

THE MAGAZINE OF THE MACDONALD-LAURIER INSTITUTE

# INSIDE POLICY

JUNE 2021

*The painful legacy of  
residential schools in Canada:*

## ANGRY? GOOD!

Now let's get to work improving  
the lives of Indigenous peoples

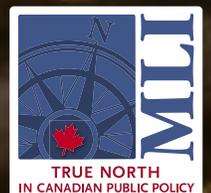
### Also INSIDE:

Politics around  
pipelines

Taiwan is more  
than a "question"

Worry about  
government debt

A pandemic of  
cancelled care





# INSIDE POLICY

THE MAGAZINE OF THE MACDONALD-LAURIER INSTITUTE

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# From the editors

The recent news and ensuing conversations about the remains of hundreds of Indigenous children who were buried around residential schools has touched a raw nerve in this country, and rightly so. Many people understandably feel both anger and shame at these terrible revelations. Yet such emotions, by themselves, are not enough.

As detailed in our cover feature by **Ken Coates**, greater self-governance would put Indigenous communities in a position to better determine and protect their own needs and destinies. Indigenous empowerment would represent the real solution to the abject failure of decades of government policy.

Also, as part of the cover feature, **Chris Sankey** offers a deeply personal account of his own experience as an intergenerational survivor of residential schools, **Melissa Mbarki** notes that tearing down statues is a gesture that only further divides people and breeds racism, and **Patrice Dutil** and **Ron Stagg** come to the defence of Egerton Ryerson, who would've been horrified at the abuses and cruelties of residential schools. Lastly, **Todd Hataley** and **Christian Leuprecht** suggest Indigenous peoples could take control of genetic material found at these mass graves.

Of course, to help facilitate Indigenous empowerment, governments must also do their part by not adding economic roadblocks when it comes to the natural resource economy – a point raised by **Jeff Kucharski**.

Meanwhile, **Shawn Whatley** looks at the impact of cancelled care during the pandemic, while **Christian Leuprecht** offers suggestions on how to tackle harassment and discrimination in the Canadian Armed Forces.

According to **Philip Cross**, public debt represents a burden that should not be casually dismissed. Meanwhile, **Kaveh Shahrooz** comments on the M-103 “Islamophobia motion” in light of the tragic deaths of members of the Afzaal family in London, and **Peter Menzies** explores the implications of Bill C-10 on Canada’s creative communities.

Despite these domestic challenges, Canada also faces an increasingly uncertain international environment. As **Balkan Devlen** notes, Canada needs to formulate a response to countries like authoritarian China. This includes Beijing’s ongoing efforts to destroy Hong Kong’s autonomy and its threat to annex Taiwan – issues that **Nathan Law** and **Ai-Men Lau** as well as **J. Michael Cole** have highlighted, respectively.

The issue concludes with **Marcus Kolga** raising concerns over cyber attacks against our critical infrastructure, **Mariam Memarsadeghi** reminding us that we need to help Iranians secure their liberty, and **Maria Reisdorf** and **Sarah Teich** suggesting the need to apply Magnitsky sanctions over Tigray.

# Contents

- 4 **Line 5 and Colonial reveal much about politicians and pipelines**  
*Jeff Kucharski*
- 6 **Conservatives have much to answer for. Voting against M-103 is not on the list**  
*Kaveh Shahrooz*
- 8 **Finding a new path forward driven by Indigenous people**  
*Ken S. Coates*
- 11 **A letter from an intergenerational survivor**  
*Chris Sankey*
- 14 **Cancelling John A. Macdonald will do little to help Indigenous people**  
*Melissa Mbarki*
- 16 **Egerton Ryerson is being misjudged**  
*Patrice Dutil and Ron Stagg*
- 18 **Give Indigenous peoples the power to return children’s remains to families**  
*Todd Hataley and Christian Leuprecht*
- 19 **We should be worried about government debt**  
*Philip Cross*
- 20 **Not all of Canada’s creative communities benefit from Bill C-10**  
*Peter Menzies*
- 21 **How much did patients really suffer from the pandemic of cancelled care?**  
*Shawn Whatley*
- 22 **A new approach to military accountability**  
*Christian Leuprecht*
- 24 **Hong Kong’s autonomy has been tragically destroyed**  
*Nathan Law and Ai-Men Lau*
- 26 **Wishful thinking is no substitute for strategy with China and Russia**  
*Balkan Devlen*
- 28 **Taiwan is more than a mere “question”**  
*J. Michael Cole*
- 29 **US pipeline hack and concerns about Canadian cyber security**  
*Marcus Kolga*
- 31 **Freedom for Iranians from a brutal regime should eclipse the nuclear issue**  
*Mariam Memarsadeghi*
- 33 **Canada should lead on Magnitsky sanctions over Tigray**  
*Maria Reisdorf and Sarah Teich*

# Line 5 and Colonial reveal much about politicians and pipelines

*Politicians will buy the green lobby's simplistic solutions until their own constituents' energy needs and jobs are affected.*

**Jeff Kucharski**

The attempted shut down of the vital Line 5 pipeline by the Governor of Michigan illustrates an unfortunate imbalance in the public discourse surrounding energy and the environment. This discourse has become toxic and polarized. I call it “unbalanced energy discourse syndrome (UED).”

Rather than a physiological disease, UED is an imbalance in the body politic. It is characterized by political rhetoric that promotes radical, one-dimensional environmental “solutions” to solve multi-dimensional energy system problems. Unfortunately, UED produces side effects and life-altering consequences including economic pain, suffering from job loss and the risk that communities will die a slow death.

The Line 5 pipeline supplies crude oil and natural gas liquids from Western Canada to Michigan and finally to Sarnia, Ontario. The pipeline accounts for 53 percent of Ontario’s crude oil supplies and more than half of the propane used by Michigan and Quebec. Yet the Governor of Michigan is now attempting to cancel this 68-year-old pipeline that has operated safely over the same period. In so doing, she is willing to sacrifice the energy security, jobs and economic wellbeing of



Mackinaw City, Michigan, US – Exterior of Enbridge Inc. oil pump station at the Straits of Mackinaw.



Traffic snakes around one of the few gas stations in North Carolina, USA with fuel reserves remaining. This took place after a cyber attack on the Colonial Pipeline May 13, 2021, sent panicked drivers scrambling for gas.

thousands of people, both in Canada and the US, to score political points with the green lobby.

Our current political narratives are partially to blame for this syndrome. Politicians and others who warn of

an impending climate “catastrophe,” “cataclysm” or “emergency” are being unnecessarily alarmist, thereby raising unrealistic expectations that justify extreme measures. Since pipelines have now become the iconic soft target for

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some environmental activists, we have witnessed illegal protests over the Trans Mountain pipeline and now the attempted cancellation of Line 5.

Such rhetoric also serves to promote climate change issues over all others, overshadowing other urgent and important policy issues and creating an opening for some politicians to take extreme positions that will actually harm the energy transition, not to mention cause backlash and societal division as side effects.

The US green lobby risks its credibility as a result of increasing radicalism and its own internal contradictions. On the one hand, there is the Governor of Michigan

These two pipeline events clearly demonstrate that we cannot magically flick the switch off of fossil fuels and simultaneously replace them with clean, green renewables. This is because we still have the legacy of an energy infrastructure based on hydrocarbons that took over 100 years to construct and upon which the smooth operation of the economy still depends. Serious technological and economic hurdles also remain in our ability to deliver affordable and constantly available clean energy alternatives.

Yet this obvious fact never seems to get in the way of those activists and politicians who want to outcompete each other to

down all the pipelines because we need to address the “climate emergency.” Instead, it recognizes the need for an orderly transition to clean energy over the next 30 years. The energy industry, scientific literature and even the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change agree that meeting our climate change goals will take decades.

What we need are solutions that don’t devastate communities, disrupt the economy and result in overnight job losses. That means continuing to operate pipelines (which are demonstrably safer than the alternatives) so that we can maintain energy security, energy access and affordability, while at the same time

*What we need are solutions that don’t devastate communities, disrupt the economy and result in overnight job losses.*

demanding the immediate closure of a pipeline that is the lifeblood of Sarnia, Ontario and critical to regional supplies of propane. At the same time, the Biden administration has scrambled to help restart the Colonial pipeline after it was shut down by a ransomware group. Two important pipelines, one very great irony.

The Line 5 pipeline mainly affects Canadians, so who cares about them? But the Colonial pipeline affects gasoline availability for millions of American voters. Guess which fossil fuel pipeline is more important to US politicians? The point is, when it is politically convenient to use fossil fuel pipelines to score points to buttress their environmental credentials, politicians consider them expendable. But when it’s not convenient, especially when voters can’t find gasoline and have to pay skyrocketing prices, well that’s different.

look greener than everyone else.

The cure for UED is for advocates to stop promoting simplistic solutions and catchy environmental slogans and instead support a more balanced and informed public discourse on energy. Countries can only maintain prosperity and reach their climate change goals by balancing the elements of what has been described by the World Energy Council as the “energy trilemma”: energy security, energy equity (affordability and access) and environmental sustainability. These goals are also reflected in the widely accepted UN Sustainable Development Goals.

This implies a *gradual* transition to a clean energy economy by the year 2050. The keyword here is “transition.” A transition does not imply a revolution to achieve some utopian scheme where 100 percent renewables replace the electricity grid virtually overnight. Neither is it shutting

making the investments required to achieve a green economy. That includes gradually building new infrastructure and systems, and making investments in retraining and skills development to smooth the eventual replacement of fossil fuels with cleaner alternatives.

The green lobby risks a public backlash by supporting radical non-solutions like the one the Governor of Michigan is trying to coerce. Any unthinking climate do-gooder can hold up a sign saying, “Retire Enbridge Line 5.” It takes a lot more careful thought and forward thinking to try to balance the needs of today with the vision to plot a realistic and sustainable path forward. Sadly, much of this kind of thinking is lacking in the energy policy discourse today. ❁

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Jeff Kucharski is an energy policy specialist and researcher, and a senior fellow at MLI.

# Conservatives have much to answer for. Voting against M-103 is not on the list.

*Following the tragic deaths of members of the Afzaal family in London, we should remember that M-103 provided no protection to that family but set the stage for an encroachment on our rights.*

## Kaveh Shahrooz

The killing of four members of the Afzaal family in London, Ontario recently was the most heinous of crimes. If the facts are as the police allege, the accused appears to have been motivated by hatred. And he directed his murderous hate at a beautiful and innocent family. He should face the full wrath of the law without mercy.

No “but.” No “maybe.”

No decent person should equivocate in giving this crime the condemnation it deserves. Nor should anyone hesitate to grieve alongside Canada’s Muslim community.

Alas, politics pauses for nothing, even a national tragedy. And so, in the midst of grief, there are already voices using the killings to score points against (mostly right-leaning) politicians who did not vote to adopt M-103, the 2017 “Islamophobia motion,” in Canada’s parliament.

Introduced by Mississauga Liberal Iqra Khalid, herself a member of the Muslim community, the non-binding motion of fewer than 200 words became a lightning rod. It asked for the government to condemn Islamophobia, and for the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage to study how government could reduce systemic racism and religious discrimination, including Islamophobia. The motion passed by a vote of 201 to 91. The motion briefly became a flashpoint in a broader culture war, with each side imputing evil motives to the other. Opposition to it came primarily from the Conservatives and some members of the Bloc Québécois.

In the aftermath of the Afzaal family



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*No decent person should equivocate in giving this crime the condemnation it deserves.*

killings, with national mourning and anger displacing rational debate, that vote has taken on new significance.

