

A sell-out punctuated by camaraderie and reflection

After three long years of pandemic-mandated distancing, more than 90 members of the Association of Former MLAs of BC, their families, and their friends crowded into Government House on Sept. 15th for their annual banquet.

It was a sell-out evening punctuated by camaraderie and opportunities to reflect on lessons learned on our various public service journeys.

And, it was a special evening for our host, Her Honour Lieutenant Governor Janet Austin, who talked about her many friendships with current and former parliamentarians and who was clearly thrilled to renew her special kinship with guest speaker Jody Wilson-Raybould.

Jody delivered a compelling message ... a rocky road story about a willful Indigenous woman whose governance ethos is rooted in the non-partisan traditions of the "Big House" and who went to Ottawa determined to speak truth to power. (Page 4.)

Gordie Hogg, who welcomed Jody, put it this way: "Her persona, presence and principled passion have inspired many to refocus their attention from self to societal benefit. Rarely are messages informed by lived experiences and an emotional and theoretical awareness – Jody's are."

Dave Hayer – who earlier in the day at the AFMLABC AGM agreed to continue in the role of president – gave special thanks to his association executive and their spouses, volunteers, Orders of the Day staff, Speaker Raj Chouhan and his staff, Kate Ryan-Lloyd and her staff in the Clerk's Office, and everyone else who has helped the AFMLABC. (Dave's annual report is on Page 5.)

As in years past, the association was thrilled to welcome a delegation from the BC Youth Parliament. Outgoing Premier Abby Head and incoming Premier Megan Ryan-Lloyd shared the stage and thanked the AFMLABC for its annual funding support. (Page 6.)



More than 90 AFMLABC members and friends gathered in friendship after three long years of distancing.



A gracious host, Her Honour Lieutenant Governor Janet Austin, enjoyed her bond with guest speaker Jody Wilson-Raybould. (All photos by John Yanyshyn.)

Pages 7 through 10 are devoted to John Yanyshyn's photos of the event. Enjoy. You can view these photos and more on our website, www.formerbcmla.com.

Rediscover OOTD – Primer P-15, Survey P-16

Her Honour

The Honourable Janet Austin, OBC
Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia

Thank You and Miscellany

Thank you to **Canfor** for renewing its advertising in Orders of the Day. We appreciate all the organizations that continue to support our Association.

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

James Craven, Victoria
Richard Stewart, Coquitlam

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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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.

From the Editor's Desk

In March 2015, Anne Edwards – chair of the Committee to Re-establish OOTD – welcomed readers back to "the new *Orders of the Day*" and introduced me as the new editor. OOTD had drifted briefly after the death of Hugh Curtis, who, she wrote, "was dedicated to create, write, edit and publish this newsletter for the Association of Former MLAs of BC because he wanted to celebrate the non-partisan camaraderie that exists despite the too-often bare animosity displayed in our chamber before our retirement."

Joan Barton and Irwin Henderson were members of that committee. Sadly, Anne has left the Precinct, but thankfully, Joan and Irwin – along with Bruce Strachan and Penny Priddy – have continued her excellent and supportive work on the editorial board.

Anne also paid tribute to Rob Lee. "We couldn't have done it without Rob, who had been Hugh's right hand for many years. He did all sorts of jobs, from typing Hugh's copy to seeing to the arrangements for our AGM and annual dinners. He has always been there for us." Amen to that!

Anne also urged readers: "Please write to the newsletter! That's what the newsletter is for. Letters home from away, descriptions of your summer/fall/winter/spring vacation, reports of seeing one of the rest of us, favourite memories and revelations that you couldn't make in the old days, but now ..!"

On Page 15 of this issue, you will find an OOTD primer ... a reminder of its raison d'être. And on Page 16, you will find a readership survey. Please fill it out and send it in or complete it online on our website: www.formerbcmla.com.

I could not resist sharing this photo from the Government House bash. Mike Harcourt is going strong as a co-founder of "Strengthening Democracy," and Donna Hains is bringing a quality of copy editing diligence to OOTD that eludes me and would thrill Anne.



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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.

The President's Report

I want to thank members of the AFMLABC and guests who attended our first in-person AGM Sept. 15th at the Parliament Buildings to update bylaws and elect a 2023/24 board. In addition, thank you to all those who attended our first in-person dinner since 2019 at Government House.

A special thank you to retiring directors Penny Priddy and Ida Chong. Your advice and guidance have been greatly appreciated. We welcomed three former MLAs to the board: Richard T. Lee (2001-2017), Cliff Serwa (1986-1996), and Richard Stewart (2001-2005). I also wish to thank the executive, directors and Brian, Rob and Donna, who will continue to serve as they have been doing for years.

