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Press Clippings for the period of January 6-12, 2012
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English Media

January 12

MP pension changes

Questions have been raised about the pensions of MPs at a time when the government looks for deficit-reducing cuts in the public sector.

[CBCTheNational](#)

Environment Canada to axe 60 jobs Positions declared 'surplus' by agency

Environment Canada is sending notices to 60 scientists and other researchers that their jobs are being declared surplus.

<http://www.edmontonjournal.com/business/Environment+Canada+jobs/5983445/story.html>

Tough year ahead for labour negotiations

With lockouts starting the year at Caterpillar and Rio Tinto operations in Canada, BNN and a panel of guests looks at whether 2012 will be a tough year for labour negotiations.

[Part 1](#)

[Part 2](#)

[Part 3](#)

A Tale of Two Deficits

The federal government and Canada's largest province are both engaged in deficit reduction planning exercises for their spring 2012 budgets. The Federal government according to its June budget has expenditures of about 281 billion dollars and revenues of 249 billion for a deficit of about 32 billion dollars. Ontario, based on its last budget, has expenditures of about 124 billion and revenues of almost 109 billion for a deficit of about 16 billion dollars. While Ottawa's deficit is just under two percent of Canada's GDP, Ontario's is just over two percent of provincial GDP.

http://ldimatte.shawwebspaces.ca/blog/post/a_tale_of_two_deficits

Public sector pensions up for cuts

Looks as if the federal government is turning its sights on public sector pensions. Finance Minister Jim Flaherty told reporters in Vancouver yesterday that the budgets of some government departments could be cut by more than 10%—and that issues such as pension reform and other benefits for public servants are under the microscope.

<http://www.benefitscanada.com/news/public-sector-pensions-up-for-cuts-24300>

Some departments face cuts of 'more than 10%': Flaherty Federal government searching to double annual savings to \$8B

The federal Conservative government is considering cutting deeper and faster than originally planned, with Finance Minister Jim Flaherty saying Tuesday some departments could face cuts of more than 10 per cent in the upcoming budget.

The finance minister also acknowledged the government is examining public sector pensions as part of a broader review of federal spending.

<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/business/Some+departments+face+cuts+more+than+Flaherty/5977216/story.html>

Flaherty won't take one-scythe-fits-all approach to 2012 budget

The Conservative government's 2012 budget will mean deep cuts for some departments while others will get off more lightly as Finance Minister Jim Flaherty says he wants to protect the direct delivery of services to Canadians.

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/flaherty-wont-take-one-scythe-fits-all-approach-to-2012-budget/article2297624/>

Cabinet subcommittee reviewing proposals to cut \$4-billion annually

Cabinet's Treasury Board Subcommittee on the Strategic Operating Review is still looking at proposals on how to find up to \$4-billion in annual savings by 2015-2016 out of 67 government departments' \$80-billion operating budgets, for a cumulative total of \$11-billion in savings, says the Treasury Board Secretariat.

[http://www.hilltimes.com/civil-circles/2012/01/09/cabinet-subcommittee-reviewing-proposals-to-cut-\\$4-billion-annually/29193](http://www.hilltimes.com/civil-circles/2012/01/09/cabinet-subcommittee-reviewing-proposals-to-cut-$4-billion-annually/29193)

January 10

Public pensions on the block: Flaherty

The federal government is taking a serious look at public sector pensions in the lead up to the 2012 budget.

"Overall, sure, I think we have to," Finance Minister Jim Flaherty told reporters in Vancouver. "If one's going to make any sort of intelligent assessment of government spending in Canada, one has to look at the, at the cost of remuneration including benefits and pensions."

<http://www.torontosun.com/2012/01/10/public-pensions-on-the-block-flaherty>

Nunavut faces murder case backlog

Nunavut has more of its citizens in jail per capita than anywhere else in Canada. And that is putting a real strain on the already overworked justice system across the territory. This year alone, there are 15 murder cases waiting to be tried.

[As APTN National News reporter Wayne Rivers finds out, everyone agrees there is a problem.](#)

McGuinty, Harper and the politics of spending cuts

When McGuinty and Harper roll out their much larger set of reductions in the coming budgets, they would be wise to wait and announce them all at the same time and on a global scale.

http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/second-reading/andrew-steele/mcguinty-harper-and-the-politics-of-spending-cuts/article2297796/?utm_medium=Feeds%3A%20RSS%2FAtom&utm_source=Politics&utm_content=2297796

Welcome back, deficits. All's forgiven

January, and the air is heavy with talk of fiscal bloodbaths.

As they prepare their spring budgets, federal and provincial governments are warning of "profound reforms," "fundamental transformations," and worse.

