

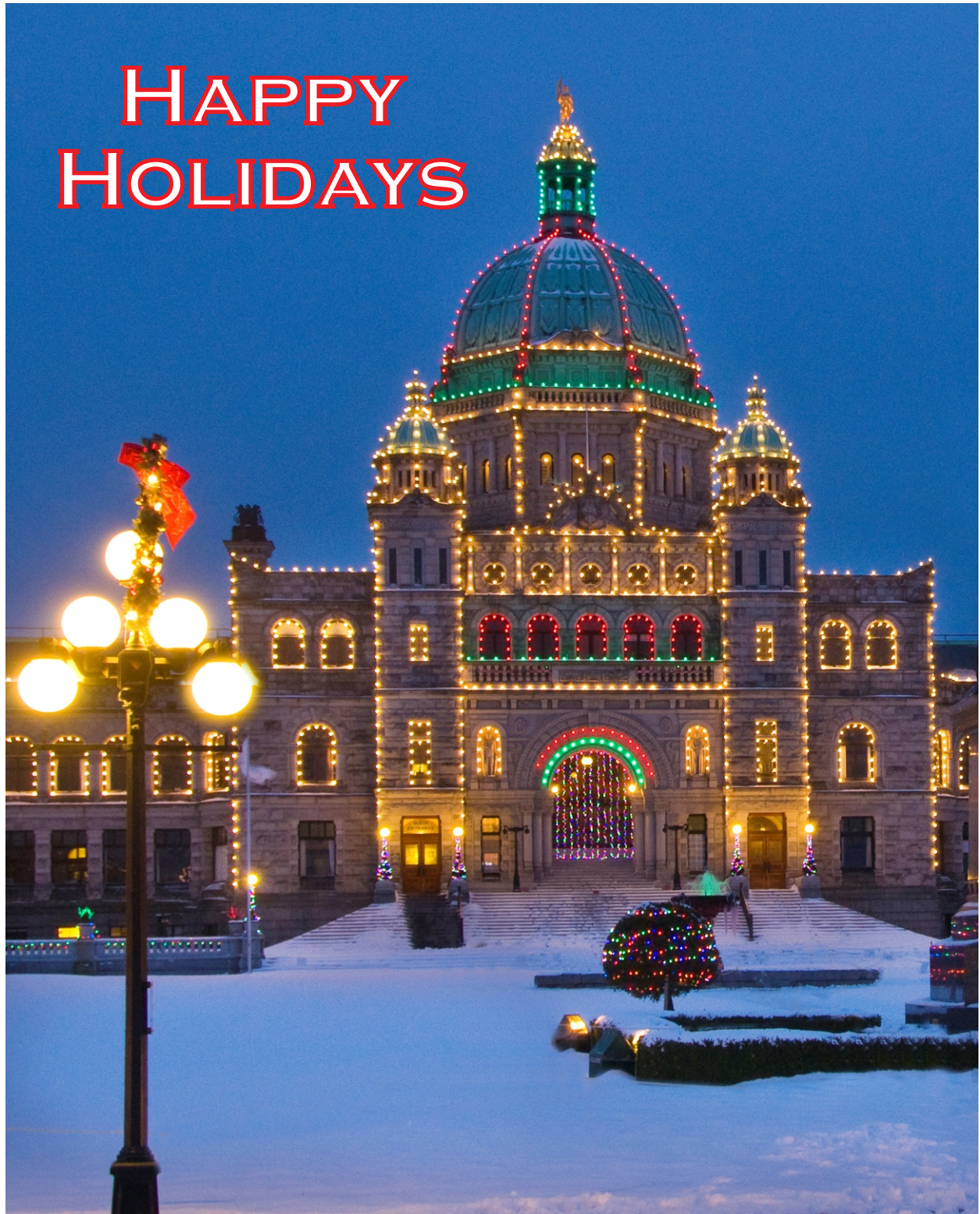


# Orders of the Day

*The Publication of the Association of Former MLAs of British Columbia*

Volume 25, Number 10

December 2019



## HAPPY HOLIDAYS

Photo Credit: John Yanyshyn / Visions West Photography

**Her Honour**

**The Honourable Janet Austin, OBC**

Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia

*Orders of the Day* is published regularly throughout the year, and is circulated to Association members, all MLAs now serving in Legislature, other interested individuals and organizations.

Material for the newsletter is always welcome and should be sent in written form to:

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*The Association of Former MLAs of British Columbia is strictly non-partisan, regardless of members' past or present political affiliation. Founded in 1987, the Association was formally established by an Act of the British Columbia Legislature on February 10, 1998.*

*Orders of the Day was conceived, named and produced in its early stages by Bob McClelland, former MLA and cabinet minister, following his retirement from office. Hugh Curtis ably helmed this publication up through May 2014.*

# Thank You and Miscellany

**Thank you** to those of you who, when sending in your Member dues or subscription renewals, add a donation to help cover production costs for the newsletter.

### **Dues, Subscriptions and Donations**

**Marc Dalton, Maple Ridge**

# From the Editor's Desk

The festive season is upon us and, once again, we are blessed to have a special Yuletide offering from the AFMLABC's Honourary Life Member and resident storyteller, Jim Hume. Christmases in the 1930s in the Midlands of England were humble celebrations for the Hume clan, but their rituals touched the heart ... as you will discover on Page 13. This month Jim turns 96 and he's going strong, still crafting articles and telling poignant tales with a deft touch. I know you all join me in wishing him a Merry Holiday and Happy Birthday.

Many thanks as well to former MLA and association director Cliff Serwa, who sent us a piece of shattered stained glass that he gathered up in the aftermath of the assault on the Legislature by rogue Clayoquot protesters in March 1993. Cliff's thoughts on the fragility of our democratic institutions can be found on Page 10.

