

## Just like old times:

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Actors in "A House for Democracy," left, include: Ryan Kniel, Naomi Duska and Isabella Derilo.

Turn to Page 14 for more information on the Legislature Summer Program.

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Her Honour

The Honourable Janet Austin, OBC

Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia

# Thank You and Miscellany

*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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Or emailed to [ootd.afmlabc@gmail.com](mailto:ootd.afmlabc@gmail.com)  
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The Association has a **new mailing address:**

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

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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.*

# From the Editor's Desk

Some days it is harder than others to look into the future scope with anything approaching optimism. This is particularly the case when I see Greater Victoria police preoccupied with keeping scores of young people from drunken swarming mischief downtown.

Against that depressing backdrop, I was buoyed by letters of appreciation we received in the OOTD mailbox from two UVic students who have recently benefitted from AFMLABC endowment scholarships. On Page 13, Public Administration MA student Meghan Corbett writes: "I am grateful for the generous financial contribution to my education. I am pursuing a career in the public service where I hope to continue supporting the design of impactful climate policies ..."

It is encouraging to be reminded that there are many Meghans out there applying their energies to launch careers that will result in the betterment of BC communities and beyond.

Many thanks to the AFMLABC members and friends of OOTD who contributed to this issue. A special nod to Ujjal Dosanjh for his telling analysis of India Prime Minister Narendra Modi's political roots in the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh – an Indian right-wing, Hindu nationalist, paramilitary volunteer organization bent on the eradication of Muslim influence. (Page 4 & 5.) It anchors other articles that examine the state of global upheaval currently commanding the news cycle.

The April and May issues featured a member survey to help the AFMLABC executive plan the 2023 annual gathering, sidelined since 2020 by COVID-19. The survey is posted on our website ([formerbcmla.com](http://formerbcmla.com)) in the News & Events section. A simple click on the "Submit" icon sends your survey responses directly to me. Look for a survey update in the Summer (July & August) issue of OOTD. The deadline for contributions and letters for that issue is July 8th.

# The President's Report

It's springtime! The grass is green, the flowers are out, and thankfully, the pervasive focus on COVID is receding. Let's hope we never again need to deal with a similar phenomenon in all its aspects: Medical, social, economic, political and others.

I don't know about you, but I feel the past two years have been as frustrating as any I've experienced in my lifetime. To this day, there are fractured relationships because of disagreements over some aspect of the COVID mitigation protocols. Too bad there isn't a vaccine against intolerance.

It's important to maintain perspective too. The people of Ukraine are likely to have a different perspective on what is the worst thing to happen to them lately. How often we focus on our own little world, oblivious to the far more difficult challenges faced by so many others around the world.

Soon, students will be graduating from high schools and universities, full of hope and anticipation for the future. I'm always encouraged when I see how well they've achieved and the potential that lies within them. It will be pretty hard to mask their enthusiasm ... and that's a good thing.

Cheers everyone!



John Les,  
President AFMLABC

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# This is how it happens ... a strong man emerges

(Editor's Note: Ujjal tells me he wrote this piece in 2017, as he was becoming very concerned about India's "drift towards fascism" under the influence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Now he says: "I shudder when I realize things are much worse today than they were then." Modi's roots spring from the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) – an Indian right-wing, Hindu nationalist, paramilitary volunteer organization bent on eradicating Muslim influence in India. RSS was founded in 1925 and has a membership exceeding six million. The RSS was first banned during British rule and three other times by post-independence Indian governments, including in 1948 when RSS member Nathuram Godse assassinated Mahatma Gandhi. Modi was denied a visa to enter the United States in 2005 on religious-freedom grounds, stemming from allegations that he tacitly supported Hindu extremists during Hindu-Muslim riots in his home state in 2002.)

By Ujjal Dosanjh

This is how it happens. It happened in Europe in the last century. Democracy succumbs to the strong man, then to authoritarianism and then possibly to totalitarianism. No, not necessarily the totalitarianism of a government; in fact, sometimes of the mob – under a government that may have a disciplined and deadly mob at its disposal.

A strong man emerges. He gathers people with money around him. He mines the majority's minority complex – the majority feeling oppressed by the minority or minorities. The vast majority is still in control but is told to feel persecuted like a minority. Circumstances and stars all align for him. He builds a base in one part of the country. Once a pariah, ignored and written off, he gains popularity and strength. He rises like a sun on the darkening national stage. He emerges as the strongest man on the scene.

Ordinary people beaten, their dreams destroyed, defeated by the corrupt elites, place their faith in him. He becomes the bundle of their hopes, the spinner of their dreams, and the weaver of their heavens to come.

The heavens are not there, at least not yet. But they are promised. The promise can now be believed because the man himself represents it, makes it and repeats it in its varied and mesmerizing oratorical iterations. Truth and lies don't matter.

(Holocaust survivor) Hannah Arendt described the phenomenon well: "In an ever-changing, incomprehensible world, the masses had reached the point where they would, at the same time, believe everything and nothing, think that everything was possible and that nothing was true.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi

"Mass propaganda discovered that its audience was ready at all times to believe the worst, no matter how absurd, and did not particularly object to being deceived because it held every statement to be a lie anyhow.

