

7th Annual Orientation for Newly Arrived Diplomats
October 5, 2017
Carleton University, Richcraft Hall
The Carleton Initiative for Parliamentary and Diplomatic Engagement

Dr. André Plourde, Dean of the Faculty of Public Affairs, opened the orientation:

Carleton University has developed a strong relation with Parliament, government and the diplomatic community. Many of our students have been given the opportunity to serve and work for the government and diplomatic community. Thank you for contributing to our mission that way. This relationship benefits all of us. I trust that you will find this orientation to serve you as an introduction to the capital of Canada.

Session One: Understanding Canada's Parliamentary System

Subjects: Tracking legislation and parliamentary business; parliamentary committees, using LEGISinfo, PARLINFO and other sources of information

The Honourable Geoff Regan, P.C., M.P., Speaker of the House of Commons:

- I want to share the role of the House of Commons with you today. Parliamentary engagement allows us to explore relationships between countries and people
- Canada's parliamentary associations engage in the following:
 - Parliamentary assemblies – Francophonie, NATO
 - Bilateral and multilateral relations with France, US etc. Commonwealth
 - Over the years of the parliament, I have been a member of many of these associations which allows me to develop stronger ties
 - There are many activities that bring countries together to share knowledge of Parliamentary system
 - During our international visits, we not only meet legislators but have the pleasure to meet representatives from the business sector as well as NGOS and civil societies

- Parliamentary study program – this is a program for senior officials, for Canadian jurisdictions as well as parliamentarians around the world, to engage with senior government officials on procedural and administrative process in parliamentary system. This allows Canada to share their knowledge of parliamentary systems as well as learning from other countries. Canada’s parliamentary association engagements further the value of Parliamentary system. We work together on common challenges.

Charles Robert, Clerk of the House of Commons, discussed the Parliamentary system in Canada with his presentation “*Understanding How Parliament Works*”:

- The purpose of this discussion is to give an overview of Canadian parliamentary system. Some of you come from British jurisdiction similar to that of Canada.
- The House of Commons is elected and serve normally for terms of 4 years (constitutions allow 5 and rare cases of extension).
- Parliament is composed of 3 parts: the Monarchy, the Senate, and the House of Commons.
- The top court is the Supreme Court of Canada
- The governor general represents the Queen in Canada (normally a 5 year term but can be extended to 7 years as seen in the case of former GG David Johnston). The Governor General has a substantive role: The governor general ensures that there is always a prime minister. He/she is also responsible to give advice to prime minister, summon new sessions of the government, and give royal assent to bills adopted by the House of Commons and Senate
- The Senate has become more independent and is a complementary body to the House of Commons. Since the members of the Senate are appointed, it allows them to act as a think tank (on policy studies and revising legislation)
- The nature of the Senate composition is changing with – at present - 36 seats for Conservative Party of Canada, 35 seats of Independent Senators, 16 seats of Liberal Party of Canada, 8 of Non-Affiliated and 10 Vacant seats. The way the Senate is composed recognizes the quality of each region with 24 senators for the 4 western provinces (6 each); 25 Senators for Ontario and Quebec the same; New Brunswick and Nova Scotia each has 10, PEI has 4; Territories have 1 each.

- Question Period is vital and tests the metal of the ministers (because they receive sharp question from opposition – lasts 40 minutes). Each opposition MP has 40 seconds to ask a question and Ministers or Parliamentary Secretaries only have 35 seconds to answer.
- Standing Committees reflect the structure of government and review legislation. House of Commons has 24 committee and Senate has 16.
- There are also parliamentary publications that diplomats should become familiar with to understand the house – which include the Order Paper and Proceedings.

Q&A:

Q: If you are a diplomat, how can you become involved? How do you go to Question Period?

