

Preserving 125 years of history is a 24/7 job



The BC Legislature is celebrating its 125th birthday this year. Even so, when you walk its aging hallways early in the morning, you'd swear the building was brand new. The floors shine, the woodwork glows, and the stained glass radiates light.

That's the work of a dedicated team of 22 maintenance and cleaning caregivers working day and night shifts. In the picture at left, Victoria photographer James MacDonald captured Legislature employee Rodney Pilatzke changing a light bulb in one of the corridors of power. There is a constant effort to update and modernize parts of the building while also working to maintain and preserve its history. Turn to Pages 6 and 7 for more of James' "Behind the Scenes" photo essay.

Rattenbury got the Leg. contract in 1892 to jump-start a dull economy

After a year-long competition, a 25-year-old architect, Francis Mawson Rattenbury, was chosen in March 1892 to design BC's new Parliament Buildings.

Construction began in 1893, partly to try to boost a stagnant economy. Every effort was made to use local materials and resources – granite foundations from Nelson Island; site facades from Haddington Island stone; and local brick, lime and Douglas fir for the construction work.



The original budget for the new Parliament Buildings was set at \$600,000. At the time, that was more than one-third of the province's entire annual revenue. Due to the challenges of a project of this size, including disputes with contractors and work stoppages, the cost of the completed project in 1898 came to just over \$900,000. More on the construction of this marvellous BC icon can be found on our History Page, 16.

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:

**P.O. Box 30024
Reynolds P.O.
Victoria, B.C. V8X 1J0**

Or emailed to ootd.afmlabc@gmail.com
or ootd@shaw.ca

Editor: Brian Kieran
Layout/Production/Research: Rob Lee

Association Membership (former MLAs) dues are \$60.00 per year. Annual subscription rate is \$40.00 for those who are not Association Members.
Payment can be sent to the above address.

Board of Directors 2022-2023

Dave Hayer President
Diane Thorne Vice President
Bruce Strachan Secretary
Patrick Wong Treasurer
Ken Jones Membership
John Les Past President

Directors

Harry Bloy **Linda Reid**
Ida Chong **Tim Stevenson**
Penny Priddy

Honourary Directors

Hon. Iona Campagnolo, PC, CM, OBC, LL.D
Hon. Steven L. Point, OBC
Hon. Judith Guichon, OBC
Joan Barton, MLSc., MPA

Honourary Members

Hon. Raj Chouhan,
Speaker of the Legislature

Honourary Life Members

Ian D. Izard, QC, Honourary Solicitor
(The late) Hugh Curtis
(The late) Jim Hume
(The late) E. George MacMinn, QC, OBC
(The late) Bob McClelland

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, added a donation to help cover production costs.

Dues, Subscriptions and Donations

Joan Barton, Victoria
Jeff Bray, Victoria
Colin Gabelmann, Campbell River
Simon Gibson, Abbotsford
Ken Johnston, Richmond
Susan Masi, Surrey

Joan McIntyre, Vancouver
Marion Reid, White Rock
David Schreck, North Vancouver
Barbara Smith, Duncan
Neil Vant, Williams Lake
Charlie Wyse, Williams Lake

From the Editor's Desk

We all know there would be no OOTD without the dedication of production guru Rob Lee. This issue marks his 20th year at your service. Congratulations Rob. Your singular focus sustains us.

Every morning over my first life-supporting coffee, I breeze through the *Capital Daily* (www.capitaldaily.ca/) ... an excellent online digest of Greater Victoria news that appears, as if by magic, in my inbox.

In mid-February, it featured a photo essay of "Life Behind the Scenes" at the Legislature. Photographer James MacDonald (<https://jamesmacdonaldphotographer.format.com/>) does excellent work, as you can see on Pages 1, 6 and 7.

That discovery led to the realization that our Legislature turned 125 this past month. Turn to our History Page 16 for more.

Thanks to former MLAs Cliff Serwa and Simon Gibson for their reflections on politics and governance. Pages 8 and 9.

From her remote outpost on the central coast, former NDP Environment Minister and former Speaker Joan Sawicki reminds me that we are approaching the 50th anniversary of the passage of the Land Commission Act, which enabled the establishment of the Agricultural Land Reserve. Neither Joan nor I can think of another government initiative that has consistently attracted so much rancour and praise through the ages.

Throughout its 50-year history, the ALR has been battered, bruised, attacked ... and sometimes ignored ... by governments of every stripe. Yet, amazingly, it has survived and, against all odds, has done what it set out to do. It remains the most successful – and contentious – agricultural land preservation program in North America.

While many issues have not changed in 50 years, several big issues are dominating the news cycles these days that were not even on the radar back in April 1973 – climate change, biodiversity and Indigenous reconciliation. The question in 2023 is, given that we still have the land base, how will we approach the next 50 years of ALR evolution and debate?

In the April issue of OOTD, Joan will take us on an ALR journey. I hope readers who recall the early days of the ALR and its impacts will send their memories to me for the April issue. The deadline for submissions is March 20 to: ootd.afmlabc@gmail.com.

The President's Report

I hope readers enjoyed BC Family Day and were able to spend quality time with their families.

Sadly, last December, former MLA Howard Lloyd passed away at 92. The Social Credit MLA for Fort George Riding from 1975 to 1979 was born in Saskatchewan and lived in Prince George since he was 10 years old.

He served as a city councillor from 1972 to 1975. He dedicated his life to helping community and family. I want to express our heartfelt condolences to his wife, Margaret, family and friends.

We observed Black History Month in February, which is particularly significant to British Columbia. BC's founding father, Sir James Douglas, was the black son of a Scottish merchant. His mother was a "free coloured woman" from British Guiana. Most Canadians don't know this. On a fur-trading trip on the Columbia River, Douglas met and married Amelia, whose ancestry was native Indian. It is great to recognize the incredible mix of cultures that have existed in BC since 1858.

Governor Douglas encouraged blacks from Africa to come to the new colony. On April 25th, 1858, the first black settlers arrived at Fort Victoria. Despite the deep roots that people of black descent have in our province, it was not until February 1994 that the BC Black History Awareness Society was formed.