At the dinner, the speakers were excellent. Future leaders like Megan Ryan-Lloyd, the 95th Premier of the BC Youth Parliament and Abby Head, the 94th Premier, spoke about their work to keep young Canadians involved in our democracy. Our guest speaker, the Honorable Jody Wilson-Raybould, gave a very informative and impactful speech, honestly and from her heart.

It was a delightful evening and could not have happened without the support of Her Honour, Lieutenant Governor Janet Austin, all the Government House Staff, Jeremy Brownridge and Piper Shelley Thorsteinson.

Special recognition also goes to long-time BC parliamentary photographer John Yanyshyn. John has a long history of taking exceptional pictures at Government House and the Legislature.

As we approach October and as we gather on Oct. 9th, Thanksgiving, I urge you to pause and reflect on the events in our lives. Even with all the serious difficulties many in BC and across our land face, it is also a time to be thankful for everything we enjoy in British Columbia and Canada.

I am thankful for our hard-working Canadian farmers who help keep food on our tables to feed our families and communities. I am thankful for our first responders who risk their lives to keep us safe. I am thankful for so many others who contribute to society in so many ways, making our province and country a great place to live and raise our families. I am profoundly thankful to be blessed with family and friends who are always there in times of need and give their support with open hearts.

Thank you for re-electing me and giving me the honour of being the President for 2023-2024.

If you have any suggestions or advice or just want to talk, please feel free to contact me at Dave.S.Hayer@gmail.com.

Dave Hayer,
President

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Indigenous invisibility was not Jody Wilson-Raybould's destiny

By Brian Kieran
Editor

Jody Wilson-Raybould's political DNA was forged by the Indigenous traditions of the "Big House" and the "Potlatch." She would discover quickly how profound the divide was between the governing collaboration practiced in her home community of Cape Mudge and the unquestioning party discipline demanded in Ottawa.

Guest speaker at the AFMLABC Government House dinner on Sept. 15th, Jody explained the Indigenous governance model this way: "The tradition of the Big House and Potlatch is a very different system of law and government and leadership in Canadian society. In the Big House, there are no political parties; there is no partisanship. There is rank, but we govern through principles of consensus.

"The role of leaders and how we were raised is to seek that consensus. While not everyone needs to agree on every aspect, we raise issues and seek general agreement to help ensure that decisions are balanced and will endure the test of time. This role of consensus – rejection of division and partisanship – reflects the communitarian nature of our culture and indigenous cultures in general."

Jody explained that in her nation, "things are in their greatest state of well-being when there is balance."

"This includes balance between humans and the natural world, between genders and groups of peoples, within families and communities or in how we live and organize our own lives. Balance means the proper state of things where conditions of harmony and justice flourish. Imbalance is what gives rise to conflict and harm. Everyone has a role to play ... to ensure that communities work well. The roles are very different but equally important to ensure that society functions as it should."

In Ottawa, Jody discovered that partisanship was at "the heart of the issue."

"Excessive partisanship, as we have in our federal and provincial politics today, is, in my view, antithetical and coercive to true leadership. It is the opposite of bold leadership.

"What I found in Ottawa is a reality of how disinterested our leaders and governing system are in building consensus around best ideas – searching for the truth and evidence of a situation and working together.



"In (Ottawa) politics, ideas are not judged on their value or merit; they are judged by who says them. If they are said by someone from another party, they are wrong or bad. If they are said by someone in their own party, they are unassailable. One is not really supposed to think for oneself. Rather, one is to imitate or parrot the party. One is never to lead, always to follow. Never call out someone who is doing something wrong if that person is from one's own party, and always say someone from another party is doing something wrong, even if they are not.

"Never speak truth in power; just accept that power is truth," Jody said.

In 2019, Jody says she was confronted with the need to honour the lineage to which she was born ... to lead and speak out or do nothing. "There was never any question that I would speak out. Just like women and others have had to do in all sorts of organizations and institutions to affect change. Just like many of you have had to do in your own ways and environments. And in doing that, it was not really that hard. I am – we are – surrounded by so much bravery and courage."

Jody recalled that her grandmother and her generation had "to toil in shadows." The only way to preserve their culture, traditions and language, and roles and responsibilities was to do so invisibly. But ultimately, Jody's contribution would be to be visible.

"Thank you for the role that you play in our political life – for creating a more just, inclusive and compassionate society," she told the Government House audience. "I believe that every one of you has a role to play in guiding the path forward in helping our societies find balance and flourish. We can work together."

President Dave Hayer's AGM Report

Sold out Government House dinner highlights 2023

Dear members and friends:

Welcome and thank you for attending our first in-person AGM of the Association of Former MLAs of BC (AFMLABC) since September 2019. Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to join us today.

