

## BC Youth Parliament – focused on service



*Close to 100 BCYP delegates gathered in the Legislature Dec. 27-31 for the annual parliamentary session.*

*Photo by Richard Cooper.*

By Brian Kieran  
Editor, OOTD

Ranil Prasad, the Premier of the BC Youth Parliament's 91st Session, said it well: "The BCYP is more than just karaoke for political science nerds – it's about being of service to our communities."

In late December, 97 young parliamentarians from all corners of BC gathered at the Legislature to give the legislative process a good workout without the constraints of party politics and caucus discipline to bind them. These young people consider themselves partisans for participatory democracy.

In her role as the BCYP's honorary Lieutenant Governor, Acting Clerk of the House Kate Ryan-Lloyd framed the BCYP legislative session eloquently: "In a world where democracy is threatened by strong man populists, it is more important than ever to support young people who believe in our institutions and the democratic process. If young people don't see democracy as a tool in which real change can occur, they will look for something else."

The enthusiasm and camaraderie embedded in the initiatives of the BCYP resonate for members of the AFMLABC. The Association supports participation in the annual legislative session through the Hugh Curtis Memorial Fund. In this Winter issue of Orders of the Day we have devoted several pages to the endeavours of these amazing young parliamentarians.

Premier Prasad delivers his report reminding us that "BCYP is not interested in creating politicians, but is, instead, focused on creating active citizens" (Page 4). Adriana Thom, Chair of the Canadian Youth Parliament, describes plans to mount the first ever national youth parliament session here in BC in May (Page 5).

Kate Ryan-Lloyd, in her Throne Speech, and Procedural Clerk Artour Sogomonian, who served as Speaker, reflect on the value of the BCYP and the roles and potential of its members (Pages 6 & 7).

One does not have to read too deeply between the lines of these reports to find lessons that older politicians might embrace in the pursuit of good governance.

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**BC has lost a great defender, Ted Hughes. Pages 8 & 9**

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**Her Honour**

**The Honourable Janet Austin, OBC**

Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia

# Thank You and Miscellany

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

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

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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.

**Thank you** to **Hotel Grand Pacific** for its advertisement in OOTD. We appreciate all of the organizations that have supported the Association and its newsletter.

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# From the Editor's Desk

In the December issue of OOTD former MLA Cliff Serwa wrote about the pieces of shattered stained glass he gathered up in the aftermath of the March 1993 assault on the Legislature by rogue Clayoquot protesters. He reminded us, in trouble times globally, of the fragility of our democratic institutions even here in peaceful BC.

At the time of this event, NDP MLA Joan Sawicki (Burnaby-Willingdon, 1991-2001) was the Legislature's newly minted 30th Speaker. Coping with the consequences of the rampage would have been a challenge for a veteran Speaker. To her credit, Joan rose to the challenge like the pro she is and guided the House through its efforts to process the event.

In this issue of OOTD Joan has written to continue the conversation that Cliff started in December. Her recollections really help us complete the retelling of that stressful time (Page 12). Thank you, Joan.

And, my thanks to former Social Credit MLA Bruce Strachan (Prince George South, 1997-2001) for adding his voice to our Art of Good Governance series (Page 10). He reminds us that "everything a government does should be in the best interest of the people, and the people – the electorate – has the responsibility to be aware of its duty to scrutinize and ensure it is being treated fairly and that good governance is at work."

I believe Bruce wrote his piece under the shade of a palm tree in Puerto Escondido, maybe sipping a chilled Dos Equis. Now that's dedication.

This issue of OOTD is packed with meaty good governance material. One piece I particularly enjoyed plucking from the news wires was the Angus Reid Institute survey revealing that the appeal of electoral reform has risen from the political ashes in the wake of last fall's federal election in which the Conservatives failed to form government with the majority of the votes. Enlightened self-interest is alive and well (Page 13).

*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.*

# President's Report

Welcome to 2020. We have started a new decade! I, for one, am optimistic about the future. We face challenges, for sure. But, as Canadians we seem to have the ability to find common ground and offer up solutions. The world needs a strong and engaged Canada. And, a strong and engaged Canada needs to have a healthy democracy. I have mentioned in this column before that there is concern our democratic institutions are weakening.

The Association of Former MLAs of BC has a role to play in addressing this concern. How? By using our membership – previously elected individuals from diverse political backgrounds – to promote non-partisan solutions that help strengthen our democratic conventions, reinforce our ideals and encourage increased participation. Over the coming months your executive will be exploring ways to leverage the experience, passion and energy of former MLAs to increase awareness of, and dialogue about, our legislated mandate to promote democratic engagement.

We will seek to involve association members and OOTD readers who wish to shape, and contribute to, this effort. Initiatives such as talks in schools, non-partisan town hall gatherings and letters to the editors of local newspapers to encourage conversation are but a few of the ideas we will explore.

As always, letters to the editor of Orders of the Day are welcome, and readers are encouraged to write in with their thoughts on this topic.

Your executive looks forward to revitalizing the Association in the decade to come, and to many more years of publishing Orders of the Day!

Sadly, just as we were going to press we learned the unhappy news of the passing of Ted Hughes. Few have had such a profound positive impact on BC's public service over the last almost 40 years than Ted Hughes. He set the bar for providing principled advice and guidance, and for working in a truly non-partisan fashion. He served under governments of different political stripes, and always had the advancement of public service as the core aim of his work.

As an MLA, Ted and Helen were active constituents of mine. I am currently Community Co-Chair of The Coalition to End Homelessness, a position created by Ted when he and Mayor Alan Lowe first created the coalition as a community-wide response to the complex issue of homelessness. Very big shoes to fill indeed. On your behalf, the Association will send condolences to the family and also express our gratitude for all his service to the people of BC.