In 1972, Rosemary Brown and Emery Barnes became the first black woman and man in BC elected to a Canadian legislature. In 1994, Emery Barnes was elected Speaker, the first black person to hold that position in Canada. For more than 160 years, our black community has made enormous contributions to British Columbia.

In 1966, the United Nations declared March 21st "International Day for Elimination of Racial Discrimination."

As we observe this day, we must work together to ensure Indigenous, Black, Asian and other racialized communities are better protected. We thank those who have worked hard to eliminate racial discrimination.

On behalf of the board, our members, volunteers, our supporters and myself, very special congratulations and thank you to our Rob Lee for all his help and support as he celebrates his 20th anniversary with Orders of the Day and the Association of Former MLAs of BC.

Please feel free to contact me at daveshayer@gmail.com.



Dave Hayer,
President

TIME TO RENEW



2023 Member Dues and OOTD subscriptions are due!

Annual membership for former MLAs in the Association is \$60 (unchanged from previous years) which includes the subscription for Orders of the Day (OOTD).

Fans of OOTD who are not former MLAs/Association members should send payment of \$40 to remain on the subscription list.

Cheques should be made out to: The Association of Former MLAs of BC
and mailed to: P.O. Box 30024
Reynolds P.O.
Victoria, B.C. V8X 1J0

You can also make your payment electronically by going to our website www.formerbcmla.com.

- Go to the Payments page in the navigation bar and follow the prompts.
- Be sure to include your purpose for payment in the Comments section on the Payments form.

A simple idea: Young people and their voices matter

By Sky Losier
Chair, BCYP Alumni Society

Frequent readers of Orders of the Day will be familiar with the British Columbia Youth Parliament.

Seeing photos and reading about nearly one hundred 16- to 21-year-old youth dressed in parliamentary attire taking over the Parliament Buildings in Victoria over winter break is hard to miss or to forget.

What is less known but may be of interest to readers is the other half of youth parliament – the Youth Parliament of BC Alumni Society, which is the governing organization that exists to facilitate and support the British Columbia Youth Parliament.

Much like the AFMLABC, the Youth Parliament of BC Alumni Society is comprised of former Members of (Youth) Parliament, albeit our members had their time in the chamber at a younger age than most of you. Our Board of Directors, affectionally referred to as “Senate” within the organization, provides mentorship and risk management oversight to BCYP’s Cabinet and senior members. For myself and my fellow directors, our service on the Board is about giving back to an organization that gave so much to us.

For me, it is also rooted in the simple idea that young people – and their voices – matter.

As we look at the world we live in, both abroad and at home – the need for engaged citizens who understand how our democracy functions has never been greater, and that is what the Youth Parliament of BC Alumni Society is committed to fostering and building. Since 1924, former youth parliamentarians have gone on to become pillars in their communities and career fields – justices at courts up to the Supreme Court of Canada, Members of Parliament, Members of the Legislative Assembly, municipal elected officials, deputy ministers, professors, doctors, and so much more.

As the British Columbia Youth Parliament approaches its centennial anniversary in 2024, our organization is as strong as it has ever been, but we also face challenges, including the rising cost of hosting our annual session, competing programs across the province and country, and attracting and retaining a diverse membership that is representative of British Columbia.

If you are interested in learning more about the Youth Parliament of BC Alumni Society and the BC Youth Parliament, please do not hesitate to reach out. We would love to have you involved in our organization. If you would be interested in getting updates from the BC Youth Parliament



Sky Losier is bracketed by 94th Session Premier Abby Head (left) and Senator Yonah Martin, a big supporter of the BCYP.

and the Alumni Society, please email alumni.affairs@bcyp.org to join our email list.

We would also like to extend an open invitation to all readers of Orders of the Day to Youth Parliament’s annual fundraising gala on May 14th at the Museum of Vancouver. For more information or to reserve your ticket, don’t hesitate to contact BCYP’s Minister of Fundraising at anna.hulbert@bcyp.org.

If you have any questions, suggestions, or would like to talk about the BC Youth Parliament and the Alumni Society, I would love to hear from you by phone (250-221-0154) or email (sky.losier@bcyp.org).

In closing, I must thank the Association of Former MLAs for the ongoing support provided to the British Columbia Youth Parliament and every one of you for your service to our province and your continued commitment to the health of our democracy.

(Sky was a member of the British Columbia Youth Parliament from 2013 to 2018, serving in roles such as Premier, Minister of Camp Phoenix, and Leader of the Opposition. He has served on the Board of Directors of the Youth Parliament of BC Alumni Society since 2018 when he aged out. He lives on WENÁ,NEĆ (Salt Spring Island) in Coast Salish territory and is a Parliamentary Affairs Advisor at the Senate of Canada and a volunteer marine first responder with the Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue Station 25.)

Howard Lloyd, former MLA and PG city councillor, passes

Howard Lloyd – a former Prince George city councillor, regional director, and MLA for the Fort George Riding – has died. Howard was born in Turtleford, Sask. on March 16th, 1930, and died Dec. 27th, 2022. He lived in Prince George most of his life after his family moved there from Saskatchewan when he was 10 years old.

Howard's career in provincial politics began in 1975 when then-NDP Premier Dave Barrett called a snap election. Howard, a strong Social Credit supporter, was elected MLA from 1975 to '79, representing what was then called the Fort George Riding.

Howard's wife Margaret tells OOTD: "Howard was always involved with wanting and hoping to make things better for people. He went into politics in Prince George to be on city council to improve the city he had lived in since 1936. He expanded the city borders creating land to build a bigger city.

"He was President of the Logging Association, again hoping to improve the pathway for small logging companies. Howard ran for provincial politics in 1975 in the Fort George Riding. Again, his hope and ideas were to improve northern BC participation in provincial politics."

Howard enjoyed the great outdoors and spent his time hunting, fishing, and boating. He started his career in sawmills, then built roads and skidded logs for a time, went into business with his brothers to form the Lloyd Bros. Lumber Company, and in 1960, started Howard Lloyd Logging, a stump-to-dump operation.

