

State of the Federation 2006: Chronology

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Aboriginal People

- 12 January
Aboriginal Peoples,
Federal Relations ,
Kelowna Accord
Stephen Harper refuses to commit unconditionally to the Kelowna Accord during the election campaign. The Accord was a \$5 billion deal for Aboriginal aid agreed upon by the former Liberal government and Aboriginal leaders in November 2005.
- 15 February
Aboriginal Peoples,
Ontario
Former Ontario Premier Mike Harris denies using racial slurs to refer to native demonstrators in Ipperwash Provincial Park during an inquiry into the 1995 shooting death of Dudley George, an unarmed native protestor.
- 28 February
Aboriginal Peoples
Federal Relations
Kelowna Accord
Indian Affairs Minister Jim Prentice affirms the Conservative government's commitment to the \$5 billion Kelowna Accord, but stresses that the existing financial framework of reserves must be reformed before funds can be released.
- 28 March
Aboriginal Peoples,
Ontario,
Caledonia Standoff
A court order gives the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) authority to evict protestors in Caledonia, Ontario.
- 10 April
Nunavut Land Claims
The final report on the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement is released. The report shows that the territory suffers from a high unemployment rate, a low literacy rate, and a 75% high school drop out rate. Inuit persons hold only 45 percent of government jobs, much lower than the promised 85 percent. Further, there is no developing wage based economy, contrary to the claims of Nunavut Premier Paul Okalik.

- 14 April
*Aboriginal Peoples,
Saskatchewan, Manitoba*
- Prairie flooding leads to the evacuation of community reserves in parts of Saskatchewan and Manitoba.
- 20 April
*Aboriginal Peoples,
Ontario,
Caledonia Standoff*
- The Ontario Provincial Police perform a pre-dawn raid to end the occupation of Caledonia. The raid fails; 200 Aboriginal protestors regain control of the territory. Members of the Six Nations and supporting residents react angrily by burning tires and overturning vehicles. Indian Affairs Minister Jim Prentice insists the matter is provincial while the Assembly of First Nations calls for federal intervention.
- 22 April
*Aboriginal Peoples,
Ontario*
- Spring flooding forces the Ontario government to evacuate Kashechewan reserve and declare a state of emergency.
- 24 April
*Aboriginal Peoples,
Ontario*
- Ontario Minister of Aboriginal Affairs David Ramsay suggests moving the Kashechewan reserve in light of the third evacuation in twelve months.
- 24 April
*Aboriginal Peoples,
Ontario
Caledonia Standoff*
- Five hundred residents of the town of Caledonia rush the police barricade in protest of the Aboriginal occupation. Residents demand to have the road opened and swarm police cruisers when one Aboriginal person is arrested.
- 25 April
*Aboriginal Peoples,
British Columbia*
- Bob Patterson, deputy mayor of Haldimand, replaces mayor Marie Trainer as community spokesperson after a negative reaction to Trainer's comments about Aboriginal people. In a show of solidarity, 200 protestors block the Lions Gate Bridge in Vancouver and drum for one hour. Spokespeople insist that this is not an instance of censorship, as Trainer's comments could complicate ongoing negotiations.
- 4 May
*Aboriginal Peoples,
Criminal Justice System*
- Frank Quennell, Saskatchewan Justice Minister, says the new federal reforms for criminal justice will likely increase the number and percentage of Aboriginal people in jail. Other provincial justice ministers welcome the reform.
- 10 May
*Aboriginal Peoples,
Federal Relations*
- The federal cabinet approves a compensation package worth \$2 billion for residential schools and agrees to fast track \$8000 cheques to victims over the age of 65.
- 12 May
*Métis National
Relationship*
- British Columbia politicians and the province's Métis residents sign the Métis National Relationship. The agreement covers healthcare, education, employment, Métis identification and data collection, and housing.
- 15 May
*Aboriginal Peoples,
British Columbia,*
- The British Columbia Supreme Court rules that protestors cannot block the work of contractors on the Eagle Ridge Bluffs, a popular West Vancouver hiking spot. Chief Capilano says the land is unsold Squamish

<i>Sea-to-Sky Highway</i>	land, and protestors ask the government for a 60 day cooling off period to gather facts regarding Highway 99, the sea to sky highway. The government seeks an injunction order requiring protestors to move farther from blasting cite.
16 May <i>Aboriginal Peoples, Ontario, Caledonia Standoff</i>	Police barricades at Caledonia are reduced. The area opens to local traffic and emergency vehicles are allowed to pass.
17 May <i>Aboriginal Peoples, Federal Relations, Kelowna Accord</i>	Paul Martin introduces a private member's bill calling for the government to honour the Kelowna Accord with First Nations.
19 May <i>Aboriginal Peoples, Ontario, Caledonia Standoff</i>	The Ontario government orders that construction at Caledonia be stopped as an act of good faith. The development company was not included in the deal.
22 May <i>Aboriginal Peoples, Federal Relations, Indian Act</i>	Jim Prentice announces that the federal government consults Aboriginal leaders regarding new accountability considerations for band governments and the possible modification or replacement of the <i>Indian Act, 1867</i> .
22 May <i>Aboriginal Peoples, Ontario, Caledonia Standoff</i>	One of two blockades is removed by Caledonia protestors as a show of good faith. However, tensions rise and later results in violence. The barricade is later reconstructed.
24 May <i>Aboriginal Peoples, British Columbia, Sea-to-Sky Highway</i>	Mr. Justice William Grist of the B.C. Supreme Court granted police an enforcement order enabling police officers to remove activists preventing the work expansion of the sea-to-sky highway. Dennis Perry of the coalition insists that the activists were not going anywhere; the coalition, according to him, is stronger than ever.
31 May <i>Aboriginal Peoples, Federal Relations</i>	The federal government offers land and monetary compensation as well as surface and mineral titles to the Deh Cho First Nation who is challenging the \$7 billion Mackenzie pipeline in the Western Arctic. Indian Affairs Minister Jim Prentice insists that the pipeline will move ahead with or without Aboriginal support.
1 June <i>Aboriginal Peoples, Ontario, Caledonia Standoff</i>	Ontario Superior Court Justice rules that the federal government has to involve itself in the Caledonia issue, as the issue is more than a provincial law enforcement concern. Justice Marshall issues in his statement a request that the federal government send a representative to the Court when proceedings resume on June 16, 2006.

<p>2 June <i>Aboriginal Peoples, Federal Relations</i></p>	<p>The federal government announces that there is no funding to move Kashechewan Reserve facing difficulties from tainted water and flooding. Proposals for funding for houses, new schools, and increased number of nurses included in Liberal budget were not included in May 2nd Conservative budget. The new location site of the reserve has yet to be decided.</p>
<p>8 June <i>Aboriginal Peoples, Fishing Rights</i></p>	<p>The British Columbia Court of Appeal rules that the Pilot Sales Program, a federal policy that restricts non-native salmon fishing during key periods, does not breach non-Aboriginal fishermen's rights because of guarantees given to Aboriginal peoples in the <i>Constitution</i>. The Court also upholds the conviction of the 1998 "Protest Fishermen" who cited an inequitable distribution of resources. The policy, from 1992, sought to expand Aboriginal roles in fisheries and conserve fish stocks.</p>
<p>15 June <i>Aboriginal Peoples, Ontario, Caledonia Standoff</i></p>	<p>Negotiations with Caledonia protestors resume. Due to increased violence, Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty suspended negotiations on June 13, 2006 until the barricades were removed and police were aided in making arrests. The OPP issued seven arrest warrants and those people are being dealt with through Six-Nation traditional law.</p>
<p>22 June <i>Aboriginal Peoples, Ontario, Caledonia Standoff</i></p>	<p>Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty discloses \$12.3 million price tag for the land in question in Caledonia in order to place land in trust while negotiations and the claims process continue.</p>
<p>28 June <i>Aboriginal Peoples, Ontario, Ipperwash Inquiry</i></p>	<p>The Ipperwash inquiry is scheduled to end after calling the final witness from the Federal Department of Indian Affairs, Ron French. The goal of inquiry is to recommend ways to avoid violence in similar situations. Justice Lindy's recommendations are expected to be delivered to the provincial government by year-end.</p>
<p>28 June <i>Aboriginal Peoples, Manitoba</i></p>	<p>CN and Aboriginal leaders reach agreement that Aboriginal protestors will not block two southern Manitoba railway lines and they had planned to for 24 hours in order to force the Federal government to look at land claims. CN was seeking an injunction, but instead will write to the Federal Indian Affairs Minister to urge a settlement.</p>
<p>8 July <i>Aboriginal Peoples, Representation, Confederation of Aboriginal Peoples</i></p>	<p>Sixty various Aboriginal group representatives meet in Gatineau, Quebec. They vow to better represent Aboriginal People off reserve, and discuss a new national group to replace the Congress of Aboriginal People. The new group would be called the Confederation of Aboriginal Peoples. Critics insist that the proposal would include too many members of unconfirmed lineage who could abuse hunting/fishing rights.</p>
<p>12 July <i>Assembly of First</i></p>	<p>Phil Fontaine is re-elected National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) in Vancouver. Key issues for discussion include Prime Minister</p>

<i>Nations</i>	Harper's comments on Native fishing rights to oppose a "racially divided fisheries program" despite the ruling of the BC Court of Appeal of June 8, and the Kelowna Accord
13 July <i>Federal Government, Assembly of First Nations</i>	At the meeting between the AFN and the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Federal Indian Affairs Minister Jim Prentice announces support for the Prime Minister's position on the fisheries issue and that the party will appoint a 'fair minded' person to lead a judicial inquiry into why salmon stocks are in decline. Mr. Prentice outlines three areas of concern to the AFN: gravity of life issues (such as water and education), legislation to replace the Indian Act and to make Aboriginal governments more accountable to Aboriginal people, and defense of the Conservative Party's decision to vote against the United Nations' (UN) Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People.
8 August <i>Aboriginal Peoples, Ontario, Caledonia Standoff</i>	An Ontario Superior Court judge orders a halt to land claims negotiations at Caledonia until Aboriginal protestors remove themselves from the disputed site and end their occupation. Community leaders worry that the ruling will damage the fragile negotiations and cause protestors to revert to road blockades. Protestors announce that they are willing to ignore the judge's orders and face any escalating violence. Provincial Conservative Party Leader John Tory calls on Premier McGuinty to end the negotiations who has not acted on the order. A spokesperson for the Federal Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development says that the department is considering the ruling.
9 August <i>Aboriginal Peoples, Ontario, Caledonia Standoff</i>	The Federal and Ontario Provincial Departments of India Affairs will look for an injunction to suspend ruling until an appeal can be heard and therefore negotiations can move ahead at Caledonia. Premier McGuinty's position is that the Court had no jurisdiction in ordering a suspension of talks pending the end of the Aboriginal occupation and the Prime Minister expresses support for that position. Provincial Conservative Party Leader John Tory and the Caledonia area townspeople are still opposed to the Aboriginal protestors.
21 August <i>Aboriginal Peoples, Ontario, Ipperwash Inquiry</i>	Final submission by the George family lawyer to the Ipperwash inquiry says the police acted due to political pressure. Former Premier Mike Harris is accused by the Chiefs of Ontario's lawyer William Horton of anti-Aboriginal policies favouring other constituencies and making his personal beliefs known to the police and the OPP.
15 October <i>Aboriginal Peoples, Caledonia Standoff</i>	Non Aboriginals participate in planned march in Caledonia which transpires with little incident. The protest slowly dispersed after a two-hour standoff with officers.
29 October	British Columbia and the Lheidlie T'enneh sign the first final agreement

*Aboriginal Peoples,
British Columbia,
Treaty Agreements*

under the BC Treaty Process, a \$73 million deal after 13 years of negotiation. The Agreement includes more than 4000 hectares of land and allocations for harvesting salmon. The value of the deal is \$25.4 million per year for 50 years. Six other bands have signed agreements in principle.

31 October
*Aboriginal Peoples,
Federal Government
Ontario,
Caledonia Standoff*

Federal Minister of Indian Affairs, Jim Prentice cancels meeting with Ontario counterpart David Ramsay regarding Caledonia accusing Premier McGuinty of creating a non-conducive relationship. Ramsay was in Ottawa to ask for \$40 million already spent on police, land purchase, and compensation for local businesses' lost revenue. Prentice says the authority to resolve pre-Confederation land disputes are not Ottawa's alone and that Ontario is also responsible.

9 November
*Aboriginal Peoples,
Ontario*

Alan Pope, former Ontario Cabinet Minister appointed by the federal government to address Kashechewans' living conditions in wake of water scandal, suggests moving the reserve to Timmins area as the best option. Jim Prentice says Pope did marvelous job but the decision to move or not to move the reserve is up to the community members. The proposal inspires mixed reactions both of praise for long-term solution and criticism as assimilation.

10 November
*Aboriginal Peoples,
Federal Relations*

Federal Court says Ottawa failed to consult with Dene Tha First nation regarding the Mackenzie valley natural gas pipeline.

13 November
*Aboriginal Peoples,
Caledonia Municipal
Election*

Halimand County Mayor Marie Trainer is not ousted from office despite the Caledonia scandal. However, she only wins by 1200 votes in 16 900 voter district.

14 November
*Aboriginal Peoples,
Federal government
Ontario,
Caledonia Standoff*

Provincial and Federal Ministers of Indian Affairs David Ramsay and Jim Prentice, respectively, agree to work together with the federal government to end the Caledonia protest and to share the \$40 million price tag.

