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## Chronology of Events July 1998 – December 1999

*Estée Garfin and Felina Arsenault*

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4 July 1998

*Western Canada*

The annual conference of western premiers wraps up in Yellowknife. The leaders of the western provinces and territories release a final statement demanding that the federal government restore money previously cut from the transfer payments for education, health care, and social services. Now that the federal government has reduced its deficit the premiers would like to see the money returned to the transfer payments. Another topic of discussion at the conference is the proposed social union. The provinces have tabled a proposal to work with Ottawa in setting national standards for social programs, determining funding, and making arrangements for dispute resolution. Social union negotiations will resume in a few weeks.

9 July 1998

*Fisheries*

Federal Fisheries Minister David Anderson announces that negotiations between Canada and Alaska over salmon fishing have failed. BC Premier Glen Clark has been very critical of Anderson's negotiations, saying that he has "sold out" to the Americans in other deals cut with Washington State and expects more of the same with the Alaskan negotiations. The BC government is urging Ottawa to tax American fishing vessels traveling through Canadian waters and to prohibit US navy testing on Vancouver Island.

- 13 July 1998  
*Environment*
- Alberta's Premier Ralph Klein states that Alberta will not ratify the Kyoto Accord, which Canada has agreed to sign. The accord calls for a large reduction in the emission of fossil fuels. Klein criticizes the accord for being too strict, saying that it will damage Alberta's economy, which is largely dependent on the fossil fuels industry.
- 15 July 1998  
*Aboriginal Peoples/  
Nisga'a*
- In British Columbia, agreement is reached between the Nisga'a people, the province, and the federal government to settle a land claim that is over a hundred years old. The BC government hopes that this deal will act as a template for future settlements of native land claims. The treaty grants the Nisga'a 1,992 square kilometres of land, ownership of the resources on the land, and self-government. Premier Clark plans to allow a free vote when the treaty is tabled in the legislature. Despite the excitement of the negotiators, there is much dissent. The Gitanyow and Gitksan native bands claim that much of the territory granted to the Nisga'a in the agreement traditionally belongs to the Gitanyow and Gitksan. In addition, the Reform Party and the provincial Liberal Party say that the agreement creates another level of government, grants too many powers to the Nisga'a, and creates racial inequality. Some have been calling for a provincial referendum on the treaty. An official ceremony will be held in the Nisga'a territory on 4 August 1998.
- 15 July 1998  
*Aboriginal Peoples*
- A law suit is launched by the Cree in the Superior Court of Quebec against the federal and provincial governments and the forestry industry. The Cree of northern Quebec argue that the forestry industry has been using logging practices that are not environmentally safe and have been violating the Cree's land rights. The law suit seeks full environmental assessments by both orders of government and a share of the logging profits and jobs.
- 15 July 1998  
*Senate*
- Reform Party member Deborah Hanly announces her bid for one of the two senators-in-waiting positions in Alberta. Premier Klein has been lobbying Ottawa to begin Senate reform which will include the move to an elected Senate. To this end, Klein announced in April that Alberta will elect two senators-in-waiting to take up any of Alberta's

six Senate seats that may become vacant. Alberta is not expected to have a Senate seat vacancy until 2001. So far only the Reform Party has put forward nominations for the senators-in-waiting election race.

15 July 1998  
*Health*

A report is released by the Canadian Institute for Health Information indicating that Canada has one of the lowest rates of organ donation among industrialized countries. The federal and provincial governments are working together to develop a national plan to increase Canada's rate of organ donation.

27 July 1998  
*Saskatchewan*

Saskatchewan and the federal government agree to spend \$40 million on economic development focusing on job creation, business incentives, and diversification of the province's economy. Manitoba and Alberta have developed similar accords with the Canadian government.

31 July 1998  
*Political Parties*

Nominations for the federal Progressive Conservative Party leadership race close with five nominees: Joe Clark, Michael Fortier, David Orchard, Brian Pallister, and Hugh Segal. The leadership vote will be held 24 October.

6 August 1998  
*Nova Scotia/  
Newfoundland*

Nova Scotia Premier Russell MacLellan announces that a dispute with Newfoundland over an ocean floor border will go to arbitration. The controversy concerns hydrocarbon potential in the ocean bed. MacLellan is criticized by opposition MLAs for legitimizing Newfoundland's unfounded claim to the area.

6-7 August 1998  
*Premiers' Meeting*

The annual Premiers' Conference takes place in Saskatoon. All of the leaders, including Quebec's Premier Lucien Bouchard, pledge to work together to negotiate with Ottawa for a new social union. In addition, the premiers and territorial leaders unanimously agree that the focus of new spending should be health care and demand that the federal government increase spending on health. The conference concludes with the leaders making a list of demands on the federal government: to continue negotiating with the provinces concerning hepatitis C compensation; to create a national transportation plan; to consult the provinces on future international trade agreements and to protect the rights of Canadians in a more

strident manner; and to eliminate Employment Insurance (EI) premiums for youth and reduce EI premiums for other workers.

17 August 1998  
*Environment*

Ottawa announces that it will go ahead and ratify the Kyoto Accord concerning fossil fuel emissions without the support of the Alberta provincial government.

20 August 1998  
*Separation*

The Supreme Court of Canada hands down its decision concerning Quebec secession. It states that Quebec cannot unilaterally secede, but that if a "clear majority" of people in Quebec vote yes to a "clear question" on secession, then the Government of Canada would be obliged to negotiate the terms of separation with the province. These negotiations would have to respect what the court termed the fundamental characteristics of Canada: the rule of law, federalism, democracy, and respect for minorities. The court, however, did not indicate what would constitute a "clear" question or a "clear" majority. It suggested that these are political questions which must be resolved by elected officials. Both the federalists and the separatists claim this decision as a victory. The federalists say that this means that Quebec would not be able to dictate the terms under which it would leave Canada. The separatists say that this decision gives Quebec the right to separate from Canada.

28 August 1998  
*Senate*

Jean Forest, an Alberta senator, steps down from the Senate for personal reasons. This leaves an unexpected vacancy among Alberta's six Senate seats. Alberta Premier Ralph Klein pressures the prime minister to choose a candidate by election in Alberta rather than by appointment.

4 September 1998  
*Fisheries*

Quebec Premier Bouchard criticized the recent fishing quotas instituted by the federal government in the fishing communities of eastern Quebec. Federal Fisheries Minister David Anderson explained that the cap on fishing is necessary for conservation purposes. The fishers of eastern Quebec are furious and have organized protests, even occupying a federal fisheries ship.

14 September 1998  
*Quebec*

The Bloc Québécois (BQ) wins the federal by-election in Sherbrooke. The by-election was called after Jean Charest, MP for Sherbrooke and leader of the federal Progressive Conservative Party gave up his seat to lead the provincial Liberal Party in Quebec. Gilles Duceppe, the leader of the Bloc Québécois, says that the BQ's win shows that the sovereignist movement is very strong. Prime Minister Jean Chrétien suggests otherwise and points out that the number of federalist votes far outnumbered the votes for the BQ.

17 September 1998  
*Social Union*

Prime Minister Chrétien is criticized by the Ontario and Quebec premiers for comments he made in a news interview. In the interview, Chrétien said that the provinces are demanding too much control over financial resources and programs in their quest for a social union. Ontario Premier Mike Harris says that the provinces are not seeking more power, but are trying to come up with a better formula for sharing federal and provincial powers. Quebec Premier Lucien Bouchard accuses the prime minister of being arrogant.

17 September 1998  
*Senate*

Douglas Roche is appointed to the Senate to fill the vacant Alberta seat. Premier Ralph Klein angrily states that Prime Minister Chrétien has ignored the wishes of Albertans in making the appointment without waiting for the election of senators-in-waiting next month. Earlier this month the Federal Court of Canada ruled that the prime minister has the authority under the constitution to appoint senators. The case was launched by the Reform Party to prevent Prime Minister Chrétien from appointing a senator without an election.