In retirement, he enjoyed his time at his Bednesti Lake cabin and spent time with family and friends in Nanaimo until he eventually moved there a few years ago.

In 2018, PG Citizen staffer Kathy Nadalin wrote that when Harold was five years old, his parents separated after having five children. Later his mother married George McCormick, and the family moved to Winnipeg, where jobs were scarce because of the Great Depression. The few jobs that were available paid as low as \$1 to \$2.50 for an eight-hour workday, not nearly enough to support a family. Two years later, they moved to a farm in Ericksdale, where they raised livestock and grew a good garden until the potato bug arrived in 1939 and ruined their crops.



Howard Lloyd and Marg in a 2018 Prince George Citizen photo.

Relatives in Prince George encouraged George to move to Prince George because of work opportunities, a warmer climate and a better way of life for his family.

Howard said: "After tuning up our old 1929 Nash, we hooked up a homemade trailer, packed our belongings, camping supplies and food, and left for Prince George. That old dependable Nash took us through the Rockies and safely delivered my parents, five Lloyds and two McCormick girls to Prince George.

"My stepfather raised all of us. Looking back, I still admire him for doing a great job of raising us through some pretty hard times. He was a hard-working, self-taught mechanic who could repair anything. We all learned a strong work ethic from him.

"I started skidding logs with a team of horses and later with a D4 Cat, building roads and skidding trees to the mill. In 1951, my three brothers and I bought a small sawmill in the Sweden Creek area, and we started Lloyd Bros. Lumber Company."

Howard is survived by his beloved wife Margaret and their children Gail Corrigan, Wanda (Ed) Turski, Grant (Darleen) Pilon, Lorne (Debbie) Lloyd, Judy (Carl) Hyde, and Guy (Penny) Pilon. He was predeceased by his wife Helen, who passed away in 1979, son Gary, son-in-law Neil and many siblings. Howard had 15 grandchildren and 31 great-grandchildren who he adored.

Round the clock, elbow grease keeps the Leg. shining

By James MacDonald

Passing through a door half a size too small and gingerly climbing a narrow spiral staircase, Surjit Dhanota, the facilities manager for the BC Legislature building and the property surrounding it, slowly opens a thick wooden door.

The late summer sunshine is blinding, and the blue sky is framed by the faded green copper roof of the Parliament Buildings. Walking from catwalk to catwalk, Dhanota inspects the roof and tiles before leaning over the edge to check one of the almost 3,500 lights that criss-cross the structure and illuminate the stone building every night.

The whole time his radio buzzes with conversations from facility crews around the property. It takes a dedicated team to maintain and upkeep a 125-year-old building through wet winters and extended summer heat, through the masses of tourists during travel season, and a robust parliamentary calendar.



Surjit Dhanota checks a bulb along the front roof of the legislature building. Being the facilities manager, he is responsible for all the lighting around the buildings. He controls the lighting of the fountains and exterior lights from a specialized program on his office computer.

All photos: James MacDonald/Capital Daily

From cleaning and upkeep to repairs and conservation, the work is always ongoing as visitors come and go, and the task of running Canada's third-largest province rolls on.

[continued next page](#)

CANFOR IS A PROUD MEMBER OF 12 COMMUNITIES IN BC

As a company that uses a renewable resource to produce sustainable products, we are part of the climate change solution and the circular economy.



In the last 20 years, Canfor has planted over 1 billion trees in Canada.



Learn more at Canfor.com





Above: Eric Hutchings, whose grandfather worked as a contractor at the Legislature, works in the wood shop where cabinetry, furniture, and historical pieces of the building are fixed, updated, and conserved.

Right: Josh Freeman tweaks a lock mechanism on one of the heavy wooden doors on a Legislature breezeway. Being so close to the ocean, and with the winter rains, the wood of the doors in the buildings contracts and expands throughout the year, causing the need for regular adjustments.



We give where we live.®

With **\$13 billion** invested in new communications infrastructure and operations across British Columbia, building on the **\$3 billion** invested in the province last year, we're proud to be a part of B.C.'s future.



Through these investments in our network TELUS PureFibre will soon reach more than **1.6 million households and businesses** in B.C. and our 5G network will connect more than **200 communities**, many in rural and Indigenous communities



TELUS Agriculture will deliver cutting-edge solutions to B.C.'s farmers, ranchers, and agricultural producers across the entire food value chain to ensure these homegrown industries continue to grow.



With **25,000 employees and retirees** living in B.C. and **12,000 jobs** through our vast partner ecosystem, no organization is more committed to this province than TELUS.



TELUS Health puts innovative healthcare in your hands through innovative digital solutions, and provides our partners with tools to fight COVID-19.

With more than **\$210 million** and **6.4 million hours** contributed to charities and community organizations in B.C. we're proud to be a part of where you live.

 **TELUS**
let's make the future friendly™

© 2021 TELUS. 21-0932

Strengthening democracy starts within the system

(Editor's note: In the Winter issue of OOTD, we reported that former premier Mike Harcourt and former Social Credit/Liberal cabinet minister Graham Bruce have joined forces to "strengthen democracy" at a time when our democratic institutions and our civil society are under assault. This project captured the interest of several readers, including former Socred Okanagan West MLA Cliff Serwa. Here is his comment.)

Dear Graham Bruce and Mike Harcourt:

I was elected in 1986 and found out very quickly in the first session of the Legislature that the parliamentary form of democracy practiced in British Columbia – and, truthfully, in all of Canada – was not as I conceived democracy to be practiced.

In my first session in Victoria, I drafted a letter and sent it to every member of the Legislature requesting their thoughts. I did not get a single response.

I spoke up a number of times in the Social Credit Caucus, indicating the three priority levels of my responsibility and support. My highest level of responsibility was to my constituents, all of them, whether they voted for me or not. My second level of priority was the party that I represented. The lowest level was my support to the Executive Branch, the government. I had no difficulty in saying that this support had to be earned. It was not etched in stone. I remained loyal to the Social Credit Party, for I believed in its principles and philosophy as well as its value system.