"The totalitarian mass leaders based their propaganda on the correct psychological assumption that, under such conditions, one could make people believe the most fantastic statements one day and trust that if the next day they were given irrefutable proof of their falsehood, they would take refuge in cynicism; instead of deserting the leaders who had lied to them, they would protest that they had known all along that the statement was a lie and would admire the leaders for their superior tactical cleverness."

This is how it happens. He wins election after election. He rides that sense of perceived oppression and persecution of the majority by the minorities. He plays the nationalist card; the new nationalism never seen or experienced before in the land; the nationalism that could exclude and include at the same time; like now you have it, and now you don't.

*continued next page*

He holds his audiences in the palm of his hand, can make them dance to any tune, put them to sleep, reawaken them – never losing his hold over them even when he shuts down their banks and prohibits them from using their own money. He argues he was dishing out pain, but it was all for their good. Proof or no proof of what, if any, good all of it was doing, people believed in him, even worshipped him – in large enough numbers for him to win the elections again.

He keeps winning elections, democratically. And he has a ready-made army of volunteers. No, this army is not new. It has existed for a long time. It has never worked for a broader and inclusive nationalism. Its aim always has been the narrow nationalism of the majority. In another country, at another frightening time, it was the nationalism of the race. In this case, it is the nationalism of the religion.

Even against the alien rule of the white man, this army didn't rise because it perceived no threat to its religion at the time. It only existed to defend what it considered was an oppressed majority. The army is fully regimented. It now rules the streets, subdues the universities, suppresses dissent as sedition, and pursues anyone who criticizes their "God" – the strong man and his word to the end of the earth.

He is hailed as the new saviour. The army of volunteers, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, was his alma mater. He was once a part of it. Some media in the free country now self-censor "for the good of the country," "for peace," and "harmony" – I suppose the peace of the dead. Otherwise, the RSS is there to "restore peace and order." The new India being built under the new redeemer needs the silence of consent; the dissonance of dissent "threatens" the "peace" and "integrity" of the country. The once strong country with a deep democratic ethos is suddenly proclaimed by the RSS to be fragile – unable to withstand any harsh criticism.

It is now considered harsh to call a spade a spade, to speak the truth as one sees it – in Mahatma Gandhi's country. One has less and less and sometimes no right to one's truth. Ascendant is the truth of the strong, particularly the strong man. His truth dominates all others, threatening many. Of course, he has the Army of Truth working for him. That was how it once was in another country, in another era, not too long ago. It came to no good end.



Some say the fear of a bad end is at best unreal and at worst exaggerated. Hope wrestles fear. Here is hoping that hope wins. And India wins.

**(Ujjal Dosanjh is a former federal minister of health and a former premier of British Columbia. He tweets at @ujjaldosanjh. Hannah Arendt was a political philosopher, author, and Holocaust survivor. Her contributions influenced 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Century political theorists. Arendt was born in 1906 to a Jewish family in a district of Hanover. She died in New York in 1975.)**



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HELPING WHEN LIFE CHANGES



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# Human Freedom Index: The skies are darkening

By Ian Vásquez and Fred McMahon

Since 2008, freedom has declined for four in five people globally, according to the *Human Freedom Index* (HFI). And that's the good news. The report, which we co-authored, is based on the most recent 2019 comprehensive data. The skies have since darkened.

The HFI, the broadest available freedom index, measures economic and personal freedoms, including security and the rule of law, both needed to protect the freedom of all and enable people to exercise their freedom safely.

The decline in freedom is wide-ranging. It affects countries large and small, dictatorships and democracies, and all regions of the planet. The freedoms that have declined most are speech, religion, and association and assembly. Yet there's a silver lining in these darkening skies.

Although in decline, freedom across the globe is higher now than at any time in human history before the late 20th century when the iron curtain fell freeing hundreds of millions, African dictatorships gave way to elections, Latin America's young democracies began opening their economies, Asian nations like Indonesia and the Philippines eased suppression, and China – home to more than a billion people – continued its liberalization. Most countries now backsliding are freer than they were two generations ago.

However, much of the good news is bad. Look at the five countries where freedom most increased between 2008 and

2019: Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Tunisia, Ethiopia and Armenia. Myanmar and Tunisia have since suffered military coups. Sri Lanka's former leaders, accused of human rights crimes, have returned to power. Ethiopia has fallen into a gruesome civil war (after its newly elected prime minister Abiy Ahmed was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2019), and Armenia lost a destabilizing war with Azerbaijan, which may have negative consequences for freedom internally.

The story is the same regionally. The Caucasus and Central Asia, South Asia, East Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa increased freedom between 2008 and 2019. However, gains in the Caucasus and Central Asia were driven by advances in freedom in Georgia, where the president who led the freedom charge, Mikheil Saakashvili, is now under arrest in brutal conditions.

Many East Asian countries – Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Mongolia – had stable or rising levels of freedom. But most East Asians live in China, and the Chinese Communist Party has intensified its repression since 2019.

In South Asia – a vast region including countries such as Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka – only Bhutan has escaped growing repression since 2019. Sub-Saharan Africa suffers instability in the Horn of Africa and, in the Sahel, uprisings, coups and growing Islamic insurgences. All of this will damage freedom going forward.