17 September 1998  
*Health*

The provincial and territorial health ministers release a statement pledging to maintain a financially viable publicly funded health-care system. To this end they are calling on the federal government to reinstate previously cut funds to the Canada health and social transfer. The ministers agree to work together to develop a comprehensive anti-smoking strategy; as well, they plan to focus on improving Aboriginal health care.

- 18 September 1998  
*Health*
- Federal Health Minister Allan Rock presents an offer to the provinces in an effort to resolve outstanding issues concerning hepatitis C victims. Last spring the federal and provincial governments committed to spending \$1.1 billion in compensation to people who contracted the virus between 1986 and 1990 (the period wherein the governments may be legally liable for the spread of the virus). This new offer arises in response to calls from Ontario and Quebec to compensate pre-1986 victims. The proposed deal would spend money on increased health services to all people infected with hepatitis C but does not include financial compensation to the victims. Ontario has committed to spending \$200 million in compensation to pre-1986 victims.
- 24 September 1998  
*Transportation*
- The provincial and territorial transport ministers meet in Regina to discuss highway construction and rail-line abandonment. Despite a report that says Canada urgently needs to upgrade its highways, the federal government will not commit to financing such a project. The report calls for \$17 billion in construction, but says that the improved roads would result in a net return of \$13 billion, much of that from increased trade. The other topic, rail abandonment, is a problem in the prairies as rail lines that are not profitable have been shut down, thus increasing shipping costs for farmers. David Collenette, the federal transport minister, says that he will work with the provinces to address these two issues.
- 29 September 1998  
*Gun Control*
- The Alberta Court of Appeal decides that the federal government does have the jurisdiction to make gun control legislation, including the requirement that firearms be registered. The governments of Alberta, Saskatchewan, Yukon, the Northwest Territories, and Ontario launched the suit complaining that Ottawa is overstepping its constitutional powers in making laws dealing with private property.
- 8 October 1998  
*Aboriginal Peoples*
- Cree leaders in Quebec and that province's government will recommence negotiations over logging rights. On the agenda are forest allotments for Cree communities, a shared land-use strategy, an end to new logging areas, and an audit of current forestry laws and policies. The Cree

are still pursuing a \$700 million claim against the Quebec government for allegedly unlawful logging practices.

12 October 1998  
*Aboriginal Peoples*

A federal study concerning the quality of life of Aboriginal peoples in Canada is released. The findings demonstrate that the standard of living for native Canadians, especially those living on reserves, falls far below the national average. Life expectancy is 7.5-10 years lower for Aboriginal peoples and wages for Aboriginal peoples are more than 50 percent below that of non-Aboriginal Canadians.

14 October 1998  
*Budget*

Federal Finance Minister Paul Martin delivers his annual fall budget update. His message to Canadians is that while the Canadian economy is in fairly good shape, it is necessary to be cautious in economic forecasting and in the planning of future spending, given the rough shape of the world economy. Martin says that there may not be the money expected earlier this year to cut taxes and increase spending in next year's budget due to lower than predicted growth rates.

14 October 1998  
*Fisheries*

Federal Fisheries Minister David Anderson reveals a plan to cut down the size of British Columbia's fishing fleet. The government will buy back licences and will develop even stricter quotas; the goal is to have a smaller, more profitable fishing fleet. The current quotas have already been sharply criticized by the BC government and fishers.

19 October 1998  
*Senate*

Alberta finally elects its senators-in-waiting, Ted Morton and Bert Brown. The two are Reform Party members; Reform was the only party to nominate candidates for the election, although two independents also ran. The Chief Returning Officer says that many voters did not fill out ballots for the Senate vote which was held in conjunction with municipal elections.

19 October 1998  
*Aboriginal Peoples/  
Nisga'a*

Gordon Campbell, leader of the British Columbia Liberal Party, launches a bid to have the Nisga'a treaty deemed unconstitutional in the BC Supreme Court. He is asking the court to rule that a provincial referendum is necessary to ratify the agreement. He argues that it creates another level of government by granting the Nisga'a law-making

powers and contravenes the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* by allowing only Nisga'a band members to participate in the Nisga'a government. Campbell deems this to be racial discrimination.

24 October 1998  
*Political Parties*

The Progressive Conservative Party holds its leadership vote. Joe Clark comes out ahead but fails to garner 50 percent of the vote, necessitating a second ballot. Hugh Segal, Brian Pallister, and Michael Fortier will not be competing in the second round. This leaves David Orchard, a Saskatchewan farmer, as Mr. Clark's only challenger for the second ballot. The second vote will be held 14 November.

27 October 1998  
*Media*

The *National Post*, the newest of the Southam Inc. papers, makes its debut. The Toronto-based paper is being billed as providing "truly" national news coverage.

28 October 1998  
*Quebec*

A general election is called in Quebec for 30 November 1998. Lucien Bouchard states in his election announcement that the Parti Québécois will hold a referendum on the question of secession if it is elected. Liberal leader Jean Charest explains that his party will focus on improved federalism, tax cuts, and restricting government's role in the economy.

10 November 1998  
*Agriculture*

Saskatchewan asks Ottawa to develop an emergency farm aid strategy. Farming incomes have fallen drastically due to low commodity prices and a subsidy war on agricultural products between the United States and the European Union.

12 November 1998  
*Aboriginal Peoples/  
Nisga'a*

The Nisga'a First Nation holds a referendum on the approval of their treaty with the BC and federal governments. The accord is ratified as 61 percent of eligible voters voted in favour. Despite attempts by the BC Liberal Party and the BC Fisheries Survival Coalition to thwart the provincial legislature's ratification of the deal, both the premier and the prime minister say they will speed up the process in their respective legislative assemblies.

14 November 1998  
*Political Parties*

Joe Clark wins the Progressive Conservative party leadership with 77 percent of the second-round ballots. Clark



says that his agenda as the new leader includes eliminating the party's debt, readying an election platform, and attracting more support from Canadians. He has dismissed the United Alternative movement as being ineffective and refuses to become involved in discussions with the Reform Party about a possible union between the parties.

26 November 1998  
*Northwest Territories*

Don Morin steps down as premier of the Northwest Territories amid accusations that he broke conflict-of-interest rules. He is resigning as premier, but will maintain his seat in the government. Morin denies any wrongdoing and will fight the allegations made against him.

30 November 1998  
*Quebec*

The Parti Québécois (PQ) wins a majority in the Quebec provincial election, renewing Lucien Bouchard's term as premier. While the Liberal Party had a higher percentage of the popular vote, 44 percent compared to 43 percent for the PQ, the distribution of voters meant that the PQ won 75 seats and Liberals took 48. The PQ's modest win means it is unlikely that the new government will call a referendum in the near future.

30 November 1998  
*Aboriginal Peoples/  
Nisga'a*

The BC government opens a special session of the legislature to introduce the bill to ratify the Nisga'a treaty.

1 December 1998  
*Gun Control*

Canada's gun registry law comes into effect. The law requires that every gun owner be licensed by 2001 and that all firearms be registered by 2003. Some of the provinces are appealing the law in a case before the Supreme Court of Canada.

4 December 1998  
*Fisheries*

Brian Peckford submits his final report on the west-coast fishery and Ottawa's management thereof to the Government of British Columbia. The report slams the current system and suggests that a new agency is needed to replace both the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the BC Fisheries Ministry. The new agency would be located on the west coast and would be a shared project between British Columbia and the federal government.

7 December 1998  
*Social Services*

Prime Minister Chrétien announces that a youth-employment program will be extended for a second three-year

period. It is a shared-cost program between federal and provincial governments and helps young people gain work experience through subsidies to employers. The announcement is attacked by the premiers who were not consulted in the decision to extend the program and yet are expected to continue funding it. The provinces are demanding that they be consulted on new social spending; federal-provincial consultation is a key part of the social union talks.

10 December 1998  
*Agriculture*

Federal Agriculture Minister Lyle Vanclicf announces that the federal government will commit \$900 million to a farm aid plan. The problem in getting the money to farmers is how to structure the program so as not to incite US anger at what might be perceived as an agricultural subsidy.

