

THE MAGAZINE OF THE MACDONALD-LAURIER INSTITUTE

# INSIDE POLICY

Volume 3, 2024

## RATING RECONCILIATION

Does Canada deserve a passing – or failing – grade?

Also INSIDE:

Canada's rising terrorism threat

Cultivating growth

Fighting foreign interference

Helping Afghanistan







# INSIDE POLICY

THE MAGAZINE OF THE MACDONALD-LAURIER INSTITUTE

*Published by the Macdonald-Laurier Institute*

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ISSN 1929-9095 (print) 1929-9109 (online)

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# From the editors

In 1873, Treaty commissioners met with Anishinaabe leaders from what is now eastern Manitoba and northwestern Ontario to complete negotiations for Treaty 3. To cap the proceedings, the commissioners presented their First Nations counterparts with special medals rich with symbolism.

The obverse featured two figures – a First Nations man and a British military officer – shaking hands in mutual respect. Behind them, a landscape scene echoed the promise to uphold the treaties “as long as the sun shines, the grass grows, and the rivers flow.” At their feet, a buried hatchet symbolized lasting peace. And on the reverse, Queen Victoria’s stern countenance represented the Crown’s authority.

The medals were 99 per cent pure silver – something that greatly pleased the assembled chiefs and elders. At a previous signing ceremony for Treaty 2, the medals had been made from copper with a thin silver plate that quickly wore away. The chiefs saw the poorly made medals as an insult; their complaints led to the pure silver replacements.

A century and a half later, Indigenous peoples are still fighting for respect, as well for the treaty rights promised to them centuries ago. Progress has been made, particularly through the courts. But there’s still so much more to be done. In this issue, Indigenous Affairs Director **Ken Coates** and Senior Fellow **Karen Restoule** take a hard look at Canada’s commitment to reconciliation. Does Canada deserve a passing – or failing – grade?

We also explore the importance of free inquiry: **Peter Copeland**, MLI’s deputy director of Domestic Policy, argues that Canadians must stand up to the threat posed by cultural Marxism and the “equity” movement.

With a federal election looming, Senior Fellow **David L. Thomas** tackles a highly contentious issue: the possibility of granting a blanket amnesty to illegal migrants. Thomas says it would be disastrous for the country. Meanwhile, writer **Geoff Russ** warns of the ongoing risk of foreign interference unless Canada’s political parties reform the way they select their leaders.

With Canada’s economy in the doldrums, two authors explain how the natural resources and energy sectors can ignite it. **Kristjan Hebert**, a Saskatchewan crop grower, urges farmers to adopt a more businesslike approach. Meanwhile energy expert **Sasha Istvan** says recent successes in the nuclear power industry are proof Canada can be a world leader in the field.

Finally, we turn to the threat of radical Islam. Senior Fellow **Khalid Ramizy** urges Canada to do more to help Afghans suffering under Taliban rule, and counterterrorism expert **John Gilmour** explains how the October 7 Hamas terror attacks on Israel have increased the likelihood of jihadist-inspired terrorism in Canada.

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Treaty rights



Clean water



Justice



Sovereignty



Resource rights



Language

## When it comes to reconciliation, does Canada warrant a passing – or failing – grade?

Ken Coates and Karen Restoule

Canadians love scorecards. They look for signs that the country is moving in the right direction and that government policies are having the desired effect. We see this in the regular reporting of unemployment rates, cost of living reports, interest rates, housing price indices, new home starts, immigration, and a hundred other statistical reports.

So, it is with Indigenous affairs in Canada. The country eagerly looks

for signs that federal expenditures of large sums, Indigenous court victories, and substantial re-empowerment of Indigenous governments are making things better. This is precisely the wrong way to judge reconciliation.

If Canadians are waiting for a statistical report that tells us, once and for all, that reconciliation with First Nations, Inuit, and Metis peoples is complete, they will wait in vain. For the past ten years, a

single metric – the grand promise of 2015 that Canada would provide clean and safe water to Indigenous communities – was the symbolic stand-in for Ottawa's efforts to offset generations of bad and ineffective government policies. Canada did poorly, as the Parliamentary Budget Office has confirmed, in the provision of the most basic of community services and has failed miserably at almost every important metric.





Education



Job opportunities

The national response has been to double down on, or even expand, policies that did not work in the past. Unfortunately, paternalism is one of the most powerful forces in Canadian government: it formulates plans, develops program criteria, uses Ottawa-centric decision-making processes, and creates intrusive and time-consuming reporting and accounting requirements that overwhelm Indigenous community officials.

### ***A history of broken promises***

Starting before Confederation, Indigenous people protested government intrusions, sought the ability to make their own decisions, and struggled to get the resources needed to maintain a decent standard of living.

Penury, not generosity, defined federal approaches to Indigenous peoples: their quality of life deteriorated sharply when they lost access to their lands and harvesting opportunities, and declined even more rapidly once social welfare programs and expanded welfare dependency became the norm. Policies and administrative initiatives explicitly designed to improve Indigenous lives had precisely the opposite effect.

As the 20th century progressed, Ottawa's presence in, and impact on, Indigenous lives expanded exponentially. Consider that, in the 1950s, most Indigenous peoples in Canada continued to hunt, trap and fish, and language use and cultural practices remained strong

in some parts of the country. By the 1980s, thanks to forced relocation to government-run reserves, residential and day school education, and severe marginalization by the dominant society, Indigenous language use had nearly vanished, particularly among the young. Migration to larger centres accelerated, and welfare dependency skyrocketed. Federal monetary transfers dominated Indigenous economies. The Government of Canada became the most powerful force in the lives of most Indigenous peoples.

Yet, they fought back. They argued for government and public recognition of Indigenous and treaty rights. When that failed, they sought recourse through the courts.

After decades of struggle, the tide began to turn. Indigenous peoples won hundreds of court cases. They negotiated new treaties and, eventually, self-government agreements. They worked to educate a reluctant and uninformed Canadian public about

“  
*Indigenous peoples  
fought back  
against Ottawa's  
dominance.*”

Indigenous history, needs, and aspirations. First Nations, Metis, and Inuit leaders secured a place in the patriated Canadian constitution, negotiated multi-billion-dollar compensation settlements, started economic development corporations, negotiated collaboration agreements with resource companies (while protesting projects that intruded on their communities), and restructured their governments (often by revitalizing age-old customary governments).

That Indigenous leaders did all of this while coping with community struggles such as intense poverty, suicide, cultural loss, housing shortages, members' substance abuse and domestic challenges, government neglect, and the depletion of harvesting opportunities makes the political transformation truly remarkable.

### ***Many challenges remain***

It would be a time to celebrate – if only there wasn't so much more work to do. The question is: will the rest of Canada walk in partnership with Indigenous peoples – or remain a stumbling block? The answer is complicated, and somewhat troubling. Some politicians have figured out the basics, primarily that the law and constitution support Indigenous aspirations much more than do contemporary policies. And some jurisdictions – the three northern territories, British Columbia, Quebec, and Newfoundland and Labrador in particular – have taken substantial strides forward. Others, with Saskatchewan and New



Brunswick standing out in this regard, have trouble moving beyond the bare minimum.

All governments worry about Indigenous constitutional and legal authority and, more recently, about the significance of the Government of Canada's commitment to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), which seeks to broaden government obligations to work with Indigenous peoples and to adjust to First Nations, Metis and Inuit aspirations. With few exceptions, BC being the best example, governments have moved cautiously and episodically, avoiding real commitments to meaningful partnerships, careful not to get too far in front of limited public support for widespread engagement with Indigenous peoples.

We must also recognize that Canada doesn't exist in a vacuum. Other countries are also grappling with the need to reconcile with Indigenous peoples. The one global truism in Indigenous affairs is that Indigenous peoples have been systematically marginalized and discriminated against. This happened in Russia and Japan, Norway and the United States, New Zealand and Taiwan.

Several things are clear. Canada has what are probably the highest annual expenditures on Indigenous affairs in the world. It also has one of the strongest constitutional and legal recognition and protection for Indigenous rights in the

“  
*The national  
 commitment to  
 reconciliation is  
 truly impressive –  
 on paper.*”

world. Canada has firm legal requirements to consult with Indigenous peoples before developing land and resources. The policies and programs targeted at Indigenous governments are among the most expansive and fiscally generous in the world. The national commitment to reconciliation is truly impressive – on paper.

However, Indigenous outcomes in Canada are nowhere near as impressive. Indigenous suicide rates are among the highest in the world. Unemployment among Indigenous peoples is staggeringly high, as are welfare dependency and poverty. Educational achievements are low. Indigenous language use is in freefall. Infrastructure and government services in remote communities are the worst in the country and, in the most troubling cases, closer to developing world standards than Canadian norms. In short, legal recognition and government spending alone do not

quickly produce desired social, economic, and cultural outcomes. Indeed, the focus on spending has been so strong that little attention has been paid to alternate solutions. Experience in Canada suggests that two elements – political autonomy through self-government agreements and economic autonomy through the development of own source revenues and a much lower reliance on the government of Canada—are much more effective than government transfer payments.

How are other nations doing? Australia lags Canada in the recognition of Indigenous legal and constitutional rights. A national referendum designed to give Aboriginal people a permanent say in Parliament suffered an embarrassing and divisive defeat. Rural Indigenous peoples experience extreme poverty and remain disconnected from the wage economy and national prosperity. There have been promising developments in relations with resource companies and the national and state governments are more responsive and more concerned than in decades past. But socially and economically, many communities are in difficult straights.

In Scandinavia, Finland, Norway, and Sweden have different approaches. All three have well-developed social welfare systems. Education, health care, government services and basic incomes are all supported by national governments. The Sámi have



representative parliaments in all three countries, although they each have little practical power. Indigenous rights are given limited attention, resulting in considerable political and legal protests, most of which produce results very slowly. But the Sámi language is stronger than most Canadian Indigenous languages and cultural practices remain commonplace. In terms of life expectancy, well-being, education and employment, the Sámi results are positioned much more strongly than all but a handful of Indigenous communities in Canada.