“It is difficult to hear someone like Erin O’Toole say that ‘Islamophobia has no place in this country’ when he voted against M-103,” said the CBC’s Ginella Massa on air, as she jettisoned all pretense of non-partisanship and neutrality while being employed at a taxpayer-funded broadcaster. Brampton Mayor Patrick Brown asked

for the 91 MPs who voted against the motion to apologize. The *Toronto Star* ran a lengthy piece on whether condolences from Conservative and Bloc MPs “ring hollow” in light of their vote. And on Twitter, figures with large followings lambasted federal politicians who rejected M-103 and called for Canadians to vote them out. Moved by the grief – or, interpreted more cynically, sensing the shifting political winds – Conservative MP Michelle Rempel Garner essentially apologized for her vote against that motion.

Winston Churchill famously said that one should “never let a good crisis go to waste.” The adage sounds callous, but it is smart politics. I do not fault those who see in the London tragedy an opportunity to press an advantage, embarrass their opponents, and advance their policy preferences. Nor do I fault them for deliberately ignoring the Liberals’ earlier vote against an almost-identical Conservative motion which condemned “all forms of systemic racism,

religious intolerance, and discrimination of Muslims, Jews, Christians, Sikhs, Hindus, and other religious communities.” Politics is a rough game and capitalizing on a moment is par for the course.

But we, the public, need not surrender our critical faculties just because passion is running high. So, at the risk of being unpopular and out-of-sync with fashionable ideas, let me say that I disagree with Ms. Massa, Mr. Brown, Ms. Rempel-Garner, and much of the commentariat. M-103 may have been a well-meaning motion, but it was a poorly drafted one. And in a liberal democracy, it never should have been adopted.

It is an obvious point but one that needs to be repeated: Islam is not a race or ethnicity. It is a set of ideas. And those ideas are ones with which even many in the Islamic world disagree. Many dissenters are forced to abide by those ideas at gunpoint. It is their belief that their religious texts and practices are incompatible with democracy, human rights and gender equality. These reformers or ex-Muslims often face severe punishment, either at the hands of the state or their community. Whether their position is the correct one is not really the point. What is relevant here is that, by virtue of their refusal to provide a definition of “Islamophobia” and limit

their critiques do not eventually find their way into respectable Western discourse, spend a little time reading the troubling 2018 decision by the European Court of Human Rights that upheld a woman’s conviction for her “disparagement of religious precepts.” The European court, one of the leading human rights courts in the world, determined that the woman’s harsh critiques of the Prophet Muhammad were “beyond the permissible limits of an objective debate.”

The Conservative Party of Canada has much to account for in its treatment of the Muslim community in recent years – including coddling of extremist fringe-



*M-103 may have been a well-meaning motion, but it was a poorly drafted one. And in a liberal democracy, it never should have been adopted.*

I do not know what was in the hearts of each of the 91 MPs who voted against the motion. Did some do so out of prejudice against Muslims, or wildly inflated worries about Sharia coming to Canada? Almost certainly. But, allow me to submit, as a person born into the Islamic tradition and culture (but who does not practice) that there are perfectly rational, non-bigoted, and lower-case liberal reasons to have rejected M-103 as well.

The problem with the motion was always that its key term, Islamophobia, remained undefined. Garnett Genuis, a Conservative MP and one who is active in helping many of us fighting for human rights in the Muslim world, noted this during debate. He correctly identified that “‘Islamophobia’ can be used to mean both discrimination against Muslims and criticism of Islamic doctrine or practice. It is important that we not conflate the two. Religious people deserve legal protection, but religions do not.”

its application, the Liberals left open the possibility that such principled dissent to religious doctrine could be captured by an overbroad term.

This is not mere conjecture. Examples of overbroad application of “Islamophobia” abound. Take, for instance, the 2016 decision by the Southern Poverty Law Center, a once-storied anti-racist legal and advocacy organization, to list Maajid Nawaz, a mainstream Islamic reformer, in its Field Guide to Anti-Muslim Extremists. That guide is much relied upon by media and government agencies, and being placed on it is akin to being turfed out of polite society. It took a lawsuit and a \$3.4 million settlement for the SPLC to agree to remove Nawaz from the guide.

Dictatorial regimes in the Muslim world are well aware of this semantic confusion in the West, and often rely on allegations of “Islamophobia” as a basis to attack liberal democracies. If you think

right commentators to the odious barbaric practices snatch line. However, opposing M-103 is not among those sins. It is not hard to imagine that, in an era where free speech and other protections are regularly threatened by appeals to identity, a well-meaning but sloppy effort to protect Muslims from hatred could similarly go off track in Canada, further imperiling already-vulnerable liberal norms.

We, as Canadians, should grieve for the Afzaal family and their community. Without a doubt, hatred should be fought. But when the grief subsides and debate returns, we should remember that M-103 provided no protection to that family but set the stage for an encroachment on our rights. ✨

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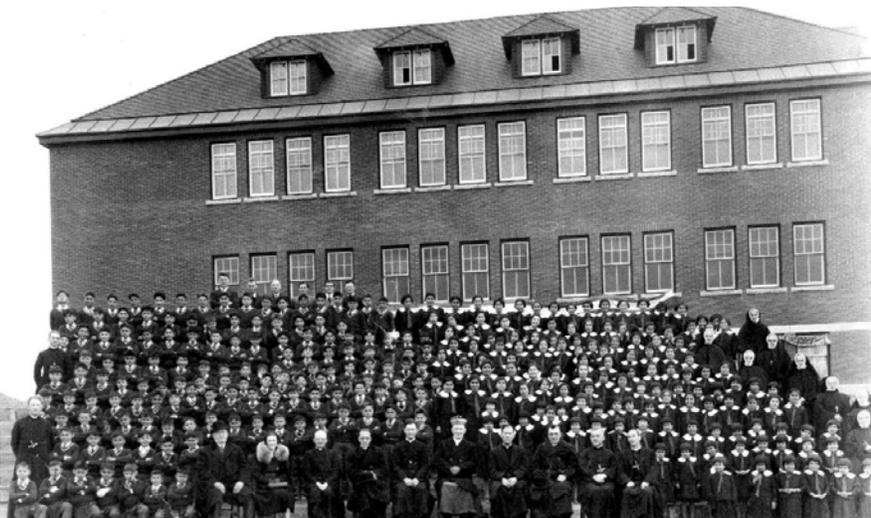
*Kaveh Shahrooz is a lawyer and a human rights activist. He is a former senior policy adviser on human rights to Global Affairs Canada and is a senior fellow at MLI's Centre for Advancing Canada's Interests Abroad. This article first appeared in The Line.*

# Finding a new path forward driven by Indigenous people

*The discovery of the locations where hundreds of children were buried near former residential schools should be the launching point for the real empowerment of Indigenous peoples in Canada.*



(GoToVan via commons.wikimedia.org)



A 1937 photo of students, administration and teaching staff at Kamloops residential school. The photo is from the Quebec archives of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. (National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation via cbc.ca)

## Ken S. Coates

People are mad. Finally! And sadly, belatedly.

The discovery of the locations where hundreds of children were buried around abandoned residential school grounds has touched the country in ways that perhaps even the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission did not. People are responding to this revelation with sustained emotion and genuine anger. But this anger must for once be translated into action.

Put aside the fact that the broad contours

of students' death at residential schools were already widely known. The country's reaction to the first major revelations of the deaths of students in the state's care (revelations from decades ago at this point) was muted compared to the current response to radar-identified graves.

For many years, extensive Indigenous testimony and writing have described the deaths of children at residential schools. First Nations, Inuit and Métis people have spoken publicly about these tragedies thousands of times, and they have for decades overshadowed life in Indigenous communities. The scale of the current revelations and the heartbreak of thinking about young children, away from family and community, dying alone

paternalism have brought and continue to bring great pain and suffering to First Nations, Métis and Inuit across the country.

Canada must first recognize Indigenous autonomy, self-government, and sovereignty over their lands and affairs – a move that the United States led on in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The *Indian Act*, reserves and all the other vestiges of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century colonization must be replaced, under terms and conditions determined primarily by Indigenous peoples. To replace these colonial structures is a tremendous legal and political task. To accomplish this effort will take time, and will require the federal government to provide funding, civil service support, the initial scoping, and then simply to get out of the way, as was done when setting up the

First Nations), or specific nations or communities (like the Carcross-Tagish First Nation or the Membertou First Nation). These communities are well equipped to manage their own priorities, and Indigenous peoples are fully capable of holding their own governments to account.

Once again, the task is not a simple one, as the challenges facing Indigenous communities vary dramatically. Ottawa needs to nonetheless expand the co-production of policy at all levels, establish clear avenues for ensuring shared financial priority setting, and establish better funding equivalencies between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. Funding allocation needs to shift away from program spending, which ebbs and flows from government to

*Government policy, far from being the solution to the issues facing Indigenous peoples, has been one of the primary sources of the problem.*

in institutions characterized by a lack of essential humanity, again highlights this shared intergenerational trauma.

While political parties at various levels may differ in their specific approaches, it seems that there is a shared sense of horror and disgust about the children's deaths. Unfortunately, as more remains will be found – Indigenous testimony and other evidence is clear on this vital point – public reaction will likely decline in intensity as people become numb to these horrors.

We must therefore seize this moment. Surely children's graves are enough to finally force a dramatic change as opposed to the social engineering and minor tinkering that has characterized policy for generations.

Government policy, far from being the solution to the issues facing Indigenous peoples, has been one of the primary sources of the problem, alongside ages-old patterns of racial discrimination and state supported assimilation. The many faces of federal

Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Facilitating a dramatic change in how Canada manages its relationships with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples must be undergirded by an overhaul of how these communities are funded. At present, the funding due to Indigenous peoples arising from their unique place in Canadian history, and their constitutional, legal and treaty rights, is caught up in a bureaucratic web. In this web, far too much funding is determined by a system in which Ottawa makes priorities for communities, and communities with few personnel resources navigate a myriad of applications and program requirements simply trying to get the support they need.

This system needs to be completely altered. Funding should instead go directly to Indigenous governments, either at a large scale (like Nunavut, Métis Nation of Saskatchewan, or the James Bay Cree), more localized groups (like the Prince Albert Tribal Council or the Treaty 8

government, and move toward long-term block funding that is reliable, predictable, and fungible. There can be no autonomy for these Nations without autonomous financial decision-making, and thus these moves need to be a key part of the process.

Moreover, Indigenous communities should be empowered to engage (or not engage) in the natural resource economy. They must be able to access the types of own-source revenue that non-Indigenous people take for granted, just as they should be able to exercise the right to protect their own environments as they see fit, free of interference. And, Ottawa must ensure that communities have clear access to the full range of financial tools and services that others in Canada already do, including access to capital.

Ultimately, Ottawa must step back – way back – permitting the re-empowerment of Indigenous peoples and ensuring the systematic and rapid

dismantling of state-driven control over Indigenous lives. This theme can carry to all elements of policy-making, whether that be education, resource development, health care, housing, and more. Negotiate modern self-governance agreements in

development of concrete policies such as a fiscal framework to directly fund communities without partisan interference or regulatory suffocation. Rights-holding First Nations, Métis and Inuit people would have to agree, through open, democratic

dozens of other impressive and culturally informed innovations. Indigenous thinkers and leaders have devoted years to imagining a new political future.

If this process succeeds, what would it look like? To start, Indigenous peoples would have clearer and more direct say over the decisions that are made which impact them. Their governments would be better equipped to advocate for their interests in negotiations with Canadian governments, the private sector, and other organizations. The management of historic wrongs and the process of meaningful reconciliation would be more deftly accomplished if communities are more fully able to engage in this process free of the yolk of Ottawa.

We see this to some extent in other countries. For instance, the Maori people in New Zealand have received major settlements, have begun having their language and culture restored in education, and more. While imperfect and though there is a long road ahead, this is all part of that quest for greater autonomy.

In short: greater self-governance would put Indigenous communities in a position to better determine and protect their own needs and destinies.