I want to thank all of our team members, the Board of Directors and executives, all our great volunteers, Brian Kieran, the Editor for the *Orders of the Day* (OOTD); Rob Lee, our specialist for Layout, Production, Research for OOTD and specialist in all various projects; Donna Hains for volunteering to take our meeting minutes and with everything else we need help with; and lastly Ken Jones, thank you for your help with obtaining advertising for OOTD and the great work you do on memberships.

I also want to say special thank you to Bruce, Diane, John, Penny, Patrick, Harry, Ken, Ian, Ida, Joan, Linda, Tim, Brian, Rob and Donna for putting up with late-night phone calls as we work on AFMLABC duties.

We accomplished a lot this year, including:

- A sold-out AFMLABC dinner this evening, our first in-person gathering since COVID-19 lockdowns.
- After many years of discussions and planning, and with help from Ian, Ken, Kate Ryan-Lloyd and Hansard, we have updated the Bylaws of the AFMLABC – sent to all members by Brian and Rob, and ones that will be voted on today.
- We are working with Elections BC, who will provide free kits called "Democracy in a Box" to former MLAs during their school visits to help students understand the voting process, provincial elections, and democracy. The goal is

to inform and inspire young people to participate in elections and vote when they are eligible to vote.

- This project helps fulfill the AFMLABC's objectives to use the knowledge and experience of its members at the service of parliamentary democracy in BC and elsewhere and to serve the public interest by providing non-partisan support for the parliamentary system of government in BC.
- We also endorsed the non-partisan "Strengthening Democracy" initiative put forward and led by former Premier Mike Harcourt and former cabinet minister Graham Bruce. Further, the association supports the initial goals stated in the May 17th, 2023 Strengthening Democracy letter to AFMLABC.
- We approved two grants of \$500 each from our AFMLABC Hugh Curtis BC Youth Parliament Fund for two young students for 2023. Ken Jones helped to update our agreements with the UVIC Scholarship and UNBC Scholarship to attempt to have, by 2024, one scholarship each for male and female students every year.

I want to give special thanks to Speaker Raj Chouhan and his staff for the \$5,000 provided to AFMLABC and the room provided to us to hold our AGMs every year. Special thanks also go to Kate Ryan-Lloyd and her staff at the Clerk's Office, Legislative Library staff, Sergeant-at-Arms Security, and everyone else who helped AFMLABC.

Finally, we would not be enjoying our dinner at Government House without the support and help from Lieutenant Governor Janet Austin and her staff. As well, I thank our special guest speaker, former Attorney General of Canada Jody Wilson-Raybould. Her work and support are impactful to all of us.

The Association Executive 2023-24



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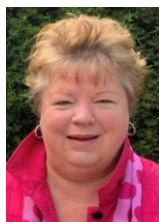
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Collaboration thrives at the core of BCYP and AFMLABC

(Editor's note: No annual AFMLABC banquet would be complete without greetings from the BC Youth Parliament leadership. This year, the honour was shared on stage by outgoing Premier Abby Head and incoming Premier Megan Ryan-Lloyd. As it happens, Friday, the 15th, was the day Abby passed the baton to Megan.)

Abby: Good evening, Your Honour Janet Austin, Speaker Raj Chouhan, current and former Members and distinguished guests.

It is indeed a pleasure to be here with all of you tonight. Thank you so much for the very kind invitation and the wonderful hospitality. As previously mentioned, my name is Abby Head, and it is a privilege to represent the British Columbia Youth Parliament alongside my colleague, Megan Ryan-Lloyd. We are thrilled to join you in celebrating the Association of Former MLAs of BC.

Megan: We are deeply honoured to have received this invitation to address you tonight as representatives of the British Columbia Youth Parliament. Interestingly, this evening coincides with a pivotal moment in BCYP, which we fondly refer to as our "turnover." Today, I officially step into the shoes of the Premier while Abby takes a well-deserved step back. Therefore, we found it fitting to deliver this speech together to emphasize the spirit of collaboration that lies at the core of both the British Columbia Youth Parliament and the Former MLAs Association.

If you are unfamiliar with it, the British Columbia Youth Parliament is a youth service organization. From December 27th to 31st, 97 youth from across the province come together at the Legislative Assembly to discuss legislation that facilitates projects to be run during the sessional year. These include regional parliamentary education events for high school students, fundraisers, and our flagship project, Camp Phoenix, which works to give all children a chance to attend summer camp regardless of social or financial status. Whether it be running donut sales, drafting mock bills for high school students, or playing with kids at Camp Phoenix, BCYP has a wide range of initiatives that impact a wide community.