Our friends in the Legislative Library sent me many media clippings from that day to refresh my memory. The package included a Toronto Star story by enviroidy David Suzuki (Headline: "Those anti-logging 'thugs' are our kids"). I do not remember seeing this piece at the time, but 26 years later I am getting a bit of a chuckle knowing that my rant in the next day's newspaper got under the skin of Canada's most annoying doomsday prophet. Suzuki wrote: "The media loved it. 'RIOT!' was the banner headline in the tabloid Vancouver Province the next day and columnist Brian Kieren cranked up the invective: 'I have never witnessed a more disgusting display of lawless disrespect.' (He must cover a pretty tame beat!)"

A belated thanks goes out to Mr. Suzuki for the plug ... his crime being not spelling my name correctly.

As 2019 fades to black, it's hard to comprehend where the time has gone. This year-end issue of OOTD is my 49th since I assumed the editor's duties after the passing of the amazing Hugh Curtis. I feel blessed to have this job and I thank the AFMLABC executive for its ongoing support. Special thanks go to OOTD's production/layout guru Rob Lee ... trust me, there would be no OOTD if Rob went on strike. Thanks also to the board's editorial committee watchdogs: Joan Barton, Irwin Henderson and Penny Priddy. Thanks to our president Jeff who I can count on for wise counsel. And, thanks to my secret agent and partner Donna Hains who quietly catches my typos, saving me from the embarrassment I richly deserve.

Going forward the following three legislated AFMLABC objectives will continue to guide me: To put the knowledge and experience of AFMLABC members at the service of parliamentary democracy; to provide non-partisan support for the parliamentary system of government in BC; and to foster a spirit of community among former MLAs.

# President's Report

As we head into the holiday season and wind down 2019, BC and Canada have certainly seen an active year! As former parliamentarians, we have watched provincial and federal elections this year. As interested politicians, we know a federal minority parliament will make Ottawa-watching a true spectator sport over the coming months!

Here at home, in this issue of OOTD we have an excellent article by the Premier of the 91st BC Youth Parliament, Ranil Prasad. Every year, youth gather in Victoria from across BC to participate in debates, QP and other activities in the Legislature. As readers know, through the Hugh Curtis Memorial Fund, the Association of Former MLAs of BC sponsors two BCYP members from outside the Capital Region to attend the December Youth Parliament. It is vital that we support these young people, encouraging them to be engaged in our democratic institutions. There are more than a few former MLAs who actually 'got their start' as youth parliamentarians.

I would like to thank our new Executive Member Ian Waddell for his article on the activities of the federal and

provincial associations of former parliamentarians. Ian brings to the table valuable insight and experience as a result of his engagements with these associations across the nation.

We look forward to eliciting articles, letters, comment from readers on subjects related to democracy, democratic institutions, BC electoral history, etc. You, our readers, have a wealth of experience and perspectives; sharing these with Orders of the Day will benefit all our subscribers.

Finally, at this time of year, it is important that we look to those is our communities who may be struggling and support those agencies meeting the needs of our most vulnerable. Also, I hope you take time to share the holiday season with friends and family, and enjoy that we live in one of the safest and best places in the world.

On behalf of the Executive, I wish you all the best this holiday season!



President Jeff Bray

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**HELPING WHEN LIFE CHANGES**

## Question Period ... provides fodder for the media

**(Editor's note: Martha Dow's report on the Role of Members prepared for the Office of the Speaker focused on several governance issues including the value of Question Period. She draws heavily on and quotes the research of Andrea Ulrich, a Senior Policy Analyst for the Government of Saskatchewan. Martha's report below has been edited for space.)**

The purpose of Question Period is to provide the legislative branch with an accountability mechanism to exercise oversight of the powerful executive branch. In practice, Question Period is mainly for the Opposition and yet, at both the provincial and federal levels, it is not designed in a manner that supports meaningful discussion and debate about substantive issues impacting British Columbians and, more broadly, Canadian citizens.

There is little debate that the stated purpose of any government's Question Period is to encourage transparency and public accountability of the executive council and individual ministers. However, Andrea Ulrich's discussion of the federal government is relevant to the provincial level, noting that it "seems at once to be the best known and the most misunderstood activity of ... government."

Yet of all the work that happens in the House of Commons, Question Period ranks least in importance in terms of actually accomplishing anything. Generally, the key criticisms are "that Question Period lacks depth and meaningful discussion, that its participants lack decorum, and that the representation of that debate lacks enlightened reflection." Instead, some BC participants (in the Speaker's stakeholder meetings) emphasized a primary role of Question Period as providing fodder for the media.

Importantly, it is argued that Question Period contributes to the disillusionment of youth as they increasingly see politics as partisan, and at times personal and hostile when the system was purportedly designed to be elected officials representing their constituents in and to government. At a provincial level, the substantive vacuum that can be Question Period is perhaps best summarized by Ulrich's phrase: "It's Question Period, not Answer Period."

In addition to concerns about the substantive value of Question Period as it is presently constituted, there are also concerns about the decorum in the legislature such as heckling and even word choices and tone, contributing to the alienation of "outsiders." These outsider groups, including the general and specialized publics, see these behaviours as out of step with the rest of society and, more specifically, workplace expectations. For some, Question Period is simply a performance, and the posturing has the consequence of acting as a deterrent to women and other under-represented voices who find these tactics unappealing and unproductive.

In discussing the federal system, Ulrich asserts that "in fact, the idea of Question Period as theatre touches on all major areas of current criticism – that the dialogue is simply scripted and lacks depth and meaning, that the 'actors' are amateurish and lack poise, and that the 'critics,' or media, do a poor job representing the spectacle to the public." Similarly, (other students of governance) note that legislative politics in Canadian provinces are almost entirely party politics, marked by a primal and relentlessly adversarial division between the government and the opposition, defined primarily in terms of parties.