10 December 1998  
*Northwest Territories*

Jim Antoine is elected premier in the Northwest Territories to replace Don Morin who stepped down last month. Antoine was a leader in the Dene community and a long-time member of the NWT legislature. His term will last until 1 April 1999 when the territory will split in order to create the new eastern Arctic territory of Nunavut.

14 December 1998  
*Financial Services*

In a much anticipated announcement, Finance Minister Paul Martin rejects the merger plans of four of Canada's most prominent banks. The decision came after almost a year of deliberation and reports from different groups on the likely outcome for consumers of the proposed bank unions. Two reports in particular influenced the government's decision: one from the Bureau of Competition Policy and the other from the Superintendent of Financial Institutions, which stated that services to customers would likely be compromised and prices would increase. The banks argue that they would be better equipped to compete internationally with the larger pool of resources which would result from the mergers. The government will continue to implement changes to its financial services policy which are intended to increase competition.

17 December 1998  
*Western Canada*

The prairie provinces and the two territories announce plans to work together to promote economic development and attract international business and tourism. The group says that it is the fastest growing region in Canada and criticizes the federal government for doing little to improve transportation.

18 December 1998  
*Health*

The federal government finally reaches a compromise with hepatitis C victims on a compensation package. Hepatitis C sufferers were angered several days ago when health ministers across the country offered financial payments to Canadians who contracted the AIDS virus through a partner or parent infected by the tainted blood supply when the same ministers have been slow in addressing the claims of hepatitis C patients.

21 December 1998  
*Aboriginal Peoples/  
Metis*

The Metis gain recognition as a distinct Aboriginal People by the Ontario Court. The official recognition is part of a ruling that absolves two Metis of any wrongdoing in hunting a bull moose. The Metis have long faced difficulties in gaining the recognition, not only in Ontario but across the country. The difficulties arise in that it is difficult to define Metis, and because the different levels of government argue over who has jurisdiction over off-reserve Aboriginal people. Approximately 210,000 Canadians are identified as Metis.

30 December 1998  
*Transportation/  
Agriculture*

Willard Estey's report on Canada's grain transportation system is made public by the Ministry of Transport Canada. Estey, a former Supreme Court Justice, was called upon to investigate the issue last year when farmers suffered huge financial losses due to delayed grain shipments. The report recommends that the Canadian Wheat Board should give up control of grain transportation to private companies.

10 January 1999  
*Newfoundland*

Newfoundland plans celebrations in honour of its fiftieth year as a Canadian province. Newfoundland joined confederation in 1949. The celebrations are also expected to boost tourism, which has been growing since the 1997 festivities marking the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of explorer John Cabot's arrival in Newfoundland.

12 January 1999  
*Social Union*

Ottawa agrees to limit its ability to introduce new shared-cost programs at a federal-provincial meeting in Halifax. The ministers met to discuss the social union, and while no deal has yet been agreed to, all parties have been compromising and are optimistic that a deal will soon be reached.

- 14 January 1999  
*Unity*
- Saskatchewan Premier Roy Romanow declares that the federal government's choice not to ratify the Calgary Declaration is insignificant. The Calgary Declaration is a statement made by the nine federalist premiers recognizing Quebec's unique character. The Declaration was seen as a provincial initiative and not one that requires Ottawa's approval. The Declaration has been rejected by Quebec as insubstantial.
- 14 January 1999  
*Homelessness*
- Toronto's task force on the homeless concludes its study by saying that the stereotype of homeless people is not accurate; in fact there are many families and children who are homeless and the fastest growing segment is youth under 18 years of age. The report suggests that shelter allowances should be higher in Toronto and that the working poor should be given rent payment assistance. Costs of the report's suggested programs are approximately \$26 million for the city, \$262 million for the Ontario government, and \$84 million for the federal government.
- 18 January 1999  
*Newfoundland*
- Newfoundland Premier Brian Tobin calls a provincial election for 9 February. He explains that he needs to renew his government's mandate in the face of two important agreements for natural resource development. Others speculate that he has called the election so as to have another term in office before moving on to compete for the federal Liberal Party leadership when Chrétien decides to step down.
- 19 January 1999  
*Bilingualism*
- A report released by the federal Task Force on Government Transformations and Official Languages states that bilingualism has deteriorated as a result of federal government downsizing to provincial governments and due to increased privatization of services.
- 21 January 1999  
*Revenue*
- Revenue Canada begins collecting outstanding debts for the provinces. Revenue Canada will deduct monies owed to the provinces, such as student loans, sales tax, etc. from federal income tax refunds. It already does so for debts owed to the federal government. So far only Ontario, Nova Scotia, and British Columbia have asked that this measure be implemented on their behalf.

26 January 1999  
*Aboriginal Peoples*

The British Columbia and federal governments reach an agreement with the Sechelt First Nation. If signed, it will be the first such agreement under the BC Treaty Commission; the agreement with the Nisga'a band did not fall under this commission because negotiations began before the commission's inception in 1991. The deal with the Sechelt First Nation includes 933 hectares of land and \$42 million.

26 January 1999  
*Justice*

The federal Justice and Attorney General of Canada announces that it will join the British Columbia government in an appeal in the BC Supreme Court in a child pornography case. A lower court in BC overturned a law prohibiting possession of child pornography saying that it violates the right to freedom of thought, belief, opinion, and expression.

29-30 January 1999  
*Social Union*

Federal and provincial ministers meet in Victoria for social union talks. The provinces and the federal government have yet to reach a compromise on the most crucial issues. The provinces are demanding that they have more input into the design of social programs and want to have the power to opt out of Ottawa's programs and yet still receive federal funds if they run similar programs. Ottawa will not agree to these demands, and moreover is asking the provinces to remove barriers to social services to out-of-province Canadians. The provinces also want to prevent the federal government from being able to decrease transfer payments without consulting the provinces; the provincial ministers are calling on Ottawa to increase social transfers to their pre-1995 levels.

4 February 1999  
*Quebec*

A new poll suggests that nationalist sentiment in Quebec is weakening. The poll indicates that over 65 percent of Québécois do not want a referendum in Premier Lucien Bouchard's current term in office, and almost half said they do not want another referendum at any time.

4 February 1999  
*Social Union*

The federal government and the provinces, minus Quebec, sign a social union deal. The signing provinces are finally convinced to sign when Prime Minister Jean Chrétien promises to make a large increase to health-care funding. Ottawa will maintain its *de jure* control over the

interpretation and enforcement of the *Canada Health Act*, but a conflict-resolution process will be adopted as a concession to the provinces' demands. The federal government agrees to give the provinces three months warning about new policies and a greater say in the development of new policies. New shared programs will require the agreement of a minimum of six provinces and again provincial input will be sought in determining shared program costs and goals. The social union deal also relaxes the provinces' obligations to spend federal money on specific programs. The signing provinces agreed to remove provincial barriers to employment, postsecondary education, health care, and social assistance within three years. Quebec chose not to sign the deal because the federal government did not agree to allow provinces that choose not to participate in shared programs to use the federal money for a different but related service. Despite Quebec's refusal to sign the deal, Ottawa says it will allow the province to participate in any new initiatives. Quebec Premier Lucien Bouchard criticized the other provinces for agreeing to the social union and said that the deal signed without Quebec is evidence that there are growing differences between Quebec and the rest of the country.

9 February 1999  
*Newfoundland*

The Liberal Party wins a majority of seats in the Newfoundland provincial election, giving Brian Tobin another term as the province's premier. The total number of seats won by the Liberals was down to 32 from the 36 held when the election was called. The Conservatives won 14 seats and the New Democratic Party, 2.

10 February 1999  
*Water*

The federal government makes a proposal to the provinces to institute a nationwide suspension of large volume water diversions or sales. The government would like to use the suspension period to achieve an agreement with the provinces for an environmentally sound strategy to manage the country's water resources.

15 February 1999  
*Nunavut*

The first election is held in Nunavut to choose the 19 new legislature members. As there are no political parties in the territory, the 19 members will choose a premier and Cabinet from among themselves. The legislature will operate like that of the Northwest Territories in that decisions

will be made by consensus. Most of the administration for the new territory is already in place in anticipation of the establishment of Nunavut as an independent territory on 1 April.