Abby: Among your Association's various endeavours, your commitment to youth and civic engagement shines exceptionally bright through the administration of the Hugh Curtis BC Youth Parliament Fund. This bursary provides essential financial support for participants in our British Columbia Youth Parliament, enabling them to attend our annual session in December. This fund eliminates financial



BCYP Premier Megan Ryan-Lloyd and outgoing Premier Abby Head

barriers that might otherwise deter our young members from experiencing the incomparable fun of a BCYP session in Victoria.

One fun thing we do that often surprises real members is in the first sitting of the day, we do what we call a "funky bow." Instead of bowing to the Speaker, both the government and opposition sides break into a prepared song and sing the praises of the Speaker. If I went on about all of the quirky traditions of BCYP, I would be here all night, but it is clear that this experience is truly like no other. We are incredibly appreciative of the Association for nurturing the leaders of tomorrow and passing on the torch of democracy and civic responsibility.

Megan: Furthermore, your Association consistently produces the highly sought-after "Orders of the Day" newsletter. We have been grateful for the opportunity to contribute to your newsletter on multiple occasions, highlighting some of our major projects. *Orders of the Day* has not only served as a platform for us to disseminate information about our significant projects, but it also provided me with my own journalistic breakthrough.

Abby: Tonight, we acknowledge and celebrate the Association of Former MLAs of British Columbia – not merely as a gathering of esteemed former legislators but as a symbol of non-partisan unity, a repository of our province's history, and an advocate for the youth who will shape our future. The Association of Former MLAs is an essential organization that transcends political divides, serving as a testament to the power of collaboration and dedication.

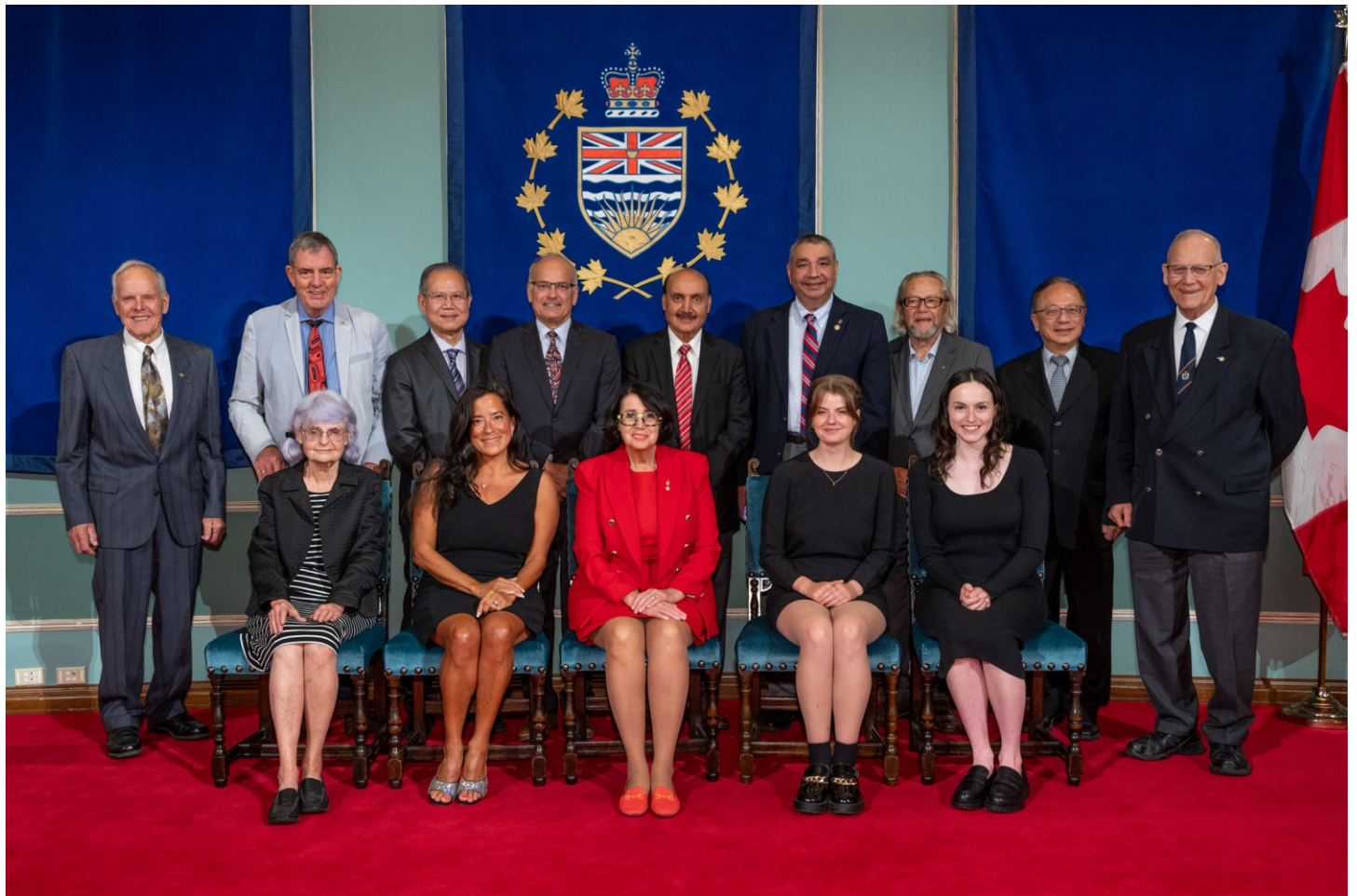
Megan: In closing, let us celebrate the spirit of service and compassion that unites us tonight. Let us be inspired by the remarkable work of the Association and the profound thanks of youth around the province.