President Jeff Bray

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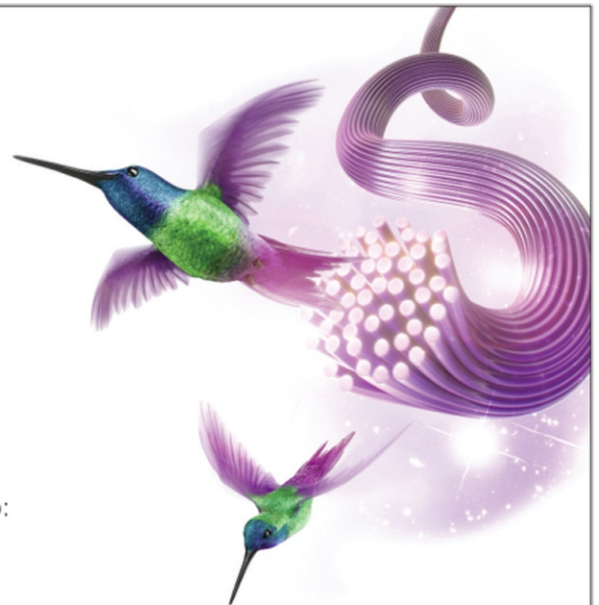
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# BCYP – “Focused on creating active citizens”

By Ranil Prasad  
Premier, 91st Session

For 91 years, the British Columbia Youth Parliament has met in the BC Legislature in late December, and this year was no different. Unlike other organizations that gather under the guise of a parliament, BCYP is not interested in creating politicians, but is instead focused on creating active citizens.

We use the BC Legislature as the launching point for the charitable projects that we deliver across the province as shown by our logo, a phoenix launching from the roof of the building. Our members also had the chance to debate hot topics in BC politics, whether it be dealing with issues at ICBC through retraining drivers, or designing a new flag for British Columbia.

We are proud that our members authorized our cabinet to hold Camp Phoenix for another year by unanimously passing the Camp Phoenix Act. Camp Phoenix is a weeklong summer camp for children who would otherwise be unable to attend camp for social or financial reasons. After several successful years at Camp Barnard in Sooke, Camp Phoenix is moving to Camp McLean in Langley to serve 48 children from the Lower Mainland and beyond.

*BCYP's 91st Session  
Premier Ranil Prasad says  
it's all about service to  
communities.*

*Photo by Richard Cooper.*



Through the passage of the Regional Youth Parliaments Act, high school aged members will also have the opportunity to participate in parliamentary simulations across the province to help them learn about the Westminster system of democracy. These will be held in Vancouver, Surrey, Kelowna, Victoria, and Richmond until May of 2020.

We were lucky to be joined by a number of prominent politicians and community members who were more than happy to share their wisdom with us, including Shannon Waters from the Legislative Press Gallery, Kate Ryan-Lloyd and Artour Sogomonian from the Office of the Clerk, Victoria Mayor Lisa Helps, and a number of MLAs from the Government, Opposition, and Third Party caucuses.

We are also grateful for education on the role of the Crown given by Lieutenant Governor, the Honourable Janet Austin OBC and the staff at Government House. Our members loved hearing about Her Honour's plans to advance reconciliation with Indigenous peoples in an age of UNDRIP, (the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples).

Every year, two BCYP members receive a bursary from the Hugh Curtis Memorial Fund in order to defray the costs associated with attending our winter session. As a past recipient of a bursary from the Association of Former MLAs of BC, I am eternally grateful to members of the organization for facilitating my entrance into BCYP. This organization has opened many doors for me, whether they be academic, social, or professional.

As Rick Mercer once said of our organization: We are “model, model parliamentarians.”

BCYP is more than just karaoke for political science nerds – it's about being of service to our communities.



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# BCYP to host first national youth parliament

By Adriana Thom  
Chair, Canada Youth Parliament

I am pleased to announce that the British Columbia Youth Parliament (BCYP) will be hosting the first Canada Youth Parliament (CYP) during the Victoria Day long weekend in May.

The Canada Youth Parliament is an expansion of the Western Canada Youth Parliament (WCYP), which has been a biennial event that brought together delegations from the BCYP, the TUXIS Parliament of Alberta, the Saskatchewan Youth Parliament and the Youth Parliament of Manitoba for a four-day parliamentary session for the past 36 years. The hosting of this event rotated in two-year cycles between each of the four provincial delegations, with British Columbia's turn to host coming up in 2020. The last session of WCYP was held over the May long weekend in 2018 at the Manitoba Legislature.

At the Canada Youth Parliament, members will debate a variety of provincial, inter-provincial, and national issues related to topics from their respective communities. In addition to the four Western provinces, we expect attendance from Ontario, Quebec, the Maritimes, and Atlantic Canada due to the strength of the youth parliament movement in those regions.

I had the privilege of attending WCYP as a Member in 2018 and it was an incredible opportunity. As a fourth year member of the British Columbia Youth Parliament, I have had the opportunity to attend several sessions of BCYP, our Regional Youth Parliament program hosted throughout the province for high school students, and most recently the 10th Commonwealth Youth Parliament in New Delhi, India.

There are various styles of youth parliament across Canada and the Commonwealth, however, despite differences in practice or tradition, the force that binds the youth parliament movement is our belief that youth have a place in democracy. Youth parliaments create a space where problems can be solved collectively through collaborative debate. Youth parliaments give young people a hands on participatory experience like no other to engage in their democracy.

