



AJC-AJJ
ASSOCIATION OF JUSTICE COUNSEL
ASSOCIATION DES JURISTES DE JUSTICE

Press Clippings for the period of March 15-21, 2013
Revue de presse pour la période du 15 au 21 mars 2013

English Media

March 15, 2013

Kevin Page blames 'weak' public service for not serving Parliament, Canadians

Days before he leaves the job, Canada's first Parliamentary Budget Officer Kevin Page is striking out at a secretive public service for starving Parliament of the information it needs to hold the government to account.

Page is pulling no punches in the final days of his mandate, veering into punditry that infuriates the government and his detractors. He wants public servants to serve Parliament and not just the government; he wants Parliament to regain "power of the purse" and he wants Canadians to fight to save his office, which he fears is doomed.

<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/news/Kevin+Page+blames+weak+public+service+serving+Parliament+Canadians/8106344/story.html>

Tories put public servants on notice over banked sick leave perk as government runs up \$5-billion liability

Canada's public servants are bracing for sweeping changes to their sick leave and disability insurance as the government looks to save millions in rising benefit costs and beef up the wellness and productivity of the workforce.

It's expected money for the overhaul, which Treasury Board bureaucrats have been working on for several years, will be announced in next week's budget.

<http://news.nationalpost.com/2013/03/15/tories-put-public-servants-on-notice-over-banked-sick-leave-perk-as-government-runs-up-5-billion-liability/>

Federal librarians fear being ‘muzzled’ under new code of conduct that stresses ‘duty of loyalty’ to the government

Federal librarians and archivists who set foot in classrooms, attend conferences or speak up at public meetings on their own time are engaging in “high risk” activities, according to the new code of conduct at Library and Archives Canada.

Given the dangers, the code says the department’s staff must clear such “personal” activities with their managers in advance to ensure there are no conflicts or “other risks to LAC.”

The code, which stresses federal employees’ “duty of loyalty” to the “duly elected government,” also spells out how offenders can be reported.

<http://news.nationalpost.com/2013/03/15/library-and-archives-canada/>

March 16, 2013

Reform bill puts public safety at risk

Not Criminally Responsible Act will mean mentally ill offenders may instead choose to go to jail where treatment may be inadequate

Improving public safety is easier said than done. Perhaps that's why the federal government continually talks about improving public safety, while implementing measures that will do no such thing.

<http://www.calgaryherald.com/news/Reform+bill+puts+public+safety+risk/8109423/story.html>

March 18, 2013

Canadian Charter does not guarantee work opportunities to members of labour unions

Recent recognition that the right to a collective bargaining process is protected by the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Charter)* has raised a number of questions about the ability of legislatures to amend statutory labour relations regimes.

<http://www.nortonrose.com/ca/en/knowledge/publications/77165>

March 20, 2013

Provinces bear rising justice costs, budget watchdog finds

Cost of jails, courts and policing up 23% in last decade, amid drop in crime rate

Per capita spending on criminal justice — including federal and provincial jails, court costs and policing — has climbed 23 per cent over the last decade even as the crime rate fell 23 per cent, says a new study by the Parliamentary budget office.

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/story/2013/03/20/pol-cp-pbo-criminal-justice-expenditures-report.html?cmp=rss>

[Expenditure Analysis of Criminal Justice in Canada \(Report\)](#)

[Powerpoint Presentation \(PDF\)](#)

PSAC head says not interested in ‘trading off’ public servants’ sick leave

Canada’s largest federal union says it will not bargain away sick leave benefits which are widely speculated to be a target in the Conservative government’s upcoming budget.

Robyn Benson, president of the Public Service Alliance of Canada, was unequivocal when she said the union will not be part of any negotiations with the government to change existing sick leave as part of the sweeping changes expected to modernize the management of sick leave and disability in the public service.

<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/news/PSAC+head+says+interested+trading+public+servants+sick+leave/8122648/story.html>

The budget should restrain absenteeism

Is there any reason that federal civil servants would be more susceptible to illness than other Canadians? They work steady, predictable hours and enjoy comfortable and generous pensions.

But on average, civil servants in Ottawa are absent for 18 days a year (combining sick leave and long-term disability). That amounts to practically a month off work, not including vacation time and statutory holidays. This level of sick leave is 2 1/2 times the rate in Canada’s private sector and almost twice the rate in the rest of the public sector.

