



GREG McLEAN

Member of Parliament
Calgary Centre



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

REPORT TO CONSTITUENTS

Issues in Ottawa: Fall 2020

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TIME TO PIVOT TO RECOVERY

COVID-19 put the whole world in turmoil and economic distress. The government has spent hundreds of billions of dollars providing a safety net for Canadians. Yet, some of the complex program design and unethical methods of getting money out the door have left many Canadians without the support they need.

It is time to pivot to economic recovery. We need to help businesses to reopen and people, where possible, to work again.

Instead, the Prime Minister is musing about how the pandemic is an opportunity to remake Canada. He clearly feels the money tree is continuing to blossom.

Let's remember this:

1. Borrowed money has to be repaid;
2. Borrowed money attracts interest payments (low now, yes, but not forever); interest payments limit our options for taxing and spending choices;
3. The people who will be paying the debt and the ongoing interest are our children and their children.

Protect Canadians who are in trouble, of course, but we need a plan for how we balance going forward.

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SHADOW MINISTER FOR NATURAL RESOURCES

On September 8, I was named the Conservative Party's new Shadow Minister for Natural Resources and the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor). I was previously the Deputy Shadow Minister for National Revenue.

This new portfolio suits my skills and knowledge very well, and is also of great importance to both Calgary Centre and all of Alberta,. Many people depend on natural resource industries both directly and indirectly. There will be several important issues coming up this fall and spring that may affect how Western Canadians can produce and sell resources for the benefit of all Canadians, and I will be diligent in holding the government to account on their policies.

FREELAND REPLACES MORNEAU IN FINANCE

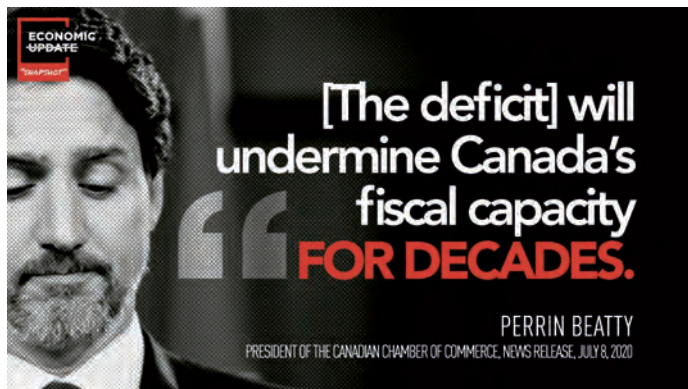
In August, the Prime Minister replaced ethics-challenged Bill Morneau as Finance Minister with Chrystia Freeland, the Deputy Prime Minister.

What does this mean for Alberta? I wrote a column for *Energy Now* with my views on Mr. Morneau's legacy, which you can find on my website at www.GregMcLeanMP.ca/news.

In short, Mr. Morneau had clear shortcomings with respect to spending and debt (even before the pandemic), but he did have

some understanding of the importance of the energy industry to Canada's bottom line. On that subject, he was a realist—one of few in the Trudeau Cabinet.

Freeland is Alberta born, although hasn't lived here in a long time. She has written and spoken widely about her economic opinions, which tend toward using the power of the state to redistribute wealth. She appears to be in step with the Prime Minister's plan to continue massive spending in an effort to redesign Canada, including an expansion of cradle-to-grave government intervention and huge investments in unproven green strategies. Perhaps the realities of a trillion dollar debt will temper her ideology, and I am hoping that, as Finance Minister, she will soon see the great economic contribution made by a healthy energy sector.



WHY THE “WE SCANDAL” MATTERS

Scandal Shows Problems in Canadian Governance

You may or may not have followed every breaking detail of the WE scandal, but in brief, the Liberal government provided a sole-sourced contract (not tendered) worth close to a billion dollars - of which \$43.5 million would go to WE, a charitable organization that turned out to be ill equipped to deliver the program (e.g. could not operate in French or in Quebec and had to hire a sub-contractor for that), but had close familial and financial ties to the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance.

My Early Involvement

I identified the issue early, and my initial questioning of the government in July can be found on my website: GregMcLeanMP.ca/news.

Information dribbled out slowly demonstrating lack of transparency. Later information often contradicted what Canadians were first told. The Finance Committee interviewed witnesses and requisitioned documents that provided the detail about what really happened and why.

Why is it Important?

This issue goes to how Canada has been governed during the pandemic. The Liberals originally wanted unfettered spending power until the end of 2021. They didn't get that, but they did get a fairly free hand by suspending Parliament. **The WE scandal is one example of what a government can do when Opposition MPs lose the necessary tools to keep an eye on them.** They act without Parliamentary oversight in allocating taxpayer dollars.

Program Not Necessary

This program was ill conceived from the start, apart from WE's untendered contract. It proposed to pay “volunteers”; but if the students are, in fact, paid employees, then their wage of \$10/hour would be less than minimum wage. There's also the question of why a new program

was created when a program already exists (Canada Summer Jobs) that pays students for meaningful work experience. There were hundreds of unfilled Canada Summer Jobs applications in Calgary Centre alone.

Is There More?

There might be. There is at least one instance where a Liberal insider lobbied for policy changes to the wage subsidy program that would benefit his company, but without registering as a lobbyist. That is against the law. (WE representatives testified that they also lobbied without registering; although they later registered on the same day as their testimony.)

