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Press Clippings for the period of November 11-17, 2011
Revue de presse pour la période du 11 au 17 novembre 2011

English Media

November 17

Top court finally settles pay-equity fight at Canada Post

The Supreme Court of Canada settled on Thursday an epic pay-equity battle, reinstating a \$150-million award for thousands of women employed at Canada Post.

The case, which has dragged on for 28 years, was finally resolved when the court upheld a 2005 decision of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal, which found a wage gap for women working in clerical jobs and awarded them \$150 million.

<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/business/court+finally+settles+equity+fight+Canada+Post/5728141/story.html>

PS unions fear battle over severance

The federal unions that vowed never to surrender severance pay without a fight are in contract talks with a government that's made the issue a deal breaker.

It's a showdown that's been looming since the Public Service Alliance of Canada made an unprecedented concession last year and surrendered severance pay as part of a 5.3-per-cent wage increase over three years. About 0.75 percentage points of that increase was to compensate for the loss of severance pay for public servants who leave or retire.

<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/business/unions+fear+battle+over+severance/5722784/story.html>

Lawyers win round in pay battle

The federal government's 2,700 unionized lawyers and prosecutors are "very much encouraged" by a judge's decision to strike down the 2.5-per-cent wage cap retroactively imposed on them for 2006-2007, says the president of the Association of Justice Counsel (AJC).

<http://www.lawyersweekly.ca/index.php?section=article&volume=31&number=27&article=1>

Tories' Quick Trigger on Labour Disputes Dangerous, Say Experts

Having nixed the possibility of a protracted strike, the government's intercession is likely to win the support of a public happy to have the whole mess cleared up before Christmas. But many experts warn the Air Canada affair marks an unprecedented and potentially dangerous overreach into a proven process of collective bargaining.

By nipping strikes and lockouts in the bud for the sake of the economic stability, they argue, the government threatens to unbalance a system of conflict resolution that has long served not only the interests of organized labour, but those of Canadian business as well.

<http://thetyee.ca/News/2011/11/17/Air-Canada-Strike/>

November 16

McGuinty axes public sector workers to fix Ontario's economy

About 30 OPSEU members and supporters gathered outside the Marriott Eaton Centre hotel Tuesday to demonstrate against the Liberal plan to terminate another 231 OPSEU members on Thursday.

The largest cuts are expected to take place in the Ministry of the Attorney General, Transportation and Health and Long Term Care.

<http://rabble.ca/blogs/bloggers/johnbon/2011/11/mcguinty-axes-public-sector-workers-fix-ontario%E2%80%99s-economy>

Feds open up access to government data

Treasury Board President Tony Clement announced Wednesday that by January 1, 2012 all departments and agencies subject to the Access to Information Act will post summaries of completed access to information requests on their websites.

Summaries would need to be posted within 30 calendar days after the end of the month during which the information was released.

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/story/2011/11/16/pol-clement-open-government.html>

Unions are key to fighting inequity

The people who have been occupying financial districts in Canadian and American cities are motivated by anger over the glaring economic unfairness that exists in our society. The labour movement welcomes what these young people camping outdoors in tents are saying — because we have said the very same thing for many years.

<http://www.thestar.com/opinion/editorialopinion/article/1088187--unions-are-key-to-fighting-inequity>

November 15

Tories shouldn't be deciding on public service cuts in secret: union leader

The Conservatives shouldn't be secretly deciding what public services, programs and jobs to cut to meet its deficit reduction targets, says the president of Canada's largest federal union.

John Gordon, president of the Public Service Alliance of Canada, said the government should allow all Canadians to see the advice he's getting from senior bureaucrats and high-paid consultants on how to trim \$4 billion from departments' budgets before the cuts are announced in the upcoming budget.

<http://www.vancouversun.com/news/Tories+shouldn+deciding+public+service+cuts+secret+union+leader/5715877/story.html>

Public service union urges open budget-cutting process

Treasury Board president Tony Clement should make the cost-cutting decision process open to the public and give Canadians a chance to voice their opinions, the Public Service Alliance of Canada says.

PSAC president John Gordon said citizens should be able to see what advice the minister is receiving on proposed budget cuts.

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/story/2011/11/15/psac-clement-cuts.html>

Union challenges Clement to sharpen budget axe in public

The Conservative government should not be making deficit-reducing cuts to departmental budgets behind closed doors, Canada's largest public-sector union says.

“What we’re saying is be open now,” Public Service Alliance of Canada president John Gordon said, “and they haven’t been so far.”

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/ottawa-notebook/union-challenges-clement-to-swing-budget-axe-in-public/article2236852/?from=sec431>

Legal challenge of labour bills underway

Four years after the Saskatchewan Party government introduced contentious new labour laws, a lawyer for the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour argued in court that the legislation infringes on the rights and freedoms of workers.

