



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

Press Clippings for the period of June 29 – July 12, 2012
Revue de presse pour la période du 29 juin au 12 juillet 2012

English Media

July 12

Unions, equality and democracy

Right-wing commentators like to claim that unions undermine good economic performance. But respected organizations such as the OECD, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank have shown this isn't so. They have recognized that unions promote more equitable societies, and that countries with strong unions have less extremes of rich and poor, stronger public services and social safety nets, without adversely affecting good economic performance.

<http://www.ipolitics.ca/2012/07/12/ed-broadbent-unions-equality-and-democracy-labour/>

July 11

Let workers decide on union membership

Christine Elliott, the Tory MPP for Whitby-Oshawa, has invited the wrath of one of Ontario's largest special interest groups. That's OK. I doubt she could have counted on much support from the labour movement, anyway. Regardless, the rest of us should be cheering what is a most sensible recommendation.

<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/opinion/op-ed/workers+decide+union+membership/6918944/story.html>

July 10

Federal Crown lawyers reach 15.25 per cent tentative pay deal

In a move that breaches the atmosphere of restraint in Ottawa, federal Crown lawyers have reached a tentative settlement that would give them a 15.25 per cent wage increase by May 2014.

The agreement with the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, is expected to go to a ratification vote in August. It would give 2,700 federal Crowns, represented by the Association of Justice Counsel, a 12 per cent increase next year alone. That includes a 10 per cent “pay restructure.”

<http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/politics/article/1224645--federal-crown-lawyers-reach-15-25-per-cent-tentative-pay-deal>

The 2012 Canadian Lawyer Compensation Survey

The difficult economic environment of the last few years is being reflected in the salaries of Canadian lawyers, both in-house and in private practice. According to the results of Canadian Lawyer’s 2012 Compensation Survey, the median salaries of newly called lawyers are lower than last year. For example, the median salary of a first-year associate is \$72,500, down by approximately \$3,500 from last year. It’s the same case for newly called in-house counsel, who are showing a median salary of \$77,500, a steep decline of \$7,500 from last year.

<http://www.canadianlawyermag.com/4218/the-2012-canadian-lawyer-compensation-survey.html>

[Full Survey Results](#)

The government is right to pay out severance

For many decades, civil servants were entitled to severance pay without severance — if they quit voluntarily, or retired, the government handed them a substantial cheque just as if they had been laid off. This was odd. Such a valuable perk essentially doesn’t exist in the private sector. And it costs the government an estimated \$500 million a year.

So the government has decided to get rid of it, a move widely supported because, really, severance pay without severance is pretty much indefensible. But there’s a problem.

<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/opinion/columnists/government+right+severance/6912867/story.html>

July 9

Federal Crowns to get 15.25% pay boost Tentative deal increases wages despite cutbacks across departments

The Association of Justice Counsel has reached a tentative agreement with the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat that will spike the wages of roughly 2,700 federal Crown counsel by 12 per cent in the same year the Justice Department is looking for millions in savings.

<http://www.lawtimesnews.com/201207099201/Headline-News/Federal-Crowns-to-get-1525-pay-boost>

Delays predicted as DOJ chops more jobs

Unions representing lawyers and support staff at the federal Department of Justice are predicting possible delays in legal proceedings involving the government and a reduction in service to the public after hundreds of additional employees learned their jobs are in jeopardy.

Currently, 83 federal government lawyers have received workforce adjustment notices and are waiting to learn whether they'll lose their jobs, says Lisa Blais, the newly elected president of the 2,700-member Association of Justice Counsel.

<http://www.lawtimesnews.com/201207099203/Headline-News/Delays-predicted-as-DOJ-chops-more-jobs>

Determining direction of judicial reform hampered by lack of data

The much-lauded and heavily funded Vancouver Community Court is impossible to evaluate because, like many legal system initiatives, the data isn't available.

From the experimental pilot court to how you determine the number of judges on the provincial bench, there is a lack of information about what is actually happening in the legal system.

<http://www.vancouversun.com/opinion/Determining+direction+judicial+reform+hampered+lack+data/6903761/story.html>

July 6

Ottawa about one-third of the way through \$6B liability for public-sector severance payouts

More than half of federal public servants have agreed to end a severance program that paid \$500-million annually to employees who quit voluntarily or retired, according to federal government figures.

Though the government has been trying to end the program for years, it's unclear exactly how much Canadian taxpayers will save if it finally succeeds.

<http://news.nationalpost.com/2012/07/06/ottawa-about-one-third-of-the-way-through-6b-liability-for-public-sector-severance-payouts/>

Kelly McParland: Billion-dollar payout enriches ‘unappreciated’ civil servants

Ottawa is in the middle of sending out a flood of cheques to bureaucrats across the land — tens of thousands of dollars apiece — for no reason except that for years they turned up and did their jobs (while complaining mightily about how badly they’re treated, no doubt.)

The money isn’t a bonus or a reward. It’s straight cash, a free cheque on top of their usual salary and all the other perks and benefits they get that you and I don’t. It has been reported several times in the media, but for some reason doesn’t seem to have registered with the Canadian public.

<http://fullcomment.nationalpost.com/2012/07/06/kelly-mcparland-billion-dollar-payout-enriches-unappreciated-civil-servants/>

July 5

Federal public sector workers reap cash windfall

Ottawa must pay out as much as \$6 billion in voluntary severance payments to hundreds of thousands of federal public servants who are not even losing their jobs, a spokesperson for Treasury Board President Tony Clement said Friday.

Even though the Conservative government has ended the generous program, which pays out thousands of dollars to federal employees when they retire or decide to quite, it is still required to honour existing contracts.

<http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/politics/article/1222458--federal-public-sector-workers-reap-cash-windfall>

Few remedies available when prosecutors go rogue

In our legal system, Crown prosecutors wield considerable power in the exercise of their discretion. Courts refer to them as “quasi-judicial” or judgelike, in terms of both their function and the manner in which they carry out their duties. Accordingly, much is expected of prosecutors in terms of fairness, impartiality and objectivity.

<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/news/remedies+available+when+prosecutors+rogue/6888661/story.html>

June 29

RCMP overhaul of job descriptions sparks anger in ranks

The Conservative government has proposed a sweeping change to the job description of nearly 4,000 civilian members of the RCMP, prompting questions and anger among their ranks.

The move to shift civilian forensic analysts, computer investigators, wiretap technologists and other specialized employees into a new public service employee category — and off the Mounties' richer benefits packages — could potentially save millions.

<http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/politics/article/1219011--rcmp-overhaul-of-job-descriptions-sparks-anger-in-ranks>

Médias francophones

10 juillet

En 2012, vous gagnez moins...

Il semblerait bien que l'environnement économique actuel ait un impact direct sur les salaires des avocats canadiens, selon les résultats du sondage annuel du Canadian Lawyer. Salaires médians ? Embauches ? Voici les chiffres.

[Rapport Complet](#)

6 juillet

Des fonctionnaires fédéraux toucheront une double compensation

Certains fonctionnaires fédéraux pourraient toucher des compensations provenant de deux programmes différents s'ils sont victimes des compressions. Ils n'ont plus droit à une indemnité de départ s'ils quittent volontairement la fonction publique.

Pour compenser cette perte, le gouvernement Harper offre une autre indemnité, équivalant à une semaine de salaire par année travaillée.

<http://www.radio-canada.ca/regions/ottawa/2012/07/06/014-fonctionnaires-compensation-programmes.shtml>