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health and to safety at the center of our strategy. All this will lead to the dignity of having a safe and affordable place to live. That's an approach that is absolutely human rights-based, but wording it as certain people have advocated, I think, can have consequences that could result in profound affronts to human dignity.

J.N.: *In your 2017 budget, you announced investments of more than \$11 billion over 10 years to make access to housing easier, but most of that money will only start to be spent in 2019, an election year. What do you say to the 1.6 million Canadian households that are still waiting for adequate housing?*

J.T.: Announcing an investment and spending the money tomorrow won't help anyone if we haven't built new affordable housing units first and if we haven't restored our existing, substandard housing stock. It will take some time, and we're making a maximum of effort because we understand that there's a pressing need. We're working on speeding up that process. I think people understand that if we spread the money around immediately without having new housing to invest it in, it will go straight into the pockets of the landlords of existing affordable housing units, without really solving the problem in the long term.

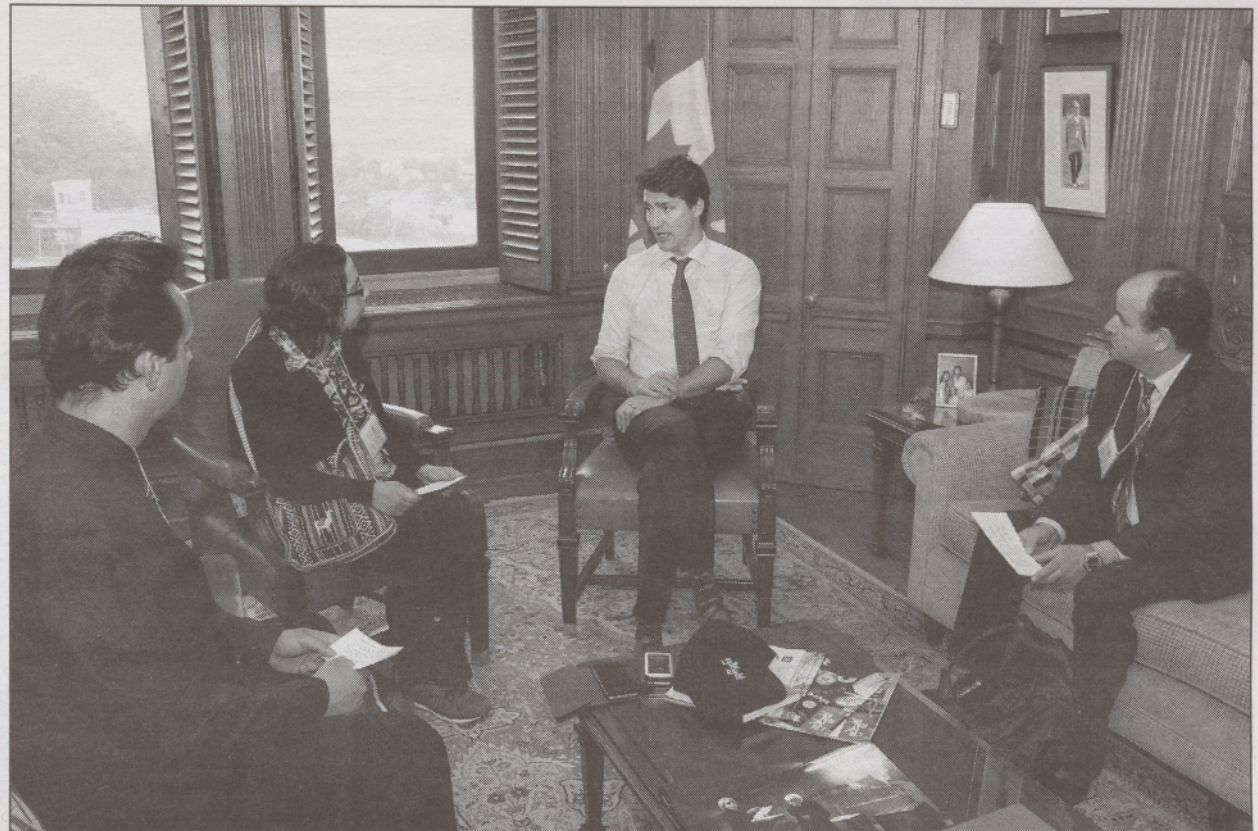
I.R.: *According to the international NGO ONE, 130 million girls around the world don't have access to schooling. One billion women don't have bank accounts. Every day, 39,000 girls around the world are forced into marriage. Even in Canada, women don't receive equal pay for equal work. You've made ensuring women's equality a priority for the G7. What measures taken by the G7 will change the lives of women?*

J.T.: That's a big priority for me. We've created an advisory council for gender equality that is bringing together leaders around the world to advise us and recommend actions that the G7 can take. One of those recommendations is making education accessible to girls, particularly girls who are living in crisis situations, in contexts of civil war and in refugee camps.

