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March-April, 2026

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**Egregious Laws Presented for Adoption in Parliament**

**Liberals Once Again Shoot Their Democracy in the Foot**

– *Pauline Easton* –

Faster than a speeding bullet, on March 26, two days after the Committee on Procedure and House Affairs (PROC) presented its recommendations to the House of Commons on measures to close down the Longest Ballot Project, the Liberal government responded with Bill C-25, misnamed the *Strong and Free Elections Act*. In a press release, the government says one of Bill C-25's purposes is to "mitigate unduly long ballots." It says, "Voters may now sign only one candidate nomination paper, and each candidate will be required to have a unique official agent."

It is never a good idea to enact legislation whose purpose is said to be to enhance democracy when the measures enacted are not motivated by enhancing democracy and the democratic participation of the people in the electoral process. The amendments to the *Canada Elections Act* being proposed in Bill C-25 to penalize the Longest Ballot Project are vindictive, petty and self-serving. These amendments are justified in the name of high ideals which have nothing to do with democratic principles. Their effect will be to further discredit the electoral system and the self-serving cartel parties which are using their positions of power and privilege in a manner which further discredits them and the institutions said to be democratic.



The need to change the *Elections Act* in a manner which ends the marginalization of the people and does not treat them as voting cattle is objective. It is not going to go away any more than past demands for universal suffrage or women's suffrage or to remove all racist provisions for a White Canada went away just because the white men of property in the House of Commons wished it so.

The blatantly unfair method of counting votes, the provision of public funds to cartel parties and candidates said to qualify because they garner enough of what is called the popular vote all amount to ways to deceive, dupe and fabricate results. Nothing is transparent.

For instance, based on elections, governments are said to rule with the consent of the governed. Elections are said to be free and fair, and to provide an equal playing field for all party candidates and independents. But how many contenders, in order to form a government have to visit banks to provide them with the funds they require to pay for a campaign which can out-manoeuvre all the other contenders? The funds a contender requires to run what is called a credible campaign are far more than what the cartel parties and their candidates can raise from members. Some of the cartel parties even pride themselves on not having many members but, on the contrary, give membership to whosoever visits their websites and signs in to acquire information.



Funds to run what is called a credible campaign are in fact routinely acquired from banks. Every one of the cartel parties does so. These borrowed funds are used not only for the party's campaign, but also to selectively bankroll candidates through party transfers to those determined to have a reasonable chance of winning, while others are left to fend for themselves. Loans are provided on the grounds that polls and studies or possibly even behind-the-scenes deals of future benefits provide credible information that the loan-seeking contender will garner enough votes to qualify for the public funds which are then used to pay back the loans. And this is called holding free and fair elections in which owning property is no longer a criteria to qualify for election.

Until public financing of political parties is eliminated and contenders to form the next government have to sink or swim just like anyone else, talk about enhancing democracy is, by any reckoning worthy of the name, fraud.

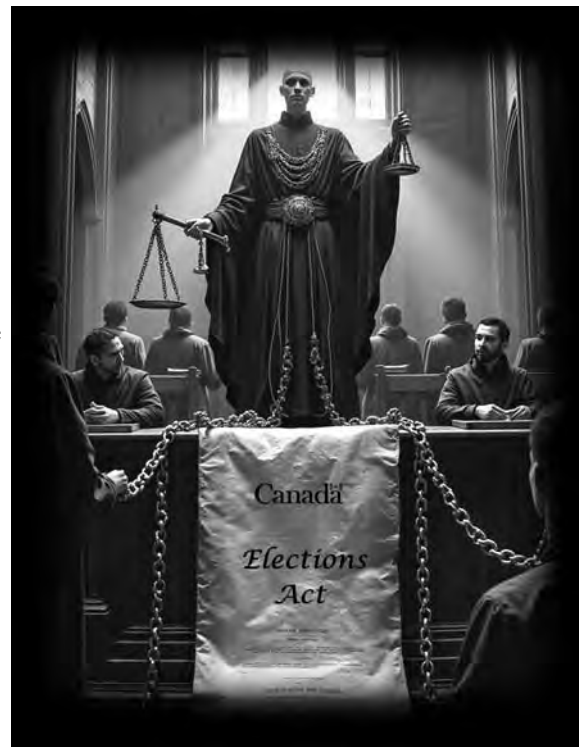
A member of the King's Privy Council proposed this law in the name of enhancing the democracy. But whatever he, or the King to whom he swears allegiance, thinks is not relevant to the needs of society, except to block it from moving forward. The existence of a King's Privy Council is itself the remnant of a medieval institution established to guarantee that the guidance of the King prevails, based on his beliefs and Christian conscience.

Whatever their beliefs, this law will go down in history as the first time the ruling class has amended the election law on the basis of the openly stated aim of subverting a protest movement. It will go down in history as making yet another series of amendments to the *Canada Elections Act* that do nothing to address the central problem of the electoral process -- its disempowerment and marginalization of the Canadian people and failure to provide mechanisms that enable all members of the polity to effectively exercise control over the direction of their own society.

However, despite all this, one thing is certain. These measures will not stop the striving of the people for empowerment. The need for democratic renewal is objective, not a conspiracy theory as those with positions of power and privilege seem to believe. The people are impelled to act in a manner which is consistent with the objective conditions which demand that they, the producers of the wealth society depends on for its living, are empowered to deliberate on the problems they and the society and the world face.

Only the producers have the motivation, incentive and experience to create a situation in which they control the productive powers which are exploding due to innovations brought in as a result of the scientific and technical revolution. On this basis, it is the productive forces, the working class and people who will unleash their capacity to provide the problems the society and modern world face with solutions which serve the people, not narrow private interests which are destroying the social and natural environment in search of ever greater private gain.

Using positions of power and privilege to subject a society to the beliefs of those in positions of power and privilege is an attempt to resurrect medieval clerical obscurantism. Clerical obscurantism was the outlook of the ruling classes at a time Europe was submerged and overwhelmed by the theological world outlook which preceded the Age of Reason and the Renaissance. A modern democratic personality does not pass laws on the basis of personal beliefs but on the basis of addressing the objective needs of a modern society.



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## House of Commons Tells Senate to Yield to Its Authority on Election Law

On March 12, the House of Commons rejected an amendment from the Senate to the section of Bill C-4 that strengthens the ways the *Canada Elections Act* allows political parties to gather and use Canadians' personal information without respecting any privacy laws in the country. As it stood before the Bill C-4 amendments, the *Canada Elections Act* authorizes the Chief Electoral Officer to hand over the names, addresses and unique identification number of every registered elector to registered political parties, as well as information about who has voted. This forms the foundation

for compiling databases about electors which the cartel parties use to target the people with their their data-driven campaigns for votes. The only legal constraint imposed on the parties is spelled out in the *Canada Elections Act*; parties must publish their privacy policies in what is referred to as a self-regulatory regime. Because political parties fall into a category of organizations which are said to be neither public bodies nor commercial organizations, they are exempted from following any of the federal privacy laws and standards that apply to virtually all other organizations in the country, such as obtaining informed consent and disclosing what information they have compiled about an individual, who they have shared it with and how they are using it.

While this is the case federally, in British Columbia the government adopted a privacy law -- the *Personal Information Protection Act* (PIPA) -- which does not exempt political parties. In 2019, some individuals in BC used PIPA to file complaints against the Conservatives, Liberals and NDP because they failed to properly disclose information about the personal files the parties held about them and the parties collectively launched a legal challenge arguing that they are not subject to any privacy laws including PIPA. BC courts disagreed and ruled that PIPA does apply, with the latest ruling having been issued by BC Supreme Court in May 2024. The Conservatives, Liberals and NDP are pursuing an appeal to reverse the ruling. While doing so, they also introduced Bill C-4 which specifically states



that federal political parties are not subject to any provincial privacy laws. It also specifically targets the complaint before the courts by stating, "For greater certainty, the registered party, eligible party or person or entity acting on the party's behalf cannot be required to provide access to personal information or provide information relating to personal information under its control or to correct -- or receive, adjudicate or annotate requests to correct -- personal information or omissions in personal information under its control." To boot, these amendments exempting the cartel from provincial privacy legislation were made retroactive to May 2000.

The Senate amendment was minimal. It proposed a three-year sunset clause with the stated intention of giving the government the opportunity to "develop a more robust and comprehensive uniform privacy regime applicable to federal political parties." After the three years, the exemption from provincial privacy laws would have ended.

In response, Liberal MP Maninder Sidhu presented a motion in the House of Commons to send the Senate a *mandate deference* message which directs the Senate to yield to the authority of the House of Commons. Green Party Leader Elizabeth May was the sole dissenter but as the motion was adopted "on division," no vote was required. In parliamentary procedure, it means the motion was approved, but not unanimously, and without the need for a formal, recorded vote.

The House of Commons provided three reasons for rejecting the Senate amendment. First, it stated that "Parliament should be the body that decides the rules that govern communication by federal parties with Canadians." This is a totally irrelevant point given that the Senate's amendment did not dispute Parliament's jurisdiction.

Second, the government said it plans to present "additional privacy provisions [...] within this parliamentary session." This promise begs the question, why would the House object to a three-year sunset clause if it has such a plan?

Finally, the government said that Senate should stay out of the House of Commons' business when it comes to electoral matters. The message to the Senate states, "there is a long tradition of the Senate deferring to the House of Commons on amendments to the *Canada Elections Act*, particularly those which have unanimous support of all recognized parties in the House and which govern the operations of candidates representing political parties seeking election to the House of Commons."

Contrary to this alleged "long tradition," the Senate has amended election law bills on many occasions, such as the Trudeau Liberal government's 2018 *Elections Modernization Act*. It has also conducted major studies related to the conduct of elections. In 2017-2018, for instance, the Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee conducted a study entitled *Impact of Social Media on Elections and Democracy* which examined the use of micro-targeting, a matter directly pertaining to how political parties use personal information. It is clearly only when the Senate interjects in a manner that goes against the interests of the cartel of so-called political parties that the House expects the Senate to stay out of its business.

The Liberal government's suggestion that the Senate is not an integral component part of Parliament and that it has no role to play when the cartel parties in the House of Commons unanimously adopt self-serving election laws is tantamount to a constitutional challenge to Parliament's composition. The government's own website states: "Canada's parliamentary system stems from the British, or 'Westminster,' tradition. Parliament consists of the Crown, the Senate, and the House of Commons, and laws are enacted once they are agreed to by all three parts."

The Senate received the message from the House on the same day. Senator Pierre Moreau, Government Representative in the Senate immediately presented a motion declaring, "the Senate do not insist on its amendment with which the House of Commons has disagreed." In defence of his motion, Moreau told the Senators, "the Senate protects constitutional democracy. It must not appear to stand against it when democracy has spoken with one voice. I submit, out of respect for our duty of sober second thought and consideration, that institutional caution demands restraint commensurate with the democratic consensus voiced in the House of Commons."