It is impossible not to be profoundly moved by the realization that hundreds of children died in the care of the state while at residential schools in this country. This legacy will be not honoured by partisan political action, a new program or two, and the allocation of a few million dollars in additional funding.

If these graves symbolize anything, it is the abject failure of decades of government policy. Find a new path forward driven by Indigenous people. Do it now. Instead of letting the memories of what happened to those Indigenous children haunt the country for years to come, let the discovery of the hundreds of bodies be the launching point. ✨

Ken S. Coates is a Munk senior fellow at MLI.



Government funding results. Top clockwise: Carcross-Tagish First Nation visitor's information centre, Yukon; Inuvialuit Corporate Centre, Yellowknife, NWT; Nisga'a Lisims government building, New Aiyansh, BC; Membertou Convention Centre, Sydney, NS. (All photos via commons.wikimedia.org)

good faith, then get out of the way.

This process, while not obvious or easy, could start simply. The leaders of the national political parties could, for once, put aside partisan politics and agree on an all-party approach to creating a new foundation for Indigenous governance and administration in Canada, advised by a large and representative group of Indigenous leaders and thinkers.

Together, this body could lead the

and culturally informed approval processes, to the new arrangements.

Though hard, this work is well within the capacity of the Indigenous leaders and peoples. After all, Indigenous peoples are responsible for some of the most imaginative and creative political systems in the country: the Atlantic Policy Congress, Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government, the Six Nations, tribal councils on the prairies, the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, the Nisga'a Lisims government, the traditional structure of the Teslin First Nation, and

# A letter from an intergenerational survivor



*I do not know you, John A. Macdonald. But I know the suffering caused by your policies, and those of many others since your time. I believe that tearing down your statue is not going to resolve the issues that still plague Indigenous communities. But wait until you see what we can do once we're out from under the thumb of government.*

## Chris Sankey

**D**ear Sir John A. Macdonald, The recent discovery of the remains of hundreds of children on abandoned residential school grounds has traumatized Indigenous people and may

have finally gotten through to Canadians the horrors of residential schools. Thousands of us share the burden from these schools. I am myself an intergenerational survivor. The revelations about the unmarked graves triggered me in ways I have not felt in years.

I often wonder what I would say to you if I met you today. I often wonder if my

“  
The revelations about the unmarked graves triggered me in ways I have not felt in years.”

feelings towards you would be hate, anger or resentment. Most of my life I had no idea who you were and what you represented. To be honest, I only ever learned about you later in life. In high school, teachers praised you. Non-Indigenous students admired you. I, on the other hand, really did not care to pay attention to your life's work. What I do know is you were behind one of the most damning acts against Indigenous peoples in Canadian history.

Over the past year and a half, Canada has been experiencing another burst of controversy about you, Canada's first Prime Minister. Although you undoubtedly laid the foundations for modern-day Canada, it came at a significant cost to our lives and forever changed the history of our people.

You set in motion some of the strictest elements of Canadian Indigenous policy: the Indian Residential Schools, which introduced a nationwide program of assimilation in 1883 that was, essentially, sub-contracted to the Christian churches. I do not think you ever understood what your educational policies did to us.

We have learned about more than just deliberate acts to assimilate Indigenous children. There was also negligence on behalf of government staff and criminal acts

by priests and teachers who worked from one school to another. Let us be honest here. The Catholic Church has done more damage to children than any other religion on the planet. Pope Francis' recent speech and poor excuse for an apology was nothing short of a prayer for himself.

In 1920, 30 years after your death, under the *Indian Act*, it became mandatory for every Indigenous child to attend a residential school or an Indian Day School. The pass system made it illegal for Indigenous people to leave the reserve. If we did, we could be stripped of our Indian status.

The government reportedly often kept rations for Indigenous peoples low enough to ensure constant hunger and discourage the expectation of "gratuitous assistance" from Ottawa. And let us not forget the infamous Indian Agent, who were the government's representatives on First Nations reserves. Some of them are alive today. These individuals seemed to believe they were God.

Many Indigenous families did not realize that your primary objective was to make room for the European settlers, commercial agriculture and railways, all in the name of the economic development of the new country of Canada.

As I say, much of this was set in motion under you, Sir John A., but so much more happened after you were gone.

As I sit and ponder your legacy, I am reminded that Mackenzie King was PM for 20 years. Why isn't anyone attacking him? Sir Wilfrid Laurier was no better. Let's not forget Alexander Mackenzie, John Abbott, John Thompson, Mackenzie Bowell, Charles Tupper, Robert Borden, Arthur Meighen, RB Bennett, Louis St-Laurent, John Diefenbaker, Lester B. Pearson, Pierre Trudeau, John Turner, Brian Mulroney, Kim Campbell and Jean Chrétien. Let us not forget the countless members of Parliament and staff who knew what was happening. After all, staff wrote reports on the schools.



Indigenous children at residential schools through the generations

(Public domain/ collectionscanada.gc.ca; National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation via cbc.ca; National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation via cbc.ca)



I name these Prime Ministers because they could have stopped residential schools but did not. Jean Chrétien was Prime Minister for three years before the last residential school closed in 1996. Surely, attending this school in such a supposedly

modern and enlightened time as the 1990s would have struck sorrow and anger in the hearts of Indigenous students. Imagine the pain of merely sitting in the very seats where so many of their family members had been attacked culturally and, in way too many cases, physically and sexually. Intergenerational trauma is layered on top of the crisis that faced the children.

Nobody in their right mind would have ever agreed to these schools once we found out what the real intent was. But the reality is that there was a mix of Liberal and Conservative Prime Ministers during the residential school era. So why are we so focused on you and your actions, Sir John A., which you must admit were grievously wrong? I do not care for you as you caused my people so much pain, but I need to find it in my heart to forgive you.

Instead of tearing down statues, we should demolish the Indigenous Services Canada building where so many of these policies were written up and enacted. In fact, let's turn these buildings into condominiums to house the less fortunate and let the government pay rent to the rightful title holders of the land where the buildings sit today.

Let's look at the approach to Indigenous relations that persist today. You cannot tell me that the current Prime Minister and his MPs are keeping track of all their staff's dealings with Indigenous communities. There was no accountability then. There is still no accountability now. All too often politicians, political staffers and government officials continue to treat our communities like crap. Yes, I said it. And do not try to tell Canadians otherwise. All of us Indigenous people experienced it and felt it. We continue to get treated poorly by the system.

I'm sure that what you envisioned for Canadians and for First Nations was by and large what you thought was right, and that you wanted good things for Indigenous peoples. You wrote to Ojibwa leader Peter Jones, "I hope to see some



*I would like to see more monuments erected of our Indigenous champions who fought for us.*

day the Indian race represented by one of themselves on the floor of the House of Commons.” That vision came true, but it took far too long.

But, John A., I am afraid that I must make this personal. Almost all my family attended residential schools. I am survivor of intergenerational trauma where the very teachings from these schools nearly killed me, my family and community. I have lost friends to suicide. I knew children who committed suicide. I’ve had a lot of loss in my life for one reason or another. My life was ravaged with drugs and alcohol as I tried desperately to bury the past, all the while keeping a smile on my face for the public.

The thought of suicide crossed my mind more times than I care to admit. In fact, I attempted to take my own life. If

it were not for my children, the sport of basketball and my best friend, I probably would not be here today. I had multiple relationships fail, because of the anger and pain I lived with for so long.

I lost a father, who previous adopted me and took me as one of his own, who loved me dearly, but later took his own life with a hunting rifle while I was home. I had a stepparent who for years mistreated me and a mother who suffered physical violence and who would eventually die of cancer. The emotional disconnect from my parents and stepparent was prevalent. The shame I lived with all these years undoubtedly put me on a roller coaster ride for which I was not prepared.

I faced racism and ignorance, but I am still here. I grew up in poverty but was grateful for what I had. I do not

hate my country. I have no ill feelings. I don’t feel sorry for myself and I do not hate anyone, but the next time you hear comments such as: “but you didn’t attend these schools” or “It was in the past, so get over it,” remember, just because you do not see me homeless and walking the street (I was often a paycheque away from that) does not mean I was not impacted by the residential school system.

I swore if I ever fought through these experiences and memories, I would go to great lengths to protect my children, build a better life for me and my family, and help others when I can. I have done all of these things and more than I expected, and I am proud that I worked through the pain and hardship.

I do not know you, John A. Macdonald. I owe you nothing. But I do know this: tearing down your statue is not going to solve our problems. It only perpetuates division. I would rather see your statue stay so that my kids will know the history. I would like to see more monuments erected of our Indigenous champions who fought for us and memorials to the Indigenous peoples who proved so resilient. That is how we build relationships. That is how we reconcile our differences. If we do not start working together, we will always point fingers at one another.

I would not cancel you, John A., but I would cancel the *Indian Act*, the Ottawa bureaucracy, and the legacy of paternalism and cultural superiority that held us down for so long. John A., wait until you see what First Nations, Métis and Inuit do when we get out from under the thumb of government and eliminate the painful legacy that you left behind.

Sincerely, Chris Sankey. 🌸

*Chris Sankey is a prominent Indigenous business leader, a senior fellow at MLI and a former elected Councillor for the Lax Kw’alaams Band.*

# Cancelling John A. Macdonald will do little to help Indigenous people

*The history of residential schools could have taken a turn for the better if Pierre Elliot Trudeau did the right thing and closed them.*



CityNews

**Melissa Mbarki**

News of the remains of 215 children found at a former residential school on the Tk'emlups te Secwepemc Nation (and later 751 more near the former Marieval school in Saskatchewan) opened old wounds in Indigenous communities across the country. We held vigils, shared our stories and we are mourning the loss of these children.

For most in the non-Indigenous community, having their three-year-old child or grandchild forcibly removed from their home has not been a regular part of life. The Kamloops and Marieval discoveries brought up many questions about the purpose of these schools. It also prompted a different conversation about

*Are we creating a villain and cancelling John A. Macdonald because we need someone to blame?*

how little is taught in our current school system and the importance of knowing our history through an Indigenous lens.

One question that everyone is asking: Who was responsible for residential schools? In the last century, every government since 1883 was complacent and did nothing to investigate reports of abuse or initiate the

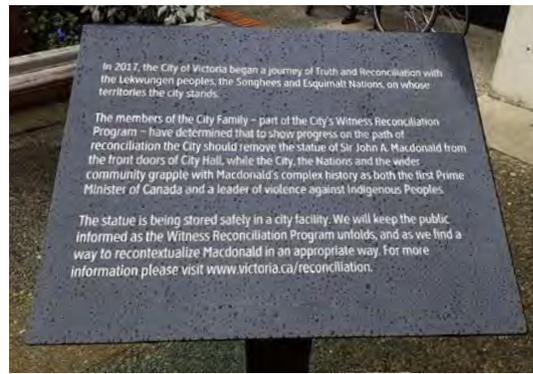
Statue of Sir John A Macdonald at Queen's Park, Toronto.

closure of residential schools. Are we creating a villain and cancelling John A. Macdonald because we need someone to blame?

One comment has really stood out for me. "Maybe this (residential schools) wasn't a chapter; it was the whole damn book." Every social issue happening in Indigenous communities today is a result of residential schools. When asked what we needed to address these issues, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission captured this clearly in its 94 calls to actions.

Since 2015, none of these calls were implemented by the Government of Canada.

Here is where our frustration and anger start to brew. Do not spend years writing



The statue of Sir John A. Macdonald in front of Victoria City Hall and the sign that replaced it when Macdonald was “cancelled” in 2017.

(Photos via commons.wikimedia.org)

a report, interviewing residential school survivors and asking what we need, only to throw it in the garbage bin. Do we need to experience a tragedy in order for the government to take action?

In addition to the government’s inaction, COVID-19 hit reserves like wildfire. This heightened many of our socioeconomic inequities. I am passionate about bringing awareness to these issues because I grew up on a reserve. I experienced boil-water advisories, over-crowded homes and an overall lack of services. Understanding the history and challenges we face today are important factors in understanding how we got here.