20 November
*Aboriginal Peoples,
Federal Relations
Health Care*

Federal Health Minister, Tony Clement, announces a new pilot project concerning wait times which guarantees prenatal care for women on up to ten First Nations reserves. Pregnant women on the participating reserves will be guaranteed an appointment with a health care professional within two weeks of a positive pregnancy test. Under the pilot project, women are also guaranteed prenatal check-ups once every four weeks. The pilot project does not address the barriers of receiving health care including a chronic shortage of doctors and remoteness of communities. Provinces have expressed some concern arguing that guaranteed wait times could drive up the already high cost of health delivery.

- 22 November
*Aboriginal Peoples,
Federal Relations*
- Ten-year anniversary of the release of the recommendations made by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples: Aboriginal people present Ottawa with a failing report card demonstrating that the federal government has not acted on a majority of the Committee's recommendations. Of the 65 grades, only one A was granted to the federal government for their 1996 decision of designating June 21 of each year as National Aboriginal Day.
- 23 November
*Aboriginal Peoples,
Federal Relations
Nationhood*
- AFN asks the Prime Minister to clarify his motion on recognizing that "Quebec forms a nation within a united Canada." The AFN asks that such recognition respects the nationhood of First Nations in Quebec and throughout Canada.
- 27 November
*Aboriginal Peoples,
Federal Relations
British Columbia,
Nationhood*
- British Columbia Premier Gordon Campbell writes an article calling for Ottawa to extend the "nation" distinction to Aboriginal people saying the "third solitude" faces more marginalization because of the announcement. Assembly of First Nations Chief Phil Fontaine supports Campbell's comments and says that the recognition is a necessary symbolic move. Jim Prentice says that there is no need for this because recognition of Aboriginal people is covered by section 35 of the constitution.
- 27 November
*Aboriginal Peoples,
Health Care*
- Federal Health Minister Tony Clement says Ottawa will join BC and Aboriginal groups to improve Aboriginal health in province.
- 5 December
*Aboriginal Peoples,
Federal Relations,
Kelowna Accord,
Language Rights*
- Jim Prentice is booed by 400 Aboriginal protestors on Parliament Hill regarding cuts to funding preserving Aboriginal language rights and the cuts to the Kelowna Accord. Chief Fontaine accuses the Conservative Government of breaking promises and says he'll keep negotiating. The government says it will spend the \$155 million cut on better programs to preserve approximately 30 languages.
- 8 December
*Tsawassen Treaty,
Federal Government,
British Columbia*
- Tsawassen Treaty signed between members of the Tsawassen band, Premier Campbell and Federal Minister Jim Prentice outlining self-government provisions including capital transfers, provisions to reclaim artefacts, and joint provisions over fisheries and environment where bands will control the areas in compliance with the existing federal and provincial regulations.
- 12 December
*Aboriginal Peoples,
British Columbia*
- The British Columbia Government settles with the Tsay Key Dene and Kwadacha for flood damage in 1968 caused by W.A.C. Bennett Dam and the Williston Reservoir in Peace River valley. 14 million total with \$1.9 million per year for the Tsay Key Dene and \$1.5 million per year for the Kwadacha.

Agriculture

- 2 March
Agriculture,
H5N1 Avian Flu Virus
- The Canadian Food Inspection Agency bans live birds from France in the aftermath of an outbreak of a deadly strain of avian flu in that country. Eight Quebec poultry farms face quarantine and testing for importing live ducks and eggs from France under suspicion that the animals carry the H5N1 avian flu virus.
- 16 April
British Columbia,
BSE
- The British Columbia government confirms the presence of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) in a six-year-old cow. Federal officials confirm that this is the fifth case in Canada since screening began three years ago.
- 24 April
Agriculture,
Federal Government,
Financial Support
- Farmers and livestock producers send an open letter to the Prime Minister requesting support and demand the federal government address food producers' alleged income crisis. They also use tractors to block Ottawa streets in protest. Prime Minister Harper says that there will be no relief until the budget on May 2.
- 18 May
Federal Government,
Farmers
- Federal Agriculture Minister, Chuck Strahl announces \$950, 000 in support through the Canadian Income Stabilization Program to aid farmers. Further, the federal government doubles the amount that can be borrowed interest free to help farmers with the spring planting to \$100, 000.
- 22 June
P.E.I.,
HN Avian Flu Virus
- A second farm in Prince Edward Island is closed due to the H5N1 Avian flu.
- 16 November
Canadian Wheat
Board
- Manitoba premier Gary Doer and four Canadian Wheat Board directors accuse Federal Minister of Agriculture Chuck Strahl of meddling in Board elections and file a protest against him.
- 14 December
Canadian Wheat
Board
- Hundreds of prairie farmers protest in Ottawa so that Canadian Wheat Board President Adrian Measner can keep his job.
- 19 December
Canadian Wheat
Board
- Despite protests of farmers, Chuck Strahl fires the Canadian Wheat Board President.

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Budget

- 2 February
- Northwest Territories Finance Minister Floyd Ronald releases the

<i>Northwest Territories</i>	province's 2006-2007 budget, with \$1.2 billion in expenditures and a \$46 million surplus. An additional \$38 million in proposed initiatives was withdrawn, although some spending could be reinstated pending news on transfers in the federal budget.
21 February <i>British Columbia</i>	British Columbia releases its \$34 billion budget, with a \$1.775 billion surplus that will be put towards the provincial debt. In addition to spending \$305 million on needy children through funds directed to the Ministry of Children and Family development, and \$733 million in tax relief. The Liberal government plans to let the debt increase by \$2.5 billion over three years to fund the 2010 Olympic Games and increased spending on schools, hospitals, and infrastructure.
22 February <i>Nunavut</i>	The Nunavut government releases budget with \$843 million in expenditures while maintaining a \$2.7 million surplus. Major spending was directed to health and education and maintaining existing tax rates. Almost 91 percent of the territory's budget comes from federal transfers.
6 March <i>Manitoba</i>	The Manitoba budget is released, with \$32.3 million directed to modest tax cuts for middle-income earners and businesses. Finance Minister Greg Selinger projects a \$148 million surplus in the \$8.6 billion budget.
22 March <i>Alberta</i>	The Conservative Alberta government releases a \$28.1 billion budget with a \$4.1 billion surplus. In the 13 th straight balanced budget, Premier Klein committed to a 10% spending increase over last year's forecast, including major investments in health and education worth \$10.3 billion and some additional tax relief for individuals.
23 March <i>Ontario</i>	The Ontario budget announces major spending initiatives for transport and infrastructure, with \$2 billions put in trust for a subway extension. The province plans an addition \$35.4 billion in expenditures for health care and \$11.2 billion for post-secondary education, while maintaining a deficit of \$2.4 billion.
24 March <i>Yukon Territories</i>	Yukon Premier and Finance Minister Dennis Fentie releases a \$793 million budget, the largest in the territory's history. Nearly \$200 million was directed to capital spending projects, but there were no new expenditures to address the crippling debt of Dawson City or the need for new schools in developing areas. Federal transfers account for 71 percent of the budget.
26 March <i>Quebec</i>	The Quebec government, under Liberal leader Premier Jean Charest, releases the provincial budget. Major commitments include \$1.3 billion in new health spending and \$660 million for education. An additional \$1.5 billion was allocated to transportation and infrastructure. The province's

debt stands at \$118 billion, and the Charest government proposed setting up a “Generations Fund” to reduce the debt to 25% of the GDP.

- 28 March
New Brunswick
- The New Brunswick Conservative government releases a balanced budget with \$6.2 billion in spending and a projected surplus of \$22.2 million. Major expenditures included corporate tax cuts, \$100 million energy relief program to help consumers with soaring heating costs, as well as funds directed to health and education.
- 30 March
Newfoundland and Labrador
- Newfoundland and Labrador Finance Minister Loyola Sullivan releases a \$4.9 billion budget, the largest in the province’s history. Oil sector royalties and corporate income tax gave the province an additional \$927 million in revenues, contributing to a \$6.2 million surplus. The budget also includes spending on education in excess of \$100 million.
- 30 March
PEI
- The Conservative government in Prince Edward Island releases a budget with a projected \$12.5 million deficit. Expenditures totalling \$1.2 billion were directed to health care, including initiatives to reduce wait times and recruit more doctors and \$14 million for developing a clinical information system.
- 6 April
*Federal Government,
Receiving suggestions*
- Finance Minister Jim Flaherty invites Canadians to make suggestions regarding the federal budget including which new programs are desired and which old ones should be discontinued. Canadians are asked to make their suggestions for the pre-budget consultations until April 19.
- 6 April
Saskatchewan
- Saskatchewan releases its largest ever budget at \$7.7 billion, including \$550 million for debt reduction. Other highlights include \$3.2 billion for health care, a raised ceiling for small business tax thresholds, over \$1 billion for building and maintaining infrastructure, more than \$340 million for highways and transportation, and an increase in funding for social assistance and literacy programs.
- 18 April
*Federal Government,
Tax relief*
- Flaherty vows overall tax relief in the budget, not the specific income tax breaks already promised by the Liberals.
- 2 May
Federal Government
- The Conservative Government releases their budget. Priorities include a 1% cut in the GST by July 1, 2006; employment tax credit of \$1000; income tax increases as personal tax increases to 15.5% from 15%; tax breaks to transit users, apprentices, fishermen, families with children in sports, and students. For health care there is a promised \$600 million over five years in pandemic preparation, \$52 million per year to the Canadian Strategy for Cancer Control, but only a passing reference to \$41 billion promised in 2004 to provinces expected to be used to reduce wait times. There is also \$100 per month for families with kids under 6. In addition,

\$2.5 billion is budgeted in total on defense and security, \$1.1 billion in new military spending over two years, \$161 million over two years for 1000 more RCMP officers, and \$5.3 billion over five years for the Canadian Forces. The goal of reducing debt to GDP ratio is moved to 2013 instead of 2014. \$117 million is set aside for the Accountability Act over two years to include Parliamentary Budget Officer and \$164 million total on Accountability. Other key provisions include a reduction in corporate income tax, the elimination of the federal capital tax and the corporate surtax; \$ 2 billion over two years is promised to the farming sector. Finally, \$ 1.3 billion total is set aside for transit, some of which is conditional on a budget surplus.

4 May
*Federal Politics,
Federal Government -
Ontario Relations*

Finance Minister Jim Flaherty informs Ontario Finance Minister Dwight Duncan that the \$538 million promised by the federal Liberals in May 2005 for the province to fight global warming and phase out coal energy plants is no longer available.

9 May
Nova Scotia

The government of Nova Scotia releases a budget of \$6.9 billion promising tax relief through a rebate, money for schools, highways, capital projects, and \$1000 for encouraging graduates to stay in the province.

9 May
*Federal government,
Federal - Provincial
Relations*

Ontario Finance Minister Dwight Duncan says the Conservative budget included only money for gas taxes and climate change (with respect to public transit allocations). Therefore it did not include the promised \$600 million transfer signed by former Prime Minister Martin for infrastructure for public transit. Duncan accuses the government of renegeing. Nevertheless Ontario will continue with the Toronto subway and public transport projects. Saskatchewan and Manitoba are also concerned over the status of the labour market agreements signed by Martin because they are not provided for in the latest federal budget.

4 July
*Nova Scotia,
Modified Budget*

Nova Scotia tables modifications to its May 9 budget. The provincial surplus is now expected to be \$1.6 million larger and debt servicing costs \$8.4 million lower due to changes in interest rates. In total, net revenue increased by \$1.9 million. Expenses for Legislative Services increased from \$8.3 million to \$39.1 million because of election related expenses.

6 June
Federal Politics

The federal budget passes unanimously due to some confusion in the House of Commons when the vote is called.

23 August
*Alberta,
Updated Budget*

An updated Alberta budget shows a surplus of \$4.3 billion. Economists worry about inflation and the required infrastructure investments. Finance Minister Shirley McClellan, says no discussion about Ralph Bucks, i.e. a \$400 rebate, is had.

8 September
Nova Scotia Nova Scotia releases a budget showing a higher surplus than expected by \$1.5 million from July including earmarked funds for debt reduction.

25 September
Federal Politics The Conservative Government unveils its amended budget and announces that a \$13.2 billion surplus was accrued under the Liberals. Cuts include medical marijuana research, the court challenges program, and the GST rebate program for tourists in Canada. Other savings include \$46.8 million from a smaller cabinet and \$50 million from unused funding for the North West devolution. Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty says that the surplus is proof of a fiscal imbalance and that the money should go to the provinces.

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Education

5 January
*Federal Government,
Election Promise* The federal Liberal Party proposes spending in excess of \$7 billion for post-secondary education and skills training as part of an election platform. The funds were to be directed to low-income students, with \$3 billion allocated for skills training and \$1 billion to upgrade post-secondary facilities.

24 May
British Columbia British Columbia teachers reach a bargain with the government two weeks prior to strike vote.

5 August
*Quebec,
Post-secondary
Education* Quebec Premier Jean Charest announces that Quebec will act alone to finance post-secondary education because the province cannot afford to wait for another deal with the federal government. The Premier is optimistic that negotiations with the Prime Minister will be good. The Premier has not ruled out lifting the tuition freeze but maintaining current tuition, which would mean that students would pay more.