Not surprisingly, some stakeholders argued heckling is an integral part of the adversarial system and supports greater accountability while also conceding that there can be a public perception that this behaviour is, at the very least, unbecoming, contributing to further disillusionment with politicians and the efficacy of the Legislative Assembly. A more salient thread is that it is increasingly difficult to deal with the disconnect between behavioural and cultural norms in the House and in broader society, particularly as schools are dealing with bullying, harassment, marginalization, and inappropriate comments.

Ulrich argues that "the problems facing Question Period reflect institutional flaws: firstly, the dysfunctional relationship between government and the media; and secondly, the problem of public engagement with politics and public demand for quality information and analysis." Some participants reflected on the challenges inherent in the media and government relations as aggravating factors. Efforts to challenge the current form and function of Question Period need to examine and remediate these aspects of systemic engagement.

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The adversarial system is dehumanizing as it is too often accusatory, hostile, and unforgiving.

Traditional Indigenous models of governance have the potential to be more inclusive and accessible, in part, because they are characterized by grace, natural forms of leadership, and consensus decision-making. In thinking about the adversarial and too often aggressive nature of the system, a participant noted that "any system that doesn't foster those values of humility, truth, bravery, love and respect is ... violating the human gifts we've been given."



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## Here's how they do it in Britain's House of Commons

According to a recent Nanos Research survey, 65 per cent of Canadians think Question Period is "politically charged theatre that should be improved."

Nik Nanos, chairman of Nanos Research, believes QP could be improved if Canada were to adopt a system similar to Britain's Parliament, where under a constitutional convention, the prime minister shows up for "Question Time" to answer MPs' queries every Wednesday afternoon.

In Britain's House of Commons, Question Time takes place for an hour, Monday to Thursday, after preliminary proceedings and private business. Each government department answers questions according to a rota called the Order of Oral Questions.

Questions asked must relate to the responsibilities of the government department concerned. Commons oral questions are tabled by MPs at least three days in advance of the Question Time the relevant government department is due to answer. The order in which the questions are asked is determined by the 'shuffle,' carried out randomly by a computer.

On the day the questions are due to be asked, they are printed in "Business Today" in the Order Paper.

MPs who are called by the Speaker to ask their question do not read it out, but simply call out its number. When the government minister has replied, the MP can ask one further question, known as a supplementary. Other MPs may also be called to ask supplementary questions at the

discretion of the Speaker. The minister must reply to each in turn. Supplementary questions must be on the same subject as the original question.

The prime minister answers questions from MPs in the Commons every sitting Wednesday from 12 p.m. to 12:30 p.m.

The session usually starts with a routine question from an MP about the PM's engagements. This is known as an "open question" and means that the MP can then ask a supplementary question on any subject.

Following the answer, the MP then raises a particular issue, often one of current political significance. The Leader of the Opposition then follows up on this or another topic, being permitted to ask a total of six questions. The Leader of the Opposition is the only MP who is allowed to come back with further questions.

Most MPs will table the same question about the PM's engagements, and if they do, only their names will appear on the question book. After the first engagements question has been asked, any other MPs who have tabled the same question are simply called to ask an untabled, supplementary question.

This means, in theory, that the prime minister will not know what questions will be asked of them. However, the prime minister will be extensively briefed by government departments in anticipation of likely subjects they could be asked about.

# Of course Canada is divided, that's the point of elections

(Editor's note: Here's one final kick at the post-election cat. In the November issue of OOTD the Vancouver Sun's Daphne Braham asked if there can ever be a "triumph of politics over geography" and pollster Frank Graves declared that "we've seen the fault line of the country laid bare." Pretty bleak, eh? This month, Tye contributing editor Crawford Kilian tells us to give our heads a shake ... elections are all about winners and losers. And, on Page 8 we discover that addressing the priorities Canadians are identifying as most important to them will be challenging at best, given clashing regional and partisan concerns.)

By Crawford Kilian

Some Albertans are once again talking about leaving Canada, as if the election, not economic and climate realities, was responsible for the oil and gas sector's woes.

Predictably, the media's post-election hangover features what you might call a splitting headache — and the claim that divisiveness is suddenly stalking the land.

"Canada is truly divided now," lamented one commentator. "Election results reflect a divided nation," Chantal Hébert told her readers. Another pundit bemoaned "a divided Parliament."

Saskatchewan's Premier Scott Moe predictably said the Liberals have "divided our nation."

Just as predictably, Justin Trudeau promised "we'll govern for everyone," as if he'd been thinking along Trumpian lines about governing only for his supporters and then thought better of it.

Worse yet, the shocking appearance of a "regional split" stunned the media as they contemplated the Canadian Prairies bluer than the skies above them.

How could Canada, the Peaceable Kingdom, survive these tectonic fractures?

These responses are a little baffling, since the whole point of every election is to divide the nation by offering it choices, counting who chose what, and declaring someone the winner. "Elect" means "choose," after all. We don't have much respect for countries where the incumbent wins by 99 per cent. However united they may appear, their citizens have no real choice.

It would make more sense to welcome the election outcome as a fairly accurate self-diagnosis. Rather than deluding ourselves that all is well, we now have to recognize that Quebec is over its crush on the NDP and back in the



sovereignty business. The Bloc Québécois may be "progressive," but only on its own nationalist terms.

Similarly, we may welcome the erasure of the People's Party and the departure of Maxime Bernier. But, we must remember that 1.6 per cent of us — 292,703 Canadians — still thought he was a good guy with good ideas. Those ideas will persist indefinitely — just as Trumpism will long outlast Trump.