Now let me try to equate the residential school system to the tearing down of statues.

John A. Macdonald created the residential school system with an aim to assimilate Indigenous people, specifically Indigenous children. Were these policies toward Indigenous people fair and just? No. Is he solely responsible for the abuse that took place in these schools? Again, the answer is no.

We are forgetting major players in

this conversation. Those who worked in residential schools committed atrocious acts. The abuse, neglect and deaths occurred under the watch of the caretakers.

Read that last line again. Read it over a few times before you decide to tear down a statue. Why are we persecuting “one man” for the crimes committed by others in the last century? Any government during that span of time could have closed these schools. In 1969, ownership of the schools was transferred to the Department of Indian Affairs. Prior to this transfer, what did the government know about the abuse,

neglect and death of Indigenous children?

Another important question, who was prime minister at the time? Who decided to keep these schools open? The history of residential schools could have taken a turn for the better if Pierre Elliott Trudeau did the right thing and closed them. We could have saved at least two generations of children from filtering through these schools.

Since we are removing statues, why stop there? We can rename airports, paint over murals and erase history but this will not bring healing or justice to our communities. When the dust settles, we will have the same issues. These are not going away because you decided to remove something,

If you were going to city hall to advocate for a removal of a statue, you can take that effort and advocate for urban issues that directly affect us. Is homelessness and children in care unimportant? Indigenous children make up 69 percent of the foster care system and one in 15 adults are homeless. Sadly, these statistics are overshadowed by a piece of concrete.

I am going to say this bluntly: cancelling culture and removing history is not going to change the issues Indigenous people face today. How can it? You are taking the easy road to prove a point and

## *Tearing down a statue does the opposite of what we are trying to accomplish.*

that works in no one’s favour. It is easier to tear something down than it is to build a community up, so step up and help us with issues that require immediate attention.

Tearing down a statue does the opposite of what we are trying to accomplish. It is a gesture that further divides people and breeds racism. It is time to start having respectful conversations with each other and bring awareness to issues that actually affect Indigenous people. ✨

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*Melissa Mbarki is a policy analyst and outreach coordinator at MLI, and a member of the Treaty 4 nation in Saskatchewan. This article first appeared in the National Post.*

# Egerton Ryerson is being misjudged

*Ryerson would have been horrified by the abuses and cruelties later perpetrated on Indigenous children by residential schools.*



CityNews

## Patrice Dutil and Ron Stagg

The revelation that there are hundreds of children's bodies buried around former residential schools in BC and Saskatchewan has prompted more vandalism of monuments erected to honour the men of the Confederation generation, and the statue of Egerton Ryerson that stands on Gould Street in Toronto has not been spared. It has also given a new wind to the demand that Ryerson's statue be removed and that the name of the university dedicated to his memory be changed.

Egerton Ryerson (1803-1882), the Methodist minister who has long been celebrated as the founder of the Ontario

*Ryerson is being misjudged. He was not a racist and he did not discriminate against Indigenous people.*

public school system, stands accused of creating a residential school system designed to stamp out Indigenous culture. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission investigated the issue, but its final report made no such claim. It did not seem to matter: a small but nameless constituency still argues that Ryerson was the predecessor to federal politicians who launched new residential schools in 1883, and should therefore be erased from public memory.

Ryerson is being misjudged. He was not a racist and he did not discriminate against Indigenous people. It was the exact opposite! As a young man he was appointed to the Credit mission, home of the Mississaugas. He learned their language, worked in the fields with the people of the settlement and

became a life-long friend of future chief Kahkewaquonaby (Sacred Feathers), known in English as Peter Jones.

In fact, it was in recognition of his services to the Mississauga, that Ryerson was adopted and given the name of a deceased chief, “Cheechock” or “Chechalk,” who had passed away recently.

After he left the Credit mission, Ryerson kept in touch with Peter Jones. In the 1830s he assisted the Mississaugas,

It is also wrong to blame Egerton Ryerson for creating residential schools. It was Peter Jones, working with another prominent Methodist, who argued that the government should fund schools to educate Indigenous men in the new techniques in agriculture, so that they might survive in a colony where land to hunt and fish freely was rapidly disappearing. By 1842, the authorities accepted the concept, as a way to put First Nations people on farms and

an acknowledged expert on education, and asked him to provide a curriculum for schools that would train Indigenous people for a settled life.

Ryerson was fully in agreement with the plan because he worried that Indigenous communities would be destroyed unless they changed their economic life. He delivered general suggestions for a curriculum – *nothing else* – that were typical of his day. It was patronizing, as it was based on Euro-Canadian models, but it had the support of most of the Indigenous leaders. Ryerson participated precisely because he saw education as the best instrument to protect First Nations from advancing settlement.

Two schools were established. They would be supervised by the government, and run by the Methodists, just like most of the on-reserve schools. They differed markedly from later residential schools, however. Teaching was done by teachers trained for the regular school system, not by the clergy, and children could speak their own language. Attendance was voluntary. Religion was a subject in the curriculum, not a tool of forced conversion and assimilation. As a devout Christian, Ryerson would have been horrified by the abuses and cruelties later perpetrated on Indigenous children by residential schools.

The schools were failures, mainly because of government refusal to adequately fund the project. But in this small aspect of his career Egerton Ryerson demonstrated his uniquely humane instincts of generosity and recognition of minorities. This was the same man who boldly championed schools for Catholics and for French-Canadians.

Torontonians today must recognize that Egerton Ryerson has been falsely accused and restore their pride in celebrating one of the best minds of their past. ❄️

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*Patrice Dutil is a professor at Ryerson University and senior fellow at MLI. Ron Stagg is a professor of History at Ryerson University. A longer version of this article first appeared in the Dorchester Review.*

*Ryerson participated precisely because he saw education as the best instrument to protect First Nations.*



Kahkewaquonaby (Peter Jones), 1845.  
(National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa)



Egerton Ryerson Young, circa 1882.  
(rijksmuseum.nl via commons.wikimedia.org)

whose land was confiscated by colonial authorities, by approaching Queen Victoria personally through back channels. He also advanced the careers of a number of talented Indigenous individuals. When Peter Jones was gravely ill at the end of his life, he stayed in the comfortable home of his old friend Ryerson in Toronto.

Ryerson was a friend of Indigenous people.

to eliminate the expense of annual treaty payments, not as a way to assimilate them.

In 1846, government agents met with thirty chiefs, representing most of the First Nations in what is now southern Ontario. After some discussion, almost all the leaders agreed that such schools were necessary, and many even agreed to use part of their treaty payments to help support the schools. A year later, the government approached Ryerson,

# Give Indigenous peoples the power to return children's remains to families

*With the government's half-hearted past efforts on missing Indigenous persons, it should avoid colonizing the DNA data of Indigenous individuals in perpetuity.*



Left: Marieval Mission, Cowesses Indian Residential School in Elcapo Creek Valley, Saskatchewan, 1923; above: Kamloops Indian Residential School, 1930.

(Archives Deschâtelets-NDC, Richelieu via commons.wikimedia.org; Library and Archives Canada under the MIKAN ID number 3315669 via commons.wikimedia.org)

**Todd Hataley**

**Christian Leuprecht**

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) has stated that 6000 Indigenous children remain unaccounted for under the residential school system, in addition to an estimated 4000 murdered or missing Indigenous women and girls. In light of the announcement of the discovery of the remains of 215 Indigenous children at the former Kamloops Indian Residential School, and 751 more at the Marieval Indian Residential School in Saskatchewan, that estimate may prove conservative.

Canadians have been groomed to think of these deaths as natural, but should there be a criminal investigation? And who would conduct it? Those are difficult questions that may explain why the Canadian government has yet to follow through on the TRC's calls to action to allow for the proper finding and recording of children who died at residential schools.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau rose in the House of Commons to acknowledge that the tragedy uncovered in Kamloops

is, vaguely, “the fault of Canada.” The search of unmarked graves at other former residential school sites will need to identify, and appropriately and sensitively return, the children's remains to grieving families.

DNA analysis, while not always precise, holds out the best prospect of identifying and linking thousands of remains of Indigenous children from across the country to living family members.

In Canada, the analysis and storage of DNA material could become part of the Relatives of Missing Persons Index, one of a host of disparate DNA databanks controlled by the RCMP under the larger National DNA Data Bank. That, however, will not do justice: Who controls these genetic identifiers into the future is as important as what information can be gleaned for closure in the present and potential prosecution in the future.

*Indigenous peoples could take control of genetic material found at this and future locations.*

Given the tenuous relationship between the federal government and Indigenous peoples, and the government's half-hearted past efforts on missing Indigenous persons, the federal government should avoid colonizing the genetic identifiers of Indigenous individuals in perpetuity.

Relations between groups wax and wane over the years. Who knows for what purposes DNA material may be used in two or three generations? As DNA science evolves, it is impossible to anticipate what additional information may be extracted from DNA samples or how that information may be used.

To this end, Indigenous peoples in Canada should be afforded the opportunity to take control of this information. Knowledge is power: Vesting Indigenous

*Continued on page 34*

# We should be worried about government debt

*Canada's high government debt reflects an unwillingness to make hard choices about spending priorities.*

## Philip Cross

Government debt is sometimes both unavoidable and justifiable. For example, the huge debt assumed by governments during the Second World War was necessary to defeat totalitarians. Recession deficits are unavoidable since spending cannot be cut fast enough. During the pandemic, ordering lockdowns obliged governments to provide support for both households and businesses.

in addition to the rising costs of pensions and health care due to an aging population.

High debt also handcuffs future borrowing when inevitable shocks hit the economy. Canada's adoption of fiscal restraint after 2009 allowed for a borrowing binge during the pandemic, but will leave future governments with little fiscal room to manoeuvre during the next downturn. Unexpected shocks often force austerity at the worst possible time, as much of Europe discovered in 2010.

future tax hikes. Investment falls either because businesses anticipate future spending will be diverted to government or firms are crowded out of debt markets, and less investment means lower long-term productivity growth. Higher capital inflows boost the exchange rate, degrading our international competitiveness by reducing export earnings and raising imports as their prices fall.

International Monetary Fund studies show fiscal restraint is best accomplished

*“Negligent governments, in their well-intentioned haste to help with today's crisis, unwittingly harm the less well-off in the next crisis.”*

But the fact that debt may sometimes be necessary is not the same as asserting it carries no consequences. Debt is burdensome to current and future generations. Ceding control to creditors risks triggering future austerity that will disproportionately harm the least fortunate and most vulnerable.

More insidiously, today's debt orgy threatens central bank independence and control of inflation. Finally, debt dependence is a dangerous crutch for politicians who refuse to make difficult choices.

The burden to the current generation is manifest. Despite record-low interest rates, indiscriminate pandemic spending will double interest payments from \$20 to \$40 billion over the next five years. As interest rates normalize, debt servicing will further constrain government spending, in

The trendy idea that debt is not burdensome relies on theory rather than experience. History shows low-debt nations function better than those with high debt. Debt levels near 100 percent of GDP (which governments in Canada are now approaching) become more burdensome and harder to service. After all, bond markets demand high premiums to finance it and taxpayers balk at diverting more spending toward debt service instead of public services.

Furthermore, fiscal stimulus is always partially offset by other changes in savings and investment. Higher government deficits trigger some combination of more private savings, less private investment, and rising foreign capital inflows. Private savings increase, partly as people plan for

with spending cuts, not tax increases. However, austerity imposed during recessions is extremely harmful to people most dependent on the social safety net, as shown in Europe after 2010 and North America in the 1990s. Negligent governments, in their well-intentioned haste to help with today's crisis, unwittingly harm the less well-off in the next crisis.