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/commentary/editorials/the-budget-should-restrain-absenteeism/article9966416/>

March 21, 2013

Stephen Harper’s war on crime carries a steep cost: Editorial

Why is Canadian spending on criminal justice up 23 per cent when crime is down 23 per cent? The Parliamentary Budget Officer’s numbers are disconcerting.

Why are Canadians spending billions more on the criminal justice system when crime has *dropped* in the past decade? And how much worse can this disconnect get? Those are a couple

of the \$20-billion questions that arise from Parliamentary Budget Officer Kevin Page's new report into spending on police, courts and prisons.

http://www.thestar.com/opinion/editorials/2013/03/21/stephen_harpers_war_on_crime_carries_a_steep_cost_editorial.html

Feds to target sick leave in public service negotiations

The federal government says it wants to put sick leave and disability benefits for public servants on the table, with an eye to reducing costs and getting sidelined employees back to work sooner.

The message to public sector unions was part of the federal budget's plan to return to a balanced budget, which also included plans to examine employee compensation and pensioner benefits and propose "changes to the labour relations regime."

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/story/2013/03/21/ottawa-public-servant-sick-benefits.html>

Federal budget signals major public service workforce overhaul on the way

Finance Minister Jim Flaherty signalled plans in his budget Thursday for a major review of the way the federal government pays and manages its \$43-billion-a-year workforce to make overall compensation "affordable" and bring it more in line with the private sector.

The review will examine policies, practices and laws governing the management of the public service, including pensioner benefits and the way it negotiates with the 18 unions representing Canada's bureaucrats. The budget provided no details on the review other than to signal that everything is on the table for discussion with unions and employees.

<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/business/Federal+budget+signals+major+public+service+workforce+overhaul/8133837/story.html>

Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson decries PS jobs uncertainty

Pierre Poilievre, Conservative MP for Nepean-Carleton, hinted at one way the review could help save the government money.

"Federal public servants use on average 18 sick days a year," he said. "The private sector uses on average six sick days a year. I look forward to working with the public service to find ways to ensure that we can reduce the number of days when public servants are away so that we can deliver better results at a more competitive price for Canadian taxpayers."

<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/news/Ottawa+Mayor+Watson+decries+jobs+uncertainty/8135093/story.html>

Public-service perks are barnacles on the ship of state

Something is ailing the people who work for the federal government. They have among the highest absenteeism rates of any workers in Canada. Every day, about 19,000 of them are off on some form of sick leave. Federal civil servants, according to the Treasury Board, take off an average of 18 days a year because of sickness or disability – more than twice as many days as people who work in the private sector and nearly three times more than people who work in small businesses.

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/commentary/public-service-perks-are-barnacles-on-the-ship-of-state/article10030963/>

Médias francophones

20 mars 2013

La justice pénale au Canada coûte 20 milliards \$ par année

La justice pénale au Canada coûte plus de 20 milliards \$ par année. Les provinces doivent assumer les trois quarts de cette facture, soit 14,8 milliards \$...

<http://www.droit-inc.com/article9740-La-justice-penale-au-Canada-coute-20-milliards-par-annee>

[Analyse des dépenses au titre du système de justice pénale au Canada](#) (Rapport)

[PowerPoint Presentation \(PDF\)](#)

Comment rendre la fonction publique plus performante?

Audio - Le gouvernement conservateur veut une fonction publique moderne, abordable et performante. Réaction du professeur en relations industrielles de l'UQO, Jean-François Tremblay, au « Midi tente ».

http://www.radio-canada.ca/audio-video/pop.shtml?urlMedia=http://www.radio-canada.ca/Medianet/2013/CBOF/00178dcc_20130322_131259.asx#

21 mars 2013

Budget fédéral 2013 : quelles seront les conséquences pour les fonctionnaires fédéraux?

Vidéo - Le journaliste Stéphane Leclerc a rencontré des employés fédéraux et des syndicats qui s'inquiètent des répercussions.

<http://www.radio-canada.ca/widgets/mediaconsole/medianet/6635508##>

Virage dans la fonction publique

Le gouvernement compte « revoir les relations de travail » avec les 278 000 employés de la fonction publique. Rémunération, avantages sociaux, gestion de l'invalidité, congés de maladie : il faut « définir et mettre en oeuvre des pratiques [...] améliorées en suivant l'exemple donné par d'autres organisations des secteurs public et privé », indique le budget.

<http://www.ledevoir.com/politique/canada/373896/virage-dans-la-fonction-publique>