8 August
*Quebec,
Post-secondary
Education* Quebec Premier Jean Charest clarifies his plan for post secondary education; \$320 million over three years. The party expects federal support for the proposal and for additional funding. Strategists attribute the announcement as part of a pre fall election tactic.

10 August
*Federal - Provincial
Relations,
C.D. Howe
Recommendations* The C.D. Howe Institute releases a report that suggests that the federal and Provincial governments should invest more in early childhood education and not focus so much on universal health care. Citing Quebec as an example, the Institute argues that childcare programs and facilities should be centred in low income and disadvantaged areas; and parents receiving a subsidy should be given the option of choose between daycare providers.

28 August Ontario school boards are calling for a new funding formula as

*Ontario School
Boards*

many Canadian boards are being forced to dip into last year's surpluses in order to balance their budget. Boards with particular difficulties are Ottawa Carleton District School Board, Toronto District School Board, Toronto Catholic District School Board and the Upper Canada District School Board.

7 September
*Ontario School
Boards*

School Trustees request a one time transitional grant from the Ontario Government for education and a one-year review of funding to confirm that budget and financing formulas are inconsistent with the needs and realities. A number of school boards in Ontario are reported to be grossly under-funded.

2 October
British Columbia

The British Columbia Supreme Court rules that schools cannot charge mandatory fees or ancillary fees for special courses.

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Environment

7 January
*Federal Government,
Pollution*

Martin announces a \$1 billion plan to clean up the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence ecosystem and Lake Winnipeg.

12 January
*Federal Politics,
Kyoto Protocol*

The Conservative Party rejects targets set by the Kyoto Protocol, noting that such goals are "unworkable and unachievable." In place of the Kyoto targets, a Conservative government would set its own targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

1 April
*Federal Government,
Program cancellation*

Environmental groups are informed by Environment Canada that the new Conservative government has decided not to continue funding for the One Tonne Challenge as of April 1, 2006 (the beginning of the new fiscal year). The government will also be re-examining 100 other initiatives established by the previous Liberal government.

4 April
British Columbia

British Columbia adopts the spirit bear (the all white black bear) as part of its official emblem and announces that 200 000 hectares of forest will be set aside as a nature preserve for the bear.

6 April
*Federal government,
Kyoto Protocol
Alternative*

The Prime Minister announces that the government will move funding from existing environmental programs to new ones directed at decreasing greenhouse gases but the word "Kyoto" does not appear. The Government will neither abandon nor enforce the protocol. Environment Minister Rona Ambrose's spokesperson says that the government will not pull out of Kyoto but instead will work within the protocol for a "made in Canada" solution.

25 April

Environment Minister Rona Ambrose announces she is considering an

<i>Federal government, Kyoto Protocol Alternative</i>	alternative to Kyoto: the Asia Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate, and a look at partnering with the US, India, China, Australia, South Korea, and Japan.
<i>4 May Federal - Ontario relations, Global warming</i>	Finance Minister Jim Flaherty informs Ontario Finance Minister Dwight Duncan that the \$538 million promised by the Liberals in May 2005 for the province to fight global warming and phase out coal energy plants is no longer available.
<i>11 May Federal Government, Kyoto</i>	Canada's report to the UN environment committee indicates that Canada will stay in Kyoto after 2012 only if it gets breaks on the targets.
<i>11 May Ontario, Coal Energy</i>	The Ontario Government joins a United States (US) lawsuit that would force six Midwest coal plants to filter their smoke, as 100 000 tonnes of smoke and smog blow into Ontario.
<i>5 June Quebec, Federation of Canadian Municipalities, Kyoto Accord</i>	The Bloc Quebecois and the Parti Quebecois join Greenpeace to reaffirm their commitment to the Kyoto Accord. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities also reaffirms their commitment to Kyoto.
<i>15 June Quebec, Greenhouse Gases</i>	Quebec Premier Jean Charest announces a six-year, \$1.2 billion plan to reduce greenhouse gasses. Though costs are to be absorbed by oil companies, economists predict an increase of 1.5 cents per litre on consumers. The plan seeks \$328 million from Ottawa to help eliminate and reduce greenhouse gasses. The plan also calls for increased reliance on public transit and stricter fuel emission standards for cars.
<i>21 June Federal Politics</i>	A motion calling for the resignation of Environment Minister Rona Ambrose is to be put to a vote by members of the House of Commons Environment Committee. The Minister has been facing criticism for the Conservative government's position on Kyoto and other environment issues. The Conservative government announces that it will treat the vote as a confidence motion suggesting a fall election.
<i>26 June Federal - Provincial Relations Greenhouse Gases</i>	Quebec sustainable development minister Claude Béchaud announces joint support of Manitoba and Ontario to press federal government for money and an assurance that Ottawa will help provincial efforts to decrease greenhouse gasses from Environment minister Rona Ambrose.
<i>30 June Ontario</i>	Ontario: new houses will have to be more environmentally efficient. New standards for furnaces, insulation, and windows will come into effect between now and 2011; the full standards to be implemented by 2012.
<i>1 August</i>	The Clayquot Sound Central Regional Board opens logging on 90 000

*British Columbia,
Aboriginal Relations*

hectares of the UN Biosphere Reserve in Clayquot Sound, on Vancouver Island. Development is restricted to core areas including one national park, 16 provincial parks, and two ecological reserves. Outside of this area, development that is in a buffer or transition zone (such as road construction) is allowed if it meets scientific guidelines. The developments will open eight major waterways and is the largest intact old growth forest on Vancouver Island. The announcement raises issues with local Aboriginal communities; protest groups allege a violation of a 1999 deal, which limited all logging on Biosphere buffers after the largest environmental protest in Canada's history. The original protest began in 1993 and included 12 000 people.

10 September
*Federal Government,
Kyoto*

The Conservative Government backs out of the Kyoto requirement to help poorer nations develop ways to cut their greenhouse gas emissions.

10 October
*Federal Government,
Kyoto Accord
Alternative*

The Prime Minister says the government's new environment plan is an acceptable alternative to Kyoto; greenhouse gas targets will be intensity based and targeting other emissions not just carbon dioxide. The focus will be on decreasing emissions per unit which may not decrease the totally emission because the total number of units can increase.

12 October
*Federal – Provincial
Politics,
Coal PowerPlants*

Provincial Environment Ministers agree in a federal-provincial meeting in Yellowknife to cut mercury emission from coal power plants by approximate 60% by 2010, leaving open the option under a voluntary standard to aim for 80% by 2018.

13 October
Clean Air Act

Environmentalists say the draft of the Clean Air Act is vulnerable to constitutional challenges. It may also be ineffective because it does not adequately address the required changes and deficiencies of the status quo, by allowing only pollution per unit to decrease and not total number of units.

18 October
*Ontario,
Clean Water Act*

Ontario passes the Clean Water Act which adheres to the 12 post-Walkerton recommendations made by Justice Dennis O'Connor. The Act creates new bodies and watersheds to protect by-lines before the water gets to municipal distribution systems.

3 November
*Federal government,
Canada – EU Summit*

The Prime Minister tells the Finnish Prime Minister that Canada will not attend the planned Canada-EU summit on November 27, saying he needs to remain in the House because of the minority parliament. He will still attend the APEC meetings in Hanoi and NATO meeting in Riga, Latvia on November 29. EU leaders say it is because criticisms of Canada's refusal to comply with the Kyoto Protocol. The Prime Minister's Director of Communications says the cancellation is not related to the environment.

13 November

Opposition MP's and Canadian environmentalists schedule a news

*Kyoto
Conference on
Global Warming*

conference in Nairobi regarding ongoing support for Kyoto Protocol. The conference will run concurrently with the arrival of Environment Minister Rona Ambrose for the final session of the international conference on global warming.

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Equality

2 March
*Quebec,
Freedom of Religion*

The Supreme Court overturns a Quebec Court of Appeal decision that banned Sikh students from carrying ceremonial daggers in school.

5 April
*Federal Politics,
Same Sex Marriage*

Prime Minister Harper announces that a vote on gay marriage will not take place until the fall. Action groups wish for a faster resolution.

9 May
*Federal Politics,
Bilingualism*

Canada's commissioner of official languages is worried regarding Harper's position on bilingualism due to a passing reference in the Throne Speech.

6 June
*Ontario,
Same Sex Couples' Rights*

An Ontario Judge rules that same-sex parents can be listed on a child's birth certificate, citing a *Charter* breach.

21 August
*Federal Politics,
Sign-Language Rights*

Judge Mosley says that Ottawa must act in accordance with Federal Court ruling that government services must be in sign language as well as in English and French. Public Works and Government Services Canada made no comment on the ruling or whether they will appeal the ruling. The government is expected to act quickly and the changes will be expensive, However, the Judge did not impose a deadline for compliance. Judge Mosley released the decision on August 11 and they have until September 30 to appeal.

8 November
*Quebec,
Wage Equity*

Quebec reaches a settlement for wage inequality affecting 360 000 women in 350 job categories. The settlement includes retroactive payouts to November 21, 2001, to be paid out in April 2007, and an average salary increase of 6.5% beginning Jan 1.

29 November
*Federal Government,
Status of Women*

The Conservative Government cuts funding to Status of Women Canada. Heritage Minister Bev Oda announces that 12 of the 16 regional offices are to be closed by April 1 2007. Critics are outraged saying that there is still much work to do for women's economic and social equality that depended on the funding.

7 December
Federal Politics,

The House of Commons votes on whether to reopen the debate concerning Same Sex Marriage and to restore the traditional definition of marriage.

Same Sex Marriage The motion fails 170-123 and Prime Minister Harper calls the issue closed saying that he will not bring the matter back to parliament.

17 December
Quebec,
Equality of Women Quebec Minister of Families Carole Th  berge reveals new policy document directed at increasing the equality of women. Priorities include reconciling double day of labour, “promoting egalitarian behaviour” particularly among children, economic equality, physical safety, adapting health services, and promoting the participation of women in “areas of power.”

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Federal Politics

2 January
Federal Politics The RCMP announces a criminal investigation into whether the November 23, 2005 finance announcement regarding income trusts was leaked to investors in light of a surge in trading before the announcement was made. Finance Minister Ralph Goodale asserts that Prime Minister Paul Martin was part of ongoing discussions on the subject, but was not aware of the final policy decision. Goodale faced significant pressure to resign in the face of these allegations. Additionally, the announcement of a criminal investigation in the midst of the federal election campaign damaged the Liberal Party’s position in the polls.

3 January
Federal Politics Stephen Harper announces an election platform with five key priorities: cutting the GST to 6% immediately and 5% within five years; cracking down on crime; passing a Federal Accountability Act; working with provinces on a health wait-times guarantee; and introducing a \$1200 child care allowance.

7 January
Federal Politics An EKOS poll shows that the federal Conservative Party has made significant gains in the province of Quebec, with 20% support compared to the Liberal Party’s 21% and Bloc Quebecois’ 45%.

9 January
Federal Politics Authors Normand Lester and Robin Philpot release *Les Secrets d’Option Canada*, which details the misuse of public funds by a Canadian unity group in the 1995 Quebec referendum. Sheila Copps, Minister of Canadian Heritage at the time, admitted that \$300,000 of the \$3.8 million allocated to the group could not be accounted for. The Department of Canadian Heritage asked the RCMP to investigate the allegations.

9 January
Federal Politics Conservative leader Stephen Harper is attacked in the second English debate of the election campaign for proposed changes to child care spending and the tax system, as well as for a failure to disclose the source of campaign contributions from 2002. Aside from defending his party’s record with corruption and asserting the importance of Canadian unity,

Martin promised, if re-elected, to repeal the notwithstanding clause. New Democrat leader Jack Layton argued that the Conservative and Liberal positions on private health care were equally out of touch with Canadian public opinion. Bloc Quebecois leader Gilles Duceppe commented on the same-sex union issue, but focused mostly on defending Quebec's sovereignty from the federalist positions of the other three parties.

10 January
Federal Politics

Bloc Quebecois leader Gilles Duceppe reacts to the Conservative gains in Quebec by targeting Stephen Harper in the final French-language debate. All leaders reacted to the sponsorship scandal by emphasizing their personal integrity and casting themselves as ethical leaders. NDP leader Jack Layton stressed that Paul Martin did not follow the rules or ministerial responsibility in the income trust scandal. Martin in turn attacked the Conservative Party for its stance on the Kyoto Protocol and the war in Iraq.

11 January
Federal Politics

The Liberal Party released an election advertisement on its website that featured ominous drumbeats and a close-up of Stephen Harper, and accused the Conservative leader of planning to put "soldiers with guns" in Canadian cities. The ad refers to Harper's plan to install contingents of 100 regular soldiers and 400 reservists in 12 Canadian cities to better respond to civil catastrophes. Although it was immediately pulled from the Party's website and never aired on television, the ad caused a major public outcry. Liberal Party officials assert that the ad was never supposed to be released.

13 January
Federal Politics

Reports surface that Conservative candidate Derek Zeisman was charged with attempting to smuggle a 1989 Mercedes-Benz and 112 containers of alcohol by Canada Customs in July 2004. Although Zeisman asserts that the Conservative Party was aware of the charges, national campaign officials denied any prior knowledge and Harper refused to let the candidate sit as a Conservative if elected. With less than two weeks left in the election campaign, it was too late to remove Zeisman's name from the ballot or replace him with another Conservative candidate.