Leader of the Conservative Opposition in the Senate, Leo Housakos, concurred and suggested that Senators "should be very diligent in picking its spots if we want to remain legitimate." He said that while it is clear in the Constitution that the Senators have the same rights and privileges as members of the House of Commons, "it doesn't take away from the fact that we are appointed."

After a debate in which some Senators challenged the wisdom of the Senate acquiescing to the political parties in the House, the motion was adopted on division and forwarded for Royal Assent, which was pronounced the same day.

To read the brief by the Federal Privacy Commissioner Philippe Dufresne on Bill C-4 [click here](#).

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## **Senator Challenges "Loyal Institutionalists" and Legitimacy of Election Law Privacy Amendments**

Senator Paul Prosper is one of several who opposed or questioned accepting the House of Commons' rejection of the Senate's proposal for a three-year sunset clause to the election law privacy aspects of Bill C-4. He began by pointing out that in the Senate Committee's study of the amendments to the *Canada Elections Act* in Bill C-4, senators examined questions such as "What is our role?" and "What is our constitutional duty?"

He noted that Liberal Leader of the Government in the House of Commons Steven MacKinnon has been telling the media that the role of the Senate on election law matters should be to leave it to the House of Commons. Meanwhile he did not even speak about how Bill C-4 would amend the

*Canada Elections Act* even though he is the minister responsible for the legislation.

Prosper went on to comment on the refusal of the political parties in the House of Commons to enact legislation that would subject them to privacy laws. He stated, "I would also say, as a lawyer, that if the judge, prosecution and defence counsel in a case all have a vested interest in a certain outcome, they would all be in conflict. In this case, every elected member of Parliament belongs to a political party affected by this bill. These political parties have made it very clear that these are the changes they want."

"At times," he concluded, "there are moments when an unelected chamber not relying on a political party for nominations, electoral support and war chests must weigh in. Yes, Canada is a democracy, so there are notions of restraint and deference to the elected house built into our role, but this restraint must have limits."

Quoting from writings on the Senate's role, Prosper argued that insistence on Senate amendments "should be reserved for relatively rare cases where the issue is of special importance related to our constitutional role, where we are prepared to lead a serious fight and see its completion, when a significant part of public opinion is or could be on our side, although there could be exceptions, and where there are realistic prospects of convincing or forcing the government to change its mind."

"This is precisely the moment when sober second thought of an independent house is necessary," he said. "Election by plurality should not allow the major political parties to go over the heads of the public will and the public interest."

"This is a time to show how an unelected and independent Senate can protect the interests of Canadians," he added.

He told the Senators: "If we want to be treated as equal and assert ourselves, does it strengthen our case to simply be deferential while naming it 'self-restraint' when the Senate is, as we have so thoroughly debated here, uniquely positioned to meet this moment?"

Addressing the matter at hand, Prosper said: "It's important to be clear what's at stake when we are dealing with the privacy rights of Canadians. With the advent of social media, privacy rights have faced a reckoning in recent years because we have realized how fundamentally valuable our personal information is. When our behavioural patterns and preferences can be weaponized with algorithms to change our beliefs and behaviour, we lose our personal and political agency.

"The beneficiaries of this power are now calling on us to let them regulate themselves by allowing them to write their own privacy policies, leaving us with a potential patchwork of policies that have little to no minimum requirements or guardrails."

Prosper expressed unhappiness with the way in which the government has repeatedly ignored the Senate when it identifies issues "not contemplated because they were not studied" in the House with "platitudes that they will do something later on -- later, but not now."

"Time and time again," he said, "there has been radio silence from the government after we acquiesce. We hold firm in our beliefs until the eventual letter or promise is relayed and, once again, the loyal institutionalists call for restraint before we defer. I ask my colleagues: Is this the role we are meant to play? That is why, on principle, I will insist on our amendment, and I will vote to that effect.

*Wela'lloq.* Thank you."

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# More Amendments to Canada's Electoral Act Further Discredit Canada's Unrepresentative Democracy

– Anna Di Carlo –

On March 26, member of the King's Privy Council and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons Steven MacKinnon announced Bill C-25, misnamed the *Strong and Free Elections Act*. Second reading of the bill commenced on April 16.

A central aim of Bill C-25 is to "mitigate unduly long ballots." Bill C-25 includes all the recommendations in the March 24 report of the House of Commons Committee on Procedure and House Affairs (PROC), aimed at shutting down the Longest Ballot Project, except for one. The government did not agree with putting a message on candidate nomination forms warning people that it is a crime to nominate more than one candidate.



The enforcement of the new long ballot prohibitions criminalize people who participate in gathering nomination signatures for more than one candidate in a riding, along with those who sign the forms. The act of soliciting signatures is captured by provisions against "conspiring" with and/or "counselling any person or entity" to nominate more than one candidate. Administrative monetary penalties will apply, the amount at the discretion of the Commissioner of Elections Canada.

There is no provision targeting candidates. As if the election law was already not incoherent enough, Bill C-25 actually states that a candidate's nomination "is not to be refused on the ground" that an unstated number of their nominators also signed other nomination forms.

## Bamboozling Amendments on Political Parties and Personal Information

Bill C-25 also contains bamboozling amendments to amendments to the election law that received Royal Assent barely two weeks before it was tabled. The amendments and amendments to the amendments all pertain to the gathering and use of personal information by political parties.

Specifically, the House of Commons recently adopted Bill C-4 amendments to the *Canada Elections Act* which established that no federal or provincial privacy laws are applicable to political parties. The Senate objected to Bill C-4 and attempted to introduce a time-limit on its applicability, with the stated aim of giving the government time to "develop a more robust and comprehensive uniform privacy regime." When the House of Commons rejected the Senate's proposal, Minister MacKinnon promised "additional privacy provisions" would be introduced within this session of parliament. Unless the Liberals have more election law amendments up their sleeves, Bill C-25 contains these promised "additional provisions."

Bill C-25 does nothing to provide Canadians with the right to informed consent when Elections Canada hands over their personal information to political parties to use in ways they know nothing about. Instead, the *Canada Elections Act* retains the provisions that authorize Elections Canada to

hand over to registered political parties the name, address and unique identification number of registered electors, along with information on which of them voted. The information on who voted is handed out both during and after an election. The consent of Canadians is not required so they remain deprived of any say or control over the matter, save removing themselves from the National Register of Electors. For their part, political parties retain the exceptional privilege of being exempt from all privacy laws and the entitlement to draft their own privacy policies.

Instead of addressing the absence of the right to informed consent in the election law, Bill C-25 expands what political parties will have to include in their published privacy policies, all of which are related to the security of their data banks. The policies will have to state that the party provides "physical, organizational and technological safeguards" for personal information; that it will inform affected individuals of security breaches; and that it will ensure that persons or "entities" with which they share electors' personal information have the same level of security that the party has. Privacy officers of political parties will have to attend at least one Elections Canada meeting a year on the topic of personal information protection. Bill C-25 authorizes the Chief Electoral Officer to review the party policies; he must be satisfied that they comply with the *Canada Elections Act* requirements.

Finally, the Liberals are claiming that with Bill C-25 they will enforce cartel party honesty about their use of personal information, with provisions making it a crime for parties to lie to Canadians!??

Henceforth, once Bill C-25 receives Royal Assent, party privacy policies must "prohibit the party [and all connected individuals and organizations] from providing false or misleading information to individuals about the purposes for which the party collects personal information." The party must also not lie about selling personal information it has, nor about its disclosure of personal information it controls "for the purpose of causing harm." What "causing harm" means is not defined.

### **Extending "Foreign Interference" Laws to the Internal Affairs of Political Parties**

Other measures in Bill C-25 introduce prohibitions against "undue foreign influence" in candidate nomination and leadership contests which are by right the internal affairs of political parties. There is no apparent objection by the cartel parties who in any case have already integrated themselves into the "national security" apparatus of the state by having officials with national security clearance serving on screening bodies for potential candidate and leadership contestants.

It is already illegal for anyone but a Canadian citizen or permanent resident to make political contributions to a registered political entity: political parties and their electoral district association, candidates, and individuals who participate in a candidate nomination and party leadership nomination. So too there are myriad prohibitions against "undue foreign influence," which is defined as a foreign entity incurring expenses or breaking any law of Canada to influence how people vote. Bill C-25 introduces a whole section entitled "Prohibitions in Relation to Voting at a Nomination Contest or Leadership Contest" basically duplicating the "undue foreign influence" prohibitions that already apply to election campaigns.

The same is done with prohibitions against bribery, intimidation and "attempts to compel" a person to vote for a certain candidate or party in an election. The addition of these laws specifically targeting the internal affairs of political parties raises the question of what kind of political parties need the state to set and enforce their rules and prohibit such corrupt activities in their ranks. It remains to be seen whether these new provisions will be detected by the secret police or by cartel party "oppo-research" operatives sussing out competitor wrongdoings.

These election laws were recommended by the Public Inquiry into Foreign Interference which suggested their absence represented a "loophole." The inquiry examined allegations that nomination races and leadership contests in the lead-up to the 2019 and 2021 federal elections were the target of foreign interference. All of these were based on unsubstantiated stories from spy agencies and their secret informants, such as tales about money from the Communist Party of China being funnelled into various election campaign chests without any evidence. To date, not one verified case has been presented to Canadians and whatever the spies and informants told the "Public" Inquiry remain secrets of state.

The law makes it clear that what constitutes "undue foreign influence" definitely does not include political parties hiring supranational private corporations which specialize in running election campaigns. The law prohibits foreign corporations from intervening in elections if they do not operate in Canada. It also prohibits activities of any foreign corporation with operations in Canada if one of its primary activities consists of "doing anything to influence" voting. It does not prohibit them from working for a political party.



Who decides what constitutes "undue" foreign influence? Not any old foreign influence, but "undue" foreign influence. The Commissioner of Canada Elections says many Canadians file complaints about public statements at elections because they think they are illegal, such as foreign personalities or governments or media outlets endorsing a contestant in an election, as Barack Obama did with Justin Trudeau. The *Canada Elections Act* says that merely expressing an opinion about one's desired outcome for an election, issuing a statement encouraging people to vote in a certain way, even if expenses are incurred by the foreign entity, does not violate the law.

The experience of Canadians is that "undue" foreign influence, or allegations of it, is determined by NATO-aligned and inspired police agencies, including the Five Eyes alliance, when they pronounce certain countries -- they define as "hostile states" -- are attempting to sway elections. This applies even when the impugned activities are open and transparent.

For instance, Chinese media outlets reported on the 2019 Canadian election campaign by quoting from newspapers such as the Canadian *Hill Times* about the policies of various parties on China. This included those of the Conservative Party, which the *Hill Times* described as hostile to China. It was declared that social-media accounts re-posting the articles constituted Chinese state interference in Canadian elections.

In addition to extending prohibitions against foreign influence to candidate and leadership nomination races, regulations on "third parties" are expanded to require an increasing amount of detail about the source of their funds. In certain cases, third parties that fund themselves through contributions will have to publish the names and addresses of anyone who contributes more than \$200 to show that their funds are not coming from foreign sources. The increasingly complex "third party" rules will make it more and more difficult for any but the largest organizations to intervene in elections due to fear of inadvertently breaking the law or lack of resources to comply with all the required paperwork and accounting.

