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Press Clippings for the period of December 9-15, 2011
Revue de presse pour la période du 9 au 15 décembre 2011

English Media

December 15

Commons finance panel urges cuts

In what could serve as a prelude to the federal budget, the Conservative-controlled House of Commons finance committee is recommending the government curtail spending, proceed with corporate tax cuts and review the cost and sustainability of public sector pensions.

The Tory-dominated committee's pre-budget consultation report tabled Wednesday also calls on the federal government to consider overhauling the personal and corporate tax systems, review airport fees, consider allowing First Nations to own property on reserves and boost the number of auditors in the construction industry to combat tax evasion.

<http://www.montrealgazette.com/news/Commons+finance+panel+urges+cuts/5862576/story.html>

[Full Report](#)

Finance Committee for the Government of Canada calls for a pension review

As the federal government prepares for its budget next spring the Finance Committee conducted extensive consultations with widely representative groups including non-profit organizations, business groups, tax payer organizations and pension reform advocates.

The process was designed to investigate ways of making government finances sustainable over the long term. Many groups, who met with the Finance Committee, brought up public sector pensions as a key concern. Focusing on pensions were groups such as the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the Canadian Taxpayers Federation and Fair Pensions for All.

Two main aspects of public sector employee pensions were focused on. The first was financial sustainability of these plans and the other was fairness to taxpayers.

<http://www.exchangemagazine.com/morningpost/2011/week50/Thursday/121509.htm>

December 14

New study dispels myths about public sector pay

There is no evidence the average pay of public sector workers in Canada is consistently higher than comparable occupations in the private sector, reports a new study released today by the Canadian Union of Public Employees.

Battle of the Wages: Who gets paid more, public or private sector workers analyzes Census data at the most detailed occupational level available. By comparing average pay in comparable occupations, the study gives the most accurate snap-shot of how public sector workers pay compares to the private sector.

[Fact Sheet](#) [Full Report](#)

Lorne Gunter: Civil service pensions too rich to sustain

Most readers know how over the past two years, Greece has periodically erupted into violent protest. What many may not recall is why. Yes, in general, it's because the Athens government is deeply in debt and cannot borrow enough money from banks or bond sales to cover its obligations. But it is how the Greek government initially tried to bridge the gap between its revenues and expenditures that set off the riots in the first place: It wanted to scale back public pensions, among other cost-saving measures. Enraged public servants took to the streets and then took to smashing shop windows and setting cars on fire.

Canada could be headed in the same direction, if a new report from the C.D. Howe Institute is correct. Canadian civil service pensions are simply too rich to be sustainable over the long-haul, but Ottawa is making no effort to scale back the retirement promises it is making to federal workers.

<http://fullcomment.nationalpost.com/2011/12/14/lorne-gunter-civil-service-pensions-too-rich-to-sustain/>

December 13

Ottawa's pension liabilities understated by \$80-billion, report says

The federal government is understating the liability for its employee pension plans by \$80-billion because it does not use "real world" investment returns in its calculation, a new report says.

A C.D. Howe Institute study has concluded that the federal liability for pension plans now totals \$227-billion, which is \$80-billion more than the government reports in its Public Accounts.

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/ottawas-pension-liabilities-understated-by-80-billion-report/article2269491/?from=sec434>

[Full Report](#)

December 11

Canadians pouring billions into PS severance

The Conservative government is paying out billions of dollars in order to stop paying severance to public servants who willingly leave their jobs -- and it's the Canadian taxpayer who's on the hook.

So far, Ottawa has earmarked more than \$1.3 billion to pay out members of one union who are, for the most part, returning to work at the same job, in the same office, with the same responsibilities.

<http://www.globalnews.ca/pay+day/6442539920/story.html>

PS, government need a 'moral contract'

New rules essential to stop partisan exploitation of the bureaucracy, expert says

Canada needs to set ground rules for a new "moral contract" between ministers, public servants and Parliament because the existing rules are too weak to stop the partisan exploitation of the bureaucracy, says a former senior bureaucrat who helped write some of those rules.

