



*The team at Marda Gras in Marda Loop on August 8*

I trust you've been enjoying a good summer, with some rest and relaxation with friends and families.

In the world of Canadian politics, there has been no respite, and none expected on the horizon, as it is quite clear that this government will be going to the polls to try and eke out a majority mandate from Canadians. One should ask, 'Why now?' Well, looking at the cheques that are being cut across this country, there is no shortage of vote-buying going on. It always astounds me how short-term policies of spending announcements seems to impress those receiving the cheques.

Yet, it is government, so it is nothing but recycled taxpayer money. Hence, the bill will come due. My guess is that will need to happen after a new mandate – and the Liberals hope to be able to skate the tax increases through a majority

Parliament – because they will get a rough ride from all parties as they increase taxes to pay for their profligacy.

**Let's just add it up:**

- \$353 billion deficit in 2020;
- projected deficit of \$190 billion in 2021;
- tens of billions so far this summer in unaccounted additional spending – which, I should point out, has yet to be approved in Parliament.

**Ballpark around \$600 billion of overspending in just the two years that I have been in Parliament.**

For reference, in 2019, federal taxation revenues amounted to approximately \$350 billion. So, in 2020, we overshot spending by double! **Twice as much went out the door as was collected.** Great! If only every government in Canadian history had the luxury of spending two dollars for every dollar we collected . . . well, we'd be an impoverished country – which is where it seems we are headed.

**In my opinion, a course correction is clearly needed. The tax increases required to pay for continued overspending will cripple the ability of our economy to generate jobs. It's always easy to rack up the credit card, but the bill will arrive!**



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## **CD HOWE AND PBO BOTH ISSUE WARNINGS**

At the end of July, the CD Howe Institute warned that the federal debt-to-GDP ratio could easily rise above current peak levels associated with the pandemic. The federal and provincial debt burdens are on an **upward long-run drift with the federal debt ratio rising from 51 percent of GDP in 2021 to reach 60 percent by 2055**, and the combined federal and provincial net debt ratio possibly reaching over 140 percent by 2055. They characterized it as "rolling the dice on Canada's future". The two long-term debt-to-GDP scenarios featured in the 2021 federal budget are based on higher average GDP growth and lower

debt-servicing costs than the authors believe is reasonable. [Read the full report here.](#)

Also at the end of July, the Parliamentary Budget Officer warned that **the federal government could be running budget deficits until 2070 without a course correction.** The Liberal government has introduced numerous new permanent spending programs in recent years, including a national childcare program, expanded Employment Insurance, increased elderly benefits, and bigger transfers to provinces for infrastructure. Combined with drastically weakened fiscal positions in the provinces and territories due to the COVID-19 pandemic, those choices will substantially extend the timeline for when Ottawa might return to balance, according to the PBO's Fiscal Sustainability Report (FSR). **Reaching surplus could now take until 2070, up from 2023 just months before the pandemic struck.** [Read the National Post story here.](#)



## GNL QUEBEC

What a saga. It was illustrative to watch, as the environmental hearings associated with the best egress option for Canadian natural gas from our east coast followed a well-worn path.

**The local communities around Port Saguenay (Quebec) were overwhelmingly in favour of proceeding with a natural gas liquefaction facility** – to be connected by a new, relatively short pipeline extension to TC Energy's line through northern Ontario. My consultation with my ten Conservative colleagues in Quebec had them 100% on side. That's part of the benefit of a national political party.

Even MPs from the Bloc Quebecois wouldn't speak against the project – despite their usual manufactured false narrative on the evils of the Canadian oil and gas industry – because they hold seats in that part of Quebec also, and they know they would be offside with the vast majority of those constituents. As well, it seemed that the Government of Quebec was in favour of the project, for the diversification and regional economic benefits it would bring.

**In the end, the environmental assessment process overseen by the Government of the province of Quebec acceded to the imported voices of the Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (ENGOS) – from far away from where the facility would be built.** The additional ship traffic noise would be bad for the beluga population in the Saguenay (but not the tourist boats that come much closer to them); take-or-pay contracts were not arranged (tough to do, I should note, before you have an approved facility); the clear case was not made for how natural gas displacing European coal consumption would reduce global greenhouse gas emissions (have these people read any of the science?); and so on.