Meanwhile talk about use of foreign funds completely obscures how funds for campaigns are raised in a way that is not at all democratic because the *demos*, the people, are left out of the equation. In

terms of how the funds are used, including the generous reimbursement of election campaign spending, this too is based on marginalizing the people, violating the right to an informed vote and reducing the people to voting cattle.

### **Bill C-25 as Part of a Suite of Measures for Increased Police Monitoring of Elections**

Bill C-25 also strengthens the powers of the Commissioner of Canada Elections who is responsible for enforcement of the *Canada Elections Act* to conduct investigations and secure information. This includes the Commissioner being authorized to enter into agreements for information sharing with pretty well any government department and police and spy agencies such as the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) and the Communications Security Establishment.

MacKinnon released Bill C-25 as one of a trio of initiatives. The second measure he announced involves expanding the monitoring of elections and political discourse by secret political police, also in the name of countering "foreign interference." The "Rapid Response Mechanism" set up in 2018 by the leaders of the G7 countries -- U.S., Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy and Japan -- will receive \$31.5 million over the next five years to expand its work. It is an agency housed in Global Affairs and tasked with "detecting foreign information activities that may impact Canada's interests." This agency works in tandem with NATO-aligned "partners to detect foreign information manipulation, interference and transnational repression aimed at democracies." Canadians are to believe this does not constitute foreign interference.

The third measure is an update to the "Cabinet Directive to the Critical Election Incident Public Protocol." What a name! This is a body created in 2019 also related to allegations of foreign interference. It is comprised of the Clerk of the Privy Council, the National Security and Intelligence Advisor to the Prime Minister, the Deputy Minister of Justice and Deputy Attorney General (the position currently occupied by Marie-Josée Hogue, former Commissioner of the Public Inquiry into Foreign Interference), the Deputy Minister of Public Safety and the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. They are tasked with deciding when and how Canadians should be informed during general elections about "incidents that threaten Canada's ability to have a free and fair election." MacKinnon announced that an individual allegedly not connected to the government, decided upon by the cartel parties, will be added to the group. Of course, such an individual said not to be connected to the government is definitely connected to the state. They must nonetheless receive security clearance and in all likelihood pledge to keep whatever information comes their way as a "secret of state" which cannot be revealed to Canadians.



The fact that these amendments to the *Canada Elections Act* are proposed and voted on by cartel parties whose positions of power and privilege are defended by them is an egregious conflict of interest and history will condemn them for it. The fact that the election law changes are accompanied by measures to enhance national and supranational policing of elections is equally condemnable. Absolutely none of it has to do with providing Canadians with ways to make sure they and their claims on society are represented in government. It is cynical indeed.

**House Committee Hearings for Legislation to  
Block Longest Ballot Project**

## **Non-Serious Study Gives Rise to Repugnant Conclusions**

– Hilary LeBlanc –

In October of last year, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs (PROC) conducted a study on the Longest Ballot Committee after adopting a motion in camera to do so on September 23. The study was described as "an examination of the actions of the 'Longest Ballot Committee' in recent Canadian elections [...] with a view toward furnishing the government with recommendations."

The purpose of the recommendations was not stated and the Committee saw no need to do so given that it was a foregone conclusion: the *Canada Elections Act* must be amended to curtail and obstruct the electoral reform campaign of the Longest Ballot Committee.

The prejudices of the members of PROC against the Longest Ballot were already well known before the hearings began on October 7, 2025. Five days earlier, on October 2, when Canada's Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Stéphane Perrault appeared before the Committee for its study of his Official Report on the 45th General Election, the issue of the Longest Ballot Committee and how to stop it loomed large. Instead of deciding to study any of the several problems that emerged in the administration of the April election, including Elections Canada warning that snap elections with 36-day campaign periods were pushing its capacity to administer elections to the limit, the Committee chose the Longest Ballot Committee as the subject for a grand inquiry.



Longest Ballot organizer Tomas Szuchewycz appeared as the first witness on October 7. He was the sole witness involved in the electoral reform initiative invited to testify. The other witnesses for the first meeting were Peter Loewen, a political scientist who is Director of the Munk School of Global Affairs & Public Policy, former MP Louis-Philippe Sauvé, and Dr. Lori Turnbull, Professor, Faculty of Management, Dalhousie University. Sauvé became a member of Parliament in the September 2024 LaSalle-Émard-Verdun by-election which had a 91-candidate long ballot. He lost the seat in the subsequent general election.

At its second meeting the Committee heard from David Moscrop, described as a "Politics Writer," Dr. Holly Ann Garnett, Class of 1965 Professor in Leadership, Royal Military College of Canada, Jon Pammett, Distinguished Research Professor, Political Science Department, Carleton University, and Ryan Davies of the podcast *Northern Perspective*.

The witnesses at the final meetings included Jean-Pierre Kingsley, former Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) of Canada and Jean-François Blanchet, CEO of Québec, followed by Canada's current CEO Stéphane Perrault.

The inclusion of podcaster Ryan Davies of *Northern Perspective* was particularly egregious given its history of slandering the Longest Ballot Committee. *Northern Perspective* had produced several muckraking videos against the Longest Ballot and continues to do so. Among other things, it falsely accused the Longest Ballot of collecting nomination signatures on forms without candidate

names on them, a false allegation CEO Stéphane Perrault refuted. *Northern Perspective's* purported evidence was provided by an anonymous "whistleblower" who was a former Longest Ballot candidate but then came to associate himself with its most vituperous opponent.

When Perrault appeared before the Committee on October 2, Conservative MP Michael Cooper and Liberal MP James Maloney both declared that Longest Ballot nomination forms were suspect, without disclosing that the source of their "evidence" was *Northern Perspective*. Both grilled Perrault about why Elections Canada does not authenticate nomination signatures to prevent "forgeries" by calling nominators or having returning officers visit them to find out if they really signed the forms. Aside from explaining how Returning Officers verify nomination signatures, Perrault repeatedly responded that there was no evidence of any wrongdoing in the nomination and registration of Longest Ballot candidates.

Then, during the Longest Ballot hearings, Cooper and Maloney persisted in their false allegations about Longest Ballot nomination forms being suspect. They grilled Tomas Szuchewycz on the accusation and boorishly refused to let him explain.

Conservative MP Cooper said it's not necessarily a matter of forgery: "There was evidence, for example, in the case of the Longest Ballot Committee that there were organizers going around with nomination forms and at the top where it said the name of the candidate, it was blank." Perrault responded "I'm not aware of any evidence to that effect."

Perrault informed the Committee that at the very beginning of the Longest Ballot initiative in the 2019 General Election in the riding of Regina Qu'Appelle, Elections Canada rejected forms which indicated nominators were supporting "Any and All Candidates" participating in the Longest Ballot. People were solicited for nomination signatures by being asked to nominate several candidates being recruited with the aim of having a long ballot to protest first-past-the-post and Justin Trudeau's failure to make good on his 2015 election promise to end it. The Longest Ballot Committee was told by Elections Canada that this method of collecting nominations was not acceptable and the Returning Officer registered only two of ten Longest Ballot candidates for that by-election. Since then, the nomination forms have included the names of prospective candidates.

Liberal MP Maloney joined in the unfounded accusations, revealing his utter ignorance on the matter at hand in the course of doing so. "I think we can all agree that it's outrageous. I mean, if we're being frank with each other, this thing, if it had a purpose, I'm not sure anybody understands what it is anymore. So, in my personal opinion we need to find a way to stop it. It's an issue that impacts all the parties in different ways at different times. [...] So my question is what steps can be taken to do it?"

Having no compunction about speaking without a shred of evidence he could attest to, Maloney admitted to or feigned ignorance about the Longest Ballot's aim, which is well-known. He added to his hysteria by suggesting there is a danger in Longest Ballot candidates having access to the voters' list and using it for nefarious purposes.

Slandering Longest Ballot candidates in the most egregious and boorish way without anyone raising any objection, he asked Perrault what could be done to address his concern about privacy. "[M]ost of these people who put their names on the ballot are there to create mischief," he said. Then, from out of the outer blue yonder he declared, "What protections or safeguards are in place to make sure that those people are not using the voters' list, for example to finding, you know, my address in my home so that they can, you know, put a protest group together and come and disturb my neighbours or any other thing that they may be up to because I think you recognize they're not there for legitimate purposes, I think you then have to build extra safeguard to protect against it."

He is apparently also ignorant of the fact that all candidates, no matter whether they are affiliated with a party or not, following their nomination, obtain the list of electors for the riding in which

they are running Furthermore, they are under strict Elections Canada rules about how they are used, which all candidates are bound to.

The ruling minority Liberal government and Conservative opposition were clearly united, both before and during the Committee hearings, on their proclaimed need of "doing something" to stop the Longest Ballot project. In July 2025, Conservative leader Pierre Poilievre wrote to Liberal House leader Steven MacKinnon asking for election law "reforms" to "make the longest ballot scam impossible to carry out again and turn the ballot back to voters free from manipulation." It is farcical to hear the leader of the party best known for its microtargeting of electors speak about turning the "ballot back to voters free from manipulation." Why he should be listened to and not the champions of the Longest Ballot Project speaks reams about whose interests the cartel parties in the House of Commons represent.

Poilievre told the Speaker he would cooperate with the Liberals to get legislation passed for this purpose. Poilievre initially proposed a hefty increase in the number of nomination signatures required for candidates to register. Given that this would make registering their own candidates more difficult, as publicly noted by dissenting Conservatives, Poilievre seems to have had second thoughts about this proposal. In response, Steven MacKinnon told the press that his government "shares the concerns about the Longest Ballot initiative and we are currently examining this issue."



Clearly, within this committee, there is visceral disdain and contempt for the Longest Ballot Project and its actions. This makes it unfit to conduct an examination of the actions of the Longest Ballot Project and why it is has emerged at this time. Such an examination would necessitate acknowledging the broad disaffection and discontent of the people with an electoral system that leaves them marginalized and disempowered and address that, not the morbid preoccupations of the Liberals and Conservatives who are terrified of any electoral reform which would serve to empower the people. This is the crux of the matter. It explains how they have managed to use their positions of power and privilege to limit electoral reforms to measures which provide them with more money from the

public purse, exemptions from privacy laws and state facilitation of their microtargeting practices.

PROC's unacceptable "examination" of the Longest Ballot Project was conducted in true Spanish inquisition style. The heresy in this case is the Longest Ballot Project's assertion that the time has come to replace the first-past-the-post method of counting votes and that the drafting and approval of a new electoral law needs to be put into the hands of a Constituent Assembly and the people, not self-serving political parties.

It was no surprise when on March 24 PROC released its recommendations to change the *Canada Elections Act* to try to stop the continuation of the Longest Ballot project.

To watch PROC's October 7, 2025 hearings, [click here](#).