<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/news/government+need+moral+contract/5843111/story.html>

December 9

Controversial crime bill to cost Canadians \$19 billion: study

It will cost Canadians some \$19 billion to build prisons to put more offenders behind bars for longer periods of time as part of the federal government's new tough-on-crime legislation, according to a report released Thursday.

The study, by the Quebec Institute for Socio-economic Research and Information (IRIS), also notes the provinces are expected to shoulder the majority of the extra costs associated with the legislation, which it estimates at \$14 billion.

<http://www.vancouversun.com/Controversial+crime+bill+cost+Canadians+billion+study/5832700/story.html>

Ottawa eyes more dramatic spending cuts: paper

The Conservative government may chop federal spending by C\$8 billion (\$7.87 billion) in each of the next three years, twice the amount it previously estimated, La Presse newspaper said on Friday.

<http://ca.reuters.com/article/domesticNews/idCATRE7B817020111209>

Médias francophones

14 Décembre

Bas-Saint-Laurent : compressions à l'Institut Maurice-Lamontagne

L'Institut Maurice-Lamontagne de Mont-Joli est frappé durement par les compressions fédérales. Vingt-six biologistes et scientifiques sont touchés par les réductions budgétaires.

Le directeur de l'Institut professionnel de la fonction publique du Canada pour le Québec, Yvon Brodeur soupçonne que certaines catégories de personnes ont été plus particulièrement visées.

Il affirme que ces suppressions concernent particulièrement les employés qui ont déposé des griefs contre leur employeur. Il constate également que les deux délégués syndicaux sont sur la liste des personnes touchées.

<http://www.radio-canada.ca/regions/est-quebec/2011/12/14/002-coupes-impl-peches-et-oceans.shtml>

Les salaires du privé comparables à ceux du secteur public

Les niveaux de salaire moyens des travailleurs du secteur public sont très comparables à ceux versés dans le secteur privé, selon une étude réalisée par le Syndicat canadien de la fonction publique (SCFP).

L'étude Le choc des salaires en arrive à cette conclusion en comparant les salaires versés dans 500 professions.

« Le salaire moyen général dans le secteur public est très similaire à celui d'emplois comparables dans le secteur privé, mais il est beaucoup plus équitable, qu'il soit mesuré par sexe, âge, groupe professionnel ou région », conclut l'économiste principal du SCFP, Toby Sanger.

<http://www.cyberpresse.ca/le-droit/actualites/fonction-publique/201112/13/01-4477575-les-salaires-du-privé-comparables-a-ceux-du-secteur-public.php>

[Fiche d'information](#) [Rapport Complet](#)

10 Décembre

Les services risquent d'écoper, craint un expert

Les services à la population risquent d'écoper si le gouvernement fédéral met à exécution son plan de réduction des dépenses de 10 %, estime Jean-François Savard, professeur agrégé à l'École nationale d'administration publique (ENAP) à Gatineau.

Selon M. Savard, les fonctionnaires détenteurs d'un poste permanent au sein de l'appareil gouvernemental n'ont pas trop à craindre pour leur gagne-pain.

<http://www.cyberpresse.ca/le-droit/actualites/fonction-publique/201112/09/01-4476534-les-services-risquent-decoper-craint-un-expert.php>

9 Décembre

Flaherty imposera des compressions de 8 milliards à Ottawa

À moins de trois mois du prochain budget, le gouvernement Harper affûte sa hache; ce ne sera pas 5% de compressions, mais bien 10% de réduction des dépenses que le ministre des Finances, Jim Flaherty, imposera à l'ensemble de l'appareil gouvernemental.

http://www.cyberpresse.ca/actualites/quebec-canada/politique-canadienne/201112/09/01-4476123-flaherty-imposera-des-compressions-de-8-milliards-a-ottawa.php?utm_categorieinterne=traffidivers&utm_contenuinterne=cyberpresse_B4_manchettes_231_accueil_POS2