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English Media

March 8

Treasury Board needs \$16M to create constitutional litigation unit
Public sector unions worry what action may signal

Treasury Board says it needs \$16-million to set up a new litigation management unit to handle the growing number of constitutional challenges that unions and others have initiated against the federal government largely over collective bargaining rights.

Marco Mendicino, president of the Association of Justice Counsel, which represents federal lawyers, said the government is clearly “digging in its heels” to take on federal unions and restrict collective bargaining.

<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/business/Treasury+Board+needs+create+constitutional+litigation+unit/6267900/story.html>

Public service faces ‘deliberate downsizing’ as Tories tackle deficit

A new report to Prime Minister Stephen Harper gives the clearest indication yet that public-service layoffs will be a big part of the government’s deficit cutting plans.

Federal ministers have been downplaying the impact of looming budget cuts in recent weeks, but a report released Thursday paints a different picture.

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/ottawa-notebook/public-service-faces-deliberate-downsizing-as-tories-tackle-deficit/article2363131/>

Full Report: [Sixth Report of the Prime Minister's Advisory Committee on the Public Service](#)

Commons poised to cut jobs, but not as severely as first feared, says Comartin

The House of Commons is poised to unveil the results of its spending review — a review that will mean job cuts in the Parliamentary precinct, iPolitics has learned.

NDP House leader Joe Comartin, spokesman for the powerful Board of Internal Economy — which has been going through Parliament's spending with a magnifying glass for months — says the strategic and operating review is almost done and could be complete as soon as next Monday. At the latest, it would be the week of March 26 when the House returns after a break.

<http://www.ipolitics.ca/2012/03/08/commons-poised-to-cut-jobs-but-not-as-severely-as-first-feared-says-comartin/>

Flaherty promises jobs and growth,' opposition MPs want cuts details in upcoming \$256-billion budget

Finance Minister Jim Flaherty is playing down tough austerity talk and promised “a jobs and growth budget” on March 29, but opposition MPs say Canada is “teetering on a profound economic malaise” depending on which direction the federal government decides to take the upcoming budget.

<http://www.hilltimes.com/news/news/2012/03/05/flaherty-promises--jobs-and-growth%E2%80%99-opposition-mps-want-cuts-details-in-upcoming/29814>

Irish lessons on civil service cuts

As Ottawa braces for the civil service layoffs that are expected in this month's federal budget, Ireland's ambassador to Canada recently told a business audience how his country managed to trim bureaucratic wages without antagonizing public-sector unions.

<http://www.obj.ca/Canada%20-%20World/2012-03-08/article-2921123/Irish-lessons-on-civil-service-cuts/1>

March 7

Treasury Board plans to offer job-swap site to ease cuts

Online service would match public servants who want to go with those who want to stay

Treasury Board is planning an online 'jobs marketplace' to allow job swaps between public servants facing layoffs and those who aren't as part of departments' strategy to manage spending cuts in the March 29 federal budget.

The plans are among the behind-the-scenes preparations under way as departments find themselves in the exceptional position of awaiting the budget to learn the magnitude of the cuts they face and how fast they have to deliver them. Many are braced for reductions that will result in job losses of between 25,000 and 30,000 workers in the public service.

<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/business/Treasury+Board+plans+offer+swap+site+ease+cuts/6261803/story.html>

March 6

Ottawa stocks 'war chest' to fight labour lawsuits

The federal Treasury Board department is preparing to spend nearly \$16 million this fiscal year and next to create and maintain a "litigation management unit" to handle employment issues and fund labour relations legal costs as public-sector job cuts loom.

Civil service unions fear potentially tens of thousands of job losses as part of the federal program spending review that's expected to be released in the March 29 budget and the months following it. The government is searching for a minimum \$4 billion, and up to \$8 billion, in annual savings over the next few years from its examination of expenditures.