Images from the 2023 Association Annual Dinner

An Evening Made Possible Through The Courtesy Of The Honourable Janet Austin, Lieutenant Governor

The following images are a small sample of the photographs taken during this year's Annual Dinner by John Yanyshyn of Visions West Photography.

A wide selection of the photographs can be viewed online. Visit the Association website at www.formerbcmla.com and click on Photo Gallery.





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"Fake news" a significant threat to our democratic institutions

By Mario Canseco and Max Cameron

When a diverse and cross-partisan group of former British Columbia MLAs gathered at UBC in April for a workshop on strengthening democracy, their first question was crucial: How safe is democracy in Canada today?

To answer this question, they turned to Research Co. to conduct a poll to gauge the opinions of British Columbians.

The results of the survey, conducted in September, are reassuring and concerning at the same time.

"Fake news" is seen as a significant threat to Canada's democratic institutions by 76 per cent of British Columbians, followed closely by polarization at 75 per cent. Put differently, three in four residents are concerned about voters and parties making decisions that are based either on misinformation or knee-jerk opposition.

Three other issues are regarded as threats to the state of democracy in Canada by two-thirds of British Columbians: Racism and discrimination (70 per cent), low citizen engagement on important issues (68 per cent) and low voter turnout (67 per cent).

More than three in five British Columbians (63 per cent) view the state of democracy in Canada as "very good" or "good." While we could see this as a positive result, more than a third of the province's residents feel something is missing.

Satisfaction with democracy varies across age groups, with British Columbians aged 35 to 54 expressing more skepticism about the current state of affairs (56 per cent believe it to be "very good" or "good"). In contrast, 66 per cent of those aged 18 to 34 and 69 per cent of those aged 55 and over express higher levels of satisfaction.

Notably, over half of British Columbians (53 per cent) consider their provincial and municipal governments to be "very responsive" or "moderately responsive" to their needs. The federal government received lower ratings, with only 40 per cent of British Columbians holding similar views. The disconnect between citizens and the government is clearly greatest at the federal level.

The "Strengthen Democracy" initiative is focusing some of its efforts on the level of government closest to the citizen: Municipal politics. Our survey found that only 31 per cent of British Columbians engaged directly with



their municipality in the past year. While a majority of those who did were satisfied with the handling of their issues (54 per cent), more than two in five remain dismayed or undecided.

If disinformation has been identified as a threat to democracy, a desired course of action is to ensure that the public knows what is happening. Almost three in five British Columbians (59 per cent) agree with the idea of compelling media outlets to provide specific coverage devoted solely to municipal issues.

Additionally, 56 per cent support the concept of elected councillors representing specific wards rather than voting for several at-large councillors.

Fewer respondents agree with abolishing political parties or "slates" and having all candidates for mayor, council or school board run independently (50 per cent) or allowing permanent residents who have lived in a municipality for at least six months to vote in municipal elections (47 per cent).

While some of these ideas may be contentious, we need healthy and open debate to ensure the vitality of our democracy. Former premier Mike Harcourt and former labour minister Graham Bruce – the founding partners of the "Strengthening Democracy" initiative – addressed mayors and councillors at the Union of BC Municipalities convention in September. They emphasized the importance of civic education, leveraging social media, promoting dialogue and collaboration, and building trust by working closely with local leaders.

(Mario Canseco is president of Research Co. His poll was published in Business in Vancouver. Max Cameron is a professor of political science and public policy at UBC.)

Public Policy Forum: The rise of polarization in Canada

By Justin Ling

Canada has a polarization problem that strikes at the heart of our system of government. It's a problem that has been years, even decades, in the making, and it sits at the confluence of many long-term trends in the evolution of our political institutions and media environment. These trends came to a head during the pandemic, where they turned into a roiling cauldron of anger and recrimination.

