

## Is Rome burning?

by BRIAN LOCKHART

For the most part, I have never been highly critical of the federal government, no matter which political party is running the show.

I figure they have a job to do, and, for the most part, they keep the country running and do a reasonably good job of it.

However, I am losing confidence in the current situation as we have a crisis looming in several areas that affects all of us, and which the feds seem to be either ignoring or can't get a handle on ? and if they don't, the problems are only going to get worse, and it's common folk like you and me who will be paying the price.

The current trucker's protests seem to be a rather polarizing event across the country. People seem to be either for them, or against them, and there doesn't seem to be much middle ground or room for discussion.

When the protest arrived in Ottawa, it caused a lot of grief in the downtown core of the city. I can understand why people living in the area were frustrated.

The protest was directed squarely at the federal government and should have received a response.

The only response from the PM was issued statements ? and none of them related to why the protesters were there in the first place.

While several thousand people gathered in front of Parliament, the PM hid out at his cottage instead of facing the situation head-on.

His response included using a bunch of buzzwords to describe the protesters, when in fact, none of the actions he described were obvious as any part of the protest. His response to the protest sounded more like something that would come from a high school kid who just finished a social studies class taught by a social warrior who keeps a list of buzz words at hand and ready to use if anyone disagrees with them.

This situation displayed a total lack of leadership when taking charge and facing the problem should have been a priority.

This lack of leadership extends to a few other ongoing concerns.

We have a definite housing crisis ? especially in Southern Ontario.

With the price of home going over \$1 million in many areas, a lot of first-time buyers are seeing their chance of home ownership disappearing. It is lack of supply and too much demand that is driving the cost up.

No one should have to pay \$1 million for a place to live. Even if you have saved up a good down payment you will still be living under the pressure of a huge mortgage.

Interest rates are currently low, but all it would take is a blip on the radar to force interest rates higher and many of those million-dollar house owners would simply not be able to afford their homes any more.

Many experts say that the interest rates will not climb, but experts don't have access to a crystal ball.

The demand for housing is only going to increase as more and more people move to the country.

It is now predicted that it will be at least another 15 years before the market starts to balance itself, and that is a conservative

estimate.

In the meantime, many people cannot afford to live in their own hometown because they can't afford to buy a house on the same street they grew up on.

The federal government needs to get a better plan in place regarding immigration, because throwing the doors wide open means all those people need a place to live when housing simply is not available.

Some will say this is 'anti' immigrant 'it's not. It's common sense.

Every public building, every theatre, every restaurant, and even elevators have a capacity limit for a reason.

But when it comes to immigration, those capacity rules don't apply.

The price of gasoline and other fuels is now rising out of control with no end in sight.

Those rising prices translate directly to your bottom line. You pay more to go to work, while your pay cheque stagnates.

Those rising fuel costs translate directly to the food you put on your table and the cost of consumer goods.

The government apparently does not care, and is not worried about the inflation this is causing.

The feds have to get a handle on these situations and spend less time on their Twitter account complaining about protesters from afar.

When there's a fire, you have to act.

You can't just sit at the edge of town and watch everything go up in flames.