

REES' Pieces

Did Democracy Unexpectedly Find Two Saviours?

If you think back to last fall, leaders of the FREE World were saying democracy was being threatened. In North America, we relished in the fact, political unrest elsewhere and public demonstrations were increasing, but not here.

We were mired getting to the last stages of the pandemic, while thinking, "Thank heavens people in North America" are not as volatile and unrest of that magnitude would never happen in North America". As credit card bills for Christmas 2021 started arriving, Canada suffered the "Freedom Convoy".

At first it was like a joke, people were rushing to donate \$20, \$50, or more and waving from overpasses as semi's motored down 100 series highways headed to Ottawa. Remember those instances?

After three weeks of a paralyzed Downtown Ottawa and similar convoys showing up across Canada, it was no longer a joke. People were worried and scared of the outcome. Revelations about \$\$\$\$-Millions of convoy funding coming across the border; some Republican congress-people and senators openly voiced approval for Canada's "Freedom Convoy" woes, providing a base of support for the Federal Governments drastic action of implementing the Emergency Measures Act. Not everyone appreciated the move, and yes some fed moves were questionable, but within a few days, the convoy was all but over. The scars remained and still linger.

What the Freedom Convoy demonstrates is when people are unhappy, a handful of rebellious people with ulterior motives, such as "overthrow" the government can dupe a stellar organization like the Canadian Truckers Association with the promise to coordinate the "Freedom Convoy" to support apprehensions truckers felt about vaccination mandates. Truckers' woes were forgotten and the mutiny attitudes grew.

Instead of being a "Freedom Convoy" the initiative evolved into a mutiny causing irreparable harm to Canada's "peacekeeper" image.

No sooner had the convoy fiasco started settling down, the world faced increased threats of Russian leader, Putin, flexing his ego and trying to convince fellow-Russians, he needed to save Ukraine from various facets of society to be united with former homeland patriots in Russia.

As bad as the current onslaught of bombing, destroying entire cities and killing innocent people is Putin, in one way, might single-handedly became the catalyst to "save democracy from destroying itself". Constant attacks on residential areas and committing "war crimes" woke up the Free World causing the commitment to make NATO more united and stronger.

I do not have a glimmer of support for Putin and his activities. But let's also remember, Putin needed an adversary to make everything happen.

Enter, Volodymyr Zelensky, a former actor and comedian with no prior political experience who in 2019 became the sixth President of Ukraine, scoring a record 73.22% of the popular vote in the run-off against incumbent Petro Poroshenko. President Zelensky has become the face of Ukraine's resistance against Russian President Vladimir Putin's invading forces, with impassioned virtual speeches to U.S. Congress and Senate; Canadian Parliament; governments in UK, Germany, France, European Council, NATO and many more.

Putin might have started the jelling, but Zelensky with his impassioned speeches and public appearances is the one who pushed it over the top just as he did in standing up to US President Donald Trump during the infamous taped phone call in 2019-2020.

As a result of individual actions, it might be fair to say the two of them, in their own ways, have quickly united the Free World in ways much faster than leaders of over 30 NATO member countries could conceivably achieve.

I'll suggest the two of them will go down in history as the "World's Democracy Saviors".

On a separate note, it is interesting to see how the Mass Casualty Commission has somewhat changed its "high handed attitude" and started providing some things family members of victims have been demanding. The jury is still out. If as many allege, will the findings favour the higher ups in government and RCMP, or will it be transparent?

In closing, I would draw your attention to seven feature pages on Renewable Energy in this issue, and our special offer to raise funds for Portapique Community Build-up Project.

Have a great month enjoying April Showers.

Maurice

Letters to the editor

This is an open forum for your opinions and comments.

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OP-ED

Op-ed from Becky Druhan

Child Care that Cares for Everyone

As a parent, I understand the challenges families face when they need child care. Availability, cost, access to quality care - these are all real barriers and hurdles for Nova Scotia families.

The needs of families - the families accessing care today and the families looking for care in the future - are at the heart of the work currently underway to transform our child-care system through the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement.

The agreement supports a five-year journey to re-

Mental Health Support Always Available

duce daily fees for regulated child care to \$10 per day, on average, to give families access to child care when and where they need it, and to ensure child-care providers are compensated fairly as they provide high quality care for our youngest Nova Scotians. We are building a system of child care that cares for everyone: families, children, early childhood educators and operators.

We need to realize this vision with the people who have the expertise, knowledge and passion to deliver high quality child care. I have committed to bring together people from the child-care community across Nova Scotia to ensure that the people who

know this sector best provide input as we build the future of child care for Nova Scotians.

I want to assure the sector that we heard you and we listened. The Province will provide stable funding to offset the 25 per cent fee reductions for parents and a one-time grant to alleviate pressures facing child-care operators during this transition period.

We recognize and value the important role private operators, non-profit operators, and early childhood educators play in caring for our children. We want all operators to succeed and have the opportunity to become part of a historic system that serves children,

families and the economy.

We remain committed to the principles of the agreement to ensure that Nova Scotians have high quality child care that is accessible, affordable and inclusive - child care that cares for everyone.

Becky Druhan is Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development

Dear Editor:

Over the last two years, Nova Scotians of all ages have been impacted by unprecedented grief and loss. The COVID-19 pandemic and public health restrictions have prevented people from coming together, supporting one another, or participating in many traditional rituals of mourning and celebration. Individuals have suffered physical, emotional, or mental health challenges and have found themselves in a state of depression, anxiety and burnout. Our healthcare professionals and other frontline workers have experienced unique hardships and health risks while continuing to do their jobs throughout the pandemic.

We are all feeling a general sense of loss and disconnect. Our children have lost some of life's milestone experiences, such as graduation or first Christmas concerts. Family visits, weddings, reunions have been limited or cancelled. Community tragedies have led to unimaginable fear, pain, and loss and has impacted communities with grief and trauma.

As the new year got underway, hopes were renewed when we thought the corner was turned. However, it soon became clear that grief and trauma seem to have taken firm hold of far too many. The sadness and yearning that comes with grief and the need to reconnect with friends and family continues to manifest itself. Feelings of fear and guilt often experienced by those who have lost a loved one, are unfortunately a complex part of grieving. The Nova Scotia Hospice Palliative Care Association (NSHPCA) believes that when communities come together in support of one another, that sense of hopelessness is lessened. In early February, the NSHPCA held a province-wide virtual Weary Heart Café. Through the sharing of stories, hearts and spirits were uplifted, an activity that resonated with so many Nova Scotians.

Grief is different for everyone. Whether it is a community coming together in support of one another or simply individuals willing to listen to someone sharing a story or partici-

pating in a conversation, these are the activities that will bring hope and encouragement to the grieving person.

Social science research tells us that, with appropriate community support, most people who grieve will not require intensive professional services or counselling. Community support can include education about what grief looks like, how to support those who are grieving, and providing supportive spaces to talk.

If Nova Scotians are to heal, we need to gather and work together to implement best practices, expand resources, and respond to the increasing need for accessible grief supports in our communities. Given the complexities of our world, it will take a collective effort to bring resolve. In so doing, many Nova Scotians will find hope and a means of elevating their spirits.

Colleen Cash, Executive Director, Nova Scotia Hospice Palliative Care Association and can be reached at: ccash@nshpca.ca, 902-818-9139

The Shoreline Journal

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Kennedy's Deli - Ryland Ave

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Rath Eastlink Comm Centre
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