



G20 SUMMIT

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CANADA'S POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT NEWSWEEKLY

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Tories to scrap per-vote subsidies, move could cut feet out from all opposition parties

If the Conservative claim can be made that any amount of money buys influence in politics, all donations should be banned, says Grit MP McKay.

By **TIM NAUMETZ**

PARLIAMENT HILL—The Conservative party misled voters in its election platform with a bold claim the government of Prime Minister Stephen Harper banned donations from corporations and unions after Mr. Harper won power in 2006, critics say.

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'Game now is not what government does, but how it does it'

Lobbyists keep eye on health care, copyright, federal-provincial relations, digital economy, strategic review and more.

By **BEA VONGDOUANGCHANH**

Lobbyists say there will be plenty to advocate on and for when Parliament returns on June 2, despite a majority government that knows precisely what its agenda will be for the next four years.

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41st PARLIAMENT TO OPEN JUNE 2

THE HOUSE IS BACK AND THERE'S GOING TO BE SOME DRAMA



Photograph by Jake Wright, The Hill Times

Welcome back: Prime Minister Stephen Harper, pictured on May 18 at Rideau Hall. It will be a busy House schedule.

LEGISLATION

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LOBBYING ISSUES

A look at the top lobbying issues. p. 1, 6



CABINET POWER

A primer on Cabinet's Priorities & Planning and the Operations committees. p. 1, 28

HOUSE SPEAKER RACE

The candidates running for Speaker and their pitches for the 41st Parliament. p. 56



ROOKIE LIFE

Meet two rookie MPs, including the woman who beat Bloc Québécois leader Gilles Duceppe. p. 54

HOUSE TONE

Don't expect civility in new Parliament, says Gerry Nicholls. p. 10

WISEGUYS

Tim Powers, Brad Lavigne, Warren Kinsella on what to expect when the House comes back. p. 15



HILL CLIMBERS

Prime Minister Office staffers get hired as chiefs of staff in Cabinet ministers' offices. p. 60

Full Cabinet hardly meets, P&P is Harper's real Cabinet

Cabinet's Priorities and Planning Committee is it, the rest pale by comparison.

By **KRISTEN SHANE AND BEA VONGDOUANGCHANH**

He may not have received a coveted new ministry but Immigration Minister Jason Kenney is now at the helm of the second most powerful decision-making body of Cabinet, the Operations Committee. It's one of only two executive committees of Cabinet. The other, Priorities and Planning, is chaired by the Prime Minister and is the most powerful.

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House returns for short, substantive few weeks

Majority governing Conservatives to pass budget, omnibus crime bill and to scrap long-gun registry, per-vote political subsidies.

By **BEA VONGDOUANGCHANH**

There will be an excitement when Parliament returns on June 2, but don't expect "too much fireworks" or "histrionics," say political observers who note it will be a short but busy spring session. The budget, the omnibus crime bill and eliminating the long-gun registry and per-vote subsidies will

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OPINION: G20 SUMMIT & AN INQUIRY



Photograph by Jake Wright, *The Hill Times*

Taking it to the streets: Police pictured last summer in Toronto at the G20. The new Parliament needs to call for a full inquiry and it needs to do so quickly, writes Vincent Greason.

A G20 public inquiry: Canada's reputation depends on it

It is vital that the events of those difficult few days last June be fully and publicly examined, and that the federal government—which had responsibility for the security arrangements—be held accountable for what was at least complicity with rights violations.

By VINCENT GREASON

It was one of the least noticed and yet most important of the loose ends left dangling when the election was called. On the very day the Harper minority government fell, the Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security tabled a report calling for a public inquiry into rights violations during last June's G20 Summit in Toronto.

Sadly, the issue got no serious debate during the election. But it's crucial that this report and its central recommendation not be swept under the rug when the new Parliament sits. Canada's very reputation as a country that takes human rights seriously is at stake.

In addition to which, of course, the planned and arbitrary detention of hundreds of citizens, many of whom were unfortunate bystanders, should sound warning bells for all Canadians who value their fundamental rights.

Let's start by noting that the report can't be dismissed as an isolated outcome of an oppo-

sition-dominated Parliament, because the committee is not alone in its conclusions.

As early as last August, the Canadian Civil Liberties Association (CCLA)—which had independent observers on the ground throughout the G20—reported on human rights violations in the form of arbitrary arrests, degrading detention conditions, use of plastic bullets and tear gas on innocent people, and abusive police behaviour.

The pattern of rights violations identified by the CCLA is corroborated by statements gathered from dozens of detained citizens by the *Ligue des droits et libertés du Québec*.

And a subsequent report from the Ontario Ombudsman concluded that the state "infringe[d] on freedom of expression in ways that do not seem justifiable in a free and democratic society".

Nor was the G20 an isolated event, and nor is the resulting scrutiny confined within Canada's borders. What's emerging is a recurrent pattern of deeply troubling state behaviour, and Canadians should be aware that it's

attracting international attention.

At the "Three Amigos Summit" in Montebello in 2007, for example, *Sûreté du Québec* members were unmasked with rocks in hand while inciting a small number of demonstrators to violence. These agents provocateurs then disappeared behind security force lines before rubber bullets and tear gas were used to "calm" a peaceful crowd.

Canada is now overdue to file a report and undergo a mandatory periodic review of its compliance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Both the Montebello incident and the events of the G20 will be part of a disturbing trend that civil society groups will highlight during this review process.

And if that results in a formal expression of concern, as is likely, it won't be the first time. Abusive use of the power of arrest to stifle political expression was also raised during Canada's last review under the covenant.

The context then was the treatment of protesters during the 2001 Quebec Summit of the Americas,

and during an International Day Against Police Brutality in Montreal. Canada was admonished by the UN committee conducting the review to "ensure that the right of persons to peacefully participate in social protests is respected, and ensure that only those committing criminal offences during demonstrations are arrested."

Canada fell far short of that standard again during the G20, and this will figure into future findings and actions on the part of international bodies tasked with safeguarding human rights. Beyond the review noted above, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights is considering actions that may include appointing a rapporteur-special to examine G20 events, based on submissions it has received from civil society groups.

The use of mass arrests to prevent citizens from expressing themselves places Canada squarely on the proverbial slippery slope, and threatens our international standing.

It is eroding a proud Canadian legacy—one extending from John Humphrey's drafting

of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to Louise Arbour's groundbreaking efforts as UN high commissioner for human rights and in prosecuting international war crimes.

It is vital that the events of those difficult few days last June be fully and publicly examined, and that the federal government—which had responsibility for the security arrangements—be held accountable for what was at least complicity with rights violations. A full inquiry is the best way of achieving the simple imperative defined by the Commons committee: "to ensure that similar events never happen again in Canada."

The new Parliament needs to heed this call from the old one, and it needs to do so quickly.

Vincent Greason is a public legal education expert and currently holds a Law Foundation of Ontario Community Leadership in Justice Fellowship at the University of Ottawa's Human Rights Research and Education Centre. The opinions expressed are his own.

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