During my tenure, I spoke about the cynicism of the public with respect to politicians and politics. As a member who has had the opportunity to serve as a government member, an MLA in opposition, and a cabinet minister, I believe this cynicism is warranted.

Since stepping down, I have continued to encourage dialogue and have written articles regarding changes that I believe would elevate accountability and responsibility on the part of members.

As a member and former director of the Association of Former MLAs of BC, I had hoped that a multi-party organization of members, who had been there, would be the ideal environment to strike a committee and explore ideas of what could lead to reasoned recommendations to the Legislature. There was not enough support to even form a group.

Until improvements are made, we will never get the best qualified men and women to stand for office. Individuals like Colin Gabelmann and you, Mike, are rare entrants in the realm of politics. Some of my colleagues were members of three parties and were probably wondering if there was a fourth option.

What we have in Canada is, at best, a benevolent dictatorship! Everyone singing from the same song sheet is not democracy in my mind.

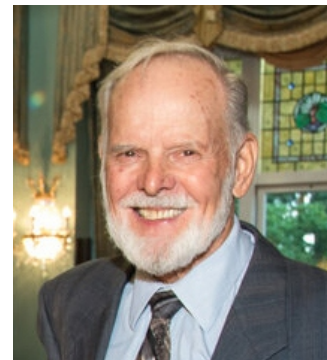
The changes required are really not that great. The mother of all parliaments in Great Britain has adopted changes to improve accountability, responsibility, and the opportunity to make government more democratic.

I do wonder why there is a reluctance to make changes here, and I suspect that the real reason is that the status quo is safer. Politicians can avoid accountability by hiding behind what is called party discipline.

I certainly wish you a much greater fortune with your agenda. Perhaps with your integrity as proponents for improvement, the matter will proceed.

There is a saying: "The people will forgive any vice in a prince save weakness." The public must accept that there are diverse perspectives on any issue and that the search for the best solution is not as simple as it would appear. Limited input makes a solution easier but not better.

When you convene a discussion forum, I would be pleased to participate. I will always believe that by working together, we do greater good than we are doing at the present time.



Cliff Serwa

Is it a compliment to be identified as a politician?

By Simon Gibson

I dropped into a produce store – owned by a friend – to pick up some local seasonal Abbotsford blueberries. Fresh from a meeting, I was dressed in a characteristic dark blue suit, crisp white shirt and stylish tie.

As I approached the cash register with my purchase, another customer, a young woman, perhaps in her early 20s, cautiously approached me and said: “You look like a politician.”

My friend, who was at the register, laughed and said: “He is a politician.” She had not recognized me; her observation was based on my appearance and deportment.

Later, I wondered whether being identified as a politician was a compliment. I reflected on a conversation I had overheard between two people at the next table at a restaurant. One said to the other: “Oh, you’re such a politician.” This was clearly pejorative; a remark intended to censure what had been said. In this case, a politician apparently would be obliging, civil ... perhaps not wishing to continue a contentious discussion.

It shouldn’t be too difficult to come up with a simple definition of a politician: Someone who has been elected – in Canada – to a federal, provincial or municipal office. Nothing too controversial there.

It would appear, in many instances, that politicians are not held in high regard. Voter turnout continues to decline in many jurisdictions, and there seems to be a significant level of cynicism, especially among younger people. Perhaps many prospective voters have become disillusioned and do not believe their vote will have much impact, so they reject politicians in general.

A casual viewing of U.S. television news reveals dramatic polarization and partisan tension that elicits a high level of disparagement, even a sense of disconnection. Moderation is often abandoned, replaced by a bifurcated society with little opportunity for reasoned discussion or debate.

Unfortunately, some of the overt divisiveness in U.S. politics has seeped into our country; debate in the House of Commons can be rancorous. Although largely drama, these debates can create a measure of skepticism of government.

Similarly, debate in the BC Legislature can also be quite acrimonious, notwithstanding the level of civility in less public settings. I know teachers and their young students attending as visitors during Question Period can be surprised at the degree of discourtesy. Is it the role modelling the teachers expected?

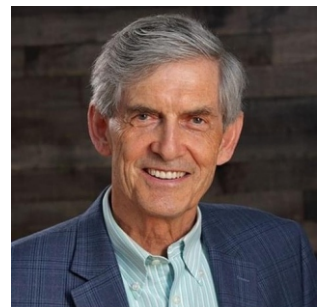
Although virtually all politicians serve with integrity and diligence, there are those who can lapse and make errors in judgment that reveal a lack of honesty and candour. It may be a questionable relationship or a financial matter that draws the media’s attention and fuels suspicion that many politicians cannot be trusted to serve in our best interests.

The media, of course, feeds on “bad news” and dishonourable politicians make appealing headlines. No one is drawn to a news report that says everything is going well and that politicians are assiduous and working hard for their constituents.

It has been a privilege to serve both in local and provincial office, and I do lament the apparent decline in respect for politicians. I worry that our young people who may have the skills and ability to contribute will decline the opportunity to seek elected office. Where will we find tomorrow’s leaders?

Politics, to some extent, is a calling. Not everyone has the temperament to succeed, but we will always need qualified and motivated people to rise to the challenge. It can be contentious, even painful, but the satisfaction of serving is a reward unique to the calling, whether local, provincial or federal.

(A frequent contributor to OOTD, Simon Gibson was elected in 2013 to represent Abbotsford-Mission for the BC Liberals. He served two terms. Before his election, Gibson was a member of Abbotsford City Council for more than 30 years. He has returned to his role as a councillor.)



Hostile environments for international democracy support

By Nicolas Bouchet, Ken Godfrey and Richard Youngs, of Carnegie Europe and the European Partnership for Democracy

International democracy support organizations (DSOs) are operating in increasingly difficult country environments. For over a decade, the world has witnessed a creeping phenomenon of closing civic space. This trend has tightened restrictions on civil society and made it harder for democratic activists to receive support from outside actors.

