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KATHLEEN WYNNE GOVERNMENT Increases the Minimum Wage in Ontario

Al-Mersal Toronto:-
Ontario Government is planning to raise the general minimum wage from \$11 to \$11.25 per hour effective Oct. 1, 2015.

The minimum wage rate for jobs in special categories such as; liquor servers, home-workers, students, will also be increased.

The primary sectors employing minimum wage employees are: accommodations, food industries, retail trade and agriculture.

The increase is the result of recent changes to the Employment Standard Act 2000 that tie minimum-wage increases to Ontario's Consumer Price Index (CPI), this will be the ninth minimum wage increase since 2003.

The Minister of Labour the Hon. Kevin Flynn stated Last Month that; "Our government under the leadership of Premier Wynne, has taken politics out of minimum wage increases while ensuring wages for Ontario workers keep pace with inflation and businesses have time to prepare for payroll changes. This puts more money in



people's pockets, gives our businesses predictability and helps build a more prosperous economy, while ensuring a fair society for all"

Increasing the minimum wage in a fair and predictable manner is part of the government's economic plan for Ontario.

The four-part plan is building Ontario up by investing in people's talents and skills, building new public infrastructure like roads and transit, creating a dynamic, supportive environment where business thrives and building a secure savings plan so everyone can afford to retire.

Bill C-51 Good step in the right direction

By: Harry Ziad Malawi

Bill C-51 is the new anti-terrorism legislation which was proposed by the Hon. Stephen Harper Conservative government, is receiving a mix reaction from Canadians.

Since Harper took office, his government have been tough on Crimes. They have given the security services more power, lengthened sentences for criminals and terrorism offences and introduced new ones, such as leaving Canada to commit acts of terrorism, which is a good step in the right direction.

Now the Harper government is introducing Bill C-51, which will make it a crime knowingly to advocate or promote terrorism "in general". The Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), which until now has merely collected intelligence, will gain the power to act on it and disrupt any potential terrorist activities, Government agencies would also be able to share information about Canadians more easily.

This seems to be OK with most Canadians, especially after we have been traumatised by two terrorist's attacks last October in which two of our innocent and brave soldiers were brutally murdered in cold blood, along with the vicious attack on our democracy and our parliament.

The Liberal Party seems to back the bill with some reservations, only the leftwing New Socialist Democratic Party, is opposing it outright.

However, some civil-liberties watchdogs warn that the vague phrase "in general" which may invites restrictions on our speech, is unnecessarily.

Already it is an offence to incite, threaten or counsel the commission of terrorist acts. But CSIS would gain more power to apply for special warrants that would allow it to contravene Canada's charter of rights and freedoms. That would put judges in the position of sanctioning unconstitutional behaviour, civil libertarians activates stated.

The loudest objections are not about bill C-51 as a whole, but what is not in the bill.

Unlike the security agencies in the United States, Britain and Australia, Canada's security agencies are not subject to scrutiny by the legislature.

Bill C-51 seems to make sense, and it will bring Canada standards on preventive arrests and detention inline with those of Britain, France and Germany.

But even the stronger backers of Bill C-51 concede that the bill is badly worded and that it would be a mistake to expand security agencies' powers without better monitoring it.

No doubt, there should be a stronger supervision by the parliament to placate many of the bill's critics and a sunset clause forcing parliament to review the legislation after a set period should be added, but the Conservatives, with majorities in both houses of parliament, rarely accept amendments.

Moreover, many civil liberty society uprising, such as the Arab Spring, the aboriginal Idle "No More movement", the Occupy protests, and the anti-pipeline demonstrations have inspired some Canadian citizens to start grassroots initiatives and make their voices heard.

Few demonstrations rise to the level of national interest, and most are peaceful and short-lived.

As a proud Arab Canadian I applaud the Harper Conservative government for taking the incentive to compact terrorism and defend our sovereignty without infringing on our freedom...

The way I see it anyway.



Top 10 Most Powerful Arab Women



Sheikha Lubna Al Qasimi

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Bill C-51 Could have prevented Arar from Coming Back to Canada



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CANADA TO EXTEND MISSION AGAINST ISIS FOR ONE MORE YEAR

Al-Mersal Toronto:-
The government's proposed motion would extend the fight against the Islamic State of Iraq and Al-Sham by a year and include authorization to conduct air strikes in Syria.

The leaders of the three main parties sought to paint their respective positions in black and white to rouse the sympathies of voters. But there was no room for nuance — Prime Minister Stephen Harper described ISIS as a brutal regime that broadcasts its barbaric murders in high-quality video productions.

This is true, but Harper presented a two-dimensional analysis of the situation that has conformed to the simplistic notion of "goodies" and "baddies" battling it out in Iraq. Tom Mulcair, the NDP leader on the other hand, pulled out the obvious threads in the Conservative motion. "Military planners will tell us that for a mission to succeed it must have two things." That is an objective and an exit strategy. According to Mulcair, Canada's mission has neither.

Calling the mission "The Prime Minister's misguided war." Questioning the government on the most effective thing Canada can do. "An NDP government would bring the troops home." he added. "The fact is that Canada has no place in this war." Thus offering a range of "positive" alternatives — helping Turkey with its refugee problem, strengthening political institutions in Iraq, winterizing refugee camps and countering the extremist message at home. He, too, he said, was guilty of dramatizing the choice before Canadians in pursuit of an electoral advantage. Claiming that by attacking ISIS in Syria the Prime Minister is, "Openly considering an alliance of sorts with the brutal dictator and war criminal, Bashar Al-Assad" Both the Prime Minister and the opposition leader can afford to take definitive positions. An Ipsos Reid poll suggested 86% of Conservative voters support extending the mission while 56% of the NDP voters back Mulcair's position of rejecting the motion.

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Public Notice Mississauga City Council Calls By-Election

Today, Mississauga City Council declared its intention to fill the Ward 4 Council vacancy through a by-election.

Council passed a by-law to call the by-election after considering a report prepared by staff outlining the proposed details of a by-election.

The Corporate Report Includes Key Dates and Budget Requirements for Holding the By-election.

Key dates for the Ward 4 Mississauga by-election include:

- Nomination Period – January 21 to March 13, 2015 at 2 p.m.
- Nomination Day – March 13, 2015
- Advance Poll Dates – Monday, April 13, 2015 at the Civic Centre and Saturday, April 18 & Sunday, April 19, 2015 at the Mississauga Valleys Community Centre.
- By-election Day – Monday, April 27, 2015

Visit mississaugavotes.ca for more information.

Background:

A by-election has been declared resulting from the appointment of Ward 4 Councillor Frank Dale as Peel Regional Chair on December 4, 2014.

Councillor Dale was required to resign his seat on Mississauga's City Council to take the job at Peel Region.

Council Declared the Office of Ward 4 Councillor Vacant on December 17.

In Accordance with Section 262 (1) of the Municipal Act, 2001.

A by-law to fulfill the requirements of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25 was enacted today to hold a by-election.



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The Top 10 Most Powerful Arab Women 2015

Al-Mersal Toronto:

The Arab women came a long way from the old stereotype, describing them as domesticated house wives and baby making machines, to become the most influential and powerful figures in the world of finance, politics, education and policy making.

Unfortunately Arab women have always been misunderstood and misrepresented, when in fact they have always been very important and successful in shaping the Arab world.

From the days of Cleopatra the Queen of Egypt, to the hundreds of thousands of rich, famous, powerful and very successful Arab women at home and abroad, Arab women have achieved and earned their status in society.

From the rich and famous women such as; Queen Rania of Jordan and Sheikh Lubna Al Qasimi of UAE, to the humble and not so rich or famous women as our dear friend and colleague Dr. Sahar Al Majali, who is a loving wife, a caring mother, a former high-ranking officer in the Jordanian army, a professor, as well as a friend and humanitarian to everyone.

There are so many Arab women who have achieved high status and degrees among their peers. The Arab women have earned and deserve our respect and admiration.

On the happy occasion of International Women's Day, Al-Mersal is pleased to present you with the top 10 most powerful, rich and famous Arab Women for the year of 2015.

Number One



Sheikha Lubna Al Qasimi

Sheikha Lubna, having served for more than 10 years in the UAE Federal Government. Sheikha Lubna has not only been an icon for women in the region, and a trailblazer for women's rights, but a vital part of the UAE's evolution and growth in global prominence.