23 January
Federal Politics

The Conservative Party wins a minority government with 124 seats in the House of Commons. The Liberal Party had a surprisingly strong showing after a campaign troubled by scandal with 103 seats. The Bloc Quebecois received only 51 seats, a lower number than predicted due to an unexpectedly strong showing by the Conservative Party in Quebec. The NDP received 29 seats, with one remaining seat going to an independent Member of Parliament from Quebec.

24 January
Federal Politics

Paul Martin announces that he will step down as leader of the Liberal Party. An interim leader will oversee the party until a permanent leader is chosen at a leadership convention at a later date.

31 January <i>Federal Politics</i>	Prime Minister-Elect Stephen Harper meets with Paul Martin to discuss the transition of power.
1 February <i>Federal Politics</i>	RCMP Commissioner Giuliano Zaccardelli takes part in a controversial photo op with Stephen Harper at RCMP headquarters. The Commissioner is criticized for compromising the impartiality of the national police force. The RCMP had already played a role in the federal election campaign by confirming that there was a criminal investigation into the income trust announcement made by the previous Liberal government.
1 February <i>Federal Politics</i>	A poll published by the Montreal newspaper <i>La Presse</i> shows that support for Quebec sovereignty has diminished significantly after the election of Stephen Harper's Conservative government.
1 February <i>Federal Politics</i>	Justice John Gomery releases the second report of his inquiry into the Liberal sponsorship scandal. This report recommended reforms aimed at increasing the accountability within government and averting future scandals by increasing the powers and funding of parliamentary committees and eliminating the Prime Minister's right to control secret funds.
1 February <i>Federal Politics</i>	General Rick Hillier, head of the Canadian Forces, praises Prime Minister-Elect Stephen Harper's ambitious plans for the military, which include funding for an additional 13,000 troops and the installation of troop-carrying icebreakers in remote northern regions. Hillier publicly censured the Liberal election ad threatening that Harper would put "soldiers in the streets" if elected, and noted that there was an internal debate over whether to issue a rebuttal during the election campaign.
2 February <i>Federal Politics</i>	Paul Martin steps aside as leader of the Liberal Party in the House of Commons. Although he relinquished all powers of leadership to interim leader Bill Graham, Martin remains leader in name until the leadership convention is formally announced.
5 February <i>Federal Politics</i>	An independent arbiter rules that David Dingwall, former president of the Canadian Mint, was forced out of his job by the Liberal government in 2005 amid allegations over expenses and lobbying activities. The Privy Council Office pays Dingwall a settlement in excess of \$400,000, in addition to associated pension benefits.
6 February <i>Federal Politics</i>	Former Liberal Cabinet Minister David Emerson defects to the Conservative Party shortly after the election. There are widespread calls for Emerson to resign and run in a by-election as a Conservative. Liberal officials and local riding organizations demand that Emerson return more than \$97,000 in fundraising expenditures.

6 February <i>Federal Politics</i>	Stephen Harper is sworn in as Prime Minister and announces his Cabinet. Surprising appointments include former Liberal Minister of Industry David Emerson, who defected to the Conservative Party shortly after the election, and Michael Fortier, an unelected party organizer who was appointed to the Senate.
10 February <i>Federal Politics</i>	Ted Menzies is appointed parliamentary secretary to Minister of International Cooperation Josée Verner, whose portfolio includes official languages and the francophonie. Prime Minister Stephen Harper is criticized for appointing Menzies, a unilingual Conservative MP from Alberta, to a post where he will be responsible for the francophone portfolio during Question Period in Minister Verner's absence.
12 February <i>Federal Politics</i>	The NDP expels Buzz Hargrove, leader of the Canadian Auto Workers union, from the party for actively promoting strategic voting and Liberal candidates in the federal election.
22 February <i>Federal Politics</i>	Prime Minister Stephen Harper appoints Kevin Lynch to Clerk of the Privy Council.
25 February <i>Federal Politics</i>	General Rick Hillier suggests that aggressive recruiting tactics will be used to meet the Conservative Party's target of 23,000 more soldiers. Such initiatives could include offering incentives of fast-tracked citizenship to landed immigrants who join the Canadian Forces.
3 March <i>Federal Politics</i>	Groupaction founder Jean Brault pleads guilty to \$1.2 million in the federal sponsorship fraud case. Brault's co-accused, former federal bureaucrat Chuck Guite, will plead not guilty to the same counts of fraud and an additional count of conspiracy.
7 March <i>Federal Politics</i>	Prime Minister Stephen Harper appoints retired Supreme Court Justice John Major to head a full judicial inquiry into the Air India bombing.
8 March <i>Federal Politics</i>	Ethics Commissioner Bernard Shapiro launches an investigation into whether Stephen Harper violated Member of Parliament's ethical code by luring former Liberal David Emerson into cabinet after the election. Harper and Emerson refuse to cooperate with the investigation on the grounds that the Prime Minister has the power to appoint cabinet ministers and that Shapiro is a Liberal appointee with a political agenda.
8 March <i>Federal Politics</i>	Former Liberal Cabinet Minister Scott Brison maintains that he had no inside information when he assured a banking acquaintance by email that the income trust decision would be favourable.
8 March	Justice Minister Vic Toews announces that his department has no plans to

<i>Federal Politics</i>	bring forward legislation to replace a Liberal bill decriminalizing the possession of marijuana.
11 March <i>Federal Politics</i>	New Democrat MPs request that the ethics probe into David Emerson's defection to the Conservative Party be expanded to include Belinda Stronach's floor crossing to the Liberal Party in May 2005.
16 March <i>Federal Politics</i>	The RCMP charges former Privacy Commissioner George Radwanski with breach of trust and fraud. The charges stem from a 2003 Auditor General's report which found that Radwanski mismanaged hundreds of thousands of dollars as Privacy Commissioner, took an unjustified \$15,000 special travel advance and charged \$56,000 in lieu of vacation time that he had already taken. Radwanski's chief of staff, Arthur Lamarche, faces identical charges.
17 March <i>Federal Politics</i>	Paul Martin officially resigns as leader of the Liberal Party. Although he had stepped down as leader in the House of Commons, Martin retained the right to sign candidates' nomination papers and oversee the party machinery. There had been speculation that Martin intended to retain these powers to make a political comeback.
18 March <i>Federal Politics</i>	The Conservative government cuts off funding for the Canadian Unity Council as part of a broader review of the way the federal government promotes the federation. The Council was founded in 1964 to promote national unity.
20 March <i>Federal Politics</i>	The federal Liberal Party sets the leadership convention for December 2007.
21 March <i>Federal Politics</i>	A federal Ethics Commissioner report finds that Prime Minister Stephen Harper did not violate parliamentary rules by bringing former Liberal David Emerson into the Conservative cabinet. Commissioner Bernard Shapiro stated that Harper was merely exercising his personal prerogative as Prime Minister in appointing cabinet ministers, and did not offer any inducements to Emerson to switch parties. However, Shapiro noted that Emerson's choice to switch parties so soon after an election "devalued" votes cast by his constituents. The NDP declared itself satisfied with the result of the inquiry, but intends to introduce legislation to ban floor-crossing.
3 April <i>Federal Politics</i>	The Prime Minister, at the Canadian Professional Police Association Conference, vows to crackdown on crime, reform and implement minimum sentences for serious offences, and end government efforts to decriminalize marijuana.
4 April	Governor General Michaëlle Jean delivers the Conservative Government's

Federal Politics

Throne Speech. The Accountability Act is listed as a first priority. Other key issues include toughening up on crime; implementing a child-care tax credit, reducing the GST by 1% immediately; and establishing patient wait times guarantees. The Speech also includes strong support for Canadian military presence in Afghanistan, and for Canada's military adopting a leading role in human rights issues worldwide. Other issues include the special recognition and the place of Quebec in Canada, an apology for the Chinese Head Tax, and plan to repeal tax cuts implemented by the Liberal government. The Speech also heralds the US as Canada's greatest ally and trading partner. It further touches upon environmental issues, farm support, new immigrants, Aboriginal Peoples, and the fiscal imbalance. Finance Minister Jim Flaherty says that a Bank Act and finalized plan to fix the fiscal imbalance will have to wait until next year.

6 April

Federal Politics

The government tables the 252 page Accountability Act which proposes a number of reforms such as an increase in the powers of the Ethics and the Integrity Commissioners; an increase the scope of the Access to Information Act; a decrease the influence of lobbyists; new ways for political parties to raise money; a decrease in the maximum amount individuals are allowed to give; a ban on union or corporate donations; and provisions that allow the Chief Electoral Officer to appoint the returning officer in every constituency. The bill will also merge the offices of the Ethics Commissioners of the House of Commons and of the Senate. Further, it grants new powers to the Auditor General to track money given to governments, including Aboriginal governments not covered under self-government legislations. The Aboriginal focus is criticized by Phil Fontaine, Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, who says Aboriginal people and organizations were not consulted prior to the change and that the proposal does not include the AFN's own proposals for accountability. The move to include native governments is praised by the Canadian Taxpayers Federation.

10 April

Federal Politics

The NDP demands that an extension of the mission in Afghanistan be put to a parliamentary vote and should consider the potential of success and the progress of the mission. Liberal Interim leader Bill Graham and Defense Critic Ujjal Dosanjh stand behind the government.

13 April

Federal Politics

Transport, Infrastructure and Communities Minister Lawrence Cannon says that the federal government wants to review the role of the National Capital Commission(NCC) for the first time in nearly five decades.

18 April

Federal Politics

Prime Minister Harper announces he will appoint MP's as committee chairs. Critics worry that the chairs will have divided loyalties and will be reluctant to publish reports critical of the government.

18 April <i>Federal Politics</i>	The Defense Department confirms that General Hillier, Chief of Defense Staff, has been asked to submit advanced copies of public speeches to be screened by the government before media release. Defense Critic Ujjal Dosanjh says it is unethical because Gen. Hillier is independent of the government and should not be screened by the Ministry of Defense.
20 April <i>Federal Politics</i>	At a meeting with the Montreal Board of Trade, Prime Minister Harper praises a new federalism where provinces would be autonomous in their own areas of jurisdiction. He also highlights an increased recognition of Quebec as possessing a distinct provincial role. Furthermore, he recognizes the fiscal imbalance.
25 April <i>Federal Politics</i>	Defense Minister Gordon O'Connor bans media from covering the return of four soldiers killed in Afghanistan at CFB Trenton. Spokesperson for the Minister says the media would be prevented from covering future arrival ceremonies as well.
1 May <i>Federal Politics</i>	Prime Minister Harper calls the Commission of Inquiry of the Air India Bombing.
4 May <i>Federal Politics</i>	The Conservative Government introduces a criminal law reform bill to stiffen mandatory minimum sentencing and to eliminate conditional sentences for specific crimes. The reform bill is expected to result in a total increase of 18-23% in inmate populations.
17 May <i>Federal Politics</i>	The House of Commons votes 149 to 145 to extend the mission in Afghanistan until February 2009. The vote is very divisive in the Liberal party. Some critics accuse the Prime Minister of rushing the vote because there is only ten months left in the current deployment. They further charge that the vote was taken to ensure that the Afghanistan issue is off the table before the next election.
7 June <i>Federal Politics</i>	The Federal Government announces its intention to establish a watchdog group of Senators and MP's to receive confidential briefings and inform Parliament annually of security threats.
15 June <i>Federal Politics</i>	Prime Minister Harper introduces a new bill to make street racing illegal. No minimum sentence is proposed. Lawyers argue that it will not be enough of a deterrent.
20 June <i>Federal Politics</i>	Canadian Immigration Minister Monte Solberg announces that Canada will accept more than 800 Burmese refugees currently living in a camp in Thailand.
21 June	The Federal Accountability Act passes through the House of Commons on

<i>Federal Politics</i>	division to the Senate, with no record of counting of MP votes. Liberals voice their non-support and will wait to see if the Act is amended before its finalized.
21 June <i>Federal Politics</i>	Inquiry of the Air India Bombing officially opens in Ottawa
1 July <i>Federal Politics</i>	The GST decreases from 7% to 6% but with the exception of some grocery and department stores, most businesses are closed.
20 July <i>Federal Politics</i>	The Liberal Party asks Canadian Revenue Agency to investigate the Conservative Party's refusal to disclose delegate fees received during the 2005 convention and as donations, and suggest a violation of the Canadian Elections Act. The New Democratic Party has already filed similar complaints. Chief Elections Officer Jean Pierre Kingsley has asked the Conservative Party to hand over their records.
7 August <i>Federal Politics</i>	The New Democratic Party calls for an investigation and discussion within Parliament regarding the option for the federal government to dole out military contracts to the West, the Maritimes, and Quebec, under a "national security" clause. Critics fear the clause can lead to corruption and massive lobbying. A spokesperson for the Department of National Defense says the clause can be invoked to encourage Canadian businesses by giving them supporting contracts.
8 August <i>Federal Politics</i>	Prime Minister Harper appoints Wajid Kahn, a Muslim, Liberal MP, as a member of the envoy regarding the Middle East conflict and Canada's role in Afghanistan. Interim Liberal leader Bill Graham supports the appointment. Critics within the Liberal Party allege that Mr. Kahn's appointment is part of a Conservative strategy to deflect criticism of the Prime Minister and of the government onto the Liberal Party, and call the MP to resign his post or leave the Party.
11 August <i>Federal Politics</i>	The Conservative Government shuffles senior ranks of the public service, in particular associate deputy ministers and baby boomers.
11 August <i>Federal Politics</i>	Liberal MP Wajid Kahn leaves the caucus while serving as Special Advisor to the Prime Minister on the Middle East and Afghanistan, citing a desire to perform a non-partisan public service. Mr. Kahn will remain a Liberal MP and will not cross the floor.
12 August <i>Federal Politics</i>	The Prime Minister travels to Iqaluit regarding the effect of global warming on sovereignty and the North West Passage. Experts estimate that as early as 2015 and no later than 2090 the North West Passage will be open in the summer. The Canadian government hopes to be able to enforce the Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Act, establish Rapid Reaction Battalions (RRBs) in British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec, and

Newfoundland and Labrador, as well as invest in armed icebreakers, and construct a deep-water port near Iqaluit at the eastern entrance of the North West Passage. Other governments say that the waterway is part of international jurisdiction.