While the poor treatment of Indigenous peoples has been quite uniform around the world, resulting in marginalization and dispossession, there is no fixed policy or legal response to their needs and aspirations. Indigenous peoples in Canada are the envy of much of the world in legal rights, government funding, and formal commitments to reconciliation. But the Sámi, the Maori of New Zealand, and the Indigenous peoples of Taiwan are doing markedly better in most measures of social and economic well-being. Canadians are, as a nation, much better than other countries in expressing guilt and shame, particularly over things like residential schools and forced sterilization, but they remain well behind Scandinavia and New Zealand in carving out practical and meaningful space for Indigenous peoples in their midst.

### ***Working together in a good way***

Reconciliation, to put it simply, is exceptionally difficult. These are, in each instance, deeply embedded, multi-generational conflicts in which one side (Indigenous peoples) lives daily with the consequences of decades or neglect, harassment, racism, and dispassion and the other (the dominant society) has only lately had an epiphany about the damage caused by its actions, policies, and historical dominance. But newcomer apologies, offers of short-term compensation, and a

preference for “looking to the future and not to the past” simply will not work.

Reconciliation is obviously a process – long-term, difficult, and painful for all – and far from a single act, declaration, or policy initiative. It requires – and New Zealand is the only country to make major strides in this direction – a realization that power must be shared, that political structures must reflect the new approaches,

and that society must in all key elements (education, historical remembrance, ceremonies, and government policies) reflect the original and historical cultural foundations of the nation.

Canadians must commit to a multi-generation effort to reconstruct and reimagine the country. The new Canada must include autonomy for First Nations, Metis, and Inuit, much greater Indigenous involvement in the economy, and sincere and meaningful consultation with Indigenous peoples on major policy initiatives. When Canadians embrace these approaches, and when Indigenous people see themselves and their priorities reflected in the nation’s policies and strategies, a new relationship will be weaved into the fabric of the country.

There will be, in sum, no scorecard for reconciliation, and very likely, no giant leap forward. Progress will be incremental, and yes, Indigenous peoples will often need to push forward on their own as the rest of Canada reluctantly catches up. However, it’s time to go beyond simply platitudes. Land acknowledgements are symbolic, but they build no homes and create no prosperity

for Indigenous peoples. They don’t solve language loss, improve services, or rebuild and strengthen cultures.

We need concrete measures: commitments to procure a small percentage of goods and services from Indigenous suppliers help, as do hiring quotas and commitments. But they must go along with a society-wide commitment to Indigenous autonomy and revitalization.



*Canadians must commit to a multi-generation effort to reconstruct and reimagine the country.*

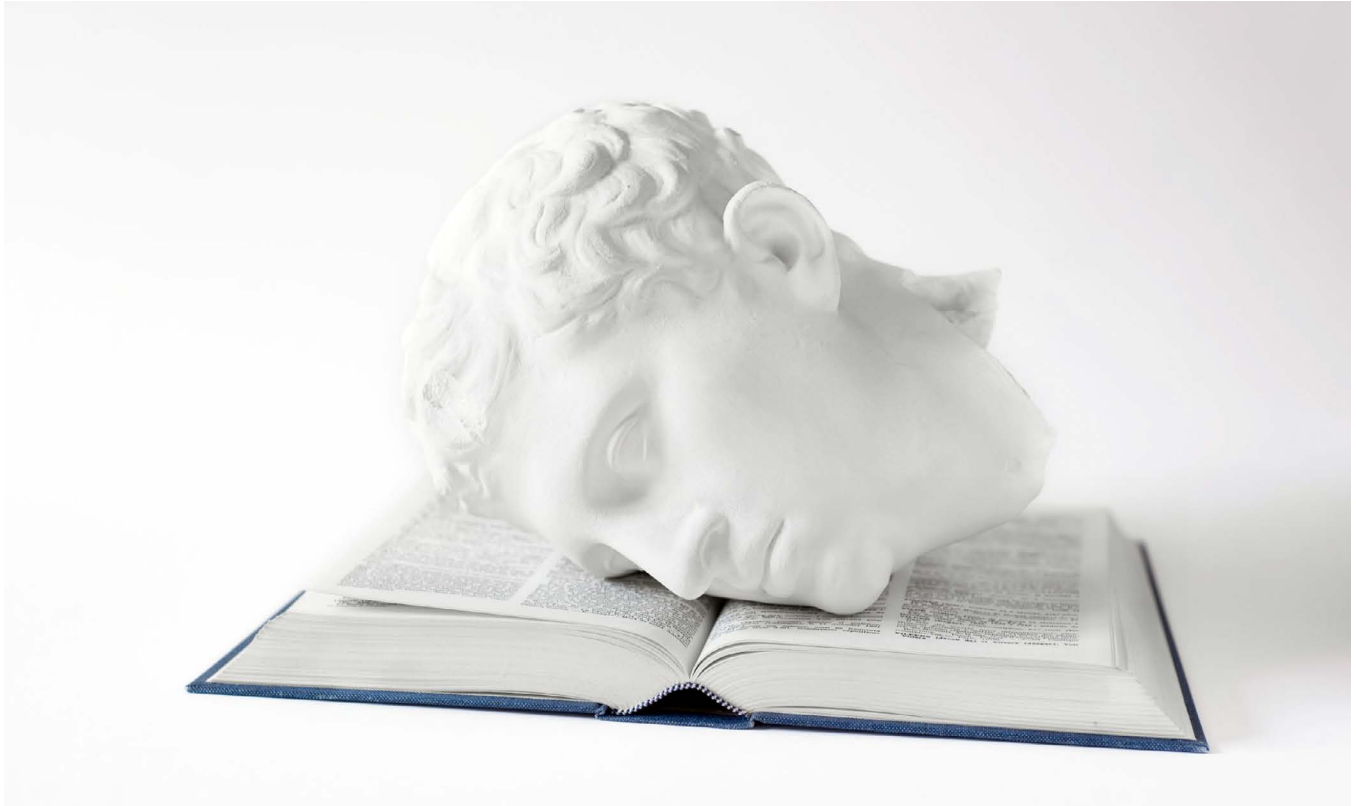
Canadians need to be more aware of the foundational principles of Indigenous-newcomer relations in Canada. Indigenous people hold inherent rights on these lands, each with their own history and connection to the land, and each with their own roles and responsibilities as set out by the original treaties (think, Treaty of Niagara), and respect for one another in these. There must be a willingness for Canadians, whether their family lineage dates back 400 years or 4 months, to commit to learning and understanding the realities of our shared history. Only then will the nation shift from the well-intentioned but ill-defined pursuit of reconciliation to a society based on shared prosperity, mutual respect, and a hearty appreciation for the resilience and determination of Indigenous people. ❁

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# Free inquiry is vital to preserving our intellectual and cultural heritage

*It is time to reclaim freedom as the foundation for truth, excellence, and meaningful reform in our institutions.*



iStock

## Peter Copeland

“Peace, order, and good governance” may not carry the global recognition of American, British, or French ideals, but it captures Canada’s commitment to democracy, freedom, and respect for tradition. These values, defined by politeness, tolerance, and moderation, now seem increasingly fragile. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s description of Canada as the “first post-national state,” devoid of core values, highlights this troubling shift in national identity.

Across the Western world, a growing discontent is undermining free expression

and open inquiry, replaced by groupthink and censorship in the name of political activism. Misguided equity-seeking has moved beyond academia, permeating K–12 education, universities, businesses, and government, prioritizing activism over objectivity.

To preserve freedom in our institutions, we must revisit its true meaning. Freedom is not mere licence, but the cultivation of agency and character in pursuit of truth and excellence. Businesses and governments must refocus on their core missions, rather than becoming platforms for activism, and it is to the formative institutions of universities that we must turn for change. It

is time to reclaim freedom as the foundation for truth, excellence, and meaningful reform in our institutions.

### ***Freedom in our political history – freedom for excellence***

Freedom is deeply ingrained in our political traditions, tracing back to *Magna Carta* in Britain and rooted in the intellectual and cultural pillars of Western civilization – Athens and Jerusalem. The Socratic ideal of self-knowledge and the Biblical emphasis on “serving one another in love” highlight how freedom is essential for developing our agency to pursue what is right and good. This historically unique Western emphasis



on freedom, connecting it with truth and virtue, is globally admired for affirming human dignity and worth.

Freedom is not only a moral good but also a driver of social and economic well-being. Societies with democratic institutions, free markets, and the rule of law generally exhibit higher levels of happiness, social stability, and trust in institutions, alongside lower crime rates and corruption. However, freedom has never been viewed by the wise as the ultimate good. Its value lies in enabling the development of agency and morally good actions, which must be freely chosen, not coerced. Thus, freedom is a means to higher ends rather than an end in itself.

True free action involves deliberation, mental clarity, and having reasons for acting. Neuroscience supports this view, linking freedom with self-control and the ability to act, while its depletion corresponds

or pleasure but from well-nurtured relationships and virtuous living. Harvard's Arthur Brooks, summarizing decades of happiness studies, emphasizes that the greatest contributors to happiness are seeking transcendent experiences through faith and philosophy, cultivating family and friendships, balancing work and life, and imbuing both with a sense of vocation.

Today, some view freedom of choice and expression as ends in themselves, equating personal desires with the "true self." This overlooks how reason and the pursuit of what is best can shape those desires. The notion that freedom means choosing everything for oneself is a misunderstanding; it often leads to submission to lower desires – such as fame, pleasure, honour, or power – and the illusion of self-created values.

Authentic freedom involves conforming oneself to the objective contours of

sharp and sometimes porous boundaries given by the nature of the activity and its inherent standards.

Freedom also extends beyond the personal sphere. We are not "anywheres" but "somewheres," connected to people and places. Growing up in communities, relying on friends and family, and having networks of care and concern are integral to our lives. The increasing notion of freedom as the liberty to do as one pleases contributes to higher divorce rates, fewer marriages, more children born outside marriage, and more children experiencing divorce in Canada. These things have significant negative social consequences. As economist Tim Sargent illustrates, marriage enhances happiness, longevity, and living standards, and children raised by their biological parents fare better than those who are not.

Freedom is not an escape from responsibility, politeness, or commitment.



*Freedom is not an escape from responsibility, politeness, or commitment. Instead, it is the freedom to make choices that reflect these values, tailored to our unique circumstances.*

to succumbing to cravings or negative emotions. We don't consider someone truly free if they are dominated by desires, anger, greed, or act out of ignorance or impulse.

