

OPINION
& EDITORIALS



The CENTRAL NEWSPAPER

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Pierre Poilievre can no longer lead the Conservatives...

Two Conservative members of parliament have now crossed the floor to join the federal Liberal caucus, being Chris d'Entremont in November, and Michael Ma in recent days. Another Conservative MP, Matt Jeneroux, also announced he would be resigning his seat altogether, and will likely be relocating to British Columbia. These events have certainly caused turmoil within the Conservative caucus and now the pressure is on their leader Pierre Poilievre to signal his intention to step down before facing a mandatory leadership review in January – a process that was already set to take place after his party failed to form a government in the last federal election.

Although the decision to resign as party leader is a personal one, often influenced by internal party dynamics and future electoral prospects, his will be a direct consequence of the sheer number of floor crossings and other expressions of discontent within the ranks. There is no formal rule that requires a party leader to resign under these circumstances, however the writing is certainly on the wall for the man who has worked so tirelessly to overcome the odds - having lost in his own riding and being forced to run in a vacated Alberta seat. The nail that may prove to seal his political coffin came from Conservative MP Michael Ma, who has abandoned the party, a move he announced on Thursday as MP's finished their autumn session. Ma, who represents the Ontario riding of Markham - Unionville, said he now believes the government led by Prime Minister Mark Carney is on the right course, and we can take that as a direct jab at the leadership style of his old boss, Pierre Poilievre. Ma, elected as a Conservative MP, cited a desire for "unity and decisive action for Canada's future," saying that Prime Minister Carney offers what he now sees as the "steady, practical approach" needed to address priorities like affordability, the economy, and community safety. His defection is significant as it brings the Liberal government to 171 seats, just one seat shy of a majority government in the House of Commons. As it happens, Ma won his seat after the previous Liberal candidate, Paul Chiang, stepped down amid controversy. Although the practice of "crossing the floor," or changing political parties between elections, is a controversial one, with public opinion in generally divided on the matter, there seems little doubt someone, somewhere within the Conservative caucus or elsewhere, will look for a windfall of sorts by very soon choosing to cross the floor in an effort to give Mark Carney his coveted majority. Just who that person will be remains to be seen.

Carney Liberals copy Conservative ideas in words only...

Regardless of the troubles now being stirred up by Conservative MPs defecting to the Liberals, credit goes to their leader Pierre Poilievre who spent months fighting for stronger take-home pay for Canadians after a decade of rising costs and Liberal mismanagement. While Mark Carney bragged about stealing Conservative ideas to remove the consumer carbon tax, he turned around and hiked the industrial carbon tax even higher. No real surprise there. But along with keeping taxes on food packaging and the clean fuel standard - which make transportation even more expensive, the Liberals' love of hidden taxes on food continues to increase the cost of living. It's why families will be paying almost \$1,000 more for groceries next year – an issue that has been discussed in these pages recently. It's the same approach that led Mark Carney to say he wants to make our country an "energy superpower," only to back down in an effort to appease his keep-it-in-the-ground caucus that voted against building a pipeline and removing the tanker ban. Instead of getting out of the way and approving the pipeline he promised, the Prime Minister has instead decided to keep the same anti-development regulatory regime for hundreds of projects. Under the Major Projects Office, only well-connected insiders like his corporate friends are able to get anything built - with special status for certain projects that benefit the 'insider' class. The same refusal to simply get government out of the way is also suffocating housing construction.

After promising to cut development charges in half, Carney's Minister Gregor Robertson dropped the promise altogether. While it's clear that builders are ready to build, the Liberals are doubling down on their plan to build just 5,200 homes a year. That's after they copied the Conservatives' intention to cut the GST on new homes, but failed to apply it across the board, eventually excluding 95 per cent of homes from the tax cut. That's simply ridiculous. It's the same abandonment of the promise to 'Spend Less and Invest More' that delivered the costliest budget in Canadian history. Canadians will all be forced to pay the cost of that \$90 billion in net new spending, and there's no hope that things will get better any time soon. We could go on and on, but it's clear enough that what this country needs is a federal government that will start to match words with action if we are ever to begin restoring what was a self-reliant Canada - with stronger take-home pay, safer streets, and stronger borders.

Federal Liberals gave money to an antisemitic activist...

Canadians should be outraged by the federal Liberal government's decision to attempt to conceal the details of a secret settlement with Laith Marouf, a raging antisemite who was awarded \$122,661 by the Liberals as part of Canadian Heritage's 'Anti-Racism Program' to deliver lectures. While receiving this significant amount from taxpayers, Marouf published vile antisemitic statements, including calling Jewish people "loud-mouthed bags of human feces," and even fantasized about shooting Jewish people. It was only after pressure from the opposition Conservatives that the Mark Carney government agreed to end the funding provided to Marouf and to recover the taxpayer money he'd already been given.

Granting Marouf this money was a massive failure by the Liberals, and recovering the funds was the very least they could do to address the harm done to the Jewish community in this country. But wait, because now we've learned the Liberal government secretly struck a deal with Marouf and are refusing to make the details of that deal public. The Liberals failed to deliver on their promise and are trying to hide it from Canadians. At a time when antisemitism is rising across Canada, the government's secrecy only deepens the hurt felt by the Jewish community and further erodes public trust. If the Liberals truly believe in combating hate, they must release the full details of this settlement and explain why they are protecting Laith Marouf. Canadians have a right to demand transparency, accountability, and a full explanation for how this government allowed taxpayer dollars to be funneled to someone who sought to spread hatred and violence, and why they then chose to cover it up. This is yet another Liberal scandal.