17 August
Federal Politics

Finance Minister Jim Flaherty says he will review Statistics Canada's procedures and budget after it is revealed that the Consumer Price Index and inflation rate has been miscalculated for a five-year period. The error resulted from improper calculation for hotel room rates that predicted the rates would fall by 16% instead of rise by 32%. The error went unnoticed because of an expected decline in the tourism industry caused by a number of factors such as SARS and global terrorism. The International Monetary Fund who found no error and granted the agency a measure of quality of 15 out of 15 when they reviewed the agency's calculations. The ripple effects of the error have yet to be determined.

31 August
Federal Politics

Prime Minister Harper says that Ottawa will spend \$101 million over 10 years to train and arm border officers and increase numbers of officers and security by 4400 total. By September 2007, the first will be deployed and eventually 400 more will be hired so that no one is on duty alone.

18 September
Federal Politics

Opening of the House of Commons: The Prime Minister renews his plan for Afghanistan. The Bloc Quebecois announces they will vote against the abolition of the gun registry after the tragedy at Dawson College on September 18, 2006. The Liberals say that the Conservatives have no mandate to abolish the registry at all.

18 September
Federal Politics

Justice Minister Dennis O'Connor releases his report in response to the Maher Arar situation. The report calls for the Prime Minister to supervise the RCMP national security investigation and makes 23 other recommendations, including a tighter control of the RCMP and compensation for Mr. Arar. In total the report is 822 pages but was censored.

19 September
Federal Politics

Chief Elections Office Jean Pierre Kingsley says the Conservative explanation for why they are not going to disclose convention fees is contrary to the Elections Act.

28 September
Federal Politics

RCMP Commissioner Giuliano Zaccardelli apologizes. Minister of Public Safety Stockwell Day says that the Department will investigate the role the RCMP played in the Maher Arar scandal. The government has offered no final settlement along or an apology. Some MP's question whether Zaccardelli should retain his post or be replaced, and what personal role the commissioner had.

18 October <i>Federal Politics</i>	MP Garth Turner is suspended from the Conservative caucus either because of alleged violation of caucus confidentiality on his website, or because of criticism of the ‘intensity based’ approach to emissions and a call for overall emission reduction instead.
20 October <i>Federal Politics</i>	The Prime Minister calls a by-election for the vacant seats in Ontario and Quebec for November 27. Conservative Senator and Public Works Minister Michael Fortier will not be running in the by election.
31 October <i>Federal Politics</i>	Breaking a campaign promise, the federal government announces taxing income taxes; this causes a major stir.
3 November <i>Federal Politics</i>	The Department of Justice says the federal government will not appeal the judicial ruling which struck down a section of the Security of Information Act due to a Charter violation.
22 November <i>Federal Politics</i>	Prime Minister Harper puts forward a motion in the House of Commons: “This House recognizes that Quebecers form a nation within a united Canada.” Liberals, NDP, and federalists praise the proposition. The Bloc Quebecois, however, is upset because they were going to release their own motion which would have stated: “This House believes that Quebec is a nation;” there would have been no specification for national unity question. The NDP says they would have supported both wordings. The PQ says it is symbolic progress only towards sovereignty and that there is no legal consequence to the recognition. Liberal Quebec Premier Jean Charest supports the recognition.
27 November <i>Federal Politics</i>	British Columbia Premier Gordon Campbell writes an article calling for Ottawa to extend the “nation” distinction to Aboriginal people saying that the “third solitude” faces more marginalization because of the announcement. AFN Chief Phil Fontaine supports Campbell’s comments and says that the recognition is a necessary symbolic move.
30 November <i>Federal Politics</i>	The Quebec National Assembly agrees on the wording of the motion that was adopted unanimously on November 29 th formally supporting Parliament’s recognition of Quebec as a nation within a united Canada.
2 December <i>Federal Politics</i>	Stéphane Dion is elected Liberal party leader at the Liberal Leadership Convention held in Montreal. Michael Ignatieff finished in second place.
18 December <i>Federal Politics</i>	Stéphane Dion names rival Michael Ignatieff as deputy leader of the Liberal Party.
22 December <i>Federal Politics</i>	Chief Elections Officer Jean Pierre Kingsley say he will resign in February; there is some speculation that it is because of a disagreement with the Conservative Government.

27 December
Federal Politics

The Conservatives file a new funding report from election donations showing that three people including Prime Minister Harper exceeded the legal limit for donation and almost \$700 000 undisclosed funding from riding associations as well as \$539 915 in “unreported donations”, \$913 710 in “other revenue” and \$1.45 million in “other expenses”. Critics allege this is a flagrant and intentional disregard for the law but the Conservative have said that they do not believe that delegate fees are donations and that they will not issue tax breaks.

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Health

4 January
*Federal Government,
Election Promise*

Martin announces a “patient guarantee” as part of the Liberal election platform. This plan would have the federal government pay to send patients out of province if they are unable to receive timely care in five key areas: joint replacement operations, cancer care, cataract surgery, cardiac care and diagnostic testing.

18 February
*Quebec,
Wait Time Limits*

The Quebec government announces a patient guarantee that will eventually put wait-time limits in place for key health services. If a patient must wait more than six months for service, the government will pay for treatment at private facilities; if the wait exceeds an additional three months, the government will pay for treatment outside the province. Doctors who practice in the private system will not be permitted to also work in the public system. This new policy is a response to the Supreme Court decision in the Chaoulli case of June 2005 where the Court found that Quebec’s ban on private insurance is contrary to the Charter.

18 February
*Federal government -
Quebec relations*

Federal Health Minister Tony Clement welcomes Quebec’s new patient guarantee, but cautioned that the province should not expect to receive any new federal funds to offset the cost of running this program.

18 February
Ontario

Ontario Conservative leader John Tory proposes to cut health care costs by sending annual invoices to inform citizens of the true costs of health care.

1 March
*Ontario,
Regionalised Health
Care*

The Ontario Legislative Assembly votes to cede control over delivery of care at hospitals and publicly funded health facilities to 14 regional agencies. Ontario is the last province to regionalise health care.

1 March
*Alberta,
“Third Way”*

Alberta Premier Ralph Klein introduces a “Third Way” for health care that allows patients to subscribe to private insurance and get faster access to hip and knee replacement surgeries. Under this plan, doctors will be able

<i>Health Care</i>	to work in both the private and public systems. Other provinces react critically to this proposal, saying that it undermines the system and tests the Canada Health Act.
2 March <i>Federal-Provincial Politics, Health Care Reform</i>	Prime Minister Stephen Harper encourages other provincial governments to reform their health care systems in ways similar to Quebec's new patient guarantee, rather than Alberta's Third Way which allows doctors to work in both public and private systems.
8 April <i>Federal- Alberta Politics, "Third Way" Health Care</i>	Prime Minister Harper warns Alberta Premier Ralph Klein that the proposed "Third Way" health care reforms can lead to better access for wealthier Canadians, queue jumping, as well as problems for rural areas as doctors may move to urban areas.
13 April <i>Ontario, Pharmaceuticals</i>	Ontario introduces legislation that would ban pharmaceutical companies from paying secret rebates to pharmacists. The legislation would also increase access to breakthrough drugs and replace brand name drugs with cheaper generic versions. The proposal includes provisions to curb drug costs in publicly funded and private sector plans.
20 April <i>Federal-Alberta Politics, "Third Way" Health Care, Federal Transfers</i>	Health Minister Tony Clement warns that transfer payments may be held back over "Third Way" proposal in Alberta. The province retracts the proposal due to the pressure.
20 April <i>British Columbia</i>	British Columbia Health Minister George Abbott says the province will invest \$70 million to research diagnostics and prevention.
28 April <i>Ontario, Wait Time Guarantees</i>	Ontario announces it will invest \$222.5 million in order to reduce wait times in five areas including cancer, heart disease and joint ailments.
1 June <i>Federal-Provincial Politics, Wait Time Guarantees</i>	Federal Health Minister Tony Clement argues that only Quebec has implemented wait time guarantees. Brad Green, Co-Chair of the Council of Federal/Provincial/Territorial Health Ministers says the federal government needs to allocate more money in order to have an active role in improving waiting times and health care in general.
15 June <i>Quebec, Private Care Legislation</i>	Quebec tables a bill expanding coverage of health insurance in compliance with SCC ruling that Quebec lift the ban on private care. In February Quebec allowed private clinics to do knee and hip replacements and cataract surgery to be paid by public insurance if the wait time in the public sector was too long. If patients require faster care and can afford private insurance it is also acceptable. Also included in the bill: doctors cannot opt out of the public system and other non-life threatening surgeries are not covered.

<p>5 July <i>Provincial Meeting</i></p>	<p>Provincial Health Ministers meet without Federal Health Minister Tony Clement in Fredericton to approve a pan-Canadian program to cover drug costs and a national pharmaceutical strategy in preparedness for the First Ministers in Newfoundland later in the month. The provinces argue they will need financing for any pharmaceutical strategy.</p>
<p>14 July <i>Federal Government, New Health Plan</i></p>	<p>Federal Health Minister Tony Clement reveals a new health care approach. The approach is not pan-Canadian; it allows each province to decide which services they need most. No additional money for wait times is provided as he argues that enough was provided by the 2004 budget.</p>
<p>21 August <i>Federal Government, Wait Time Reforms</i></p>	<p>Tony Clement delivers a speech to the Canadian Medical Association saying that provincial elected officials need to draft policy with respect to wait-time guarantees or open to other services for some procedures (knee and hip replacements, cataracts), or offer alternate services. Thus far Quebec is the only province to draft an alternative.</p>
<p>22 August <i>Canadian Medical Association</i></p>	<p>Brian Day, a Vancouver for-profit surgeon becomes the new president of the Canadian Medical Association.</p>
<p>2 September <i>Federal Government</i></p>	<p>Health Minister Tony Clement extends the deadline of a monetary injection from Ottawa into provincial health care until December 2007, past the three and a half year maximum that had been originally instated.</p>
<p>5 October <i>Ontario</i></p>	<p>Surgeons say that the five target wait time areas mean delays everywhere else. Health Minister Tony Clement has no comment.</p>
<p>27 October</p>	<p>Ontario invests \$142 million into reducing wait times at emergency rooms.</p>
<p>30 November <i>British Columbia, Private Health Care</i></p>	<p>The British Columbia Government moves to close planned pay as you go private health care clinics scheduled to open in Vancouver on December 1. The clinics offered urgent care in emergency style services. The clinic representatives say that the proposal is in line with the Canada Health Act and the Provincial Medical Protection Act as the Supreme Court has ruled in the past that a private clinic can operate to provide services if they are not already provided in a timely fashion by the public system.</p>
<p>5 December <i>Manitoba, Pharmaceuticals</i></p>	<p>Manitoba passes an act to facilitate rural and northern population's access to prescriptions and allows Internet based companies to stay in business. Pharmacists will get to vote on special regulations and any changes to the Manitoba Profession Pharmacist Association's Ethics Code. Health Minister Theresa Oswald says there are still some amendments to be made; all are in favour of passing the bill.</p>

5 December
B.C. Medical Association

British Columbia Medical Association arranges a resolution meeting between Health Minister George Abbott and False Creek Urgent Care Facility founder Mark Godley. The Clinic abandons plans to charge per procedure (medical assessments stitches, fractures,) and will bill as per prescribed list to the province clinic helps 30 people a day.

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Intergovernmental Relations

8 February
Federal-Provincial Relations, Child Care

Quebec Premier Jean Charest receives assurances from Prime Minister Harper that plans to phase out the 2005 child care agreement are open to negotiation. Other premiers protest plans to phase out funding by 2007 in order to introduce a \$1200 child benefit paid directly to parents, one of the Conservative government's key election promises.

10 February
Federal Government-Quebec Relations, UNESCO

Senior government officials move forward in creating a role for the province of Quebec in the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The province can hold only "associate member" status because of rules that reserve full membership for countries recognized by the United Nations.

10 February
Intergovernmental Relations, Child Care

Prime Minister Stephen Harper assures premiers that all provinces will be treated equally in negotiating a transition period for the 2005 child care agreement. Harper made the statement in response to complaints that he had made a special deal with Quebec Premier Jean Charest.

15 February
Federal Government, Quebec

Quebec Premier Jean Charest is the first provincial leader to meet with Prime Minister Harper following the election.

24 February
Intergovernmental Relations, Fiscal Imbalance

The Prime Minister hosts an informal meeting with provincial leaders to discuss the fiscal imbalance and increased aid for cities.

1 March
Ontario, Fiscal Imbalance

Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty calls for a royal commission into resolving the fiscal imbalance with a scope like that of the 1985 Macdonald Commission on the Economic Union and Development Prospects for Canada. This proposal finds little support outside of Ontario.

