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Ticked Off
That the city doesn't enforce the unsightly property bylaw. While people don't have to water lawns they do need to mow what ever grows there. I am tired of weed field next door spreading seeds into my yard.

Ticked Off
With the promise to fix our health system in 90 days, fast forward two-plus years and we can smile and brag about this being the way we get things done in Alberta. ER rooms still waiting and would be nice to get a doctor, but hey, nice uni-forms and fancy ambulances.

Ticked Off
So you want to separate from Canada but Alberta wants a new pipeline to be federally supported. What do you think will happen to it if Alberta sep-arates? If certainly won't be fed-erally supported.

Ticked Off
The only reason the Liberals don't like Alberta talking about separation is that if we go the gravy train is over.

Ticked Off
To commenter who claims surgery wait times are less than half in B.C. than Alberta is simply false. At my ortho surgery orientation here in MH seven out of 20 patients were from B.C., including two from Vancouver and Ladysmith.

Ticked Off
Why is there not something done about the E-bikes speeding and riding double? Someone is going to get hurt big time. Where are the bylaw?

Ticked Off
Health care is great unless you get sick.

Ticked Off
We moved here from B.C. a few years ago and the first time we went back to B.C. wearing our

Ticked Off
&
Tickled Pink

SPEAK YOUR MIND

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Ticked Off and Tickled Pink provides a venue for the free exchange of ideas in our commu-nity. While we encourage com-ments on every topic, the News reserves the right to edit them for length, timeliness, libel and decency. No identifying factors can be present in the submissions. new Alberta plates we had our first car keying. Suggest newcom-ers keyed here get their plates changed.

Tickled Pink
If someone would explain 'the premier's question'. As right now it makes no sense. Why not just: Stay/no referendum or have a ref-erendum, and done? And save a bundle on having another vote.

Ticked Off
That no one is explaining 'that' question's validity. Is it two separate questions going onto ballot, or just one? In which case, is this a legal question at all? (Editor's note: The question is this: "Should Alberta remain a prov-ince of Canada, or should the Government of Alberta com-mence the legal process required under the Canadian Constitution to hold a binding provincial refer-endum on whether or not Alberta should separate from Canada?" It's a word salad for sure, but it boils down to two choices. 1) Remain in Canada. 2) Hold a ref-erendum on separation. As far as legality, Smith suggests the ques-tion was carefully crafted to avoid any legal issues, but it would be fair to say she isn't exactly an expert on constitutional law. She's trying to appease both sides of an



issue with this question. How's that working out? Not great.)

Tickled Pink
I thought the Cypress Hills was a park. I didn't know we could harvest trees. How about a map to the tree cutting areas? (Editor's note: Would you settle for a map to the office where you can apply for a special permit to harvest a spec-ific number of trees?)

Ticked Off
I shouldn't have to pay prop-erty taxes to schools when I don't have kids. Your kids, your respon-sibility. (Editor's note: And yet, we all require other humans to be educated in order for society to operate, and for experts in a field to exist when we need an expert in a field we aren't familiar with.)

Ticked Off
Premier Smith has grossly exaggerated the number of Alberta separatists by stating "a million or more Albertans have given up on the country over-

night." At best, there are 300,000 without having verified that list of residents.

Tickled Pink
I live in a home/neighbour-hood where I can still hang my clothes and laundry on the clothesline when the weather is nice. Ahh — the scent of air-dried sheets (and nothing else).

Ticked Off
Merge does not mean stop in the lane and wait, it means while signalling your intentions keep proceeding in the lane until space appears and merge. Oh right, that means you also have to know how to signal. I give up.

Tickled Pink
If Premier Danielle Smith would read the News poll ques-tions, then she would realize the majority of readers are against just about everything she is doing.

Ticked Off
It seems to me penalties for

breaking the law are too light. Extortionists who shoot at a house where people are occu-pying should be charged with attempted murder.

Tickled Pink
If Alberta could trade our premier for Manitoba's pre-mier. To sweeten the deal we could throw in Justin Wright and one other unqualified minister to be named later.

Tickled Pink
To Mr. Guilbeault, "So long, farewell, Auf Wiederseh'n, goodnight."

It is about time Guilbeault got out of government. I will not miss him at all.

Ticked Off
Justin Wright does not have the qualifications for his new title. That job should have gone to a person with a medi-cal background. He is only in it for the wage.

Smith's policy on immigration is wrong

Former Alberta premier Jason Kenney launched the prov-ince's multimillion dollar "Alberta is Calling" campaign in August 2022, luring residents of other provinces to move west for higher wages, more affordable housing, shorter commutes and greater opportunity.

The province spent over \$17 million on the massive ad cam-paign, handing out moving bonuses to convince people to move to Alberta. Billboards and digital ads blanketed Toronto, Vancouver and other major cities, urging Canadians to consider a fresh start in Alberta.

Kenney's successor, Premier Danielle Smith, has changed the tone, blaming rapid population growth as the root causes of the province's strains on housing, healthcare, and public infrastruc-ture. Her solution is to hold a ref-erendum on restricting social ser-vices for certain immigrants. It appears she is using newcomers as a scapegoat to distract from her own government's planning failures, inflation and provincial budget deficits caused by fluctu-ating oil prices. Obviously, popu-lation growth would create pres-sures on housing etc. but it's the failure of the government not to plan for such an eventuality.

Premier Smith is planning to place the immigration issue to a referendum in October requir-ing certain immigrants to pay fees to access health care and education or making non-per-manent residents ineligible for certain services until they've lived in the province for a year.

The CEO for the Institute for Canadian Citizenship, Daniel Bernhard, says Alberta would be shooting itself in the foot if it moves forward with the pro-posed policies.