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## Recommendations

On March 24, the House of Commons Committee on Procedure and House Affairs (PROC) tabled a 58-page report promoting election law amendments aimed at banning the Longest Ballot Committee's participation in elections. Entitled *Becoming a Candidate in an Election: A Review of*

*the Criteria*, the report presents seven recommendations for amendments to the *Canada Elections Act* and calls on the government to introduce legislation embodying all of them, which it says reflect its "concerns about the integrity and accessibility of Canada's elections caused by the activities of the Longest Ballot Committee."

PROC considered several proposals made by the ten witnesses opposed to the work of the Longest Ballot Committee who were invited to three meetings it held on "The Activities of 'the Longest Ballot Committee' in Canadian Elections." Proposals included increasing the number of signatures required to nominate a candidate and re-introducing the requirement for candidates to provide a deposit to register. The essence of PROC's seven recommendations is to criminalize support for electoral reform through mass candidacies in a riding. It proposes to make nominating more than one candidate a crime "subject to penalties." PROC also proposes to ban more than one candidate in a riding appointing the same individual as their official agent.



As it stands now, the law entitles any eligible elector in a riding to nominate candidates; there is no restriction on how many candidates an elector can nominate. The act of nominating must be witnessed and there is no restriction on who the witness is, just as there is no restriction on who can participate in gathering signatures. The witness must only ensure that the elector is an eligible elector in the riding. One hundred signatures are required in most ridings, while only 50 are required in specified sparsely populated ridings.

PROC is presenting the following amendments to the *Canada Elections Act*:

1. "prohibit signing more than one candidate's nomination paper [...] subject to penalties;"
2. "add disclaimers to candidate nomination papers which state that it is an offence under the *Canada Elections Act* to sign more than one candidate's nomination paper."
3. "make it an offence to induce anyone to sign more than one candidate's nomination paper [...] subject to penalties."
4. "make it an offence for a candidate to submit false or misleading information on a candidate nomination paper [...] subject to penalties."
5. "prohibit individuals from serving as the official agent for more than one candidate per electoral district [...] subject to penalties."
6. "provide for penalties when signatures are obtained on a nomination paper before a candidate has been identified."
7. "that prohibitions under the *Canada Elections Act* be expanded to penalize anyone who counsels, engages in a conspiracy, or acts as an accessory after the fact to a violation or an offence in the act."

The PROC report included supplementary reports from the Conservatives and the Bloc Québécois. The purpose of the Conservatives' supplementary report is to express support for the recommendations and to note the Liberal government's failure "to curtail the disruptive actions of the Longest Ballot Committee" sooner than it did.

In its supplementary report, the Bloc Québécois says it does not support the prohibition of people nominating more than one candidate. It says it supports recommendations 3 to 7 listed above, which include the prohibition against "inducing " electors to nominate more than one candidate.

To read the full report from the PROC, [click here](#).

## Longest Ballot Committee's Response



Tomas Szuchewycz appears before PROC October 7, 2025

The Longest Ballot Committee (LBC) has posted a statement on its Bluesky account (@longestballot.bsky.social) responding to the report and recommendations of the Procedure and House Affairs Committee (PROC) that calls for amendments to the *Canada Elections Act* aimed at criminalizing the work of LBC for electoral reform.

The statement says: "PROC report released...and it looks like MPs fell for the conspiracy theories and photo editing skills of Youtuber Ryan Davies of *Northern Perspective*. For three months the Youtube channel *Northern Perspective* has been accusing us of collecting nomination signatures without a candidate's name on the form. Their proof... a photo they 'zoomed-in and enhanced.'

"*Northern Perspective* worked hard to get their accusation known, repeating it many times on their Youtube Channel during the Battle River-Crowfoot by-election. Their edited photo even made it to parliament: To the right is MP Michael Cooper holding up the image they manipulated.

"The good news is we have the original unedited photo! The forms are still blurry, but you can definitely make out where the name is. And...by a stroke of luck we also held on to the original forms featured in the photo (though we won't be sharing those on a bluesky post).





**Photos "enhanced" by Northern perspective and original photos**

"This has been a good lesson on the dangers of photoshop, misinformation, and malicious politics.

"What has surprised us most is just how easily a random bozo on Youtube fooled dozens of MPs.

"The LBC will continue to take great pride in our spotless record and strict observance of election law."

In response to questions from CBC about PROC's recommendations, LBC spokesperson Tomas Szuchewycz notes that the 42 Longest Ballot candidates in the Terrebonne by-election each have their own official agent, so the proposal to amend the law requiring unique official agents has already been overcome.

"The only recommended change for us would be a new ban on voters nominating more than one candidate, but we are looking forward to meeting this new challenge."

He added: "We wish MPs would stop wasting their time trying to think up new ways to ban long ballots and instead reflect and recuse themselves from decisions on election law and instead pass responsibility to a permanent, independent, and non-partisan body, such as a citizens' assembly."

## **Shame on Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs!**

**– C. Lemieux –**

On October 7, 2025, the members of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs (PROC) welcomed Tomas Szuchewycz, spokesperson for the Longest Ballot Committee (LBC), for a meeting to "discuss the actions taken by the LBC." Namely, this was to discuss its mobilization to get as many candidates as possible on the ballot to force a public discussion on the need for democratic renewal, especially regarding the current first-past-the-post electoral system.

An EKOS poll from January 2025 indicated that 68 per cent of Canadians want the first-past-the-post voting system to be replaced with a system of proportional representation. Another from the same firm from December 2022 concluded that 76 per cent of Canadians support the creation of a

national assembly of the people on electoral reform. Meanwhile, the spectacle put on by the MPs throughout this session eloquently illustrated the conflict of interest which the LBC has been denouncing and rightly so.



Collecting signatures for longest ballot project in La Salle--Énard--Verdun, August 2024.

Thus, rather than seriously addressing the issue raised by the LBC, members of the committee chose to ask questions that sidestepped the essence of the matter. Instead, they sought the opinion of an "expert" invited "in a personal capacity" to find ways to prevent the LBC from continuing its work so that the peoples' demands for democratic renewal are finally heard and respected!

The LBC representative, Tomas, responded clearly and concisely to questions, especially those from Conservative MPs who sought to accuse the LBC of "misrepresentation" or "obstruction" in the electoral process. While Tomas calmly corrected some facts that a member of PROC had just misrepresented, the member and the committee chair made thinly veiled threats of criminal prosecution. Such intimidation is outrageous and unacceptable!



I salute the work of the LBC and the courage of its representative before a House of Commons committee whose sole mandate is clearly to silence the voice of the people. Their aim is to prevent the people from achieving a fairer electoral system, under the responsibility of an independent body and not under the control of the cartel parties that profit from the current system and, regardless of their stripes, attack those fighting for renewal.

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## From the Party Press Longest Ballot in Canada's History

Canadians have not forgotten that Justin Trudeau broke his promise to make the 2015 election the last first-past-the-post (FPTP) election. Canadians remain unsatisfied with the archaic and out-of-touch political system which Justin Trudeau and Erin O'Toole call a democracy. An opportunity every few years to vote for the lesser evil is a far cry from what Canadians deserve. Our democracy

is one that is designed to keep the voices of ordinary people out and concentrate power in the hands of a few. People feel disillusioned with voting for those that don't represent them. Instead of accepting apathy and alienation, we decided to do the opposite; and engaged directly with our democracy to make ourselves heard. We now are happy to celebrate our success in creating the longest federal ballot seen in this country's 150 year history.

We mobilized ordinary Canadians from all walks of life and from a diverse range of political opinions to stand in a single riding at the heart of the country, St. Boniface-St. Vital Winnipeg. We collected nearly 1,600 individual nomination signatures from local residents who were excited to see regular people stand up for a better democracy.

Section 3 of the *Charter* explicitly grants every Canadian the right to stand for election; there is no reason why we should accept our lot just as voters. We can do more. We believe a democracy in which everyday Canadians have a bigger voice will forever remain a distant dream until we start to exercise our democratic rights to their fullest extent and stand up with our own voices against the politicians who seek to speak on our behalf.

Some will call the longest ballot frivolous, inappropriate, or just ballot clutter. We must disagree. There is nothing inappropriate about having regular Canadians exercising their *Charter* rights and engaging directly in politics. The rules and model of our democracy is determined by the winners of the last election; this is neither fair nor democratic. We have shown what a few people can accomplish, and we will continue to work hard to bear pressure on the administrative and conceptual limits of our electoral system until the widespread calls for democratic reform are answered.

Towards a better democracy,

*Organizer of the Longest Ballot*  
*Tomas Szuchewycz*

*(Renewal Update, September 8, 2021)*

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### **Anti-Immigrant Measures Become Law**

## **Dark Day as Canada Takes Another Step Backward Amidst Vigorous and Sustained Opposition**

*– Diane Johnston –*



March 26, 2026 will be remembered as a dark day in Canada as it is the day Bill C-12, the *Strengthening Canada's Immigration System and Borders Act* became law. This legislation originated in the omnibus Bill C-2, the *Strong Borders Act* in October 2025. Bill C-12 was carved out of Bill C-2 due to objections from other cartel parties in the House of Commons. The then minority government of Prime Minister Mark Carney would likely not have been able to pass Bill C-2 without acquiescing to objections by the Conservatives about expanded surveillance power by the Canadian Security and Intelligence Service and other similar measures.

Most importantly, Bill C-12 has been broadly opposed by working people and a broad cross-section of rights organizations at every stage of its existence, as well as by scholars, legal experts and many others. Attempts by some Senators to blunt the most egregious aspects of the bill were ultimately cast aside.

Like Bill C-2, Bill C-12 is an omnibus bill, a 75-page piece of legislation that revises nine existing pieces of legislation:

- the *Customs Act*,
- the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*,
- the *Cannabis Act*,
- the *Oceans Act*,
- the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*,
- the *Department of Citizenship and Immigration Act*,
- the *Proceeds of Crime (Money Laundering) and Terrorist Financing Act*,
- the *Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions Act*, and
- the *Sex Offender Information Registration Act*

Bill C-2 and now Bill C-12 came about in response to spurious claims from U.S. President Donald Trump that the border with Canada is a significant source of criminal activity that negatively affects the U.S. due to "dangerous migrants" and out-of-control trafficking of the opioid fentanyl and related materials. Trump demanded that Canada bring its border security measures in line with U.S. demands as part of its trade war.

Now that Bill C-12 has passed, appeasement of President Trump is seemingly no longer part of the discussion. There has been no talk of how passage of Bill C-12 should figure in the current round of U.S.-Canada trade negotiations.

This confirms the people's profound concerns about Bill C-12 from the start, that its main aim was a broad, craven and chauvinist attack on the rights of refugees, migrants and immigrants in Canada.

The passage of Bill C-12 into law represents a broad attack on the rights of all and means stepping up the work to defend the rights of all and to achieve status for all.