Youth parliaments empower the young leaders of today with the knowledge and tools to create the changes they are passionate about. Being Chair of the Canada Youth Parliament is an immense privilege and it is my vision that I can create an event that is educational, inspiring, and meaningful so that members can fall in love with youth parliament the way I have.

Canada Youth Parliament is scheduled to take place May 15 to 18 in Victoria and we will be expecting 50 to 60 members between the ages of 15 and 25. The planning for



Canada Youth Parliament Chair Adriana Thom details plans for first ever national youth parliament in BC.

Photo by Richard Cooper.

Canada Youth Parliament is well under way and I am excited to be working with a passionate team made up of members of BCYP, the Youth Parliament of BC Alumni Society, and youth parliamentarians from across Canada.

Hosting a nationwide youth parliament requires a large amount of support in order for it to be accessible and affordable, however, Canada Youth Parliament's vision of diversity and inclusion is also our strength. This truly is a collaborative event and I am excited to work with the community around me.

If anyone is interested in receiving more information or would like to become involved in supporting the Canada Youth Parliament, feel free to visit our website, [bcyp.org](http://bcyp.org), or email [cyp@bcyp.org](mailto:cyp@bcyp.org).

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# Say what you mean; mean what you say ...

In her role as Lieutenant Governor, the Legislature's Acting Clerk of the House Kate Ryan-Lloyd delivered the Speech from the Throne and Prorogation address.

In the Throne Speech she said: "The British Columbia Youth Parliament is a unique organization. Parliamentary procedure is followed and taught, but it is not the sole source of purpose for the summoning of this Assembly. We use the Legislative Assembly and the parliamentary system as the launching point for our projects. This is reflected in our logo of a phoenix taking off from the roof of this building. You have chosen to undertake this responsibility, which is an admirable pursuit, and after session you will be expected to continue to demonstrate your devotion to your fellow British Columbians.

"Your dedication to increased involvement in the parliamentary process and service to your community is reflected in your election to the office of Youth Parliamentarian. The continuation of such sentiments will serve you well throughout the sessional year.

"Each of you is here to represent a voice – not only your own, but also of fellow young British Columbians. You each bring your unique and valued perspective and lived experiences to the table through parliamentary debate. Each of you contributes to the betterment of this Parliament. I strongly encourage all Members to participate in proceedings, no matter how intimidating or daunting it may seem at first.

"You each have a voice – and I encourage you to make it heard.

"In a world where democracy is threatened by strong man populists, it is more important than ever to support young people who believe in our institutions and the democratic process. If young people don't see democracy as a tool in which real change can occur, they will look for something else. I encourage each of you to be involved in your youth parliament, in your regional youth parliaments, and in your community. You have a valued place in the democratic process, and I encourage you to use it in order to strengthen democratic dialogue and institutions."

In her Prorogation Speech Ryan-Lloyd said: "Without a doubt, your proceedings were conducted with professionalism, dedication, and always with the very best interests of the youth of British Columbia in mind.



*In her role as LG, Acting Clerk of the House Kate Ryan-Lloyd said: "You each have a voice – and I encourage you to make it heard."*

*Photo by Richard Cooper.*

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"Your conduct here has demonstrated that you are truly determined to see this organization flourish. The youth of our province will benefit greatly from the many hours that you've put into ensuring that the British Columbia Youth Parliament's projects are the best that they can be.

"Honourable Members, it is my hope that this last week has been one that will stay with you. The bonds you have forged and the times you have shared will carry you well through this sessional year ahead and beyond.

"Give your all, and give your utmost, to the projects you have now set your sights upon. Make the world around you a better place. That is the true measure of a leader. And I do not doubt that you will make yourselves, this organization, your communities and each other very proud.

"After all, Camp Phoenix, the Regional Youth Parliaments, and all of BCYP's other projects certainly won't run themselves. Unlike the usual occupants of these seats, every member in the British Columbia Youth Parliament sits as an independent. None of you belong to a political party; and the votes taken here are not subject to a whip to determine how you will vote. While you may sit as non-partisan Members, you are partisans in that you are passionate advocates for the rights and privileges of this Assembly, whether it be freedom of speech in your debates or the right of this Assembly to gather as a group.

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# And, do what you said you would do

“While playing the role of a parliamentarian is a worthwhile pursuit, the life of an elected official includes many roles. Among them is the debating of bills in the interest of their communities, which you all have done over the past five days.

“Another role is that of service. Parliamentarians are able to act in service to their community by assisting their constituents. Their community service includes directing constituents towards important services, providing a voice for charitable causes, and attending community events.

By voting for the pieces of legislation that have passed and to which I have just granted Royal Assent, you have made a commitment to see those projects come to fruition – whether it be the service projects in every corner of the province, Regional Youth Parliaments, or Camp Phoenix.

“As the timeless saying in this organization goes: Say what you mean; mean what you say; and, do what you said you would do.”

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## You are unique and you have a voice

In his role as Speaker, the Legislature's Procedural Clerk Artour Sogomonian closed the 91st BCYP session with these remarks:

“May I congratulate you on a successful and enjoyable Session. It has been an immense honour for me to serve as your Speaker and to participate in BCYP's legislative affairs, 12 years after my time as a BCYP Member. I thank the Premier and the House for bestowing this privilege on me.

“The opportunity to live, laugh and learn in a parliamentary setting with so many incredible people – in the Legislative Chamber, no less – does not present itself often. I have been incredibly humbled and am grateful for these five days during which I have been in your midst and presided over your deliberations. I hope that it has been an equally enjoyable time and experience for all Members, and that all Members have come away from our time together having learned about parliamentary procedure and processes and dedicated yourselves to BCYP's deep commitment to service and community.