In many countries, the situation has deteriorated beyond the problem of closing space to the point at which external democracy support faces a fully hostile environment.

If the autocratization trend noted around the world continues, the number of countries with fully hostile environments will increase, obstructing democracy support even further. This makes it vital to draw the right lessons from existing international democracy support in such countries.

DSOs have sought to adapt to the increasingly closed civic space around the world. They have sought ways to channel their support to less direct political entities. Many have funded informal and cultural groups and spaces for dialogue rather than projects focused on political action directly against regimes' authoritarianism. DSOs have also helped keep activists out of harm's way.

While these creative tactics often make a difference, repressive regimes increasingly seek to neutralize many of them. As a result, international DSOs risk losing traction and the ability to influence positive change even through these means. To avoid this, these organizations must supplement their useful indirect initiatives with more direct political approaches.

A fully hostile environment (FHE) is defined as one in which the state is closing the space for domestic democratic actors, is unwilling to engage with external actors in democracy support programs, and tries to cut off domestic actors from international and domestic support. Such an environment makes the barriers to, and the risks of, helping democratic activists more prohibitive for domestic and external actors alike. Examples include countries such as Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Myanmar, Russia, and Turkmenistan.

In such cases, there has been a general trend for DSOs to adapt their work by adopting less overtly political policies and programs. DSOs have focused primarily on less directly political themes, such as culture and the arts, the environment, education and youth, media diversity, social entrepreneurship, and gender and disability rights.



The range of less overtly political actors that DSOs have supported has widened to include informal and grassroots civic groups, initiatives, and movements. Organizations have provided support to individual activists and human rights defenders. DSOs have also made a greater effort to reach provincial and rural actors, balancing the previous focus on capitals and major cities. Support to independent and critical media now includes informal actors, such as bloggers, vloggers (posting short videos), citizen journalists, and social media figures. These newer forms of support are partly driven by funders' aim to engage with a broader range of society and are carried out even in quite open contexts, but they also reflect a defensive adjustment to more hostile environments.

One element that underlies the work of DSOs with these more diverse themes and actors is the fostering and protection of key civic infrastructure. This refers to a growing variety of networks, hubs, spaces, community forums and the like that provide activists and members of the public with opportunities to meet, deliberate, and plan actions to address civic or socioeconomic needs. Support for civic infrastructure can build up a society's civic capital by enabling political agency from the ground up. It can also offer venues for civil society organizations to engage with individuals to channel their agency in more organized and impactful ways. Backing for social entrepreneurship can help generate further domestic funds for civic and democratic initiatives.

Some funders have moved away from having a physical presence with an office and staff in countries with hostile environments. In some cases, DSOs can be driven out by being blacklisted or because of legal, financial, or even physical risk.

More and more, DSOs have worked through intermediaries, using out-of-country organizations or subgrantees to fund domestic actors. Where a regime makes

continued next page

it nearly impossible for DSOs to transfer money into a country, partner organizations can be helped to register abroad, so they have a legal entity to receive funds. Where even subgranting is too difficult, donors have provided small cash transfers or even cryptocurrency to individuals or groups in need or as seed capital for informal groups and initiatives.

One trend in the shift to less overtly political democracy support has become especially relevant for FHEs: working with and through democracy actors that have left their country because of repression. DSOs must grapple with how to engage in more systematic and sophisticated support that is delocalized or implemented outside FHE countries as this trend spreads. Currently, most of this support goes to individuals in the form of practical support to help activists relocate and set up a new life abroad, but it will also need to help organizations relocate.

In summary, international DSOs have increasingly focused on indirect ways of helping democratic progress and on informal activism to widen their traditional democracy strategies and get around hostile regimes' actions. Even organizations that continue with fairly direct political approaches in some countries channel more of their funds to less overtly political initiatives. Now many are becoming aware that on its own, this strategy is not enough in FHEs. The time has come for DSOs to explore how to add more directly political elements to their strategies.

Faced with more hostile environments, some DSOs have tended to reconceptualize their mission from democracy support to democracy protection and survival. While understandable, this can reduce their agenda to defensive objectives. Yet, with democratization progress in FHE countries being a long-term challenge, less reactive approaches are equally necessary. It is essential to provide immediate protection for individual activists at risk and lifelines to threatened organizations while focusing on longer-term processes of institutional reshaping.

An updated, more directly political approach to international democracy support, based on a fuller understanding of what democratic activism entails in hostile environments, should include the following goals.

First, DSOs could do more to foster connections between different kinds of democratic actors. New strategies should centre on building alliances between cultural and informal groups on the one hand and conventional pro-democracy groups on the other. Where appropriate to the country context, these strategies could also build more engagement with protest movements rather than avoiding them, as has largely been the case under the more apolitical approaches of recent years.

Second, discreet forms of funding for democracy actors in FHEs will need to be developed more systematically. As more countries become increasingly hostile to international democracy support, DSOs will look to less vulnerable forms of support. There are risks in discreet ways of working, so DSOs and their funders need to have clear game rules for the use of such tactics.

Third, democracy supporters should do more to bring together democratic actors inside and outside their country of origin. The risks of relying too much on out-of-country activists have been exhaustively debated for years, but DSOs know this work is an inevitable new normal. In many countries, a crucial part of the pro-democracy constituency will continue to be based abroad for long periods.

(Nicolas Bouchet is a visiting fellow at the German Marshall Fund of the United States. Ken Godfrey is the executive director of the European Partnership for Democracy. Richard Youngs is a senior fellow in the Democracy, Conflict, and Governance Program based at Carnegie Europe. This article – edited for space – is part of the European Democracy Hub initiative run by Carnegie Europe and the European Partnership for Democracy.)



BRITISH COLUMBIANS BENEFIT FROM PERSONAL SERVICE

As B.C. continues to grow, so does the demand for personalized service. That's why there are offices in virtually every community, with over 15,000 insurance brokers province-wide, ready to serve. Brokers provide families with advice and better coverage for their homes, vehicles and businesses.

Working together in the community, brokers help families by providing information about safety, emergency preparedness and other local issues.