16 February 1999  
*Budget*

The federal government delivers its budget, focusing on health care and modest tax cuts. It is the second balanced budget in a row and Finance Minister Paul Martin promises balanced budgets over the next two years. To keep Ottawa's promise during social union negotiations the federal government pledges to increase health transfers by \$11.5 billion over the next five years and to spend more money on research and innovation in health care. As for tax relief, the basic personal exemption will increase by \$675 and a surtax on income above \$50,000 instituted in 1985, said to be temporary at the time, will be repealed. Other areas being targeted for increased spending include youth employment, information technology, improved salaries and benefits to the military, Aboriginal Canadians and the Department of Indian Affairs, and an emergency contingency fund. In addition, \$3 billion will be spent on paying down the \$579.9 billion debt.

In response to the budget, anti-poverty activists point out that the budget makes a very weak attempt to address the growing poverty rate. Health groups were also critical. While they applaud the infusion of money to health care, they say it will not be enough to maintain an effective system. In contrast with the demands for greater spending, the Reform Party chides the government for not making greater tax cuts. Quebec Premier Lucien Bouchard complains that the change in CHST transfer payment calculations, now made on a per capita basis, will short-change Quebec. The prime minister responds that the federal equalization payment will make up for the change in transfers, emphasizing that the money is a benefit of federalism in that it comes primarily from Ontario's growing economy.

22 February 1999  
*Media*

The Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Communications Commission grants approval to Canada's first Aboriginal television network. The Aboriginal People Television Network will be carried as part of basic cable.

- 24 February 1999  
*Agriculture*
- Agricultural ministers from across the country meet in Victoria to sign an agreement on farm aid. All of the provinces, except Nova Scotia, grudgingly sign onto the federal government farm aid program. The program is designed to compensate farmers who have suffered economic hardship due to low commodity prices. The program will cost \$1.5 billion, 60 percent to be paid by Ottawa and 40 percent by the provinces. Despite signing the accord, Manitoba and Saskatchewan say that it is too expensive for their agriculture-based economies. Nova Scotia withdrew from the agreement at the last moment because it says the program does not address the needs of its farmers which differ from the needs of prairie farmers.
- 5 March 1999  
*Nunavut*
- Paul Okalik is chosen as Nunavut's first premier. He will lead the territory once the official transfer of power takes place on 1 April.
- 8 March 1999  
*Aboriginal Peoples*
- Parliament approves legislation to transfer control of reserve lands to band councils away from the federal government. This means that leases, licences, and property management regulations will come under the jurisdiction of the local band. Critics say it gives the reserve councils too much power to expropriate land. Native women's groups say that the bill does not entrench women's equal right to property, especially in divorce.
- 10 March 1999  
*Agriculture*
- The Saskatchewan and federal governments pledge a further \$85 million in relief for Saskatchewan farmers. This money supplements the money from the national farm aid program introduced this year.
- 11 March 1999  
*Aboriginal Peoples*
- Natives of the Treaty 7 bands in Alberta try to exercise their rights over natural resources. They have launched a suit against the federal government saying that they have maintained their rights to natural resources even with the Treaty 7 agreement, signed in 1877. The federal government says those rights belong to the Alberta government; the rights were transferred from the federal government to Alberta in 1930.
- 15 March 1999  
*Quebec*
- Premier Lucien Bouchard says that Quebec needs to have an independent voice from the federal government in



international relations concerning culture. Bouchard's comments follow Prime Minister Chrétien's statement in the House of Commons reinforcing the concept that diplomatic relations be conducted between countries and not provinces and countries. Earlier this month the culture minister from France invited representatives from both the Canadian and Quebec governments to a conference. Federal Heritage Minister Sheila Copps boycotted the affair because Quebec was invited independently.

22 March 1999  
*Aboriginal Peoples/  
Premiers*

Aboriginal leaders meet with six of the premiers and territorial leaders to discuss the role of natives in implementing the social union. Native leaders criticized the social union process because they were not included. The premiers and territorial leaders support their demand to be consulted in future planning, but did not approve a proposal by First Nations' Assembly Chief Phil Fontaine that Aboriginals play a formal role. The conference did not determine what the role of Aboriginal leaders is to be, and native participation in the social union process must still be endorsed by Ottawa. Included in the Aboriginal leader delegation are the Assembly of First Nations, the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, the Metis National Council, the Native Women's Association, and the Inuit Tapirisat. The premiers of Newfoundland, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Quebec do not attend the meeting.

25 March 1999  
*Quebec*

Ottawa rejects a Quebec proposal that would allow it to have a formal role in international cultural and trade organizations such as UNESCO and the World Trade Organization. The federal government did say that it would work with Quebec to develop better federal representation for Quebec abroad. The Quebec Cabinet passed a resolution on 24 March saying that Quebec must "speak with its own voice in the name of the Quebec people."

25 March 1999  
*Homelessness*

Toronto hosts a summit on homelessness. Accusations fly between the city, provincial, and federal governments as to which government is to blame for the enormous problem. Two days before the conference, Ontario Social Services Minister Janet Ecker pledged to spend \$45 million on affordable housing and housing for people suffering

from mental illness. As well, the federal government has appointed its first minister on homelessness.

30 March 1999  
*Aboriginal Peoples*

In an historic accord, Mohawk natives on Quebec's Kahnawake reserve will now be able to tax non-natives on the reserve. The deal allows the same natives the benefit of being exempt from sales tax when making purchases off the reserve in Quebec. The federal government will not participate in the deal and still demands that Kahnawake reserve natives pay GST on off-reserve purchases. Critics of the deal, including the federal government, say that it is unfair to tax some people and not others on reserves.

30 March 1999  
*Justice*

The Alberta Court of Queen's Bench upholds a law banning the possession of child pornography. The decision states that possession of child pornography endangers the right to privacy and protection of children. The decision is the reverse of a recent ruling in British Columbia which struck down the law as a violation of the right to freedom of thought, belief, opinion, and expression. The British Columbia and federal governments are appealing the BC court decision in the BC Supreme Court.

1 April 1999  
*Nunavut*

Nunavut, Canada's newest territory, is born. Nunavut is created from the eastern portion of the Northwest Territories and covers two million square kilometres with a population of 25,000. Per capita annual income is \$11,000 and the unemployment rate is 22 percent. Nunavut's budget will be approximately \$600 million, most of which will come from the federal government.

7 April 1999  
*Quebec*

The federal government grants another \$175.2 million to Quebec in disaster aid. The money will pay for further repairs needed as a result of the 1998 ice storm and the 1996 Saguenay floods.

12-15 April 1999  
*Atlantic Canada*

The Atlantic premiers and business leaders travel through four northern states on a trade mission to expand cross-border trade. The trip is sponsored by the federal Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and is deemed to be a success by both the Canadian and American participants.

22 April 1999  
*Aboriginal Peoples*

Brian Craik, spokesperson for the Cree, says that the Cree of northern Quebec have started a law suit in the Federal Court of Canada claiming that some 100 islands in the Hudson Bay and James Bay are part of their traditional lands. The islands are now part of Nunavut and were previously part of the Northwest Territories. The Cree say that they were not consulted when the boundaries of Nunavut were determined.

27 April 1999  
*Aboriginal Peoples/  
Nisga'a*

The Nisga'a treaty is signed by the British Columbia government and the Nisga'a band during an opening ceremony for the annual Nisga'a convention. The BC legislature ratified the accord on 22 April after the NDP government closed the debate in order to be able to sign the accord at the Nisga'a annual convention. The opposition Liberals were incensed by the close of debate and highlighted the fact that one-third of the document remains to be debated. The federal government is not expected to introduce the accord for ratification in the House of Commons until next fall when there will be more time available for debate.

29 April 1999  
*Newfoundland*

Newfoundland changes its name to Newfoundland and Labrador. The legislation concerning the name change receives unanimous approval in the provincial legislature on 29 April. The House of Commons and the Senate must approve the change before it can come into effect.