9 March
Federal Government, Quebec, Open Federalism, UNESCO

Prime Minister Stephen Harper meets with Quebec Premier Jean Charest to discuss "open federalism," Quebec's role in UNESCO, and the federalist future of Quebec. This was Harper's third visit with Charest since taking power only a month previously.

28 March

Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty launches a "fair deal" campaign to

<i>Ontario, Fiscal Imbalance</i>	pressure the federal government to resolve the issue of the fiscal imbalance in a way that addresses Ontario's concerns.
<i>11 April Provincial Meeting, Fiscal Imbalance</i>	Meeting in Montreal between the provincial and territorial leaders to discuss equalization and the fiscal imbalance takes place.
<i>12 April Federal Government, Forecasting Site in Gander</i>	The Conservative government reverse the controversial decision to close the forecasting site in Gander abiding by his election promise to reopen the federal weather forecasting site in Gander.
<i>18 April Quebec, New Brunswick</i>	Quebec Premier Jean Charest and New Brunswick Premier Bernard Lord sign a wide reaching agreement designed to decrease barriers between the provinces, to share expertise, and to increase worker mobility. New Brunswick construction workers have had difficulty getting jobs in Quebec, but the same barriers have not existed for Quebec workers in New Brunswick. The provinces say that they want to increase the free movement of people, goods, and services across the country.
<i>2 May Federal Government, Ontario</i>	Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty meets with Prime Minister Harper and accuses Ottawa of manipulating interest rates to stabilize Alberta's economy and damaging economic independence of manufacturers in Ontario. Premier McGuinty also tells Prime Minister Harper he will not be supporting an equalization formula that benefits have not provinces only.
<i>5 May Federal Government, Quebec, UNESCO</i>	Prime Minister Harper and Quebec Premier Jean Charest sign an agreement establishing a formal role for Quebec in UNESCO; Quebec will participate through Canada's Permanent Delegation. The agreement is deemed a recognition of Quebec's unique character and an acknowledgement of asymmetrical or open federalism.
<i>10 May Federal Government, Ontario</i>	Jim Flaherty says the \$6.9 billion Liberal commitment to Ontario will be honoured, but only after the fiscal imbalance has been fixed.
<i>24 May Alberta, Equalization Payments</i>	Alberta says it will drop out of the equalization deal if energy income is included in the revenue sharing formula.
<i>29 May Western Provinces Meeting</i>	Western Premiers meet where they discuss the equalization formula and fiscal imbalance as well as the Kelowna Accord.
<i>29 May Intergovernmental</i>	Provincial Ministers say the federal plan to give tax incentives directly to corporations and non profit groups to increase the number of child care

<i>Relations, Equalization Payments</i>	spaces is exceeding federal jurisdiction.
<i>29 May Intergovernmental Relations, Equalization Payments</i>	Finance Minister Jim Flaherty says the government intends to exclude natural resource revenue from equalization formula. Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario are pleased; other provinces worry and Manitoba has no comment.
<i>1 June Intergovernmental Relations, Equalization Payments</i>	Prime Minister Harper insists that the decision of whether or not to include natural resources from equalization reform has not yet been reached, contrary to Flaherty's earlier comment.
<i>1 June Ontario, Quebec, Worker Mobility Pact</i>	Ontario and Quebec sign a Worker Mobility Pact, removing trade and employment barriers for Ontario construction workers seeking employment in Quebec. Quebec had previously imposed strict regulations that made it difficult for Ontario construction workers to find employment in Quebec. Ontario had retaliated by imposing regulations, which had to be later removed due to a labour shortage in the province.
<i>8 June Provincial Meeting, Equalization Payments</i>	Premiers meet in Edmonton to discuss equalization and attempt to find common ground. Newfoundland Premier Danny Williams says the proposed changes to equalization will cost the province up to \$100 million annually. Saskatchewan Premier Lorne Calvert rejects the proposal that 50% of a province's natural resource revenue will be included in favour of 100% exclusion of non-renewable resource revenue, also supported by Alberta Premier Ralph Klein. Instead, Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty is in favour of increased per capita transfers, not the suggested changed to equalization. Manitoba Premier Gary Doer accuses those opposed to increased equalization of being anti-Canadian.
<i>23 June Federal Government,</i>	Prime Minister Harper's cabinet meeting in Quebec marks a significant move to captivate Quebec voters by hosting it on St. Jean Baptiste Day.
<i>27 June Intergovernmental Relations, Equalization Payments</i>	Federal and provincial finance ministers met to discuss equalization payments, but no resolution reached. Further, no indication is released to the media regarding whether a possible deal is underway. This is the second day of meetings with Minister Flaherty who maintains that side deals with Nova Scotia and Newfoundland will remain.
<i>6 July Federal Government, Alberta</i>	Alberta Conservative MLA's and Federal Conservative MP's meet in Calgary to discuss Alberta's needs. Jim Prentice, Federal Minister of Indian Affairs who is from Calgary, says that it is crucial for the provincial and federal caucuses to understand each other. Klein and Harper, who are not in attendance, support the meetings.
<i>26 July</i>	Citizens of Prince Edward Island accuse Conservatives of gerrymandering

<i>Federal Government, PEI, Electoral Map</i>	when they revised the electoral map to increase rural influence in Conservative strongholds.
25 July <i>Intergovernmental Relations, Kelowna Accord</i>	Canadian provincial premiers and territorial leaders announce their support for the Assembly of First Nations and the \$5.1 billion Kelowna Accord. This support may be crucial in the future when the federal government re-examines the Accord.
26-28 July <i>Premiers' Conference Equalization Payments</i>	Premiers' conference in Newfoundland: While it has been acknowledged that the Premiers need to reach a deal before meeting with the Prime Minister by the end of the meetings there is no resolution on equalization and each province will need to negotiate its own deal.
10 August <i>Intergovernmental Relations, Fiscal Imbalance</i>	The Conservative government is in discussion regarding a division of federal surpluses among provinces to solve the fiscal imbalance. Federal Finance Minister Jim Flaherty and Intergovernmental Affairs Minister Michael Chong are in discussion with their provincial counterparts. Provincial representatives argue that this is not a replacement for an equalization formula. They are hoping for more information on how the transfer of funds will go and to where the money will be directed. The 'sharing the surplus' idea was announced by the Prime Minister in April and raised by Mr. Flaherty in June, but to little media attention.
22 September <i>Ontario, Quebec, Manitoba, Agreement to share Information</i>	Attorneys General of Ontario, Quebec and Manitoba sign an agreement to share resources regarding criminal networks and justice including those pertaining to gangs and organized crime, wiretapping, shared crown prosecutions, criminal code interpretations, and search warrants. The provinces recognize the agreement as a starting point that may require the integration of the federal government and other provinces.
27 September <i>Intergovernmental Relations, Fiscal Imbalance</i>	In a French news interview, Prime Minister Harper mentions that he may not meet the fiscal imbalance deadline of February 1 st , 2007 and instead may look at the spring budget. Disappointed, the Bloc Quebecois and Premier Charest suggest that the announcement could cost the Prime Minister any number of seats in an election.
3 October <i>Federal Government, Ontario, Auto Industry</i>	Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty warns Prime Minister Harper not to damage Ontario's auto industry by forcing Ontario to bear the brunt of the clean air policies by imposing new auto emission standards. Finance Minister Jim Flaherty says all sectors will face charges.
8 October <i>Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, High Risk Criminal Notification</i>	Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba are developing a website that gives the public details about high risk criminals living in their communities. Justice Minister of Saskatchewan is calling on the rest of Canada to implement the same measures.

- 14 October
*Federal Government,
Newfoundland and
Labrador,
Equalization Payments*
- Prime Minister Harper and Newfoundland and Labrador Premier Danny Williams meet in Gander at the Progressive Conservative Party convention. Harper refuses to side with Newfoundland regarding equalization and refuses requested legislation that would impose deadlines on development of the province's oil resources. Williams threatens, or suggests, that there would be a negative impact for Harper if an election were called. Currently, the Federal Conservatives hold three seats in Newfoundland and the Liberals hold four.
- 5 November
*Federal Government,
Quebec,
Open Federalism*
- While in Montreal, the Prime Minister announces a \$1 billion traffic beltway. Ottawa and Quebec will share the costs of the project. The agreement is cited as an example of open federalism.
- 23 November
*Federal Government,
Ontario,
Crime*
- The Prime Minister with Premier McGuinty and Toronto Mayor David Miller announce new federal legislation with tougher bail for gun related crimes. The new legislation requires a reverse onus for those charged to prove why they shouldn't stay in custody pre-trial when charged with an indictable offence. Experts say this is a violation of s 7 rights in the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Harper says a constitutional challenge is unlikely but even if challenged the legislation justified as an issue of public safety.
- 4 December
*Federal Government,
Alberta,
Equal Treatment*
- Alberta Premier Designate Ed Stelmach warns Ottawa that Alberta wants to be treated equally to all provinces including Quebec. He vows to fight for same rights a "nation within nation."
- 8-9 December
*Provincial Meeting,
Health Care*
- Provincial health ministers with the exception of Alberta, Quebec, and the Yukon, meet and agree to present a united front regarding funding required vis-à-vis patient wait time guarantees when they meet with Tony Clement on December 9.
- 14 December
*Intergovernmental
Relations,
Equalization Payments*
- Finance Minister Jim Flaherty begins meetings with provincial finance minister in Vancouver. Compromise is not likely regarding the equalization formula. Saskatchewan is accused of being flushed with cash, while Ontario cries poor under the proposed wealth distribution scheme, saying that the province carries a \$15 billion burden each year. Flaherty is also seeking support for Ottawa's other tax policies and economic agenda.

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International Relations

- 3 January
International Relations,
- The federal bureaucracy faces increased pressure to put forward a proposal to counter the requirement that Canadian citizens use passports for all air

<i>Passport Use</i>	crossings by 2007 and all land crossings by 2008. Delays are blamed on an unwillingness to deal with a politically unpopular issue during an election campaign.
26 January <i>International Relations</i>	Frank McKenna resigns as ambassador to the United States. There is speculation that McKenna is interested in running as leader of the Liberal Party.
26 January <i>International Relations</i> <i>Arctic Waters</i>	David Wilkins, US Ambassador to Canada reiterates that the United States does not recognize Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic, claiming that all Arctic waters are neutral territory. Stephen Harper responds with an assertion of Canadian sovereignty, including a plan to deploy icebreakers in the Arctic as part of a \$5.3 billion election promise to bolster defence spending.
4 February <i>International Relations,</i> <i>Religious Controversy</i>	Muslim communities across Canada react to the publication of Danish caricatures of the prophet Mohammed by boycotting products from Denmark. The cartoons were first published in the Copenhagen daily <i>Jyllands-Posten</i> , and caused outrage and protests in Muslim communities worldwide, as any representation of the Mohammed is considered to be blasphemy.
8 February <i>International Relations,</i> <i>Terrorism</i>	Abdullah Khadr, a Canadian citizen, is formally charged on four terrorism-related counts by the United States government. Khadr was captured and detained by Pakistani forces in 2004, and held without charge for 14 months, during which time he faced questioning by both US and Canadian officials. He returned to Canada in December 2005, where he was again detained pending extradition.
10 February <i>International Relations</i>	Finance Minister Jim Flaherty meets with G8 finance ministers in Moscow.
10 February <i>International Relations,</i> <i>Canada-U.S.</i> <i>Border Security</i>	Michael Chertoff, head of the US Department of Homeland Security, announces increased electronic surveillance, aerial patrols, and satellite surveillance at the Canada-US border.
13 January <i>International Relations,</i> <i>American Missile</i> <i>Defence</i>	Stephen Harper announces his intention to reopen the debate over Canadian participation in the American missile defence system. Harper promised a free vote on the issue in the House of Commons if the American government made another proposal to expand the program from its sites in Alaska and California.
15 February <i>International Relations</i>	Michael Wilson is appointed ambassador to the United States by Prime Minister Harper. Wilson served as a former Conservative cabinet minister under Brian Mulroney.