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## **Rights Organizations Decry Shameful Attack on Refugees and Migrants**

In a press release issued on the website of the Canadian Civil Liberties Association one day after passage of Bill C-12, the *Strengthening Canada's Immigration System and Borders Act*, a broad coalition of rights organizations condemned the bill: "This egregious bill marks a significant attack

on refugee and migrant rights in Canada, and has been criticized by the UN Human Rights Committee for undermining critical procedural safeguards for refugees."



Picket at Montreal MP's office against Bill C-12, November 13, 2025

The coalition notes that the legislation limits the ability to seek refugee protection in Canada, "enabling the mass cancellation of immigration documents and applications, and facilitating the sharing of personal information within and outside the country." It claims it will "put thousands [...] at risk of persecution, violence and precarity."

It also points out that in June 2025, over 300 organizations had "urged the government to withdraw Bill C-2, its predecessor" noting that their concerns "were ignored" and that the groups "were largely excluded from the legislative process in the House of Commons."

Despite this, a "broad range of experts and individuals" who did appear in the Senate underscored "the harmful effects of Bill C-12," while "the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology recommended deleting parts of Bill C-12 that would make changes to immigration and refugee protection laws, due to human rights, privacy and due process concerns." Again however, "these recommendations were ignored, and no significant amendments were made as the government fast-tracked this deplorable piece of legislation."

Notes the coalition: "This government is replicating U.S.-like anti-migrant sentiment and policies in Canada." It also expressed concern "about the dangerous trend towards discretionary power and the further erosion of refugee and migrant rights slated in future legislative and policy reforms, including imminent changes to the Interim Federal Health Program coming into effect on May 1."

The press release ends with the coalition vowing to "fight back against this attack" which sees "refugees and migrants [...] scapegoated for the crises that governments at all levels have created."

For the full list of signatories, [click here](#).

(Canadian Civil Liberties Association)

## What United Nations Human Rights Committee Had to Say

In its "Concluding observations on the seventh periodic report of Canada" dated March 23, three days before Bill C-12, the *Strengthening Canada's Immigration System and Borders Act* became law, the United Nations Human Rights Committee, tasked with overseeing and adjudicating the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR), expressed concern over reports indicating that the bill "may weaken refugee protection" in Canada. It said the bill "reportedly introduces new ineligibility provisions under which certain asylum claims are no longer referred to the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, thereby restricting access to an effective refugee-status determination procedure." It also noted that "individuals rendered ineligible under these provisions are instead directed to the Pre-Removal Risk Assessment, which is an administrative process that reportedly lacks adequate procedural safeguards."

The committee also took note of Canada's designation of the U.S. "as a safe country under the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* and the Canada-United States Safe Third Country Agreement," expressing concern "about the potential consequences this may have for asylum seekers transiting through that country, including risk of 'chain refoulement.'" Chain refoulement (also known as indirect refoulement) occurs when a country transfers an individual to a second country, which then forces that person to return to their country of origin or another territory where they face persecution, torture or other serious human rights violations. This practice is generally considered a violation of international law, including the 1951 Refugee Convention.

The UN body called on Canada to "ensure that all persons seeking international protection have unfettered access to the national territory and to fair and efficient procedures, with all necessary procedural safeguards, for the individualized determination of refugee status or other forms of international protection, in full compliance with the principle of non-refoulement." It also implored Canada to "ensure that its legislation, including Bill C-12 is fully compliant with these requirements, and guarantees access to effective remedies." It also called upon Canada to "review the designation of the United States as a safe third country to ensure that it fully complies with the principle of non-refoulement and guarantees effective access to fair and efficient asylum procedures and remedies."

(Source: "Concluding observations on the seventh periodic report of Canada, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights," CCPR, March 23, 2026)

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## Senate Approves Tweaks to Save Face

The Senate first received Bill C-12, the *Strengthening Canada's Immigration System and Borders Act* for review on December 11, 2025. It was ultimately passed back to the House of Commons with certain amendments on March 12.

The Senate's first approved amendments came from the bill's sponsor in the Upper House, Tony Dean. His was a lame attempt at addressing the harsh criticism meted out by the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology (SOCI), mandated to study and report on those sections of the bill (Parts 5-8) that dealt with immigration and asylum.

SOCI's first recommendation had been to entirely remove those parts of the bill from the proposed legislation. In the case where that recommendation was discarded, it proposed 10 others, the last of which was that parts of the *Department of Citizenship and Immigration Act* and the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* "be amended to include a sunset clause that would mandate an obligatory parliamentary review to assess the efficiency, fairness, and overall balance of the proposed policy shifts."

Rather than a "sunset clause" that would have automatically terminated the measures contained in the bill after a fixed period, Senator Dean's amendment merely created a time-bound review that functions only as an oversight mechanism, which the Senate had approved.

Another amendment the Upper House agreed to, proposed by Senator Paulette Senior, clarified that C-12's expanded immigration information-sharing power provisions would not apply to Canadian citizens or permanent residents. SOCI had made a similar recommendation in its report, "that Part 5 of the bill be amended to ensure that the proposed information-sharing regime does not apply to permanent residents and naturalized citizens." Although her proposal did meet with the approval at the Senate, it was later rejected by the representatives of the cartel parties in the House of Commons.

### **Concerned Senators' Attempts at Changes to Bill**

Some Senators suggested changes to lessen the impacts of the bill, but time and again they were voted down by the majority in the Upper House.

Senator Suze Youance, another SOCI member, began her intervention by recounting how her office had been swamped with telephone calls and over 1,000 emails from the public concerned over the consequences of Bill C-12. She reported that over 300 organizations across the land had spoken out against the bill "which they believe flout the rights protected under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and stand in stark contrast to Canada's international obligations, including the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees."

She then took issue with a clause in the bill, which provides that the date of first entry into Canada be used to determine future eligibility for asylum. Here she argued that children should be excluded from this provision, as it may prevent them from later applying for international protection. Her proposal was that a claim should not be deemed ineligible if the applicant was under 18 years of age on the date of their first entry into Canada.

For her part, Senator Paula Simons tried introducing amendments on Part 7 of the bill, proposing a regulatory power to prescribe circumstances in which an officer can terminate an application for a visa or permit or other document, or can cancel, suspend or vary a visa or other document. Her proposed modifications also dealt with orders made in the so-called public interest, in which the Governor-in-Council can directly bar, suspend or terminate *en masse* applications for visas and permits and other documents.

She argued against giving the executive the power to take away the rights or privileges of thousands of people at their sole discretion and proposed that Parliament retain "an emergency override on any order or regulation the government makes under these new powers."

Her proposed amendments would have required "that any order or regulation made by the Governor-in-Council under Part 7 of the bill be tabled in Parliament within 15 sitting days. Then, if it were warranted, each house of Parliament could, in accordance with its own rules, choose to pass a resolution that the particular order or regulation be annulled. Both chambers would need to pass such a resolution in order for it to take effect so the unelected Senate could not unilaterally thwart the will of the elected chamber."

Senator Farah Mohamed's proposal was for a veritable sunset clause, whereby certain provisions in the act would cease to have effect after five years.

"Bill C-12 is presented as a response to a changing global environment, rising geopolitical instability, increasing irregular migration, evolving security threats and mounting administrative backlogs," she said.

She also noted that during committee review of Bill C-12, neither the Minister of Immigration nor departmental officials were able to provide a breakdown of the roughly 300,000 cases currently in the immigration backlog, including how many involve students, asylum seekers or economic migrants. She questioned how the Senate could be asked to make decisions of such magnitude without the proper evidence. She also raised the concern that several measures in C-12 may not eliminate administrative backlogs but "simply relocate them."

Senator Mary Coyle explained that her amendment was a modification of SOCI's Recommendation 8, "to increase the ineligibility period for refugee claims from the one year indicated in Bill C-12 to five years from the most recent date of entry." She further informed, "Currently, for the In-Canada Asylum Program, there is no time limit for individuals making a refugee protection claim."

"Colleagues," she argued, "we have heard that Canada has a backlog of applicants in its system that is estimated to be around 300,000 -- there's not much data available on what it is and why it is. It makes sense to support appropriate measures to address this situation" as it "might actually be causing harm to those desperate to have their claims settled and their lives moved out of limbo and insecurity and onto a safe and secure track so that they can get on with their lives, provide for their families and contribute to Canada."

Her amendment would have extended the one year eligibility bar to two years. This "recognizes the need to address the backlog of asylum seekers while creating a more reasonable timeline, particularly for certain vulnerable applicants -- those who will need more time to come forward and who should not be denied their rights to a fulsome consideration of their circumstances."

Senator Yuen Pau Woo proposed changes that would have required mandatory oral hearings within the pre-removal risk assessment (PRRA) process "for individuals who are captured by the new ineligibility provisions." He likened his amendment to a type of "last protection," or "a modest safeguard." He further explained that his amendment would simply ensure "that when a person is diverted to the PRRA process, they are guaranteed an opportunity to appear before a decision-maker through an oral hearing before a final decision is made."

Finally, Senator Marilou McPhedran described her proposed change as one that "addresses the transitional provision of Bill C-12." It "currently applies the one-year asylum application deadline retroactively to June 2025," the date that the bill's predecessor, Bill C-2, was tabled in the House of Commons. In the interests of "procedural fairness and the rule of law," she explained that her amendment would have removed that retroactivity and activated "the deadline as of the date of Royal Assent of this bill."

However, it was all for naught as Bill C-12 was passed on March 26 by the House of Commons without taking heed of the proposed amendments from the Senate.

So much for the "sober thought of the few" in the face of the great indifference and inhumanity of the elitlely accommodated many!

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**Canadians Must Control Where Their Pension Funds Are Invested**

**NOT in ICE! NOT in War Production!  
NOT in Projects Which Harm the Social  
and Natural Environment!  
It is NOT a Business Decision!**

**– Barbara Biley –**

Two years ago Ontario teachers learned that their pension funds were invested in Stone Canyon Industries Holdings (SCIH), the Los Angeles-based holding company which owns Windsor Salt

whose workers were forced out on strike in February 2023. SCIH hired the notorious anti-union U.S. law firm Jackson Lewis to "run the negotiations" by making sure there were no negotiations so the company could succeed in imposing its dictate and contract out union jobs at Windsor Salt.



Active and Retired Teachers on picket line at Windsor Salt, May 31, 2023

When teachers learned that their pension funds were invested in SCIH they said *NO!* They would not support a brutal U.S. anti-labour corporation attacking the working conditions, health and safety and job security of the salt miners and support staff, their families and community. The teachers took a bold stand. They rejected the mantra that where pension funds are invested is a business decision to achieve the highest returns and that issues related to the social and natural environment are not their concern. Teachers said *NO!*[1] The concerns teachers expressed represent the desires of the majority of Canadian and Quebec workers that both workplace funds and government plans, including the Canada Pension Plan, not be used to invest in war production and ventures that harm people or the environment.

On March 30, the environmental organization STAND.earth issued a report on investments by Canadian public pensions and banks in contractors which profit from contracts that enable U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to carry out repression and violence in the U.S. The report reveals that the Canada Pension Plan, nine other public pensions, and all major Canadian banks, as well as Desjardins, have investments in ICE-contracted companies including Palantir, CoreCivic, Geo Group, General Dynamics, CACI, L3 Harris and AT&T.