Ben Franklin noted a key debt dynamic means “you give to another the power over your liberty.” The realization that dependence on debt markets constrains independence motivated Quebec's bipartisan commitment to lower the debt it has held since 1996. Quebec's recent experience demonstrates that sustained

*Continued on page 34*

# Not all of Canada's creative communities benefit from Bill C-10

*The government might be wise to consult with all of Canada's creators and consumers before Bill C-10 develops into an even bigger political problem.*

## Peter Menzies

The federal government's clumsy legislative efforts to merge the old and new communications worlds has given all involved a chance to wonder if Bill C-10 is – as advertised – really in the best interests of Canada's cultural communities.

I used the plural because there are a number of creative communities – those who operate within the walled regulatory system, those who embrace the entrepreneurial opportunities the Internet represents, those in film, those in television, those who stream, those who make music, etc. And they don't all see the world the same way. Add to that the French-language versions of all of those and there's much more diversity out there than Heritage Minister Steven Guilbeault appears to have been led to believe.

The loudest voices calling for government regulation of the Internet through Bill C-10 comes from the regulated film and television production sector.

Producers and guilds operate within a sector of the industry designed to meet regulatory goals, not market demands. Their system has at its heart the moderation of consumer preferences in the manner parents manage their children's meals.

Business plans are designed to meet criteria dictated by funds fuelled by levies paid by cable companies and television networks through the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC). Those networks in turn broadcast the funded programs, typically in non-prime time. And so it goes. All involved are convinced that Canadian culture cannot survive without them.

This ecosystem, while it has sustained the incomes of many creators, was recently described by lawyer Philip Palmer, one of the authors of the *Broadcasting Act*, as a failure. Speaking on a Macdonald-Laurier Institute panel, Palmer says that when he and his colleagues completed their work 30 years ago they assumed they had written Canada's last *Broadcasting Act* because in the infinite content world they could see forming there would be no need for it.

"The government has not asked itself 'is regulation necessary?'" says Palmer, now retired from the federal public service and vice chair of the Canadian branch of the Internet Society. "It has said 'regulation is necessary' therefore we've got to bring in these



Renée Depocas with iStock image

(Internet) people to prop up a system that is now totally outmoded technologically and philosophically.

"They have failed to . . . encourage an audience-directed policy. Instead they want to prop up a system that has failed consumers continually throughout the history of the Canadian broadcasting system. That's the fundamental flaw (in C-10)."

While some smile wryly at the notion that forcing the Internet into a 1980s-style straitjacket could be characterized as

*Continued on page 35*

# How much did patients really suffer from the pandemic of cancelled care?

*Canada simply cannot afford the health care we have promised our citizens.*

## Shawn Whatley

As the third wave of COVID-19 recedes in Ontario, watch for the resumption of an old debate about the impact on patients of delayed procedures and treatments. On one side, hospitals, medical associations, and labour unions will point to all the many patients who endured cancelled care. On the other, with apologies to Burke, economists with calculators and sophists will ask: How much did those patients really suffer from waiting?

We should not be so dismissive about the impact of delaying “elective” procedures. The suffering will be enormous.

The Ontario Medical Association reported this week on what it calls the “backlog” of 15.9 million cancelled services. The OMA found “the estimated backlog was greatest for MRIs (477,301), followed by CT scans (269,683), cataract surgery (90,136), knee (38,236) and hip (16,506) replacements and coronary artery bypass grafts (3,163).” Even working at 120 percent capacity, it will take 22 months to clear the backlog for knee replacements alone.

As I said, this is an old debate. The OMA “backlog” argument assumes patients should get the care they need, as determined by the doctors who ordered it. But experts and advocates of central planning often dismiss the OMA’s core assumption.

In 2005, Dr. Michael Rachlis, author and public health researcher, tackled the relationship between suffering and waiting. “How much do patients really suffer because of these delays?” Rachlis asked. He admitted that patients waiting for hip and knee surgery “experience considerable

pain and disability” but concluded that it “doesn’t affect their vital status to wait an extra few months.”

In fairness, Rachlis wrote at a time when waits were less than half as long as current OMA estimates, but his logic still guides system planners. For another example, in 2012, Dr. Robert G. Evans, Emeritus Professor from the Vancouver School of Economics, also questioned the “ethical norm” that “patients should get the care they need, as judged by a qualified clinical practitioner, regardless of the cost.”

“*Canada simply cannot afford the health care we have promised our citizens.*”

In effect, Evans is making a remarkable claim – that patients apparently do not actually need all the care their doctors order. And since central planners cannot control doctors directly, they cut capacity instead. Compared with other OECD countries, Canada has fewer physicians (2.7 vs. 3.5) and hospital beds (2.5 vs. 4.7) per 1000 population. We also have fewer CT scanners (15.4 vs 26.6) and MRI machines (10.0 vs. 16.8) per 1 million population. Canadians spend more (10.8 percent vs. 8.8 percent of GDP) and get less care, but even this is too much.

It is settled wisdom in some quarters

that Canadians will accept high taxes in return for “free” health care. As the CBC’s Neil Macdonald wrote in 2016:

“This has been the social compact in Canada for more than half a century: our governments tax everything that moves, and even tax each other’s taxes, but in return, our medical needs are seen to be free of charge, never mind some budget imposed on the hospital.”

If this was ever so, there can be no doubt that this compact was shattered with the arrival of COVID-19.

Canada simply cannot afford the health care we have promised our citizens. We maintain the myth of “care when you need it regardless of ability to pay.” But, in reality, we have cut services beyond what prudence allows. Our acute-care hospitals overflowed with elderly patients even before the pandemic, with many left in hallways, modified closets, and even bathrooms for days. When COVID came, we crammed them all into under-resourced long-term care homes, then wrung our hands at the horrifying death rates.

Central planners maintained the status quo on the assumption that waiting does not really impact a patient’s “vital status.” But should central planners decide whether patient suffering, caused by waitlists, delays and cancelled services, is acceptable enough to ignore?

If the past 50 years offers a guide, expect planners to manage the current backlog according to the same old arguments. Of course, a bigger question remains: how long will Canadian patients put up with it? ❁

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*Shawn Whatley is a senior fellow at MLI and a past president of the OMA.*

# A new approach to military accountability

*Governments exhibit a common pattern when confronted with a harmful institutional culture – one that still falls short on accountability.*



Both images left: Corporal Lynette Ai Dang, Her Majesty's Canadian Ship CALGARY, Imagery Technician [flickr.com/photos/efcombatcamera](https://www.flickr.com/photos/efcombatcamera)

Cpl Michael Bastien, MARPAC Imaging Services; Cpl Rommie Kinnite, MCpl Genevieve Lapointe, Canadian Forces Combat Camera, Canadian Armed Forces Photo

## Christian Leuprecht

In 1989, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal mandated the full integration of women into the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF). However, women in the CAF know all too well that they have been integrated into an institutional culture that is neither of their making nor of their choosing: a highly sexualized contagion with a deleterious current of sexual misbehaviour.

Governments on both sides of the aisle exhibit a common pattern when confronted with a harmful institutional culture: they appoint a new leader – whether chief of the defence staff or commissioner of the RCMP – and commission an outside study. By the time the study is tabled, public attention has died down. Government obliges by

implementing some recommendations, while skirting more contentious ones. Government then defers to the organization on implementation, on which it has a decades-long track-record of falling short.

This approach is an affront to civil-military relations in a democracy and

“  
*Ministers of national defence have heeded their responsibility during past controversies.*”

undermines a basic principle of Canada's Westminster system of parliamentary government. Canada's fundamental constitutional principle is responsible government: the government of the day is responsible to Parliament that represents the electorate. Its ancillary principle is ministerial responsibility: the minister is responsible for the conduct of her or his department and answers for it to Parliament. But when was the last time a minister, let alone a minister of national defence, resigned over a controversy?

Ministers of national defence have heeded their responsibility during past controversies: Brooke Claxton had the Royal Military College take in returning non-commissioned officers to grant degrees; Paul Hellyer implemented unification

of the Armed Forces against their stiff resistance; Donald Macdonald set up the Management Review Group in response to cost overruns and shirking by the Army; and David Collenette and Doug Young imposed significant change in the aftermath of the Somalia affair and inquiry. In fact, Young's successor Art Eggleton had so little confidence in the military's ability to resolve problems internally that he set up a Minister's Monitoring Committee that lasted several years.

Attempts post-Somalia to root out the noblesse oblige attitude among select senior

has ramifications for effectiveness, efficiency and morale.

A consensus is emerging among Members of the House on replacing the current Office of the Ombudsman with an Inspector General (IG) who is internal to the department yet reports to Parliament. The IG at the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) was dissolved, but only because bureaucrats and politicians quickly lost sight of how it was supposed to function and, consequently, the IG ended up with too much overlap with the Security Intelligence Review Committee (SIRC).

Parliament would not have the same effect. Since independence has emerged as a problem with the CAF ombudsman, public reporting would need to be enshrined in legislation to ensure both ministerial responsibility and the IG's independence. The IG would conduct inspections and investigations of errors in judgment or unethical or illegal behaviour that erode professional culture, unit-climate and the well-being of members.

For serving members of the CAF to have confidence that issues raised will be resolved fairly, the CAF IG needs to be complemented by a complaint-focused office that reports



*Women in the CAF know all too well that they have been integrated into an institutional culture that is neither of their making nor of their choosing: a highly sexualized contagion with a deleterious current of sexual misbehaviour.*

leaders appear to have met with less success than previously thought, as commonalities in patterns are becoming apparent: then it was (ab)use of perks of office that came to light, now it is fraternization and misconduct in violation of the military's Code of Services Discipline and possibly offences under the Criminal Code. Recent media reports on a case where the "regimental guard" of the PPCLI, well-connected to the senior CAF and political leadership of the department, backed a perpetrator over the victim are a case in point that is ominously reminiscent of the role of regimental senates in the Somalia case.

In 2015, the minister was expeditious in his exercise of responsibility at just a hint that a senior general officer – who was subsequently exonerated – may possibly have crossed the new government of the day. That overreaction now stands in stark contrast with the minister's and government's lax response to a genuine crisis that affects hundreds of uniformed members, present and past, and

Opposition Parliamentarians have been pushing for the IG as yet another addition to a growing list of agents of Parliament. This is par for the course: pushing for offices of Parliament when in opposition, only to come to regret those same offices when elected.

Rather than enhancing ministerial responsibility, the proliferation of agents of Parliament has been contributing to its decline. At the same time, it would not actually remedy the problem at hand. The purpose of the proposed IG is to establish an independent reporting/oversight agency for conduct-related matters that is external to the CAF and the Department of National Defence (DND). A professionally focused, statutorily based, independent IG would report to the minister of national defence, not Parliament.

However, a CAF IG should be able to table reports to Parliament without having to obtain approval from the minister of national defence. The minister then has to act or be held responsible. An IG that reports to

to the Clerk of the Privy Council. The Office for Harassment Resolution would investigate violations of statutes or formal codes of conduct related to harassment or discrimination. With the clerk as the senior civil servant, akin to the deputy minister to the prime minister, arguably the office replicates some departmental problems, only at a higher level.

Nonetheless, this dual-track model holds out the promise of tackling harassment and discrimination across government more broadly: the office could address pervasive issues in the RCMP along with the dismal results in the annual Public Service Employee Survey – where the CAF performed only marginally worse than other parts of the civil service. ❁

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*Christian Leuprecht is Class of 1965 Professor in Leadership at the Royal Military College, director of the Institute of Intergovernmental Relations at Queen's University, and senior fellow at MLI. This article first appeared in the Hill Times.*



Isis Tong/voa via commons.wikimedia.org

## Hong Kong's autonomy has been tragically destroyed

*Despite Canada's national obligations as an endorser to the Sino-British Joint Declaration, the Canadian government has done little to hold Beijing accountable.*

**Nathan Law**

**Ai-Men Lau**

The People's Republic of China (PRC) has crushed remaining vestiges of Hong Kong's autonomy with sweeping legislation that transformed semi-democratic elections in the territory to a Beijing-controlled selection process. Despite Canada's national obligations as an endorser to the *Sino-British Joint Declaration*, the Canadian government has done little to hold Beijing accountable.