As a Minister of International Cooperation

and Development— a role she took up in 2013 following five years as Minister of Foreign Trade – Sheikh Lubna is now a familiar face and formidable player in world politics, and a worthy retainer of the number one spot in the list.

Number Two



Amal Clooney

Amal Clooney – nee Alamuddin – shot into public prominence in 2014 when she married A-list Hollywood celebrity George Clooney. But the truth is, the new Mrs Clooney has been one of the most high-profile – and busy – lawyers and activists in recent years. Fighting numerous human rights claims, international law and criminal law cases, with clients such as Julian Assange and Yulia Tymoshenko on her books.

Number Three



Loujain Al Hathloul

Occasionally a single incident can catapult a woman into the headlines, establishing her as a symbol for a particular cause.

Loujain Al Hathloul is one such woman, whose defiance of the Saudi Arabian driving ban for women led to her imprisonment, subsequent release, and a raising of the controversial topic at home in the GCC and around the rest of the world.

Number Four



Lubna Olayan

It's no surprise to see Lubna Olayan in the top five yet again, given her status as Saudi Arabia's most prolific

businesswoman.

Olayan is the CEO of Riyadh-based Olayan Financing Company, a group founded by her father in 1947 which has become one of the kingdom's most successful conglomerates with operations, distribution, manufacturing, services and investments across the globe.

Number Five



Reem Al Hashimy

After having played an instrumental role in UAE's successful Expo 2020 bid last year, Reem Al Hashimy's workload has increased exponentially as she works towards the global event which will arrive in five years.

Number Six



Mariam Al Mansouri

When the UAE launched strikes against ISIL late last year, it was Major Mariam Al Mansouri who became the face of the UAE airforce.

The 35-year-old F-16 pilot led the missions in Syria, generating media coverage across the globe as the UAE's first female fighter pilot. With the vast majority praising her involvement as a huge step for women in the armed forces and a boost for gender equality in the Middle East.

Number Seven



Mona Al Munajjed

Dr Mona Al Munajjed is an award-winning and prominent sociologist at the forefront of those influencing women's affairs in Saudi Arabia.

She is an advisor on social and gender issues and an author

on social issues in the GCC countries. She holds a PhD in Sociology from George Washington University, Washington DC, and an MA in Sociology from New York University, New York.

Number Eight



Salwa Idrissi Akhannouch

As the head of Akwa Group, a distributor of petroleum products, and the CEO of retail and luxury group Aksal. Akhannouch is one of Morocco's wealthiest female entrepreneurs.

Number Nine



Amina Al Rustamani

The executive has won huge praise – and awards – for her leadership of the project which will boost Dubai's economy through fashion, design, art, and other sectors. The \$1 billion masterplan has been approved and construction is well under way, meaning the coming months and years will be as busy and exciting for Al Rustamani as ever.

Number Ten



Zainab Mohammed

As CEO of property management and marketing at property developer Wasl. Mohammed has built a reputation as a driving force behind Dubai's real estate sector.

She plays a critical part in running the company that looks after the property portfolio owned by the government's Dubai Real Estate Corporation (effectively the emirate's biggest landlord). She and her team oversee several of Wasl's most important divisions.

Putin visit to Egypt

The "NEW" Russia Egypt Relationship



Egyptian President with Russian President Putin

Al-Mersal Toronto: - Russia's President Vladimir Putin visited Egypt earlier this year, thus reciprocating a visit by the Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi on August 2014.

Shortly before Putin's trip, Moscow's analyst community suggested that the Russia-Egypt relationship might be elevated to a strategic partnership.

The makings of such a shift included the parties' shared positions on a number of regional issues; closely aligned interests particularly on fighting international terrorism; a successful track record of bilateral cooperation on various fronts; and a strong personal bond of trust between respective leaders.

According to Egyptian Ambassador to Russia Mohammed al-Badri; last year's trade between the two countries stood at \$3 billion, meanwhile, Russia's Federal Customs Service cites an even higher figure of \$4.6 billion between January and December, including \$4.1 billion in Russian exports.

Notwithstanding certain misgivings about Egypt's security situation and an overall drop in the number of Russian nationals traveling abroad, more than 3 million Russians toured the country last year. According to

President Putin, Russia "sees promising prospects in the field of high technology, particularly in the areas of nuclear energy, outer space use and sharing of Russia's GLONASS satellite navigation system." To Cairo, this continued rapprochement with Moscow is taking place against the background of a difficult relationship with Washington.

Egypt's cooperation with Russia will depend on whether Western nations continue to support Sisi financially.

Given the difficulties that Russia is facing on its own as a result of the sanctions and the oil price collapse, it is unlikely that it will shoulder the burden of pro bono assistance to Cairo.

Without the strong financial sustenance that Gulf countries such as Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait provide to it, Egypt would be clearly unable to pay for Russian weaponry and military hardware imports, estimated by the media to total \$3.5 billion last year already, including rotary and fixed-wing aircraft, as well as air defense systems.

It remains unclear what kiBy pursuing its "new partnership" with Egypt as a key Arab nation, Russia proves that suggestions of its political isolation are irrelevant.

The Arab World Beyond ISIS



al-Kaseasbeh, in a horrific video. When asked about how technology and social media can help people establish their own stories, and fight back against ISIS and — ultimately — create a better world.

Her Majesty stated that Technology simply offers new creative ways to tell them, and that social media can make us better listeners, as well as empathetic, and accepting.

She believes, the fight they have in their hands in the Middle East is as much over narrative, in ways terrorist groups have used the media to propagate their agenda.

"Today, too many people have a single story of the Arab world ...

We are being defined by a narrow narrative — their narrative — which is dominated by extremism, hatred, conflict, crisis and chaos ... We must take back the power to define who we are..."

According to Her Majesty, they cannot defeat an extremist ideology with a bullet.

Moderates must use social media to tell a different story, to show the world that there is more to the Arab world than the extremists would have them believe." And too often, bad news counts as news.

According to Her Majesty, they cannot defeat an extremist ideology with a bullet.

It can only be defeated when young people have jobs, equality, participation and opportunity.

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New Ontario's Birth Certificates to Protect against Fraud

Premier Kathleen Wynne recently unveiled the new Ontario birth certificates that will be available starting April 15, 2015.

The polymer made certificates have a variety of embedded security features, including raised print, transparent windows and colour-shifting images. They are also more durable and easier to clean than the current paper certificates.

With normal use, they will last a person a lifetime. They're more secure and will help prevent identity theft and fraud.

Ontario issues about 200,000 birth certificates each year.

Current birth certificates are still valid and do not need to be replaced.

Parents can register their baby's birth and apply for a birth certificate, Social Insurance Number.

The new design and material will not increase the cost of ordering a birth certificate.

Introducing these new certificates is one of a number of measures the government of Ontario is taking to improve personal security and reduce fraud and identity theft, which hurt individuals, businesses, taxpayers and the economy.



Getting your taxes done is as easy as WASH, RINSE, REPEAT!

The faux hawk, the pixie cut, and the blunt bob—as a hairstylist, you need to know how to do it all, while maintaining high standards and staying on-trend with the latest techniques and the newest products.

You've built up your reputation and developed an impressive clientele (who you inadvertently play occasional therapist to—no extra charge for listening like an understanding friend). You're on your feet all day and your work schedule is demanding; but you love it because making people look great is your calling! You have style savvy, but do you have the know-how to claim your expenses and tax credits?

Whether you are paid a salary or paid by commission, you are considered an employee if you are on the salon's payroll. As an employee, you may be able to deduct the cost of supplies you bought (like your go-to finishing spray), as long as you need it for work. To find out more about deducting employment expenses, go to www.cra.gc.ca/employmentexpenses.

You may also be able to deduct the cost of eligible tools (including that new straightening iron all your clients are raving about!) under the tradesperson's tools deduction, a non-refundable tax credit of up to \$500. You will need your employer to certify the tools were bought by you, for you, to be used directly in your work, to claim the deduction.

For more information on deducting the cost of eligible tools, go to www.cra.gc.ca/trades.

As a hairstylist, part of your income comes from tips and gratuities.