- Standing Committees that are studying a bill are open to the public (committees that are studying controversial issues are often televised)
- Go to the website to follow the process and procedure of a bill
- Caucus meetings are private. They take place at a national and regional level; the discussion is often what position a party should take on a particular issue
- 99% of what a Member of Parliament does the public don't see – because it takes place in private.

Q: How often do members of political parties vote against their party?

- Not often on a money bill because that is considered a question of confidence in the house and could trigger an election
- Over the last decade more free votes have been allowed on private bills
- On a government bill that the party feels strongly about, the choice of the member is to say to themselves, well how does it impact my area? If I vote against it, what are the consequences?
- There are times where a member will vote against a motion, but you need to ask yourself: What is my ability to influence in the future? That's a challenge. (How strongly do I feel about this and what are the consequences)

Q: Why are there vacant seats in the HoC?

- Reasons include death, a MP leaving to run in another jurisdiction, personal reasons including distance (exhausting travel) etc. A byelection is then called
- In the Senate, the same thing can happen but most vacancies occur at the mandatory retirement age of 75

Q: What are the required qualifications for a Senator?

- 1) \$4000 worth of property in land; 2) 35 years old 3) resident of province in which they are appointed
- There's a new appointments process where candidates need to apply to be a senator. A panel considers their qualifications looking for those who would best represent their province

Session Two: Voices from Parliament:

Maureen Boyd, Director of the Carleton Initiative for Parliamentary and Diplomatic Engagement, moderated the panel "*Voices from Parliament*" with three Members of Parliament:

- The Honourable Andrew Leslie, M.P. for Orleans and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs
- The Honourable Erin O'Toole, M.P. for Durham and Conservative shadow cabinet minister for International Affairs
- H  l  ne Laverdi  re, M.P. for Laurier–Sainte-Marie and NDP critic for foreign affairs.

The Honourable Andrew Leslie, M.P. for Orleans and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs with special responsibilities for the Canada-U.S. relationship:

- NAFTA facts: Canada is USA's largest trading partner (more than China, UK and Japan combined); thus, NAFTA is very important to Canada but equally to USA. Canada is USA's largest customer.
- When we represent Canada in the USA, we do so with one voice to represent overall interest of Canada
- The USA is the most protectionist since the 1930s which is very challenging in negotiating NAFTA (there's 7 rounds and we've finished 3); and it will become tougher.
- Key points: we have a trade surplus with the US (they sell more products and services to us than vice versa; they have positive trade balance with us). 300 000 people cross the border everyday – one of the most integrated economies in the world, e.g. cars cross border 6-7 times
- Our big philosophy in renegotiating the NAFTA is 1) USA asked, 2) NAFTA has served all three of the partners well, 3) this is the 12th time NAFTA has been negotiated. The key difference is that this one has a

shorter time frame (interest of Mexico due to upcoming election and of USA upcoming midterm deadlines). It's worth all of our efforts to create conditions for win-win-win situation

Q&A:

Question on asset banking in USA compared to Canada

- Canada has 5 chartered banks and 2 chartered status. The capital assets of our banks are among the largest in the world (because we have so few banks). In 2015, Canada invested more in USA than vice versa

Q: Mandate on business opportunity in Canada and vice versa. We hear all the time that you trade more with USA. What should we look forward to in Canada and foreign relations, particularly Africa?

- It depends on what sort of good and services; trade in energy with USA is 99%, but in other such as agriculture, it is lower. The reason why we speak of trade more with USA is because the two economies have grown together in a very integrated fashion (e.g. migration etc.). Combined, we are the single largest shared economy in the world. We are bigger than CETA. But CETA will now allow us to trade freely with our second largest, which allows us to diversify our risks and reduce the reliance to the US.
- Increasingly, we are going to China, Indonesia and many Asian countries. We trade with Africa mainly on natural resources, but the trade is not nearly enough. I think we need to trade more and do more to help alleviate poverty and development in Africa.