We know access to education will transform their lives, their families, their communities and our world. Therefore, the G-7 is making investments of several hundred million dollars around the world, targeted toward the education of girls and women in difficult or crisis situations.

That's in addition to the measures we're taking to ensure equality and pay equity. Despite the progress we've made in the past few years, Canada is still far behind the OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) average for pay equity.

That's why we're making proactive proposals for pay equity that will make a big difference. The argument for women's equality and women's independence is not just a moral argument, it's not just the right thing to do. It's also an economic argument; it's the *smart* thing to do. If more women succeed, we'll be better off economically and have more economic growth for the community. The solutions that will be proposed will often be better solutions, better decisions. It's something we're doing



MARIO ALBERTO REYES ZAMORA

L'itinéraire vendors Jean-Claude Nault (from left), Isabelle Raymond and Mostapha Lotfi interview Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, in his Parliament office in Ottawa, Canada's national capital.

for all sorts of reasons.

M.L.: *Last year, more than 20,000 migrants crossed the Canadian border – most of them at Lacolle – to seek asylum. Everything indicates that we'll reach a new record this summer. In Quebec, these people are putting enormous pressure on the resources available to homeless people, including housing, food banks, soup kitchens and clothing outlets. What are you going to do to help frontline organizations respond to this wave of migrants? Will you compensate the Quebec government for these extra expenses?*

J.T.: We all recognize that immigration is a source of strength, of growth and of benefits for our society. We have an aging population, we have fewer and fewer children being born, so we need to bring immigrants here and have them succeed. Having said that, we have a rigorous immigration system and there are rules that we apply when the irregular arrival of people causes legitimate concern.

I can reassure you that any people who arrive and request asylum will have their claims reviewed to see if in fact they are legitimate asylum seekers – that is to say, fleeing war, terrorism, persecution or violence. If they aren't, they will be sent home. We also have a (regular) immigration system through which they can apply.

The asylum system exists for refugees. Within that system, we recognize that additional costs are created for our health systems (and) for our housing systems. Yes, the federal government is working with the provinces to ensure that money (spent to support asylum seekers) is not taken away from other people in need.

J.N.: *The Quebec government and the city of Montreal have agreed to let local*

organizations determine the priorities of their homelessness strategies. We don't know yet what Ottawa's approach will be to respond to the specific needs of communities. In Vancouver, the needs aren't necessarily the same as the needs in Montreal. Can you tell us if, before establishing new programs, the federal housing strategy will ensure that existing organizations are funded?

J.T.: I can tell you that our strategy and our approach is to work with the communities and to acknowledge that the needs and the solutions differ from one region to another, from one city to another and sometimes from one neighborhood to another.

The real experts are the people who are on the ground, who do the work and who know their community. These people are best placed to support empowerment and success and help people regain their dignity and reintegrate into society, which is very important for me. Blanket solutions generated in Ottawa and applied indiscriminately in the rest of the country without listening to and fully involving community organizations aren't real solutions at all.

I can assure you that the minister responsible, Jean-Yves Duclos, and his parliamentary secretary, Adam Vaughn, who has always been an expert in homelessness issues as a result of his work on the Toronto City Council, have been heavily involved in this process.

We're listening, working with, and, most importantly, continuing to value the extraordinary work done by community organizations on the ground as well as social enterprises.

I.R.: *You have chosen to make indigenous peoples a priority. You have made official*

apologies, created commissions of inquiry and stated objectives, for example, in regard to housing and drinking water. What concrete problem will you have solved by the end of your first mandate?

J.T.: That's a very good question, but I'm going to correct you – I'm not the only one who has made indigenous peoples a priority. All Canadians, across the country, have done this. For non-indigenous Canadians, it was high time to become a part of reconciliation, to do something to establish a true partnership with indigenous communities. I'm very happy to be able to work on that.

Thousands of young people started this past school year in new schools that we've built in indigenous communities. Housing units, community centres and medical clinics are being built. We are also investing in training and governance initiatives in communities across the country.

As far as drinking water goes, between now and the end of next year, we will have eliminated many of the drinking water advisories in indigenous communities. We've promised to eliminate them entirely by March 2021, but already, at the end of 2019, we will have eliminated many of them.

One of the reasons why this is taking time is that drinking water advisories are often linked to many different factors within a community. To fix the problem permanently requires investment in all sorts of things, like training, infrastructure and governance, to be sure that a year later, or three years later, we don't find ourselves faced with the same problem again. We need to make the necessary changes to ensure the safety of these communities.

Translated from French by Ruby Irene Pratkan. Courtesy of Street Roots' sister paper L'itinéraire / INSP.ngo