The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau,

P.C. MP.

Prime Minister of Canada, Ottawa

Dear Prime Minister;

Congratulations on your slim victory to retain the reins of government. I am writing today to give you my thoughts and concerns on the future of Canadians and the world.

First, my interpretation of the minority government position. Even though you may be relatively safe from votes of confidence in the next year, I want you to know that I believe Canadians don’t want another election in one or two years. We elected you to serve a full four years and we think you should govern for four years. We are tired of having to be on the election campaign full time for our democracy. In addition, the fact that you have a minority government is meaningful. About one third of the Canadian population voted either NDP, Green, or Block. They did not vote Liberal. If they had wanted you to think you had all the power and could do anything you wanted, they would have voted Liberal. They want you to listen to other points of view. They want you to modify crucially important positions that the Liberal platform is not considering. We are asking you to help us make the shift from combative, positional politics to collaborative politics. We asked for this when we asked for Proportional Representation and you rejected it. We have found another way to ask you by delivering two minority parliaments in a row. Please listen. The well-being of Canada depends on it. Canadians desperately want a culture change.

Second, you are going to a very important COP26 in a few weeks. This meeting is critical according to scientists. The future of the world climate systems, ecosystems, food production, and ability to support life is at stake. We are currently targeting 4 degrees of warming by the end of the century. Maybe 6. Our emissions should have started going down by 2020. We don’t have clear or ambitious enough targets for 2025 and 2030 and our plans are insufficient to meet the targets we have. We are shuffling off our responsibilities by escalating the production of oil and gas. We are building pipelines destined to continue to deliver fossil fuels for the next 40 years to other parts of the world. This is completely unacceptable. All parts of the world have to make this shift together. There is nothing more important than successful world collaboration at this time. Canadians want you to do everything in your power to bring that about -- including committing to much stronger GHG reduction targets and to meeting our fair share of funding for the developing world. They did not make this problem and are struggling to survive because of climate impacts in their territory.

We are living through a climate emergency and we are acting as though we can tinker with current systems to solve it. Seth Klein is right. We need a war-scale effort to make the transition to a clean economy in the next 9 years. We must stop all subsidies to and investments in oil and gas and divert all that money into building the infrastructure to reduce energy consumption and build the clean energy infrastructure -- particularly wind, solar, and geothermal. If the private sector won’t lead, we need to form the crown corporations that will. We cannot rely on nuclear as a solution - especially with such a short time frame. New nuclear takes too long to develop, is unproven, still requires too many emissions in the development phase, and is a threat to the environment and to the peace of humanity. All of our resources must be focused on this problem. We have to put Canadian labour to work achieving these goals. This will provide the basis for a Just Transition -- A Green New Deal.

You were given a mandate because you are the only leader we have capable of imagining this transition, how to make it real, and who might be willing to try. We need you on board. We need you to lead. We need you to use your fabulous communication skills to tell Canadians the truth -- just as you did with the pandemic -- and tell them why they have to shift to electric cars if they must drive a vehicle, and to public transit if they can make it work. Sell the vision of the positive lifestyle we can have with more community and caring and less consumption. We need you to pull together the coalition that will make it happen.

Finally, there are all those who are left behind. We must truly redouble our efforts to get First Nations on a solid economic footing. Canadians are ready to see First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities properly funded for education and social services. Stop fighting them in court. Make sure they have the facilities and professional services they need to heal their wounds. Give them the land bases they need to put their own people to work. Give them stewardship over the land to protect it, and pay them to do it. Particularly the Old Growth Forest.

We must care for the people with mental health issues, disabilities, and people who have been systemically discriminated against, forced into toxic neighbourhoods with low tax bases and poor educational outcomes. We will never succeed in our mission of a world of justice, equity and compassion unless we preserve and enhance the medical system, fix the staffing problems in long term care, provide affordable childcare so that mothers can work, and ensure that our social safety net is not designed to punish people for being poor. We need to truly support all people to live with dignity and work if they possibly can. Personally, I think a well-designed basic income plan such as proposed in the Green platform is the answer. There is no doubt in my mind that we must move to decriminalize all drugs and ensure addicts have a safe supply provided by qualified health care workers.

Thank you for taking the time to really listen to my thoughts on our future in Canada and the world. We do a lot right in Canada, and we are making some pretty big mistakes. Our direction on climate change is the biggest mistake we are making right now. We need a dramatic correction in strategy. We need to make that correction ourselves and be a leader in the world for all of us to do this together. Are you willing to move beyond scrappy politics and really pull together the coalition we need? Together, the Liberals, NDP and Greens can do it. Please help Canadians be the leaders we should be and give the world a chance to protect this beautiful planet for future generations.

Faithfully yours,

Rev. Frances Deverell,

Retired Unitarian Minister