The Honourable Erin O'Toole, M.P. for Durham and Official Opposition Critic for International Affairs

- NAFTA is a bit unusual and difficult. We only learn from the government's public statements what they want to achieve in the NAFTA negotiations. However, Minister Freeland neither talks about the auto industry nor the most key important industries of Canada; but she talks a lot about the progressive trade agenda (gender, indigenous affairs). These are all very important, but that is not about trade. He has concerns about the priorities of the Trudeau government and emphasized that trade agreement and market access to the USA is critical to Canada – thus more focus should be on auto, lumber, and specific industries.

Hélène Laverdière, M.P. for Laurier–Sainte-Marie and NDP critic for foreign affairs.

- Overview of what the New Democratic Party stands for and its main issues and objectives. The NDP is a party that is slightly to the left of the Canadian parties. The recently newly elected leader, Jagmeet Singh, is coming with new economic, trade and climate change agendas. His leadership is new; a major leader who is non-Caucasian and she is very proud of this accomplishment in Canada.
- In terms of foreign affairs files, she has been working on disarmament and nuclear ban treaty. We are quite ashamed that Canada is selling arms to countries who violate international human rights, particularly against women.
- The NDP is also concerned about the decrease in development involvement and want to see increased international assistance.
- NAFTA – NDP view: this is an issue where they are not quite in agreement with the Conservative party. Of course, trade has a big impact on economy, but climate change is also essential and should be considered TOGETHER with trade and economy. All those things are interrelated and should be considered as global issues. Thus, we need to consider it in NAFTA – as well as workers rights, supply management (forefront), and lumber
- We share the same view as the Conservatives in terms of the need for increased transparency and information on the direction of where the government is going with NAFTA.
- International development and trade with Africa – needs to increase relations and involvement; the number of our diplomatic missions to Africa have decreased and that is a mistake of the previous Conservative government. The current government doesn't seem to be very active on that front either.
- For us the international system is extremely important and Canada's participation in UN etc. is absolutely key. Our strength has always been working with others, when the world does well, Canada does well. Thus, it is in our own self-interest.

Q&A for both speakers:

What is the position of the NDP and Conservatives on Canada joining anti-ballistic missile defence and in meeting the 2% GDP target for NATO members to spend on defence?

Erin O'Toole

- Anti-missile: Conservatives feels that Canada should join the program; Canada is full partnership with US through NORAD but with the exception of missile defence. It started with the Paul Martin government wanting to show their distance from the Bush government. But it was not changed by the Harper government either. Canada constantly want to have a close relation with USA but do not want to show that they are too close (the junior brother).
- What has changed is that the recent activities by North Korea, which is a game changer and we need to adjust our policy. I don't believe in percentages [of NATO spending] since as your economy changes, it has a huge impact. But we are not doing a good job on that front. We need to at least have a plan to change this.

Hélène Laverdière

- We don't think Canada should join the system – from distance of Bush and now Trump
- First the system only has a success rate of only 50%. As there is no guarantee that the system works well, it can lead to escalation (with North Korea, but also with China and Russia) – thus a race to the bottom. It is more costly to build a defensive system than an offensive system. We think the only solution is a diplomatic solution and that Canada should be involved with this and with China.
- NATO: the NDP doesn't like the percentage either. We need to equip our military and we also need to support our veterans.

Question re NAFTA progress on the Ottawa round of talk – there's no substantive agreement or progress yet for dispute settlement (ISDS)?

Erin O'Toole

- There's now already been 3 rounds and US still has not put out their demand outcome for auto and supply management. The US secretary of agriculture is critical that the US hasn't put out a demand for auto and supply management.
- The rules of origin piece is the most critical of the negotiation because they want to take 62% of North American content for cars and ensure exclusively a large portion of that is of USA. But why? Since 1960 we've had the auto-part between USA and Canada; and that has created an integrated automobile industry for North America. Some vehicles on specific

components travel 6 times per day – very integrated. The US big three has already told US that they don't want this.