This perspective aligns with the insights of Aristotle, Aquinas, John Locke, and the founders of Canada and the United States. They understood that happiness arises from living virtuously and pursuing the good. As Brian Crowley notes in *Fearful Symmetry*, "For Canada's founders... one of happiness's deepest sources sprang from a learned ability to discipline untutored emotions and desires."

Long-term happiness research reveals that it doesn't come from fame, wealth,

reality. You cannot speak English, play an instrument or sport, become a good doctor, or a loving person by making your own rules or asserting your personal conception of these things. No one babbling in a self-invented dialect, pounding arbitrarily on a piano, kicking a basketball, or mutilating a patient's body in their mistaken search for fulfillment and health is properly free in each of these domains. In each case, they lack the requisite ability and knowledge of how to do these things because they do not know what it means to do them well. Freedom, then, is about agency – having the skill and understanding to act effectively and meaningfully within the sometimes

Instead, it is the freedom to make choices that reflect these values, tailored to our unique circumstances.

### ***Equity activism, the therapeutic self and postmodern relativity***

The ideal of freedom as the pursuit of truth and excellence has been central to Western prosperity and happiness for over 2,500 years, though it has been imperfectly realized. Today, free inquiry and the rule of law are often criticized as unjust for not ensuring "equity" or full expression of the "authentic" self.

Modern equity implies that unequal outcomes among groups are inherently

unfair. After classical Marxism's failure, leftist thinkers shifted focus from economic class to culture. Cultural Marxists redefined social conflict, emphasizing culture and identity groups as the primary forces shaping society and viewing formative cultural institutions as key to social change.

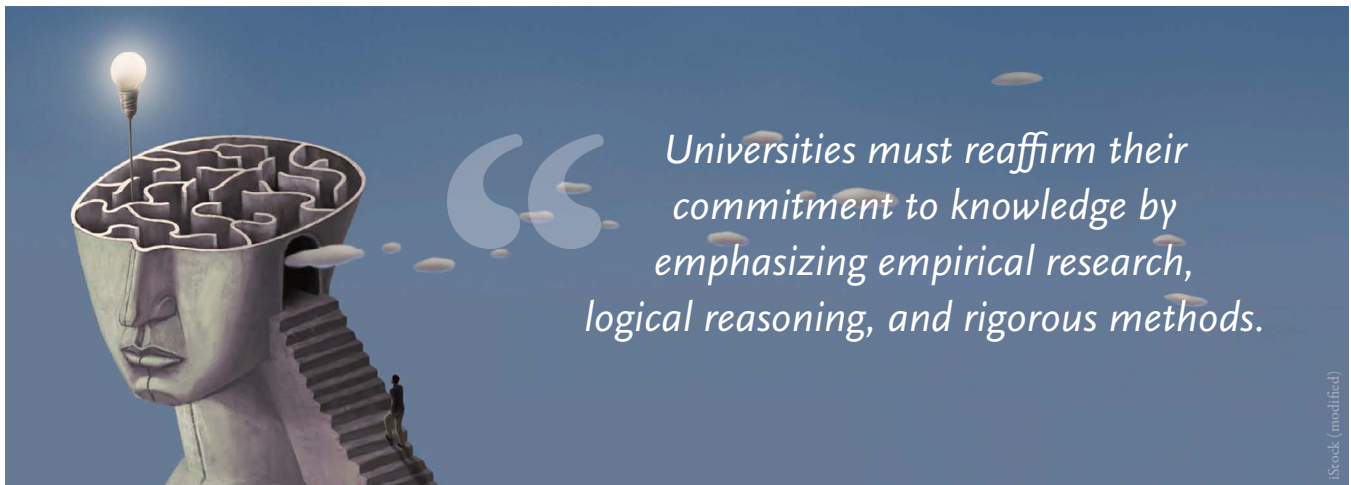
This shift coincided with the rise of therapeutic and expressive individualism, which prioritizes self-expression and subjective choice at the heart of personal dignity, demanding constant affirmation. Advocates of this world view often

groups, favouring the "marginalized" or "oppressed" while dismissing traditional authority. This has fostered ideological conformity, political correctness, and censorship, leading to cynicism and apathy.

Recently, postmodern relativism, equity-seeking, and therapeutic individualism have merged into a powerful activism that often replaces objectivity and rigorous debate. These currents have real consequences in universities and governments, leading to a culture of "safetyism" that eliminates perceived harms without considering

scholarship, its absence can lead to self-censorship and fear of expressing dissenting opinions, undermining academic rigour.

Dummitt also found that universities increasingly require candidates to submit statements affirming their commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), a trend that has spread to government and the private sector. Similarly, Professor Dave Snow's research showed that the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), which funds millions in grants, now prioritizes projects with activist aims



see objectivity, critical inquiry, and disagreement as harmful or discriminatory. The self is no longer guided by reason toward fulfilling objective human potential but is viewed as an emotional core that withers under challenge.

Postmodernism, with its emphasis on skepticism, relativism of moral, aesthetic, empirical and logical truth alike, and the rejection of grand narratives, has significantly undermined free inquiry, objectivity, and academic rigour. It promotes the idea that truth is subjective, constructed through language, culture, and power dynamics, and that all viewpoints are valid. The Sokal hoax and the grievance study affair illustrate the rejection of objective truth and the view that scientific inquiry is merely one of many competing narratives.

Postmodernist thinkers view the world through power structures and identity

trade-offs, as seen in pandemic lockdowns. This extends to children's over-managed lives, businesses weakened by social justice imperatives, and institutions prioritizing activism over excellence and effectiveness.

***Counteracting postmodernism, equity-seeking and therapeutic individualism in our culture: reform in the university***

Since their inception in medieval cities like Bologna, Paris, and Salamanca, universities have sought to advance education, shape character, and contribute to objective knowledge. This mission is now at risk due to a declining environment of free inquiry.

Professors Christopher Dummitt and Zachary Patterson revealed in a survey that 88 per cent of Canadian university faculty self-identify as left-leaning. While intellectual diversity isn't essential for rigorous

under its DEI Charter, often at the expense of objective, falsifiable research.

This is all the more troubling, because research indicates that DEI training programs do not reduce bias or change workplace behaviours and can even increase prejudice and bigotry.

To prevent further polarization and preserve institutional rigour, reforms in universities and government should emphasize balanced discourse, reinforce academic standards, and foster a more grounded cultural environment.

Universities must reaffirm their commitment to knowledge by emphasizing empirical research, logical reasoning, and rigorous methods. Integrating courses on critical thinking, philosophy of science, and epistemology will help students evaluate

*Continued on page 14*



# A blanket amnesty for illegal migrants would be a disaster for Canada

*The prospect of a general amnesty for illegals in Canada will be the final straw.*

*How can there be any shred of integrity left in our immigration system if we reward those who broke the rules?*



iStock (modified)

## David L. Thomas

The Liberal government's proposal to grant a pathway to citizenship to "undocumented" people who are in Canada illegally is a risky strategy and likely to backfire. It will be seen as an open invitation to billions of people around the world to come here, break our immigration laws, and eventually be rewarded for it.

In my years as an immigration lawyer, I met countless people who dreamed of one day possessing a Canadian passport. Holding one would unlock a world of opportunity in Canada. But it also has another attractive

feature: Canadian passport-holders can travel visa-free to 188 countries. When I began my legal career, we used to say there were only about 20 "good passports" in the world – passports that allowed unrestricted travel abroad and a good standard of living in the home country. Given general rises in prosperity and geopolitical progress (think the fall of the Berlin Wall), I would argue the number of "good passports" has risen to about 45.

Of course, that means there are still around 155 "not-so-good passports" issued by other countries, where the majority of the world's population happens to reside.

Given that only a few countries actively promote immigration (Canada leads in this respect, followed closely by Australia and New Zealand) it is easy to see why Canadian citizenship is in such high demand.

Some activists argue there should be no borders – that "no one is illegal." They are grossly underestimating the demand. If a border-free world popped into existence tomorrow, an estimated 250 million people would immediately choose to relocate. Some have put that number as high as 750 million. I believe these estimates are outdated and perhaps naïve. Surely the number today would be in the billions.

A recent survey suggested that 69 million Chinese would like to move to Canada, if they could. The same survey showed 137 million Chinese are considering moving to the US (Canada would be their second choice). Another survey indicated that almost 75 per cent of Indians are seeking to emigrate, and 35 per cent are actively working towards it (India has a population of 1.4 billion). A Gallup World Poll in 2017 showed a growing worldwide trend in the desire to relocate to a new country. In Sub-Saharan Africa, with a population of 1.24 billion, 33 per cent indicated a wish

“To those fleeing persecution, terror & war, Canadians will welcome you, regardless of your faith. Diversity is our strength #WelcomeToCanada.”

Many undocumented migrants in America saw this as an open invitation to simply walk across our border. By the end of 2018, more than 50,000 people had crossed into Canada illegally, most of them through Roxham Road in Quebec, at the border with upstate New York.

In 2019, a CBC reporter made these observations about the Roxham Road crossing:

it was widely believed to be part of a scheme in which the visa recipients understood they had to immediately leave the US by walking into Canada.

Trudeau could have easily stopped this charade at any time by amending the *Safe Third Country Agreement* with the US (which he eventually did in 2023). But at the time, he instead dispatched then Immigration Minister Ahmed Hussen to Nigeria to try to persuade US officials to stop issuing so many dubious visas.

Even though authorities have since closed Roxham Road and similar illegal

“Prior to 2017, Canada – surrounded by three oceans and neighbouring the United States – had reasonable control of its borders.”

to emigrate. In Nigeria alone, 48 per cent indicated a desire to emigrate permanently (the population of Nigeria is 229 million).

Prior to 2017, Canada – surrounded by three oceans and neighbouring the United States – had reasonable control of its borders. Illegal border crossings were not that common. Some might recall in 1999 when four rusty ships washed ashore on western Vancouver Island, having transported 599 illegal migrants from Fujian, China. The federal government responded quickly – deporting 330 migrants and granting three dozen refugee status. As for the rest, well, they just disappeared.