In the legal action launched by the SFL and about two dozen individual member unions, the Court of Queen's Bench in Regina is being asked to determine whether or not the province's essential services law, called Bill 5, and changes to the trade union act, Bill 6, are constitutionally valid.

<http://www.leaderpost.com/business/Legal+challenge+labour+bills+underway/5710293/story.html>

Fraser Institute suggests Canada needs to implement 1990’s style austerity measures

According to a new book by the Fraser Institute, federal and provincial finance ministers need to rethink their strategies to balance their budgets: specifically, they need to slash spending now instead of relying on rosy revenue projections.

In a press release accompanying the book, titled *Learning from the Past: How Canadian Fiscal Policies of the 1990s Can Be Applied Today*, co-author Niels Veldhuis cites the federal government's recent 'budget update' as proof current strategies to slay deficits are not effective.

<http://ca.news.yahoo.com/blogs/canada-politics/fraser-institute-suggests-canada-needs-implement-1990-style-170118015.html>

[*Learning from the past* \(Free download\)](#)

Deficit a 'struggle': watchdog

Spending has dropped but still higher than before downturn

The federal government is struggling to reduce its deficit with spending levels remaining significantly higher than levels prior to the global economic downturn, says a new report released Monday by Parliament's budget watchdog, Kevin Page.

The report reviewed the government's supplementary spending estimates and found that overall spending had dropped about three per cent when compared to levels from the previous year, but was still 15 per cent higher than it was in 2008-2009 because of growth in wages for public servants as well as increases in support for the unemployed, Page explained.

<http://www.timescolonist.com/business/Deficit+struggle+watchdog/5711794/story.html>

November 14

Crowns win salary ruling

As the federal government continues its aggressive approach to labour unions, it found itself losing a battle in its own backyard in a court decision that found salary caps for federal Crowns to be unconstitutional.

At the heart of the matter are wage caps on federal lawyers and prosecutors from 2006 and beyond that the government imposed through the Expenditure Restraint Act (ERA).

<http://www.lawtimesnews.com/201111148778/Headline-News/Crowns-win-salary-ruling>

Labour law court challenge begins

A constitutional court challenge began in Regina Monday against two pieces of labour legislation passed by the Saskatchewan Party government in 2008.

Bill 5, the Public Service Essential Services Act, helps prevent some public sector employees from going on strike if they're deemed essential.

Bill 6, amendments to the Trade Union Act, ended the practice of automatic union certification in cases where a majority of employees sign union cards. It also raised the minimum percentage of card-signers needed for the union to get an employee vote — from 25 per cent to 45 per cent.

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatchewan/story/2011/11/14/sk-labour-law-court-case-1111.html>

10 reasons to oppose Bill C-10

Bill C-10 is titled The Safe Streets and Communities Act — an ironic name, considering that Canada already has some of the safest streets and communities in the world and a declining crime rate. This bill will do nothing to improve that state of affairs but, through its overreach and overreaction to imaginary problems, Bill C-10 could easily make it worse. It could eventually create the very problems it's supposed to solve.

<http://www.thestar.com/opinion/editorialopinion/article/1086785--10-reasons-to-oppose-bill-c-10>

MPs need more info about looming cuts: watchdog

As Ottawa moves to slash its spending, parliamentarians need to press the government about what potential cuts will mean to Canadians, according to a new report by the Parliamentary Budget Officer.

<http://www.globalnews.ca/mps+need+more+info+about+looming+cuts+watchdog/6442521741/story.html>

Number of federal civil servants earning more than \$100,000 doubles since 2008

While ordinary Canadians were feeling the effects of the recession, the number of federal public servants earning more than \$100,000 a year nearly doubled, newly released documents show.

<http://www.calgaryherald.com/business/Number+federal+civil+servants+earning+more+than+doubles+since+2008/5707339/story.html>

Small steps to smaller government

Anyone who doubts that it is the Conservatives' plan to displace the Liberals as Canada's natural governing party need only look at Finance Minister Jim Flaherty's economic update speech, delivered in Calgary last Tuesday. For nearly a century, the Liberals held power with few interruptions by clinging tenaciously to the centre of the political spectrum and moving leftward or rightward only when they had to.

<http://www.nationalpost.com/news/Small+steps+smaller+government/5705276/story.html>

November 13

Preparing for uncertainty

Canadian Lawyer Annual Corporate Counsel Survey 2011

As Canada fights to stay out of a looming global recession, it seems corporate counsel are preparing for the worst with plans to bring more work in-house even as they expect to see an increase in the amount they will be challenged to do in the coming year, according to the annual Canadian Lawyer corporate counsel survey.

