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MONDAY, AUGUST 25, 2025



Prime Minister Mark Carney and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy take part in a signing ceremony at Mariinskyi Palace in Kyiv, Ukraine on Sunday.

Soldiers could deploy as part of security guarantee against Russia, Carney says during Kyiv visit

# Canadian troops in Ukraine possible: PM

BILL GRAVELAND

KYIV — Prime Minister Mark Carney says Canada could deploy military troops to Ukraine as part of an eventual security guarantee against Russia.

Carney made the remarks at a joint news conference with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy after a meeting between the two leaders in Kyiv, where the prime minister made an unannounced stop Sunday.

When asked what kind of security guarantees Canada could provide to Ukraine, Carney said Ukraine's own military must be supported but that more than that will be required.

"I would not exclude the presence of troops," he said.

Carney said Canada doesn't think it is "realistic" that Ukraine's military alone would be enough for a

security guarantee.

"So that needs to be buttressed, it needs to be reinforced," he said, adding Canada is working with allies in the Coalition of the Willing about what other forms of protection could be offered by land, air and sea.

Canada has been part of talks for more than two years seeking to help secure any sort of peace deal in Ukraine. Those talks morphed last fall into a coalition of nations seeking to contribute to maintaining peace in Ukraine, if a ceasefire is reached. It includes most European nations as well as Canada, Japan and Australia.

Carney was in Kyiv as a guest of Zelenskyy to participate in Ukraine's Independence Day. In a speech at a ceremony marking the holiday, Carney said in French that Ukraine is at a critical moment of the war, and that the support of the international

community must intensify.

His visit comes as efforts to find a peace deal ramped up over the last week, though there does not appear to be any immediate sign of a deal.

"When that peace comes... Canada will be there," Carney said in his speech.

"We will be there with you to promote peace, security and prosperity for Ukraine once the killing stops."

U.S. President Donald Trump tried to move the peace process along this month, first hosting Russian President Vladimir Putin in Alaska on Aug. 15, and then Zelenskyy and other European leaders at the White House a few days later.

In his speech, Carney applauded "the leadership of the transformative U.S. President Donald Trump in creating the possibilities for peace."

Despite those talks, Moscow unleashed a heavy barrage of

strikes on Ukraine earlier this week and continues to insist it must be involved in any security guarantees for Ukraine. Zelenskyy has rejected any such involvement.

Security guarantees will be largely dependent on the United States. Trump said in recent days that there will be no U.S. troops on the ground in Ukraine but suggested air presence and intelligence support could be part of any security guarantees in an eventual peace deal.

Carney left Canada early Saturday for an extended trip to Europe that will also include stops in Poland, Germany and Latvia. He arrived in Kyiv by train early Sunday. The Ukraine leg of the trip was made under a media blackout for security reasons.

● CARNEY, CONTINUED ON A2

Winnipeg School Division board meetings often pivot to in-camera stretches

# Trustees' closed-door approach slammed

MAGGIE MACINTOSH  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

WINNIPEG School Division trustees have a habit of spending extensive periods of public meetings in private and publishing records with errors.

A *Free Press* review of 2024-2025 regular meeting minutes found elected officials repeatedly spent more time having closed-door conversations than talking openly.

They suggest trustees were in camera for 50 per cent or more of a regular meeting on at least seven of the 15 evenings they met.

These pivots, which often happen mid-event, require attendees to leave the Wall Street board room indefinitely. The livestream is also cut.

"Why are they operating in this manner? In a way, it does erode public trust by making it appear they have something to hide," said Cameron Hauseman, an associate professor who researches educational administration and leadership at the University of Manitoba.

Each board member was elected to make important decisions on behalf of a combined 30,000 students and their families, Hauseman noted.

Traffic-calming measures, school nutrition, class sizes, the Spanish-language program, ward boundaries, student demographics and a cellphone survey were among the topics discussed behind closed doors.

(A generic description of what was discussed in camera is included in meeting minutes.)

Hauseman said it's a best practice for boards to leave confidential topics to the very end of a meeting to avoid disruptions, or to reconvene at another time to discuss them.

On Jan. 13, trustees moved into "committee of the whole" — otherwise known as a break to discuss matters in private — just four minutes into a regular meeting.

More recently, just as the 2024-2025 school year was coming to a close, one parent showed up to discuss changes to the schools-of-choice program.

● TRUSTEES, CONTINUED ON A2

# Duty-free stores left 'for the wolves', Emerson owner says

GABRIELLE PICHÉ

AS cross-border traffic continues to sag, the Emerson Duty Free Shop's owner is calling on "critically important" regulatory changes to stay afloat.

Four months ago, Simon Resch joined fellow duty-free store owners across Canada in issuing a plea for federal support.

Since then, Resch has watched his peer close the Woodstock Duty Free Shop in New Brunswick. The Peace Bridge duty-free store, at Canada's second-busiest land border crossing, went into receivership in April.

Fewer Canadians are driving across the border. Canada's statistics agency

keeps tracking year-over-year declines in Canadians returning by auto from the United States. July — a 36.9 per cent decrease — was the seventh consecutive month on the downward trend.

Many Canadians have boycotted southern travel amid a United States-led trade war and U.S. President Donald Trump's comments about annexing Canada. Some fear different treatment in the neighbour country.

Canada's government has largely left duty-free stores "out there for the wolves," Resch said.

"Things have been going as you might expect," he continued. "It's a challenge, it's a struggle."

He employed upwards of 30 summer-time staff six years ago. His current employee count is six.

He's dropped his purchase volume for the land border store in Emerson, by roughly 75 per cent, he said. Summer is typically the shop's busiest season.

"For me, it really is a consideration — do we continue with duty-free, or do I try to repurpose our land?" said Resch, who helmed the store — and saw major traffic loss — during the COVID-19 pandemic.

● DUTY-FREE, CONTINUED ON A2



JOHN WOODS / FREE PRESS FILES

Simon Resch, owner of the Emerson Duty Free Shop, is calling on the federal government to support small businesses that rely on cross-border traffic.



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