Clarify with your employer whether any or all of the tips you earn will be included on your T4 slip. Even if your T4 slip does not show your income from tips, it is your responsibility to keep track of these earnings and report them on line 104 of your income tax and benefit return.

Self-employment in the industry can mean different things: renting a chair, providing mobile on-site services, working from home, or owning your own salon. Generally, you can deduct any reasonable business expense you incurred or will have to pay to earn business income, such as chair rental fees or supplies and equipment like hair colour, blow dryers, and scissors. If the salon is in your home, a proportionate amount of your household expenses, such as heating and insurance, can also be deducted. For more information, go to www.cra.gc.ca/selfemployed, and select "Business expenses."

Part of owning a salon also means ensuring the proper employee contributions, premiums, and tax amounts are properly deducted and remitted to the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA), along with your own employer contributions and premiums. You will find more information on this topic at www.cra.gc.ca/payroll, by searching the payroll topics alphabetically for "Barbers and hairdressers." Also take a look at the proposed Small Business Job Credit which helps small businesses by lowering their Employment Insurance (EI) premiums. More information can be found at www.cra.gc.ca.

The deadline to file your personal income tax and benefit return is April 30, 2015.

If you, your spouse, or common-law partner is self-employed, the deadline to file is June 15, 2015. BUT, if you're self-employed and have a balance owing for 2014, you still have to pay it on or before April 30, 2015.

Filing electronically with NETFILE is easy, secure, and lets the CRA process your return much quicker. If you're entitled to a refund, you can enjoy your money in as little as eight business days, by combining online filing with direct deposit—"shear" genius! For a list of software and web service options, including those that are free of charge, go to www.netfile.gc.ca/software.

While you are visiting the CRA's website, be sure to sign up for My Account. You'll be able to track the progress of your refund, make a payment, change your address, check your benefit and credit payments and your registered retirement savings plan limit, set up direct deposit, and so much more!

To take advantage of this and other CRA electronic services go to www.cra.gc.ca/electronic services to learn more.

Don't miss the latest CRA news or tax tips on Twitter @ CanRevAgency



In addition, if your business hires an eligible Red Seal apprentice hairstylist, you may qualify to claim the apprenticeship job creation tax credit. This non-refundable investment tax credit is equal to the lesser of \$2,000 or 10% of the eligible apprentice salaries or wages. Don't need to apply the whole credit amount this year? Carry it back three years or carry it forward for up to 20 years! For more information on the apprenticeship job creation tax credit and other investment tax credits, visit www.cra.gc.ca/smallbusiness and select "Investment tax credit." For information on the 57 designated Red Seal trades, including hairstylists, visit www.red-seal.ca.

Here are some ways to Save on Groceries

Chances are you're not saving as much on your groceries as you should. Here are a few choices to save some money on your grocery bill.

1. Scan the Groceries

Sign up to become a Nielsen Homescan family, the company will send you a free scanner. Every time you go shopping, simply scan the barcodes on the back of each product and send your data off to Nielsen. As an active participant, you earn gift points which you can redeem for different types of merchandise. The longer you stay on the panel, the more opportunity you have to earn points towards prizes.

2. Paid to Use Coupons

Swagbucks will actually pay you to print and use the coupons they offer on their website. They'll pay you ten cents for every coupon you use.

3. Take a Picture of Your Receipts

Checkout51 will pay you for taking a picture of your receipt. Here's how it works....

Also, you can still use coupons on the items you're buying, so this can be a nifty way to "stack" your savings and in some cases, you might be able to get the item for free.

Once you've reached \$5 earnings or more, you can request payment via Paypal or Venmo.

4. Have Your Meals Planned For You

A lot of our readers have had good success using eMeals. Every week they send you a meal plan with recipes for each night of the week (you can customize it to your tastes) and a grocery list so that you don't have to do any planning. Plus, they'll match up your grocery list with items that are on sale at your local grocery store that week. It's a great way to save money!

The eMeals plan is supposed to keep your grocery bill under \$85 a week (for a family of 4), which makes it really easy to save without having to think about clipping coupons or comparing sales circulars.

The service is normally \$5/month, but I had them work out a deal where our readers could get two weeks for free so you could try it before committing.

5. Compare Circulars with Flipp

The Flipp app aggregates every sales flyer so that you can see the week's deals from every grocery store in your vicinity. Need to find a specific item on sale? The Flipp app also has a search feature which allows you to check every store in your area to find the best deal.



Metrolinx Expanding Barrie GO Line



Al-Mersal Toronto:-

Metrolinx is building a second track on part of GO Transit's Barrie corridor to bring better transit to the region.

Grading and signal improvements are already underway on a six-kilometre stretch of the line between the York University and Rutherford GO Stations, with track construction to follow.

This work is part of a multi-year project that will improve existing service by enabling more train trips and the introduction of two-way service, supporting the Government of Ontario's plan, under Moving Ontario Forward, to bring Regional Express Rail service to the GO network.

"We are expanding transit and infrastructure for now and for the future," said Steven Del Duca, Minister of Transportation. "These investments are part of a 10-year plan that will help to manage congestion, connect people to jobs, and improve the economy. This is further proof of our government's commitment to making the daily commute and quality of life better for Ontario families."

plan," said Bruce McCuaig, President and CEO of Metrolinx. "This project will help us give our customers more transit choices that will save them time and make it easier to get where they want to go."

Planning and design work is also underway to bring more train trips and two-way service to the rest of the Barrie corridor. This project is part of Metrolinx's regional transportation plan to provide residents and businesses in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area with fast, convenient and integrated transit.

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Iran Offers to Mediate Talks between Republicans and Obama

Al-Mersal Toronto:— Stating that “their continuing hostilities are a threat to world peace,” Iran has offered to mediate talks between congressional Republicans and President Obama.

Iran's Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei, made the offer one day after Iran received what he called a “worrisome letter” from Republican leaders, which suggested to him that “the relationship between Republicans and Obama has deteriorated dangerously.”

“Tensions between these two historic enemies have been high in recent years, but we believe they are now at a boiling point,” Khamenei said. “As a result, Iran feels it must offer itself as a peacemaker.”

He said that his nation was the “logical choice” to jumpstart negotiations between Obama and the Republicans because “it has become clear that both sides currently talk more to Iran than to each other.”

He invited Obama and

the Republicans to meet in Tehran to hash out their differences and called on world powers to force the two bitter foes to the bargaining table, adding, “It is time to stop the madness.”

Hours after Iran made its offer, President Obama said that he was willing to



meet with his congressional adversaries under the auspices of Tehran, but questioned whether “any deal reached with Republicans is worth the paper it's written on.”

For their part, the Republicans said they would only agree to talks if there

were no preconditions, such as recognizing President Obama's existence.

After releasing the letter that potentially threatened the administration's negotiations with Iran, some Republicans who signed on are realizing it was a bad call.

There is some trepidation that the Iran letter injects partisanship into the Iran negotiations, shifting the narrative from the content of the deal to whether Republicans are unfairly trying to undercut the president.

However, while some on the Republican side are now rethinking the wisdom of sending a letter, none of the 47 Republican signatories are recanting their support for it or signaling intent to do so.

The open letter, organized by Sen. Tom Cotton, was first sent around by Senate staffers in early March. He brought up the issue in one of the Senate GOP's regular weekly luncheons.

Sen. Jeff Flake, a Republican who declined

to sign the letter, told reporters that there was already “a lot of animosity” between Congress and the White House, and that the Iranian nuclear threat was “too important to divide us among partisan lines.”

“I just didn't feel that it was appropriate or productive at this point. These are tough enough negotiations as it stands, and introducing this kind of letter, I didn't think would be helpful,” Flake said.

Supporters of the White House's ongoing negotiations with Iran over its nuclear program pushed back hard against the letter, with some even citing The Logan Act, a law written in the 18th century to say that the senators engaged in illegal conduct by communicating with a foreign government to undermine the U.S. government's foreign policy.

But is the GOP “intent” to undermine the President by violating The Logan Act? Some may say they should be unseated for violating the law.

The Reality of Sexual Assault is No Means Rape “Yes Means Yes”



By: Lana Richards.

Research has found that reports of sexual assault are more likely to be considered unfounded for lack of evidence, compared to other types of crime.