Letters To The Editor:

WHAT IS ON YOUR MIND? Send letters to newspaper@ocentral.com

Dear Editor:

This holiday season, Santa Claus is asking Canadians to break with tradition for a good cause. In a heartfelt letter, Santa urges families to skip leaving out milk and cookies and instead start "A New Tradition" by donating to Second Harvest, Canada's largest food rescue organization.

"You know the milk and cookies you leave out for me? They're delicious, but I've had far more than my fair share," Santa writes. "And truthfully, there are people struggling to put food on the table. There are more than 10 million Canadians experiencing hunger. That's why this year I ask that you please skip my meal and pass one on to a family who needs it instead by donating to Second Harvest."

Hunger is a growing issue in Canada with 1 in 4 people unsure where their next meal will come from. Every day, millions of Canadians struggle to put food on the table while perfectly good food goes to waste. Families shouldn't have to choose between paying bills and eating a healthy meal. By starting "A New Tradition" and donating to Second Harvest, Canadians can help feed people in need this holiday season. Every dollar donated during the month of December will be matched by the Nikita Foundation, meaning your gift will go twice as far.

Last year, Second Harvest rescued and redistributed 95 million pounds of food to more than 10,800 non-profit programs across Canada, preventing waste and fighting hunger nationwide. "Even the smallest donation can have an incredible impact," Lori Nikkel, CEO of Second Harvest, said. "One dollar can provide 10 meals of good, healthy food to people who need it most. Together, we can make sure no one goes hungry this holiday season."

Second Harvest - Santa Claus

Dear Editor:

With the holiday season fast approaching, it's important to take all necessary precautions to keep yourself and your loved ones healthy, including by ensuring your vaccines are up to date. Respiratory illness season typically begins in the fall and lasts through the winter months, when colder weather and indoor gatherings make it easier for viruses to spread. This includes several common viruses such as influenza (flu), respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and COVID-19. Currently, COVID-19 and RSV activity remain low in Ontario, but flu season is officially here, and cases are steadily increasing. The flu shot remains one of the most effective ways to protect ourselves from influenza. Each year, the vaccine is designed to cover multiple strains. Getting vaccinated reduces your risk of catching the flu and, most importantly, lowers the chance of severe illness, hospitalization and serious complications.

Flu and COVID-19 shots are already available across Ontario for people 6 months and older at participating pharmacies, doctor and nurse practitioner offices or public health units. RSV immunization is also available for eligible groups, including adults aged 75 and older, infants and pregnant women. Those at higher risk of severe illness are especially encouraged to get vaccinated early. Influenza activity is expected to peak as early as mid-December in some regions. As the vaccine takes about two weeks to reach full effectiveness, getting vaccinated now will help ensure you are protected when virus circulation is at its highest, while also reducing the spread of illness and protecting those most at risk. If you or a loved one are at higher risk for severe illness, you should talk to your health-care provider now to plan for testing and treatment.

As the holidays approach, let's all remember the simple steps that make a big difference: wash your hands, cover coughs and sneezes, clean shared surfaces regularly, and stay home if you are sick.

Dr. Kieran Moore
Chief Medical Officer of Health
Province of Ontario

Dear Editor:

Doug Ford's Ontario PC Party is mired in scandal after scandal and their party operations now seem to be spiralling out of control.

With each passing day, new reports emerge of the Ford government's fake "skill development" fund that has been used by the PCs to dole out billions of dollars to organizations led by PC insiders and friends who hire PC lobbyists.

And now, in the middle of this scandal, PC Party operations are in an upheaval. Just last week, MPP Bobbi Ann Brady's husband - PC Insider Gareth Neilson - was fired as the PC Party Executive Director after only a few months on the job.

Neilson has been a loyal PC foot soldier for many years. Prior to being promoted to PC Executive Director, Neilson worked in various other roles in PC operations until 2022 when he received a government appointment to sit on the Licence Appeal Tribunal.

Why did Doug Ford let go of MPP Bobbi Ann Brady's husband now, after years of loyalty? Chip in with a year-end donation to the New Blue!

It's hard not to wonder.

Fortunately for Neilson, he is confident that he will return to the PC Party's payroll when Doug Ford moves on as leader, saying to the media, "You serve at the will of the leader. It is what it is. I'll be back when Doug Ford's gone."

Unfortunately for Ontarians, even when Doug Ford is gone as PC leader, the PC Party won't be any different because it is a party so corrupt, it is beyond redemption.

Together, we will continue to challenge the Left, balance the narrative, and change the course.

Annie Nolan

Dear Editor:

Christmas, the time of year we all celebrate Christ. We go about with hearts full of joy and happiness not realizing the realities that phantom all around us.

The many fellow citizens struggling, living on our streets and going hungry for days. Sure, there are all kinds of social services.

But there is also the factor of dignity and human pride. Many out there feel ashamed of having to live in such a rich country under such conditions.

Don't get me wrong. I do not expect anything for free. What I do expect is a fair chance. I work three jobs. I can barely pay my rent, food and car expenses.

How is anyone living on the streets expected to make it out if a person with 3 jobs can't make it.

If I let me mind wonder I feel myself falling into a depressed state. I can't turn to no one. I can't really expect anything but the reality before me.

This is not right. We need to bring down rental rates fast. We need to take control of food prices so that people can eat again.

Meat and Chicken the staple protein in Canadian diet. Now almost impossible to buy. Who is controlling these prices?

Probably the same people that are controlling gas prices. We as Canadians are falling behind in what Canada should be. I feel betrayed and left to fend for myself. We can't turn to our politicians as it seems as they do not care.

We need Canada back. We need to help those suffering in our country. We need real leadership that we do not have in any of the choices before us. I don't know what to do.

Henry Faulk, Oshawa