“Force – specifically, the use of it – is what Parliament is intended to prevent. Stemming from the French word “parlement,” Parliament is intended to allow elected representatives to use their words to make arguments, reconcile differences, and make the electorate's voices heard. In a world where marginalization is on the rise, don't forget the ideals that you have learned over the past five days, and no matter where life takes you, please always strive to build bridges – with those you agree with, and those with whom you may disagree. The health of our democracy and society will only be sustained if we commit ourselves to working together, even though differences.



*Opposition Leader Rhett Mutschke, left, and Premier Ranil Prasad, right, drag BCYP “Speaker” Artour Sogomonian to his chair. Photo by Richard Cooper.*

“Be you. Don't forget that you are unique and have a voice that is no less significant than anyone else's. Nothing – not race, national or ethnic origin, colour, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, genetic characteristics, or socioeconomic status – makes us better than anyone else. The passion, candour and wisdom that Members brought to our debates was nothing short of impressive, inspiring and refreshing. It was truly invaluable to the good functioning of our House. You should all feel incredibly proud of what you have accomplished over this Session, and I hope that this experience and your involvement in the organization in the coming year will help you grow as an individual.

“You leave this House with an opportunity to shape the year ahead through your contributions. Please take that responsibility seriously. I encourage you all to continue to be model parliamentarians, and I sincerely hope to see you return to the Parliament Buildings in the future.”

**(Editor's note: The addresses by Acting Clerk of the House Kate Ryan-Lloyd and Procedural Clerk Artour Sogomonian have been edited for space.)**

# BC's celebrated defender of public process, Ted Hughes, dies

Ted Hughes, BC's first Conflict of Interest Commissioner whose report led to the resignation of Premier Bill Vander Zalm, died Jan. 17th in Victoria. He was 92.

Hughes was born in Saskatoon. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Saskatchewan near the end of the Second World War and began practising law in Saskatoon in 1952. He became a judge in 1962 and was promoted to the Saskatchewan Court of Queen's Bench in 1974.

Hughes stepped down from the bench in 1980 and moved to BC to become a legal advisor to the Attorney-General. He was appointed Deputy Attorney General in 1983 and chaired a series of public hearings into the government's cuts to legal aid in 1984.

In 1990, he was appointed Conflict of Interest Commissioner. In 1991, Premier Bill Vander Zalm was accused of inappropriate behaviour in the sale of his family's Fantasy Gardens theme park. Hughes' report found that Vander Zalm had mixed private business with public responsibilities and had violated provincial conflict-of-interest guidelines.

Hughes also investigated Premier Mike Harcourt over a possible conflict-of-interest involving a former campaign advisor who had started a company called NOW Communications. The company specialized in social marketing and received several contracts from the provincial government. Harcourt testified that he played no role in granting the contracts, and the matter ultimately came to nothing.

In 1992, Hughes issued a report asserting that sexual discrimination against women pervaded every aspect of the provincial justice system, including hiring practices and the handling of sexual assault cases. He was most disturbed by the testimony of sexual assault and family violence victims.

Hughes chaired a Justice Reform Committee from 1997 to '98 that led to significant changes to British Columbia's judicial structure.

In 1998, Hughes was appointed to take over an existing inquiry into whether RCMP officers had acted improperly against protesters at the 1997 Asia-Pacific Summit. The inquiry, under the auspices of the RCMP Public Complaints Commission, had previously been led by a three-member panel, which itself became caught up in scandal and controversy. Hughes found evidence of widespread police incompetence and wrote that RCMP actions sometimes provoked violence and deprived protesters of their constitutional rights.



*Photo by Craig McInnes*

In 2005, the government of Gordon Campbell appointed Hughes to examine its method of reviewing child deaths, following the violent death of an aboriginal girl in foster care. In his report, Hughes blamed a constant turnover in leadership, major policy shifts, and the government's budget cuts for undermining the system.

Hughes was a staunch defender of a non-partisan, neutral public service. He once said: "My observation, across the provincial scene of our country ... leads me to the conclusion that the Canadian tradition of a neutral career public service is increasingly under challenge. It is time for a forceful initiative to reverse it, to restate the virtues of the Canadian tradition and to appeal to the reason and logic of our elected representatives so that they and the people they represent will appreciate that they all will be much better served by an adherence to the time-tested procedures of the past rather than moving step-by-step to gut one of the greatest safeguards of vibrant parliamentary democracy."

Hughes and his wife, Helen, were heavily involved in service organizations in Greater Victoria, giving their time and dollars to issues such as ending homelessness. Hughes was the first co-chair of the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness, a group that brings together voices to address the needs of a vulnerable population.



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# Universal praise for a quintessential public servant

**Bob Plecas** – Ted was a public servant ... in the best sense of what those words mean. His book of life illustrated by example after example of doing public good. The public rewarded him by giving him their trust unequivocally. Principled, high moral standards, a great sense of humour, intelligent, down to earth, and fearless; never afraid to speak truth to power. A great listener. A constant bearer of sage advice. Ted had the respect of his peers, even those who disagreed with him. He was political as hell, but once in BC, not partisan. A fair-to-middling campaign manager who was successful because Helen was the candidate. Never lost an election, he would say. A man who passionately loved his family and his partner, a strong and able woman. How happy he was to join Helen as a recipient of the Order of Canada. Ted went with Helen like salt with pepper. Canada recognizes too few heroes. Ted was one of them.