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## — Freedom measured in the absence of coercive constraint —

The Human Freedom Index (HFI) presents a broad measure of human freedom, understood as the absence of coercive constraint. This seventh annual index uses 82 distinct indicators of personal and economic freedom in the following areas: Rule of law, security and safety, movement, religion, association, assembly, civil society, expression and information, relationships, size of government, legal system and property rights, sound money, freedom to trade internationally and regulation.

The HFI is the most comprehensive freedom index so far created for a globally meaningful set of countries and jurisdictions representing 98.1 per cent of the world's population. The HFI covers 165 jurisdictions for 2019, the most recent year for which sufficient data are available.

On a scale of 0 to 10, where 10 represents more freedom, the average human freedom rating for 165 jurisdictions in 2019 was 7.12. Among the 162 jurisdictions for which we have data for 2018 and 2019, the overall level of freedom (weighing all jurisdictions equally) remained unchanged, with 82 jurisdictions decreasing their ratings and 67 improving.

Comparing all the jurisdictions for which we have the same data available since 2008, the level of global freedom has decreased slightly (-0.01), with more jurisdictions in the index decreasing their ratings (71) than increasing (67). By the same measure, fully 83 per cent of the global population lives in jurisdictions that have seen a fall in human freedom since 2008. That includes decreases in overall freedom in the 10 most populous countries in the world. Only 17 per cent of the global population lives in countries that have seen increases in freedom. The data show there is an unequal distribution of freedom in the world, with only 14.6 per cent of the world's population living in the top quartile of jurisdictions in the HFI and 40.3 per cent living in the bottom quartile. The gap in human freedom between the most-free and the least-free jurisdictions has widened since 2008, increasing by 6.6 per cent when comparing the top and bottom quartile of nations in the HFI.

For full disclosure, both authors' countries, the United States and Canada have suffered comparatively smaller losses in freedom, though they face threats going forward. Government is growing rapidly in both countries, squeezing space for free exchange. Political polarization, particularly in the U.S., will almost certainly continue to have negative consequences for freedom.

Reasons for freedom's decline vary. In some cases, democratically elected leaders are aspiring autocrats, amplifying their power by suppressing opposition, speech, assembly, and even religion and relationship freedom, as in the Philippines, Turkey, Hungary, Mexico and Poland. In other countries, autocratic leaders have intensified their attacks on freedom. Russia, China, Nicaragua, Egypt and Venezuela are on this track.

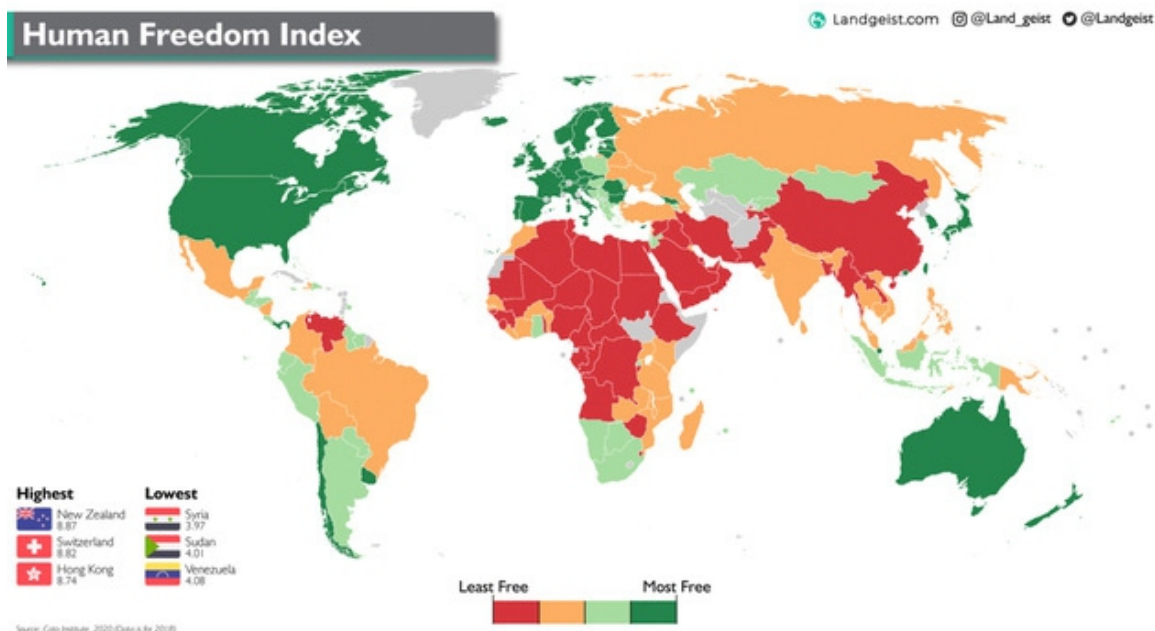
A malign form of populism often provides the engine. Populism is an appeal to the interests of "the people," but at its worst, it also identifies "the enemies" of the people – the elites, the wealthy, experts, the media, racial and religious minorities, changing social mores, immigrants and refugees, and foreign nations. These "enemies" are used to justify increased repression so leaders can "protect" the people and suppress their enemies.