29 April 1999  
*Revenue*

The federal government creates the new Canada Customs and Revenue Agency. This single body would save about \$60 million in tax-collection costs if used by all governments: federal, provincial, and municipal. Federal Revenue Minister Herb Dhaliwal expects that it will take a great effort to convince the other governments to use the centralized tax-collection system, although Revenue Canada currently collects personal income taxes for the nine provinces, and some other taxes for certain provinces.

5 May 1999  
*Ontario*

Premier Mike Harris calls an election in Ontario for 3 June. The Progressive Conservative Party platform includes more tax cuts, health-care spending, and strong leadership. The Liberal Party campaign focuses on the health-care issue, which has been a hot topic in Ontario

and across the country this past year. The NDP platform also promises increased health spending, but includes spending on education, increased shelter allowances for people on social assistance, the re-implementation of labour laws repealed by the Tory government, and improved environmental protection.

7 May 1999  
*Provinces*

Federal and provincial leaders introduce a National Children's Agenda at a conference in Saskatoon. While the agenda lacks detail and does not address the issue of funding, it does target certain areas for future policy development: The four areas covered by the agenda are physical and emotional health, safety, success in learning, and becoming responsible and socially engaged citizens. All of the provinces with the exception of Quebec will participate in this endeavor.

8 May 1999  
*New Brunswick*

A general election is announced by New Brunswick Premier Camille Theriault. Theriault says that his Liberal Party will address jobs, health care, and leadership. The leadership question is important as it is the first election after long-time premier and Liberal leader Frank McKenna's retirement. Important issues in the campaign will include tax cuts, which are favoured by the Liberal and Progressive Conservative Parties, and the question of tolls on a new highway running between Fredericton and Moncton.

12 May 1999  
*British Columbia*

Federal Fisheries Minister David Anderson responds to a confidential report by the BC Forests Ministry, which was leaked a day earlier. He announces that the federal government will not provide relief funds for forestry industry restructuring. The report states that over 18,000 jobs will be lost in the industry over the next two years and calls for federal aid to alleviate the economic impact. Anderson says the federal government will not provide help both because forestry falls under provincial jurisdiction and because the industry's problems are the result of mismanagement by the BC government.

12 May 1999  
*Nunavut*

Nunavut's legislature opens for the first time. It is reported in the Throne Speech that the government will make itself as accessible as possible, and it introduces Inuktitut as the

territory's official government language. Nunavut plans to join the other two territories to negotiate a greater share of resource revenues from Ottawa.

14 May 1999  
*Transportation*

Federal and provincial transport ministers meet to discuss highway improvements. The provinces are asking Ottawa to share half the costs of proposed roadwork. Currently, all parties involved are finding it difficult to raise the money needed to improve the country's highways. They are necessary to maintain and increase trade.

15 May 1999  
*British Columbia*

British Columbia Premier Glen Clark announces that his province will resume discussions with the federal government concerning Ottawa's lease of the area at Nanoose Bay. The federal government has leased the area since 1965, and it allows the United States military to use the area as a torpedo testing range. At issue is British Columbia's demand that the federal government pledge to ban vessels carrying nuclear weapons in the leased area. The federal government says that it cannot make such a commitment because, for security purposes, the US will not divulge whether or not a ship is carrying nuclear warheads. Ottawa had said a day earlier that it would move to expropriate the land given the suspension of negotiations with BC. BC has used the Nanoose Bay lease as a bargaining chip in a dispute over fishing with the federal government.

19 May 1999  
*Quebec*

Quebec Premier Lucien Bouchard returns home from a trade mission to Mexico with millions of dollars of business contracts. Bouchard says his government will quadruple spending to promote Quebec internationally and plans to conduct similar trips to Argentina and Chile. Quebec's attempt to make itself known internationally and to conduct relations with other states without the federal government has angered federalist politicians in Ottawa. Chrétien's government refused to help Bouchard arrange a meeting with Mexican President Ernesto Zedillo.

20 May 1999  
*Aboriginal Peoples*

The Supreme Court of Canada hands down a decision allowing off-reserve natives to vote in band elections. The requirement that natives be ordinarily resident on their reserves was found to be discriminatory. Many natives have been forced to move off-reserve in order to find work and

better housing. The ruling will be particularly beneficial to native women who were forced off the reserves and lost their band membership when they wed non-natives prior to a 1985 ruling which ended that practice and reinstated band membership. However, often women were not permitted by their communities to return. This latest decision will now allow these women to participate in the election of their band leaders.

20 May 1999  
*Justice*

The Supreme Court of Canada ruled that the definition of "spouse" in the *Ontario Family Law Act*, which applies only to heterosexual couples, is unconstitutional because it discriminates on the basis of sexual orientation. The ruling grants Ontario six months to update the Act and implies that other provincial laws ought to be changed as well to eliminate discrimination against gays and lesbians in the law. This means that other provinces will likely be forced to re-examine their own statutes. However, Premier Ralph Klein has suggested that his government may invoke the notwithstanding clause to avoid changing the definition of spouse in Alberta statutes.

20-21 May 1999  
*Western Canada*

Postsecondary education tops the agenda at a meeting of western premiers and territorial leaders. They are asking the federal government to budget more money for postsecondary education transfers. The leaders say that postsecondary programs need ongoing support. The programs have not received support because of the social transfer cuts over the past several years. Also on the agenda is the development of a process to resolve cross-border disputes with the United States. To this end they met with North Dakota Governor Ed Schafer. The leaders of western Canada have been invited to attend the semi-annual meeting of western governors in Wyoming in June.

3 June 1999  
*Ontario*

Ontario elects the Tories to a second term in government. It is the first election in the province in over 30 years where a party wins back-to-back majority governments. The Conservatives win 59 seats, the Liberals 32, and the NDP are down to just 9, which does not meet the required 12 needed for official party status.

3 June 1999

*Fisheries*

Federal Fisheries Minister David Anderson endorsed changes to the Pacific Salmon Treaty signed with Alaska, Washington, Oregon, and US native groups. The changes include fishing caps based on the fish available, not quotas, and a focus on conservation. However, BC fishers, environmentalists, the BC government, and natives are furious about a deal they see as selling out their interests.

7 June 1999

*New Brunswick*

In a surprise election landslide the Progressive Conservative Party comes to power in New Brunswick. The party wins 44 seats compared to the 9 held when the election was called. The Liberal Party went from a majority government to holding just 10. High unemployment on the Acadian peninsula, road tolls, and cuts to the numbers of health-care workers and police were among the reasons cited for voter dissatisfaction with the previous Liberal government. Bernard Lord will be the new premier of the province.

10 June 1999

*Supreme Court of  
Canada*

Louise Arbour is appointed to the Supreme Court of Canada. She will resign as chief United Nations' war-crimes prosecutor in order to fulfill the appointment. The vacancy comes after Justice Peter Cory's recent retirement.

17 June 1999

*Nova Scotia*

Premier Russell MacLellan's Liberal government is defeated in Nova Scotia. The Conservative Party joined the NDP in voting down the government's budget, thus toppling the government. At the dissolution of the legislature, the Liberals and NDP each held 19 seats and the Tories held the balance at 13. The Tories had agreed to support a Liberal minority government on the condition that the budget would be balanced. They withdrew their support when it was not. The Liberals have defended themselves by saying that the extra money would be spent on a much needed infusion into the health-care system. The election is called for 27 July.

21 June 1999

*Aboriginal Peoples*

An agreement in principle is reached between the Dogrib First Nation and the federal government. If ratified, the deal would grant the Dogrib \$90 million, 39,000 square kilometres of the Northwest Territories, a share of resource revenue, and mineral rights to the land covered by the treaty

with the exception of current mining claims being honoured by the federal government. The agreement also sets the stage for self-government.

21 June 1999  
*New Brunswick*

The Conservative government led by Bernard Lord is sworn in in New Brunswick. Lord has reduced the size of the Cabinet and says that the government will be much leaner than the Liberal government it replaces. Lord promises to raise the minimum wage, fight the federal gun control law, resolve outstanding issues with health-care workers, remove highway tolls, and create 300 new nursing positions.