As for the Prairies, even they are far from monolithic. The election divided Alberta and Saskatchewan into Conservative majorities and Liberal/NDP minorities; yet the Tories in those provinces ignore the frustration of their unrepresented progressive neighbours.

By the same token, we can ignore the Prairie Conservatives' frustration at being excluded from Trudeau's new cabinet. Losers get excluded. And even if Liberals had been elected in Alberta and Saskatchewan and recruited into cabinet, the Conservatives would still have been disgruntled and unrepresented.

One useful lesson of the Conservatives' victory on the Prairies is that they have reverted to their cherished Sore Winner role. While an Alberta oil executive warned of separation, #Wexit gained the dubious legitimacy of trending on Twitter.

For those of us with fond memories of the Western Canada Concept and Preston Manning's early Reform Party ("The West wants in"), the current fuss sounds like the last few fusses.

This too is useful knowledge for the rest of Canada: a majority of Prairie Conservatives are so invested in their self-image as operators of the country's fossil-fuelled "economic engine" that any change in that image becomes an existential threat.

The rest of us may roll our eyes, but the election shows that most Prairie Conservatives (and perhaps most Tories nationally) are simply incapable of understanding that economies must change with the climate. The Prairie fossil fuel economy is predictably doomed; the trick is to develop new energy sources in a fraction of the time it took to develop the oilsands. The Conservatives seem deeply unwilling to learn that trick.

If we can learn about others from the divisions created by elections and adapt accordingly, you would think that others could learn about us. Maxime Bernier's populists might pause to consider whether their views are really suitable for complex 21st-century societies. The Bloc might reflect on the widespread hostility to Bill 21 and decide it may have pushed secularism into authoritarianism. And the Conservatives might, by a leap of empathy, understand why so many of us in BC oppose the expansion of the Trans Mountain Pipeline.

Pipeline opponents, meanwhile, should reflect on the fact that Burnaby North-Seymour voted for the pipeline-owning Liberals and rejected two serious foes of the Trans Mountain expansion. A failed argument doesn't mean argument is futile; it means only that more arguments are needed.

As for the Canadian media, they might ease up on the easy thumb suckers about divisiveness and fractures and speculation about which leader has benefited or lost ground. Politics is about running the country, not who's going to win the Great Canadian Baking Show.

Focus instead on the self-diagnosis in the election results, and explore possible remedies for all our ailments: Progressive Narcissism, the Tories' Prairie Victimization Syndrome, the Bloc's Passive-Aggressive Separatism, and the Liberals' High-Functioning Climate Denialism.

The next election will trigger them all over again, and that election could be sooner than we think.

**(Writer and author Crawford Kilian was born in New York City in 1941. He was raised in Los Angeles and Mexico City, and was educated at Columbia University (BA '62) and Simon Fraser University (MA '72). He served in the US Army from 1963 to 1965 and moved to Vancouver in 1967. He became a naturalized Canadian in 1973. He is a contributing editor of The Tyee.)**

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# Parliament resumes; Canadians weigh in

The resumption of Parliament this month represents a chance at a fresh start for the Trudeau government, but will his minority administration be able to address the priorities Canadians are identifying as most important to them?

A new study from the non-profit Angus Reid Institute suggests success will be challenging at best, given clashing regional and partisan concerns.

In western provinces, a clear emphasis emerges on the Trans Mountain pipeline and a stronger voice in Ottawa.

For eastern provinces, emissions reduction and climate change policy are top of mind, alongside health care and tax cuts for low- and middle-income earners.

Despite this, more than half of Canadians look to a reopening of government business with optimism: six-in-10 say a minority mandate in the House of Commons will be a chance for parties to come together over shared priorities, while four-in-10 say that they expect more of a legislative logjam than a path to productivity.

So, where can the Trudeau government find common ground? A plan to raise the income tax exemption to \$15,000 for those earning under \$147,000 per year is a start. That issue receives the most across-the-board support.

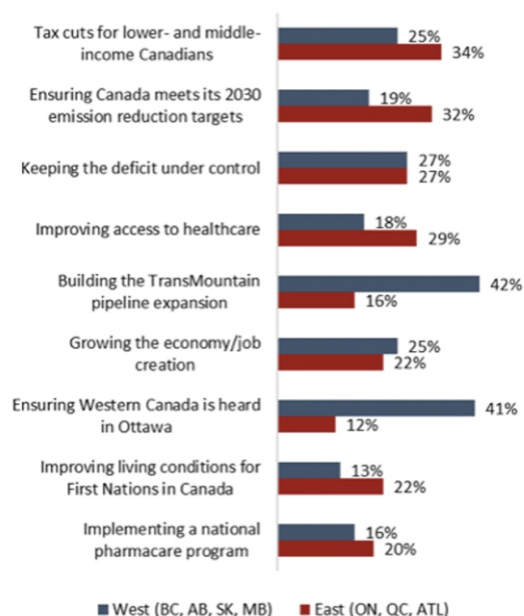
And, as the Liberal government looks for opportunities to work with other parties on policy, it will need to overcome a widespread sense that Ottawa is disinterested in representing certain parts of the country. Ontario residents are more than twice as likely to say that they feel well-represented compared to those living in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

Canadians' agenda for the new Liberal minority government largely reflects the issues they identified as most important during the campaign – with a few notable exceptions.

The top issue overall for Canadians heading into the new legislative session is to pass tax cuts for lower- and middle-income Canadians. What is particularly notable about this priority is that it is chosen by at least one-in-four supporters of each party. No other issue enjoys this level of support across party lines.

The second highest issue on the priority list for Trudeau and the Liberals is ensuring that Canada meets its 2030 emission reductions targets signed onto during the Paris Accord. The difference here compared to the taxation issue is the massive priority for Liberal, NDP, Green Party and Bloc Quebecois supporters, compared to nearly zero support from those who supported the CPC. This issue is also much more salient among younger Canadians.