<http://www.vancouversun.com/business/Ottawa+stocks+chest+fight+labour+lawsuits/6256362/story.html>

Cut \$10-billion now

On Monday, Finance Minister Jim Flaherty held his traditional pre-budget consultation with a number of private-sector economists, who all appear to be predicting improved growth in the Canadian economy for the coming year. This no doubt comes as welcome news to the Finance Minister, as he prepares to unveil his next budget on March 29.

<http://www.nationalpost.com/opinion/billion/6255599/story.html>

Where Flaherty can begin

In his budget of February 2008, Jim Flaherty laid out plans to balance the budget over the following five years. Today, \$160-billion in deficits later and another \$20-billion to go before he plans to return Ottawa's revenue and spending into balance again, Canada's Minister of Finance is playing it cool.

<http://www.nationalpost.com/opinion/Where+Flaherty+begin/6255598/story.html>

Legal appeal risky course

With its decision to appeal a Court of Queen's Bench ruling that found the province's essential services legislation to be unconstitutional, the Saskatchewan government is embarking on a course with the potential to create headaches for lawmakers across Canada.

<http://www.thestarphoenix.com/business/Legal+appeal+risky+course/6255673/story.html>

March 4

Man in charge of B.C. justice reform says frustration is evident in system

The man in charge of British Columbia's justice system review agrees he may have the job of a contortionist worthy of master escape artist Harry Houdini.

By this July, respected Queens Counsel lawyer Geoffrey Cowper is to submit a report on how to overhaul an over-burdened justice system. But he has to do it without stepping on judicial independence, while attempting to change a legal culture centuries in the making and within a set and limited provincial government budget.

<http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/canada/man-in-charge-of-bc-justice-reform-says-frustration-is-evident-in-system-141343063.html>

As public service girds for cuts, Ottawa's personnel costs increase

Ottawa is spending 6 per cent more on staff this year even as public servants warn they are being asked to bear the brunt of the Conservative government's restraint efforts.

Meanwhile total government spending is on track to come in 3 per cent below the year before, which would be a far deeper cut than anything the government suggested in last year's budget.

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/ottawa-notebook/as-public-service-girds-for-cuts-ottawas-personnel-costs-increase/article2357751/>

March 3

Federal public service costs rise despite spending freezes

The compensation bill for Canada's public service grew by \$2.3 billion this year despite spending freezes on operations across departments in the ramp-up to the biggest reductions and job cuts in the bureaucracy in more than a decade.

<http://www.calgaryherald.com/business/Federal+public+service+costs+rise+despite+spending+freezes/6247605/story.html>

March 2

Prepare for deeper federal spending cuts

With fiscal austerity a core part of the brand, Tories likely to double down

Far from tempering spending cuts to ease the sting of recent political setbacks, the Conservative government intends to double down on fiscal austerity in the March 29 bud-get, cutting departmental spending across the board by closer to 10 per cent than five per cent and slashing the total operating budget by close to \$8 billion, including a cut of at least 10 per cent to the CBC.

The goal is to get the books back in balance a year earlier than previously planned, by fiscal 2014-15 - thus allowing the Conservatives to go into an election in the fall of 2015 with a balanced budget as the centrepiece of their campaign.

<http://www.edmontonjournal.com/Prepare+deeper+federal+spending+cuts/6239337/story.html>

Government Perpetuates "Status Quo" Crisis in the Justice System

The Canadian Bar Association, British Columbia (CBABC), responding to the provincial budget released today, expressed disappointment that the Government decided to maintain "status quo" levels in the justice system and overlook public demand to restore funding to legal aid as an essential service. Underfunding legal aid affects families in crisis and results in clogged courts that slow all cases down, increasing the risk of serious criminal cases being dismissed because they take too long to get to trial.

http://www.businessreviewcanada.ca/press_releases/government-perpetuates-status-quo-crisis-in-the-justice-system

Unions fear Tories will slash public service jobs

With the federal budget due March 29, the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) trotted out a few hundred protesters Thursday to warn about "austerity" measures they predict the Conservatives will include in that budget.

They marched outside one of the many Ottawa buildings that house legions of civil servants, sporting union-supplied buttons that declare, "Stephen Harper hates me."