- On Plan B would be NAFTA going back to US-FTA but that question is unlikely as according to some commentators (NAFTA superseded US-FTA).
- Dispute resolution: a priority for Canada; it is the most important element of US free trade and a fundamental part of US free trade. There's some suggestion that US doesn't want that to be part of NAFTA. It would be hard for Canada to take that out unless if we received what we want in many other areas. Negotiation is a series of compromises. But this area is not something we can easily compromise. He has confidence in Freeand.
Hélène Laverdière
- ISDS is extremely important but it needs to be modernized and improved; the mechanism has not always worked properly for Canadian businesses. But it definitely has to stay.

Q: What are some of your priorities?

Hélène Laverdière

- The standing committee on foreign affairs will conduct a study on consular services including child abduction. We should also be looking at an implementation bill on arms trade treaty. The Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs will also be traveling to Mexico and USA to look at NAFTA; as well as travel to China, Vietnam and Indonesia (to promote trade). In terms of the Arctic, the standing committee did conduct a study on the Arctic 2 years ago.
Erin O'Toole
- Committee travel to Asia; continuous focus on the Arctic; Canada is an Arctic nation and it will continue to be an area where multilateral support is needed (there's military issue with Russia)
- CAN-SAC – Canada, Australia, New Zealand and UK to promote more trade (for Brexit will be a complicated scenario for EU, thus Canada need to try to help them)
- The failing of TPP, I think we need to pursue more multilateral involvement on this front (with focus on security) – where countries with similar legal system, political system etc. to promote freedom and opportunities – Not just focus on security, but mobility of people

Session Three: Engaging with Canadian Business

Jayson Myers, Senior Vice President, Policy, The Canadian Chamber of Commerce

- Emphasis on importance of people-to-people relationships
 - Business sectors are vastly distributed in the population of Canada
 - Canadian businesses are internationally oriented
- Business community has 3 branches
- Chambers of Commerce: 450 local/regional chambers of commerce
 - Business Council of Canada
 - Canadian Federation of Independent Business

Session Four: Effective Diplomacy in Ottawa – Best Practices

Subject: Diplomatic access points: media, lobbyists, associations and other sources of influence; information resources, and public diplomacy goals

Moderator: Colin Robertson, Vice-President, Canadian Global Affairs Institute

- Former diplomat; vice president of Canadian Global Affairs Institute; writes often about NAFTA (part of the negotiating team) and other foreign affairs issues; honorary captain of the Royal Canadian Navy

Frank Graves, President, EKOS Research Associates

Moderator: How would you describe the mood of Canadians?

- Confidence in the federal government and in government has been positively increasing yet only 2% of the Canadians think the world is safer

Moderator: What are Canadians' attitude towards trade?

- There has been a shift in the economic outlook of Canadians. Only 10% of Canadians think their children will do better than them – a dramatic decline. There is a rising middle-class group leaning to populist sentiment. A lot of the same allergy to globalization (in UK and US) is happening in Canada.

- Fears of geopolitical tension has produced more sensitivity to defense. The public is looking at a world that appears much more frightening than the past. Yet there is still an acceptance of immigration.

Susan Delacourt, Author, journalist and instructor at Carleton University's School of Journalism and Communications

Moderator: What are the national concerns of Canadians?

- There's a controversial tax proposal right now which could affect the popularity of the Trudeau government.
- The pending legalization of marijuana is another big issue. It could cause potential problems with the USA which prohibits entry to anyone who admits they have consumed marijuana in Canada.
- NAFTA: During Harper's government, there were not much high-profile negotiation – now they need to restrain themselves on NAFTA. Biggest issue and unpredictable factor is Donald Trump.
- Trump is consuming just as much oxygen in Canada as in USA and his unpredictability means that much of what the government in Canada is doing is a reaction to Trump.
- Border issues, immigration and Donald Trump are some of the main national concerns.