The pandemic has not helped. Since 2019, governments worldwide have resorted to extraordinary measures to address the health crisis, often using them to violate fundamental liberties such as freedom of expression or assembly.

We hope the HFI will help us better understand these and other trends, their causes, and the conditions under which freedom rises and recedes. That task is especially important because freedom is closely linked to improvements in human wellbeing.

Freedom waxes and wanes over time. Its current setback need not become permanent or prolonged if its inherent value and benefits are more widely and better appreciated. If the past is any guide, the human desire for freedom and the failure of suppression to produce better lives can help reverse the current backsliding. A reliable measure of freedom may help speed that process.

**(Ian Vásquez is vice president for international studies at the Cato Institute and director of its Center for Global Liberty and Prosperity. He has appeared on CNBC, NBC, C-SPAN, CNN, Telemundo, Univisión, Canadian television, and NPR and Voice of America, discussing foreign policy and development issues. He has a master's degree from the School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University. Fred McMahon is a Fraser Institute Resident Fellow and holder of the Dr. Michael A. Walker Chair in Economic Freedom. He has an M.A. in Economics from McGill University.)**



# We support Ottawa's Ukraine aid, but more is needed

The war in Ukraine is more than three months in duration, leaving thousands dead, millions seeking refuge, and billions feeling the economic impacts of an unsettled global economy. In May, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau arrived for a surprise one-day visit to the capital city Kyiv as both the Canadian and American embassies reopened for the first time since the war began.

A new study from the non-profit Angus Reid Institute finds Canadians mostly supportive of how their government has responded and sought to support Ukraine, while many say they are doing their own bit to help.

Indeed, one-quarter of Canadians say they have donated money to support efforts to help Ukrainians since the war began in late February. Those over the age of 54 are most likely to follow the conflict and have opened their wallets. On the more symbolic side of this scale, nearly the same number, a quarter, have posted something in support on social media. A handful of Canadians (just three per cent) say they have sponsored or supported a Ukrainian refugee or refugee family.

At the governmental level, where policy decisions can wield much more considerable influence, Canadians largely support efforts made to this point. Hundreds of millions of dollars have been offered in both weaponry and financial assistance, in addition to sanctions targeting Russian oligarchs and businesses.

Notably, the vast majority of past Liberal and NDP voters are joined by half of past Conservative voters in praising the government's approach to the crisis.

That said, many say Canada should do more. As Ukrainian officials have requested more weaponry and support, many say the Canadian government has been slow to commit to offering much-needed heavy weapons.

## **Two-thirds closely or very closely monitoring the war**

Russia invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24<sup>th</sup>. While media coverage has declined from the initial deluge in the months since, most Canadians are still following the conflict. Two-thirds of Canadians say they've been following developments in the war either closely or very closely. One-third, however, have not been paying as close attention. Men – especially those older than 55 – are more likely than women to be reading stories and discussing the situation with friends. Half of women under the age of 55 say they aren't keeping tabs on the conflict.

## **One-quarter have donated, and half have shown support in some way**

Since the war began, fundraisers for Ukraine have been ubiquitous across the country. Canadians have held bake sales, concerts, and 50/50s to help raise funds for relief efforts. In total, approaching half (47 per cent) of Canadians have done something to support the victims of the conflict, including three-in-10 (28 per cent) who have posted on social media and more than one-in-20 (seven per cent) who have attended a rally or put up a flag.

Overall, women over the age of 54 are the most likely – three in five – to have done something in support of Ukraine. Conversely, two-thirds (64 per cent) of men under the age of 35 say they haven't.

One-third of those living in households earning between \$100,000 and less than \$150,000 say they've donated money to support Ukraine, the most of any income bracket. Those in households earning more than \$100,000, but less than \$200,000, are also the most likely to say they've sponsored or assisted a Ukrainian refugee family, at one-in-20.

## **The government response**

Support from the Canadian government for Ukraine in its fight against Russia has ranged from military – more than \$118 million in surveillance equipment, body armour, weapons, and ammunition – to humanitarian – \$245 million in assistance – to a lengthy list of economic sanctions targeting Russian oligarchs, politicians, businesses and exports. The spring federal budget, too, saw the country commit a further \$500 million in military aid.

*[continued next page](#)*



*In Edmonton, at the Alberta Council for the Ukrainian Arts, PM Justin Trudeau meets with volunteers who make flags and pins in support of Ukraine's war effort.*



These efforts are being met with majority approval from Canadians. Three-in-five (61 per cent) say they approve or strongly approve of the federal government's response to the invasion, a rate nearly triple those detractors who gave the Liberal government a thumbs down (22 per cent).

Even amongst the current government's typical detractors – past Conservative voters – half (47 per cent) say they believe Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's government has done well in supporting Ukraine. Approval is higher for the response among past Liberal, Bloc and NDP voters.

One-third of men aged 35- to 54-years-old disapprove of the federal government's response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the most of any demographic. Still, half (51 per cent) of men that age approve of what the federal government has done on that file in recent months. They are joined by at least half of all other age-gender groups.

Regionally, there is also broad approval of the government's assistance for Ukraine and sanctions against Russia. The Prairies are home to the largest minorities of disapproving respondents, but still, those groups are significantly outweighed by those who approve of the federal government's efforts.