<http://www.calgaryherald.com/news/Welcome+back+deficits+forgiven/5971180/story.html>

Put belt-tightening in some context as fiscal axe looms

A running tab of reckless spending, not the deficit, is responsible for cuts

January, and the air is heavy with talk of fiscal bloodbaths. As they prepare their spring budgets, federal and provincial governments are warning of "profound reforms," "fundamental transformations," and worse.

<http://www.edmontonjournal.com/news/belt+tightening+some+context+fiscal+looms/5971029/story.html>

January 9

Public Service to Feds: Hands Off Our Pensions

Rumours of the Conservative government taking on public-sector pensions this year have prompted the civil service's union to say that such a move would lead to "open warfare." John Gordon, president of the Public Service Alliance of Canada, warned that if the government wants to restructure pensions by raising the age of pensionability or tying pensions to average salaries instead of a worker's top five earning years, it would not be greeted casually by the union, one of the biggest in the country.

<http://www.themarknews.com/articles/7963-public-service-to-feds-hands-off-our-pensions>

Canada to speed up pace of some spending cuts: report

The government plans to double the pace of spending cuts in some major ministries as part of its plans to eliminate the federal deficit, the Canadian Broadcasting Corp said on Monday.

Ottawa has already told government departments and agencies to come up with two scenarios, one that cuts costs by 5 percent and another by 10 percent over four years. Officials said late last year the 10 percent scenario was the most likely.

The CBC said the Defense, Foreign Affairs and Public Works departments, as well as the Canadian Security Intelligence Service spy agency, would have to cut spending by 10 percent over two years rather than four.

<http://ca.reuters.com/article/topNews/idCATRE8082EK20120109>

January 8

Cutting DND Pensions to Save Money. Will it Happen?

One cost-cutting scenario floating around Ottawa that would affect DND civilian employees (among the thousands of federal workers) is to make changes to what a number of people see as the lucrative public service pension plan.

<http://blogs.ottawacitizen.com/2012/01/08/cutting-dnd-pensions-to-save-money-will-it-happen/>

Feds would face 'open warfare' for pension scale-back, PSAC warns

The federal government would face "open warfare" against any move to overhaul public sector pensions, warns the head of Canada's biggest public service union.

<http://www.ipolitics.ca/2012/01/08/feds-would-face-open-warfare-for-pension-scale-back-psac-warns/>

Labour's Pain

CityNews anchor Gord Martineau explores whether Canada can afford public unions and if the economy can afford to do without them in.

[Tough Choices with Gord Martineau](#)

January 7

'Extremely serious' B.C. court delays worsening

The B.C. government claims it is taking steps to reduce delays in the court system, despite a report that says the backlogs are getting worse.

New figures show there are now about 2,500 criminal cases that have been before the provincial court for 18 months or more. That's 25-per-cent more than there were one year ago.

Also, judges stayed 109 cases due to delays last year, almost double the number from 2010.

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/story/2012/01/06/bc-court-delay-crisis-bond.html>

[Justice Delayed: A Report of the Provincial Court of British Columbia Concerning Judicial Resource](#)

[Justice Delayed: Update](#)

January 6

Civil service pensions are fat at any cost

Let's say that Stephen Harper, as reported by John Ivison, is considering a plan to restructure the public service pension plan, raising the minimum pensionable age to 65 and increasing the share employees have to contribute. Would this make it harder to recruit civil servants?

<http://fullcomment.nationalpost.com/2012/01/06/pricier-pensions-wont-diminish-the-lure-of-civil-service-jobs/>

John Ivison: Public pensions a fat target for Conservatives

The Harper government is said to be considering a restructuring of federal civil service pensions in the upcoming budget — reforms that could save taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars a year.

<http://fullcomment.nationalpost.com/2012/01/05/john-ivison-public-pensions-a-fat-target-for-conservatives/>

2,522 criminal cases now in jeopardy

Proceedings could be thrown out despite efforts to reduce backlog

A growing number of criminal cases are at risk of being thrown out due to unreasonable delays despite the provincial government's efforts to reduce backlogs. Over the past two years, the province has hired 14 judges and more sheriffs to try to arrest the trend.

But the number of criminal cases taking longer than 18 months to get to trial, the point at which charges could be stayed, continues to grow. The number reached 2,522 as of Sept. 30, 2011, up from 2,038 when a report titled Justice Delayed was first issued in September 2010.

<http://www.vancouversun.com/news/criminal+cases+jeopardy/5956188/story.html>

More criminal cases could be dropped due to court backlog Critics say province's efforts aren't enough

According to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, every person accused of an offence has the right to a trial within a reasonable amount of time. But justice critics say many criminals in BC could walk free because of lengthy court backlogs.