Under the guise of complying with the Basic Law and the *Sino-British Joint Declaration*, Beijing loyalists enjoy an

*The message is loud and clear: Hong Kong is now fully under Beijing's control.*

overwhelming, de facto advantage. Public office nominees will now be vetted by Beijing and there will be pro-Beijing majority in Hong Kong's legislature.

Despite officials' repeated assertions that the latest electoral "reforms" strengthens Hong Kong's "democracy," the message is loud and clear: Hong Kong is now fully under Beijing's control.

The PRC's latest move is neither sudden nor unexpected. Since the handover from British rule two-and-a-half decades ago, fear of Beijing's takeover has woven itself into the fabric of Hong Kong. Canada saw a spike in Hong Kong immigrants during the initial handover, as the belief that Hong Kong's autonomy would swiftly end drove many to leave the territory.

Beijing's takeover of Hong Kong has been a slow one, with many fighting for

the establishment of democracy since the 1980s. The *Sino-British Joint Declaration* did promise universal suffrage for the people of Hong Kong, but that has never been honoured. Yet, little international attention has been paid to Hong Kong's fragile institutions and basic law despite being enshrined in the *Sino-British Joint Declaration*. The warning signs were seemingly shrugged off, as China's rise to power and economic might captured the world.

called for further measures to help Hong Kongers fleeing political persecution.

While Beijing was predictably incensed, none of these measures effectively deterred China's actions. Rather, the PRC was only emboldened to continue its suppression of the territory, breaching international agreements in the process. This has continued with impunity.

The federal government has recently announced sanctions, in conjunction with the US, the UK, and the EU, on

to examine how state-funded or affiliated Beijing-influence campaigns operate in all sectors. Measures need to tackle political and elite capture, Beijing's disinformation operations, and their infiltration into academia, non-profit and business sectors.

Addressing foreign interference is another critical measure, not only to safeguard Canadian interests but Canadian citizens themselves. As Beijing continues to muzzle political dissent and critics, no one is beyond the reach of Beijing.



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“  
Canadian  
Hong Kongers  
do not feel safe  
here in Canada.”

The Canadian federal government's silence has been harrowing for many Hong Kong-Canadians. As homes, city streets, and favourite haunts in their homeland were morphed into scenes of blood, tear gas, and police brutality, mounting frustration and calls for actions tore through the Hong Kong-Canadian community.

Ottawa belatedly shifted its approach on this issue. After the implementation of the National Security Law (NSL), the federal government suspended its extradition treaty with Hong Kong and banned the export of sensitive military technology to the territory. In November 2020, the Canadian government launched new immigration measures for Hong Kong students and youth. However, these immigration pathways do little for those fleeing danger, and many activists have

four Chinese officials and one Chinese entity for their complicity in crimes against humanity in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous region. Sanctions would send a message to the Chinese regime that their actions in Hong Kong are unacceptable, yet there are no indications of such sanctions against Chinese and Hong Kong officials for their role in the crackdown on Hong Kong.

While sanctions would be a welcomed first step in addressing the PRC's authoritarian dismantlement of Hong Kong's autonomy, it does not address foreign interference within Canadian institutions.

Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, François-Philippe Champagne, has recently unveiled revised guidelines scrutinizing foreign takeovers and investments, but more should be done

In Canada, pro-democracy Canadian-Hong Kongers and other dissidents have been physically assaulted, intimidated and harassed. Communities often self-censor out of fear for retribution. Even more heartbreaking, Canadian Hong Kongers do not feel safe here in Canada, a home that was once thought to be a haven for those seeking freedom.

Democracy was a cherished dream in Hong Kong. Over the years, we have seen the repeated efforts of activists, lawmakers, colleagues, friends, and loved ones fight to save the Hong Kong they love. We cannot let their efforts go in vain. ❁

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*Nathan Law is an activist in exile, the former leader of the pro-democracy party Demosistō, and MLI's ambassador on Canada-Hong Kong policy. Ai-Men Lau is a communications officer at MLI. This article first appeared in the Toronto Star.*

# Wishful thinking is no substitute for strategy with China and Russia

*Canada and its allies and partners need to have a clear-eyed view of the challenge posed by this authoritarian axis.*

## Balkan Devlen

Democracies around the world face an important new challenge with an authoritarian axis being formed around Russia and China.

The despotic regimes of Putin and Xi are increasingly acting in concert with each other – an alignment that can be seen in a range of policies, including on defence cooperation, subverting international norms and institutions, and on the question of cyber-governance and information security.

Given their hostility to universal human rights and democracy, their “Animal Farm” understanding of sovereignty – in which some countries are more sovereign than others and only major powers are truly sovereign – their desire to make the world safe for autocracy, and their increasingly revanchist policies, the Sino-Russian alignment poses a serious challenge to the rules-based international order and its defenders.

As I outlined in a recent paper for the Macdonald-Laurier Institute, Russia and China are strange bedfellows driven to one another by their shared neo-authoritarian ideology, obsession with regime security, and conviction that the West is in terminal decline.

Ideologically, both countries are led by strong men who believe in their own indispensability for promoting economic growth, protecting the regime, and advancing their national interests abroad. Here the personal fortunes of the leader are assumed to be one and the same with the national interest and thus any threat to Putin’s or Xi’s rule is perceived to be an existential threat to Russia or China.



Renée Depocas

*Russia and China  
are strange  
bedfellows driven  
to one another.*

Such regimes cannot tolerate dissent, at home or abroad. They are characterized by suppression of free speech, tight control of traditional and social media, repression against political and religious dissident groups, and especially in the case of PRC, a vast surveillance infrastructure that reaches every aspect of political and social life.

This shared neo-authoritarian ideology enables Putin and Xi to frame their common opposition to the rules-based international order and surmount the lingering suspicions between both countries dating back to the Cold War.

Russia and China share a common interest in undermining the status quo. They perceive the international order – underpinned by common rules, liberal values, and a near-hegemonic democratic superpower – as an inherent and existential threat to their respective ruling regime. The imperative of regime survival is crucial to understand the Sino-Russian alignment at the international level and makes the strategic partnership between Russia and China an enduring one.

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) – the clear dominant force in this emerging partnership – explicitly identifies values and norms such as liberal democracy, freedom of press, freedom of expression, and human rights as threats to its rule in its own internal documents. In the eyes of the CCP, the existence of a thriving democracy right across the strait in Taiwan increases the urgency of undermining the rules-based international order led by the world’s democracies.

differences between two countries on a number of fronts – from the growing power asymmetry that clearly favours China to their rivalry when it comes to both influence in Central Asia and arms sales. It is possible that Russia might, in this context, be dissuaded from supporting a partnership with China that has left Russia as the junior partner. After all, no one wants to be the horse, and everyone wants to be the rider.

To do this requires more than idle words. We must instead develop a coordinated, multilayered and multilateral strategy. On one hand, the US needs to take the lead in pushing back against Russia and China, as only the US has the assets and indeed power to do so successfully. On the other hand, the West and other democratic partners should coordinate in the dual-containment of this authoritarian axis. That will help capitalize on the individual strengths of each

*China and Russia believe they need to speed up a shift in global power away from the West and restructure the international order.*

Both China and Russia believe they need to speed up a shift in global power away from the West and restructure the international order to their liking. Engaging in subversion against the West is a crucial component of this strategy and a natural driver for their alignment.

The outgrowth of this strategy is a range of destabilizing activities, such as economic coercion, diplomatic belligerence, military threats, maritime bullying, territorial incursions, and more. Such heavy-handed tactics have defined Russia and China under their current leadership. Emboldened by one another, and in the absence of a coherent response from the West, the Sino-Russian partnership operates with greater abandon, coherence and nerve.

How should the West respond to this challenge? The worst choice is almost certainly what appears to be the present strategy: wait and see, hoping that the partnership will dissolve or that some dispute forces Xi and Putin to look in opposite directions. Yet wishful thinking is no substitute for strategy.

Another option is to pursue a wedge strategy. There are existing and potential

However, it is important not to overstate these otherwise modest disagreements. And the tensions that come with a power imbalance pale in comparison to the drivers of the relationship between Russia and China. Both countries realize they each have more to gain in their continued cooperation. Besides, Russia would need to be at least somewhat accommodating to the West for this wedge strategy to succeed. And Moscow has proven time and time again to be precisely the opposite of anything the West might describe as “cooperative.”

Instead of attempting to play the two authoritarian regimes off one another, we should bank on a much more solid strategy of solidarity and deterrence. Only by being able to confront, stand up to, and ultimately push back against the dual threats of a Sino-Russian alignment can we dissuade such a power bloc from undermining the rules-based international order. We must be resolute and firm in communicating that the goals of these authoritarian partners cannot be accomplished even through their cooperation, and thus encourage both countries to engage in rule-abiding behaviour.

democratic partner and amplify each other’s capabilities across domains and geographies.

To coordinate these efforts requires an institutional structure – an “alliance of democracies” to coordinate efforts among our partners and defend international institutions. This also means that our values such as democracy, the rule of law, and human rights should be reaffirmed and defended without apology, as these values ultimately underpin our shared interests. And ultimately, we must retain a defence advantage over these authoritarian powers. This means defence-spending laggards like Canada need to start paying their fair share into collective defence.

As we emerge into a post-pandemic world, Canada and its allies and partners need to have a clear-eyed view of the challenge posed by this authoritarian axis. The future of the rules-based international order, liberal democracy, and individual rights and freedoms depends on how well we confront this task. It’s time that democracies join together to fight back. ✪

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*Balkan Devlen is a senior fellow at MLI. This article first appeared in The Hub.*

# Taiwan is more than a mere “question”

*By referring to the dispute in the Taiwan Strait as a “question” or an “issue,”  
Taiwan and its people become dehumanized.*

## J. Michael Cole

Time and again in academic works, newspaper articles and public comments, the dispute in the Taiwan Strait, which stems from Beijing’s longstanding claims of sovereignty over Taiwan, has been referred to as the “Taiwan question” or, alternatively, the “Taiwan issue.” Whether by design or intellectual sloppiness, this designation of Taiwan – of Taiwan’s fate, in fact – is reductionist, a construct that presupposes conclusions and frames the complex dispute in ways that benefit China.

By referring to the matter as a “question” or an “issue” (not to mention the occasional use of “Taiwan problem”), Taiwan and its people become dehumanized.

This kind of dehumanization has a long and dangerous history. In Canada, the “Indian question” and “Indian problem” were shorthand for discussing the assimilation, territorial conquest of, and cultural erasure of Indigenous peoples, while simultaneously treating these peoples as others who are unimportant in the determination of their own futures. The “Ukraine question” is often thrown around in the context of the country being supposedly in Russia’s sphere of influence, once again reducing the sovereignty of Ukraine and the self-determination of her own people to a mere rump status.

At its most infamous and extreme, references to the “Jewish question” created a special category of people who were both inherently “problematic” and somewhat “less human.” As we now know, such language, which predated National Socialism, opened the door for Hitler and his cronies to launch efforts to annihilate an entire category of people.



Renée Depoux with iStock image

*It is revealing that the Taiwanese people themselves do not refer to their predicament as a “question” or an “issue.”*

In the same vein, the reductionist language downgrades Taiwan and the Taiwanese people to the status of mere objects, a problem that needs to be managed and, ultimately, resolved. A “question” presupposes an unfinished state of existence. It makes an object transitional. Thus, rather than an entity in itself, Taiwan is a question mark on its way to something else. Such designations already answer half of the question by refusing to concede that Taiwan’s current status can actually be what it is, no more, no less.