30 June 1999  
*Justice*

The British Columbia Court of Appeal upholds a lower court ruling, which found a law criminalizing the possession of child pornography to be unconstitutional. The appeal was initiated by the BC government and the federal government; federal Justice Minister Anne McLellan says that the governments are disappointed with the decision and that they will institute an appeal in the Supreme Court of Canada.

30 June 1999  
*Agriculture*

Agriculture ministers from Manitoba and Saskatchewan meet with their federal counterpart in Ottawa to ask for more farm aid from the federal government. Lyle Vanclicf, the federal minister, says that no more money will be spent on agricultural aid at this time, but he did commit to helping the provinces find money in other departments for disaster compensation.

5 July 1999  
*Political Parties*

The Liberal task force on the west wraps up its meetings with a trip to Saskatchewan this week, after some discouraging news that Alberta tends to mistrust the central government. The task force was established by the prime minister in January in order to build a Liberal presence in the traditionally hostile region.

26 July 1999  
*Alberta*

Albertan municipalities lash out at the Progressive Conservative provincial government for downloading its spending onto municipal governments. The municipalities have their hands tied when it comes to spending by a law that prevents them from running a deficit. This means that municipal governments can either raise taxes or delay infrastructure improvements.



- 27 July 1999  
*Nova Scotia*
- Led by John Hamm, the Progressive Conservative Party won the provincial election in Nova Scotia, capturing 29 of the legislature's 52 seats.
- 27 July 1999  
*Political Parties*
- The United Alternative holds a press conference in Toronto to kick off the next step in its unite-the-right crusade. As co-chair of the United Alternative steering committee, Ontario Tory minister Tony Clement announced the co-chairs of eight action committees and revealed changes to the United Alternative's executive council.
- 1 August 1999  
*Northwest Territories*
- A Supreme Court decision is forcing the government of the Northwest Territories to alter the number of seats in its Legislative Assembly after concerns were raised that non-Aboriginals represent the majority of people in the Northwest Territories after its split with Nunavut. The new system was also giving preference to urban rather than rural areas, which was an issue of great concern to many Aboriginals. The Legislative Assembly has until 1 September 2000 to make the necessary changes.
- 13 August 1999  
*Political Parties*
- Former Tory MP Bill Matthews of Burin-St. George, Newfoundland announced his resignation from caucus and joined the Liberals. As the Tory fisheries critic and deputy House leader, Matthews departure has humbled Progressive Conservative Party members and bolstered Liberal confidence.
- 16 August 1999  
*Premiers' Meeting*
- At their annual conference, premiers and territorial leaders unanimously called for full restoration of the CHST to fund social programs, with a specific focus on postsecondary education. The premiers attacked the rise in federal budgetary surpluses claiming that provincial expenditure responsibilities are outstripping provincial tax revenue. However, there were differences between the premiers over the need for increased transfers versus substantial tax cuts. Premiers Harris and Klein were particularly strident in their demands for tax cuts, but the other premiers were less enthusiastic in their support. The federal government has already announced that it will divide future revenue surpluses between debt reduction, tax cuts, and new spending.

16 August 1999  
*Party Politics*

Jean Chrétien makes a mid-summer Cabinet shuffle that gets political circles buzzing. Among the shuffle, all-but-unknown Liberal backbencher, Toronto MP Maria Minna, was put in charge of international cooperation. The move shows a definite shift to the left and is also likely meant to cool the leadership aspirations of right-leaning Liberal Finance Minister Paul Martin.

16 August 1999  
*Alberta*

The Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA) meets with provincial Treasurer Stockwell Day to ask that the school portion of property taxes be given to local government. The cash-strapped municipalities are suffering from a downloading of responsibilities from the provincial to the local level coupled with a decrease in provincial grants to municipalities from \$75 in 1993 to \$25 in 1994. In addition to the changes to taxation, the AUMA is also lobbying the Alberta government to draw up a charter delineating provincial and municipal responsibilities.

21 August 1999  
*British Columbia*

Premier Glen Clark met with Lieutenant-Governor Garde Gardom and tendered his resignation. Clark continues to maintain his innocence in regard to the police allegations against him, but admits that he should have recognized that his actions had tarnished his public reputation. The NDP caucus announces that Deputy Premier Dan Miller will replace Clark as acting premier of the province.

23 August 1999  
*Ontario*

At a Toronto meeting of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, municipal leaders highlight the implications of province-wide restructuring of services. Changes to public services, in particular the health system and the education system, were discussed.

30 August 1999  
*Supreme Court of Canada*

The appointment of Beverley McLachlin as the new Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, replacing Antonio Lamer, has generated criticism about the system of judicial appointments. There are concerns that the current procedures for appointing Supreme Court Justices are too vague and may reflect partisan interests. McLachlin is the first woman to be named as the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada.

- 9 September 1999  
*Trade* Prime Minister Jean Chrétien cancelled a Team Canada trade mission to Australia after several provincial premiers dropped out for various reasons.
- 12 September 1999  
*Political Parties* Reform Party leader Preston Manning and Progressive Conservative leader Joe Clark share the stage in Edmonton for a press conference updating the press on their pursuit of common ground between the two right-wing parties.
- 13 September 1999  
*Political Strategy* The narrow win in the Reform Party referendum to create the United Alternative raises concerns. Many of the yes voters were recruited after the beginning of the referendum campaign, which suggests that an aggressive pro-United Alternative campaign took place after it became obvious that the referendum would not be supported by the old rank and file Reformers.
- 13 September 1999  
*Governor General* Adrienne Clarkson is appointed to succeed Romeo LeBlanc in the Governor General's office.
- 17 September 1999  
*Supreme Court of Canada* The Supreme Court of Canada upholds an Aboriginal treaty signed in 1760 that allows Aboriginal People in Atlantic Canada to fish year-round for commercial purposes. The case was initiated by Mi'kmaq native Donald Marshall, who was initially made famous when he was wrongly convicted for murder and spent 11 years in jail.
- 21 September 1999  
*Manitoba* The New Democratic Party wins the provincial election with 32 out of 57 legislative seats. The new premier is Gary Doer.
- 26 September 1999  
*Homelessness* Federal Labour Minister Claudette Bradshaw wraps up a cross-Canada tour of shelters and programs related to homelessness with a commitment to seek short-term federal aid for homelessness while at the same time seeking a long-term solution.
- 27 September 1999  
*Political Parties* New Brunswick MP Angela Vautour, who represents the Beausejour-Petitcodiac constituency, announces her move from the New Democratic Party to the Progressive Conservative Party. The move means that both the NDP and the Progressive Conservatives occupy 19 seats in the House of Commons.

- 27 September 1999  
*Political Parties*      The Reform Party has had to drop the idea of merging with Progressive Conservatives and instead is pursuing the creation of an entirely new party, the United Alternative. Although the third option of sharing candidates in some constituencies has not been dismissed by the Reform Party, the Tories are trying to ensure the presence of a Tory candidate in every riding.
- 28 September 1999  
*Atlantic Canada*      Atlantic members of the Liberal caucus draft a report on the economic renewal of the region. The report targets government investment in high-tech industries and tax incentives as ways to improve the economic prospects of the region.
- 28 September 1999  
*Political Leaders*      Finance Minister Paul Martin declares that he will run for re-election even if Jean Chrétien opts to retain the Liberal Party leadership. The finance minister has hinted at aspiring to the office of prime minister in the past, but continues to declare his support for Prime Minister Jean Chrétien.
- 29 September 1999  
*Education*      Political wheeling and dealing may prevent students in Quebec from getting their share of the Millennium Scholarship Fund. Federal Human Resources Minister Jane Stewart and Quebec Education Minister François Legault cannot seem to agree on anything — from the colour of the cheques to the language in which they're printed. Both sides accuse the other of holding up the process, but neither seems willing to yield.
- 30 September 1999  
*Aboriginal Peoples*      A Nova Scotia fishing group, the Scotian Fundy Mobile Gear Fishermen's Association, demands that the federal government compensate non-native fishers if Atlantic Aboriginal people are allowed to fish without restrictions. At the same time, Aboriginal chiefs from the Atlantic region are encouraging natives to continue fishing despite the rising tension.
- 30 September 1999  
*Health*      Federal Health Minister Allan Rock requests that the Alberta College of Physicians and Surgeons wait until the Alberta Legislature reintroduces Bill 37 before making decisions on accrediting private hospitals. Bill 37 was dropped earlier this year by the government after critics charged that it would open the door to private health care.