In the end, the Government of Quebec decided not to take on a fight with the ENGO's – as previous governments in that province had lost that fight. It's easier to ignore reality than it is to take on shrill voices. **This is where leadership in Canada has arrived on the GLOBAL GHG reduction mission: put our heads in the sand, and run from the loudest voices that, I should point out clearly, are providing no solutions for the planet's decarbonization requirements.**

These are the same interests that lobby to de-invest in Canadian oil and gas, and pressure international insurance companies to withdraw from viable Canadian projects – **all while funding our less environmentally-friendly competitors in foreign jurisdictions.** Fear is trumping common sense.

**Like this current government – the one trying to get re-elected at all costs (to the Canadian public) – it's not about providing any solutions, it's about saying all the right things – and accomplishing nothing.**

Those of us who have worked in private enterprise know that we are employed to solve problems. You should demand as much from your governments. This government has shown they have no abilities to execute a plan, and no plan that works for Canada.

We need to defeat them in the upcoming election.

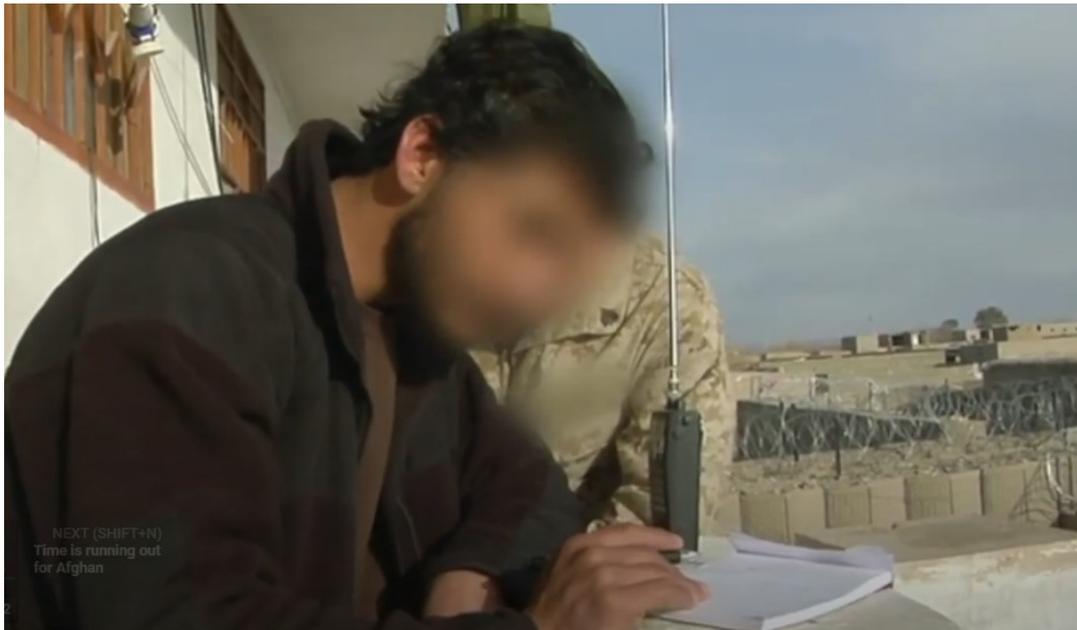


## **Afghan Interpreters**

**There is no greater illustration of this government's inability to execute a plan than their delayed and inept approach to bringing our military's collaborators out of Afghanistan, as it is being overrun by the Taliban.**

Delays, bureaucratic forms – in the wrong language and only available by internet in a country whose communications infrastructure is falling apart – signal not only that the political class has no perspective, but, as we've heard from our allies for years now, Canada's diplomatic corps has also lost ranking on the world stage.

Failing here will be an embarrassment that will take a generation to live down. The world is watching, and Canadians will be very aware of how the world views our international positions. "All talk and no execution to plan" is clearly evident – regrettably, at the potential cost of the lives of thousands of our friends and their families. **It is time to act. The consequences of our failure are dire – to our friends and to Canada's international reputation.**



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## Next Facebook Live Event

My special guest for the next Facebook Live Q&A is **Cory Channon**. Cory works for the **International Brotherhood of Boilermakers**, a private sector union. He is the International Director for Climate Change Policy Solutions and Special Assistant to the International President for the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers. He is an advocate for Carbon Capture so we will talk about that and related issues.

**Tuesday August 17**

**6:00 to 7:00 PM**

**My Facebook Live page: [GregMcLeanYYC](#)**

Type your questions into the comments box during the event, or send questions/comments in advance to [Greg.McLean@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Greg.McLean@parl.gc.ca).

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## Around Calgary Centre

***More from Marda Gras:***



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*Please get in touch if there's anything my office can do for you.*

**Greg McLean, MP**  
Calgary Centre