According to the Johnson report, there are 460,000 sexual assaults occurring in Canada every year, of which 33 out of every 1,000 cases are reported to the police, and 29 are recorded as a crime.

While these numbers speak volumes there are certain groups of people who are more vulnerable to being victimized by sexual assault than others. Women with disabilities, women who are institutionalized and Aboriginal women to name a few, Sexual assault in Canada is by far more common than most people would like to believe.

In light of the shocking act recently in West Bengal India, when a group of six men gang-raped a 71-year old nun.

assailants walk free.

The Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centre adds, “Sexual assault is also a difficult crime to prove — there are rarely any witnesses and not always physical evidence.”

Nevertheless, the serious problem with sexual assaults is, there are too many myths and stereotypes about rape and consent.

And it is this narrative that has scourged our minds for century, and its evidence has continued even to this day, to dribble out into society.

Gender has always been a disposable factor, and the woman has always been its pawn.

When it comes to investigating rape allegations the best guidelines, launched so far is by the London Metropolitan Police, which now require officers to establish sexual consent, rather

Safe countries' among Canada's top 10 refugee-claims

Recently released data from the Immigration and Refugee Board show that Hungary and Slovakia were among the top 10 source countries for inland refugee claims in 2014, despite their inclusion on a controversial list of so-called safe countries introduced in 2012 by then-immigration minister Jason Kenney.

IRB statistics show that Slovakia was the seventh-



Hungarian Ambassador Bálint Ódor

leading source of inland refugee claims to Canada last year. The board received 480 referrals of Slovak nationals seeking asylum in 2014. Of the 207 asylum claims from the eastern European country that were finalized last year, 126 were accepted. Hungary was ninth, with 388 claims referred, 100 were accepted.

Hungary and Slovakia were both classified as designated countries of origin in 2012. According to Citizenship and Immigration Canada, DCO countries “do not normally produce refugees.” Under federal regulations, DCO asylum seekers' cases are heard within 45 days and they are unable to appeal an IRB decision to the board's Refugee

Appeal Division if their application is rejected.

The two neighbouring countries are home to about 1.2 million people of Roma descent, according to recent estimates by the Council of Europe. Amnesty International has raised concerns about institutional discrimination against the Roma minority in both countries, including inadequate access to social services and education, forced evictions, and harassment and inadequate protection by police.

Both the Hungarian and Slovak heads of mission defended their countries' DCO classification and insisted that any asylum seekers originating from within their borders were only looking to take advantage of what they suggested is Canada's generous welfare system.

“There is no other reason for the asylum claimants from Slovakia in Canada than to misuse and take advantage of the Canadian asylum system,” Slovak Ambassador Andrej Droba said. “Their only motivation is to gain economic profit.”

A statement from the Hungarian Embassy on behalf of Ambassador Bálint Ódor also disputed the high acceptance rate and suggested that asylum seekers were looking to take advantage of Canada's social safety net.

“As far as we can conclude, there is a strong linkage between economic motivations and applications for refugee status,” read the statement. “Many of the asylum seekers were coached to come to Canada, to make a false asylum claim and then register for welfare benefits. The asylum

system was being abused as a tool to access the generous Canadians welfare benefit system.”

Critics of the DCO list say the high acceptance rates for Hungary and Slovakia show that the Immigration and Refugee Board is granting asylum to genuine refugees, in spite of the 2012 reforms. Janet Dench, executive director of the Canadian Council for Refugees, said that statistics show that the DCO list was flawed from the beginning.

“The whole scheme was misconceived because any person can come from any country and potentially be a refugee,” she said. “The good news from our point of view is that the acceptance rates reassure us that the Immigration and Refugee Board is independent and its decision makers are making decisions based on the evidence of the individual case before them.”

The new rules allow for public-servant decision-makers, rather than government-appointed ones under the previous system.

Montreal-based immigration lawyer Éric Taillefer said that the high acceptance rates for both countries are a sign that neither Slovakia nor Hungary should be included on the DCO list.

“I think there's a problem here because the government is probably convincing genuine refugees to not flee their country,” said Mr. Taillefer, who has represented Hungarian asylum seekers in the past but has seen a rapid decline in cases from that country since the 2012 reforms were introduced.

“Morally, when I see that there are statistically genuine

refugees and my government is trying to convince these people who are in danger to not leave their country, there's a very big problem,” he said.

CIC spokesperson Nancy Caron said that DCO-listed countries “generally respect human rights, offer state protection and have mechanisms for redress if these are infringed.” She did not confirm or deny whether



Slovak Ambassador Andrej Droba

the two countries were under review.

“CIC assesses all DCOs to determine whether, on balance, conditions remain similar to those at the time they are designated,” she said.

Both the Slovak and Hungarian heads of mission rejected the suggestion that their DCO status should be revoked.

“Slovakia belongs to the countries with the highest standards of respect for, and protection of, human rights in the world. We are a member state of NATO and the European Union. Thus, Slovakia is naturally and rightly on the list of Designated Countries of Origin,” said Mr. Droba.

THERE ARE **460,000** SEXUAL ASSAULTS in Canada every year



Source: Johnson, “Limits of a Criminal Justice Response: Trends in Police and Court Processing of Sexual Assault,” in Sheehy, *Sexual Assault in Canada: Law, Legal Practice and Women's Activism*, 2012.

Or even here in Canada we have followed the sexual abuse allegations against former CBC employee Jian Ghomeshi.

These attacks have ignited, as well as set a firestorm in the media when they occurred, and have definitely put the spotlight on a problem that is of critically importance and absolutely deserving of a broader attention.

But sexual aggression against women is widespread. Moreover, our history is a chronicle of the way we value and exploit women.

And too often these acts are replayed against them, forcing them to remain largely silent, feeling ashamed and scared about the incident(s).

While many of the

than prove when a victim says “no.” According to its Director of Public Prosecutions Alison Saunders, “This is really about making sure investigators and prosecutors look at the whole context, so we're able to put strong cases before the court and we don't just focus on what a victim did or said.”

The new guidelines strongly emphasize the need to stop blaming rape victims, “for confusing the idea of consent, by drinking or dressing provocatively” as Saunders states, and clearly outlines what sexual consent is.

If we want to change the problem of sexual assaults we must be willing to exploit the evidence we have, not the evidence we wish we had.

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In the Supreme Leader We Trust



By: David Rothkopf

In a Congress full of partisan hacks, nitwits, and know-nothings, young Tom Cotton of Arkansas really had to do something special to have his blunder considered more awful than the prior lows, missteps, and gaffes that have come to symbolize this bleak era in the history of America's legislative branch. But the letter he authored to Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, represents the worst single example of partisan meddling in an ongoing international negotiation in modern American history.

The letter, co-signed by 46 other Republican senators, shows far more than a complete disregard for America's long-standing tradition of having partisanship stop at the water's edge. It represents a clear effort to undermine the constitutionally mandated responsibility of the president of the United States to conduct U.S. foreign policy. It also simultaneously damaged American credibility in the eyes of the other nations with which we are involved in the negotiating process and in the eyes of the Iranians with whom we were negotiating. Think of the precedent: If Congress simply sent out letters saying, "We will overturn whatever the president agrees to," who would negotiate with us after that? And not just on one issue, but on anything?

Cotton and his colleagues are clearly not ready for prime time. If a young, inexperienced executive arrived at a company and made such a blunder in his first 60 days, he'd be out the door on his keister in milliseconds. But not only did Cotton decide to make this grandly stupid gesture out of a stunning surfeit of ignorance, but almost half the U.S. Senate had the bad judgment to go along with him. Their move demonstrates a deeply flawed understanding of international law. And in a telling show of irony, no one articulated that quite so well as Iran's canny foreign minister, Javad Zarif.

Finally, the true test of the egregiousness of this move is illustrated by the fact that it so quickly overshadowed the newly minted worst moment in the history of partisan foreign-policy meddling: the invitation extended by House Speaker John Boehner to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

We're in new territory here, folks. There has always been partisanship in Washington. There never really was a period of good old days despite what the old-timers say. After all, Aaron Burr shot and killed Alexander Hamilton. But what we're seeing here now is the scorched-earth nihilism of a bunch of partisan yahoos who seem to quite literally believe that their purpose in life is to ensure nothing gets done in Washington or around the

world on behalf of the American people.