30 September 1999  
*Social Services*

NDP leader Alexa McDonough calls on the Liberal government to live up to its 1993 promise to create 150,000 new child-care spaces. The federal government has not created any new child-care spaces and McDonough argues that only 9 percent of children who need daycare receive it.

1 October 1999  
*Aboriginal Peoples*

Federal Fisheries Minister Herb Dhaliwal announces his intentions to step into the east-coast fishing fray in order to negotiate an interim agreement with Aboriginal fishers so that a long-term solution — satisfying both native and non-native fishers — can be found. Unrest in east-coast fishing communities has been on the rise since a 17 September Supreme Court ruling allows east-coast Maliseet and Mi'kmaq Aboriginals to hunt and fish year-round without a licence.

2 October 1999  
*Alberta*

On the last day of the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association convention in Edmonton it appears that the provincial government is prepared to meet some municipal demands for financial support.

3 October 1999  
*Aboriginal Peoples*

Tensions run high in Burnt Church, New Brunswick where non-native fishers carry out threats to destroy any lobster traps put in the water after the official season closed. Over 3,000 traps were destroyed. Non-native fishers also stormed fish-processing plants accused of accepting off-season lobster from native fishers. The conflict stems from the 17 September Supreme Court decision confirming Aboriginal treaty rights to commercial fishing.

4 October 1999  
*Aboriginal Peoples*

Leaders of five Innu communities in Quebec issue an ultimatum to the federal government saying that if Ottawa does not get involved in ensuring that Innu concerns over the impact on the environment and their territorial rights of the Churchill Falls hydroelectric project are addressed they will go to court. The provincial governments of Quebec and Newfoundland are jointly working on the Labrador-based project, but neither government has satisfied Aboriginal concerns for the integrity of their land. Talks between the Innu and the provincial governments currently appear to be at a standstill.

- 5 October 1999  
*Forum of Federations* The Liberal government tries to downplay a scheduled meeting between US President Bill Clinton and Quebec Premier Lucien Bouchard as a mere courtesy call. Quebec sovereignists, on the other hand, argue that the meeting is symbolic recognition of Quebec sovereignty. The private meeting is scheduled as part of the International Conference on Federalism beginning in Mont-Tremblant, Quebec, 6 October 1999.
- 6 October 1999  
*Forum of Federations* The International Conference on Federalism opens in Mont-Tremblant, Quebec. Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and Quebec Premier Lucien Bouchard face off over issues of Canadian federalism before the international crowd. Organizers attempt not to let the conference be overridden by Canada-specific issues.  
Former Prime Minister Brian Mulroney defends Canadian federalism. Speaking at the conference, Mulroney claims that given the vast geography and diversity of Canada, specific provincial interests are served well, and that federalism is here to stay.
- 8 October 1999  
*Forum of Federations* President Bill Clinton spoke on the issue of unity in Mont-Tremblant, Quebec. The 45-minute impromptu speech was applauded by federalists, but has Premier Lucien Bouchard fuming as it lays out tough criteria for any group seeking independence. The US president is said to have taken a special interest in Canadian unity and has done extensive research on the topic.
- 11 October 1999  
*Aboriginal Peoples* Department of Fisheries and Oceans officers crack down on native fishers who are not covered by the 17 September Supreme Court decision to allow Mi'kmaq and Maliseet east-coast Aboriginals to hunt and fish year-round without a licence. Metis fishers are arrested for fishing illegally on a Mi'kmaq boat.
- 12 October 1999  
*Aboriginal Peoples* Eighteen charges are laid in connection with the destruction of thousands of Aboriginal lobster traps in New Brunswick. The RCMP announce that 25 people have been charged with 49 Criminal Code offences and a spokesperson for the Department of Fisheries and Oceans announces that an undisclosed number of non-native fishers will be charged with having lobster traps on the boats

during the closed season. The charges all arise from the tension surrounding the 17 September Supreme Court decision.

12 October 1999  
*Throne Speech*

In the Speech from the Throne the Liberal government restates its promise to use half the federal surplus on debt and tax reduction and the other half on increased social spending. Emphasis is placed on children and the role of the family. Using investment in areas that support the knowledge-based economy is also touted as a way to keep highly trained and skilled professionals in Canada. Critics of the speech say it lacks vision and merely represents more of the status quo.

12 October 1999  
*Quebec*

In anticipation of today's Speech from the Throne, Quebec Premier Lucien Bouchard attacks the Liberal government's centralist approach to politics and intervention in provincial jurisdictions such as health and education.

13 October 1999  
*Gay and Lesbian Rights*

Attorney General Jim Flaherty claims that Ontario needs more time to comply with the Supreme Court of Canada ruling that struck down its definition of a common-law spouse. Flaherty has just one month to allow same-sex, common-law spouses to claim alimony payments in the event of a separation. Critics claim that the Ontario government is dragging its heels for political reasons and argue that the province should be forced to obey the start date of 20 November.

17 October 1999  
*Aboriginal Peoples*

James MacKenzie, lead negotiator for federal Fisheries Minister Herb Dhaliwal, visits Yarmouth, Nova Scotia to address the demands of commercial fishers who want to have native fishing restricted. Tensions in Yarmouth have been rising since the Supreme Court of Canada decision allowing year-round fishing without a licence, and there are fears that the dispute may get out of hand.

18 October 1999  
*Aboriginal Peoples*

Mi'kmaq Chiefs meet with federal Fisheries Minister Herb Dhaliwal in an attempt to bring peace to the growing east-coast lobster dispute. The minister calls for a self-imposed moratorium on lobster fishing, but only 25 of the 35 Chiefs agree and many band members refuse to heed the moratorium.

A group representing the non-Aboriginal Nova Scotia lobster fishing industry requests that the Supreme Court of Canada review its controversial ruling which allows Mi'kmaq and east-coast Maliseet Aboriginals to earn a livelihood from hunting and fishing year-round without a licence. There is no deadline for the court's response.

19 October 1999  
*Quebec*

A letter from federal Intergovernmental Affairs Minister Stéphane Dion to his Quebec counterpart Joseph Facal is released to the public. The letter suggests that Quebec is subject to the Supreme Court of Canada ruling made last year in which Quebec was denied the right to secede unilaterally. Meanwhile, some members of the Liberal caucus urge Prime Minister Jean Chrétien to put on the backburner a plan to establish federal ground rules for a future referendum on Quebec sovereignty. These caucus members worry that laying down the law to separatists will fuel their dissent.

20 October 1999  
*Quebec*

Judge Danielle Cote rules that the provincial government failed to prove that the French language is still in jeopardy in Quebec. This means that section 58 of the French language charter is invalid and that the French language no longer has to be predominant on signs. The case was initiated by Gwen Simpson and Wally Hoffmann, who were fined \$75 under the Language Charter for not making the French letters on the signs in their gift shop larger than the English letters.

21 October 1999  
*Quebec*

Quebec Premier Lucien Bouchard lashes out against the ruling made by Judge Danielle Cote in which the Judge stated that the French language is not endangered. Bouchard argues that the French language is very much in danger and that the Québécois people have the right to take action to preserve it. The Quebec government is appealing Cote's ruling. However, lawyers for the government chose not to present arguments demonstrating that French is still at risk in the province. Liberal Leader Jean Charest described the case as "either provocation or incompetence at the highest level." He suggested that the government was deliberately trying to instigate a language debate in the province in order to generate support for sovereignty.