If these trends continue, our politics will become more gladiatorial and performative. More voters will tune out and drop out, leaving less territory in the middle and on the margins to be contested. Politics will devolve further into trench warfare. Increasingly, policy could become politics by other means – a way of signalling to the faithful and wedging the opposition.

Our political arena is becoming less cooperative and more rigid. Politicians and partisans are locked in a downward spiral, each demanding greater purity and militancy from the other.

This is driven by plenty of real-world factors, but the trend is supercharged by caricatures we have made of each other online. Emails in our inboxes and posts on our timelines tell us that partisans of the other stripe represent a threat to our society, our way of life, our finances, and our children.

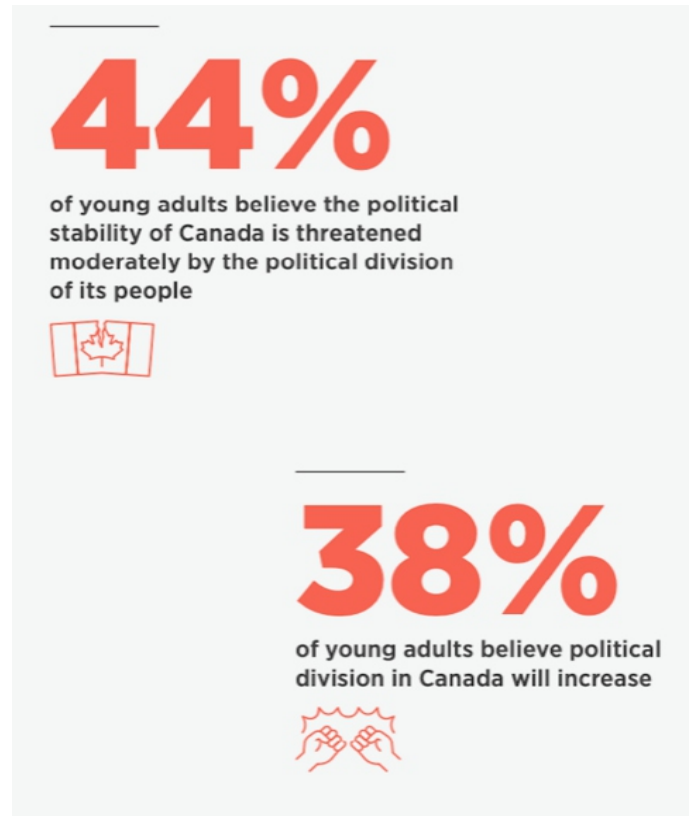
Many Canadians have recoiled from this nastiness, particularly young adults. An attempt to use the internet to serve as a great equalizer and to prosecute social injustice through collective action has netted plenty of good but also pain. Rather than consistently fostering accountability, education and redemption, cancel culture has allowed small, marginalized groups, or even lone actors, to set loose a mob to destroy lives and careers. Worse yet, some marginalized young adults we interviewed – intended beneficiaries of this online justice – feel stifled and anxiety-ridden because of it.

The mainstream media, which one would hope could help untangle this social tumult, is more fragmented than ever. Things are likely to get worse. We will have an institutional press, for those who believe in institutions, that is increasingly impoverished and incapable of fulfilling its mandate, and an alternative press that prioritizes confirming fans' identities and boosting its own fundraising over true accountability for the systems it covers. This divide is worsening polarization, not improving it.

In good times, reasonably steady economic growth makes everyone more open-minded and tolerant of diversity and difference. But Canada is facing serious challenges, including a cost-of-living crisis, a challenged economy and flatlining productivity, all factors contributing to a noticeable decline in state services. Those problems are providing traction for this growing anxiety.

Young adults have become frustrated but, as best we can tell, are not entirely hopeless about the state of our country; they haven't checked out.

At the very least, we need to understand them better and, more ambitiously, ensure they understand one another and see themselves – their anxieties and priorities – addressed in our political discourse.



The ship of state is not rudderless in these waters. We still have time and ability to address these problems, but we require leaders who want to reduce this polarization and are willing to abandon the tactics that drive it. That does not require individuals in our political system and media to water down their beliefs or mute their criticism of each other. However, it does demand that they do so thoughtfully and with awareness of their own potentially corrosive impact.

The Freedom Convoy should be a wake-up call. Canadians are angry. And they are picking sides, increasingly segmenting into agitated clusters of comforting rage.

(This report is a dynamic and comprehensive study involving more than 1,600 young adults, 10 researchers and writers, six community organizations, two think tanks and one investigative journalist, all studying, documenting and reporting on the issue of Canadian polarization.)