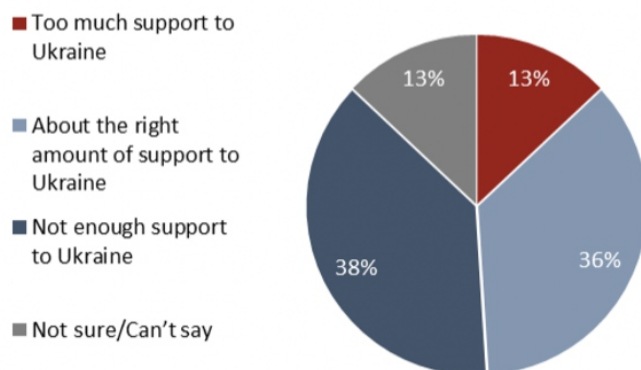
### **Still, two-in-five want Canada to provide more support**

Despite the majority level of approval of what the federal government has done so far, there is significant belief that Canada should be doing more. Two-in-five (38 per cent) say Canada is not providing enough support to Ukraine. Few (13 per cent) would like to see Canada scale back its efforts to support Ukraine in its fight against Russia.

That latter group includes a significant number of past Conservative voters (19 per cent), who are four times as likely as those who voted Liberal (five per cent) or NDP (five per cent) in last fall's election to say that Canada has done too much in support of Ukraine. However, among Conservatives, that is still a minority opinion.

One-in-five (21 per cent) 18- to 34-year-old men believe Canada has done too much in support of Ukraine, the most of any demographic. As well, that demographic includes the lowest proportion (27 per cent) who believe

### **When it comes to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, do you think Canada is providing... (All respondents, n=1,992)**



Canada should be doing more. For all others, those who believe Canada should provide more support at least double those who want Canada to do less.

Approaching half (47 per cent) of Albertans, the most in any region in the country, believe Canada should provide more support to Ukraine. That is also the plurality opinion in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, and Atlantic Canada. The Prairie provinces were early homes for immigrating Ukrainians and boast significant populations of Ukrainian Canadians.

### **Concern is high about the potential for a wider conflict**

The belief Canada could do more to help Ukraine in its war efforts against an aggressive Russia perhaps is influenced by a worry that the fight could spread outside of Ukraine's borders. Before the invasion, four-in-five (78 per cent) Canadians worried their country and its allies could be drawn into a broader conflict.

Though the war has more or less remained a regional conflict in the three months of engagement, the rhetoric coming from Russia remains alarming, and fear of broader conflict has not been quelled.

For all demographics, concern remains high, peaking at nine-in-10 (92 per cent) of women over the age of 54 who say they are concerned or very concerned the Russian invasion of Ukraine will eventually draw in Canada, its western allies and the United States.

# Is diplomacy between Russia and the West still possible?

By Richard Haass

President, Council on Foreign Relations

Amid more than three months of intense media focus on the war in Ukraine, one story was largely overlooked. In late April, the United States and Russia carried out an exchange of prisoners. Russia released an American (a former marine) whom it detained three years ago, while the U.S. released a Russian pilot imprisoned over a decade ago on drug smuggling charges.

What makes the exchange noteworthy is that it took place at a time when Russia's brutal invasion of Ukraine has brought relations with the U.S. to their lowest point since the end of the Cold War. The U.S. has opted to avoid direct military involvement in the war, but it is doing a great deal to affect its trajectory, including providing Ukraine with large quantities of increasingly advanced arms, intelligence, and training so it can successfully resist and potentially defeat the Russian forces.

The U.S. has also taken steps to strengthen NATO and impose severe economic sanctions on Russia.

The war is likely to stretch on for some time. Although Ukraine's fundamental interest is to end the war and prevent more death and destruction, President Volodymyr Zelensky's desire for peace is conditional. He seeks to regain territory that Russia occupies and ensure the country's sovereignty is respected so that, among other things, Ukraine can join the European Union. He also wants those responsible for war crimes to be held accountable.

Russian President Vladimir Putin, for his part, needs to achieve an outcome that justifies his costly invasion lest he appear weak and be challenged at home. There is little chance that a peace could be negotiated that would bridge the gap between these two seemingly irreconcilable positions. It is far more likely that the conflict will continue not just for months but for years to come and will be the backdrop for U.S. and Western relations with Russia.

One possibility for the West would be to link the entire relationship with Russia to Russia's actions in Ukraine. This would be a mistake because Russia can affect other Western interests, such as limiting the nuclear and missile capabilities of Iran and North Korea and the success of global efforts to limit the emissions that cause climate change.



The good news is that, as the prisoner exchange demonstrates, profound differences over Ukraine need not preclude conducting mutually beneficial business if both sides are willing to compartmentalize. But protecting the possibility of selective cooperation will require sophisticated, disciplined diplomacy.

For starters, the U.S. and its partners will need to prioritize and even limit their goals in Ukraine which means renouncing talk of regime change in Moscow. We need to deal with the Russia we have, not the one we would prefer. Putin's position may come to be challenged from within (or he may succumb to reported health challenges), but the West is not in a position to engineer his removal, much less ensure that someone better replaces him.

