

Politics

by Jim-Beaux Lieyeah

Nov. 4th- I am still living this day but it is clearly by now Friday. I wonder if it is too late for this deadline?? Oh well, here are some of the political events that caught my attention for this week....

Prairies Come Dry...

other farmers. In Europe, farmers get on average a 56 cent subsidy for every dollar of product sold. In the US, they get 38 cents but here in Canada they get all of 9 cents (and we wonder why it is so hard for farmers to compete- talk about an

million more to take them over a billion. Imagine if the price of potatoes, for instance, dropped 20% instantly. Essentially, that is your profit margin. You're going broke by running a money losing entity (your expenses exceed your revenues)!! I

two year estimates, Martin estimated the accumulated federal surplus to be \$95.5 billion over the next five years. This is a good thing. Now the debate is over what to do with it. The Liberals stated policy, and what they seem to be sticking to, is a 50-50 split with the surplus. Half of it going to tax reduction and to pay down the accumulated national debt (presently over \$580 billion-

measure that Martin did provide was his announcement that Employment Insurance (E.I.) premiums would be reduced. They will go from \$2.55 to \$2.40 for every \$100 earned. While this is a nice savings do not expect it to have an impact on any pay stub you'll get in the near future. Why?? Because Martin had already announced that the Canadian Pension Plan (CPP) premiums would be rising next

fiscal morass it was in six years ago. Now stop spending it and start putting back into the people's pockets who give it to you.

Good News+Supreme Court=...

Recently it was announced that the new Canadian Supreme Court Chief Justice is Beverley McLachlin.. She is the first Female Supreme Court Chief Justice in



Guess who got screwed last week in Ottawa. How ya doing Saskatchewan and Manitoba?? They came looking for some farm relief in a clearly needy situation. Basically, Jean Chretien took the respective Premiers (Sask. Roy Romanow and Man. Gary Doer) aside and showed them government figures that told them that the situation was not that bad. The best figure I have to highlight this problem is the way subsidies are provided in the western world to

unequal playing field!!). The government asserted they had already provided almost \$900 million in relief. Within one week, Finance Minister Paul Martin estimates the federal surplus to be over \$95 billion over the next five years (if all things remained constant, of course). They tell these people they have no money for them. It is insulting and I can see how it makes them go crazy!! Then, within two days of that announcement, they graciously give them over \$100

mentioned a couple of weeks back about a federal by election in Saskatchewan. I guess the Liberals will be losing that one (hello Reform in an NDP seat?? .. Yuck).

Martin's Economic Statement...

Federal Finance Minister Paul Martin had some excellent news for Canadians this week. Basically, Martin was giving a mid term economic forecast and update on our government's economic situation. Moving away from his

incidentally another report came out last week stating that over \$621 billion had been paid in interest on the debt in the last 20 years- this is the cost of maxing out the government's credit card without paying down any of the principal). The other half is going towards increased spending on both existing and new programs. This is a good formula. Personally, I think a higher priority should be on tax relief. But that does not buy votes in this day and age like an orgy of spending. The one concrete

year to begin to cover the cost of our aging population. The revolting aspect of this is that the current E.I. fund has an on paper surplus of over \$27 billion. On paper, because this money has been pilfered in the past to pay the deficit. The good news on the employment front, however, was that over 600,000 jobs had been created this year and the unemployment rate stood at 7.5% (the lowest in 9 years). Lots of good news from our Prime Minister-in-waiting who has navigated this country out of the

Canadian history as well as in the Western world. Furthermore, she is a Westerner, born in Southwestern Alberta; it is good to see the West get a fair shake out of our federal system (and its' institutional bias towards both Central and Atlantic Canada). She is known to take very independent stances in the Court (in the form of dissensions) which I think is a good thing. The last thing we need is some lackey to the government in that role. She has also served as the Chief Justice of the BC