Picket March 16, 2026, by Retired BC Teachers demanding all BC public pensions divest from war profiteering and climate collapse.

The Minister of Finance Francois-Philippe Champagne is directly responsible for the Canada Pension Plan. When asked for comment about the report, Champagne's office spokesperson John Fragos told the *Canadian Press* that the investment strategies of Canadian pension funds are "theirs to own, and guided by independent and professional boards of directors who oversee, among other things, risk management and investment policies." He said that questions should be directed to them.

This is the typical cowardly stand of government ministers. These are matters of serious concern to the working class and people of this country but Champagne is incapable of elaborating why funding police repression and war production, and the extreme violence of the Trump administration is okay.

The fact is that the federal government has also awarded contracts and subsidies to ICE contractors including Palantir's Canadian subsidiary which received a \$14.4 million software contract in 2020. The Ottawa-based tech company JSI which provides wiretapping tools to ICE will receive \$1 million in federal funds to commercialize AI products for police and security agencies. This is NOT okay!



**Windsor Salt Workers' picket, March 3, 2023**

Excerpts from the report issued by STAND.earth follow:

"Combined, public pensions, including CPP, have more than U.S.\$2.5 billion invested in ICE contractors. Other public pensions include: Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec (CDPQ), Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan (OTPP), Public Sector Pension (PSP), Investment Management Corporation of Ontario (IMCO), British Columbia Investment Management (BCIM), Healthcare of Ontario Pension Plan (HOOPP), Ontario Municipal Employees Retirement System (OMERS), Alberta Investment Management Corp (AIMCO) and Vestcor Inc (which manages New Brunswick public pensions). Canadian and U.S. public pension funds have more than \$11.3 billion invested in the above listed ICE-contractors.

"Canadian banks TD, RBC, Scotia Bank, CIBC, and BMO have financed more than \$23 billion in loans and bonds to a subset of these companies since 2020. These banks, as well as Desjardins, also have extensive investments, often through their asset and wealth management divisions, in many of the named companies to the tune of at least \$9.8 billion. In total, banks globally have issued more than \$218 billion in financing to the above listed ICE-contractors since 2020.

"Companies were chosen based on available data and having been issued contracts since 2025 with ICE or Homeland Security. AT&T is the exception, with a multiyear contract with ICE that runs from 2021 to 2027. The companies are Palantir, a tech and surveillance company (\$1.8 billion

contract), private prison companies GEO Group (\$800.9 million) and Core Civic (\$294.8 million), weapons manufacturers General Dynamics (\$17.2 million) and L3 Harris (\$4.4 million), and telecommunications and IT companies CACI (\$70.1 million) and AT&T (\$90.7 million issued in 2021, running until 2027)."

## Note

1. See Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan Major Investor in U.S. Company Attacking Windsor Salt Workers, *Workers' Forum*, March 10, 2023.

(With files from STAND.earth, Canadian Press)

### Canada's Hypocrisy and Appeasement of U.S. Crimes Against Peace and Humanity

## Carney Government's Duplicitous Positions on U.S./ Zionist Aggression Against Iran

– Steve Rutchinski –



Montreal, March 21, 2026

Since the U.S. and Israel launched their criminal aggression against Iran, they have committed heinous crimes against a sovereign member of the United Nations on false pretexts which claim, all evidence to the contrary, that it is making nuclear weapons and requires "regime change." These lies outdo even the "Iraq has weapons of mass destruction" lie used by the Bush administration when it invaded Iraq on March 20, 2003 to effect regime change in that country, where every kind of war crime, violations of the laws of war, and crimes against peace and humanity were also committed.

Despite the atrocious nature of the aggression and the justifications for it, the Government of Canada has refused to condemn it. Instead, it is peddling duplicitous positions which it is having trouble maintaining due to widespread opposition to its refusal to take a principled stand by people from all walks of life across the country.

On the evening of March 9, Carney's Liberal government was virtually forced to raise the issue of Canada's position on the U.S./Israeli war of aggression against Iran in the House of Commons. There is broad opposition to this war from all quarters and contempt for the duplicitous positions of Prime Minister Mark Carney who, like it or not, is tying Canada to the U.S. war machine.

Foreign policy is a ministerial prerogative power, and the government condescendingly agreed to convoke a "take-note" debate. The House of Commons X feed announced that MPs unanimously passed a motion to "hold a take-note debate on the military escalation between the United States and Iran" after regular parliamentary business wrapped up that day.



The announcement followed opposition calls for a debate in the parliament. The NDP had previously issued a statement calling for Canada to condemn the U.S. war as a violation of international law and categorically rule out any Canadian participation, a stand markedly modified somewhat during the debate itself.

Carney was also under pressure as some members of the Liberal caucus publicly expressed their opposition to the prime minister's support for the U.S.-Israeli attack on Iran on February 28. Will Greaves, Member of Parliament for Victoria, stated that Canada "cannot endorse the unilateral and illegal use of military force," a statement "liked" by five other Liberal caucus members.

The Conservatives, who enthusiastically support war against Iran to bring about "regime change," also called for a debate for Carney to say where he stands and to discuss how the war is affecting global energy supplies.



Even though at issue was Carney's duplicitous position on the U.S. aggression against Iran and he is the one running around the world saying he represents Canada, he himself was absent from the debate. He cited a prior commitment -- later identified as an Iftar, the evening break of the fast during Ramadan.

In the days before the debate, Carney "adjusted" his stand from total support for the U.S./Israeli unprovoked aggression and destruction against Iran, to doing so with "regret." Posing as an ignorant man who doesn't understand the complexities of international law, Carney has put on a shameful performance of trying to muddy the waters about whether U.S./Israeli aggression violates international law. After musing that a straightforward question, whether Canada would join forces with the U.S. in this aggression, was

"hypothetical," then saying that Canada would stand by its allies, he went on to say -- perhaps thinking he had finally settled the matter -- that in any case, Canada had not been consulted and would thus not participate in the war.

Mark Carney and Foreign Minister Anita Anand, her master Carney's voice, subsequently continued to take the tack of repeating the need to avoid civilian casualties. It is what the youth now refer to as "the broken record strategy." Carney and Anand attempted to shift the focus onto what the government is doing to assist Canadian citizens who want to leave the Middle East and

claiming that Canada will do its best to get combatants, presumably the U.S. and Israel, to "de-escalate." All of it goes hand in hand with the talk of the war propagandists who declare that Iran targets civilians, while the U.S. and the Israelis do not.

The fundamental matters of concern to the working class and peoples of Canada and Quebec regarding matters of war and peace are purposely eclipsed by the unprincipled renderings which come out of the mouths of the cartel parties with seats in the House of Commons. The "take-note" debate itself went on for four hours and it was embarrassing as well as nauseating to listen to.

Besides the strident anti-Iran stance of the Conservatives and a weak-as-potato-without-salt presentation by the Bloc Québécois representative, was Elizabeth May's wimpy position. Correctly pointing out that Canada's position on the war is a non-partisan question and trying to make an argument that it concerns international law and sovereignty, she then asked if there wasn't a more peaceful way to achieve regime change. Given all the crimes which have been committed by imposing illegal sanctions on Iran for years, the massive Islamophobia promoted in Canada since 9/11 and previous targeted assassinations in Iran and against Iranian officials in other countries, as well as the criminal war of genocide the U.S. and Zionists have been conducting in Gaza, and much more, such a question is unforgivable.

Representing the NDP, Don Davies was the last speaker. After giving a principled position opposing this illegal war, he unfortunately caved in to the anti-regime narrative.

After everything was said and done, the "take-note" debate amounted to giving tacit approval to continued devastating strikes on Iran and the illegal and unjust war itself, to U.S./Israeli crimes against the peace, and to violations of international law and the UN Charter, and to the U.S. and Israeli use of extreme violence which could at any time give rise to even more extreme violence on an even grander scale aimed at eradicating Iran altogether. Justifying all of this under the hoax that regime change is a high ideal will not rescue Canada in the eyes of Canadians and Quebecers or world public opinion.

The Prime Minister was impelled to attend Question Period himself on March 10, the day after the take-note debate in Parliament, and answer questions he could no longer foist on his Foreign Minister and her unpersuasive performance. Leader of the Bloc Québécois Yves-François Blanchet remarked on Carney's presence and asked for clarification on the government's position on the war:

"Mr. Speaker, bring out the good china; we have visitors in Parliament. Judging by the Prime Minister's inclination to travel the world like Marco Polo, he is his own foreign affairs minister. Unfortunately, this foreign affairs minister is not known for her clarity, and by not accepting his own invitation yesterday, he missed a tremendous opportunity to explain his policies in Parliament. When will he explain his strategic vision for the Middle East?"

According to Carney, "Canada's policy is clear: Canada supports the need to prevent Iran's nuclear program and the export of terrorism. Canada is not taking part in offensive operations by the United States and Israel, and it never will."

Apparently buying into Carney's Davos speech about middle powers needing to work together in the face of U.S. hegemony, Blanchet asked, "In military terms, Canada is clearly the smallest of the major players. Among the mid-level players, it is clearly the most isolated and no one seems to have understood its position so far. Has the Prime Minister spoken with our allies in Europe? What have they agreed on in terms of a common position?"

As if the U.S. is just another member and not the main instigator of the war on Iran, Carney said that he has been discussing the matter with France, Japan and the U.S., who along with Canada make up four of the seven members of the Genocide 7 (G7).

Blanchet followed up with a question to Carney about whether he had "any short-term measures to help people who are suffering and who will continue to suffer as a direct result of this war." He ghoulishly clarified that he was talking about those feeling the effects of the war on "purchasing power, inflation, pensioners and home ownership" in Canada and Quebec, not the Iranian people. To this, Carney again said he is "having conversations with other members of the G7 and with leaders of Middle Eastern countries, such as Qatar, Oman, the United Arab Emirates and Lebanon. "We also need to use the G7's oil reserves," he said.

Just two days later, Carney was on his next junket, to Norway and Britain, a fellow "middle power" and G7 member respectively. While in Norway, Carney met with Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz (Germany is another G7 member). There is no indication Merz and Carney discussed the U.S./Israeli war on Iran. In later talks, according to a press release from the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), Støre and Carney were said to have "condemned the Iranian regime's missile and drone attacks on civilians across the Middle East and expressed deep concern over regional escalation. They agreed that diplomatic engagement is essential to avoid a wider conflict that would devastate civilian populations and worsen the global economic and energy situation." It raises the question of what is meant by "diplomatic engagement" when productive negotiations between the U.S. and Iran on the latter's civilian nuclear program were cut short by the unprovoked bombing of Iran by the U.S. and Israel.