Likewise, Western governments would be wise to put off talk of war crimes tribunals for senior Russian officials and stop boasting about helping Ukraine target senior Russian generals and ships. The war and investigations are ongoing, and the Russians need to see some benefit in acting responsibly. The same holds for reparations.

Similarly, although Russia will likely find itself worse off economically and militarily due to initiating this war of choice, the U.S. government should make clear that, contrary to Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin's remarks, America's goal is not to use the war to weaken Russia. On the contrary, the U.S. should underscore that it wants the war to end as soon as possible on terms that reflect Ukraine's sovereign, independent status.

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As for the war in Ukraine, the West should continue to support Ukraine and prevent escalation by avoiding direct combat. However, the Kremlin should be made to understand that this restraint is premised on it not widening the war to a NATO country or introducing weapons of mass destruction. At this point, such self-imposed Western limits would disappear.

The West also should consider carefully its war aims and how to pursue them. The goal should be that Ukraine controls all its territory, but this does not necessarily justify trying to liberate Crimea or even all the eastern Donbas region by military force. Some of these goals might be better sought through diplomacy and selective easing of sanctions. But, until Russia's behaviour changes, sanctions should not just remain in place but be extended to cover energy imports that are funding the Russian war effort.

Diplomacy is a tool of national security, not a favour to be bestowed, and it should continue to be pursued with Russia. Private meetings between senior civilian and military officials of Western countries and Russia should

resume to reduce the risk of a miscalculation that could lead to confrontation or worse and to explore opportunities for limited cooperation.

It may well be that constructive relations with Russia do not emerge until well into a post-Putin era. But this in no way alters the West's interest in seeing that relations do not fall below a certain floor in the interim.

**(Dr. Richard Haass is a veteran diplomat, a prominent voice on American foreign policy, and an established leader of nonprofit institutions.**

**He is in his 19<sup>th</sup> year as president of the Council on Foreign Relations, an American think tank specializing in U.S. foreign policy and international relations. Founded in 1921, the Council is a nonprofit organization that is independent and nonpartisan, dedicated to being a resource to help people better understand the world and the foreign policy choices facing the United States and other countries.)**



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# Letters

## Jim Hume, son Nic, the Legislature clerks and the missing tippie

**(Editor's Note: We start this wonderful tale with a letter to OOTD from the AFMLABC's great friend and supporter, Ian Izard, who recalls a celebration of the birth of Jim and Candide's son, Nic. After being out of touch for many years, Ian reached out to Nic to make sure his recollection was accurate. Nic, a paramedic, confirmed it was, picked up the narrative and shared it with us. We also received a nice note from Bruce Strachan reminding us that The Old Islander was prescient right to the end.)**

Dear Editor:

We will all miss Jim Hume, but I think there is an untold story. When Jim's son Nic was born, the Humes hosted a number of guests from the legislative world at a garden party at their home on Joan Crescent in Victoria.

Clerk Ian Horne Q.C., Deputy Clerk George MacMinn Q.C., and I attended and presented a bottle of Haig Pinch whiskey as a present for the young lad to be enjoyed, as stated in the card, on his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday (the drinking age at that time).

Candide Temple, Jim's wife, graciously accepted the present on behalf of Nic, possibly in escrow, for the distant future event. Some years later, Jim, a bit sheepishly, owned up to the fact that he didn't know what had happened to the bottle.

Later in life, some years after Candide had passed away, Jim decided to sell the family home on Oxford Street. He and Nic were busily cleaning out the house when, out of the blue, appeared a now ancient unopened bottle of Haig Pinch. It had survived those many years in the back of a kitchen cabinet where Jim had never ventured, perhaps as Candide had intended.

Jim called to advise of this seeming miracle, and George MacMinn and I joined him and Nic in the now long overdue celebratory tippie.

Cheers,  
Ian Izard

## There's a pinch of Pinch left for a final toast

Hi Ian and OOTD:

Thanks, first, for the kind words about Dad's passing, and second for the reminder of the Scotch Story – I still have a couple of fingers in the bottom of the bottle, being saved for a final toast to the old guy!

Your recollection of the story is entirely accurate. The bottle was, in fact, hidden behind baking supplies (specifically the flour and oats), and I am absolutely positive it was placed there by Mom to make sure Dad wasn't tempted to have a wee dram. I was 28 when it was finally rediscovered, making the contents around 40 years old by the time we got to drink it.

I still have a picture of the toast, courtesy of Legislature photographer John Yanyshyn, who you brought along for the event!

Nic Hume



*Ian Izard, George MacMinn, Nic Hume, and his Dad Jim crack the seal of the long-lost bottle of Haig Pinch whiskey that Nic's Mom Candide squirrelled away in the cupboard behind the flour and oats to keep Jim from sampling a dram or two. (Photo by John Yanyshyn.)*

## Jim's valuable lesson about Russia

Dear Editor:

Re. "Vladimir Putin has skipped a few history lessons."

What an amazing writer and analyst; even as he slipped away, Jim Hume left us with a valuable lesson about Russia, age-old European conflicts and how these factors still play out.

In his last column, Hume gave us a scholarly essay on Russian/Polish/Ukrainian history. It was brilliant, thoughtful, and timely. Thanks for everything, Jim.