Kristen Shane, Managing Editor, The Hill Times.

Moderator: What's going on out there that the new diplomats should be aware of?

- Canada's marijuana law is currently being studied at the committee
- NAFTA is being studied
- Tax reforms are a big one and everyday the conservatives are bashing the liberals on this. Senate is also dealing with that now.
- Jagmeet Singh elected to be NDP leader – first visible minority leader and concluding a generational shift as now all three political parties have leaders in their late 30s or, in the case of Trudeau, mid40s.

Moderator: How can diplomats gain media attention for a foreign leader for a country that is not of immediate importance to Canada?

Kristen Shane

- Understand the media landscape in Canada and target your pitch. Know who you are targeting in terms of media – The Hill Times is purely about the federal government, the parliamentarian and the diplomatic community.

Toronto Star, CBC, National Post is more for the public. It also depends on what you want kind of interview you want to do.

- You need to know what is on the minds of Canadians and how to link your issues to the interests of Canadians and what might they make of this interview

Susan Delacourt

- To stay current, start with the Ipolitics morning brief.
- National News Watch is an aggregator of all the political summaries of the day
- Policy Options has academics writing about the news
- The Conversation Canada – academics

Moderator: What trends are you looking at?

Frank Graves:

- Observation of US-Canada relationship: major shift (historical positive relations to the current relations)
- 19% of people in Canada approve of Donald Trump compared to 70% who approved of Obama
- Historically Canadians don't want to be like USA. But now a huge increase of people say that we are becoming less like USA – which opens new opportunities in the world e.g. FTA China-Canada, Mexico-Canada new relations as Mexico will be the 5th largest economy in the world in 2050.
- Economic sense of frustration and despair: high percentage of Canadians believe there will be increasing violent class conflict

Susan Delacourt:

- Canadians are worried that conditions that created the election of Trump could happen here
- There's a huge political trend desire to try to prevent this.

Moderator: what are you looking at in terms of forthcoming trends in the Canadian context?

Frank Graves

- How is Canada relating to these broader trends going in other part of the world: Populism etc. Why is that occurring and what do you do about it is a central question.

Q&A

Q: Areas of immigration: What is Canadian's attitude towards immigration? Particularly, Haitian migrants coming here via the U.S.

- Answers are complicated. At federal level, immigration is perceived to be a good thing – which is great but that sentiment is varied in the population
- Attitude has shifted based on the external environment – i.e. recent incidence of Haitian immigrants claiming refugee status after arriving from the U.S.
- There is a populist progressive trend here in Canada
- Liberals need to look at both left and right
- What worries Susan Delacourt is the creation of an environment where people feel more able to espouse racial views – due to Trump, Brexit etc. It's worrying and she hopes that it will end soon
- Kristen Shane: Canadians have a simplistic view; Canadian's view of refugee stream is different from immigration

Q: What is a book that would help diplomats have a better understanding of Canada?

- Colin Robertson recommended *Letters to Canadians* written by David Johnston, former Governor General and his writings about innovation in Canada
- Frank Graves suggested diplomats go through some editions of Policy Options to help understand Canada and how it's evolving
- Kristen Shane recommended *The Plutocrats* by Minister Chrystia Freeland
- Susan Delacourt recommended *Common Ground* - Justin Trudeau 2014 autobiography tells a vivid story of how it feels like to be brought up as a son of a prime minister and Trudeau's view of the country
- *Shopping for Votes* by Susan Delacourt explains how marketing, election and business world has collided with politics in Canada
- Maureen Boyd recommended *The Promise of Canada* by Charlotte Gray – a look from pre-confederation to now

Session Five: Engaging with the National Capital Region

Dr. Mark Kristmanson, CEO, National Capital Commission

His Worship Jim Watson, Mayor of Ottawa

Explanation of the structure and governance of the NCC and the city of Ottawa and how diplomatic missions can play a role as well as the recreational, tourist and cultural activities available.