Even though more than two hundred migrants slipped through the cracks during that 1999 event, that seems like a tremendous success compared to the open invitation Prime Minister Justin Trudeau made to the world in an infamous January 2017 tweet. In response to the inauguration of President Donald Trump and his promise to clamp down on illegal immigration, Trudeau posted on Twitter:

“But the majority of those who come here to Plattsburgh, N.Y., by bus, train or plane have spent little time in the U.S., arriving on tourist visas with the intent of treading the footpath to Canada. When CBC News visited the crossing recently, in one day we met families and single travellers from Pakistan, Turkey, Yemen, Lebanon, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, Eritrea, as well as a Palestinian family from the occupied territories. Some arrived with what appeared to be fresh baggage tags from overseas flights into New York. Others had made their way north from Mexico, South and Central America.”

In 2017, Haitians who had overstayed their 2010 earthquake disaster-related visas in the United States formed the largest group of migrants illegally entering Canada. Trump had specially targeted this group, although, in the end, his administration made few deportations. By 2018, however, nearly 75 per cent of illegal migrants at Roxham Road had freshly arrived from Nigeria. They had obtained valid US visitor visas in Nigeria, but

crossing points, Canadians are still feeling the repercussions of this open-border policy – and will be for years. There are still about 7,300 refugee claimants being housed in 36 hotels, mostly in southern Ontario, who on average each cost Canadian taxpayers about \$208 per day. The total price tag for Trudeau’s 2017 tweet is already in the billions of dollars and ongoing.

Without question, surely some of the 113,000 people who walked into Canada since 2017 are legitimate UN Convention-definition refugees. Equally clear is that many are economic migrants, and others are just queue-jumpers looking for an easy way in. Moreover, if you were an undocumented person in the US with criminal charges outstanding, a swift exit into Canada across Roxham Road would seem extremely attractive. You could arrive without identification and make up a new identity. Why not? We have no idea how many criminals or terrorists may have walked in.

In the 2000s, when I was still actively practicing immigration law, there were

many Mexican citizens working illegally in Vancouver. It was the same in Toronto. Some years earlier, the Liberal government had dropped the visitor visa requirement for Mexican citizens. It resulted in a flood of people over-staying their lawful period of admission as well as a deluge of Mexican refugee claims made within Canada. In 2009, Prime Minister Stephen Harper put an end to the madness and required Mexican citizens to apply for visitor visas.

Canada has established, objective standards in place for determining which countries should be exempt from our visitor

is elected this fall, he has promised a massive deportation effort to deal with illegal immigrants in the US, many of whom may be tempted to illegally escape into Canada.

Marc Miller, the current immigration minister, estimates there are between 300,000 and 600,000 people living illegally in Canada – but even he’s not sure. Unlike many other countries, Canada does not track the departure of non-Canadians. Therefore, it is quite easy for someone whose visitor visa, study permit, or work permit has expired to simply remain in Canada. No one will be

the speakers blamed “white supremacy” for shortcomings in our legal immigration system. However, the majority of legal immigrants to Canada have been non-white in every year since 1971.

Shortly after the 2021 federal election, Trudeau issued a mandate letter for his new immigration minister, Sean Fraser, that ordered him to explore an amnesty solution. More recently, Minister Miller commented, “There is no doubt that we have made a conscious decision to be an open country.” In May, Trudeau told reporters, “People who aren’t here regularly



*Without broad public support,  
Canada’s immigration system is doomed.*

visa requirement. In 2016, Trudeau hosted Mexican President Enrique Nieto in Ottawa. Nieto urged Trudeau to remove the visitor visa requirement for Mexican citizens. Trudeau ignored the objective standards and promised Nieto he would do so. (This resulted in immediate protests from Bulgaria and Romania, who also didn’t meet our standards. To avoid controversy, Trudeau removed their visa requirements as well.)

Unfortunately, removing the visitor visa requirement for Mexicans turned out to (again) be an unmitigated disaster. For instance, in 2023, there were more than 25,000 inland refugee claims from Mexico alone. Fast forward to 2024, and Trudeau had no choice but to reverse his decision – since February of this year, most Mexicans are required to apply for a visitor visa.

Canada also has a poor record for removing failed refugee claimants as well as non-Canadians who have committed crimes in Canada. Most people who have been issued deportation letters since 2016 are still in Canada. Moreover, if Donald Trump

knocking on their door because they just aren’t on the radar.

We could begin tracking departures as other countries do, or we could start seriously enforcing our deportation orders. However, this seems to be too much effort. The federal government is apparently attracted to a much easier solution: just let them stay.

Lobby groups like the Migrant Rights Network (MRN) are pressuring the government to offer an amnesty for all “undocumented” migrants in Canada, and to grant permanent status to their family members upon arrival in the future. At a recent press conference calling for amnesty, the MRN estimated that between 20,000 and 500,000 people without immigration status are currently living in Canada.

Since 2017, the City of Toronto has celebrated “Undocumented Residents Day” and this year the City hosted a forum where activists spoke up to encourage the federal government to grant permanent residence to people living in Canada in Canada without authorization. Some of

need to be supported and taken care of. There needs to be either a pathway towards regularization and citizenship, which I know the (immigration) minister is working on.” These recent comments by Trudeau and Miller suggest the Liberals are seriously considering an announcement of an amnesty in the near future.

Until recently, most Canadians were in favour of Canada’s immigration system. The reality today is that most Canadians feel that our immigration levels are too high, with the highest anti-immigration sentiment in decades. Even 42 per cent of recent immigrants feel the numbers are excessive. Recently, the Bank of Canada also sounded the alarm, blaming record levels of immigration for driving up the cost of housing.

It is reckless, and possibly, dangerous for the federal government to ignore these warnings. Without broad public support, Canada’s immigration system is doomed. It also risks heightened levels of racism and xenophobia once the broad support is gone.



The prospect of a general amnesty for illegals in Canada will be the final straw. How can there be any shred of integrity left in our immigration system if we reward those who broke the rules? I spoke recently to a retired government immigration program manager who concurs: “An amnesty is pure madness,” he said, “and crushing in its unfairness to all those who have played by the rules.”

What message would a general amnesty send to legal migrants to our country? Why would others go through normal channels to come here? Would an amnesty now undermine future deportation orders? Why would failed refugee claimants or convicted criminals depart Canada? If Canada grants amnesty once, surely Canada will do it again, once the number of illegals bloats again.

If there is any doubt about that, consider the current illegal immigration crisis gripping the United States. In 1986, President Ronald Reagan signed a sweeping immigration reform bill into law. Sold as a crack-down on illegal immigration, it called for tighter security at the Mexican border, with employers facing strict penalties for hiring undocumented workers. As part of the bill, the US government offered amnesty with a path to permanent status to about 3 million undocumented migrants. Supposedly a one-time amnesty, it was to be followed up with strict border controls and other measures to make sure the number of illegals never grew to such a large number again.

Reagan’s amnesty plan was anything but a panacea. Rather, it acted as an invitation to billions of would-be migrants to come to America and break its immigration laws. Although it’s impossible to know the exact number, some estimate the number of illegals in the US today to be around 22 million. Canada is on the cusp of making the very same mistake. ❁

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## **Free inquiry (Copeland)**

*Continued from page 10*

arguments and evidence objectively. Promoting interdisciplinary peer review can prevent echo chambers and encourage a balanced assessment of scholarship. Although postmodernism and DEI ideologies are now influential in the sciences, interdisciplinary review can counteract the insularity and narrow assumptions and methods that can ossify in disciplines.

Policy-wise, universities and governments should protect academic freedom and support open exploration of ideas without fear of censorship or retribution. At federal and provincial levels, reducing or eliminating the now-pervasive DEI policies that mandate diversity in the name of equity considerations in hiring and program funding could help balance these priorities with academic rigour.

Reforming universities requires internal changes but also external intervention. Eric Kaufmann, professor of politics at the University of Buckingham, suggests that government action is essential to restore academic freedom, as universities have struggled to address this issue on their own. In Canada, the tri-councils – Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), Canadian Institutes of Health Research, and Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council – administer \$1.8 billion in core research grants over the next 5 years. Legislators could consider restructuring these councils, revising their governance, and redirecting funding towards research that prioritizes rigorous methods and objective analysis.

Provincial governments, which oversee education in Canada, could implement or strengthen standards that emphasize academic rigour, objectivity, and intellectual diversity. Regular assessments of university programs could ensure adherence to these standards.

Addressing the balance of power within universities is also crucial. Currently, there is no independent body in Canada tasked with ensuring universities uphold free and open inquiry. While quality assurance systems focus on degree status and course reviews, they do not specifically address the maintenance of rigorous academic standards and freedom from ideological constraint. Provincial governments could establish such an entity to oversee adherence to these principles.

These reforms must balance promoting intellectual diversity with ensuring academic rigour and protecting freedom of inquiry. Their aim should be to foster a robust academic environment that supports knowledge pursuit, respects diverse perspectives, and maintains ethical standards.

## **Bold, balanced policy needed**

Free and open inquiry’s strength lies in its ability to self-correct. Historically, it challenged rigid cultural norms; today, it must address ideological conformity and subjective attitudes toward lifestyle, culture, ethics, and knowledge.

Nature abhors a vacuum. Defenders of freedom have focused on procedural neutrality, leaving a void in shaping culture and education that has been filled by postmodernism, expressive individualism, and equity-driven activism. Substantive discussions about the true, good, and beautiful are unavoidable, and universities and public discourse are crucial venues for this discussion.

Renewing and rearticulating the ideals of free inquiry is vital to preserving our intellectual and cultural heritage. A society grounded in these principles can reach its full potential by fostering agency and rejecting both rigid conformity and aimless dynamism. The time has come for bold, balanced public policy to renew these ideals. ❁

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# The next Liberal leadership contest could be a mess of foreign interference

*Party's loose internal voting rules are a danger to Canada's democracy.*

**Geoff Russ**

**F**oreign interference is no longer just a *threat* to Canada – it has already arrived. In fact, it's a cancer poisoning our political system, posing the gravest internal danger to our collective security since the Cold War.

As an open, participatory democracy, our political parties are the entry point for bad actors serving foreign interests. Our democracy is also cyclical, with the Liberals and Conservatives competing to form government.