<p>17 February <i>International Relations,</i> <i>Arar Affair</i></p>	<p>A US federal court dismisses a lawsuit brought against the Bush administration by Maher Arar that alleges that the government knowingly sent Arar to a country that was known to use torture. Arar was detained by the US in 2002 on suspicion of committing acts of terrorism; he was later sent to Syria.</p>
<p>21 February <i>International Relations,</i> <i>NORAD</i></p>	<p>The bilateral North American Aerospace Defence Command (NORAD) treaty is expanded to include maritime as well as air defence.</p>
<p>24 February <i>International Relations,</i> <i>Bilateral Missile</i> <i>Defence</i></p>	<p>Defence Minister Gordon O'Connor confirms that the Conservative government is willing to reconsider the bilateral missile defence proposal that the previous Liberal government had rejected. Any new negotiations would be contingent on a formal request by the American government and a free vote in the House of Commons.</p>
<p>25 February <i>International Relations,</i> <i>Ballistic Missile</i> <i>Defence</i></p>	<p>David Wilkins, U.S. Ambassador to Canada, states that there are no plans to ask Canada to join the ballistic missile defence system.</p>
<p>3 March <i>International Relations,</i> <i>Afghanistan</i></p>	<p>General Rick Hillier, the chief of defence staff, claims that Canada will face international pressure to keep 2,200 Canadian troops in Afghanistan after the scheduled pull-out date in 2007.</p>
<p>4 March <i>International Relations,</i> <i>Afghanistan</i></p>	<p>Canadian forces take over the Kandahar region of Afghanistan from America troops. Responsibility for this region will require undertaking significant combat missions.</p>
<p>8 March <i>International Relations,</i> <i>Palestinian Aid</i></p>	<p>Foreign Affairs Minister Peter MacKay announces a review of Palestinian aid in light of the Hamas government's position on Israel. The Canadian government has refused to deal directly with Hamas. It has channelled funds through the United Nations and non-governmental organizations.</p>
<p>13 March <i>International Relations,</i> <i>Afghanistan</i></p>	<p>Prime Minister Stephen Harper makes a surprise visit to Canadian troops in Afghanistan.</p>
<p>17 March <i>International Relations,</i> <i>Terrorism</i> <i>Khadr</i></p>	<p>The Attorney General orders an extradition hearing for Abdullah Khadr, who faces terrorism charges in the United States. Khadr had been indicted on charges of cooperating with Al Qaeda and plotting to kill US troops in Afghanistan.</p>
<p>23 March <i>International Relations,</i> <i>Arar Affair</i></p>	<p>Maher Arar, a Syrian-born Canadian, testifies before a committee of the European Parliament investigating the role of the Italian government in the "extraordinary rendition" that allowed the United States government to send him to Syria as a terrorist suspect.</p>

<p>25 March <i>International Relations,</i> <i>Peacekeeping</i></p>	<p>The Canadian peacekeeping mission in the Golan Heights region between Israel and Syria ends. The withdrawal of these troops leaves less than 60 Canadians serving on the United Nations peacekeeping force.</p>
<p>29 March <i>International Relations,</i> <i>Palestinian Aid</i></p>	<p>Foreign Affairs Minister Peter MacKay announces that Canada has cut off contact and funding to the Hamas-controlled Palestinian Authority. The federal government maintains \$7.3 million in funding through non-governmental organizations and international agencies. The Canadian government became the first nation aside from Israel to cut off financial assistance to Palestine after Hamas gained political control of the country.</p>
<p>1 April <i>International Relations,</i> <i>North America Summit</i></p>	<p>The North American Summit is the first face-to-face meeting between Canadian Prime Minister Harper and US President Bush. President Bush says that the US will go ahead with the plan, now an American law, to insist on passports or high-tech identification cards for crossing the border. Prime Minister Harper warns that Canada will need to move quickly in order to protect the economy and ensure the continuation of cross border traffic and trade. Air and sea crossings will require identification by January 2007, while land crossing requirements will not be instituted until January 2008.</p>
<p>2 April <i>International Relations,</i> <i>Cross Border</i> <i>Identification</i></p>	<p>Ontario Tourism Minister Jim Bradley publicly accuses the Prime Minister of capitulation to the US regarding cross border identification. Mr. Bradley insists that the plan will have a devastating effect on Ontario tourism and trade.</p>
<p>11 April <i>International Relations,</i> <i>Afghanistan</i></p>	<p>Afghan Ambassador Omar Samadi says that it is too soon to discuss an exit strategy. He argues that the country needs an extension of Canadian military service.</p>
<p>13 April <i>International Relations,</i> <i>Cross Border</i> <i>Identification</i></p>	<p>Foreign Affairs Minister Peter MacKay meets in the US with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice regarding passport requirements. Rice acknowledges the difficulties that Canada will face, particularly in tourism and trade, and Canada's wish to be both informed and able to comment. MacKay suggests that there is little probability that the plan will not go through.</p>
<p>18 April <i>International Relations,</i> <i>Cross Border</i> <i>Identification</i></p>	<p>Public Safety Minister Stockwell Day and Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff meet in Washington to discuss the passport issue and terrorism. Day is unable to get an extension on the January 1, 2008 deadline for border cards at land crossings.</p>
<p>28 April <i>International Relations,</i></p>	<p>President Bush's administration releases a report criticizing lax Canadian laws and a liberal immigration system in Canada that allows Islamic</p>

<i>American Criticism</i>	terrorists cells to continue to operate. The view is common amongst those sitting on the American political right, however, it is not official sanction is rarely given.
8 May <i>International Relations, NORAD</i>	The House of Commons votes 257-30 to approve new NORAD pact. Critics note the deal has already been signed in advance and no changes were allowed, but the Conservative Government had pledged to bring the international treaty to the house for a vote.
1 June <i>International Relations</i>	Implementation of passports and cross border ID cards delayed by pressures from the travel industry and politicians citing the potential to further strain Canada-US relations along with BSE and softwood lumber.
5 June <i>International Relations, Immigration Laws, Terrorism</i>	Weekend arrests of seventeen Toronto area terror suspects increases discussion of issues of Canada- U.S. border security, in spite of unconfirmed links to the U.S., and leads to accusations that Canada's immigration laws are not stringent enough.
10 June <i>International Relations, Terrorism, Khadr</i>	Abdurhaman Khadr, a Canadian citizen captured in Afghanistan in 2001 and held without charge as an enemy combatant, in U.S. Guantanamo Bay, is granted a Canadian passport. The passport application had been held since 2004 due to suspicion of terrorist association. The Federal Court of Canada ruled that denying the passport was contrary to the rule of law.
6 July <i>International Relations, Canada-U.S. Relations</i>	Prime Minister Harper and U.S. President Bush meet in Washington. Topics for discussion include passports and identification for cross border travel and business, missile defence, terrorism and teamwork, North Korea, and the Middle East. Canada is also praised for its quick response to the terrorist threat in Toronto and the arrest of 17 terrorism suspects in June and for its work in Afghanistan. Prime Minister Harper announces that Canada is not prepared to reopen discussion on missile defense after the previous Liberal opt-out.
15-17 July <i>International Relations, G-8 Summit</i>	G-8 Summit in Russia focuses on Iran, North Korea, Hezbollah and the crisis in Lebanon. Prime Minister Harper attempts to draw attention to Canada's abundant source of energy and criticizes the use of energy as a political or monopolistic tool.
16 July <i>International Relations, Lebanon</i>	Seven Canadians are killed in Lebanon and the Canadian government moves to evacuate up to 40 000 Canadians from the region. Foreign Affairs Minister Peter MacKay says he has dispatched two cruise ships from Cyprus to evacuate the Canadians. Prime Minister Harper, along with the U.S.A. announces that Canada recognizes Israel's right to respond to a Hamas and Hezbollah attack.

- 18 July
International Relations, Terrorism
- At a policing conference in Toronto for FBI National Academy graduates, FBI Director Robert Mueller informs Canada that the country will become a haven for terrorists if it does not safeguard confidential information, toughen anti-terrorism laws, keep intelligence flowing to the United States. Director Mueller does praise the new anti-terrorism laws and the arrest of seventeen suspects in early June, but suggests that reforms which are more in tune with newer US laws.
- 31 August
International Relations, Canada-U.S. Relations
- The United States announces it will impose fees for air travelers cargo vessels trucks and trains in order to raise revenue to screen for pests and other biohazards. International Trade Minister Emerson says he has been aware of this proposal for two weeks, but the policy will not take effect until November 24. Critics worry about the effect that this will have on commerce.
- 5 September
International Relations, Canada-U.S. Relations
- Before the UN, Bloc Quebecois Leader Gilles Duceppe calls for an emergency debate regarding the direction of Canadian foreign policy and a pull out of Afghanistan. Duceppe accuses the Canadian federal government of being too in sync with the Bush administration, especially with respect to Israel, thus breaking with Canada's traditional position. Duceppe is demanding more direction of the Canadian forces before the deployment of the Quebec 22 Regiment (the "Vandoos") who will become a main Canadian force in Afghanistan.
- 6 October
International Relations, Arar Affair
- Prime Minister Harper tells US President Bush that Canada will protest US handling of the Arar security file and seek answers. At the same time President Bush pays video tribute to "Steve" at a separate awards dinner.
- 9 October
International Relations, Afghanistan
- Defense Minister O'Connor confronts NATO countries (Spain, France, Italy and Germany) whose troops are restricted to less dangerous areas where Canada shoulders Afghanistan burden.
- 23 October
International Relations, Canada-U.S. Relations
- Premier McGuinty protests a sex offender from the US from serving sentence in Canada and says that Ottawa must try to overturn US decision letting the teacher serve his sentence in Canada by returning to Fort Erie where he lives with his family.
- 28 November
International Relations, Afghanistan
- The Prime Minister is in Riga Latvia to encourage NATO support for Afghanistan.
- 1 December
World Aids Day
- Prime Minister Harper announces on World AIDS Day that Canada will commit \$120 million extra in the global fight against AIDS. International Cooperation Minister Josée Verner unveiled the long awaited announcement: \$41 million is for preventative strategy; \$20 million for vaccine research \$2 million to Tanzania to support the national HIV AIDS plan, \$19 million to Haiti; \$2.5 million in research to McGill University

regarding Zimbabwe's parent child transmission research. The amount is in addition to \$250 million over two years already pledged to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria.

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Municipalities

- 17 February
Federation of Canadian Municipalities
- The big city mayors caucus of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities meets to discuss the possibility of increased powers and funding for cities under the new Conservative government.
- 24 April
Ontario GTAA
- Ontario Transportation Minister Harinder Takhar reveals a plan for new regulations transport agency, the Greater Toronto Transportation Authority (GTAA), which will co-ordinate planning, capital spending, road improvement, and vehicle purchases. Critics insist that the plan offers no structure and implementation deadlines and therefore offers no guarantees on improvements.
- 10 May
Ontario
- Ontario passes a bill extending the terms of mayors, councils, and municipal politicians (including school trustees) from three years to four years, to take effect in November 2006.
- 2 June
Federation of Canadian Municipalities, Fiscal Imbalance
- The Federation of Canadian Municipalities and the mayors of Canada's twenty-two largest cities call on the federal and the provincial governments for increased access to tax revenues and a permanent national transit program. The mayors also insist there is a fiscal imbalance between municipalities' growing responsibilities and traditional funding structures. The Prime Minister response is that funding will come from other governments, whether through equalization or transfer payments.
- 5 June
Federation of Canadian Municipalities
- Prime Minister Harper announces to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities \$16.5 billion in new money for municipalities. The money is intended for infrastructure repairs, crime prevention and policing, affordable housing, immigrant settlement, funding for public transportation, gas transfer program, and the GST rebate. However, the announcement does not include a guarantee of federal revenue as the cities' mayors had requested.
- 19 September
Toronto
- Toronto strikes a deal to buy the largest private landfill, near London Ontario, and faces opposition from four London area MP's including the Minister of Training Colleges and Universities, and the Labour Minister. The NDP criticizes the plan as wasteful and damaging to the environment and critics allege that Toronto Mayor David Miller has more influence over Premier McGuinty than MPP's.

13 November
*Ontario Municipal
Elections*

Ontario holds municipal elections and politicians are now elected to four-year terms.

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Provincial Politics

4 February
*Provincial Politics,
Ontario*

Reports surface that Conservative MP Jim Flaherty owes between \$25,000 and \$64,000 in costs related to the 2004 leadership race to the Ontario Conservative Party. Flaherty, who was rumoured to be in consideration at this time, will later be appointed Minister of Finance.

25 February
*Provincial Politics,
Nova Scotia*

Conservative Rodney MacDonald is elected Premier of Nova Scotia.

27 March
*Provincial Politics,
Ontario,
Electoral Reform*

Marie Boutrigianni, Minister responsible for Democratic Renewal in Ontario, announces a citizen's assembly to examine electoral reform. The assembly consists of 103 randomly selected citizens from each riding in the province. The assembly's report is due by May 15, 2007.

3 April
*Provincial Politics,
Newfoundland and
Labrador
Hebron Offshore Oil
Project*

The Hebron offshore oil project is shelved due to a dispute between Newfoundland and Labrador Premier Danny Williams and Exxon Mobil. Mr. Williams says that the province is willing to buy Exxon's shares in the project in order to put it back on track, but did not specify the costs of doing so.

10 April
*Provincial Politics,
Manitoba*

Manitoba NDP Government tables legislation that would bar member from crossing the floor of the legislative assembly.

11 April
*Provincial Politics,
Newfoundland and
Labrador*

Chevron and other oil companies announce they will not reopen talks with Newfoundland and Labrador, thus stalling the Hebron project indefinitely, and begin dismantling the project and worker teams.

13 April
*Provincial Politics,
New Brunswick,
Provincial Election*

The New Brunswick Conservative government regains its majority as former Conservative, then former independent, Michael Malley returns to the Caucus. The party standings are 28 Conservative, 26 Liberals and one Independent.

4 May
*Provincial Politics,
Nova Scotia
Throne Speech*

Nova Scotia Throne Speech promises lower taxes and billions for infrastructure, leading some to suggest that an election call is imminent.

