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NEWS

House filibuster is putting money for military, dental care, and keeping the government lights on at risk

BY SOPHALL DUCH

A funding bill to pay for government programs, the military, and to keep departments afloat could fall victim to the ongoing filibuster in the House of Commons.

Parliamentary approval of supplementary estimates (B), which includes \$21.6-billion in proposed government spending across multiple federal organizations, is on the line if the stalemate in the House doesn't end.

"Unfortunately, if there was a delay in the approval of those supplements, it could result in the lapsing of [Canadian Armed Forces] funding," said Defence Minister Bill Blair (Scarborough Southwest, Ont.) in response to *The Hill Times* on Nov. 20.

"It's one of the reasons I'm going before committee tomorrow, to share with my parliamentary colleagues the urgency of making sure we provide to the Canadian Armed Forces the resources they need to do their job. It's our responsibility as government, but also to make sure that the money that Ukraine so urgently needs is made available to them," said Blair.

Supplementary estimates are routinely tabled throughout the year, and outline additional and unforeseen government spending needs not included in the annual main estimates. Once tabled, a subsequent supply bill—or money bill—is introduced that will authorize the expenditures.

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NEWS

What Trump's election means for Canada: 'institution of government needs a sharp wakeup call,' says Donald Savoie

Canadians do not want a wrecking ball approach, but they do want the government to do much better, warns one of the country's leading experts on the machinery of government.

BY ABBAS RANA

The takeaway for Canada from the U.S. presidential election is that the general public feels they are not receiving adequate value for the \$80-billion spent annually on wages and consultant fees, and that both politicians and public servants would be well advised to ask tough questions about how to address public dissatisfaction and meet Canadians' expectations before it's too late, says Donald Savoie, Canada's



leading expert on the machinery of government and author of a new book, *Speaking Truth to Canadians About Their Public Service*.

"At some point, the level of [Canadians'] frustration will be such, there'll be some impetus to throw a wrecking ball at it," said Donald Savoie, who holds the Canada Research Chair in Public Administration and Governance at the Université de Moncton, and is the author of 45 books on the



Not their first rodeo: Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, left, and U.S. president-elect Donald Trump. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade and courtesy Wikimedia Commons

inner workings of government and politics. "My advice is for the public service to take a good look at how it operates, a good look at its size, and it could look at how it spends resources."

Savoie said that Trump's election as U.S. president reflects the American public's decision to take a "wrecking ball approach" to its government, driven by dissatisfaction with the performance

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NEWS

PCO clerk subject of human rights complaint over Israeli-Palestinian conflict

BY ABBAS RANA

Some members of the federal public service have questioned Privy Council Office Clerk John Hannaford's neutrality following his decision to issue a statement after the Oct. 7, 2023, Hamas terrorists attack on Israel, but declined to do the same to mark the deaths of thousands of Palestinians and Lebanese in the ensuing conflict.

The public servants question why Hannaford issued a statement following the deaths of 1,200 Israelis, but didn't send out a similar email following the loss of more than 46,000 Palestinian and Lebanese lives since then.

"On Saturday [Oct. 7, 2023] morning, Canadians across the country were horrified to learn of the gruesome terrorist attacks launched by Hamas against Israel, and shocked by the terrible loss of life that occurred," Hannaford wrote in an email to all federal public servants on Oct. 11, 2023, with the headline "Attack against Israel in bold letters," and subject line "Message from John Hannaford, Clerk of the Privy Council and Secretary to the Cabinet."

"I join those around the world in unequivocally condemning these inhumane acts and in supporting Jewish people. I offer my sincere condolences for all of the innocent lives lost."

In his email, Hannaford described the Oct. 7 events as "deeply personal and painful"

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U.S. vetoes UN Security Council resolution for immediate, unconditional ceasefire in Gaza

Fourteen states on the Security Council spent days crafting a resolution that included the release of all hostages, the exchange of Palestinian prisoners, the return of the remains of hostages who have been killed, the return of Palestinian civilians to their homes in all areas of Gaza, and a full withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza.