For more on insurance brokers and the benefits they provide to B.C. families go to bcbroker.ca.

HELPING WHEN LIFE CHANGES



Most provinces say: Abolish the notwithstanding clause

Recently, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Quebec Premier François Legault drew lines in the sand over that province's recent use of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms' notwithstanding clause.

The renewed debate came at a time when new data from the non-profit Angus Reid Institute finds Canadians concerned with its increased use.

Trudeau has said he intends to better regulate the use of the clause and might turn to the Supreme Court of Canada for a ruling on its use; Legault has responded by saying that doing so would be a "frontal attack" on "Quebec's democracy and people."

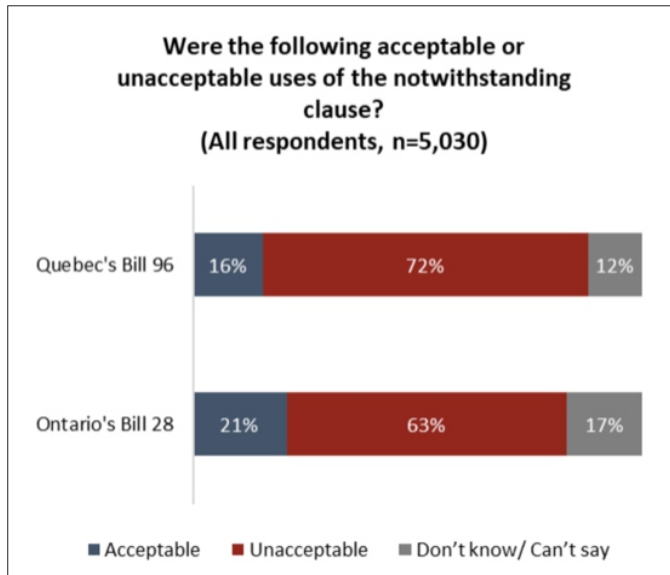
In terms of public opinion, 58 per cent say they are either concerned (32 per cent) or "very concerned" (26 per cent) with the recent popularity of the clause with provincial governments. In addition, most Canadians believe the two uses of the clause by Ontario and Quebec in 2022 were unacceptable.

Quebec's Bill 96, which promotes the use of French by restricting the use of English in many settings in the province, is believed to be an unacceptable use of the notwithstanding clause by almost three-quarters of Canadians. Forty-four per cent of Quebecers disagree. Since the clause's inception with the constitution in 1982, Quebec has invoked it more than any other province, including in 2019 with Bill 21, a ban on religious symbols for public employees.

In the fall of 2022, Ontario passed and quickly repealed Bill 28, which imposed a contract on education support workers and circumvented their right to strike for four years. More than three-in-five Canadians, including 64 per cent of Ontarians, believe Premier Doug Ford's government's use of the clause was unacceptable. Ontario has invoked the clause twice and considered using it a third time, all under Ford, though only one bill has been passed and not repealed.

For Canadians, the worry is that the notwithstanding clause – Section 33 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms – weakens the rights and freedoms of their fellow citizens. Half say this, outnumbering those few who believe the clause strengthens them or has no effect. As well there is a significant belief the increased use of the clause is damaging national unity. Half (53 per cent) of Canadians say this, nearly double those (28 per cent) who disagree.

The notwithstanding clause was included in the charter as an "escape hatch," a concession by the federal government to the provinces who felt a charter without one would vest too much power in the courts. Since 2018, the notwithstanding clause has been considered or invoked seven times. This represents an awakening of the clause from a period of dormancy – there were only four invocations between 1990 and 2017.



From 1982 to 1989, the clause was invoked 15 times, including immediately on the constitution's passing by Quebec in 1982 in a blanket attempt to exempt all statutes passed in the province from charter review.

Prime Minister Trudeau heavily criticized the use of the notwithstanding clause by Ontario in 2022 but had stayed mainly quiet on Quebec's Bill 96 and earlier Bill 21 until recently. In January, Trudeau said in an interview with *La Presse* that he planned to regulate the use of the notwithstanding clause. "There should be a political consequence to such a decision. But we are experiencing a certain trivialization of this suspension of rights," said Trudeau. He also said he was considering turning to the Supreme Court of Canada for a reference on the clause.

Critics of the recent uses of the notwithstanding clause have argued that it is threatening the national unity of Canada. The Charter of Rights may be irrelevant "if provincial governments routinely bypass it on the way to crafting legislation that impacts fundamental freedoms," wrote Quebec journalist Chantal Hebert in response to Ford's pre-emptive use of the clause with Bill 28.

Half of Canadians believe provinces that use the notwithstanding clause undermine unity, while one-quarter disagree. The latter includes 42 per cent in Quebec, the only province where more people disagree than agree with that statement.

As Alberta wrestles against the constitution with Premier Danielle Smith's Sovereignty Act, one-third there disagree that use of the notwithstanding clause is undermining national unity, more than any province but Quebec.

continued next page



Saskatchewan and Alberta are provinces where the Conservative Party of Canada (CPC) earned the majority of votes in the 2021 federal election. Those two provinces are behind only Quebec when it comes to the proportion of residents who believe use of the notwithstanding clause does not undermine national unity. Those who voted Conservative (37 per cent) in last year's federal election are more likely than those who voted Liberal (20 per cent) and NDP (14 per cent) to believe that provinces aren't undermining national unity by using the notwithstanding clause.

Still, the plurality of Conservative voters (46 per cent) say national unity is under threat from the notwithstanding clause. Few (15 per cent) of those who voted for the Bloc Québécois agree.

Many feel the right to religious freedom is under threat in Quebec because of the passing of Bill 21. A Quebec teacher was told she could no longer teach in a classroom because she wore a hijab. In a ruling on Bill 21, a Quebec superior court judge wrote the law "violates" the religious freedom of Muslim women. In his interview with *La Presse*, Trudeau worried that increased use of the clause, in general, had "reduced the political costs of the suspension of fundamental rights."

Half of Canadians believe the notwithstanding clause weakens the rights and freedoms enshrined in the country's constitution, which is more than the number who think the clause has no effect (19 per cent) or instead strengthens them (10 per cent).