"Immigration is not a gift that we give to immigrants. It is (a) service that we do to ourselves to ensure that we have the talent to deliver the public services that we need and to fuel business

growth," said Bernhard, adding that it would only make life hard-er for newcomers, some of whom work in the sectors Smith says are being overwhelmed by popula-tion growth, including nurses, support workers for the elderly and early childhood teachers. Bernhard predicts that other provinces will use the issue as an opportunity to attract immigrants away from Alberta.

"We bring them here legally, (and) they want to contribute, they want to give back to the country, to the community, but on the other hand we are kind of blaming them for a lot of issues that exist no matter with or with-out immigration," said Sally Zhao, CEO of The Immigrant Education Society of Calgary, in an interview with Global News.

Data from Statistics Canada shows immigration and migra-tion levels to Alberta have dropped considerably since 2023-2024, when the province gained 220,000 residents. Of that, just over 100,000 were non-perma-nent residents, such as interna-tional students, temporary for-eign workers and family.

In an article in the Financial Post on Oct. 24, 2022, Victor Dodig president and CEO of Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, pointed out that without immigration, Canada's working-age population would be shrinking by 150,000 people every year. This would present signifi-cant challenges that all Canadians would feel since 60 per cent of GDP growth comes from popula-tion growth. He added that Canada is facing an aging popula-tion and the pandemic that accel-erated retirement.

NDP Leader Naheed Nenshi accused Smith of "blaming and scapegoating" immigrants. "This exercise is simply about distrac-tion after distraction about distrac-tion to avoid talking about how bad the Conservatives are with money, how bad they are with the budget, how bad they are with

economy," said Nenshi.

In an interview with CTV News, Mount Royal University political scientist Duane Bratt called it a "head tax," which draws connotations to Canada's discriminatory past. "She is link-ing the budget crisis to immigra-tion—that is clear. And this is a crackdown on immigrants and let's be clear, a crackdown on non-white immigrants," he said.

Groups who offer education and other services to newcomers in Alberta also reacted negatively to the premier's announcement, some fearing that the proposed referendum on Alberta's immigra-tion policies could stir up ant-immigrant sentiment.

Instead of using immigration as a punching bag, the Premier would be well-advised to concen-trate dealing with the main issue facing the province - Alberta sep-aration. Smith's official stance is that she opposes formal separa-tion from Canada but supports the right of Albertans to hold a referendum to publicly debate the issue. Her government is cur-rently appealing a court decision that struck down a major pro-independence citizen petition.

Without denouncing the sep-aratists, she has been advocating a Sovereign Alberta within a United Canada which allows the provincial legislature to refuse to enforce specific federal laws it deems unconstitutional or harmful to provincial interests. Smith generally frames her actions as leverage to secure bet-ter fiscal, energy, and environ-mental deals from Ottawa rather than actively pursuing a total.

Within her UCP, there is a vocal and highly active wing of her party which strongly advocates independence. Her ongoing court-blocked refer-endums are widely viewed as a tactical maneuver to avoid a definitive commitment to full independence.

Former Alberta premier Jason Kenney, who has publicly

denounced separation, says it's high time federal MPs take a stand and fight against those who wish to see Canada torn apart. "Federalists need to start kicking it into gear here. I think we've allowed the separatists to almost completely dominate the debate on the process for the past year."

Supporting him, Calgary Liberal MP Corey Hogan said it's important for Alberta MPs of all stripes to speak out ahead of a possible vote. "If this goes ahead, I think all Alberta MPs are going to need to stand up and fight for this country. The prime minister is from Alberta, and I would cer-tainly counsel to him that he uses that voice as an Albertan."

Among the notable Alberta politicians who have been silent on this issue include federal Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre who grew up in Alberta and represents an Alberta riding, former Alberta prime ministers Stephen Harper and Joe Clark and Reform party leader Preston Manning. Their silence is deafen-ing. Where are these Alberta poli-ticians when we need them?

As an immigrant, I am insult-ed to be considered a burden on society and that the Premier thinks immigrants don't con-tribute to the economy. All she has to do is walk through our hospitals and other public facili-ties to view the contribution that the immigrant workforce is making to this province.

And please note Madame Premier, on a personal level, this immigrant succeeded in becom-ing perhaps the only newspaper owner of colour in Canada, who employed 11 full time and sev-eral part-time staff – all of whom paid taxes increasing the provin-cial coffers.

In August 1972, Canada wel-comed thousands of Asian refu-gees expelled by Ugandan dicta-tor Idi Amin. This was the first time Canada accepted an influx of non-white refugees to Canada. Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau



Mansoor Ladha
Mansoor's Musings

allowed 6,000 Asian non-white refugees to Canada, among them were Shia Ismaili Muslims who have contributed immensely to this country in politics, business and academic life.

A noteworthy victim of the Uganda expulsion is the current Alberta lieutenant governor Salma Lakhani, proudly repre-senting the Crown in the prov-ince. Also, the NDP Opposition leader Naheed Nenshi, a three-time mayor of Calgary, whose parents had to flee their country, Tanzania in 1971. There are sev-eral other examples of immi-grants who have contributed and served the province and the country with distinction.

Canada is reputed as a haven for immigrants and as a country which welcomes refugees and people fleeing from starvation and political turmoil. Let's not tarnish that image. This is the time to shout to point out that Smith's proposed policy on immigration is wrong and should not be supported.

Mansoor Ladha is a Calgary-based journalist, travel writer and author of five non-fiction books: Canadian Experience, Aga Khan: Bridge between east & West, Memoirs of a Muhindi: Fleeing East Africa for the West, Off the Cuff and A Portrait in Pluralism: Aga Khan's Shia Ismaili Muslims. His first novel, Urge to Merge, is scheduled to be published in June.