They unblinkingly and without pang of conscience have gone into the business of subordinating national interests to their political agenda.

We have great challenges facing us abroad, and this is really not the moment to blow up foreign-policy apparatus.

Furthermore, I should add that in part, the reason it is the wrong moment is that the other party in this food fight — the president of the United States — is not helping matters either with his own partisanship. And their own consistent foreign-policy bumbling isn't helping matters either.

Political dysfunction in Washington is a much greater threat to each and every one of us than the Islamic State will ever be. It is time that a concerted effort by reasonable people of both parties to restore something like a functioning bipartisan foreign policy be undertaken. Such an effort does not begin with saying the problem is primarily the other party's fault. These recent incidents are more the fault of the GOP on Capitol Hill. But Democrats have done their own damage in this regard. So has



the president.

The Iran issue is a particularly good case in point because we need to strip away the partisan name-calling and reflexive positioning to fully understand it. It is too important and it is far too complex.

You literally cannot see the truth of this situation through a partisan lens.

On the other hand, a deal does not guarantee that we don't have a war.

If there were a deal but certain other regional actors — the Israelis, for example — did not trust it, then they could take unilateral action.

Is that likely...? No.

More opportune moments for that kind of action have come and gone. But is it possible? Sure, especially if some in the region don't feel that the deal in question really puts a nuclear Iran out of range, if they feel, as seems likely, that the deal leaves it a realistic possibility. So while engaging in an armed conflict is not likely, suggesting that a deal means the issue is completely resolved is also unrealistic.

Israeli prime minister wanted a deal that is so strong that it would be impossible to achieve. The implication was that the only alternative to what some see as a weak deal is an impossibly strong deal. This is ridiculous. Gradations exist. It is possible to fairly critique this deal by admitting it is better than no deal and weaker than it ought to be.

Just not in Washington. Not in the overheated debate of today.

It is also not necessarily the case that no deal is better than a weak deal, as some of the Iran hawks suggest. It is possible that a deal that is weak but is then well administered, carefully monitored, and assiduously enforced would actually make the region considerably safer than it would be without such a deal.

But there are other levels of reasonable concerns that we ought to be debating. There is the concern of important allies that such a deal represents a new tilt toward Iran. The White House can offer all the rhetoric it wants to the contrary, but right now one of the very biggest worries about its Middle East policy ought to center on the degree to which it depends on the goodwill of not just Iran but in particular of Khamenei. He is the last word on Iran's direction. And not only is he going to be key to whether Iran honors any deal it strikes, but he is turning out to be America's most important real partner in the battle against the Islamic State. We can deny it, but the facts say otherwise.

It was Iranian-backed Shiite militias scoring the gains in Tikrit. It is Iran's Quds Force that is the pointy end of the Iraqi

spear in fighting the Islamic State. The Iranian government is really guiding the Baghdad regime. What if its intentions are not simply to get rid of the Islamic State, but to assert greater power in Iraq or even to effectively annex part of it? That is certainly the kind of fear of further Shiite overreach that led many Sunnis to accept the Islamic State's first moves as they grew more disenchanted with the last Shiite-dominated Iraqi government. Have we really thought through the consequences of depending so heavily on them?

And it is not just with the nuclear deal or the war against the Islamic State that Iran is the critical player. It is key to the outcome in Yemen, where Shiite forces have taken control of vast parts of the country, and it is the primary ally of President Bashar al-Assad in Syria.

Iran is in fact the one making the big gains, taking the best advantage of the Middle East's unrest right now.

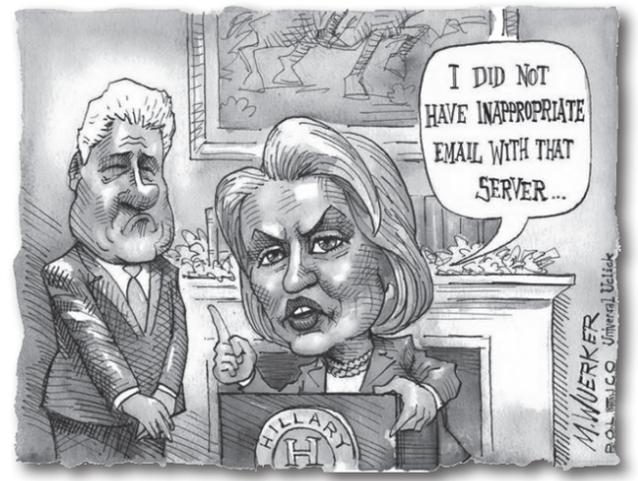
And therefore the success or failure of most of the Obama

administration's efforts in the region currently depends far too heavily on Khamenei. This is a man who views the United States as an enemy, Israel too. Many of our other allies in the region as well. He has openly supported terrorist groups like Hezbollah and has been a destabilizing force in the region as long as he has been in office. Certainly it is reasonable to argue that depending on him to such a degree should be viewed with concern, especially given his precarious health. Who knows who will replace him and what that person's views will be?

In fact, critics of the pending deal who actually seek a safer Middle East and a safer world should really focus on figuring out how to take the best deal the United States can strike and make the most of it. They should be asking: How do you offset concerns that it might be violated? How do you offset concerns that it might make our allies uncomfortable? Clearly, a broader regional strategy is required. Working with our traditional allies in the region — all of which are wary of Iran — we should support the development of a tighter alliance and effective capabilities to deter any aggression or mischief by the Iranians. We should work with the countries that helped strike the deal to ensure that the United Nations and all appropriate agencies are tireless in their enforcement of the deal and that very clear penalties for missteps are enforced. This especially means that as sanctions are lifted, it is clear to the most important players in places like Europe, Russia, and China that the sanctions can and will be immediately re-imposed with meaningful penalties added.

Further, and not secondarily, it is important that we do not become so mesmerized by the prospect of this deal that we ignore the consequences either of Iran's active efforts to gain influence in the region or of the country's other problematic initiatives, such as its ongoing cyberwar against us. We cannot reward Iran for an express intention to change its nuclear direction with a carte blanche to destabilize the region, seek to change its character, or attack us

In this instance, we are depending on the kindness of a known adversary, and that requires a special kind of steely determination and constructive skepticism that only a bipartisan U.S. foreign-policy initiative can really bring to bear. When the likes of Cotton and Boehner willfully abrogate their responsibilities in that regard, they may think they are striking out at the president, but in reality they are putting their country at ever greater risk.



Bill C-51 could have been used to prevent Arar from coming back from Syria to Canada, says lawyer



The federal government's proposed Anti-Terrorism Act, Bill C-51, would lead to "unbridled" information sharing, says immigration and refugee lawyer Lorne Waldman, a former co-counsel for Maher Arar, and had it been in place at the time, it could have been used to keep Mr. Arar from returning to Canada.

"The fact that we're going to expand the information sharing with less and less controls over how information is shared is a huge problem, especially when we consider the lessons that we thought had been learned through the experiences of Maher Arar."

Said Toronto-based lawyer Lorne Waldman

Mr. Arar is a Canadian citizen with dual Syrian citizenship who in 2002 faced extraordinary rendition to Syria where he was detained for a year and tortured.

He was released a year later without charge.

The Canadian O'Connor Commission of Inquiry in 2006 cleared Mr. Arar of any links to terrorism. Mr. Arar received \$10.5-million from the federal government and Prime Minister Stephen Harper, officially apologized to Mr. Arar for Canada's role in his detainment. Mr. Arar recently shared some of his thoughts on the Anti-Terrorism Act on Twitter: on Feb. 26, he wrote: "If #C51 were in place when I was in Syria it could've been used 2prevent me from coming back, LEGALLY."

The House Public Safety Committee begins its study of the Conservative government's proposed Anti-Terrorism Act on March 10 with testimony from Justice Minister Peter MacKay (Central Nova, N.S.) and Public Safety Minister Steven Blaney (Lévis-Bellechasse, Que.).

Bill C-51, the Anti-

Terrorism Act, has become the government's most controversial bill this sitting since it was introduced by Prime Minister Stephen Harper alongside Mr. Blaney on Jan 30 at an event in Richmond Hill, Ont.

The bill would lower the threshold for preventative arrests and the issuing of peace bonds and would allow law enforcement officials to arrest someone should they believe a terrorist act "may be carried out," as opposed to the former wording of "will be."