Bruce Strachan

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# AFMLABC scholarships pay heartening societal dividends

**(Editor's Note: Dozens of University of Victoria and University of Northern BC students have been recipients of Association of Former MLAs of BC endowment scholarships since they were established in 2004. Association Director Ken Jones reports that former MLAs engaged in fundraising in the 1990s that allowed UVic to create its endowment fund. This year UVic provided two \$830 scholarships from invested earnings. To be eligible for the award, recipients must be full-time students who have demonstrated an interest in future public service – elected or appointed – and may need financial assistance to continue their studies. The letters of gratitude the Association receives annually bear witness to the value of the scholarships. Both letters below speak to the lofty ambitions of hard-working students dedicated to exploring ways to bring value to their communities.)**

Thank you for supporting my academic journey and future goals

Dear AFMLABC members:

Thank you very much for awarding me the Association of Former MLAs of BC Student Scholarship. I am grateful for the generous financial contribution to my education. To me, this award also represents a recognition of the interesting journey that has been my Master of Public Administration degree.

When I started my degree, I had a very different plan for my education and career. However, the many unique and incredible opportunities available both at the University of Victoria and in BC allowed me to get into behavioural climate policy, which is something of a dream field for me.

I enjoy combining behavioural science with policy design to implement more effective and impactful policies. I'm particularly passionate about applying these skills to climate policy to address the climate crisis.

These interests led me to my Master's thesis, in which I studied the importance of numerous behavioural and policy variables in Canadians' willingness to adopt low-carbon heat pumps as their home heating system, with a focus on the role of policy awareness. I have been able to present my applied research insights to policy groups and am pursuing a career in public service, where I hope to continue supporting the design of impactful climate policies by blending behavioural science, sustainability, and policy analysis.

Thank you again for supporting my academic journey and future goals with the Association of Former MLAs of BC Student Scholarship.

Sincerely,  
Meghan Corbett



AFMLABC support helps Karyn find creative solutions to local issues

Dear AFMLABC members:

Thank you for your generous contribution to my education. My name is Karyn Hurlbut, and I am from Fort Saskatchewan, Alberta, which is on Treaty Six Territory, the traditional and ancestral territory of the Nehiyawak, Dene, Blackfoot, Saulteaux, and Nakota Sioux people. I acknowledge that this territory is home to the Métis Settlements and the Métis Nation of Alberta Region 4 within the historical Northwest Métis Homeland.

I am a lifelong learner and plan to continue taking courses to strengthen my practice. Currently, I am studying community development and evaluation at the University of Victoria. I will defend my Master's project in June 2022. It is an arts-based evaluation of the outcomes of the Communities ChooseWell Program delivered through the Alberta Recreation and Parks Association. I am very interested in using creative methodologies to engage communities and ultimately create more connected communities that have a sense of pride and where people experience a sense of belonging.

I have had a career in the public sector for seven years now and intend to continue using my public service skills. Working on a small scale within blocks, neighbourhoods, and the municipality, I can engage community members to find creative solutions to local issues they are facing. My intention in taking the MACD program is to continue growing and learning as a community developer and serving my community. My long-term career goal is to stay in a public service position that interacts daily with the community.

Karyn Hurlbut



# Letters

## A busy, accessible summer ahead at the Legislature

Dear Editor:

After a couple of quiet years, the Parliamentary Education Office is looking forward to a busy summer season. We are excited to have a full team of college and university students back to offer free guided tours of the Parliament Buildings and deliver theatrical presentations around the Legislative grounds.

The tours and theatrical presentations are free and are offered seven days a week between Victoria Day and Labour Day. Please visit our website [bcleg.ca/tours](http://bcleg.ca/tours) for more information.

This summer, we have two new travelling plays. These fun, free, and family-friendly shows take you around the buildings and maybe even... back in time! Running Thursday-Monday until Labour Day.

- In “A House for Democracy,” a young architect struggling for inspiration travels through time and encounters the scandalous designer of the BC Legislature, Francis Mawson Rattenbury. Learn about his dramatic rise and fall every Thursday through Monday this summer.
- Riley dreams of running for student council, but it's a big challenge! Luckily, Riley meets inspiring people from BC history. Will they help Riley build the confidence to succeed? Find out in “My Place in Politics,” playing every Thursday to Monday at the BC Legislature.

David Nicholls  
BC Legislature



## Lamenting “freedom from responsibility”

Dear Editor:

All the very best wishes! It has been a most interesting and challenging time for the past while, with COVID-19 bearing the brunt of the responsibility.

To paraphrase Winston Churchill's famous words, I would say the following: Never before in the history of Canada have so many strived, for such a long time, to aspire to a state where “freedom from responsibility” is both acceptable and desirable. Cloaking their misguided quest by displaying the flag of Canada.

Anyway, cheers,

Cliff Serwa

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## Helen Hughes: A ready smile and steely determination

Dear Editor:

As public tributes continue following the death of Helen Hughes, I am remembering her as a cherished friend and mentor.

I first met Helen shortly after she and her husband, Ted, moved to Victoria from Saskatchewan. My former husband and I, along with our two young children, were invited to what became an annual summer tradition, a day at the Hughes' cottage on Shawnigan Lake.