<http://www.canadianlawyermag.com/3937/preparing-for-uncertainty.html>

November 12

Arbitrators shouldn't have agenda

The arbitration system is only broke for those intent on using it for purposes it was never designed to achieve. Interest arbitration is not a tool to deny public sector workers the rights enjoyed by others.

<http://www.windsorstar.com/opinion/Arbitrators+shouldn+have+agenda/5700377/story.html>

November 11

Quebec introduces legislation to determine Crown prosecutors' salaries

Quebec has introduced legislation in the National Assembly that will determine how much the province's Crown prosecutors should be paid.

Introduced on Nov. 9, Bill 40 will create a new, independent process to determine the wages for Crown prosecutors. The bill also removes their ability to strike in the future.

<http://www.labour-reporter.com/articleview?articleid=11688&headline=quebec-introduces-legislation-to-determine-crown-prosecutors-salaries>

Médias francophones

17 Novembre

Postes Canada: le syndicat gagne une bataille vieille de 28 ans

La Cour suprême du Canada a tranché en faveur de l'Alliance de la fonction publique du Canada (AFPC), jeudi, dans une bataille judiciaire sur l'équité salariale qui opposait depuis 28 ans le syndicat à Postes Canada.

<http://www.cyberpresse.ca/actualites/quebec-canada/justice-et-faits-divers/201111/17/01-4469033-postes-canada-le-syndicat-gagne-une-bataille-vieille-de-28-ans.php>

Les avocats de l'aide juridique réclament la parité avec ceux de la Couronne

Les 300 avocats de l'aide juridique du Québec entament des moyens de pression pour faire comprendre au gouvernement Charest qu'ils n'accepteront pas un salaire moindre que les procureurs de la Couronne qui se sont entendus avec Québec.

<http://www.droit-inc.com/article6620-Les-avocats-de-l-aide-juridique-reclament-la-parite-avec-ceux-de-la-Couronne>

À contre-courant

Le nombre de retraités de la fonction publique québécoise augmente en flèche, tout comme les coûts reliés à leurs fonds de pension. Le Journal vous présente cette semaine une série de reportages qui éclaireront ce sujet capital à l'heure où l'assainissement des finances publiques fait consensus.

Les régimes de retraite des sociétés d'État sont dans l'ensemble supérieurs à ceux offerts dans le secteur privé. Celui d'Hydro-Québec se démarque toutefois par la générosité des prestations offertes à ses 23 000 employés et la part assumée par l'employeur.

<http://fr.canoe.ca/cgi-bin/imprimer.cgi?id=1069415>

16 Novembre

Clement devrait être plus transparent

Parce que les compressions pourraient avoir des effets dévastateurs sur les services offerts à la population, le président du Conseil du Trésor, Tony Clement, devrait rendre publics les conseils qu'il reçoit, afin de permettre aux Canadiens de s'exprimer sur le sujet.

Dans une lettre transmise au ministre responsable de l'Examen stratégique et fonctionnel actuellement en cours, le président de l'Alliance de la fonction publique du Canada (AFPC), John Gordon, soutient que le gouvernement Harper devrait mener avec transparence son exercice visant à réduire de 5 ou 10 % les dépenses publiques, parce que les décisions prises auront des répercussions importantes sur la population.

<http://www.cyberpresse.ca/le-droit/actualites/fonction-publique/201111/15/01-4468260-clement-devrait-etre-plus-transparent.php>

15 Novembre

Plafonds des salaires : les procureurs fédéraux gagnent une manche

Le gouvernement fédéral vient de perdre une bataille dans son propre camp. Une décision de la Cour a déclaré les plafonds des salaires de la Couronne inconstitutionnels.

<http://www.droit-inc.com/article6604-Plafonds-des-salaires-les-procureurs-federaux-gagnent-une-manche>

Les gagnants et les perdants du système

Le nombre de retraités de la fonction publique québécoise augmente en flèche, tout comme les coûts reliés à leurs fonds de pension. Le Journal vous présente cette semaine une série de reportages qui éclaireront ce sujet capital à l'heure où l'assainissement des finances publiques fait consensus.

Alors que les deux tiers des employés du secteur privé n'ont aucun régime de retraite, ceux du secteur public jouissent de régimes blindés de plus en plus coûteux. Ce qui pose un problème d'équité entre les travailleurs.

<http://fr.canoe.ca/cgi-bin/imprimer.cgi?id=1067744>

14 Novembre

Secteur public - La compétence se paie

Il est de bon ton de montrer du doigt la fonction publique chaque fois qu'il est question de déficit et d'impôt. Pourtant, l'expérience nous apprend qu'il y a un prix à payer pour faire trop de place au privé en matière de services publics. Un prix parfois plus élevé que celui d'une fonction publique compétente.

<http://www.ledevoir.com/politique/quebec/336008/secteur-public-la-competence-se-paie>