Percentage of residents that consider each a top priority for the new government



Increasing access to healthcare is consistently a top issue for Canadians, and as one may predict, crosses political lines more than many other contentious issues. That said, those who supported the Conservatives in the election would like the federal minority government to tackle other issues with more haste. For at least one-quarter across the rest of the country, healthcare access is top of mind heading into the new parliamentary sitting.

Conservatives would like to see the federal government focus on keeping the deficit under control, and they are joined by three-in-ten Bloc Quebecois supporters. Unfortunately for those voters, the Liberals plan to run deficits of \$27.4 billion in 2020-21, and at least \$21 billion for the three years following. Far fewer Liberal, NDP and Green Party voters say the government should focus efforts on reining in the deficit.

Perhaps the most divisive issue that the minority government will face is the completion of the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion. The Liberals plan to move forward with the project that they purchased in 2018 for more than \$4 billion but have little enthusiasm within their own party ranks. Just 15 per cent of those who supported Trudeau and the LPC in October say this should be a top priority, compared to 52 per cent of CPC voters.

(For the complete study go to:  
<http://angusreid.org/post-election-priorities/>)



# BCYP sets the stage for a national youth gathering

By Ranil Prasad  
Premier, 91st British Columbia Youth Parliament

The 91st British Columbia Youth Parliament (BCYP), in session at the BC Legislature Dec. 27th to 30th, will set the stage for the first-ever Canadian Youth Parliament to be hosted next summer by BCYP here in BC.

BCYP is a service organization for youth from the ages of 16 to 21 from across British Columbia. Whether they come from Terrace, Powell River, Sparwood, Victoria, or Metro Vancouver, our 97 members will have the opportunity to debate legislation and Private Member's Resolutions, participate in Question Period, give Members' Statements, and visit Government House on the invitation of the Lieutenant Governor.

We are proud to have Acting Clerk Kate Ryan-Lloyd serve as Lieutenant-Governor and Artour Sogomonian as Speaker. Members will also have the chance to gain a more comprehensive knowledge of the working of the Legislature via a panel discussion with MLAs, journalists, and BC Legislature staff.

One of the most important pieces of legislation that BCYP members will debate is the Canada Youth Parliament, 2020, the enabling piece of legislation for the 1st Canada Youth Parliament (CYP). If passed, BCYP will host CYP over the Victoria Day long weekend for delegates from across Canada, replacing the Western Canada Youth Parliament, a biannual event that has brought together the four youth parliaments from the western provinces for a joint session since 1983.

BCYP's signature service project is Camp Phoenix, a five-night summer camp for children who, for social or financial reasons, otherwise would not be able to attend. We hope to pass the Camp Phoenix Act, 2020, the enabling piece of legislation for the project. After hosting Camp Phoenix at Camp Barnard in Sooke for several years, we will be moving to Camp McLean in Langley in an attempt to serve as many children as possible. Camp Phoenix is truly unique in the camping world as we are one of the only organizations that offer full travel subsidies for the children who are eligible to attend, waive all registration fees, and provide an almost 1:1 camper to staff ratio.



In addition to the legislation that BCYP's cabinet will be introducing, members also have the chance to introduce Private Member's Resolutions to discuss the hot topics in BC politics. Topics this year will include privatizing auto insurance, electoral reform, and the construction of the Trans Mountain Pipeline. These debates are some of the most popular amongst BCYP members, and if adopted, resolutions will be forwarded to the BC Legislature and other stakeholders.

As someone who is currently serving in their fifth year of BCYP, meeting with other like-minded youth is an incredible opportunity. In an age when apathy and disengagement are becoming cool, building a community of learners within the walls of the Legislature is something that we cannot take for granted. If young people are disengaged from our institutions and our democracy, they will find solutions that are outside democracy; solutions that I do not favour. As a non-partisan organization, BCYP has no interest in supporting or disavowing political causes. While we may be non-partisan, we are partisans for the rights and privileges of Parliament and active citizenship.

Should members of the AFMLABC want to give greetings on the floor of the Legislature, they are more than welcome to contact me directly at [premier@bcyp.org](mailto:premier@bcyp.org) to organize a time between December 27th and 30th. Written letters of greetings can also be sent to the same email address. If any members are in town, they are also more than welcome to watch the proceeding from the gallery during regular office hours.

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Cliff Serwa shares a shard

# Stained glass from the Leg sharpens our memories

By Brian Kieran  
Editor, OOTD

As I was assembling material for this issue, former MLA Cliff Serwa sent me what he described as “a memento of the unforgettable day when an environmental protest group stormed the Buildings and tried to break into the Legislative Chambers when we were in Session.”

Cliff wrote: “You will recall that one of the Sergeant-at-Arms security personnel was injured while holding the doors closed. In the process, one of the stained glass panes was broken. I was fairly close to that corner, and after order had been returned, I – for some obscure reason – decided to pick up the bits of glass. Several days later, there was a request asking anyone who had pieces to return them so the colour and design of the original could be matched for a new one. I returned all in my possession. Several months passed and I was pleasantly surprised to have the packet of glass returned to me.

“I wanted to do something with the glass to ensure that the event was not forgotten and to remind colleagues that democracy is fragile and vulnerable to violence. I wrote a few words, glued a piece of glass to each sheet and sent every MLA, cabinet ministers, Premier Mike Harcourt and the three legislative clerks a reminder of the event and the lessons earned.

“You, Brian, are receiving the last piece of that pane. I hope that you will appreciate being reminded of a unique piece of history, and as a bonus, you now have an original piece of glass from the doors leading into the Legislative Chamber.”

Thank you, Cliff.