The Liberals are far more exposed to entryism by foreign agents due to their very loose membership process, which enables anybody over the age of 14 and possessing a Canadian address to vote in leadership elections. This is something the Liberals must fix if Canada is to maintain the integrity of its democratic process.

After almost a decade in government, the Liberals are on track for a punishing defeat in the next federal election. The party has sustained devastating losses many times before, and always found ways to recover, even after 2011 when the party was reduced to less than 40 seats and pundits began to predict their demise.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has led the party since 2013 and is determined to lead the Liberals into the next federal election. If he loses, which looks increasingly likely, the way that his successor wins the party leadership should be a grave concern.

Foreign agents from authoritarian states like China and Iran, and even from democratic nations like India, are actively trying to influence the outcomes of our

elections. At the same time, the power and sway of diaspora politics is growing in Canada, evidenced most notably by the widespread and ongoing anti-Israel/pro-Palestine demonstrations in cities and on college campuses across the country.

On June 21, 2024, the Liberals suffered a crushing defeat in a byelection for a seat in the party's thought-to-be stronghold of Toronto-St. Paul's. This was followed in mid-September by another shocking byelection loss in a long-time Liberal bastion in Montreal.

The losses indicate that the Liberal grassroots membership is weaker than ever. Riding association meetings are becoming sparsely attended, and polls have consistently displayed a collapsing enthusiasm for the party.

Who are the Liberal Party's "grassroots" members? Traditionally, they are Liberal supporters who are attracted to the party's policies as they pertain to Canada. They see the party as a vessel to better the lives of all Canadians, first and foremost – via national child care or dental care program, or by combatting climate change and the like. Foreign affairs, while important, are not the chief priority for grassroots members, nor is pandering to diaspora politics.

If grassroots members cannot muster the numbers in the next leadership election, the party's loose membership rules could see it further hijacked by diaspora politics or, even worse, the interests of foreign governments.

Former Liberal MP Han Dong left the party to sit as an Independent last year following investigative reporting that



implicated him in having been part of foreign influence efforts on behalf of the Chinese government. It is important to note that Dong has not been charged with any crimes, and a judge recently found no “documented evidence” to support the allegations.

However, Dong has testified during a public inquiry that international students voted “en masse” for his 2019 nomination campaign to be the Liberal candidate for the Toronto riding of Don Valley North. According to Dong himself, these international students attended New Oriental International College in Markham, Ontario, and he believes most of them did vote for his candidacy.

Further reporting has revealed that the United Front Work Department (UFWD), a branch of the Communist Party of China, has interfered in political systems across Canada, Australia, and the United States.

Overt foreign interference, at the behest of the Chinese government, allegedly took place in several ridings during the 2021 federal election, with the intent of weakening or defeating Conservative Party incumbents – perhaps in retaliation for then-Conservative leader Erin O’Toole’s hardline stance against China’s Communist government.

Unless steps are taken now to crack down on foreign interference, it’s entirely possible that future elections will see thousands of temporary residents marshalled to vote for specific candidates who see the interests of foreign governments as paramount. This applies not just to Chinese interference, but also to the Iranian government, whose Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) have an active presence in Canada.

Anti-IRGC activists in Canada’s Iranian diaspora – such as Mojdeh Shahriari of StopIRGC – already claim that the IRGC has infiltrated Canada in a similar way to China. The IRGC was recently listed as a terrorist group by the federal government, but its influence is unlikely to be fully curbed without a massive operation involving CSIS and the RCMP that could take years.

While foreign interference is certainly alarming, another more subtle threat to Canadian democracy is the growing focus on diaspora politics that sees powerful and influential voting blocs exacerbate fault lines and fissures in modern society. Often tied to conflicts abroad, such as the ongoing war between Israel and Hamas, these groups are attempting to turn Canada away from its traditional allies. Diaspora politics is not a new phenomenon – it dates back hundreds of years. In 1885, the large Irish Catholic diaspora in Liverpool, England, helped elect an Irish nationalist politician to the United Kingdom’s House of Commons. However, Ireland was still a constituent part of the United Kingdom, barely a day’s sail away from England, and Irish independence was a domestic matter.

In Canada, diaspora politics is increasingly focused on using Canada’s power and influence to impact affairs on the world stage. Increasingly media savvy, diaspora groups – often well-financed with foreign funding – are increasingly using social media (especially TikTok) to spread propaganda that sows dissent and undermines Canadian sovereignty. The success of these influence campaigns is seen today in the antisemitic campus protests and anti-Israel activism that runs rampant in communities across the country.

Without strong party membership rules, diaspora forces beholden to China, Iran, or other authoritarian regimes could supplant grassroots members.

Canada needs firm laws dictating the internal operations of political parties. Membership in those parties should be restricted to citizens and permanent residents across the board. And entrusting the future of our country to teenagers as young as 14 – malleable minds at a severe risk to foreign influence via social media – is a recipe for disaster.

It’s important to state the obvious – most Canadians, regardless of their

ancestries, are loyal to Canada. And while it is not unreasonable for Canadian citizens to have attachments to their ancestral countries, their first allegiance must be to Canada.

So, what can be done? The Hogue Commission investigating foreign interference is a positive step, as are calls to create a foreign agents registry. However, this is not enough.

A recent exchange in the Canadian Senate highlighted the complicated issue of competing loyalties. During a debate over the need for a foreign agent registry, British Columbia senator Yuen Pau Woo asked the following question: “What advice would you give to Chinese Canadians who want to build good ties with their motherland – build good ties with the People’s Republic of China – and who want to participate in charitable activities in Canada for the benefit of Canadians?”

Senator Percy Downe of PEI responded with the following: “Obviously, the first comment I would have is, that I know many Canadians of Chinese descent who consider Canada the motherland, not China, and their loyalty is to Canada, not to China. That’s what we expect from all our citizens.”

Senator Downe was absolutely correct. Indeed, Chinese Canadians have borne the brunt of Beijing’s most aggressive efforts to interfere in Canadian affairs.

While the Liberal government may fall in the next federal election, the party itself has a track record of rising, phoenix-like, from the ashes of political defeat. That’s why all Canadians have a stake in ensuring that foreign interference is removed from its internal party elections.

For the sake of our democracy, the Liberal Party must reform its membership process and safeguard it against diaspora politics and foreign interference. Canada cannot risk having major political parties co-opted by foreign governments. ❁

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*Geoff Russ is a writer and policy analyst based in Vancouver, and a former reporter with The Hub.*



# Cultivating growth

## The business savvy and policies today's farmers need to thrive

*Canada can feed the world with healthy, safe, ethically produced, and sustainable crops.*

### Kristjan Hebert

Canada's agriculture and agri-food system generates around \$143 billion, or 7 percent of our gross domestic product, per year. It also provides 1 in every 9 jobs in Canada and employs a total of 2.3 million people. Yet agriculture and food remain a forgotten stepchild to other economic sectors, such as oil and gas and manufacturing, and barely receive a mention at budget time.

Neither does it figure in environmental discussions, despite the fact Canadian farmers are global leaders at sustainable agriculture, as a recent report from the Global Institute for Food Security shows. The federal agriculture minister did not attend COP28 – the UN climate change conference. Minister of Environment and Climate Change Steven Guilbeault did attend, but his agenda didn't include agriculture.

Two things need to change for Canadian farmers to reach their full potential. One is a more supportive environment from the federal government. The other is for farmers themselves to adopt a more business-minded approach.

### **Business-savvy family farms**

As Western Canadian farmers, we have long painted an idyllic picture of the small family farm on the Prairies.

However, many farms struggle to turn a profit. And many farmers have off-farm jobs just to pay the bills. While we've



*While we've romanticized the lifestyle of farming, we haven't been very honest about the business of farming.*

romanticized the lifestyle of farming, we haven't been very honest about the business of farming.

The truth is, too many small family farms are on life support, subsidized by Canadian tax dollars through government-run insurance programs. Our industry typically resists change. But we need to convince more producers to think like entrepreneurs so they can capture the growth opportunities that lie ahead for Canada's agriculture industry.

### **Farm size matters**

According to data from the most recent census, there are approximately 189,000 farming operations in Canada. However, only about 10 per cent have sales greater than \$1 million; those account for more than 52 per cent of the sector's total operating revenues.

The remaining 90 per cent of farms are what I would consider a hobby farm. According to widely used accounting benchmarks for top agriculture firms in Canada, a decent EBIT (earnings before interest and taxes) margin is 20 per cent. If your revenue is \$1 million or less, that leaves EBIT at \$200,000 or less. For many farms, that \$200,000 will be used for personally held land payments and living costs, which doesn't leave much for re-investment into the business. To my mind, \$1 million in farm revenue is a job, and below that is a hobby. Only above that does it start to be a real business. Small farms provide a great lifestyle, but they are not a great business model.

The reality of agriculture today is that size does matter, and this is why we're seeing a growing trend towards consolidation. Farms are becoming increasingly sophisticated operations – expanding in terms of equipment, use of technology, sales, employees, and bargaining power.

Suppliers and customers have consolidated as well. We're seeing significant consolidation among grain elevators, processors, seed, fertilizer and equipment companies. Good luck to any small farm that tries to negotiate or strike a deal with these companies. Those who don't embrace change won't survive.

We do not need to do away with the family farm. But farm ownership (and attitudes) needs to be restructured in a way that supports growth, collaboration, and shared equity.

## **Demographic shift and succession planning**

With the average age of the Canadian farmer being 56 and retirement on the horizon, hundreds of thousands of acres of valuable farmland will soon be available. The price of farmland in Canada has increased tenfold over the last three decades. Proper succession planning has never been more important.

Rather than keeping it “all in the family,” what if a retiring farmer’s succession plan involved bringing in non-family professionals to help run the farm – a COO and a fractional CFO – and the family sat as major shareholders? The Cargill family’s agri-business enterprises are the quintessential example. It’s what we did with our family business; my father and I rely heavily on our COO and CFO, with whom we have a profit-sharing arrangement.

The goal is to treat the business as an investment that provides cash for labour, land rent and return on other equity. A farm is really two businesses – a real estate business and a farm operation. These can give the retiring generation certain cash flow, continued equity growth as well as an enterprise that can use the equity to maintain or increase growth. As part of a comprehensive succession plan, the parameters must be set correctly to ensure family equity is not put at significant risk.