**Gordon Campbell** – Ted Hughes lived his life unafraid. Year after year, decade after decade, he realized the importance of public life and the rule of law to the quality of life we all enjoy. His motivation was always the public good as he saw it, and he was a relentless warrior who battled expedience and excuses on behalf of the public good. His pursuit of justice for all, regardless of station, and his understanding of the importance of a life of service to the province he loved are a lasting legacy. Men of his stature and commitment are a gift to us all. His family deserves our support and thanks. He will be remembered as an example of selfless public service. We always need people of stature and integrity to guide us through difficult times. Ted Hughes gave himself to that task for which we should all be grateful.

**Ujjal Dosanjh** – Ted was an outstanding public servant who conducted himself with exemplary dignity and ethics. His long and storied tenure as the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, in particular, has left an extremely positive and lasting impact on BC's public life.

**Jim Hume** – He was one of the greats, and I was privileged to walk and talk with him for many a mile on my life journey. In today's world of avarice, hatred and malice in the world of politics, he shone like a lighthouse across stormy seas, a guiding light to honesty and ethical conduct.

**Penny Priddy** – Between 1991 and 2001, I had two occasions to seek an opinion from Ted Hughes. The first time I was a very new MLA and cabinet minister. I had some trepidation as I approached the office of THE Ted Hughes. On entering the office and after chatting for a few minutes I began to feel as if I was talking with a benevolent uncle, albeit an uncle who was famous. His quiet calm put me at ease. He was kind, sensitive and wise. He also had that rare gift of listening very carefully. Ted was comfortable with leaving moments of silence in the conversation for reflection or further comment. The opinion I sought was probably trifling, but he treated it with the same respect as an opinion of great import. BC has lost a history maker, but more than that BC has lost a truly great man.

**Keith Baldrey** – Ted was a man of tremendous personal integrity, who spoke with unassailable authority on so many issues, whether they were about a politician's behavior or whether it was about a government's ability to protect children. He was, quite simply, the finest civil servant I have had the pleasure to meet. It was always a personal honor to talk to him.

**Vaughn Palmer** – While Ted Hughes was taking on the biggest among us, he never let us forget our obligations protect to the most powerless. His unwillingness to retire became a running joke that Hughes himself shared. "The sand has gone pretty much through the egg timer," he told reporters, amid much laughter, when he was a mere 78. But, after 92 years and six decades of unparalleled public service, the sand finally did run out. Visiting him in hospital, Craig McInnes, author of the 2017 biography *The Mighty Hughes*, found that the great man was ready to go.

**Les Leyne** – He maintained a sense of humour while handling a long succession of white-hot, excruciatingly-sensitive political dilemmas, controversies and scandals with exquisite grace and sound judgment ... There are a lot of smart people in the upper echelons of government. But there has never been one who combined a keen intelligence with an innate sagacity to greater effect than Ted. And there's never been one with the guts to use those traits to set the course on occasions when no one else was quite sure what to do.

# Getting along in power ain't easy, but it can happen

By Bruce Strachan



In the first week of 2020, two items popped up in my email box; one, our editor Brian Kieran asking me if I'd write something about good governance and two, news that a US air-strike had killed an Iranian General and tensions were rapidly increasing in the Middle East.

Not the most auspicious beginning to a new decade nor any sort of inspirational cue for comment on good governance. But in terms of governance, I think most OOTD readers would agree that governance in the United States has changed and it would really be pushing the charitable button to say the change has been for the better.

However, as in all affairs of love or war, there is always a lesson to be learned, and perhaps the rising tensions in the Middle East will help the rest of the world avoid bad governance and focus more on the art of good governance.

Think about this: after being severely beaten by LA police officers, Rodney King posed a simple question asking, "Can we all get along?" Pretty hard to argue against that and perhaps a larger lesson for us all.

One more anecdote and then on to some ideas. This incident happened in the summer of 1979. I was a brand new Socred backbencher; it was just before prayers; and we were all seated, waiting for the afternoon session to begin. However, the NDP benches were empty – curious, given the time. Then, New Democrat Ernie Hall came in. He was a large man – hard to miss – and he had a wicked sense of humour. I said: "Watch out fellows, here comes the enemy." Ernie looked at me, smiled and said: "Bruce, I'm in the opposition; you're sitting with the enemy."

I later learned that, in many ways, Ernie was right. And all of us who have sat in a caucus can relate to his comment. I'll spare you the old joke about a caucus and a cactus, but suffice it to say it's difficult for politicians to agree on all issues at all times.

So, how do we learn about the art of good governance? Who do we study, what works, and what really is good governance? We have all seen good leaders, we have all introduced successful programs, and we have all supported good legislation. Legislation that has endured and stood the test of time.

On examination, I've noted most good policies are in the political middle. Something the right can live with as well as the left. Remember the old adage: "Stay in the middle, that's where the votes are." Also, all politicians must look at what they're proposing with the question: Would I want my political opponents to have this power or this legislation? If the answer is no, scrap the idea; it's going too far.

Finally, back to Rodney King and "Can we all get along?" Well, yes. Political systems, by their nature, are adversarial. But in the practice of good governance, they do not have to be. The U.S. system – with checks and balances – is designed to make legislators get along. Mostly it works. U.S. President Lyndon Johnson was a master at getting agreements; witness the Civil Rights Act and Medicare. Other presidents have not been so successful. In the BC Assembly, I've seen agreements reached and compromises made when the parties at odds with each other reached out, attempted to find the middle and agreed that the opposition had a point.

It's easier said than done, but it can be done. There is one more element to this "getting along" notion of mine, and that's the public. Everything a government does should be in the best interest of the people, and the people – the electorate – has the responsibility to be aware of its duty to scrutinize and ensure it is being treated fairly and that good governance is at work.