Douglas Roche



Opinion

EDMONTON—It doesn't matter about the mounting deaths of innocent people in Gaza that have reached genocidal proportions. It doesn't matter that 14 other members of the UN Security Council want an immediate ceasefire. It doesn't matter that the Biden administration was repudiated in key battlegrounds in the recent U.S. election because it has failed to protect Gaza. The United States still singularly killed a Security Council resolution that demanded an immediate and unconditional ceasefire in the Gaza Strip.

Think about this. Fourteen states which serve on the Security Council spent days crafting a resolution that included the release of all hostages, the exchange of Palestinian prisoners, the return of the remains of hostages who have been killed, the return of Palestinian civilians to their

U.S. President Joe Biden, pictured in Ottawa on March 24, 2023. The United States vetoed a UN Security Council resolution calling the immediate and unconditional ceasefire in the Gaza Strip, which Doug Roche says in an egregious use of the veto. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garcia



homes and neighbourhoods in all areas of Gaza—including in the north—and a full withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza.

But because it did not link the release of hostages with the ceasefire, the U.S. vetoed it. This is an egregious use of the veto. It says that the U.S. will stand by Israel no matter the cost.

More than 40,000 people have been killed in Gaza over the

course of the war, according to the local health authorities, and a UN-backed panel warned of growing famine. Almost the entire population of more than two million people has been internally displaced.

The veto was the fourth time the U.S. stopped the UN Security Council from demanding a ceasefire since the war began over a year ago, when Hamas

led an attack on Israel and took more than 200 people hostage. Algeria's ambassador to the UN Amar Bendjama, one of the sponsors of the resolution, was livid: "Today's message is clear to the Israeli occupying power—you may continue your genocide ... with complete impunity. In this chamber—you enjoy immunity."

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 **ROGERS**



U.S. vetoes UN Security Council resolution for immediate, unconditional ceasefire in Gaza

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He added: “To the Palestinian people, another clear message—while the overwhelming majority of the world stands in solidarity with your plight, others remain indifferent to your suffering.”

How come one country, all by itself, can stop world progress? If all the implications of that question could be figured out, maybe we could steer the world to peace.

The UN’s Charter assigns to the Security Council responsibility to maintain the world’s “peace and security.” But here’s the catch: the founding fathers allowed the five permanent members of the council to hold a veto. Thus, the U.S., Russia, the United Kingdom, France, and China each can veto a resolution. It takes nine votes of the 15 members to pass a resolution, but any one of the five can block it. This doesn’t make any sense. But Winston Churchill, Franklin D. Roosevelt and Joseph Stalin demanded this right at the outset, or their countries would not have joined the UN. Take it or leave it.

As of March 2024, Russia—formerly the Soviet Union—has used its veto 128 times, the U.S. 85 times—47 times to protect Israel—, the U.K. 29 times, China



Pope Francis wants an international investigation into the Gaza war to determine whether Israel’s ground offensive in Gaza constitutes genocide. Photograph courtesy of Flickr/Catholic Church in England and Wales

19 times, and France 18 times. The veto is an obvious abuse of power, and everyone wrings their hands over it. But the UN can’t get rid of it because a veto-possessing state would veto a resolution to abolish the veto.

Other solutions are being tried. In 2022, the General Assembly adopted a resolution ordering any Security Council state casting a veto to come to the General Assembly to explain its

actions. This was thought to be a somewhat mitigating influence, but apparently not. The Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft, a U.S. think tank, has proposed that the Charter be amended to require a state wanting to cast a veto to be accompanied by at least one other state; or that a single veto be over-ridden by a two-thirds majority in the General Assembly. In other words, there are solutions to limit the

power of the veto—if there was a sufficient degree of dialogue and desire for co-operation, not to mention comity, in the international community today.

But the reverse obtains. The international atmosphere is poisonous. Many people are losing faith in the UN. Thus, the demand for more munitions grows. The world becomes far more dangerous. Pope Francis wants an international investigation into the Gaza

war to determine whether Israel’s ground offensive in Gaza constitutes a genocide.