It’s an uphill battle getting farmers to realize that genealogy does not always equate to skill. Just because your name is on the farm, it doesn’t mean you need to be the one running it. I think it comes back to our rugged individualism and fierce independence, both a blessing and a curse. Farmers will get the job done, but we’re reluctant to ask for support.

## **Policy support and better advocacy**

That mindset has contributed to a weak policy environment for Canadian agriculture. If we’re thought of at all in Ottawa, it’s often for a policy that neither

reflects our interests nor benefits from our input.

Current federal tax policies are hindering growth and expansion. Take, for instance, the carbon tax. It’s a punitive tax for all Canadians but really stings for agricultural producers who must pay the tax when there are no viable alternatives for grain drying and barn heating. At a grain operation in the dead of a Saskatchewan winter, solar and/or wind power simply aren’t going to work! Recent changes to the capital gains tax will also hurt our industry. A larger capital gains tax bill will certainly hinder the succeeding generation’s ability to buy out their parents’ farms and could result in more farms being sold to non-farm, or even international, owners.

Canada is an exporting country and our supply chain, via railways and ports, is vital to our economic stability. Looming strikes, rail disruptions, backlogs at ports – and even the inability to load grain on a rainy day in Vancouver – hurt our reputation as a reliable trading partner. This is something I heard while attending COP28 last year – that Canada couldn’t be counted on. We need strong federal leadership in this area. If we continue to disappoint our customers, they will go elsewhere and turn to other countries with more reliable infrastructure.

It is frustrating to hear our federal government consistently tell Canadian producers that we can do a better job of reducing our emissions without giving credit to Western Canadian farmers who pioneered no-till (minimum tillage) farming – a practice that helps to sequester carbon in the soil. Under the federal Greenhouse Gas Offset Credit System, early adopters of no-till farming are prohibited from participating in the carbon market. Only projects that started after 2017 will qualify, and backcasting to 2017 has been made nearly impossible. There seems to be no acknowledgment that agriculture holds significant potential as a carbon sink.

## **Industry needs a unified voice**

As the demographics shift and the number of farms decreases in the years to come, it becomes even more important for agriculture to have a unified and informed voice in Ottawa.

We have far too many lobby groups, grower groups, and crop councils. While these groups have an important role in terms of check-off collection to support research and development, international markets, and advocacy, I believe they struggle to influence policy due to their fragmentation. Their work is often reactive versus proactive, always fighting back against bad policy, proposed changes, or global issues. When a minister is faced with more than 400 strategy groups, the easiest route is to do nothing. We need more than photo ops with the agriculture minister on social media. We need size, knowledge, and influence to protect the very thing we are trying to preserve – the family farm.

Agriculture as a whole (and especially crop producers) needs to agree on 80 per cent of the policy strategy. In a perfect world, this would also be part of a national natural resource strategy where energy, critical minerals, and agriculture band together to agree on 80 per cent of the issues and policies. Canada can be an energy and resource superpower; but it can be an agricultural one as well – helping to provide food security to not only ourselves but our allies around the world.

Canada can feed the world with healthy, safe, ethically produced, and sustainable crops. But to ensure future growth and investment, we need to collectively shift our mindset. We need to finally start running our farms as businesses, while pushing government for increased support through sound policies that allow agriculture to grow and thrive. 🌾

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*Kristjan Hebert is the president of the Hebert Group, which operates a 40,000-acre grain and oilseed farm near Moosomin, Saskatchewan.*

# Canada's nuclear industry energized by successful refurbishment projects

*The recent success of Canadian nuclear power projects speaks volumes about the industry's preparedness and competitiveness*



Sasha Istvan

When you think about Canadian infrastructure projects, what are the first words that come to mind?

Late and over budget.

Poor project management, regulatory hurdles, and market impacts make it nearly impossible to build any major project on time, and it's a genuine surprise if something gets completed under budget. This doesn't have to be the case: the Canadian nuclear industry is rewriting this narrative. Currently, two of Canada's largest active infrastructure projects are in the nuclear sector – and they are on time and on budget.

Bruce Power, the world's largest operating nuclear facility, and Ontario

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Bruce Power operations staff synchronizes Unit 6 to the Ontario electrical grid in September 2023, ahead of schedule. (brucepower.com)

Power Generation's (OPG) Darlington reactors are undergoing major refurbishments. The upgrades will extend the operating life of the reactors by 30 years.

These projects are complex, featuring intricate components, tight deadlines, numerous stakeholders, and detailed safety procedures. Several components are undergoing replacement for the first time in the stations' operational history, requiring today's engineers, machinists, and technicians to figure out how to fabricate parts that have been out of production for decades. Refurbishments



add a layer of complexity compared to new builds, as operators work around existing radioactive systems and engineers must design replacements for obsolete parts. Despite all this, both projects remain firmly on track.

Bruce Power refurbished Unit 6 ahead of schedule and on budget in 2023. The current Bruce Unit 3 refurbishment is well underway and the reactor is tracking to return to service on schedule in 2026; indeed, Bruce Power recently completed the Unit 3 removal series earlier than planned. Its remaining four units will eventually follow.

OPG has successfully refurbished two of its four reactors, Darlington 2 and 3. The Unit 3 refurbishment finished 169 days

this spring on time and on budget. OPG's efforts highlight Canada's ability to multi-task when it comes to nuclear power – we can conduct major refurbishment projects while also building the next generation of nuclear reactors.

Many other jurisdictions can't make the same claim. For instance, Vogtle Units 3 and 4 in Burke County, Georgia, Finland's Olkiluoto Unit 3, and Hinkley Point C in Somerset, England, are all sufficiently late to warrant attention and concern. With these projects dragging on for 10, 18, and 15+ years respectively, it is easy to be pessimistic about prospects for building new reactors at pace. But globally, these projects are the exception, not the rule. Over the last ten years, China has

the local supply chain capitalizes on the province's nuclear expertise and strengthens it for future builds.

Bruce Power is applying the lessons learned from the Unit 6 refurbishment to keep Unit 3's refurbishment on schedule. Like OPG, Bruce Power has also built a state-of-the-art operator training facility and is using automated tools to improve the safety and schedule performance of the project. This will help it achieve a progressively shorter refurbishment schedule for each subsequent unit.

The recent success of Canadian nuclear power projects speaks volumes about the industry's preparedness and competitiveness. It proves the capability of Canadian nuclear workers and the supply chain. The Royal



*The recent success of Canadian nuclear power projects speaks volumes about the industry's preparedness and competitiveness.*

ahead of schedule, in July 2023. According to OPG's 2024 Q1 update, Darlington Unit 1 is tracking to be completed three months ahead of schedule, and the final refurbishment, Unit 4, is expected to finish by the originally scheduled date of February 2026. The entire project is still on pace to meet its \$12.8-billion budget – despite the cost inflation and COVID-19 disruptions that stymied many other major projects in Canada, such as the Trans Mountain Extension (TMX) pipeline, Toronto's Eglinton Crosstown LRT extension, or the BC Hydro Site C project.

At the same time, OPG is also building North America's first fleet of Small Modular Reactors (SMRs). The first of four planned reactors is scheduled to come online in 2029, and by all accounts, the project is tracking to meet that goal. OPG completed early site preparations

built 34 nuclear reactors, with an average construction duration of 6.3 years; South Korea has built five in an average of 8.8 years; and Pakistan has built four with an average of just 5.6 years. Part of this success can be attributed to growing nuclear expertise, applying lessons learned, and repeating builds of the same design.

Canada is already doing this, as our active projects demonstrate. OPG refurbished Unit 3 faster than Unit 2, and part of the rationale for building a fleet of four SMRs is to take advantage of repetitive builds. Having established itself as an expert in the field, OPG attributes its success to careful planning, a unified team, and a "made-in-Ontario" approach. Preparations have included training operators on a full-scale reactor mock-up and planning with stakeholders to align on safety, quality, schedule, and cost goals. Leveraging

Academy of Engineering and the World Nuclear Association have studied how to set up a nuclear project for success. They highlight the importance of establishing a knowledgeable and competent team, proper planning, and appropriate contract structure. The Bruce Power and OPG refurbishments are models of this approach.

No major project is flawless, and there's still potential for Canadian refurbishments and new SMR builds to veer off course. However, as we ramp up nuclear construction, there's reason to believe these projects will buck the trend that seems to haunt every other major infrastructure endeavour in Canada – proving to skeptics that nuclear can be built at pace. ❁

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Sasha Istvan is an engineer based in Calgary, with experience in both the nuclear supply chain and the oil and gas sector.

# Has the Hamas-Israel war revived the spectre of jihadist terrorism in Canada?

*How the Gaza conflict is fuelling a rise in Islamic terrorism with Canadian connections.*



iStock (modified)

## John Gilmour

When jihadist terrorists hijacked civilian airliners and slammed them into the Twin Towers and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, it sent shockwaves around the world. In Canada, like in other Western democracies, people seemed to finally awaken to the threat of Islamic terrorism.

Twenty-three years later, Canada's national security and law-enforcement agencies are facing a disturbing question: after years of relatively benign activity, is jihadist-motivated violence on the rise in our country? A string of recent events suggests that, unfortunately, the answer is yes.

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After years of relatively benign activity, is jihadist-motivated violence on the rise in our country?”

## Identifying the threat

While the public was generally aware of Islamic terrorism prior to 9/11, al-Qaeda's attacks brought the threat sharply into focus. Since then, this brand of terror has gone by many monikers. “Traditionalists” refer to it as “Islamist,” “Salafist,” or “jihadist” terrorism. They cite the fact many of these terror groups actually have the term “jihad” or “Islam” in their names (the various affiliates of the so-called Islamic State are probably the best-known).

Others, who believe that the terminology characterizes the threat too narrowly or lacks sensitivity towards certain communities, refer to it with more ambiguous terms, such as “religiously motivated violent extremism”

(RMVE) or, more recently, “international terrorism extremism.”

Semantics aside, for more than fifteen years after 2001, Canada’s national security policies, strategies, and programs focused on the threat of jihadist-motivated extremism. National security and law enforcement agencies investigated threats posed by individuals who – driven by extremist narratives – were prepared to engage in violence or facilitate attacks. The investigation and arrest of the “Toronto 18” is among the best-known cases.