Indeed, that day – March 18, 1993 – was a traumatic one and I am grateful that Cliff jogged my memory so many years later. That shard of stained glass will be framed and hang on my office wall, a poignant reminder of what Cliff so accurately reminds us is a fragile democracy.

I was in the thick of the action that day, later on writing my Province newspaper column, “Reliable Sources,” from my perch in the Legislature Press Gallery. While I pounded the keys, Sergeant-at-Arms guard Gary Miller, a veteran, was in surgery for a fractured hip and broken pelvis. As I recall, he was an avid golfer and the attack ended that. Like many of my colleagues I was mad as hell.



*The Vancouver Sun's* Stephen Hume – son of Jim Hume – wrote: “Personally, I thought the strategy of trying to disrupt traditional ceremonies surrounding the Throne Speech was as dumb as a bag of hammers.”

In the next day's paper, I fumed: “In a dozen years of covering politics I have never witnessed a more disgusting display of lawless disrespect than was offered up yesterday by opponents of logging in Clayoquot Sound. Even though they are often annoying, their right to spout nonsense in front of the legislature is as sacred as the government's right to conduct the peoples' business within.

“Yesterday they went too far. They became a mob. They knocked down and injured an elderly commissioner. They charged into the rotunda and through the Golden Gates. They smashed the stained-glass doors of the chamber.

“Yesterday, the enviro-loonies became anarchists. If I were Premier Mike Harcourt, I'd pave the Clayoquot.”

That last sentence took on a life of its own in the Press Gallery. Of course, I did not want to pave the Clayoquot, but it reflected the level of anger reached when radical extremists push otherwise rationale observers to the wall. Thankfully, we have come a long way since that dark day a quarter century ago.

# Member News

Please send news about your activities to [ootd.afmlabc@gmail.com](mailto:ootd.afmlabc@gmail.com) for the next newsletter.

## Former members from across Canada gathered in Quebec

By Ian Waddell  
AFMLABC Director and Secretary

Former parliamentarians, both federal and provincial, gathered in historic Quebec City in the last week of October, hosted by Amicale des Anciens Parlementaires du Quebec. There were members attending from associations in BC, Alberta, Ontario, Quebec and the national association.

Dorothy Dobbie, former Conservative MP from Manitoba, attended in her capacity as President of the Canadian Association of Former Parliamentarians (CAFP) and reported nationally after a regional meeting in Newfoundland. I was fortunate to represent BC as a director of our AFMLABC. I also wore my national hat as President of the CAFP Educational Foundation.

It was a unique opportunity to learn from each other and to share ideas, not to mention savouring Quebec City's great food and hospitality. On the way to Quebec, I was invited by David Warner, former Ontario Speaker, to attend the Ontario group's annual general meeting. My Facebook picture with Premier Doug Ford did raise some eyebrows among my NDP friends!

Here are a couple of items I found interesting:

The Ontario association gets a \$51,000 grant from its legislature plus an office and a part-time staffer and legislature privileges, mailings etc. They have about 170 members including some honorary members (over 80 years) who don't pay membership fees. Their foundation organizes student programs in the legislature and travels abroad with students. They have a YouTube channel consisting of videos of members, and they produce a good PowerPoint presentation to support members who go out to speak to students.

The Manitoba and Quebec associations have archived videos of former members with Quebec putting them on the Parliamentary Channel (something for the AFMLABC to consider?). The Quebec association has 268 members and charges \$75 per year. It also has a very active women's committee.

The Ottawa-based CAFP (where all the money resides) has two full-time staff shared by the Spouses Association (yes, this is Ottawa), an office, mailing privileges, and a financial contribution from government.

Our CAFP Educational Foundation is revamping its Parliament to Campus Program to reach out to young people to promote democracy and hopes to raise funds by hosting a new Nation Builders Award (former prime ministers).



*Our man in Quebec, Ian Waddell, shares some camaraderie with France Dionne, President of Amicale des Anciens Parlementaires du Quebec, and the Speaker of the Quebec National Assembly Francois Paradis.*

Some reflections: All groups are looking at renaming themselves from "former" to "alumni" or "council of." All are looking at new ways of raising funds.

Almost to a person, there was concern about threats to the institutions of democracy, especially abroad. But, there is a recognition that Canada is not immune. Also, there is concern about growing political polarization and a lack of civility in debate. Association leaders across Canada want to reach out to a new generation of legislators.

As I reported to the assembled association representatives in Quebec City, we have in BC an active President in Jeff Bray and an excellent magazine, Orders of the Day edited by Brian Kieran. And, we have a group of BCers with direct experience in the practice of democracy and thus a message to pass on to this new generation.

By the grace of Speaker Darryl Plecas, we received some financial assistance last year, and we routinely receive support with printing and mailing OOTD. I recommend we explore more ways we can improve our fiscal sustainability. A good starting point may be an examination of the funding models of other associations to identify what might be applicable in our circumstances.

# HOLIDAY DIVERSIONS

Answers on  
bottom of Page 15

## Holiday Animation Quiz

by Rob Lee

December TV viewing is filled with fare for the young at heart, including these titles: Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer (1964), Frosty the Snowman (1969), Santa Claus is Coming to Town (1970) and The Little Drummer Boy (1968). These animation and stop motion classics featured the voice talents of famous actors and entertainers - can you guess them?

Choose an answer for each numbered question and transfer the letters to the numbered blanks at the bottom. When completed, the answer will be the creative minds of the four movies.