- 21 October 1999  
*Aboriginal Peoples*
- Indian Affairs Minister Robert Nault promises to pass the Nisga'a treaty in Parliament before the new year, even if it means quashing debate. The treaty was signed by the Nisga'a of British Columbia, the province, and the federal government earlier in the year but in order to be implemented it must be passed by Parliament. Only the Reform Party has threatened to delay its passing.
- 22 October 1999  
*Aboriginal Peoples*
- Nova Scotia Fisheries Minister Ernie Fage gives his support to a seven-point plan developed by non-native fishing groups in the region. The plan calls for one fishery with one set of rules that would apply equally to everyone and would bring an end to out-of-season Aboriginal fishing for commercial purposes.
- 22 October 1999  
*Aboriginal Peoples*
- Tenants on Musqueam land, in southwest Vancouver, have seen their rent soar and have become embroiled in a bitter fight that is taking them to the Supreme Court of Canada. The rent, which was typically about \$400/year previous to 1997, was raised without dispute to \$10,000/year in 1997 to reflect changing land values. However, the Musqueam band appealed that decision and last December the Federal Court of Appeal awarded rents in the \$28,000 range. Leaseholders are refusing to pay that much, while the band is demanding more. Both sides have requested leave to appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada and in the meantime the land rent will average \$10,000 a year and those refusing to pay will receive eviction notices.
- 25 October 1999  
*Atlantic Canada*
- The Atlantic Institute for Market Studies publishes research that examines Ottawa's mismanagement in transferring wealth to the Atlantic provinces. The research shows both inefficiency and negative economic impacts of the transfer payments on the Canadian economy.
- 1 November 1999  
*Political Parties*
- A growing number of grassroots Reform Party members are organizing in opposition to the new approach the Reform Party is taking to politics. Members of GUARD (Grassroots United Against Reform's Demise) are critical of Preston Manning's proposed United Alternative as well as his pandering to Ontario audiences in order to gain a stronger electoral backing.

- 3 November 1999  
*Finance/Health*
- Finance Minister Paul Martin threatens to act unilaterally to raise tobacco taxes if the provinces cannot agree to work together. In 1994 the federal government and five provincial governments cut tobacco taxes in order to counter smuggling. Martin is also working with the RCMP to ensure that incidences of smuggling do not go up as a result of a tobacco tax increase.
- 3 November 1999  
*Aboriginal Peoples*
- The all-party Commons committee responsible for reviewing the proposed Nisga'a treaty begins reviewing the controversial treaty. The meeting quickly becomes hostile.
- 8 November 1999  
*Agriculture*
- Saskatchewan Premier Roy Romanow decries federal Agriculture Minister Lyle Vanclicf's decision not to implement a massive farm aid package. Vanclicf commented that a bailout package was not worthwhile when it seemed that many farmers were going out of business anyway and such a package would only delay the inevitable. Vanclicf lost his personal farming operation in 1998. However, this has not softened his stance to the plight of Canadian farmers.
- 14 November 1999  
*Children*
- Campaign 2000's Report Card reports that child poverty has increased 60 percent in the last decade. This statistic undermines the commitment made by the House of Commons in 1989 to eliminate child poverty.
- 22 November 1999  
*Justice*
- A former prominent Liberal organizer, John Richard, is appointed to the Federal Court of Canada as the new Chief Justice. The court has a large backlog of cases and it is expected that the new Chief Justice will be able to help with the crisis.
- 25 November 1999  
*Political Parties*
- Irwin Cotler, a McGill Law professor, wins a landslide victory in the Mount Royal by-election. A member of the Liberal Party, Colter wins 92.3 percent of the vote, a possible Canadian record. Cotler is firmly positioned on the left-wing of the Liberal Party and has already spoken to increased social spending.
- 29 November 1999  
*Aboriginal Peoples*
- Reform House Leader Randy White announces that the Reform Party will work hard to delay passing the Nisga'a treaty. He argues that Reform opposition to the treaty is a

response to the Canadians who are against the treaty and threatens to join forces with the Bloc Québécois in order to gain more support for the delay.

1 December 1999  
*Social Services*

Alberta Treasurer Stockwell Day announces that he is exploring Alberta's options for opting-out of the Canada Pension Plan. Day says that he has brought up concerns about the plan with the federal government. Finance Minister Paul Martin argues that Day's questions are currently being addressed.

3 December 1999  
*Quebec/Clarity Bill*

Quebec Premier Lucien Bouchard weighs in on the Quebec separation debate, arguing that Jean Chrétien is only playing tough with Quebec sovereignists in order to prepare for the next federal election. Bouchard assures the media that Quebec will determine the next referendum question, not Ottawa.

13 December 1999  
*Political Strategy*

Government House Leader Don Boudria and other Members of Parliament discuss how to prevent legislation from being delayed by filibusters. The previous week saw the Reform Party stage a three-day voting marathon to delay the passing of the controversial Nisga'a treaty.

17 December 1999  
*Quebec/Clarity Bill*

Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs Stéphane Dion table a bill in the House of Commons which stipulates the conditions under which Ottawa would negotiate the separation of Quebec from Canada following a yes referendum vote. The bill indicates that after the Government of Quebec announces a referendum question on sovereignty, the House of Commons will meet to determine if the question is "clear." The bill also indicates that after a yes vote in the referendum, the House of Commons will determine if the majority is sufficiently "clear" to warrant negotiating separation with the province. As with the Supreme Court reference decision on secession, the federal legislation does not indicate what would comprise a "clear" question or a "clear" majority.

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*Education* 29 September 1999

*Environment* 13 July 1998, 17 August 1998

*Finance/Health* 3 November 1999

*Financial Services* 14 December 1998

*Forum of Federations* 5 October 1999, 6 October 1999, 8 October 1999

*Fisheries* 9 July 1998, 4 September 1998, 14 October 1998, 4 December 1998, 3 June 1999

*Gay and Lesbian Rights* 13 October 1999

*Governor General* 13 September 1999

*Gun Control* 29 September 1998, 1 December 1998

*Health* 15 July 1998, 17 September 1998, 18 September 1998, 18 December 1998, 30 September 1999

*Homelessness* 14 January 1999, 25 March 1999, 26 September 1999

*Justice* 26 January 1999, 30 March 1999, 20 May 1999, 30 June 1999, 22 November 1999

*Manitoba* 21 September 1999

*Media* 27 October 1998, 22 February 1999

*New Brunswick* 8 May 1999, 7 June 1999, 21 June 1999

*Newfoundland* 10 January 1999, 18 January 1999, 9 February 1999, 29 April 1999

*Northwest Territories* 26 November 1998, 10 December 1998, 1 August 1999

*Nova Scotia/Newfoundland* 6 August 1998

*Nova Scotia* 17 June 1999, 27 July 1999

*Nunavut* 15 February 1999, 5 March 1999, 1 April 1999, 12 May 1999

*Ontario* 5 May 1999, 3 June 1999, 23 August 1999

*Party Politics* 16 August 1999

*Political Leaders* 28 September 1999

*Political Parties* 31 July 1998, 24 October 1998, 14 November 1998, 5 July 1999, 27 July 1999, 13 August 1999, 12 September 1999, 27 September 1999, 1 November 1999, 25 November 1999

*Political Strategy* 13 September 1999, 13 December 1999

*Premiers' Meeting* 6-7 August 1998, 16 August 1999

*Provinces* 7 May 1999

*Quebec* 14 September 1998, 28 October 1998, 30 November 1998, 4 February 1999, 15 March 1999, 25 March 1999, 7 April 1999, 19 May 1999, 12 October 1999, 19 October 1999, 20 October 1999, 21 October 1999

*Quebec/Clarity Bill* 3 December 1999, 17 December 1999

*Revenue* 21 January 1999, 29 April 1999

*Saskatchewan* 27 July 1998

*Senate* 15 July 1998, 28 August 1998, 17 September 1998, 19 October 1998

*Separation* 20 August 1998

*Social Services* 7 December 1998, 30 September 1999, 1 December 1999

*Social Union* 17 September 1998, 12 January 1999, 29-30 January 1999, 4 February 1999

*Supreme Court of Canada* 10 June 1999, 30 August 1999, 17 September 1999

*Throne Speech* 12 October 1999

*Trade* 9 September 1999

*Transportation* 24 September 1998, 14 May 1999

*Transportation/Agriculture* 30 December 1998

*Unity* 14 January 1999

*Water* 10 February 1999

*Western Canada* 4 July 1998, 17 December 1998, 20-21 May 1999