Three others – Michael Zehaf-Bibeau, Aaron Driver, and Martin Couture-Rouleau – were not charged as they were fatally shot in the conduct of their attacks).

During post-arrest interviews, most people charged with terrorism offences in Canada claimed to be motivated by the country’s foreign policy. They condemned Canada for being too “pro-Israel,” or for taking part in Western military counter-terrorism operations in South and Central Asia that they believed indiscriminately targeted Muslim populations.

This occurred even as the Islamic State reached the peak of its geographic occupation of sections of Syria and Iraq in 2015, and despite the fact that jihadist-motivated terrorism, when considered from a global perspective, was (and still remains) the dominant terrorist threat in terms of the number of attacks and associated lethality.

Despite this, US law enforcement and security agencies began to shift their concern, and attention, to the spread of extreme right-wing or white supremacist violence in that country. A succession



*As years passed, the threat of jihadist terrorism in Canada gradually receded into the background.*

Globally, and as part of its broader post 9/11 counter-terrorism response, Canada maintained its decades-long security strategy of keeping the threat as far away from its shores as possible. For example, Canada contributed significantly to the International Security Assistance Force’s (ISAF) efforts in Afghanistan against Al-Qaeda and the Taliban; it joined the US-led coalition forces against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, and provided capacity building assistance to countries that requested material or training support as part of their own respective counter-terrorism efforts. The opaque nature of “transnational terrorism” forced Canadian agencies to regularly work with global partners in support of both high-level counter-terrorism strategies and individual investigations.

Thanks to these efforts, Canadian law enforcement has charged close to sixty people for jihadist or RMVE terrorism offences under Canada’s *Criminal Code*.

### ***Diminishing concerns and shifting priorities***

As years passed, the threat of jihadist terrorism in Canada gradually receded into the background – surfacing occasionally in the media when an attack was successful, or when intelligence and law-enforcement agencies successfully thwarted planned attacks.

Fortunately, planned or successful attacks were typically ad-hoc (i.e. not part of any sustained or organized strategy), amateurish, and infrequent, with generally little impacts on broader society. As a result, the public generally grew more confident in security and law-enforcement agencies to keep them safe from radical jihadism.

However, after more than a decade of focusing almost exclusively on the jihadist-motivated threat, national security and law-enforcement practitioners and policy-makers within Canada and the US began to redefine the scope and nature of what constituted “terrorism.”

of high-profile attacks – Charleston in 2015, Pittsburgh in 2018, and El Paso in 2019 – motivated by extreme right wing narratives, highlighted the threat. A 2021 report by the Center for Strategic and International Studies organization (CSIS, based in Washington, DC – not to be confused with the Canadian security agency) indicated 94 per cent of recent terrorist incidents in the US were linked to what it defined as “domestic terrorism,” while jihadist-based attacks amounted to only five per cent. In October 2020, the Department of Homeland Security stated for the first time that domestic violent extremists, rather than “foreign terrorist organizations,” were the most persistent and lethal threat to the nation.

In Canada, national security practitioners and academics noticed this shift in the US and began to move beyond a jihadist-centric focus when identifying trending terrorism threats to the security of our country (examples of these threats



include the Quebec Mosque shooting of January 2017 and the allegedly incel-inspired vehicular attack in Toronto in April 2018).

In 2018, the federal government released a report titled *2018 Report on the Terrorism Threat in Canada*. While referencing the emerging threat from “right-wing extremist views” and “extremists who support violent means to establish an independent state within India” (i.e., Sikh nationalism), it still focused primarily on religiously motivated terrorism – specifically referencing al-Qaeda, the Islamic State and its affiliates, the Taliban, and Hezbollah. Ottawa has yet to update its 2018 report.

In 2019, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) published *Threats to the Security of Canada and Canadian Interests*. The document generally supported the shift in American narratives away from strictly jihadist-based terrorist threats. CSIS annual reports from 2020 forward also tended to focus on the threat posed by “Ideologically Motivated Violent Extremism” (IMVE), which includes in part what would commonly be termed right-wing or left-wing terrorism.

There are several possible reasons for the change, including a lack of jihadist-motivated attacks, successfully sustained mitigation, disruption of the jihadist-terrorist threat by government agencies, and even a need by Canadian officials to be seen as mimicking American narratives on terrorism.

Ultimately, governments, institutions, and even Canadians themselves began to see jihadist-motivated terrorism as an increasingly diminished threat. Other challenges captured our attention: state-on-state conflicts, foreign interference, cyber threats, and hybrid or gray-zone warfare consumed the attention and resources of our national security agencies. The emergence of non-traditional security issues such as a need to secure key supply chains, or ensure environmental and health security, has



*The ongoing war between Hamas and Israel seems to have inspired a resurgence of jihadist-motivated terrorism.*

pushed terrorism even further down our national security hierarchy.

***Jihadist terrorism returns with a vengeance***

And then came Hamas’s vicious terror attacks on Israel on October 7, 2023.

The ongoing war between Hamas and Israel seems to have inspired a resurgence of jihadist-motivated terrorism against the West. National security agencies are raising concerns about spikes in xenophobic-based threats to both Jewish and Muslim communities in terms of both “mischief” and “incitement” offences as defined as in the *Criminal Code*. An even greater concern is that jihadist or religiously motivated terrorist groups, their affiliates, or their disciples will use the Gaza conflict to encourage attacks against Western targets in the West while also recruiting more adherents.

On October 31, 2023, FBI Director Christopher Wray told the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs, “We assess that the actions of Hamas and its allies will serve as an inspiration the likes of which we haven’t seen since ISIS launched its so-called caliphate years ago. In just the

past few weeks, multiple foreign terrorist organizations have called for attacks against Americans and the West.” In its 2023 annual report (*Mission Focused: Confronting the Threat Environment*), the Canadian Security Intelligence Service noted that IMVE-motivated terrorism within Canada remained a prime threat, religiously motivated attacks in particular would likely rise in 2024. “CSIS assesses inspired attacks across the globe will continue during 2024, at an unpredictable pace, related in part to world events... [and] charismatic RMVE leaders in Canada continue to use international events to amplify their propaganda to radicalize and recruit vulnerable individuals while encouraging both domestic acts of violence and international travel to conflict zones.”

Since the October 7 Hamas terror attacks, Europe has seen a disturbing rise in religiously motivated terror-related arrests, with nearly two-thirds of the cases since October 2023 involving teenagers. At the time of writing, the most recent example involved a knife attack in late August in Solingen, Germany, that killed three people and wounded eight. The suspect, a 26-year-old Syrian immigrant, was allegedly inspired by Islamic State ideology.

The attack took place less than three months after a similar attack in Mannheim, an ethnically diverse city in the country’s west, just over 200 kilometres south of Solingen. In that case, a knife-wielding Afghan refugee allegedly attacked a crowd gathered for an anti-immigrant rally, killing a police officer who tried to intervene.

Still in Germany, police foiled a terrorist plot targeting the Euro 2024 soccer tournament hours before the final game between England and Spain. And, of course, there was the high-profile Islamic State-inspired attack in Moscow in March of this year, and the cancellation of Taylor Swift concerts in Vienna in August due to a threat from jihadist-motivated, Islamic State-inspired terrorists aged 19



## Contrary to the opinions of some terrorism “experts” – the threat of jihadist-motivated terrorism in Canada has not dissipated.

and 17 years of age. The suspects in the foiled plot reportedly sought to kill “tens of thousands” of fans before the CIA discovered intelligence that disrupted the planning and led to arrests, according to the agency’s deputy director.

### **Terror on the home front?**

Closer to home, Canadians are increasingly concerned about the threat of rising jihadist-inspired terrorism.

Prior to ongoing Hamas-Israel war, Canadian authorities had charged only a handful of individuals for jihadist-motivated terrorism. Recent cases include a knife attack by an ISIL adherent in British Columbia and an instance of incitement/recruitment in support of terrorism in Montreal (both events happened in 2023). But within the past few months alone, there have been five separate incidents where Canadians or people with domicile in Canada have either launched jihadist-motivated attacks or been involved in their planning. On July 22, 2024, a Canadian citizen armed with a knife attempted to attack an armed civilian security unit southern Israel near the Gaza border. Authorities killed the assailant during the attack. The following day, a court in the United Kingdom convicted Khaled Hussein, a Canadian citizen living in Edmonton, of being a member of the Al-Muhajiroun – a proscribed group under the UK’s *Terrorism Act*. And a week later, the RCMP arrested Ahmed Fouad Mostafa Eldidi, 62, and his son, Mostafa Eldidi,

26, near Toronto. The pair now face nine different terrorism charges, including conspiracy to commit murder on behalf of the Islamic State. The latter case has also raised questions regarding how the elder Eldidi specifically gained access to Canada after being allegedly identified in a 2015 video depicting the dismemberment of an Islamic State prisoner. This case is currently before the courts.

On August 22, 2024, authorities laid terror charges against a young offender in the Greater Toronto Area for inciting terrorism. Little information has emerged regarding the particulars of that investigation. Finally, on September 4, 2024, authorities arrested Muhammad Shahzeb Khan, a Pakistani national residing in Toronto, and charged him with allegedly planning a terrorist attack against a synagogue in New York city. Authorities caught him as he tried to cross the Canada-US border. With the arrest coming so close to the anniversary of 9/11, it’s possible that US lawmakers and officials may use the incident to hammer Canada for being too lax on security and immigration screening.

Is the Gaza conflict fuelling the sudden flaring of jihadist-motivated terrorism with Canadian connections? If so, will the threat subside when and if the conflict in Gaza is ultimately resolved? Or will the threat continue over the upcoming months and years in something of a “Back to the Future” post-9/11 scenario?

Time will tell. But clearly – contrary to the opinions of some terrorism “experts” –

the threat of jihadist-motivated terrorism in Canada has not dissipated.

Fortunately, the recent rise in jihadist-motivated attacks have not yet claimed any lives or resulted in any injury. This is in part due to the experience and diligence of national security and law enforcement agencies in Canada, which have a commendable record in mitigating and disrupting jihadist-motivated attacks.

However, history shows that a motivated and determined singular terrorist is quite capable of mayhem, “amateurish” as the planning and attack may be.

