

# LETTERS

## Tory disarray

Kudos to Marie-Danielle Smith for her piece on the federal Conservative Party (“The shaky blue tent,” *Politics*, July 2021). The summary reminded me of a political editorial cartoon from 1967 when the party went into disarray over challenging then-leader John Diefenbaker. The cartoon showed a wagon train circling in defence, guns blazing. The caption read: “When the wagon train of the Conservative Party is under attack, they circle and fire inwards.” With all the innuendos and disagreements that Smith refers to, it seems this is happening again. What the party needs to do is get off the bandwagon of getting rid of the Trudeau Liberals and instead work at developing some good policies and programs. Just beating up on the governing party is not going to do it.

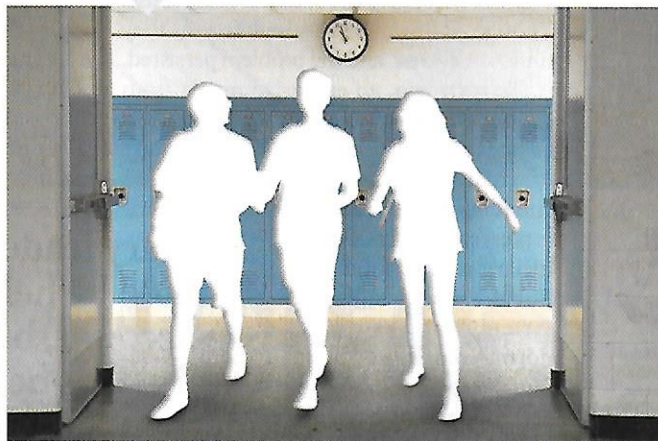
Rod McLeod, Regina

## Returning artifacts

The timing of “When it’s time to give back” (*Culture*, July 2021) was in sync with my own time to give back. A few weeks ago, I visited the Museum of Anthropology in Vancouver, where there are wonderful Indigenous cultural artifacts on display. When I got to the cedar baskets, I suddenly thought, “I have to give mine back.” I knew at that moment they didn’t belong in the museum, but to the people who made them. My great-grandparents came to B.C. from Scotland in 1900 and had a farm. They sometimes traded produce for baskets, and several were passed to the next generation. Among my generation, there are nine baskets to return; fortunately, my brother knows where they came from as our grandmother told him. A repatriation ceremony is being planned and it

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*C.J. Jennissen, Sherwood Park, Alta.*



feels so great, as a family, to send the baskets home. When so much has been taken from First Peoples in Canada, it is only right to give a little back.

*Laura Jones, New Westminster, B.C.*

## Pricey houses

A suggestion to help curb the outrageous bidding on market homes for primary residences (“Nowhere to buy,” *Real Estate*, June 2021) would be to tax the amount that exceeds the “assessed value” at 100 percent capital gains. The amount up to the assessed value would still be tax-free and make the listed price meaningless... which it currently is. This might force governments to calculate a more realistic assessed value, which in turn would provide a fair point-of-sale for a listed property.

*G. Deering, Port Coquitlam, B.C.*

## Judging a judge

I read the article about retired Supreme Court of Canada justice Rosalie Silberman Abella with interest (“Rosie Abella said she’d answer questions when she turned 75,” *Supreme Court*, July 2021). There is much to like about her as a Canadian, as a woman and, especially, as a human being. However, it is clear that Madam Abella needed much more time in the cut and thrust of the court system as a working lawyer before her appointment as a judge at just 29 years of age. Her understanding of the fact that parliamentary supremacy in Canada is a constitutional principle is underdeveloped, to say the least. The courts are the mechanism that upholds the rule of law established by Parliament and not, as she stated, “the people in the democratic uni-

verse who have the right to make those decisions that a legislator may not be comfortable making.” What is most disconcerting are her final thoughts about past Supreme Court decisions that likely stretched the intent of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms beyond what its framers envisioned. “We have time on our side,” she told journalist Paul Wells. “And history. Time will tell us whether it turned out to be the right decision or not for the public. And if it wasn’t, another court will change it. Or the government will change it.” Little solace for those whose livelihoods were jettisoned by delusory activism rather than clear-headed common law.

*John Challinor II, Milton, Ont.*

## Vax supply

I am disappointed in Scott Gilmore’s choices in the June issue (“The partisan polemic,” *Politics*, June 2021). In an article that was supposed to be non-partisan, Gilmore decided to repeat Erin O’Toole’s nonsensical claim that the federal government has not procured as many doses of COVID-19 vaccines as it ought to have. A non-partisan article would have acknowledged that the WHO is correct in pointing out that Canada has a disproportionate share of the global vaccine supply. In a world where vaccination rates are limited by the number of available vaccine doses, every vaccine dose we get today is one that a poorer country will not get until later. This is not merely a moral failing on the part of Canada. The rise of variants of concern, which vaccines may provide less protection against, is directly connected to how many people get infected with COVID-19. The vaccine dose I will receive next week would have provided