Having navigated the precariously steep driveway to the home, I remarked to Helen that “one of these days, someone's brakes are going to fail, and people will land in your kitchen!” To which Helen replied: “At least they'll be well fed when they arrive!” That's the Helen I'm going to miss most. Her ready smile and quick wit, combined with her steely determination to get things done.

Later, as my community involvement grew, Helen was always there to offer encouragement and lend support where she could. But above all, she always wanted to know how my children were getting along. Helen focused a great deal of her energy on the welfare of young people.

As the driving force behind “Souper Bowls of Hope” benefitting Victoria's Youth Empowerment Society, she almost single-handedly arm-wrestled celebrities of all stripes to sign a bowl for the annual auction and, in the process, helped raise more than \$1 million to support programs for youth.

Sadly, I doubt I will see the likes of Helen Hughes (and Ted before her) again in my lifetime.

Veronica Osborn

# Len Norris



This work by Len Norris  
first appeared  
May 16, 1981

*"I think sending Mr. Trudeau a little reminder note about inflation and interest rates is thoughtful of you ... but do you know which is his office window?"*



## Please support BC Youth Parliament

The Association of Former MLAs of BC seeks your support for BC Youth Parliament and its annual session in Victoria. Donations can be made to the The Hugh Curtis BC Youth Parliament Fund, which is managed by the Victoria Foundation.

By phone: Call 250-381-5532 to make a donation by credit card directly.

By cheque: To the Victoria Foundation, #200 - 703 Broughton Street, Victoria, B.C., V8N 1E2.

**Make your cheque payable to The Victoria Foundation.** Note the name of the fund in the cheque memo line or in a cover letter.

Online: Go to [www.victoriafoundation.bc.ca](http://www.victoriafoundation.bc.ca). Click on "Giving" in the navigation bar and then on "Make a Donation." After that just follow the prompts to find The Hugh Curtis BC Youth Parliament Fund.

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)

60 years ago

## Saskatchewan MDs strike over introduction of Medicare

A plan to introduce Medicare was announced by Saskatchewan Premier Tommy Douglas in 1959 in a speech he made during the Birch Hills byelection campaign.

It became the central issue of the 1960 provincial election won by his Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) government. The government struck a commission to make recommendations for the plan's implementation. The Saskatchewan College of Physicians and Surgeons met that development with opposition, declaring that its doctors would not cooperate with a compulsory, government-run program.

The Saskatchewan Medical Care Insurance Bill was introduced in the Saskatchewan Legislature on October 13<sup>th</sup>, 1961 and was passed and given Royal assent in November. By then, Douglas had stepped down as premier to assume the leadership of the newly-formed federal New Democratic Party. He was replaced as provincial premier and CCF leader by Woodrow Lloyd, who would face enormous pressure to withdraw the plan. In an attempt to reach a compromise, Lloyd delayed the implementation of Medicare from April to July 1962.

In May 1962, a meeting of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan passed a resolution vowing that physicians would close their practices when Medicare came into force.

In Regina, a group of mothers formed a committee to support their doctors. Similar committees were organized throughout the province, encouraged by doctors and joined by political opponents of the government. These KOD (Keep Our Doctors) committees, with support from the media, launched a well-organized campaign against the government and the Medicare plan. Rallies, petitions, panels, and advertisements brought the emotional climate to the boiling point. There were warnings that most doctors would leave the province if socialized medicine were introduced.

On July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1962, the doctors' strike began, and approximately 90 per cent of the province's doctors shut their offices.

During this time, anonymous letters signed by "the Swift Current citizens safety committee" accused doctors of rebelling against the people and gave doctors until the morning of July 6<sup>th</sup> to return to regular practice or suffer harm to them and their families. This led to the death by heart attack of Dr. Emil John Kusey of Canora, a threat recipient.



Medicare –  
Tommy Douglas's dream;  
Woodrow Lloyd's nightmare

The government brought in doctors from Britain, the United States, and other provinces to staff community clinics that were set up to meet the demand for health services. A July 11<sup>th</sup> rally in support of the doctors in front of the Saskatchewan Legislature in Regina attracted about 4,000 people, a fraction of the number hoped for by the organizers.

By mid-July, some of the striking doctors had returned to work. Lord Stephen Taylor, a British physician who helped implement the National Health Service in the United Kingdom, was brought in as a mediator. The "Saskatoon Agreement" ending the strike was signed on July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1962.

As a result of the agreement, amendments to the Act were introduced, allowing doctors to opt-out of Medicare. It also raised fee payments to doctors under the plan and increased the number of physicians sitting on the Medical Care Insurance Commission. By 1965, most doctors favoured the continuation of Medicare.

The strike was a significant test for Medicare. Its failure allowed the program to continue, and the Saskatchewan model was adopted across Canada within 10 years.

However, the political divisions within the province aggravated by the strike contributed to Lloyd's government's defeat in the 1964 provincial election. Even though the Saskatchewan Liberal Party of Ross Thatcher had opposed the plan, Medicare's popularity was such that by the time of the election, the Liberals promised to leave it in place and expand it even more.

Source: The Canadian Encyclopedia and Wikipedia