<http://www.news1130.com/news/local/article/316858--more-criminal-cases-could-be-dropped-due-to-court-backlog>

Delays in B.C. courts may cause crimes to go unpunished

A growing number of criminal cases are at risk of being thrown out due to unreasonable delays despite the provincial government's efforts to reduce backlogs.

<http://www.vancouversun.com/news/Crisis+criminal+courts+causing+cases+thrown/5953863/story.html>

The Crown Counsel Association says BC's court system is "crumbling before our eyes."

Lawyers and Judges are warning about the growing backlog in BC's court system, but the Attorney General has no quick solutions.

BC Crown Counsel Association President Samiran Lakshman says a report that warns 2500 criminal cases could simply be thrown out because of delays is dead on.

<http://www.cknw.com/Channels/Reg/NewsLocal/Story.aspx?ID=1635867>

Legal award recognizes access to justice contributions

The Law Foundation of Ontario (LFO) is pleased to announce the selection of Judith McCormack of the University of Toronto's Faculty of Law as recipient of its 2011 Guthrie Award. This award recognizes outstanding public service on the part of an individual or organization, in the form of contributions to access to justice or excellence within the legal profession.

<http://www.newswire.ca/en/story/902493/legal-award-recognizes-access-to-justice-contributions>

First cut must be deep

The Treasury Board is currently reviewing spending cut proposals after telling all departments to come up with opportunities to cut between 5% and 10% of their budgets. Even if a full 10% of

government expenditures were cut, the federal government would still be spending more than it was in 2008 before the recession began.

<http://www.torontosun.com/2012/01/05/first-cut-must-be-deep>

Changes to civil service pensions just speculation, PM says

Prime Minister Stephen Harper says any possible changes to public sector pensions will be fair to both federal employees and taxpayers, but he maintains no final decisions have been made.

Heading into the spring federal budget, unions are fearing thousands of job cuts. But they also worry the government may reform civil-service pensions following some estimates the federal plans face a shortfall of more than \$200 billion.

<http://www.vancouversun.com/business/Changes+civil+service+pensions+just+speculation+says/5959460/story.html>

Médias francophones

12 Janvier

L'austérité conservatrice rapporte

La cure minceur imposée par le gouvernement Harper aux finances publiques commence déjà à porter des fruits, constate le directeur parlementaire du budget.

<http://www.ledevoir.com/economie/actualites-economiques/340045/l-austerite-conservatrice-rapporte>

Des attaques «sans fondement»

Les régimes de retraite des employés fédéraux sont en bonne santé financière, grâce à des placements ayant été parmi les plus rentables des régimes de pension du Canada - avec un rendement global des investissements de 14,5 % en 2011 -, un élément qui devrait être incontournable lors d'un examen des pensions fédérales, croit l'Association nationale des retraités fédéraux (ANRF).

<http://www.cyberpresse.ca/le-droit/actualites/fonction-publique/201201/11/01-4484970-des-attaques-sans-fondement.php>

11 Janvier

Les régimes de retraite fédéraux seraient sur le billot

Alors que l'échéance du prochain budget fédéral approche à grands pas, les rumeurs voulant que le gouvernement Harper cible les régimes de retraite des fonctionnaires, députés et sénateurs se multiplient.

<http://www.cyberpresse.ca/le-droit/actualites/fonction-publique/201201/10/01-4484611-les-regimes-de-retraite-federaux-seraient-sur-le-billot.php>

10 Janvier

La pension des députés pourrait être coupée

<http://fr.video.canoe.tv/archive/la-pension-des-deputes-pourrait-etre-coupee/1381925792001>

Des ministères pourraient perdre plus de 10% des budgets

Le gouvernement fédéral a augmenté ses dépenses tous les ans lors de chacune des cinq dernières années, mais le ministre des Finances Jim Flaherty affirme maintenant qu'une telle manoeuvre est «dangereuse et risquée».

<http://www.cyberpresse.ca/actualites/quebec-canada/politique-canadienne/201201/10/01-4484580-des-ministeres-pourraient-perdre-plus-de-10-des-budgets.php>

Le gouvernement ne «fermera pas boutique»

Ottawa-Gatineau n'a pas à craindre la prochaine vague de réductions budgétaires que s'apprête à mettre en branle le gouvernement fédéral, soutient le président du Conseil du Trésor Tony Clement, avouant du même souffle que les départs volontaires ne seront peut-être pas suffisants pour que le gouvernement atteigne ses objectifs.

<http://www.cyberpresse.ca/le-droit/actualites/sur-la-colline-parlementaire/201201/09/01-4484247-le-gouvernement-ne-fermera-pas-boutique.php>