This framing is also predicated on the assumption that Beijing has a point: Taiwan – or the “Taiwan question,” to use the Chinese foreign ministry’s own formulation

– “is a question left over by the civil war in China, and it is purely China’s internal affair.” Therefore, when we call Taiwan a “question,” we replicate the reductionist language, carefully selected by Beijing in its propaganda, that aims to distort historical facts and make a complete abstraction of the Taiwanese people. Simply put, Beijing’s formulation aims to make the Taiwanese less human, and thereby less worthy of the world’s attention.

It is revealing that the Taiwanese people themselves do not refer to their predicament as a “question” or an “issue.” To them, the “question” was resolved a long

*Continued on page 35*



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# US pipeline hack and concerns about Canadian cyber security

*Cyber security experts have increasingly warned about the vulnerability of Canada's critical infrastructure to foreign hackers and cyber criminals.*

## Marcus Kolga

A Russian criminal hacker group behind a major attack against a major US oil and gas pipeline has caused substantial disruptions throughout the Eastern United States and its effects could trickle into Canada as well. The Russian cyber criminals, known as DarkSide, hacked into the Colonial Pipelines network this month, leading the company to shut down all of its operations for nearly a week.

The fuel shortages affecting the entire Eastern United States demonstrates the potential threats from malign foreign actors against critical infrastructure. The situation also raises questions about whether Canada is prepared to defend against these actors.

Colonial Pipelines was targeted with what is commonly known as a ransomware attack. As the name suggests, criminal hackers identify and exploit vulnerabilities in a targeted system to access and seize control

“  
Russian government  
hackers attempted  
to steal COVID-19-  
related vaccine  
research.”

of data and even entire networks and systems and a ransom is demanded to release them. In the Colonial Pipelines case, Russian hackers stole over 100GB of data from the Georgia-based company and then locked up part of the pipeline after which the criminal hacker group demanded a ransom.

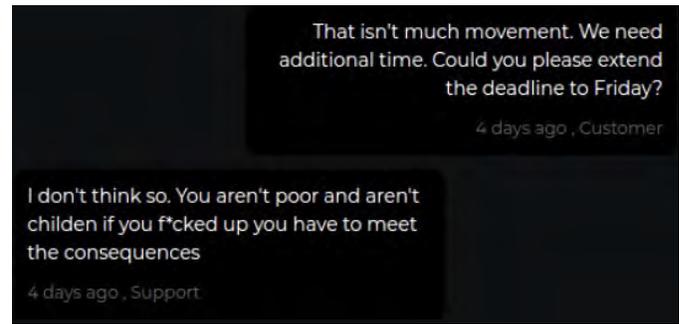
The Colonial Pipelines system stretches from Texas to Maine, supplying gasoline, diesel and jet fuel supplies to the entire Eastern US. Its near week-long shutdown forced the US government to approve alternate methods to transport oil and fuel

across the region, including railways and roads.

The *Wall Street Journal* reported Colonial paid US\$4.4 million in ransom (which was later recovered). Cyber criminals in past hacks have demanded amounts ranging from as little as a few thousand to millions of dollars in order to release data and hijacked systems. In October 2019, a Canadian insurance company reportedly paid \$1.3 million to recover 20 servers and 1000 workstations.

Over the past several years, cyber security experts have warned about the vulnerability of Canada's critical infrastructure to foreign hackers and cyber criminals. In its 2020 threat assessment report, Canada's Centre for Cyber Security noted that “cyber threat actors will intentionally seek to disrupt Canadian critical infrastructure and cause major damage.”

In July 2020, Russian government hackers attempted to steal COVID-19-



Inside the DarkSide cyber criminal attack on Colonial Pipelines. Left: The DarkSide ransomware note; right: An exchange between DarkSide and the victim during negotiations.

(Intel 471 via krebsonsecurity.com)

related vaccine research from facilities in Canada. The Communications Security Establishment (CSE) identified the hackers as belonging to the Russian intelligence APT-29 cyber warfare teams, known as “The Dukes” and “Cozy Bear,” whose goal was to hinder Canadian response efforts to COVID.

In December, Russian government hackers infiltrated critical updates of

Kasparov, tweeted that “no Russian hackers ... would operate without his [Vladimir Putin’s] sanction.”

The Russian government has denied involvement and there is yet no hard evidence pinning the crime at the Kremlin’s feet. However, those of us who have watched Russia closely have a running joke: we shouldn’t believe anything, until the Kremlin denies it.

medium-sized businesses to help them secure their networks. However, it’s unknown how many businesses have adopted these security protocols. Greater personal cyber literacy and the promotion of simple habits like adopting two-factor authentication, at a minimum, should be promoted among Canadians, and at all levels of government and business.



*Russian pro-democracy and human rights activist, Garry Kasparov, tweeted that “no Russian hackers ... would operate without his [Vladimir Putin’s] sanction.”*



SolarWinds software. The hack affected large parts of the US government, NATO and multiple tech and utility companies.

This attack may have been thwarted if a strikingly simple solution was used – strong password protocols. According to the *New York Times*, an intern at SolarWinds set the company’s password to its master updating system to SolarWinds123. The easily hacked password contributed to one of the biggest cyber attacks on record.

While it is unclear whether the Colonial Pipelines hack can be attributed to the Russian government, Russian pro-democracy and human rights activist, Garry

Just as we ourselves are becoming more reliant on the “Internet of Things,” so too are the operations of our critical infrastructure. The threat of hacking or interference in the functioning of our hospitals, power grids, traffic networks and beyond could put countless Canadian lives at risk, to say nothing of the devastating economic costs.

The consensus amongst experts is that much of the Western world and indeed Canada are unprepared to defend against these threats.

CSE has developed baseline cyber security guides for small- to

The cost of engaging in cyber and digital information warfare against Canada and our allies by malign foreign states and actors is extremely low. Without strong deterrence – and the ability of our intelligence community to actively defend against and to proactively neutralize threats – we invite further attacks against us. The cost of that may soon be counted not just in millions of dollars, but ultimately, in lives lost. ❄️

*Marcus Kolga is director of DisinfoWatch.org and is a senior fellow at MLI and the CDA Institute. This article first appeared in the Toronto Star.*

# Freedom for Iranians from a brutal regime should eclipse the nuclear issue

*The only way for the free world to secure the region's peace and stability is to help Iranians to secure their liberty.*

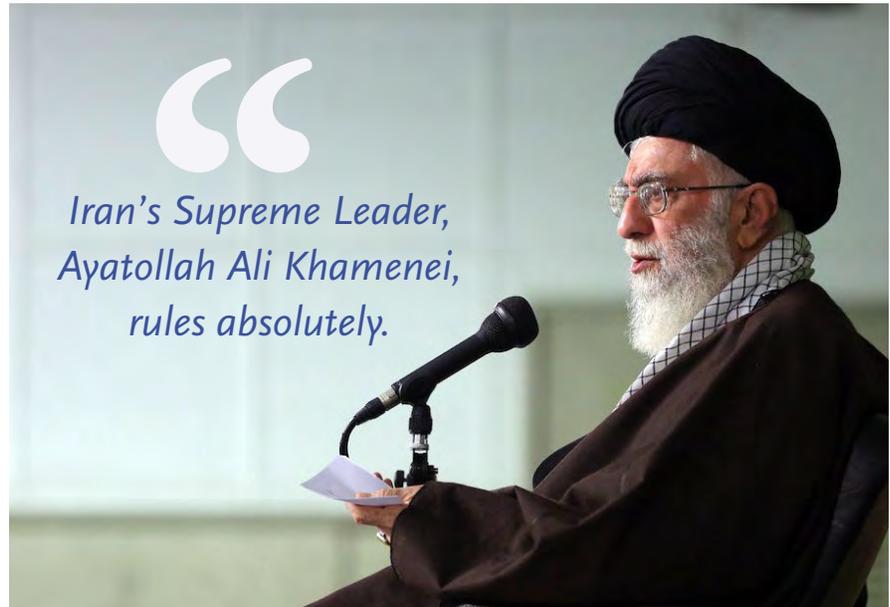
## Mariam Memarsadeghi

Like other totalitarian regimes, the Islamist theocracy ruling Iran pays lip service to democracy with elections and other trappings of popular sovereignty, but only for the veneer of legitimacy. Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, rules absolutely. Potemkin elections – such as this month's presidential election – serve to distract from a repressive state that with each passing year is more resented but also more intent to kill to survive, both inside Iran and throughout the region.

Though Iranians today can access the outside world through social media, they are no less brutalized. During the past few years especially, those agitating for freedom have been targeted for killing, on the streets and in the dungeons. In fact, the November 2019 protests resulted in the biggest show of state violence against peaceful protesters since the 1979 revolution.

Under the regime, the nation has suffered not only the effects of repression and injustice, gender apartheid and other systemic inequalities, but also the fundamental policies that destroy human livelihood: a backward education system, ineptitude, corruption, poverty and its ensuing social malaise, environmental devastation, brain drain, and an imperial ideology of hate that spreads terror and misfortune throughout the Middle East and beyond.

Iran today is a wasteland that, prior to the 1979 revolution, led the region and dwarfed the economies of Turkey and South Korea. Such a gruesome fall needs camouflage and



english.khamenei.ir via commons.wikimedia.org

subterfuge for those responsible to remain in power. For this, elections are a necessity. They immunize the world's chief state sponsor of terror from scrutiny and are promoted by Khamenei and his chief propagandist, Foreign Minister Javad Zarif, as a show of popular will and support for the system from the masses.

But the Iranian people well know that their Supreme Leader is not elected, that he has held absolute power for three decades, and that the presidency is one tool at his disposal to maintain totalitarian control. The myth of electoral competition and political dynamism is maintained even though all but the strictest adherents to the theocracy are denied the right to run; media are strictly controlled even for those permitted to campaign; there is no independent body overseeing elections and ballot

counting; international observers are prohibited; and people are intimidated into voting. Once "elected," the president and members of the legislature have no real power or independence and remain subservient to Khamenei.

While the undemocratic nature of Iran's elections is broadly known, regime propaganda and disinformation have worked to present the electoral scam to a beleaguered population as a real rivalry between one boogeyman ("reformist") and a worse boogeyman ("hardliner"), instilling fear that as bad as things are, they easily can get worse. With this false choice, the regime lulls people away from the warning of principled dissidents who have tried to sway people from giving their inadvertent but unmistakable stamp of approval – via inked fingers – on the totality of the repressive system.

Real election and public opinion data are out of reach in Iran, but even in 2009, when large numbers of Iranians were mobilized to vote – and then protest the stealing of their vote in the Green Movement – a portion of society had boycotted the election. Their unwillingness to participate was an outgrowth of the reformist years of former President Mohammad Khatami, who promised but did not deliver expanded civil and political liberties and government-led reforms. Those who had believed in the promise of slow change no longer would participate in sham elections and joined the hard opposition who, since the inception of the Islamic Republic, had always refused to vote.

These refuseniks have been a largely silent segment of the population until recently. As the regime prepared to bring people out to vote this summer, it needed popular validation more than ever. An economy battered by sanctions, mismanagement and corruption has combined with brutal crackdowns on protesters to make the ruling cabal more detested than ever. This time, a mass boycott of the election was a real possibility.

When former President Trump began his “maximum pressure campaign” on the regime, Washington think tank “experts” and university scholars were among those who argued that sanctions and other pressures from the US would drive people to rally around the regime flag. Many Iranian activists were outspoken in favour of pressure on the regime; they had been opposed to the Obama administration’s 2015 nuclear deal and injections of capital to the regime. The Trump years proved the Iran experts wrong: maximum pressure resulted in widespread protests, strikes and other acts of civil disobedience against the regime.

