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

English Media

September 15

Federal government's hiring chill remains despite new laws: Reports

Laws intended to improve the federal government's hiring process have backfired, opening the door to patronage appointments while increasing the chill among public servants looking to participate in the political process, according to a study the Public Service Alliance of Canada conducted.

<http://www.canada.com/news/Federal+government+hiring+chill+remains+despite+laws+Reports/5404343/story.html>

Full Report: <http://www.psaac.com/documents/PSMA-5-year-legislative-review-eng.pdf>

September 14

Opinion: Teachers shouldn't count on the courts for a windfall

When the Supreme Court of Canada condemned the B.C. Liberals for their contract-breaking legislation, the main reason was the government's failure to first try to resolve the matter at the bargaining table.

"There was no meaningful consultation," the high court found. "The minister telephoned a union representative 20 minutes before the bill was introduced in the legislative assembly to inform the union that the government would be introducing legislation dealing with employment security and other provisions of existing collective agreements."

And that was it for consultation. The government's near-total disrespect for its employees provided the Supreme Court with an opening to reverse long-standing jurisprudence and define, for the first time, a Charter right to collective bargaining.

<http://www.vancouversun.com/news/Opinion+Teachers+shouldn+count+courts+windfall/5404394/story.html>

Don't reduce deficit at the expense of infrastructure improvements: NDP

The New Democrats want the Conservative government to turn back the clock and slow down on reducing the federal deficit while boosting investment in crumbling infrastructure.

"We of course want to see the deficit eliminated, but what we're saying is you're going to make that worse if you act too quickly," NDP Finance Critic Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park) told reporters on Wednesday. "You can slow that down slightly and use the opportunity to invest in the economy, put people back to work . . . and take advantage of rock-bottom interest rates."

<http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/politics/article/1053832--don-t-reduce-deficit-at-the-expense-of-infrastructure-improvements-ndp>

September 13

Scott Newark: How to fix Canada's parole system

Dealing effectively with crime is an inherently complex issue in part because of the number of independent institutions within the justice system, such as the police, prosecution, courts, corrections and parole boards, all of which need to co-ordinate their efforts to support public safety.

<http://fullcomment.nationalpost.com/2011/09/13/scott-newark-how-to-fix-canadas-parole-system/>

B.C. teachers union quits settlement talks over 10-year-old legislation

The British Columbia teachers' union has pulled out of settlement talks with the provincial government relating to legislation imposed nearly a decade ago that was later challenged in court.

And as those talks founder, negotiations on a new contract are also bogged down, with both sides accusing the other of being unwilling to budge.

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/british-columbia/bc-politics/bc-teachers-union-quits-settlement-talks-over-10-year-old-legislation/article2165176/>

Tough-on-crime agenda a matter of ideology

The Harper government's tough-on-crime agenda is ideologically and politically driven, not evidence-based, embarrassingly flawed, and smacks of everything that is wrong with our criminal justice system. A classic case of crime as politics.

As usual, this legislation, either passed or pending, will prey on the socially, culturally and economically disadvantaged, especially aboriginals and the mentally ill.

<http://www.thestar.com/opinion/letters/article/1053183--tough-on-crime-agenda-a-matter-of-ideology>

September 12

It's time for unions to re-evaluate needs of workers and adapt accordingly Attitude overhaul necessary to regain their much-needed place in society

This past Labour Day, Canada quietly celebrated a continuing decline in private sector unionization that has been on a downward trend for the last three decades. This should give us pause; while unions have often alienated the Canadian public and Canadian workers, they remain an important part of civil society that we cannot do without.

<http://www.edmontonjournal.com/business/time+unions+evaluate+needs+workers+adapt+accordingly/5386833/story.html>

This is no time for \$4B in government cuts, says Liberals

The federal Liberals say \$4 billion in planned spending cuts by Ottawa should be postponed by a year or more until the global economy stabilizes.

John McCallum, the Liberal party's Treasury Board critic and a former bank economist, says it is almost impossible to overstate the gravity of the financial crisis facing Europe.

McCallum says Canadians are not insulated from the threat of another global financial meltdown and that now is not the time to be cutting public-sector jobs and programs.