The belief the notwithstanding clause weakens constitutional rights and freedoms is highest in Ontario (60 per cent) and lowest in Newfoundland and Labrador (32 per cent) and Quebec (33 per cent). In those two provinces, there is a stronger belief than in other jurisdictions that Section 33 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms has no effect.

A majority of Canadians (55 per cent) want to see Canada scrap the notwithstanding clause, while 45 per cent would keep it in place. To abolish the clause, Canada would need to amend the constitution, which is unlikely to happen given any constitutional amendment requires approval from the House of Commons, the Senate and at least two-thirds of the provinces.

About two-thirds of Quebecers – Quebec never formally approved the constitution in the first place – would keep the notwithstanding clause.

Half of past CPC voters would keep the notwithstanding clause, while half would ditch it. Three in five who voted Liberal in 2021 say they would abolish the clause, while two in five want to keep it in place. Past NDP voters are the most likely of supporters of the four major political parties to want to abolish the clause (71 per cent). Four in five who voted for the Bloc Québécois last year would keep Section 33 in place.

Support for the notwithstanding clause has increased slightly in the decades since it was first enacted. Angus Reid surveyed on the clause in February 1992, finding 41 per cent wanted to keep it in place and 59 per cent wanted to abolish it. Support for the clause has increased most significantly in Quebec, where it has increased 10 points (53 per cent to 63 per cent) since 1992.

The lawyers want to rewrite sports history

ATTENTION: Orders of the Day

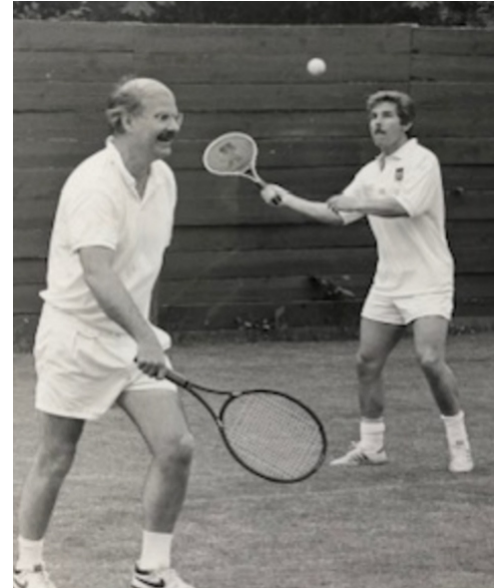
We have been retained to act for Messrs. Keith Baldrey (Global TV) and Les Leyne (The T-C) in the matter of the offensive, inflammatory photo cutline in your Winter edition. The line below a photo of MLAs Mike Harcourt and Graham Bruce in tennis attire alleged that they "trounced" Leyne and Baldrey in a tennis match.

This slur has subjected our clients to malicious taunting and hurtful smears and reduced their standing in the community.

MLAs may have won 23 out of 24 tournaments against the press over the history of that tourney (using extremely dubious recruiting tactics). But there is no record of a score in the match you pictured. If the media doesn't report it, it didn't happen.

The basic job of sports journalism is to get the score right. We demand a correction.

Cordially,
Warren Betanko, Esq.
(Nasty, Brutish and Short, Solicitors at Law)



Germany burns energy crisis candles

GERMANY (NPR) – It's a great time to be a candlemaker in Germany.

"Candle demand is very strong right now," says Stefan Thomann, Technical Director of the European Candle Manufacturers Association.

The candle boom began during the pandemic after the government-imposed lockdowns, and Germans began spending much more time at home. The industry expected the boom to end once the nation opened back up, Thomann says. "But then the war (in Ukraine) started."

Many Germans remain anxious about high energy prices and the possibility of shortages and power outages. Their response to this has included buying lots of candles.



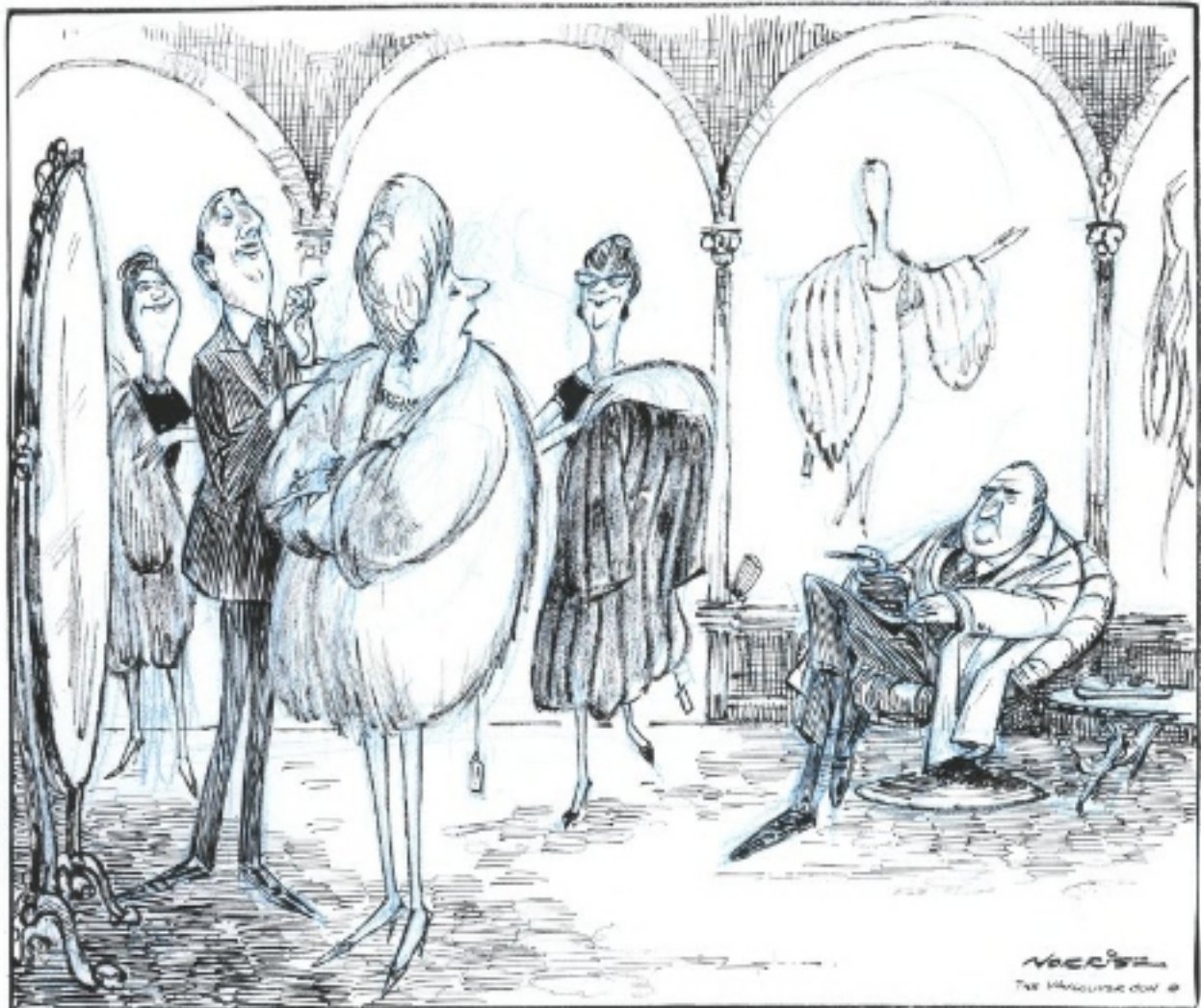
Just another example of Congressional kryptonite