In the UK on March 16, the PMO informs that Carney and British Prime Minister Keir Starmer "discussed the situation in the Middle East. They condemned the Iranian regime's missile and drone attacks, including on civilian and energy infrastructure, and expressed deep concern over the toll on civilians, the risk of further regional escalation, and the broader global economic consequences of the conflict, including rising energy prices." There was no mention of "diplomatic engagement." Exactly what the Carney government's position is on this important issue seems to depend on who the Prime Minister is talking to, which is certainly not Canadians or Quebeckers.

The Prime Minister's remarks show again that the Canadian government supports the criminal U.S./Israeli war and that it has no intention of holding the U.S. or Israel to account. Instead it continues to spread the disinformation that it is Iran and not the U.S. and Israel who are the aggressors and terrorists.

On March 19, Canada and the other members of the Genocide 7 issued a joint statement regarding Iran's exercising control over the Strait of Hormuz to defend itself and bring an end to the war imposed by the U.S. and Israel. It spared no disinformation to portray Iran as an aggressor and did not mention once that war was being waged on it by the U.S. and Israel.[1]

Without condemning the U.S./Israeli aggression and crimes against peace, civilians and all the values humanity holds dear, any claims to be seeking "de-escalation and peace" are a hoax and a farce. Along with Carney's repeated defence of his own war preparations as a requirement to defend Canadian sovereignty, it does not take a genius to correlate that Canada, like other countries with conciliatory approaches, will not only be ill-prepared to cope with the results but will also be dragged in without the approval of the peoples of this country. Clearly, those who sow the wind with their unprincipled conciliatory stands will reap the whirlwind.

## Note

1. For coverage of the Genocide 7 statement see "[Despicable Statement by 'Coalition of the Willing,' Hilary LeBlanc, TML Supplement, April 5, 2026.](#)

See also the entire April 5 *TML Supplement* that provides coverage of Iran's unrelenting response to U.S./Israeli aggressors, its diplomatic work at the UN as well as actions taken by Resistance forces in Lebanon and Yemen. To read that issue, [click here](#).

## **Canada Forced to Withdraw Its Occupation Forces from Iraq**

# **Iraqi Resistance Successfully Targets U.S. and NATO Presence in Iraq**

*– Philip Fernandez –*

During the U.S./Israeli war on Iran, crushing blows from Iraqi resistance forced the remnants of NATO forces, which had been hunkering down in protected areas, to leave Iraq. This signified the utter defeat of the U.S. and NATO occupation of Iraq under whose auspices there have been horrendous crimes against humanity.

Since the war on Iran started on February 28, the Iraqi resistance had struck U.S. military targets in Iraq on a daily basis, including all its so-called safe zones in Baghdad. The U.S.-operated Victory Base near Baghdad airport was targeted regularly with rocket and drone strikes. The U.S. military had been using the site as a logistical centre, which the Resistance has now brought to an end. Other targets that came under heavy attack included Harir Air Base, serving U.S. and coalition forces in northern Iraq, as well as the U.S. embassy compound in Baghdad. Other bases where Italian, French and British NATO forces were located were also targeted.

In the first 12 days alone after the start of the U.S.-Israeli unprovoked aggression against Iran, Iraqi resistance forces reported more than 290 operations, with as many as 29 actions in a single day. The Resistance in Iraq downed several drones including an MQ-9 Reaper used by the U.S. for intelligence and assassination attacks. Most significant was the downing of a U.S. KC-135 refueling aircraft in Anbar, killing its six-member crew, a major blow to U.S. aerial support capabilities over Iraq.

On March 22, the Iraqi Resistance announced that the U.S. and NATO had called for a 24-hour ceasefire so that some 600 NATO personnel could be evacuated. Abu Mahdi al-Jaafari, spokesperson for the Awliyaa Al-Dam Brigades, stated that the U.S. and NATO requested mediation through the Iraqi government "to obtain a temporary 24-hour truce from the resistance factions, with the aim of completing the withdrawal of their forces from the Victory Base in Baghdad." He added that sustained attacks on the base had made it impossible for NATO aircraft to land and take off, noting that in the previous 24 hours the Resistance had carried out 21 attacks against their enemies.

Canadian troops were part of the NATO evacuation. They were participants in the U.S.-led NATO Mission Iraq launched in 2018. According to NATO, this Mission was to assist "in building more sustainable, transparent, inclusive and effective armed forces and security institutions, so that Iraqis themselves are better able to stabilize their country, fight terrorism and prevent the return of ISIS/Daesh."

What is not mentioned by NATO of course is that the instability in Iraq was caused by the illegal invasion of Iraq in 2003 by the U.S. with "a coalition of the willing" made up of NATO members and others. It was carried out under the false pretext that Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein had "Weapons of Mass Destruction."

Then Prime Minister Jean Chrétien claimed that Canada would not be involved because the war was not approved by the UN Security Council. This was a spurious claim on two counts. Firstly, the Chrétien Liberals had no problem with Canada fighting under the U.S. in the illegal bombing of Yugoslavia in 1999 nor, following the criminal Gulf War against Iraq, did Canada have any trouble justifying its participation in the illegal U.S. war against Afghanistan in 2001 after 9/11. Far from it, Canada has been instrumental in getting the UN Security Council to adopt all kinds of sanctions, which are acts of war, and to veto any attempt to hold the U.S. and Apartheid Israel to account. Amongst the many other egregious crimes in which Canada has participated are the bombing and destruction of Libya and the wanton assassination of its leader.

Secondly, the Canadian navy was involved in supporting the U.S. invasion of Iraq from the Persian Gulf and Canadian Air Force personnel flew on U.S. missions to help U.S. pilots find and attack Iraqi targets. Neither the U.S. nor any of the "coalition of the willing" of NATO and other allies, such as Australia, have ever expressed remorse for the war crimes committed against the Iraqi people. The millions of people killed, the destruction of the Iraqi economy and the desecration of its historic and cultural sites, not to mention the brutal assassinations of its leaders and the crimes committed in the course of the aggression and war, the use of depleted uranium, the black ops, torture camps and security certificates were all to justify a phony war on terror while the real terrorists were the United States and NATO allies. This is what initiated what is termed the "ongoing instability in the country" being blamed on the forces fighting for Iraq's freedom and independence.

According to Canadian Defence Minister David McGuinty, following the withdrawal of Canadian troops involved in the NATO Mission Iraq: "As we continue to monitor the situation in the region, we call on all states to respect international law and uphold the fundamental principles of international prosperity and security."

The Iraqi Resistance is gaining in strength and has affirmed that it will continue to carry out armed actions against the U.S. and its allies in support of the Iranian people, the Lebanese people and the Palestinians, and to affirm the Iraqi people's right to be.

*(With files from Canadian Encyclopedia, Palestine Chronicle, Al-Jazeera, CBC.)*

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## **Carney's Latest European Junket**

# **Visit to Norway Serves NATO's Militarization of Arctic and High North**

– Nick Lin –

On March 12, Prime Minister Mark Carney made his latest trip abroad -- a 10-day trip to Europe, starting with a visit to Norway, followed by a visit to the UK. One of the aims of the trip, particularly to Norway, was to bolster NATO's militarization of the Arctic regions of North America (made up of U.S., Canada and Greenland) and the "High North" in Europe. Carney's trip came one day after he announced a \$40 billion plan to militarize Canada's Arctic, setting the stage for these discussions with European NATO members.

On March 13, Carney met with Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, in Bardufoss, Norway, the site of the NATO war game Exercise Cold Response. The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) noted that this Norwegian-led exercise, which ran from March 9 to 19, involves "approximately 30,000 women and men from 14 nations, operating on land, at sea, and in the skies of the High North. The exercise builds our shared strength and resilience in the challenging terrains and waters of NATO's northern flank -- in fjords, with sub-zero temperatures, limited daylight, and deep snow.



"Prime Minister Carney underlined Canada's efforts to further strengthen its presence in the Arctic and High North to ensure the increasingly strategically important region remains secure. The leaders welcomed NATO efforts in this regard, including through enhanced deterrence."

Also discussed was the "continued instability driven by Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine." The NATO countries continue to throw fuel on the fire, while claiming, as the PMO wrote, to stand for a "just and lasting peace, backed by robust security guarantees."

All such northern activities of NATO now take place under Operation Arctic Sentry, headquartered in Norfolk, Virginia, as declared by NATO defence ministers at their meeting in Brussels on February 12. It is part of giving legitimacy to NATO disinformation about Russia and China to fuel stepped-up war spending and war preparations across NATO members and partner countries.[1]

During the remainder of his visit, Carney's activities prioritized joint war preparations with Norway "including their shared commitment to NATO, support for Ukraine, cooperation in the Arctic." Other areas of discussion included "energy, critical minerals, trade, emerging technologies such as space communications and security, and artificial intelligence (AI)," according to the PMO.

Also while in Norway, Carney took part in the Canada-Nordic Summit, where he met with leaders from Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden "to reinforce efforts to strengthen transatlantic security in the North. In a joint statement, the leaders outlined the deepened partnership between Canada and Nordic nations -- in trade, technology, energy, and defence and security."

During his trips abroad and meetings with foreign heads of state during their visits to Canada, Carney continues to present access to Canada's natural resources, his government's pay-the-rich schemes and his government's program to militarize the economy as sound investments for European countries. The PMO writes that "Norway is home to the world's largest sovereign wealth fund with a value of over \$3.5 trillion" and Carney "held meetings with business leaders to position Canada as a premier destination for international capital."

Despite all the discussions about "defence and security" the PMO did not mention anything about the U.S./Israeli war on Iran and its implications.

### **Meeting with UK Prime Minister**

On March 16, Carney met with UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer. The PMO press release about the meeting states that they "discussed the situation in the Middle East. They condemned the Iranian regime's missile and drone attacks, including on civilian and energy infrastructure, and expressed deep concern over the toll on civilians, the risk of further regional escalation, and the broader global economic consequences of the conflict, including rising energy prices."

On matters of joint interest and cooperation, here again warmongering, war spending and war preparations were a major focus of discussions between Starmer and Carney. The two reaffirmed their "steadfast support" for the corrupt neo-Nazi regime in Ukraine. They also spoke about the Canada-UK partnership established in 2025 dealing with trade, AI, defence and critical minerals, including mechanisms to finance the massive increases in war spending and militarization of their respective economies, such as NATO's proposed Defence, Security and Resilience Bank.

Just before leaving for Europe, Carney had attempted to clarify his government's murky position on the U.S./Israeli war on Iran in Question Period on March 10, and said his aim in discussions with other countries, especially G7 members, was to promote "de-escalation and peace." Any mention of this was pointedly missing from the PMO press releases and news reports. By omission, the one consistent position the government is taking is to give its tacit approval of U.S. and Israeli war crimes against Iran, in total violation of international law.