- 1) This actor, who voiced Ben Hared in The Little Drummer Boy, won the Oscar in 1950 for his portrayal of a swordsman.  
ERROL FLYNN                      JOSE FERRER
- 2) This character actor appeared in movies with his father Ed, and was the voice of the Winter Warlock in Santa Claus is Coming to Town.  
KEENAN A WYNN                      JOHN HUSTON
- 3) He was the voice of Kris Kringle in Santa Claus is Coming to Town, and a veteran of Busby Berkeley musicals.  
DICK POWELL                      MICKEY ROONEY
- 4) In Frosty the Snowman, this entertainer with a prominent proboscis was the narrator and sang the title tune.  
JIMMY DDURANTE                      W.C. FIELDS
- 5) This stand up comedian, discovered by Steve Allen in a club in Windsor, Ontario, voiced Frosty the Snowman many times.  
JACKIE MASON                      JACKIE VERNON
- 6) He's the voice of narrator Sam the Snowman in Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer, and known for singing the title tune.  
BURL IVES                      ANDY WILLIAMS
- 7) He's the narrator in Santa Claus is Coming to Town, but this singer/dancer is much better known for the movie Holiday Inn.  
BING CROSBY                      FRED ASTAIRE
- 8) This Canadian actor supplies the voice of Hermy in Frosty the Snowman and Spiderman in the original animated series.  
JOHN VERNON                      PAUL SOLES

1   2   2   3   4   5   /   6   7   7   8

## Christmas Scramble

Unscramble these three words  
one letter to each square,  
to form three holiday words

by Rob Lee

DOLC  
□ □ ○ □

GLITH  
□ ○ □ □ □ □

SLEEV  
○ □ □ □ □ □



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Ans: HE “ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ” IT

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Nanaimo Harbour	20m	2h, 44m	2h, 24m
FROM VICTORIA	✈	🚗/🚲	SAVE
Richmond, YVR South	30m	3h, 16m	2h, 46m
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# Young Jim Hume ... with cleaned knees for God

By Jim Hume  
The Old Islander

Saturday night was bath night – except at Christmas when, whatever the day, the late afternoon hours of Christmas Eve were organized for special ablutions based on Saturday night tradition. A battered galvanized tin tub was brought into the kitchen from the backyard, plunked in front of the kitchen fire and half-filled with buckets of cold water plus a couple of kettles of boiling water. Just enough to take the chill off.

With sister Doris on enforced visit to the neighbours during the cleansing of her brothers, the ritual began, changed only from our regular Saturday night splash by more vigorous scrubbing. My brother Tom, four years my senior, was deemed old enough and responsible enough to bathe himself. I was not. For me, a strong-armed mother was needed to make sure every visible patch of my 10-year old body gleamed.

Hands, elbows, and behind the ears got special attention. Fingernails were trimmed and every speck of grime removed. Hair, shampooed and dried, was combed reasonably straight and I was eventually proclaimed clean enough to wear freshly laundered pyjamas and ready for bed.

Next morning, we would be up and about for a fairly early breakfast which, it being Christmas Day, would offer rare treats of eggs and bacon, huge slabs of bread and a cup of tea. We were allowed (ordered) to wear our pyjamas while opening recession-modest presents and while eating breakfast. The latter was not a concession to slovenliness but to make sure no egg yolk dripped on soon-to-be worn Christmas Day best suits and ties. With the donning of those ultra cleaned and pressed garments there were more examinations of fingernails, ears, and knees.

We didn't get to wear long pants until we reached the magic age of 14 so clean knees were of prime importance for choir boys representing the house of Hume. Tom qualified for long pants; I didn't. My protests that as all choir boys wore ankle-length cassocks, no one in church ever saw my knees were swept aside with a motherly declaration that "God can see your knees."



*Not actually Jim, but he admits "it's close."*

---

And with that, we would be ushered from the house for the short-block walk to St. Mary's Abbey church, with Tom getting firm last-minute orders to "go straight to church and make sure he (that's me) doesn't get mucky before he gets there."

After morning service, we would meander home, taking care not to get too mucky because we knew there would be another inspection before the big meal of the day to be served at midday. Before we boys could eat, we had to change our clothes because we had an evening service to sing, and gravy stains on nice white shirts could undoubtedly also be seen by God.

After the meal – usually an elderly chicken donated by Granddad Jimmy Startin, my mother's father – loaded with vegetables and dumplings and followed by Christmas pudding and custard, it was nap time for adults, reading time or playing with newly opened Christmas present board games for the choir boys.

Then a sandwich and cup of tea, the final examination of the day with touch-ups where necessary, the short walk to church and "Evensong" around 5:30 or six. Mother always attended Evensong, beaming with pride. By seven o'clock we walked home together with only gas lamps lighting the winter-dark streets, not talking much.

Then it was hot cocoa and biscuits and bed. Christmas had never been happier. And I wish you all an equal season of happiness leavened with the simple joys and loving strength of family.

## Poignant poppy-stealing pigeon

MELBOURNE (Reuters) – A pigeon was discovered pinching poppies from the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Australia's national war memorial in Canberra and using them to build a colorful nest in the lead-up to Remembrance Day commemorations.

The pigeon had created the nest with the red flowers under the soft light of a stained-glass window at The Australian War Memorial, the West Australian newspaper reported.

"The wounded soldier symbolizes the defining quality of endurance, and the nest of poppies nearby was a poignant reminder of the powerful bond between man and beast on the battlefield," a War Memorial spokesperson told the West Australian.



## In Seoul, they're dying for a better life

SEOUL (Reuters) – A South Korean service is offering free funerals – but only to the living.

More than 25,000 people have participated in mass "living funeral" services at Hyowon Healing Center since it opened in 2012, hoping to improve their lives by simulating their deaths.



"Once you become conscious of death, and experience it, you undertake a new approach to life," said 75-year-old Cho Jae-hee, who participated in a recent living funeral as part of a "dying well" program offered by her senior welfare center.

Dozens took part in the event, from teenagers to retirees, donning shrouds, taking funeral portraits, penning their last testaments, and lying in a closed coffin for around 10 minutes.