I doubt if this small missive will settle the Middle East crisis, but I'll bet pre-emptive "getting along," as well as meaningful discussions over the years, would have prevented the current hostilities.

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# How much worse are we willing to let this get?

By Jim Hume  
The Old Islander

A few things to consider while nervously observing events in Australia where that wonderful Down Under country is painfully showing the rest of the world what global warming looks like when it lurches from disturbing to calamitous.

Australia, with its vast forests of gum trees and brush, burns a little easier and more rapidly than British Columbia's tall tree wilderness. But, not all that much as our forest fire fighters will tell you when they remember 2018 and BC's record wildfire season. It was a time when several small towns felt isolated and scared.

Australia and BC are blessed with abundant natural resources which, when sold on the international market, have brought them great wealth and afforded their citizens a way of life envied by millions – and even a few Royals seeking a pleasanter lifestyle.

But, benefits usually come with problems. Coal – the “black diamond” that made both Australia and BC rich in resources and their citizens comfortable – brought with it the evil of carbon emissions. And the countries that bought their coal became the worlds' leading contributors to excessive carbon emissions and brought on the global warming now threatening the entire planet.

China is the leader in carbon emissions as registered by the Global Carbon Atlas. The latest record I could find indicates 9,839 metric tons in 2017. The USA – which, on President Donald Trump's orders, has abandoned the international effort to find world-wide solutions to uncontrolled carbon emissions – sits second on the Atlas spewing 5,269 tons of carbon emissions annually; India is third with 2,467 tons.



(To read more of Jim Hume's columns visit [The Old Islander at http://jimhume.ca/](http://jimhume.ca/))

China and India are the great consumers of coal on the international market. They, along with Japan (1,200 tons a year), have been prime customers for BC and Australian coal for decades.

So why do the Aussies and BC still sell to these countries committing obvious massive violations of safe environmental practices in their major industries? Both countries have all sorts of federal and provincial environmental rules and regulations governing the mining industry to protect their citizens at home. However, globally, it's a free for all for those who don't seem to mind contributing to what could be the end of Planet Earth.

So, why not just stop fueling foreign furnaces with our profitable coal ... a fuel that could destroy earth as we know it? Good puritanical thinking for sure, but – there's always a BUT and this is a big one.

A recent Business in Vancouver (BIV) article tells us “BC's mining sector generated \$12.3 billion in gross revenue in 2018 – a nearly \$4 billion increase over 2016. Higher prices for metallurgical coal and copper helped boost net income for BC miners to \$3.5 billion in 2018.” The full report can be found at: [biv.com/article/2019/05/mining-bc-generated-record-revenue-pwc](http://biv.com/article/2019/05/mining-bc-generated-record-revenue-pwc).

The BIV story goes on to report that payments to government in 2018 through taxes was \$900 million. I think it is safe to assume that the loss of \$900 million in any government's revenue would be disastrously reflected in cuts to social programs. And China wouldn't take long to find another supplier.

So, what's the answer? I have no idea, but readers of OODT might be brimming with them. I'm sure Editor Kieran would welcome your thoughts.

There is some urgency for a solution. Nerilie Abram, an Australian climate scientist at the Australian National University, says: “The question we need to ask is, how much worse are we willing to let this get? This (the Australia scene) is what global warming of just over one degree Celsius looks like. Do we really want to see the impacts of three degrees or more?”

Three degrees or more is the trajectory generally forecast by climate scientists.

# Letters

## Legislature defended the place where democratic rights reside

By Joan Sawicki,  
BC Speaker 1992-1994

I'm sure the article in December's issue on the events of March 18, 1993 resonated with all who were in the House on that day. (A warm hello, Cliff. Thanks for keeping the tangible evidence all these years.)

As a novice Speaker (and novice MLA), I had to deal with this unprecedented physical breach of the Legislature. I vaguely recall recessing the House and attempting to do so with as much calmness and dignity as I could muster. Two subsequent events remain in my memory, however.

The first was personal. The disturbance took place during the Speech from the Throne as delivered by His Honour, Lieutenant Governor David Lam. During the hour we spent together in the Speaker's Office while the Sergeant-at-Arms staff secured the Legislative precinct, His Honour shared stories from his own life when he was called upon to handle difficult situations. His gracious manner was a welcome distraction. While it would be presumptuous to say we became friends as a result of that private time together, thereafter, whenever our paths crossed, he always greeted me with warmth – a reminder that sometimes fortunate opportunities arise from unfortunate events.

The second was procedural. The following day, the House Leader for the Official Opposition rose on a point of privilege, requesting the Speaker rule that the events of the previous day constituted a prima facie case of privilege and contempt of Parliament.

Section 5 of the Legislative Assembly Privilege Act defines a breach of privilege, or a contempt, as actions which obstruct, threaten or attempt to force or intimidate Members of the Assembly.

It took a couple of days for the Clerk to research precedence from other parliaments. (Speakers' rulings are not casual decisions.) On March 24, I delivered the ruling that ... "it is abundantly clear to the Chair that the events of March 18, 1993, as described, do amount to a prima facie case of breach of privilege," thereby clearing the way for the member to move the required motion.



*Photo by John Yanyshyn*

During the intervening days, consultation through the usual channels resulted in the Member withdrawing his original motion as submitted and moving an alternative one, namely that: "Be it resolved that, while recognizing and affirming the undoubted rights of freedom to lawfully assemble, to lawfully demonstrate and to lawfully dissent, this House condemns the abuse of those rights, and this House further declares and asserts that it is a contempt and high breach of its privileges to interfere in any manner with the proceedings of this Assembly ..."