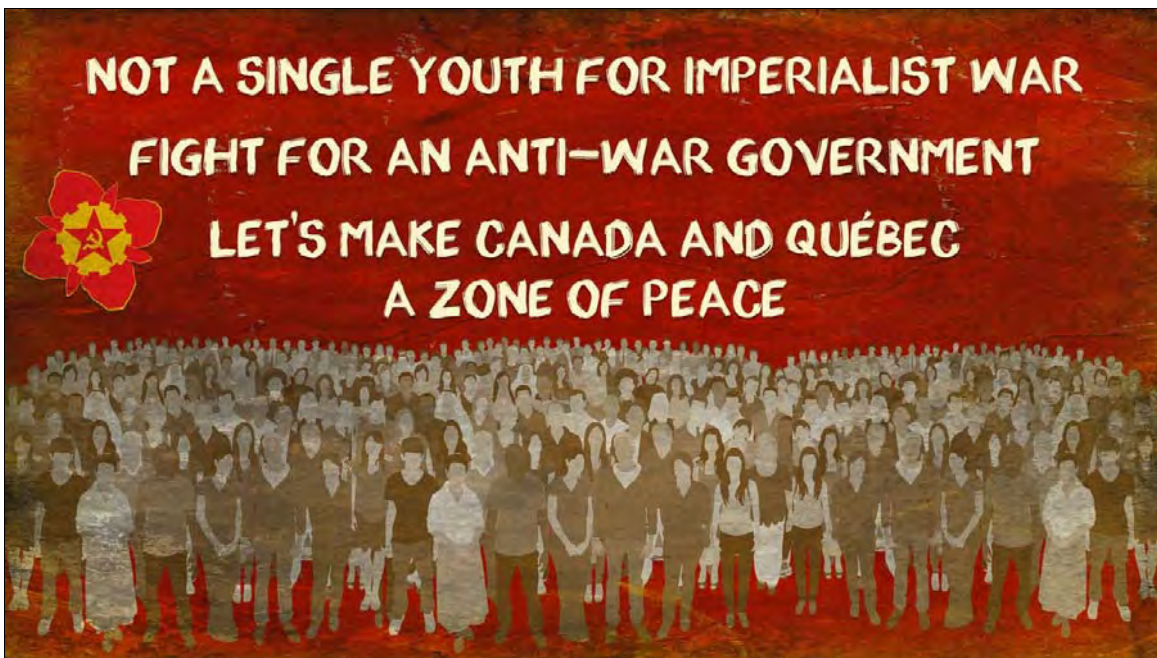
## Note

1. Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Gruskho, at the time of NATO's announcement of its Operation Arctic Sentry, stated its significance as follows: "All peaceful instruments of cooperation are being deliberately destroyed, and the work of the Arctic Council, which was the main international platform for managing the situation in the Arctic and establishing cooperation, has been effectively blocked." He said that the rupture in diplomatic ties between Russia and NATO countries is being leveraged as a pretext to militarize the Arctic and transform it into a theatre of direct confrontation -- precisely when international cooperation is most urgently needed. "This has now been declared an arena of confrontation, where they want to confront not only Russia but also China," he concluded in his remarks to a local newspaper.

*(With files from PMO, teleSUR.)*

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## \$40 Billion Plan for Militarization of Canada's Arctic



On March 12, before leaving on a 10-day trip to Europe, Prime Minister Mark Carney flew to Yellowknife to announce a massive \$40 billion defence spending program that he called an "ambitious new plan to defend, build, and transform the North." The announcement is in keeping with the Carney government's plan for the overall militarization of Canada's economy, based on the false claim that this will boost the economy and provide good jobs. According to Carney, "With this new plan, Canada is taking full responsibility for defending our Arctic sovereignty. We will boldly develop the critical minerals, clean energy, and trade corridors -- the full economic potential of the region. At the centre of this plan are the 140,000 Northerners and Indigenous Peoples who will have stronger, more sustainable, more connected communities, greater opportunities, and a lower cost of living."

First and foremost is \$32 billion allocated for "Forward Operating Locations in Yellowknife, Inuvik, and Iqaluit, and at Deployed Operating Base 5 Wing Goose Bay."

While the announcement talks repeatedly about how the aim to build up all kinds of infrastructure -- roads, airports, power generation and infrastructure -- will also benefit civilians, it is clear that the needs of the U.S./NATO to militarize the Arctic is the overall aim. This level of militarization will not be possible without first putting in place the necessary infrastructure.

Another rationale for improving infrastructure, one being pushed by NATO, is to transport out "critical minerals" needed for high tech and military purposes, as part of contention with China and Russia.

Not mentioned by Carney is the fact that Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy is another way in which the country is deeply integrated into the U.S. war machine. As the policy is based on the concept of a "North American Arctic" comprised of Alaska, Canada's Arctic and Greenland, all are subordinated to U.S. and NATO war aims.

Besides the outrageous war spending of the Carney government, this announcement raises the question about why meeting the objective needs of the people of the Arctic, something that is long overdue, is not by itself a sufficient, just and necessary aim for the Canadian government after so many decades. Furthermore, what of the longstanding opposition to the militarization of the north by Canada's Indigenous Peoples (and many others) and their mistreatment by the Canadian state and its military, and the degradation of Mother Earth, in the name of the "sovereignty of Canada's north"?

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## **\$20 Billion to Buy Submarines to Pay the Rich**

*– Dougal MacDonald –*

As part of its ill-conceived and simplistic "Defence Industrial Strategy" to try to revive the Canadian economy by purchasing weapons from sellers other than the U.S., the Mark Carney Liberal government plans to spend an estimated \$60 billion buying up to 12 conventionally-powered submarines with under-ice capabilities from a not-yet-chosen foreign war contractor to replace Canada's aging British-built Upholder/Victoria Class submarines.[1] This works out to handing over an initial \$5 billion per submarine.

Canada has never built its own submarines and the country's existing shipyards apparently lack the technical know-how. The avowed aim of the purchase is to protect Canada's three coastlines from unnamed aggressors, generally hinted to be Russia and China, even though there is no evidence any such incursions have taken place and all evidence points toward the United States as the current main threat to Canada's sovereignty.

The Carney government has narrowed bidders for the submarine contract to two foreign monopolies. One is ThyssenKrupp Marine Systems (TKMS) of Germany, a monopoly formed by the 1999 merger of two of Adolf Hitler's main corporate backers, Thyssen and Krupp.[2] The other bidder under consideration is Hanwha Ocean, now one of the "Big Three" shipbuilders of south Korea. Hanwha, still controlled by the founding family, was created as Korea Explosives Company in 1952 during the U.S.-led aggression against Korea. The submarine contract might also be split between ThyssenKrupp and Hanwha. The final contract is expected to be awarded around 2028, with the first submarine delivered by about 2035. It is likely that Canadians will strongly protest the purchase which totally contradicts their sincere desire for Canada to be a Zone for Peace.

Since 1914, the Canadian navy has commissioned only 15 submarines, almost all of them U.S. or UK cast-offs. None were built in Canada. BC Premier Richard McBride bought the first two submarines from a Seattle shipyard in 1914 to "protect the West Coast." In the 50 years following the First World War the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) acquired four submarines, two of which were



British and the other two former German U-Boats. The RCN and the Royal Navy (RN) created the Sixth Submarine Squadron in 1955, made up of three British submarines commanded by RN officers. Canada bought an ex-U.S. Navy (USN) submarine in 1961, the Grilse, later replaced by the ex-USN submarine *Argonaut* in 1968. Canada purchased three British Oberon class submarines in 1962, the last leaving service in 2000. Four Upholder Victoria Class submarines were then bought from the UK, beginning in 2000.

The proposed submarine purchase has already been riddled with hypocrisy. The Carney government claims to be standing up for the defence of Canada when the whole boondoggle is obviously just another giant pay-the-rich scheme. Once again, social programs for the well-being of the people of Canada will be decimated so that the owners of huge foreign monopolies like ThyssenKrupp and Hanwha can get even richer. Throughout this farce the phrase "joint continental defence" has recurred, making it clear that the principles guiding Canada's very expensive submarine purchase have everything to do with the warmongering needs and sinister plans of the U.S. imperialists, NATO and NORAD, and nothing to do with the real needs of the people of Canada.

Whichever foreign contractor wins the bidding, the critical point is that it is the Canadian people who must exercise real control over our submarine supply and naval defence. It is a matter of sovereignty. When it comes to Canada's integration into the U.S. military apparatus, it is well known who gives the orders: the North American Air Defense Command (NORAD) has a U.S. commander and a Canadian deputy commander.

Important decisions regarding the defence of Canada should be made by the Canadian people, not foreign monopolies and imperialist institutions. The Carney government is using fearmongering about the need for joint defence against a non-existent threat to claim that not buying new submarines will somehow be a danger to Canadian sovereignty, when exactly the opposite is the case.



The truth of the matter is that it has been shown in practice time and time again that the U.S.-NATO-NORAD conception of defence and "defensive weapons" is not defence at all but attack, aggressive attack against any country which exerts its own independence and refuses to knuckle under to imperialist dictate. Canadian submarines have not once "defended Canadian sovereignty." In fact, the two known times Canadian submarines have been put to any use other than routine "surveillance" and "deterrence" (the effects of which are not

measurable) were as part of an international task force enforcing U.S. sanctions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and as part of Operation Caribbe, a U.S.-NATO-commanded operation supposedly directed at preventing drug trafficking. The latter is well-known to be U.S. President Trump's patently phony excuse for violently interfering in the affairs of Latin American countries by shooting innocent people, kidnapping leaders, and strangling economies.

Reducing questions of Canada's defence to a phony argument over "which submarine" (or which fighter jet) is yet another indication that the Liberals have no intention of defending the security of the Canadian people but rather of placing Canadians in serious jeopardy. On June 25, 2025, Carney announced his government would cave in to the U.S.-NATO demand that Canada spend five per cent of its annual GDP by 2035 on "improving its defence capabilities" to ensure "our individual and collective security." The Liberal government is pushing for further integration into the U.S. war machine precisely when Trump and the U.S. ruling elite are becoming more violent and launching further aggression against the world's people, including the latest attacks against Iran.

It is clear that our real security lies not in buying the "right" submarine to further enrich some foreign monopolies and support U.S. aggression but in standing as one with the world's peoples in defence of their right to be against U.S. imperialist preparations for another world war. Canada needs to take immediate action to get out of NATO and NORAD and all aggressive military bodies. Canadians must continue to fight hard for an anti-war government that will say *No!* to foreign control of Canada's defence, end interference in the affairs of sovereign countries, and become a staunch force for peace in the world.

## Notes

1. The Upholder/Victoria-class submarines are a class of diesel-electric submarines built by the United Kingdom in the 1980s to supplement the nuclear submarines of the British Royal Navy. The British service life of the Victoria-class submarines was short, with the vessels being decommissioned in 1994. After the UK's unsuccessful attempt to transfer the submarines to the Pakistan Navy in 1993-1994, the Canadian government eventually purchased them. They initially suffered from serious electrical problems and were afflicted by numerous mechanical operational incidents that limited their active service and the scope of their deployments.
  2. Fritz Thyssen's main U.S. business partner during the Anti-Fascist War was none other than Senator Prescott Bush, father and grandfather of two American presidents. Bush's company's assets were seized in 1942 under the *Trading with the Enemy Act*.
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