

Politics

by Jim-Beaux Lieyeah

As per usual I like to touch on some things from my last column. So the place to start would be...

Native Fishing

At last report, the natives had not been idle since the Supreme Court upheld the centuries old treaty that gave them a right to unlimited fishing (among other things). At last report they had managed to take in some 100,000 pounds of lobster alone in 10 days. Quite the lucrative haul to say the least. Unfortunately what's brought in today has a negative multiplier effect on what can be brought in in the future. Stocks are fragile and I understand this is a key breeding time for lobster. Why am I writing this?? Last issue I stated the feds needed to step in and put some limitations on what is going on. Since then there have been some angry meetings and Ottawa's Fishery Minister has said he would examine the problem. Problem is the well meaning and honest Herb Daliwal who knows nothing about fisheries (which he admitted when he gained the post through an August cabinet shuffle). As one who considers himself a

conservationist, my guess is that this examination period will go on indefinitely. This will test people's limits. My guess is that over the next coming weeks look for things to get a little testier both on and off the water (translation- you are gonna see some serious violence that'll make Thai soldiers look like they belong in the Disneyland marching band).

Nova Scotia Budget Crisis

New government and the first thing they have to say is that the provinces budget is back in the red. This doesn't surprise me as it is a recurring theme for incoming governments. They take the departing governments accounting practices and throw them out the window. Then they apply their techniques and voila, guess who is back in the red. In this case they have included a lot of expenditures and even managed to find fault in a previous budget (in this case Nova Scotia went from a modest \$20 million surplus to a deficit of over \$300 million). More parties have done this than I care to review. The best

recent examples are the Liberals when they came into Ottawa following the Tories and Paul Martin cooked the books to create a then record deficit of \$42 billion. Other takers include the PQ in Quebec and the Tories in Ontario. Why do they do this? To damage the credibility of the other government and make it easier on themselves to look good. Expenditures for this year might be slid into last year's and a couple of shakes later they make it look like they performed an economic miracle. Unfortunately, it is difficult for us to decipher what the real number is. My guess is that it is not that great considering the Tories in Halifax have maintained that they will be able to balance the books and still implement their promised tax cut. If you have never been involved, (i.e.) a victim, in a magic trick here is your chance...

So what if...

70% of the people in Quebec don't want a referendum. This does not faze Lucien (a.k.a. Lucy/ Lucifer/ or just plain Bullchard) Bouchard who at a recent party convention told his troops to stay on high alert. Thanks to Ottawa's largesse (Quebec City gained a \$1 billion increase in transfer payments thanks to a readjustment on transfer payments- which was also a benefit

to the Maritimes) the provinces books are balanced. This was a key criteria on the road to sovereignty. But it will also be a millstone around his neck. Butcher got tough with nurses this summer and didn't budge from his governments declared annual wage increase for civil servants. The nurses had generally supported his stone-throwing eventually led that union to fold as quickly as the New York Mets do in September. But his next round was tougher. Teachers are on a work rule program which, in this case means they are not participating in any extra curricular activities like sports, theatre, and music to name a few, and things are getting a little heated in La Belle Province. How much longer he can hold out before these students with all this pent-up energy (and poutine clogged arteries) really go crazy is anyone guess. But after being the first ones to tighten the belt since the drive for balanced budgets, you can bet civil servants across the board and across the country will be looking for a little payback. And they should get it. Whether they do or don't is another matter. Why?? Let's call it the Harris effect. In Ontario he took it to the teachers. He closed schools, increased classroom

sizes, and increased actual teaching time. They swore revenge, and during this year's election they targeted ridings where they thought he would be weak. Final result, Mike Harris is still in power. Let's hope this lesson gets lost in the translation or at the very least lost going over the border.

right mood) failed to disclose his sale of golf course stock worth over \$200,000 that happened to be in his riding. Now this might not sound like anything out of the ordinary for our ever ethical politicians, but this is different. Why? When Johnny came in he recognized (and rightly so) that confidence in our politicians was at an all time low (I can still see Mulrone's trout nosed Ministers burying their head in a trough- which I wished was a trough of a different sort). So he brought in the honest and honourable (he really is) former Pearson/Trudeau Cabinet Minister

Mitchell Sharp who drafted an ethics code. Things ran pretty smoothly. MP's were ultra careful and porkbarrelism was significantly reduced (which is good). But now this stuff is starting to come out and it is not only my sixth sense that is telling me this is only the tip of the iceberg. With Chretien and his government riding so far out in front and division on the right (between Presto "I wish you were gone already" Manning's Reformers and Joe "who?" Clark's Tories) it is not unreasonable to think they could easily get elected for third term. This could be the only thing to bring them down. Stay tuned to see what else surfaces.

Golf course.

What golf course? I can almost hear our esteemed Prime Minister saying that in an accent unique to one. It came out that Jean (or eh- Johnny if your in the

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