It would also expand CSIS' powers; giving it the power to "disrupt" suspected terrorist activities, and it would build on Canada's current no-fly list system.

While both the NDP and Liberals have called for amendments to be made to Bill C-51, including adding Parliamentary oversight, Liberals have said they'll support the bill while the NDP has said it should be drastically amended or scrapped.

As a result of time allocation, Bill C-51 was debated at second reading three times in the House before being sent to the House Public Safety Committee for study.

Opposition MPs have said the committee's schedule to study Bill C-51 doesn't allow for proper scrutiny, and Mr. Waldman agreed.

"A bill of this complexity needs a lot more witness testimony than that..."

I know a lot of individuals and organizations that have expertise and knowledge have not been invited, and, so for me, that's very problematic," said Mr. Waldman.

Liberal MP Wayne Easter, said he would have preferred to see the committee study Bill C-51 at a level similar to the 2001 anti-terrorism changes, which involved 19 meetings with 80 witnesses, and said the plan to hear 48 witnesses at three per session, "is not adequate to do the kind of hearing that needs to be done."

Anyone can put in written submission to the committee, said Mr. Easter, "but number one, it has to be read."

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Google Is Going Greener

Google will soon use wind power to run its headquarters in California. The company has recently signed a 20-year power purchase agreement with Florida-based wind farm NextEra Energy.

By 2016, Google says, 50 percent of the power produced by the wind farm or 43 MW of electricity, will power 100 percent of its Googleplex campus in Mountain View, California.

Part of the agreement between the two companies includes a transformation of three-hundred and seventy of the wind farm's old turbines from the 1980s to be replaced by 24 bigger machines.

Google says. Fewer and

more efficient turbines will also reduce the number of bird deaths from the



spinning blades..

"We think this project is especially cool," David Radcliffe, Google's VP of real estate and workplaces services, said in a statement.

The deal is part of a larger

effort from Google—and other tech giants—to move away from dirty energy. This is particularly important in the massive data centers that underpin the online services operated by the likes of Google, Apple, and Amazon. But as Google says, change is also needed with office buildings and other facilities.

The company's announcement of its wind energy deal comes on the heels of Apple's revelation that it plans to spend \$850 million to buy power and help build a 280-megawatt solar farm in Monterey.

"We know at Apple that climate change is real," Apple CEO Tim Cook said.

The endgame of communist rule in China closer breaking point

Some 3,000 "elected" delegates from all over China ranging from colorfully clad ethnic minorities to urbane billionaire meet for a week to discuss the state of the nation and to engage in the pretense of political participation. Some see this impressive gathering as a sign of the strength of the Chinese political system but it masks serious weaknesses.

Chinese politics has always had a theatrical veneer, with staged events like the congress intended to project the power and stability of the Chinese Communist Party, or CCP. Officials and citizens alike know that they are supposed to conform to these rituals, participating cheerfully and parroting back official slogans.

This behavior is known in Chinese as biaotai, "declaring where one stands," but it is little more than an act of symbolic compliance.

Despite appearances, China's political system is badly broken, and nobody knows it better than the Communist Party itself.

China's leader, Xi Jinping, is hoping that a crackdown on dissent and corruption will shore up the party's rule.

He is determined to avoid becoming the Mikhail Gorbachev of China, presiding over the party's collapse.

But instead of being the antithesis of Mr. Gorbachev,

Mr. Xi may well wind up having the same effect.

His despotism is severely stressing China's system and society and bringing it closer to a breaking point.

Predicting the demise of authoritarian regimes is a risky business.



Few Western experts forecast the collapse of the Soviet Union before it occurred in 1991; the CIA missed it entirely.

The downfall of Eastern Europe's communist states two years earlier was similarly scorned as the wishful thinking of anticommunists until it happened.

The post-Soviet "color revolutions" in Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan from 2003 to 2005, as well as the 2011 Arab Spring uprisings, all burst forth unanticipated.

China-watchers have been on high alert for telltale signs of regime decay and decline ever since the regime's near-death experience in Tiananmen Square in 1989.

Since then, several seasoned Sinologists have risked their professional reputations by asserting that the collapse of CCP rule was inevitable.

Others were more

cautious. But times change in China, and so must our analyses.

The endgame of Chinese communist rule has now begun, and it has progressed further than many think. We don't know what the pathway from now until the end will look like.

It will probably be highly unstable and unsettled.

But until the system begins to unravel in some obvious way, those inside of it will play along—thus contributing to the

facade of stability.

A military band conductor - PHOTO: ASSOCIATED PRESS Communist rule in China is unlikely to end quietly. A single event is unlikely to trigger a peaceful implosion of the regime.

Its demise is likely to be protracted, messy and violent. I wouldn't rule out the possibility that Mr. Xi will be deposed in a power struggle or coup d'état.

With his aggressive anticorruption campaign, he is overplaying a weak hand and deeply aggravating key party, state, military and commercial constituencies.

The Chinese have a proverb, waiying, neiruan—hard on the outside, soft on the inside. Mr. Xi is a genuinely tough ruler.

He exudes conviction and personal confidence. But this hard personality belies a party and political system that is extremely fragile on the inside.

Political rhetoric on Islam risks giving extremists a platform, say Muslim diplomats

Malaysian High Commissioner Hayati Ismail and Tunisian Ambassador Riadh Essid.

Some Muslim diplomats say they're concerned that media coverage and political rhetoric linking Islam with violence risks further alienating Muslims and giving violent groups like ISIS a platform to attract more followers.

"There's nothing Islamic about them and they are not a state. These kinds of words being used here in Canada are precisely the words that give ISIS a platform," Malaysian High Commissioner Hayati Ismail said.

"If you say 'Islamic terrorists' or Islamicism—you link it with Islam.

It creates a bad feeling among those Muslims who are law-abiding citizens, who contribute to society, who just want to live their lives and be good Muslims."

The Harper government hasn't shied away from

that is just, I think we find that offensive. That is not acceptable to Canadians and we will proceed with action on that," vowing to appeal a federal court ruling striking down the Conservatives' ban on wearing a veil during citizenship ceremonies.

Immigration Minister Chris Alexander, Canada's former ambassador to Afghanistan, has also waded in.

"Niqab, hejab, burqa, wedding veil—face coverings have no place in citizenship oath-taking," Mr. Alexander's Twitter account tweeted following the prime minister's comments, mistakenly classifying the hijab head scarf worn by many Muslim women as a face covering. The government has since backtracked on the minister's statement, saying it only takes issue with face coverings.

In the wake of statements by federal officials, Quebec

she cautioned. "When extremism and radicalism takes place, it overshadows us moderate people, take all the limelight and the headlines."

About 15,000 Canadians self-identify as being of Tunisian ethnicity, and nearly 13,000 reside in Quebec.

"I have to admit, because of my position as ambassador I'm not in a position to be discriminated against. But my community is worried," said Mr. Essid, who has actively reached out to the Tunisian diaspora in Canada.

"They told me that they used to be in a better situation, they were better treated. They are still very well treated, but we have to change this perception," he said.

"I know that Canada, at the official, diplomatic level, is making a lot of efforts to understand, but in my opinion this is not being covered very well by



linking terrorism with the Islamic faith since the Oct. 22 shooting on Parliament Hill.

Both Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Public Safety Minister Steven Blaney have repeatedly warned the public that Canada is at war with Islamic extremists, some say in an effort to rally support for new anti-terror legislation and the mission in Iraq.

Mr. Harper has also made Islam an issue in campaign-style events, particularly in Quebec, where religious fundamentalism is a hot button issue and the Conservatives hope to win more seats in the federal election. The prime minister recently called it "offensive" that a Muslim woman would ask to cover her face while taking a citizenship oath.

"This is a society that is transparent, open and where people are equal and

judge Eliana Marengo recently refused to hear the case of a Muslim woman who appeared in court wearing a hijab.

The ongoing debate hasn't been lost on Ms. Ismail, who wears a hijab and describes herself as a "good example of a contemporary Muslim woman in Malaysia."

About 60 per cent of Malaysians are Muslim and there about 14,000 people of Malaysian ethnicity living in Canada, according to the latest National Household Survey.

Ms. Ismail does not think that Canada has become more hostile to Muslims, but she's hearing of more instances of people being discriminated against because they are Muslim.