<http://www.thestar.com/business/article/1052523--this-is-no-time-for-4b-in-government-cuts-says-liberals>

September 9

Harper signals government will be 'flexible' given fluctuations in global economy

After a summer of tough-on-crime talk and a focus on Canada's military efforts in Libya, Prime Minister Stephen Harper has set the stage for a fall parliamentary session where the top priority would be the wobbly economic recovery.

Though he twice repeated the sliver of good news for Canada — that since July 2009, the Canadian economy has created “nearly 600,000 net new jobs” — Harper flagged his government's openness to shifting its economic plans.

Harper hinted that the government could adjust timelines for economic measures, including cost-cutting, announced in the June budget.

<http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/politics/article/1051221--harper-signals-government-will-be-flexible-given-fluctuations-in-global-economy>

Plenty of room remains in Canada's prisons

Federal bureaucrats vastly overestimated how many jail cells would be required for the Conservative government's law-and-order agenda, according to new data obtained by QMI Agency.

Bureaucrats believed that when the Harper government's "Truth In Sentencing" legislation went into effect early in 2010, it would cause Canada's jails to burst because the legislation keeps some convicted criminals in jail longer.

<http://www.ottawasun.com/2011/09/09/plenty-of-room-remains-in-canadas-prisons>

The end is in sight – Canadian Lawyer Magazine

Lawyers who work in the Quebec public service are set to Sign a new collective agreement this fall after a negotiated end to an acrimonious labour dispute that resulted in a two-week strike and back-to-work legislation last February.

Marc Lajoie, president of the Association des juristes de l'Etat, which represents some 900 lawyers and notaries who work for the government, says under the agreement –in principle approved by 94 per cent in a mid July vote, association members will receive salary increases between 15 and 18 per cent retroactive to April 1, 2011. That is on top of the six-per-cent increase all public sector workers, including lawyers, will receive for the April 1 ,2010 to March 31, 2015 period.

<http://presidentaje.wordpress.com/>

Médias francophones

15 septembre

Justice pour tous

Délais insoutenables, frais exorbitants: notre système de justice est devenu un dédale dans lequel le citoyen entre à ses risques et périls, sans savoir quand, ni dans quel état il en ressortira. Le ministre Jean-Marc Fournier promet une réforme pour l'automne. Les attentes sont grandes.

<http://www.cyberpresse.ca/place-publique/editorialistes/ariane-krol/201109/15/01-4447884-justice-pour-tous.php>

13 septembre

Syndicats prêts à défendre les retraites des fonctionnaires

L'idée de la Fédération canadienne de l'entreprise indépendante (FCEI) d'offrir aux nouveaux employés du gouvernement fédéral un régime où les prestations dépendent du rendement des placements effectués par la caisse de retraite, a rencontré un tollé chez les syndicats.

<http://www.canoe.com/cgi-bin/imprimer.cgi?id=1016444>

Les libéraux dénoncent le «secret» des compressions

L'examen stratégique et opérationnel lancé par le gouvernement conservateur lors du dernier budget fédéral montre des signes « d'un exercice de plus en plus secret qui place l'idéologie avant les intérêts des Canadiens », a dénoncé hier le porte-parole libéral du Conseil du Trésor, John McCallum.

<http://www.cyberpresse.ca/le-droit/actualites/fonction-publique/201109/12/01-4446952-les-liberaux-denoncent-le-secret-des-compressions.php>

12 septembre

Le gouverneur général au congrès du Barreau canadien

Les avocats du pays sont rappelés à l'ordre

Invité par l'Association du Barreau canadien, cet été à Halifax, le gouverneur général, David Johnston, a causé toute une surprise en invitant les avocats à restaurer la confiance des citoyens dans la justice et dans leur profession. Sollicité pour sa nouvelle fonction, ce juriste s'est replongé dans la Constitution du pays. Son admiration pour la «primauté du droit», si précieuse

au Canada, a grandi, a-t-il confié, mais aussi sa crainte pour la fragilité de ce principe fondamental.

<http://www.ledevoir.com/societe/ethique-et-religion/331173/le-gouverneur-general-au-congres-du-barreau-canadien-les-avocats-du-pays-sont-rappeles-a-l-ordre>