Letters

Phone calls during wildfire crisis reaffirm collegiality

Dear Editor:

The McDougall Creek fire resulted in the loss or damage to more than 189 homes in the Central Okanagan. The intensity of the fire, coupled with strong winds aloft, enabled the fire to cross Okanagan Lake and start a series of fires on the east side of the lake.

Winds moved the fire northward and eastward over the ridge and into Glenmore. Words will always fall short of fully describing the pain and anguish of the families that have lost their homes and accumulated irreplaceable possessions.

In response to the news reports going out, I started receiving several phone calls. A number of those calls were from former members. Those calls were totally unexpected, for it has been over 27 years since I stepped down from representing Okanagan West.

The fire-prompted calls universally expressed concern for our safety and welfare in the face of the expanding fire zones. Calls came from friends in all political parties: Colin Gabelmann, a former AG and an honourable man in the fullest sense of the word, was an early caller. Our Association President, Dave Hayer, called as well.

From my perspective, the calls formed a part of the silver lining surrounding a very dark cloud. While the media may portray – and perhaps the public believes – that hostility and adversity play a dominant role in our Legislature, my experience has found quite the opposite.

With both government and opposition members cognizant of their responsibility to represent their constituents to the best of their ability, the reality is that cooperation and collaboration, working together, is necessary to move business through the House. In this process, long-lasting relationships are built.

That has been exhibited in my case by all the caring phone calls.

I have always looked forward to meeting old friends at the Association of Former MLAs of British Columbia Annual General Meeting. The phone calls confirmed the reason why!

Cliff Serwa,
former MLA, Okanagan South and West



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HELPING WHEN LIFE CHANGES



1983 – A brief Grenadian war

Tourist T-shirts said: “Thank you America for saving us”

(Editor's note: This historical anniversary took me back. In 1985, on leave from the Vancouver Sun, I was working as a charter skipper aboard a 51-foot Beneteau sloop sailing the Caribbean between St. Lucia and Grenada. One week, my guests were the retired commander of the USS Enterprise and his pal, a U.S. industrialist who built submarine bases for the military. They said the Cuban communists had installed jet fuel bunkers at the Grenada airport designed to sustain a Soviet jet fighter group. In St. Georges, the Grenada capital, the local tourist vendors were selling T-shirts that said: “Thank you America for saving us.” I bought one.)

Forty years ago, the United States invaded Grenada, its first military action since the Vietnam War. Canada opposed the act alongside the majority of the United Nations.

Grenada gained independence in 1974. In 1979, after a coup, the constitution was suspended, and Maurice Bishop's Marxist-Leninist government took power. Allied to Cuba and the Soviet Union, the country began significantly beefing up its small army, causing U.S. President Ronald Reagan concern over a potential Soviet military build-up in the Caribbean.

However, Bishop wanted to establish a socialist government and encouraged development, particularly of the tourism industry. Communist hardliners disagreed with his approach, urging him to step down or share power.

In 1983, Reagan's concern escalated to alarm when the hardliners led a coup on Oct. 16th and executed Bishop and other government leaders. Under the guise of evacuating 650 American medical students, the U.S. invaded the island on Oct. 25th.

Codenamed “Operation Urgent Fury,” the U.S. sent in about 7,000 troops, joined by 300 from Barbados and Jamaica. They encountered about 1,200 Grenadian and 800 Cuban soldiers. In three days of fighting, a score of U.S. forces and four dozen Grenadians were killed, along with two dozen civilians. The coup was stopped, and 18 officials, including the entire military chain of command, were arrested and constitutional rule was restored.



Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau said it was unjustified and that there were other ways to protect Americans on the island. British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher addressed Reagan directly. “This action will be seen as intervention by a Western country in the internal affairs of a small independent nation, however unattractive its regime,” wrote Thatcher.

Indeed, nations around the world condemned the action. The United Nations called it a flagrant violation of international law. Massive protests ensued in Bolivia, the Dominican Republic, Trinidad, Cuba, Nicaragua, and even the United States. Congress enacted the War Powers Resolution, requiring the president to bring forces home within 60 days.

On the day of the U.S. invasion, Canada tried to evacuate its citizens by dispatching a Boeing 707 from the 437 Transport Squadron to Barbados. The Grenadian government gave it permission to land, but permission to take off from Barbados was denied.

Canada dispatched two Hercules flights from Canada to Grenada on Oct. 28th, but “in neither case had any Canadians assembled to be evacuated,” according to Department of National Defence mission notes. The U.S. Air Force had evacuated hundreds of people, including 23 Canadians, who subsequently returned to Canada aboard the 707.