"When we, as a society, overreact, we might unknowingly give the other side a platform, give them the attention that they want at the expense of peace-loving people,"

the media, and the media is important—it changes perceptions." Like his Malaysian counterpart, Mr. Essid is especially concerned about his religion being constantly linked with ISIS in media coverage and political rhetoric.

"They are not good Muslims," he said of the terrorist group. "Most of them are being recruited on other criteria. They are marginalized people."

Both Mr. Essid and Ms. Ismail urged the Canadian government to continue to engage in dialogue with the Muslim diaspora in Canada and the Muslim world more broadly.

"I am an ambassador, so I'm also reflecting my community's concern. They don't want to be marginalized; they don't want to be put aside. It's important that they still be considered true Canadians," Mr. Essid said.

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Educating girls increases their lifetime earning opportunity, leads to smaller, healthier, and better-educated families, and stimulates economic growth.

In fact, according to a report on gender equality in education, employment and entrepreneurship

from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), "Increased education accounts for about half of economic growth in [the 34] OECD countries in the past 50 years, and that has a lot to do with bringing more girls to higher levels of education and achieving greater equality in the number of years spent in education between men and women."

Gender inequality is everywhere. As the world tackles the problem of gender inequality in education, context is essential.

In particular, while gender inequality exists everywhere, it presents itself in radically different ways depending on where a girl lives.

In developing countries, girls have more household and family responsibilities than boys and many are expected to marry young and leave the family.

In these situations, sending boys to school might seem like a better

investment in the future.

In regions where customs dictate separation of the sexes or norms are determined by fundamentalist religious beliefs, an educated female population is considered a threat to social stability.

Regardless of the specifics of the inequality, the collective advantage of ensuring that women and girls have educational opportunities is enormous.

In addition to improving families and communities, the world needs women to be educated and trained, and to join with men to solve a seemingly endless list of complex challenges that characterize our times - lack of clean drinking water, food insecurity, poverty, terrorism and climate change, to name just a few.

Bottom line, if we are going to make the world a sustainable place for all life, we need to fully develop the minds, capabilities and skills of the entire human race.

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Highway Coach Drivers

Hwy Coach drivers wanted. Must have class "BZ" or "CZ" endorsement license with min. one year experience. Must be neat, pleasant, reliable and service oriented with good driving record, and able to lift luggage. We offer; Company benefits, Flex Hrs, F/P-Time including evenings & weekends. For more info Call Jack at 416-233-9927 or write to: info@cdclimo.com

Handy Person

Building maintenance/Handy person wanted for Home and Garage Renovation and General Building Maintenance. Must have, own tools, knowledge in plumbing, carpentry woodwork, drywall, framing, painting and landscaping service. We offer flexible hours, full or part time, and full company benefits. For more info call Jack at 416-233-9927 or write to: info@cdclimo.com

Executive Assistant

Executive Assistant needed for the President of CDC Group. Applicants must be fluent in English and Computer literate, French language would be an asset. Must also be pleasant, neat, organized, reliable, dependable, Service oriented and well mannered, with a valid Driver licence. For more info, Call Harry at 416-233-9927 or write to: hm@cdclimo.com

Campaign Pushes For Woman on US \$20 Bill

A nonprofit organization called Women on 20s is advocating for changing the \$20 bill by replacing the face of former president and Indian Removal Act signer Andrew Jackson with that of a woman such as Harriet Tubman, Rosa Parks, Alice Paul, Betty Friedan, Shirley Chisholm, Sojourner Truth, Rachel Carson, Barbara Jordan, Margaret Sanger, Patsy Mink, Clara Barton, Frances Perkins, Eleanor Roosevelt, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony.

These women were

Andrew Jackson, Ulysses S. Grant, William McKinley, Grover Cleveland, and James Madison, two Treasury Secretaries; Alexander Hamilton and Salmon Chase, and the unclassifiable Benjamin Franklin. These people featured on the banknotes haven't changed since 1929.

The process of changing the banknote wouldn't require a vote in Congress or Presidential approval to get a woman on the twenty-dollar bill.

The Secretary of the Treasury is responsible for

to the American public's resistance to change. "I think the choices of people on those bills, at this point, is more a tradition than it is a matter of consciously choosing these individuals," Mark Tomasko, an expert on the history of currency, stated. He couldn't recall any past campaigns to put a woman on a bill. Some Republicans in Congress, meanwhile, have tried—and failed—to put Ronald Reagan on the fifty-dollar bill, replacing Ulysses S. Grant.

The group hopes to



selected from a longer list of a hundred names based on their societal impact and the difficulties they faced in pursuing their goals.

Each of the eleven denominations in circulation, from the one-dollar bill to the ten-thousand-dollar bill, depicts a man. Including eight Presidents form, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln,

the designs that appear on paper notes, including the portraits. Nor do the people depicted on bills have to meet particularly stringent standards; according to U.S. law, they just have to be dead. Even so, the appearance of U.S. banknotes was hardly modified during the twentieth century; according to historians, this was partly to keep the bills recognizable and partly due

present the winning candidate to President Obama sometime in the next several months, with the hope that he might help persuade the Treasury Secretary to sign off on a new twenty-dollar-bill design.

Meanwhile a spokesperson for the Treasury Department declined to comment on the campaign.



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Super Sikh: a superhero in a turban fighting injustice and ignorance



Secret agent Deep Singh is a 20-something turbaned superhero, described by the character's creators as Batman meets Jason Bourne.

Illustrated by award-winning artist Amit Tayal, shows Deep Singh wearing aviator glasses and a turban, putting paid to the evil plans of a Taliban commander who intends to burn books outside a girls' school in Afghanistan, even as he blares Blue Suede Shoes on his car stereo.

The Elvis connection is one of many motifs. Deep Singh's father was an Elvis fan, and the hero's parents disappeared in Africa when he was a child. There's also a nuclear scientist called Gurpreet Kaur, Deep's ninja master cousin who is described as similar to Q in James Bond.

Deep Singh is not supernatural. He's multicultural



He's trained, he's educated, and he's multicultural." A character is not so different from us. He can be you and he can be me.

The creators are certain that their project will help inject a modern Sikh character into the popular consciousness. Deep Singh represents strength, its creators say, and he doesn't tolerate bullies.



Trinidad Carnival 2015



Sheldon Best is seen in his costume Once In A Blue Moon, which won the Traditional Moko Jumbie category of the National Carnival Commission's competition held at Victoria Square, in the capital Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, REUTERS/Andrea De Silva

Gorgeous Northern Thailand



Motorcycle touring at Khun Chang Kian Khun Chang Kian IS ABOUT AN HOUR OUT OF Chiang Mai, yet relatively few tourists have ever heard of it.

Some Canadians think there's no such thing as a 'UNIQUE CANADIAN CULTURE'

According to a new Angus Reid Institute report, twenty four per cent of Canadians say there's no such thing as a unique Canadian culture to begin with.

The numbers underline the ongoing anxiety among Canadians about the country's cultural identity,

said they are emotionally attached to Canada and love what it stands for, but the rest were more subdued in their patriotic fervor: "only as long as it provides a good standard of living," and the remaining six per cent said they don't care and would



an anxiety that is itself a defining characteristic of life in Canada.

Respondents in Atlantic Canada are most convinced Canada makes important cultural contributions, while eighty eight per cent saying there is a unique Canadian culture. While in Quebec sixty three per cent are of that view. Sixty nine per cent of respondents

rather see the country split into two or more smaller nations.

This is the age of YouTube, and of Netflix, and we're able to access immediate information from anywhere in the world. But most Canadians still see who they are as a culture to be unique and special, but they also want certain protections in place to ensure their stories are being told.

Lawmakers rip through Political thriller "House of Cards"

Just hours after the real-life drama of The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) funding played out in the House, much of Washington took in the Hollywood's version; binge-watching the third season of "House of Cards."

The newest episodes of the show, stars Kevin Spacey as a corrupt, power-hungry commander in chief, were released on Netflix.