The debate was not a long one. Representatives of each party emphasized the seriousness of the breach of privilege, a pragmatic concern for the safety of legislative staff and Members – and a shared desire that this one event not jeopardize openness and future access by the public to their place of governance.

The motion passed and legislative life resumed. But, the procedural significance remains. With the kind assistance of Legislative Library staff, I was able to determine that, of the many instances in the BC Legislature when Members have risen on points of privilege, March 18, 1993 was one of only four times during the past 50 years that a Speaker's ruling confirmed that, indeed, the indisputable rights of Parliament had been breached.

A reminder perhaps that, despite the degree of meaningless partisan rhetoric the public often associates with the Legislature, it is where our democratic rights reside. And, when threatened, assemblies are capable of rising to their responsibilities to defend them.

# Enlightened self-interest writ large post-election

The 43rd Canadian federal election appears to have churned up support for a certain policy change long thought lost to the depths of a watery political grave: electoral reform.

A study from the non-profit Angus Reid Institute finds support surging – post-election – for the promise the Trudeau Liberal government killed in 2017.

Likely motivated by their preferred party receiving the most votes yet falling short in the House of Commons in a first-past-the-post electoral system, Conservative preference for proportional representation has more than doubled.

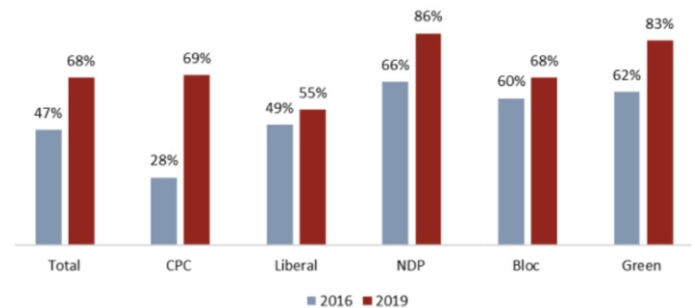
Seven-in-10 (69 per cent) who supported the CPC in October say they would change the electoral system, compared to just 28 per cent of party supporters who said this when the Institute canvassed the same issue at the beginning of 2016.

It's not just a spike in support on the right of the political spectrum, however. Increasing approval across all parties has transformed this – at least for now – from a divisive to a consensus issue. In 2016, just over half (53 per cent) wanted to keep first-past-the-post while the rest wanted to move to proportional representation. Today, more than two-thirds (68 per cent) now say that they would prefer Canada change its voting system.

In the leadup to the 2015 federal election, then-Liberal-candidate Justin Trudeau famously stated that he would ensure that if elected, his government would do away with the nation's first-past-the-post voting system in favour of proportional representation. The House of Commons Special Committee on Electoral Reform (ERRE) was created soon after Trudeau's Liberals took office to study the issue and suggested among other recommendations, that proportional representation be implemented through a national referendum. Despite this, in February of 2017, the government announced it was no longer pursuing reform.

The Angus Reid Institute asked Canadians after the 2015 election about their preferred path for Canada –

Support for proportional representation by party  
January 2016 versus November 2019



keep the current first-past-the-post system or change to a system of proportional representation. At the time, Canadians were divided. In 2019, however, a clear preference has emerged for proportional representation, with support for it doubling in some provinces. At least six-in-10 residents in every region of the country would prefer a change:

Note – the 2016 question on keeping or changing the electoral system offered a “don't know” response. Support and opposition were recalculated to compare only those with a positive or negative opinion.

This new enthusiasm comes on the heels of an election where the Liberal Party won 47 per cent of the seats in the House of Commons with one-third of the vote, enough to form a minority government, while the Conservative Party placed first in the popular vote and was left as the official opposition:

Thus, Conservative voters, once firmly opposed to electoral reform, are now apparently strong champions of it. Meanwhile, supporters of every other party have also increased their level of openness to change.

Looking at this trend regionally, areas of staunch opposition – the Prairies and Ontario, are now areas of support, as every region of the country voices firm majority support for a move away from first-past-the-post. Support for keeping the electoral system is highest in British Columbia, the province that rejected a change in a provincial referendum in 2018.

# Party machinery determines makeup of Parliament

More than 99 per cent of the Members of Parliament (MPs) elected to Parliament over the past 30 years were elected as representatives of a political party. And, these parties had almost complete control over the pool of people who were afforded the opportunity to serve.

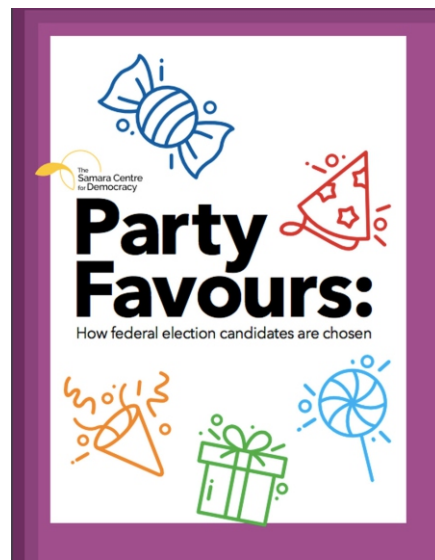
But how do parties pick who appears on the ballot?

At a quick glance, local party democracy in Canada can appear strong, with grassroots members in each constituency gathering every few years to choose their candidate for the next election. But in recent decades these contests have increasingly come under the control of the central party, and many cases have emerged where nomination meetings appeared to be biased in favour of one candidate or another.