WASHINGTON (NPR) – Congressman Robert Garcia (D-Calif.) opted to swear himself in on a copy of the Constitution, a photo of his late parents, his certificate of U.S. citizenship and ... a copy of *Superman #1* on loan from the Library of Congress. Unusual, that last bit? Sure. But it makes sense in an absurd, yet profoundly American, way.

Not just because Garcia is a lifelong comic-book nerd but because of what *Superman #1* is as a historical and cultural object. *Superman #1* appeared on newsstands in April 1939. It was the first comic book devoted entirely to a single character.

Ironically, the Superman that appeared back then was not the Big Blue Boy Scout we know today, nor the smiling cop-in-a-cape who enforces the rule of law and saves the day. No, the Superman of those first few outings was an agitator. He didn't reinforce the status quo; he upended it again and again. So Congressional.

Len Norris



October 25, 1967

"I can never remember ... is it too much money chasing not enough goods that causes inflation or vice versa?"

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 "AFMLABC Hugh Curtis British Columbia 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. Click on "Giving" in the navigation bar and then on "Make a Donation." After that just follow the prompts to find the AFMLABC 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.

125 years ago

First came the "Birdcages," then the new Legislature

The Fraser River gold rush of 1858 transformed Victoria. Built as a Hudson's Bay Company fur trading fort adjacent to a Songhees village, Victoria became the capital of the Colony of Vancouver Island and the hub for tens of thousands travelling from San Francisco and beyond to the gold fields of BC's interior.

The gold rush also spurred the British government to formally claim sovereignty over the Pacific Northwest by establishing the mainland Colony of British Columbia, despite the fact that both Vancouver Island and the mainland were largely unceded by the Indigenous peoples that lived there. James Douglas, the Governor of Vancouver Island and the former Chief Factor of the Hudson's Bay Company, became the Governor of both colonies in 1858.

Douglas recognized the need for administrative buildings adequate for the two colonies. He also supported the choice of a site along James Bay, the location of the present Parliament Buildings. Although somewhat removed from the town, a bridge across James Bay (where Government Street currently crosses in front of the Fairmont Empress Hotel) improved access.

The group of six Colonial Administration Buildings, built in 1859, was described in the press as a "mixed style of architecture, the latest fashion for Chinese pagoda, Swiss-cottage and Italian-villa fancy Birdcages." (Victoria Gazette, June 23rd, 1859.)

These "Birdcages" included the first purpose-built Parliament House, which served as the home for BC's Legislative Council and government until the present Parliament Buildings were completed.

After 30 years, it was generally recognized that the Birdcages were no longer adequate. Too small for the growing province, they were difficult to heat, and their quaint design was increasingly out of favour.

According to a local newspaper, the "mean and insignificant public buildings are outward and visible signs of a sordid, narrow-minded and uncultivated State or Province. Visitors are sure to judge the whole people by the buildings they erect for public uses. Those buildings ought to be handsome as well as commodious." (Victoria Colonist, March 16th, 1883). The idea of a new, substantial building was also supported by those in Victoria who feared that the provincial capital might relocate to New Westminster.



The Legislative Buildings take shape, with the Birdcages still standing

The economic depression of the early 1890s was an added impetus for a major public works project. The jobs were badly needed. In 1892, a competition was held to select a design for the new Parliament Buildings, which was to include an administrative building, a Legislative Assembly building, a government printing office, and a land registry office.

Although there was universal praise for the quality of the design and craftsmanship, upon completion in 1898, opinion was divided. Most were understandably proud of the magnificent new structure overlooking Victoria's harbour. Others saw it as a wasteful extravagance at a time when the economy was beginning to weaken again. Skeptics could not imagine there would ever be enough people in BC's government to fill the many empty corridors of the new building.

To make way for the new Parliament Buildings, the Birdcages were either moved or disassembled. The last Birdcage was converted into a provincial mineral museum. This, however, did not last, as the museum burnt down on March 27th, 1957.

Although BC's new Parliament Buildings were completed in late 1897, the opening was delayed to coincide with a new session of Parliament. Lieutenant Governor T.R. McInnes formally opened the buildings on February 10th, 1898. The only dignitary not attending was the architect Francis Rattenbury. He was in England raising funds for a business scheme involving Klondike steamboats.

Between 1911 and 1915, Rattenbury designed additions to the structure, including the magnificent Legislative Library, with its elegant marble-panelled rotunda.