Gray Hair Is In... And It's Hot

Al - Mersal Toronto: - Gone are the days when women in their 30s, 40s and beyond would attack gray hairs with bleaches and hair dye, as if they were rogue chin hairs. No, as of late, gray is in. We're not talking just aging gracefully; we're talking about women with fully pigmented hairs that

are no longer referring to gray as in, well, gray -- a word normally associated with dullness, dreariness, sadness and gloom. It's a fashion statement, whether natural or boxed, and it's a badge of beauty rather than a dreaded part of aging.

Cindy Joseph, a 60-something model, says



are rushing to salons to get the most coveted shade of grey.

Imagine getting root touch-ups when you're blonde or brunette starts to show.

Various starlets have been spotted sporting the trend, from pop princess Rihanna to Kylie Jenner to "Girls" star Zosia Mamet. And the fact that it's suddenly trendy is a good thing for aging. Headlines

her modeling career only took off once she accepted aging and went totally gray. Joseph has appeared in ads for Olay, Aveda and fashion house Dolce & Gabbana.

"Celebrate silver," Joseph said "I call it silver instead of gray, because gray has a negative connotation. Gray mood, gray day. But silver is considered very special and very valuable. So whatever shade of silver you have, call it silver."

Harsh winter storms put the spotlight on Syrian refugees



Winter storms battered Lebanon with heavy rain and snow at the start of this year, once again highlighting the poor living conditions of Syrian refugees.

As dozens of tents housing Syrian refugees camps in the Bekaa Valley, Qoub Elias near Chtaura and Tell Serhoun near Dalhamieh.

Have collapsed under the weight of mounds of snow and well water had frozen in the sub zero temperatures.

Despite help provided by NGOs, many refugee families still lack basic necessities such as blankets, warm clothes, shoes, medicine and medical care, as well as wood and fuel to burn.

Cricket 2015 - India Vs. Bangladesh ICC Cricket World Cup



March 19, 2015 - Melbourne, Australia - SURESH RAINA jumps in celebration after reaching his century during the 2015 ICC Cricket World Cup Quarter Final knockout match between India Vs Bangladesh at Melbourne Cricket Ground. India defeated Bangladesh by 109 runs.

Dustin Cook wins super-G Race



Canada's Dustin Cook speeds down the course in Meribel, France en route to winning the final World Cup men's super-G race of the season. This is a first world cup victory for the 26-year-old from Ottawa, who finished .05 seconds ahead of Olympic super-G champion Kjetil Jansrud.

Dave & Natal Laycock Build Backyard Curling Rink



David and Natal Laycock built a backyard curling rink at their home in Saskatoon's. "I love curling, it's been a part of my life since I was seven," Natal said. "I played at the old Hub before it was torn down." But the story of how the Laycocks' backyard rink came to be is so Saskatchewan they thought about building it for awhile. But it took a production of the homegrown classic — W.O. Mitchell's "The Black Bonspiel of Wullie MacCrimmon" at Saskatoon's Persephone Theatre.

TRAVEL TRAVEL

Scenic Bus Routes in Ontario

The bus is one of the most common and iconic way to travel in Ontario and there are millions of people who take wonderful journeys on buses and coaches every year. It takes you off the main tourist track through some fascinating neighborhoods. Not only will you arrive at wonderful and interesting destinations but you will be see stunning sights along the way. One of the best things about bus travel is that the large windows offer a great view of the passing scenery, and if you are one who prefers to raise your head from your cell phone or book, then enjoying the views is one of the great benefits of bus travel. There are plenty of places in the Ontario where you can take in some stunning scenery as this is a country of spectacular views. Tempting you to get off and explore the area.



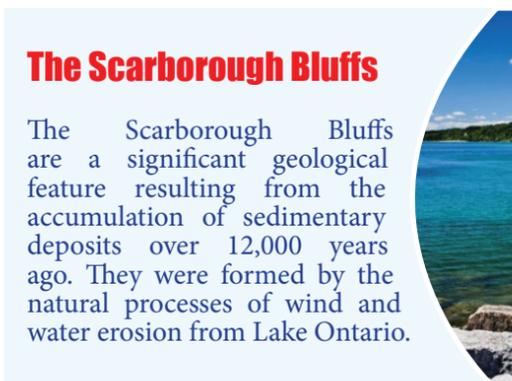
Killarney Provincial Park

Killarney Provincial Park is considered the crown jewel of the Ontario park system and is one of the most popular canoeing, hiking and kayaking destinations in Ontario. This remote coastal village was recognized in 1820, making Killarney, northern Ontario's oldest community.



Algonquin Park

The first provincial park in Ontario, protects a variety of natural, cultural, and recreational features and values. As one of the largest provincial parks, Algonquin is diverse and offers something for nearly everyone.



The Scarborough Bluffs

The Scarborough Bluffs are a significant geological feature resulting from the accumulation of sedimentary deposits over 12,000 years ago. They were formed by the natural processes of wind and water erosion from Lake Ontario.



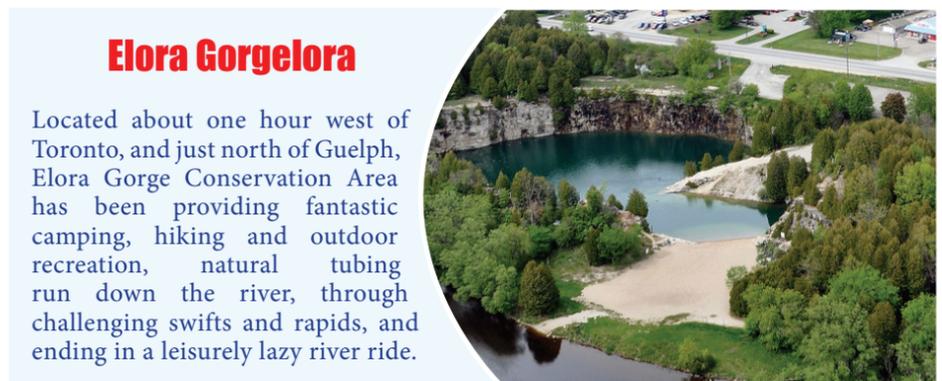
Sleeping Giant

Thunder Bay's Sleeping giant Provincial Park has natural, recreational and cultural opportunities during every season including hiking and biking, canoeing and kayaking, camping, wildlife viewing and photography, and winter sports like cross-country skiing and snowshoeing.



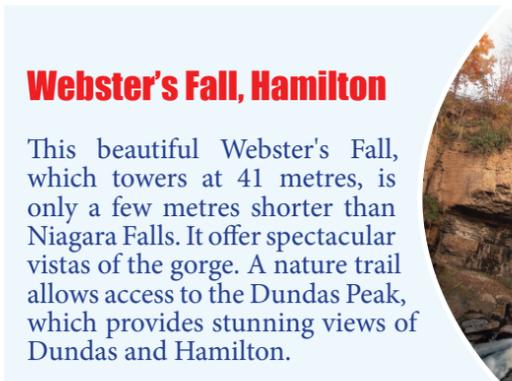
The Georgian Bay Grotto

Explore the Grotto, a sea cave carved out of the Niagara Escarpment, relax on the Bruce Peninsula's famous boulder beach, or snorkel in the cool clear waters. The Grotto is located within Bruce Peninsula National Park. Day use fees apply. Park your car at the head of trails, and hike to the shore.



Elora Gorge

Located about one hour west of Toronto, and just north of Guelph, Elora Gorge Conservation Area has been providing fantastic camping, hiking and outdoor recreation, natural tubing run down the river, through challenging swifts and rapids, and ending in a leisurely lazy river ride.



Webster's Fall, Hamilton

This beautiful Webster's Fall, which towers at 41 metres, is only a few metres shorter than Niagara Falls. It offer spectacular vistas of the gorge. A nature trail allows access to the Dundas Peak, which provides stunning views of Dundas and Hamilton.



Agawa Rock, Lake Superior

The trail to Agawa Rock is rugged, descending 30 metres (98 feet) through some interesting geological features: rock chasms, broken boulders and sheer cliffs. Beside the lake, a rock ledge stretches along the base of the pictograph cliff, which is accessible only when Lake Superior is calm.





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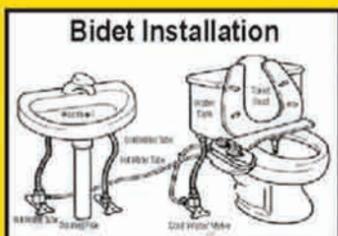
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