The Samara Institute recently examined how election candidates for Canada's five major federal parties were chosen over the last five elections. To do so, Samara looked at the law governing nomination contests, the parties' own contest rules, the local contest reports submitted to Elections Canada, and the candidates who actually ran in the federal elections. This allowed the institute to uncover how the more than 6,600 candidates who stood for election under major political parties ended up on the ballot.

Key findings:

- Of the more than 6,600 federal candidates captured in the study, only 17 per cent arrived there through a competitive nomination race.
- Parties directly appointed more than 2,700 election candidates with no nomination process at all.
- Over 70 per cent of the 3,900 nomination contests held had just a single person running.
- Women who ran in nomination contests were just as likely to win as their male competitors – but made up just 28 per cent of nomination contestants.
- Candidates directly appointed by parties were no more reflective of Canada's gender, ethnic, or Indigenous diversity than those chosen through nomination contests.
- Contests were unpredictable, with no standardized start or end dates. The parties' rules for nomination contests allow the central parties to decide when contests open and close, who can and can't run in a contest and whether an incumbent MP can stand again as a candidate without facing a contest.
- Contests lacked transparency – parties have no requirement to release information on how many votes were cast or how many contestants were prevented from running.



Parties play a vitally important role in Canadian democracy: they offer Canadians an entry point into the political process, combine diverse policy positions into unified platforms, and select candidates for elections.

In the age of social media and 24-hour news cycles, it can be tempting for national parties to operate with little local input to ensure consistent messaging. And there are times, like snap elections, when parties may need to appoint candidates. But open, locally controlled nomination contests can strengthen parties by attracting new members, ensuring candidates have local support, and increasing the public's confidence in the political system. In contrast, candidates who are appointed or chosen through highly restricted contests owe their position to the central party, potentially reducing their community focus.

How can we improve the nomination process?

- Set standard opening and closing dates for nomination contests.
- Hold contests whenever possible—even if a constituency has a sitting MP.
- Report how many members cast ballots in each contest and how many votes each contestant received.
- Reveal the total number of people they “vetted out” or prevented from running in each election cycle.
- Ensure their candidate slate reflects the diversity of the country.

If parties don't adopt these changes voluntarily, Parliament should consider increased regulation over the nomination process.

(You can read the full Samara report at: <https://www.samaracanada.com/research/political-leadership/party-favours/>)

# 2020 Member Dues are due!

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

Fans of **Orders of the Day** who are not former MLAs/Association members should send payment for **\$40** to remain on the newsletter subscription list.

Cheques should be made out to:

The Association of Former MLAs of BC

and mailed to:

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Victoria, BC V8N 6J3

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HELPING WHEN LIFE CHANGES



## 100 years ago this month

# RCMP created from merging of Dominion Police and NWMP

In February 1920, the Dominion Police was merged with the North-West Mounted Police (NWMP) to form the Royal Canadian Mounted Police as the new federal police force of Canada.

The Dominion Police Force was the federal police force of Canada between 1868 and 1920. It was the first in Canada, formed the year following the Canadian Confederation to enforce federal laws and perform policing duties for the Federal Government of Canada.

The force was created in response to the Ottawa assassination of Thomas D'Arcy McGee, a prominent Irish-Canadian politician and MP for Montreal West. McGee was killed by elements of the Fenian Brotherhood, a powerful Irish nationalist organization based in the United States. The Canadian authorities were worried about the power of the Fenian Brotherhood, which had already launched three major raids into Canada in 1866 before McGee's death. They feared existing law enforcement agencies were not capable of protecting state security.

The Dominion Police had jurisdiction over all of Canada, built from the Western Frontier Constabulary which had been in existence since 1864. Its mandate was to protect buildings of the Federal Government of Canada, including the Parliament Buildings on Parliament Hill, the naval yards at Halifax and Esquimalt; to provide bodyguards for government leaders; to carry out secret service work arising from the activities of the Fenian raids, and to enforce federal laws such as those relating to counterfeiting and human trafficking.

The force also had responsibility for keeping the peace along railways and canals that were under construction when the Public Works Peace Preservation Act was brought into effect in 1869. Its legal authority gradually increased to include compiling fingerprint and criminal records and administering a parole service.

The North-West Mounted Police was established in 1873 as Ottawa was planning to administer the North-West Territories. In May of that year, Parliament passed an act establishing the force and, in August, 150 recruits were sent west to spend the winter at Fort Garry (now Winnipeg). The following spring another 150 joined them. The new police force was organized along the lines of a cavalry regiment and armed with pistols, carbines (small, short-barreled rifles) and a few small artillery pieces.



By the mid-1890s, the NWMP was preoccupied with the Gold Rush. Rumours of gold discoveries in the Yukon prompted the government to send Inspector Charles Constantine to report on the situation in that remote region. His recommendations led to the stationing of 20 police in the Yukon in 1895. This small group was barely able to cope with the full-scale gold rush that developed when news of sizable discoveries reached the outside world in 1896. By 1899, there were 250 mounted police stationed in the Yukon. Their presence ensured that the Klondike Gold Rush would be the most orderly in history. Strict enforcement of regulations prevented many deaths due to starvation and exposure by unprepared prospectors.

By 1900 the gold rush was over, and the NWMP turned its attention to other parts of the North. In 1903 the first mounted police post north of the Arctic Circle was established at Fort McPherson. Later that year, the NWMP began collecting customs duties from whalers at Herschel Island in the Beaufort Sea.

Many popular novels were published about the mounted police from 1885 onwards and, in the 20th Century, over 250 films were made, along with radio and television portrayals. The police were depicted as courageous and disciplined, displaying a sense of fair-play as they brought their suspects to justice.

**(Sources: The Canadian Encyclopedia and Wikipedia)**