As importantly, sanctions brought a fundamental shift in discourse and

demographic composition of regime opposition. Iranians have shown in protest slogans, social media discourse and open letters a wholesale rejection of the regime. The mostazafin, or “downtrodden,” in whose name the 1979 revolution was waged, poured into the streets in more than 200



Scenes from the Green Revolution in Tehran in 2009.

(mehrnews.com/news/898515/  
via commons.wikimedia.org)

Iranian cities. Their slogans spoke to their misery, aimed unmistakably at overthrow.

As protests became ubiquitous, so did labour strikes and individual acts of defiance against the state. Fourteen civic leaders wrote an open letter demanding Khamenei’s resignation and a transition to democracy. Their courageous act heralded more acts of dissent. When 1500 protesters were shot to death, family members refused to be silent. Loved ones of those killed, as well as those who continue to be tortured in dungeons, are a thorn in the regime’s side, taking great risk to urge President Biden not to lift sanctions. They are the undeniable rebuttal to the regime’s foreign-based apologists who seek to normalize a grotesque tyranny.

Most recently, Iranians from throughout the country have launched a simple but powerful campaign: “No

to the Islamic Republic!” They are supported by more than 1400 leaders in the diaspora spanning politics, the arts, sports and academia. The effort is intentionally plain, a complete and unequivocal rejection of the regime. It has unified disparate parts of the opposition

and, because of its relatively low-risk approach, holds potential to galvanize all manner of Iranians into a broad, inclusive movement for democracy.

All this comes as the Biden administration has taken steps to show that the US is willing to appease and accommodate Khamenei’s regime if Iran complies on the nuclear issue alone. But if the 2009 Green Movement provides any lesson, the US stands to lose much if it turns its back on a people determined to be free. The only way for the free world to secure the region’s peace and stability is to help Iranians to secure their liberty. ✨

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*Mariam Memarsadeghi is a senior fellow at MLI and a leading proponent for a democratic Iran. This article first appeared in The Hill.*

# Canada should lead on Magnitsky sanctions over Tigray

*There's a need to show solidarity with the Tigray community and impose real consequences against those committing atrocity crimes against them.*

**Maria Reisdorf**  
**Sarah Teich**

A war is raging in Ethiopia's northern-most province of Tigray. Fighting between the Ethiopian military and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) has now been going on for six months, creating instability in the strategic Red Sea region.

The Ethiopian military, backed by Eritrean forces, has also been accused of committing war crimes and crimes against humanity against Tigray civilians. There is evidence of mass extrajudicial killings; rape is used pervasively as a weapon of war; millions of Tigrays have been displaced; and the region is facing an imminent and disastrous famine as humanitarian aid remains blocked by Ethiopian forces. Some are calling this genocide.

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed is quickly losing international credibility as atrocities mount. After winning the 2019 Nobel Peace Prize for facilitating peace and international cooperation, the Nobel Committee rebuked his actions in Tigray in November of last year.

Aiming to avoid international criticism, Abiy promised to protect civilians and increase access to humanitarian aid. He also promised that Eritrean troops would withdraw from the conflict. These promises were not kept, and in fact, the unfolding human rights crisis in Tigray is only worsening as the violence rages on.



*“Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed is quickly losing international credibility as atrocities mount.”*

Above: Prime Minister Ahmed giving his Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech, 2019; right: The Tigray Defense Force.



In the United States, the Biden administration has committed US\$305 million in humanitarian aid, suspended economic and security assistance to Ethiopia, and applied visa restrictions to individual Ethiopian and Eritrean officials. On May 26, US President

Joe Biden called for a ceasefire and the withdrawal of troops.

There are growing calls for the Biden administration to impose Magnitsky sanctions (or sanctions that target specific individuals responsible for atrocities) on individual Ethiopian and Eritrean officials responsible

Bair175 via commons.wikimedia.org

Samuel Tigray via commons.wikimedia.org

for these human rights violations, in addition to the visa restrictions already imposed. In this, Canada can provide leadership.

Magnitsky sanctions impose visa bans, asset freezes and block properties. Targeted Magnitsky sanctions feature the added benefit of raising awareness against the perpetrators of human rights crimes, by naming and shaming them.

Magnitsky sanctions are internationally lauded as an important and effective human rights measure. As the power of international institutions like the UN Security Council to impose sanctions for human rights abuses wane, domestic Magnitsky laws now adopted across Europe and North America provide opportunity to deter against human rights violations.

Ottawa should answer the call for collective action that its Ambassador to the United Nations Bob Rae has made by imposing Magnitsky sanctions on individual Ethiopian and Eritrean officials responsible for the ongoing atrocities in Tigray, and empower its diplomats across Western capitals and institutions to follow suit.

Canada has taken only limited action so far to combat the situation in Tigray. In November, Canada provided Ethiopia with \$3 million in humanitarian aid. In February, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau spoke with Abiy and “welcomed efforts” to expand humanitarian assistance access and protect civilians. In March, Minister of Foreign Affairs Marc Garneau expressed concern when speaking with Ethiopia’s deputy prime minister and welcomed their efforts to improve the situation in Tigray. Yet amid growing international condemnation, Canada has remained relatively silent.

For a nation that prides itself on being committed to human rights, silence in the face of a devastating and worsening conflict is insufficient. Leading on Magnitsky sanctions will be an important first step, both to show solidarity with the Tigray community, and to impose real

consequences against those committing atrocity crimes against them. ✿

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*Maria Reisdorf is a recent Queen’s law graduate.*

*Sarah Teich is an international human rights lawyer, a senior fellow at MLI, and a legal adviser at C-CAT. This article first appeared in the Hill Times.*

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### **DNA (Hataley, Leuprecht)**

*Continued from page 18*

peoples with control over the DNA of their victimized ancestors makes an important contribution to reconciliation while bolstering Indigenous sovereignty.

When used to identify family members, DNA analysis is only as good as the databases against which the samples are compared. The country needs a pan-Canadian database to enable DNA from unidentified persons to be matched against cold cases, missing persons, as well as individuals and family members who volunteer samples. The US has a highly successful precedent with the University of North Texas’s National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs), which works in partnership with the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children. The system has thereby restored some dignity by matching anonymous victims with their families, but its success depends on the database of DNA matches.

Indigenous peoples may not trust government with their DNA. However, they may come forward and volunteer their DNA more readily if they know that these samples are held by their community and used only in ways authorized by that community. Possibly feeding some or all data into the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS), the FBI’s system for DNA identification, to ensure a comprehensive continental approach to identifying missing Indigenous persons, could improve results. To ensure that the requisite technical and laboratory expertise is independent of the broader

system, the effort would need to be housed at a university or a private lab with a strong track record in forensic sciences and mitochondrial DNA evaluation.

Rather than surrendering their genetic markers to the federal government, Indigenous peoples could take control of genetic material found at this and future locations and determine, on their own terms, how DNA samples and the information gleaned from them is to be used. Such control would allow Indigenous groups to assert their sovereignty and retain control over their own bodies and communities. ✿

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*Todd Hataley is professor at Fleming College and a former RCMP federal investigator. Christian Leuprecht is class of 1965 professor in leadership at the Royal Military College, director of the Institute of Intergovernmental Relations at Queen’s University and senior fellow at MLI. This article first appeared in the Globe and Mail.*

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### **Government debt (Cross)**

*Continued from page 19*

fiscal discipline can reduce debt without compromising the social safety net and societal cohesion.

Debt compromises independence in other ways. Gargantuan deficits complicate monetary policy, posing long-term threats to central bank independence and inflation targets. The avalanche of government debt in 2020 overwhelmed bond markets’ absorptive capacity, requiring the unprecedented Bank of Canada purchase of government debt.

These purchases raise questions about monetizing debt and the implications for inflation, while even the perception the Bank of Canada is bound to support the government’s fiscal policy gives rise to politicized critiques of the bank and invites more political oversight and interference in the future.

Ultimately, the problem with government debt is about values. Debt

increases dependency on government, disincentivizes self-reliance, and absolves government from accepting responsibility for its actions.

Controlling debt is about balancing the most basic impulses of society, not just the books. The high level of government debt in Canada, when the economy is recovering rapidly, reflects an unwillingness to make hard choices about spending priorities. ❁

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**Philip Cross** is a senior fellow at MLI. This article first appeared in the *Toronto Star*.

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### **Bill C-10 (Menzies)**

*Continued from page 20*

“modernization,” Guilbeault nevertheless sees it as such and has clearly been heavily influenced by those advocating on behalf of the status quo Palmer described.

Had he not been in such a rush to please these groups, Guilbeault would have undertaken a proper public consultation that would have opened his eyes to those harnessed by this legislation – consumers enjoying their online liberty and Canadian content producers whose unfettered creativity is about to be fettered by the CRTC if Bill C-10 passes as is.

And there are a lot of them.

According to a 2019 Ryerson University study, YouTube has facilitated the rise of 160,000 Canadian creators, 40,000 of whom have achieved audiences large enough to monetize their channels. Twenty-eight thousand full-time equivalent jobs have been created.

The interests of these people, some of whom recently struck up the Twitter hashtag #iamccancontoo, have not formally been considered nor really has their existence been acknowledged by those lobbying on behalf of the self-appointed official Canadian creative class.

Philosophically, these people differ from the regulated creative class in that

they are – or at least have been up until now – motivated only by their art and the desire to attract audiences. A great many, without being micro-managed into it by the CRTC, are actually achieving the objectives of the *Broadcasting Act*. They appear to be willing to take their chances in a competitive market and some, such as Justin Bieber, Shawn Mendes, Lilly Singh, Evan Fong and Lewis Hilsenteger, have capitalized on the freedom to succeed that the Internet provides.

The report also notes that 65 percent of Canadian YouTube viewers “believe that no government or other organization should determine what they watch.”

That likely means that the government might be wise to consult with all of Canada’s creators and consumers before Bill C-10 develops into an even bigger political problem. ❁

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### **Taiwan (Cole)**

*Continued from page 28*

time ago, and their status is that of citizens of a country that is both sovereign and democratic, defined both by what it is and what it is not.

Admittedly, that existence is bracketed by another concept – the “status quo” in the Taiwan Strait, which continues to be supported by a majority of Taiwanese. This “status quo,” however, underscores a belief in Taiwan’s de facto sovereignty and is, it must be pointed out, a linguistic sleight of hand meant to reduce the risk that Beijing will seek to annex it by use of force. While a “question” or an “issue” for people on the outside, it is a lived reality for the Taiwanese themselves: it is nothing less than an external threat, the imposition of a value system, ideology, and way of life by an exogenous force. The Taiwanese have answered that question, and

they have done so loudly. They do not want it.

If the international community is to find a way to break the impasse in the Taiwan Strait and reduce the likelihood the region will descend into catastrophic war, it is incumbent upon its diplomats and intellectuals to get it right. What this means is the necessity of avoiding a subjective take that reinforces propaganda by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), dehumanizes Taiwan’s 23.5 million people and reduces them to a question mark.

That isn’t to say that everybody should agree as to how the dispute should be resolved. After all, some analysts, primarily those in the realist school of international relations, will continue to argue that China has a right to its own sphere of influence and that Taiwan, whether it likes it or not, has no choice but to subjugate itself. Whether one agrees or disagrees with such a contention (and this author strongly disagrees), we should nevertheless approach the dispute with moral and intellectual clarity rather than a subjectivism that blurs the contours of the matter.

What this means, concretely, is that the matter should be framed properly: China’s claim over Taiwan, and the actions it has threatened to take to make that goal a reality, isn’t the answer to a question, but is rather a form of colonialism. It is nothing less than the threatened annexation of a territory that the People’s Republic of China has not controlled for a single day of its existence.

Some can support Beijing’s aims all they want, but they should have the intellectual honesty to admit that what they are advocating is annexation, one that, furthermore, is being attempted by a deeply autocratic regime against a polity that, over decades of development, has become one of the most successful examples of democratization in modern times. ❁

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