South Korea ranks 33 out of 40 countries surveyed in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's Better Life Index. Many younger South Koreans have high hopes for education and employment, which have been dashed by a cooling economy and rising joblessness.

## Meanwhile, in North Korea Kim trots out PR

HUFF POST, U.S.A. – Eat your heart out, Vladimir Putin. North Korean dictator Kim Jong Un seems to want his own Putin moment.

Just as the Russian leader likes to publish "action" photos of himself – including one shirtless on a horse – North Korea's state media has released a few "action" pics of Kim on a horse. In one, he appears to be holding on for dear life as the steed gallops.



The Korean Central News Agency claimed Kim was visiting Mount Paektu. North Korea has mythologized the mountain as the birthplace of Kim's father, Kim Jong Il, who was actually born in the Soviet Union, near Siberia.

The state media report was replete with the usual over-the-top language praising the 35-year-old authoritarian. If the photos were intended to show a heroic leader in command of his nation, they had the opposite effect on social media. Twitter users compared the images to scenes from "Game of Thrones," "Shrek" and "Narnia."

# Len Norris



December 14, 1977

"OK, let's get the economy rolling with some high-profile consumer spending ..."

## An invitation to donate to the Hugh Curtis Memorial Fund

The Victoria Foundation looks forward to receiving donations to the Hugh Curtis Memorial Fund from all of Hugh's well wishers and friends.

**By phone:** Call 250-381-5532 to make a donation by credit card directly via the Victoria Foundation.

**By cheque:** Send cheques to the Victoria Foundation at #109 645 Fort Street, Victoria, BC, V8W 1G2. Please ensure they are made out to The Victoria Foundation. Note the name of the fund in the memo line or in a cover letter.

**Online:** The Victoria Foundation's mechanism for online donations is [CanadaHelps](#) and the steps are:

- Go to [www.victoriafoundation.bc.ca](http://www.victoriafoundation.bc.ca)
- Click on the [Make a Donation](#) button and then on the "Online" link and then the [CanadaHelps](#) link which will take you to the Foundation's page on the CanadaHelps web site.
- Click to indicate whether you want to donate now or monthly and you will be taken through the steps to make your donation.
- In the section for designation of your gift, click on the drop down menu to select the Hugh Curtis Memorial Fund.
- You may pay with VISA, MasterCard, American Express, Interac or through a PayPal account.
- After you pay for your gift, CanadaHelps.org will send you an online receipt.
- There are several privacy permissions available. If you choose to include your name and address in the information which is sent to the Victoria Foundation, the Association will be pleased to acknowledge your gift.

If you have any questions about how to make a donation to the Victoria Foundation, please contact Sara Neely, Director of Philanthropic Services, at 250-381-5532 or [sneely@victoriafoundation.bc.ca](mailto:sneely@victoriafoundation.bc.ca)

## Holiday Diversions answers

Holiday Scramble: COLD, LIGHT, ELVES. Ans. HE "SLEIGHED".  
Holiday Animation Quiz: Jose Ferrer, Keenan Wynn, Mickey Rooney, Jimmy Durante, Jackie Vernon, Burl Ives, Fred Astaire, Paul Soles, RANKIN/BASS

30 years ago this month

## White ribbons remind us of 14 slain women

On December 6, 1989, Marc Lépine entered a mechanical engineering classroom at Montreal's École Polytechnique armed with a semi-automatic weapon. After separating the women from the men, he opened fire on the women while screaming, "You are all feminists."

Fourteen young women were murdered, and 14 other people wounded. Lépine then turned the gun on himself. In his suicide note, he blamed feminists for ruining his life. The note contained a list of "radical feminists," who he said would have been killed if he had not run out of time. It included the names of well-known women in Quebec, including journalists, television personalities, and union leaders.

During his rampage, he entered a classroom and told the three students giving a presentation to "get out," shooting and wounding Maryse Leclair, who was standing on the low platform at the front of the classroom. He fired on students in the front row and then killed two women who were trying to escape the room, while other students dove under their desks.

Lépine moved towards some of the female students, wounding three of them and killing another. He changed the magazine in his weapon and moved to the front of the class, shooting in all directions. At this point, the wounded Leclair asked for help; Lépine unsheathed his hunting knife and stabbed her three times, killing her. He took off his cap, wrapped his coat around his rifle, exclaimed, "Ah shit," and then committed suicide by shooting himself in the head, 20 minutes after having begun his attack.

About 60 unfired cartridges remained in the boxes he carried with him. He had killed 14 women in total (12 engineering students, one nursing student and one employee of the university) and injured 14 others, 10 women and four men.

After briefing reporters outside, Montreal Police director of public relations Pierre Leclair entered the building and found his daughter Maryse's stabbed body.

The Quebec and Montreal governments declared three days of mourning. A joint funeral for nine of the women was held at Notre-Dame Basilica on December 11, 1989, and was attended by Governor General Jeanne Sauv , Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, Quebec Premier Robert Bourassa, and Montreal Mayor Jean Dor , along with thousands of other mourners.



The event, which became known as the "Montreal Massacre," sent shock waves through Quebec and the rest of Canada. In the days and weeks that followed, there was widespread public debate focused on the cause of and motive for the attack.

For some, Marc L pine's action was an isolated act without any social significance. For others, it revealed a profound malaise about the place of women in Quebec society. Many suggested that the tragedy was indicative of deep-rooted and widespread anti-feminist sentiment.

The event led to broader debates about violence against women and stricter gun control laws in Canada.

After the events of December 6, Heidi Rathjen and Wendy Cukier founded the Coalition for Gun Control. Their efforts contributed to the November 1995 adoption of Bill C-68, the federal firearm control legislation.

In 1991, the Parliament of Canada declared December 6 to be a National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. It is also known as White Ribbon Day.

(Sources: The Canadian Encyclopedia and heroines.ca)