So I ask myself: did the U.S. have to veto the Gaza ceasefire resolution? Was it really worth it to keep insisting on the precise location in the resolution of the demand to release the hostages? Has the art of compromise been jettisoned in the new age of conflict?

These are questions our political leaders should be pondering. I was shocked when the U.S. cast this latest veto, which will have a direct impact on hundreds of thousands of lives and perhaps beyond that. I thought somewhere in the Canadian Parliament, an elected Member would get up and ask the government for its views on how to bring peace to the Middle East amid the UN veto situation. I watched the whole of the hour-long Question Period that day, and not once was the subject raised.

The suffering people of Gaza wait for justice. And wait.

Former Senator Douglas Roche’s latest book is *Keep Hope Alive: Essays for a War-free World* (Amazon).

The Hill Times

Heard on the Hill

Trudeau meets #MilkshakeMonday guru Larry Canam

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home bar, making milkshakes or cocktails.”

In last Monday’s video, Canam adds three scoops of vanilla ice cream into a vintage olive-green blender, to which Trudeau adds half a cup of milk, followed by a generous glug of maple syrup.

“How much?” asks the prime minister, pausing with the glass bottle in hand. “Just measure with your heart,” instructs the affable Canam, who published a recipe book of his Insta-worthy milkshakes on Oct. 29.

Canam whizzes up the mixture, pours it into a tall, frosty glass, tops the drink with maple-infused whipped cream, and asks Trudeau to add a maple cream cookie for garnish.

TikTok Canada responded to the collab with a frosty quip with its own on Nov. 20 on X: “It’s great to see PM @JustinTrudeau collaborating with New Brunswick TikTok creator Larry Canam, one of many Canadian creators supported by @TikTokCanada’s local creator team—a team that would be eliminated under the government’s shutdown order,” alluding

to the federal government’s recent order for the Beijing-owned social media site to close its corporate offices in Toronto and Vancouver over national security concerns.

Trudeau and daughter catch up with Biden and family

Meanwhile, in Rio de Janeiro at the G20 last week, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and his teenage daughter Ella-Grace

popped up in the Twitter feed of Chris D. Jackson, an American elected official from Tennessee.

“President [Joe] Biden shares a special moment with daughter Ashley and granddaughter Natalie Biden, alongside Prime Minister Trudeau and his daughter Ella-Grace, during this week’s G20 Summit. A heartfelt reminder of the bond between our First Families and the enduring friendship between the U.S. and Canada,” Jackson posted, along with a photo, on Nov. 19.

This isn’t the first time Ella-Grace has met Biden, as the U.S. president came to her house when he was in Ottawa in March 2023.



U.S. President Joe Biden, left, Ella-Grace Trudeau, Ashley Biden, Natalie Biden, and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. Photograph courtesy of Twitter/X.

Peace Train from Vancouver arrives in Ottawa



NDP MP Don Davies, centre, met with Peace Train participants John, far left, Diane, Nora and Duncan on Nov. 14 in Vancouver. Photograph courtesy of X

Nine days since departing from Vancouver, the 40-member “Peace Train” arrived in Ottawa on Nov. 23 where participants plan to bring their message directly to Parliamentarians.

Described as a crowd of mostly retirees, the Peace Train participants made the trek to Ottawa “to ask government to create a Centre of Excellence for Peace and Justice,” according to a press release.

“Participants intend to ask the federal government to divert a small fraction of the amount of money it spends on the military to establish and fund a Centre of Excellence for Peace and Justice

focused on research, education, and training in conflict resolution, diplomacy, and peace operations,” reads the release.

NDP MP Don Davies posted a photo of his meeting with Peace Train members John, Diane, Nora and Duncan in Vancouver prior to their departure on Nov. 14. According to the release, the train was expected to arrive in Ottawa on Nov. 23 followed by “a multi-party reception” and public events in Ottawa after Peace Train participants meet Members of Parliament to make their request in person.

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