

# Politics: Parting Shots

By Jim-beau Lieyeh  
STAFF GONZO

It is April 4th and I am far too tired to be doing this type of thing. It is my final article for this year and I wanted to talk about two things. But before doing that, I wanted to take the opportunity to formally thank my editor, Kent Bruyneel, for the freedom he gave me to write. This can not be understated and served to enhance my experience, which I enjoyed, with my colleagues at the Cadre.

As Gomer Pyle says, SURPRISE, SUEPRIZE, SURLYPRIZE. Before Christmas I predicted that gas and oil prices would continue to rise and would

lead to inflation. Guess what, that is exactly what happened here on the Island and, to a greater degree, in the rest of North America. What is being done to combat this? Really two approaches are available.

OPEC (Oil Producing Exporting Countries) got

only marginally. Why? Because of what is known as lagtime. That is policies that are implemented take time to filter through the economic system. But a bigger problem remains with the nature of OPEC and that problem is maintaining solidarity around decisions (ie. sticking to them). Gas money is quite addictive for countries and with prices as high as they are, the word is

keeps it (and maybe the world) together is their complete disdain for Americans.

But there is another solution that would require the right person to wave their magic wand. That person, in Canada, is Paul Martin. That wand is cutting gas taxes either temporarily or permanently and legislating that any drop would have to be passed on to the consumer at the pump. But nobody

likes to leave cash they could've had on the table and governments who find a tax cash cow they like, find it as easy to give up as heroin for a junkie. If you want to see what that looks like, go visit a

methadone clinic. But what Ottawa does is hide behind cooperative federalism. I'll give it up if the provinces do too. Frankly, I thought that

this type of behavior was left behind in the primary school playground. Obviously, this is not going to work. The only ally Ottawa has is Brian Tobin. Beyond that, they stare at a hostile

combination of Tories and NDPers across the country. But what Ottawa is forgetting to do, in its risk-free approach, is to take some shots because everybody knows (or at least everyone at the Barn does) that you miss 100% of the shots you do not take. So cut the tax and legislate that it gets passed on and bask in the glow of Canadians' adoration while calling the rest of the provinces "cheapsy." It'll pay off in that inflation will be kept in check, which means the rhinoceros-like debt we have on our shoulders will not blow like it was cast into outer space. And think about how many friends that'll make Jean. The next federal election could be tight. It is policy like this that can make the difference between getting over the top or not.

Speaking of...

Elections, that is the other thing that I wanted to talk about. I wasn't surprised with the timing of it as those in power followed the first rule of par-

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Governments who find a tax cash cow they like, find it as easy to give up as **HEROIN** for a **JUNKIE**

together last week and decided to slightly increase production which would, logically, increase supply. More oil means that prices should come down, but

to get it of the ground fast. Further, the predominantly Arabic organization is rampant with mistrust amongst its members that go back centuries. The only thing that

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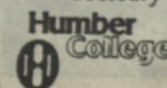
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