

A Vision When Time Is of the Essence

Although, known for its multiculturalism and diversity, Canada is not a perfect country. Many citizens face a variety of inequalities due to the structural historical problems in Canada, such as this country's treatment of Indigenous People. Just because we aren't a perfect country, doesn't mean we shouldn't try to solve these inequalities. This is not to say Canada is the only country with these inequalities. These freedoms have not always been for everyone. People of different races, genders, sexual orientations have faced inequalities. My vision for Canada's public policy is to address as well as to eliminate these inequalities and disparities, time is of the essence.

When looking at inequality, we need to appreciate what exactly we are trying to make equal. For example, over one quarter of the people placed in provincial and territorial correctional services are Indigenous, even though making up only five percent of Canada's total population (Department of Justice, 2019). The solution to this is not to arrest more white people. We need to understand why there are different outcomes, when people do the same offenses. How do we fix these inequalities so that we do not end up in a race to the bottom? Perhaps minimizing the over policing in these communities is required? When we look into inequalities within our country, we view many; such as opportunity, income, and racial inequality within many of our social groups.

Inequalities have caused damage to many communities, in Keeley's paper on income inequality says 'There is the possible impact of inequality on people's well-being – everything from health to happiness' (Brian Keeley, 2015). This idea of the possible impact of inequality on one's mental health increases the argument on why we need to eliminate inequalities. These inequalities also can have an impact on determination to try new skills and climb up the social ladder as Keeley stated later on. Equality isn't about just fixing the problem because it hurts someone, it's fixing it because it hurts all in various ways.

Inequalities in the treatment of people when in contact with police vary. As a white male myself I do not fear being pulled over for a speeding ticket compared to a Black or Indigenous man would. At the same time we need to look at police misconduct as a whole rather than just racially motivated misconduct. An important change that I would make would be amending current legislation requirements for Canadian police data to create a national database of police misconduct records; including complaints that are publicly accessible. This data would be reported to Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics at Statistics Canada, similarly to homicide and other crime data. This database would provide both the Department of Justice and the public with the information allowing for research into police misconduct. Without having a complete understanding of police complaints and misconduct, it is much harder to create change.

In Dale Eisler's paper on Canada's biggest policy failure, he talks about the education inequality between Indigenous and non-Indigenous (Dale Eisler, 2018). While Eisler gives possible solutions to these problems, he agrees that "Alone they will not resolve issues that are deeply embedded in a history of colonialism, clash of cultures and the racism evident in Canadian society." As a leader the reform I would like to create around education in Indigenous

communities is a 2 year study on why the high school dropout rate is so high within Indigenous communities and what are some solutions to lower it. Depending on what the studies conclude, we as a nation will enact and implement policies to help the Indigenous Peoples regarding their dropout rate. At the same time as the study is taking place, another policy to enable Indigenous teens skills and interest to be implemented into the Canadian public school system.

Wealth and income inequalities affect each and every Canadian differently. From a single parent trying to make car payments to a homeless person trying to pay for a hotel room that night. In order to help recover from the COVID-19 Pandemic as well as eliminate the income inequality, I would like to provide a Universal Basic Income (UBI) of \$1000 a month to every Canadian over the age of 18. Former U.S Democratic Presidential Candidate, Andrew Yang and the Canadian Green Party have also promised a UBI, if they were elected. Studies have shown when an individual is homeless or living in poverty, providing them with financial or housing support will reduce policing and medical costs of the individual (Banerjee, Abhijit, et al, 2016). A UBI could help improve their health and nutrition as well as supporting transitions into the workforce again. The UBI would not do away with employment insurance (EI) for the unemployed. The UBI would be there to help in those situations when something unexpected happens or rent goes up. A UBI would be extremely beneficial for Canadians who are disabled, living in poverty as well as those impacted by the current pandemic.

The impact of my public policy changes would be reducing the inequalities between one another. These changes help ensure minimizing these prominent issues in Canadian public policy, ensuring all are starting at the same place. Although there are already many policies to address these inequalities, they still don't allow for the basic inequalities in income, opportunity or education. These public policies are a way for our nation to be reshaped providing the basic equalities for all. These ideas for public policy is not my complete vision for our nation, this is my vision of what needs to be done immediately. We all know there is not one solution for all. By making these changes in a time of essence, we as a nation will be ready for the challenges and have aims for a better future.

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