If the frequency or lethality jihadist-motivated attacks in Canada rises significantly, then senior policy-makers will be forced to enact the necessary policy, strategy and program measures to counter the growing threat. At the same time, Canada’s national security and law enforcement agencies will need to remain vigilant. As noted in Canada’s one and only national security policy of 2004, “There can be no greater role, no more important obligation for a government, than the protection and safety of its citizens.” Let’s hope there is a clear understanding on the part of senior decision makers of what this obligation entails when it comes to the threat and risk posed by jihadist-motivated terrorism in Canada. ❁

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# Three years after the Taliban's return, Afghanistan is suffering. Here's how Canada can help

*As a country with a long history of involvement in Afghanistan, Canada has both the responsibility and the capacity to make a meaningful difference in the country's future.*

## Khalid Ramizy

When Canada joined the US-led NATO mission to topple the repressive Taliban regime in Afghanistan in 2001, no one could have imagined the fighting would last more than a decade.

By the time the last Canadian troops left in 2014, more than 40,000 Canadian Forces members had served in the war-torn country, and 158 soldiers had given their lives trying to bring freedom and democracy to the people of Afghanistan.

Unfortunately, the fighting continued, and in August 2021, the Taliban returned to power.

It's now been three years since the hardline Islamic regime drove out Afghanistan's legitimate democratic government, and the impact Taliban rule on Afghan society is starkly evident. The regime's radical religious vision remains unchanged from its previous rule between 1996 and 2001. The Taliban is systematically denying the basic rights of people in Afghanistan and imposing severe restrictions on individual freedoms through a misguided interpretation of Sharia law, particularly targeting women and minority groups.

Afghanistan under the Taliban has no freedom of expression, assembly, or the press. The country is a breeding ground for radical extremist groups such as ISKP (a branch of ISIS based in south-central Asia), Al-Qaida, and the TTP (an offshoot



Women, wearing burkas, with a child in Afghanistan in 2009.

(Photo: Marius Arnesen/commons.wikimedia.org)

of the Taliban that operates around the Afghanistan/Pakistan border). Meanwhile, authoritarian regimes like Iran, China, and Russia are seeking a greater role and influence in the war-torn country.

Afghanistan under Taliban rule poses a dire threat to global security, including

Canada's. As a long-standing supporter of democratic values in Afghanistan, Canada must take decisive action to prevent the further growth of extremism, help to thwart authoritarian regimes' ambitions, and actively promote human rights and freedoms in Afghanistan.



## **What is happening in Afghanistan now?**

Since the collapse of the Afghanistan republic government on August 15, 2021, the Taliban have reimposed a regime of fear and repression. The rights of women and girls have been particularly targeted, with education and employment opportunities largely denied to them. According to UNESCO the current authoritarian regime has denied approximately 1.2 million Afghan girls access to secondary schools and universities in Afghanistan. The International Labour Organization reports that Afghan women's employment has witnessed a staggering decline of more than 25 per cent since the Taliban's return. The media is heavily censored, with Afghanistan ranking 178th out of 180 countries in the 2024 World Press Freedom Index. Dissent is met with harsh punishment, including arbitrary arrests and extrajudicial killings.

Humanitarian crises have deepened, with more than 28 million people – over two-thirds of the population – relying on humanitarian aid for survival, and nearly more than food insecurity. The healthcare system is in shambles, with critical shortages of medical supplies and personnel. Recent human rights surveys highlight the Taliban regime's hostility towards and active persecution of minority groups, including Hazaras, Shias, Sikhs, and Hindus, who consistently face threats and attacks. Additionally, the rapid growth of ISKP within the country and an expanding network of Taliban Madrasas pose further challenges as they brainwash Afghan youth to propagate their ideology.

The Taliban's rule has not only reversed two decades of progress but is emboldening extremist groups across the region. The turmoil and instability has opened the door to authoritarian regimes like China exploit Afghanistan's natural resources for its own interests and use the country as a hub to consolidate its influence.



*The Taliban's rule has not only reversed two decades of progress but is emboldening extremist groups across the region.*

### **How Canada can make a difference in Afghanistan?**

Canada played a crucial role in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2014. It actively fought the Taliban and trained the Afghan National Army and Police, contributing to NATO's security efforts. Beyond military involvement, Canada focused on reconstruction, improving infrastructure, healthcare, education, and women's rights. Canadians also provided substantial humanitarian aid and supported elections and governance reforms. Canada invested heavily in the country to support human rights and democratic values. Now, it must act against the Taliban's oppressive regime as well as the bad actors who seek to profit from the country's misery.

Some concrete steps include:

#### **• Support civic resistance**

Based on insights from the "Toronto Dialogue on Afghanistan," organized by the Macdonald-Laurier Institute and the World Anti Extremism Network last March, further military action to restore democracy in Afghanistan is unrealistic. Therefore, Canada should take meaningful steps to support grassroots organizations, scholars, media, women's groups, traditional civil society, and community development councils. This includes

empowering religious scholars who can produce counter-narratives to the extremist ideologies propagated by the Taliban, as well as supporting organizations on the ground that are working for human dignity and pluralism.

#### **• Re-envision Canada's role**

The Canadian government should seek a more constructive role in Afghanistan. Since departing the country, Canada has noticeably shown little interest in addressing the current issues facing Afghanistan. Canada should seek to be an active changemaker.

#### **• Recognize gender apartheid as a crime**

Canada can collaborate with Afghan women activists and human rights organizations to amplify their voices and advocate for the recognition of gender apartheid as a crime against humanity in Afghanistan.

#### **• Humanitarian aid**

Canada can increase its humanitarian aid and adjust its sanctions to address the ongoing crises in Afghanistan, including food insecurity, healthcare shortages, and education gaps. By working with international organizations and NGOs, Canada can ensure that aid reaches those most in need, particularly women, children, and minority groups. This aid must be transparent and include strong accountability measures to prevent it from falling into the hands of the Taliban.

#### **• Supporting refugees and allies**

Since August 2021, Canada has welcomed 53,690 Afghans whose lives were in danger due to their involvement with Canadian organizations and military forces. Canada can continue to offer asylum and resettlement programs for Afghan refugees, particularly those who worked with Canadian forces or NGOs. Additionally, Canada should support Afghanistan's neighbouring countries, which are hosting large numbers of Afghan refugees.

• **Countering authoritarian influence and exploitation**

As authoritarian regimes like China, Iran, and Russia increasingly collaborate and exert influence in Afghanistan, Canada can play a crucial role in supporting NGOs, scholars, and activists to counter these interventions. In particular, China is extracting Afghanistan's mineral resources without proper agreements, exploiting the country's wealth while allegedly supporting terrorism in the region. Furthermore, China is now attempting to influence the work and activities of NGOs in Afghanistan, undermining their efforts to promote human rights and democratic values. Canada must take practical actions to support local and

and sustain themselves. By funding and mentoring these entrepreneurial ventures, Canada can help Afghan women gain economic independence and resilience, empowering them to contribute to their communities and resist the oppressive restrictions imposed by the Taliban.

• **Supporting the Afghan diaspora in Canada**

Canada should support the Afghan diaspora living within its borders to enable them to play a significant role in Afghanistan's future political landscape. Strengthening and empowering the Afghan intellectual community in Canada is a vital way to contribute to the stability

**Conclusion**

Three years after the Taliban's return to power, Afghanistan faces a dire situation marked by severe human rights violations, the suppression of freedoms, and the growing influence of extremist and authoritarian forces.

As a country with a long history of involvement in Afghanistan, Canada has both the responsibility and the capacity to make a meaningful difference in the country's future. By supporting civic resistance, re-envisioning its role, and increasing humanitarian aid, Canada can help mitigate the suffering of the Afghan people and counter the dangerous ideologies spreading across the region.



*Canada must take a proactive leadership role, strengthening international collaboration to build a stable, inclusive, and democratic Afghanistan.*

international organizations that resist these authoritarian influences, providing funding, resources, and platforms for these groups. This support is essential to prevent the ideological manipulation of Afghan youth towards extremism or authoritarian socialism, which could destabilize Afghanistan and harm its democratic future.

• **Supporting girls' education and economic empowerment**

With the severe restrictions on girls' education in Afghanistan, Canada can make a meaningful impact by offering scholarships and opportunities for Afghan girls to study abroad, providing them with the education they are denied at home. Additionally, Canada can support the entrepreneurial initiatives of Afghan women, who are now turning to small businesses as one of the few ways to work

and future governance of Afghanistan. By providing resources and platforms for the Afghan diaspora to engage in meaningful political dialogue and initiatives, Canada can ensure that these individuals are well-positioned to influence positive change in Afghanistan's future.

• **International collaboration and leadership**

Canada must increase its collaboration with international partners and assume an active role in addressing the ongoing challenges in Afghanistan. By leading international initiatives, Canada can encourage other countries to support the establishment of an inclusive and democratic Afghanistan. This includes advocating for coordinated efforts to protect human rights, promote education, and support economic development.

Further, by recognizing gender apartheid as a crime, supporting Afghan refugees and allies, and actively countering authoritarian influence, Canada can stand as a defender of human rights and democratic values. Additionally, providing educational opportunities for Afghan girls and empowering women economically will be crucial steps in ensuring that Afghanistan does not lose its next generation to oppression. Finally, Canada must take a proactive leadership role, strengthening international collaboration to build a stable, inclusive, and democratic Afghanistan.

Through these actions, Canada can fulfill its commitment to Afghanistan, helping to secure a future where all Afghans can live in dignity and freedom. ❁

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constructive *important* forward-thinking  
excellent *high-quality* insightful  
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– The Honourable Jody Wilson-Raybould

I commend Brian Crowley and the team at **MLI** for your laudable work as one of the leading policy think tanks in our nation's capital. The Institute has distinguished itself as a thoughtful, empirically based and non-partisan contributor to our national public discourse.

– The Right Honourable Stephen Harper

May I congratulate **MLI** for a decade of exemplary leadership on national and international issues. Through high-quality research and analysis, **MLI** has made a significant contribution to Canadian public discourse and policy development. With the global resurgence of authoritarianism and illiberal populism, such work is as timely as it is important. I wish you continued success in the years to come.

– The Honourable Irwin Cotler

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