U.S. troops began to move out of Barbados in early November and were gone in December. Grenada has been ruled under its constitution, holding democratic parliamentary elections ever since.

Orders of the Day – a platform where voices can be heard

Dear AFMLABC members and OOTD readers:

It is going on nine years since I teamed up with Rob Lee to produce your *Orders of the Day* newsletter.

In my first March 2014 issue, I wrote: "What an honour it is to have been asked by the association to help carry on the good work of our friend and mentor Hugh Curtis." That sense of honour lives on.

For over a decade, Hugh had regularly tracked me down by phone to check in and, I assume, satisfy himself that this ink-stained wretch was still firing on all cylinders and not sliding into disrepair. He was a caring man, and his friendship meant a great deal to me. Being part of the team and keeping his OOTD legacy alive has been a privilege.

As I reiterated at the Sept. 15th AFMLABC AGM, my annual challenge has been generating and fostering reader engagement with the content of the newsletter. And so, I want to take this opportunity to emphasize the importance of your active participation in *Orders of the Day*.

Our newsletter is meant to serve as a bridge that connects us. In a perfect world, it should reflect our members' collective wisdom, experiences, and insights. It is meant to be a platform where your voices can be heard, your stories can be shared, and your contributions can make a significant impact on our community.

Each of you possess unique skills, knowledge, and political experience. The newsletter lets you share your expertise with fellow members, perhaps helping someone facing similar challenges. Here are some compelling reasons why engaging with and participating in our newsletter is so important:

Building Community: Sharing successes, challenges, and personal journeys fosters a sense of belonging and community. It allows us to connect on a deeper level and strengthens the bonds that hold our association together. I'm reminded that members often observe that they have more in common in retirement than they realized when they were two sword lengths apart as legislators.

Amplifying Achievements: Your accomplishments, whether personal or professional, deserve recognition. The newsletter provides a platform to highlight your achievements, inspire others, and showcase the remarkable talent within our association.

Networking Opportunities: Engaging with fellow members through the newsletter can lead to meaningful connections and collaborations. You never know when a contribution might spark new relationships or open doors to exciting opportunities.

Shaping Our Identity: The content of our newsletter reflects our association's identity and the values associated with good governance. By contributing, you play a pivotal role in shaping how we are perceived and what we stand for.

Contributing to Our Growth: A diverse and engaging newsletter not only benefits our current members but also attracts new members and sponsors. Your contributions directly contribute to the growth and vitality of our association.

In summary, there are many reasons to engage with the *Orders of the Day* newsletter. Thank you to all who have submitted letters and stories; please continue to do so. And, to those who have yet to do so, we look forward to your participation. Your contributions will become part of our association's history, providing a valuable resource for current and future members.

To contribute to our newsletter, please reach out to your editorial team at ootd.afmlabc@gmail.com. We acknowledge and celebrate all contributions! Whether it's a short anecdote, a thought-provoking article, or even a photo with a caption, your contributions are welcome and valued. Rob and I look forward to receiving them and sharing them with fellow readers.

Please fill out the readership survey on Page 16 and mail it in. An e-version can be found on the website – www.fomerbcmla.com. Look for "Survey" in the navigation bar on the left side of the Home Page.

Brian Kieran
Editor

Orders of the Day and you – a readership survey

(Editor's note: Rob Lee and I really need your feedback and ideas to improve this newsletter. Job One for us is engaging with our audience to ensure the newsletter meets their needs and furthers the AFMLABC's mandate of promoting good governance.)

Name/address (if you wish): _____

How thoroughly do you read the newsletter?

Cover to cover Breeze through Set it aside with the shopping flyers

Comment: _____

How satisfied are you with the newsletter content and format on a scale of 1 to 5 (with 1 being not satisfied and 5 being very satisfied)? _____

Comment: _____

What types of content do you find most valuable in the newsletter? (Select all that apply.)

Legislative updates Member news Think tank analysis Public policy polling
 Opinion pieces News from other associations of former parliamentarians

Comment: _____

Do you have any suggestions for additional types of content?

Comment: _____

Are there specific topics or issues related to promoting good governance that you want to see covered in the newsletter?

Comment: _____

How would you rate the readability and clarity of the newsletter's content on a scale of 1 to 5 (with 1 being not satisfied and 5 being very satisfied)? _____

Comment: _____

Would you be interested in contributing articles or letters to the newsletter? Yes No

Comment: _____

Do you access Association information on the website? (www.formerbcmla.com) Yes No

Comment: _____

Mail to: The Association of Former MLAs of BC
P.O. Box 30024 Reynolds P.O.
Victoria, B.C. V8X 1J0

*Thank you for taking the
time to complete this survey!*