Then there is the \$700,000 for ventilators purchased from a company owned by a former Liberal MP, even though the ventilators have not been approved in any jurisdiction. It is also a conflict for a former MP to benefit from his previous position.

We understand the pandemic caused spending to happen without the usual checks and balances, but the Opposition has uncovered several situations that go beyond simple errors of speed or carelessness. There appears to be a pattern of insiders disregarding the laws and receiving favoured treatment. That just isn't fair to the rest of Canadians who follow the rules.

NEW CONSERVATIVE LEADER ERIN O'TOOLE



Here are some of the insights into my decision to back Erin's bid for the leadership of the Conservative Party:

- **Erin is smart** – and he is methodical in his approach to using sound rationale in the execution of good policy. I first saw that when he led our caucus in the first vote the Liberals had lost in the House of Commons in almost five years: the motion to establish the Committee to Examine Canada-China Relations. Recognize that effort required the support of two other opposition parties, and collaboration is an important skill. In an era when superficial sound bites and selfies are the practiced political tools of choice, Erin will stand out as a leader of substance.
- **He is serious** – he recognizes the task ahead of him (and our party) and he knows we have a country that needs fixing immediately.
- To lead this country, one needs depth on many subjects, and I believe **Erin possesses that depth in so many subjects**. Canada's position in the world is important to him – and we will gain back the respect of our allies around the world as we reposition this country as a serious force in world affairs.
- **He is a man of principle** – I've seen that in him, and I've seen it reflected in the people with whom he chooses to surround himself. Canada needs that.

ence to the job. Erin O'Toole is a former Captain in the Royal Canadian Air Force and served as a navigator on the Sea King helicopters. He then went to law school before specializing in business law in Toronto. He has served as the Member of Parliament for Durham since 2012 and had served as a respected Minister of Veterans Affairs under the previous government.

Erin O'Toole has all the attributes to lead this country well – dedication to service, intelligence, experience, and the ability to execute against a plan.

WHERE DID ALL THE MONEY GO? INFRASTRUCTURE

The Parliamentary Budget Officer says that Canada's budgeted \$187.8 billion for infrastructure is seriously behind schedule. At a time when our economy would benefit from an already-budgeted injection of cash, where is the money?

PBO Yves Giroux also said his office was unable to account for about 20,000 projects out of 53,000 total projects.

"Unable to account for"? How does a government department lose track of 20,000 projects? No accountability!

Conservatives have successfully pressed for the Auditor General to audit the troubled spending plan. It is also time for a Federal Budget (we haven't had one in 18 months).

QUESTIONNAIRE (Or answer online at GregMcLeanMP.ca)

1. Canada has spent massively on COVID-19 supports, now reaching over a Trillion dollars in debt. Are you worried about how we're going to pay that back?

☐ Yes ☐ No

2. Understanding that decisions had to be made quickly, do you think the government took advantage of the COVID crisis to favour insiders and friends with contracts and purchases?

☐ Yes ☐ No

3. Are you concerned that the government first suspended and then fully shut down Parliament during a national emergency?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Comments: _____

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone Number: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Postal Code: _____

AROUND CALGARY CENTRE



Above: At the opening of the Calgary Zoo reptile exhibit; most of my meetings are virtual these days: this is virtual Ramadan. Below: I co-hosted some Ontario MP colleagues in Calgary; the residents of Manor Village at Garrison Woods virtually walked across Canada; I joined them as they dipped their toes in the Atlantic; in Ottawa for a COVID meeting.



TAPE

OTTAWA, ON K1A 0A6
HOUSE OF COMMONS
GREG MCLEAN, MP

HH Oct 20



FOLD

ERIN O'TOOLE ON
• OIL AND GAS
• EQUALITY RIGHTS

Erin O'Toole was elected the new Leader of the Opposition in August. He has a comprehensive plan to support Alberta's economy with respect for natural resource industries; and he is clear in his position on equal rights for all, including LGBTQ+, and supports women's rights to choose.

Supporting Alberta

- 1. **Fix Equalization.** A province with an economy in recession and high unemployment should not be forced to send money to other provinces;
- 2. Stop the discrimination against Alberta in the **Fiscal Stabilization Program**;
- 3. **Repeal Bill C-69.** Canada has some of the toughest environmental protections in the world and it is already next to impossible to build major projects;
- 4. Pass a **National Strategic Pipelines Act.** This would allow the government to declare a pipeline to be nationally strategic and subject it to an expedited review process;
- 5. **Scrap Trudeau's tanker ban.** It is unconscionable that American tankers sail through our waters while we block Canadian energy exports from the same waters;
- 6. Implement a **federal LNG export strategy.** With much of the world reliant on coal-generated electricity, we should boost exports to grow our economy and contribute to a cleaner world.

Equality for All

From Mr. O'Toole's acceptance speech:

"Whether you are black, white, brown or from any race or creed.

"Whether you are LGBTQ or straight.

"Whether you are an Indigenous Canadian or have joined the Canadian family 3 weeks ago or 3 generations ago.

"Whether you are doing well, or barely getting by. Whether you worship on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays, or not at all.

"You are an important part of Canada and you have a home in my party!"