<http://www.lfpres.com/news/canada/2012/03/01/19447091.html>

PE: Job cuts will hurt local economy, argues vet affairs union

Slashing 500 Veterans Affairs jobs in Charlottetown amounts to a \$52-million hit to the local economy, says the president of the Union of Veterans Affairs Employees.

Jody LaPierre stood with a group of protesters outside the federal Jean Canfield building in Charlottetown on Thursday in a peaceful demonstration against the cuts, some of which have already been announced with others expected in the March 29 federal budget.

<http://www.pe.dailybusinessbuzz.ca/Provincial%20News/2012-03-02/article-2913793/PE-Job-cuts-will-hurt-local-economy-argues-vet-affairs-union/1>

Federal workers protest cuts

PSAC warns of reduced services

Cutting public sector jobs will further weaken Canada's economic prospects, according to representatives of the Public Service Alliance of Canada which represents thousands of federal workers.

<http://www.windsorstar.com/news/Federal+workers+protest+cuts/6238844/story.html>

Public service workers warn of 'austerity' budget

Warning the upcoming federal budget will have an austerity theme, Public Service Alliance of Canada workers in Sudbury joined counterparts across the country in a National Day of Action, Mar. 1.

<http://www.northernlife.ca/news/localNews/2012/03/01-day-of-action-sudbury.aspx>

Budget won't be that painful: Flaherty

The federal government will unveil its much-awaited austerity budget on March 29, although Finance minister Jim Flaherty said those expecting a detailed schedule of spending cuts may be disappointed.

Flaherty said yesterday the budget will not lay out in specifics where the government plans to find between \$4 billion and \$8 billion in annual savings over the next three years.

<http://fftimes.com/node/249582>

March 29 budget to target billions in federal spending

The Conservative government will deliver the federal budget on Thursday, March 29, Finance Minister Jim Flaherty announced Wednesday.

The 2012-13 fiscal blueprint is expected to be an austerity budget, which could include billions of dollars in spending cuts as part of the federal government's sweeping program review.

<http://www.montrealgazette.com/business/March+budget+target+billions+federal+spending/6231793/story.html>

Médias Francophones

8 mars

Ottawa : un rapport évoque une « réduction planifiée de la fonction publique »

Un rapport publié jeudi et cité par le Globe and Mail donne une indication sur les intentions du gouvernement fédéral dans ses efforts pour réduire le déficit et sur sa volonté de procéder à des mises à pied dans la fonction publique.

« L'une des plus grandes tâches dont seront chargés les cadres supérieurs sera la réduction planifiée de la taille de la fonction publique », annonce d'emblée le rapport du Comité consultatif sur la fonction publique, coprésidé par Paul Tellier, ancien greffier du Conseil privé, et l'ancien ministre libéral puis conservateur David Emerson.

<http://www.radio-canada.ca/nouvelles/Economie/2012/03/08/013-rapport-reduction-fonction.shtml>

[Sixième rapport du Comité consultatif sur la fonction publique nommé par le Premier ministre](#)

6 mars

Flaherty garde le cap sur des compressions qu'il veut modérées

La situation de l'Europe continue d'inquiéter, mais un certain vent d'optimisme vient de se lever au sujet des États-Unis, a déclaré lundi le ministre des Finances, Jim Flaherty.

<http://www.ledevoir.com/economie/actualites-economiques/344358/flaherty-garde-le-cap-sur-des-compressions-qu-il-veut-moderees>

2 mars

Les syndicats craignent que les conservateurs coupent dans la fonction publique

Les membres de l'Alliance de la fonction publique du Canada (AFPC) ont manifesté jeudi dans différents endroits au pays, notamment à Ottawa et à Montréal, pour dénoncer la volonté du gouvernement de procéder à des compressions dans la fonction publique.

<http://www.journaldemontreal.com/2012/03/01/les-syndicats-craignent-que-les-conservateurs-couper-dans-la-fonction-publique>