- 6 May
*Provincial Politics,
Nova Scotia*
- The provincial NDP in Nova Scotia will back Conservative budget and support the minority government provided that a sales tax break on heating costs is given.
- 8 May
*Provincial Politics,
Newfoundland and
Labrador*
- Newfoundland and Labrador Liberal leader Jim Bennett resigns after 3 months.
- 8 May
*Provincial Politics,
Newfoundland and
Labrador,
Hydroelectric Project*
- Newfoundland and Labrador announce a multi billion-dollar hydroelectric project in Labrador's Lower Churchill Rivers. The province has been negotiating with Chevron and Exxon. The project is intended to be completed in 2014 and produce 2800 mega watts of power.
- 13 May
*Provincial Politics,
Nova Scotia*
- Nova Scotia election is called for June 13.
- 1 June
*Provincial Politics,
British Columbia
Gun Registry*
- In response to the promised elimination of the Gun Registry, British Columbia introduces gun amnesty, where citizens are able to hand in unregistered firearms to the authorities without penalty for one month.
- 12 June
*Provincial Politics,
Yukon Territories*
- Yukon Justice Minister states that the Yukon will offer a community court option for people with addictions or fetal alcohol spectrum disorder. The program is expected to be operational by the fall and is designed to help treat addiction and health problems.
- 12 June
*Provincial Politics,
Quebec*
- Quebec Plus Democratic discussion group of a number of Quebecois political parties including the Parti Quebecois, the Green Party, the Quebec Solidaire Parti, and members of the National Assembly suggest a public consultation regarding the place for Quebec in the federation as opposed to a sovereignty referendum.
- 13 June
*Provincial Politics,
Nova Scotia,
Provincial Elections*
- Nova Scotia minority Conservative government retains its position and the NDP gains five seats. Conservative Leader Rodney MacDonald and the Party won 23 seats out of 52, down from 25. The Liberals drop from ten to nine, with Liberal Leader Francis MacKenzie failing to win a seat.
- 13 June
*Provincial Politics,
Ontario,
Energy Plan*
- The Ontario government reveals new energy plan including more money for Crown Corporation Atomic Energy of Canada (AEC) along with General Electric and SNC Lavalin Nuclear. The adoption of the plan would require funding from the federal government.
- 22 June
- Parti Quebecois implicated in its own sponsorship scandal with the Group

*Provincial Politics,
Quebec
Sponsorship Scandal*

Action firm. It is disclosed that money was knowingly laundered through employees. The Parti Quebecois had tried to link the Charest Liberals to the scandal, though no evidence was found. The donation of money to political parties from corporations is forbidden in Quebec by a 1977 provincial law.

22 June
*Provincial Politics,
Newfoundland and
Labrador*

The Auditor General finds \$1 million misspent in Newfoundland and Labrador in an audit between 2000 and 2004 caused by poorly cleared spending.

27 June
*Provincial Politics,
Newfoundland and
Labrador,
Spending Practices*

Auditor General John Noseworthy issues the second chapter of his findings from his investigation into Newfoundland and Labrador's House of Assembly spending practices. The report cites misappropriation of public funds, conflict of interest and possible breach of trust by senior bureaucrats who oversaw spending Auditor General Noseworthy states he has turned his report over to the Justice Department for review.

4 July
*Provincial Politics,
Newfoundland and
Labrador*

Newfoundland Attorney General John Noseworthy issues the third and final instalment of his reports, accusing two more sitting and one former member of grossly overspent allowances.

18 August
*Provincial Politics,
New Brunswick*

New Brunswick Premier Bernard Lord meets with the Lieutenant Governor to dissolve the legislature and to officially call an election for September 18, 2006. An early election is unavoidable given the loss of Lord's one-seat majority government with the departure of former Cabinet Minister Peter Mesheau.

22 August
*Provincial Politics,
Quebec*

Parti Quebecois leader André Boisclair is sworn into his seat in the Quebec Legislative Assembly. He won in a by-election the position of leader of the Official Opposition nine months ago.

24 August
*Provincial Politics,
British Columbia*

Joint British Columbia industry paper is released. The committee made up of forestry, mining, and agriculture associations, makes recommendations to Fisheries and Oceans Canada in regards to the Fisheries Act. The committee suggests reforms to modernize the act including bureaucratic reform and new environmental legislation.

31 August
*Provincial Politics,
Alberta*

Alberta Premier Ralph Klein's last day in the Alberta Legislature; a new party leader will take over in the fall after a November vote.

7 September
Provincial Politics,

The British Columbia Liberals will not be holding a fall session. NDP leader Carole James says the government has no reason to be

British Columbia

complacent regarding the debate and that they are wrong to assume that there are no issues to be discussed. There is precedent for not holding a fall session and one is not officially required.

8 September
*Provincial Politics,
Yukon Territories*

Premier of the Yukon Dennis Fentie confirms an election will be held on October 10.

10 September
*Provincial Politics,
Ontario,
Recycling Program*

Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty announces a plan to introduce a deposit program as of February 2007 to return bottles and soft-sided containers for a refund to the LCBO. The plan is applauded by the Association of Municipalities of Ontario as a way to decrease the amount of glass in landfills. Conservative Opposition MPP and Party Leader John Tory says the idea is good but the plan is poorly constructed.

18 September
*Provincial Politics,
New Brunswick,
Provincial Election*

Liberal Shawn Graham is elected premier of New Brunswick with a slim majority over the Conservative Party (no NDP presence) and an almost equal popular vote. Voter turnout is calculated as between 63% and 73% depending on the area. Priorities include a cut to the gasoline tax and cleanup of the St. John harbour.

20 September
*Provincial Politics,
Alberta*

Ralph Klein tenders his official resignation. The first ballot is expected for November 28, 2006.

20 September
*Provincial Politics,
Manitoba*

Manitoba Cabinet is shuffled and reflects a government commitment to training as part of a provincial economic strategy.

30 September
*Provincial Politics,
Quebec*

The tragic collapse of an overpass onto another highway in Laval, Quebec leads Premier Charest and key Ministers to assure that the roads are safe.

1 October
*Provincial Politics,
Quebec*

Transport Minister Michel Despres announces that the government will hold a public inquiry, to be headed by former Premier Pierre Mac Johnson, to investigate the cause of the overpass collapse in Laval.

11 October
*Provincial Politics,
Yukon Territories*

Incumbent Premier Dennis Fentie's Yukon Party wins ten out of 15 seats, doubling that of the opposition Liberals.

20 October
*Provincial Politics,
Quebec*

Quebec Premier Charest announces \$730 million program for forest industry that includes \$200 million for reforestation, roads and bridges, forest fires and other threats. The money is also earmarked for retraining with a majority for loans and loan guarantees for companies looking to improve or expand. A forestry sector aid package of \$1 billion was also added in March.

- 5 November
*Provincial Politics,
British Columbia*
- British Columbia Liberals meet in Penticton. Promises made include a \$1000 bonus for kids born in the province starting in 2007, and plans to slash income tax. Premier Campbell pledges to remedy the Aboriginal poverty and health care. Critics and supporters alike are hopeful that the plans will be synonymous with Alberta
- 8 November
*Provincial Politics,
Quebec*
- Quebec orders the Coroner's Office to hold public inquiry into outbreak of the C difficile bacteria at rural hospital near Montreal; the bacteria was found in 11 patients.
- 22 November
- The British Columbia Legislature is back in session.
- 2 December
*Provincial Politics,
Alberta*
- Cabinet Minister Ed Stelmach of the PC party wins Alberta Premiership and becomes Premier Designate over Jim Denning.
- 5 December
*Provincial Politics,
Quebec,
Spending*
- Quebec Premier Charest unveils a \$900 million plan to increase wealth of Quebec as knowledge based economy for Research and Innovation Strategy. The plan includes \$400 million for universities for private research innovation, \$420 million for research infrastructure, and \$80 million in research and development tax cuts for companies.
- 12 December
*Provincial Politics,
Ontario*
- Ontario Labour Minister Steve Peters announces that as of today there will be no more mandatory retirement age.
- 13 December
*Provincial Politics,
New Brunswick*
- New Brunswick Premier Bernard Lord announces his resignation as Conservative Party Leader, effective Jan 31, 2007.
- 29 December
*Provincial Politics,
Newfoundland and
Labrador*
- Newfoundland and Labrador Finance Minister Loyola Sullivan resigns his position and quits politics without giving a reason, but does say that he has been considering it for a year. Sullivan has been in provincial politics for 14 years.

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Senate

- 6 February
Senate Reform
- It is reported that Prime Minister Stephen Harper intends to hold Senate elections in conjunction with the next federal vote.
- 1 March
Senate Reform
- Prime Minister Stephen Harper promises to hold senatorial elections in time for the next general election with or without the support of premiers.
- 3 March
Senate Reform
- Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty states his preference that the Senate be abolished rather than introducing senatorial elections.

- 16 April
The Accountability Act Liberal Senator Terry Mercer says the Accountability Act will not likely pass before June at the Prime Minister's request. The Senate has concerns with some provisions of a single watchdog organization and the merger of the ethics commission of the two houses. The Senate says they will neither stall nor rush the legislation.
- 22 June
CBC A Senate Committee tells Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) to stop competing with private networks. That is to say no advertising and no sportscasts, and to fill only niches that no other network does. The Senate Committee argues that broadcasting US reality television does not fulfill Canadian needs, namely promoting Canadian national identity and Canadian programs.
- 5 September
The Accountability Act Senate Hearings on the Accountability Act resume. Senators say there is debate and discussion and possibly amendments to be proposed and therefore there will be no rush to push the bill back to the House of Commons for the suggested September 26th deadline. Accusations of Liberal unethical behaviour are heard, although an earlier vote indicates that the Senate (Liberal and Conservative) may be unanimous in blocking the proposal for the joint Senate and House of Commons single ethics commissioner.
- 7 September
Senate Reform Prime Minister Harper speaks in a special Senate Committee (the first Prime Minister to do so) regarding Senate reform policy to be introduced in the fall that will include a reduction of terms for new Senators to eight years. Currently, Senators sit until the age of 75.
- 13 December
Senate Reform The Conservative Government introduces a bill that will give citizens input in Senate appointments where they would indicate choices when they vote in federal elections and winners name would be recommended to government and Governor General.

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Social Policy

- 4 January
*Federal Government,
Landing Fees* Paul Martin proposes to eliminate the \$975 "landing fee" for new immigrants. The fee was introduced in 1995 to pay for settlement services for newcomers.
- 6 January
*Federal Government,
Support for Caregivers* Paul Martin proposes a \$1.7 billion plan to support caregivers and seniors. The plan included aspects to fund reverse mortgage schemes for home owning seniors and an expansion of compassionate leave programs.

- 8 February
*Federal Government,
Quebec,
Child Care Program*
- Quebec Premier Jean Charest receives assurances from Prime Minister Harper that plans to phase out the 2005 child care agreement are open to negotiation. Other premiers protest plans to phase out funding by 2007 in order to introduce a \$1200 child benefit paid directly to parents, one of the Conservative government's key election promises.
- 9 February
*Federal Politics,
Child Care*
- The federal NDP announce plans to introduce national child care legislation that would prevent the Conservative government from cancelling funding under the 2005 early learning agreement.
- 12 April
*Federal Politics,
Child Care*
- The Bloc Quebecois announces that it wants changes to the proposed federal child tax credit plan, seeking a refundable credit instead of an allowance, which they argue hurts lower income families.
- 10 May
*Federal Government,
Residential Schools Deal*
- The Federal Cabinet approves a \$2 billion residential schools deal and to fast track \$8000 cheques to victims over the age of 65.
- 15 May
*Federal Government,
Ontario, Toronto,
Social Safety Net*
- A task force made up of representatives of the city of Toronto (Toronto City Summit Alliance and St Christopher's House), the Ontario government, and the government of Canada releases a report that calls for \$8.5 billion to repair the social safety net. It makes 11 recommendations including federal tax credits, reforming EI, increase in minimum wage, income support for disabled persons, transitions programs for adults on social assistance entering the work force, and a federal-provincial integration of child tax benefits that will not be taxable income.
- 22 June
*Federal Government,
Chinese Head Tax
Compensation*
- Prime Minister Harper announces \$20 000 per person still alive who had been subjected to the Chinese Head Tax. He also announces a widow's package similar to that granted to victims of Japanese internment during the Second World War. The Prime Minister also announces a \$2.5 million in redress funds for other historically disadvantaged ethnic communities for community programs and education.
- 15 August
*International AIDS
Conference*
- At the International AIDS Conference in Toronto, Federal Health Minister Tony Clement is questioned regarding the future of Vancouver's controversial safe injection site. Mr. Clement does not specify if the legal exemption granted for a three-year period by the previous Liberal government, that allows the site to exist, will continue. The Prime Minister had previously spoken out against federal support for illegal drug use. British Columbia Premier Gordon Campbell acknowledges the successes of the program for the first time and announces his support for its continuation. The Prime Minister also faces criticism for not attending the conference.
- 30 October
Ontario,
- Ontario introduces amendments to employment laws allowing people to take time to care for grandparents and other extended family members.

<i>Employment Laws</i>	The amendments are consistent with federal compassionate care legislation.
30 October <i>Alberta, Family Law</i>	Alberta adds “stalking” into family violence legislation.
5 November <i>Alberta, Homelessness</i>	Alberta Government promises \$809 000 to Edmonton for homeless shelters this winter and is expected to open 400 more spaces in shelters. City gets 600 spaces from nearly \$6 million of provincial funding.
21 December <i>Quebec, Duplessis Orphans</i>	Quebec compensates the Duplessis orphans from the 1940’s and 1950’s for abuses suffered and forced hard work. The package is \$26 million, for 1700 people averaging \$15 000 per person and payments start next year.

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Softwood Lumber

10 February <i>Softwood Lumber</i>	Report surface that then-Minister of Industry David Emerson and British Columbia forestry companies blocked a fledgling softwood lumber deal with American negotiators in November 2005. The deal would have imposed a 5-10 percent tax on Canadian lumber, but included a return of 75-80 percent of the \$5 billion in duties previously collected. The BC lumber industry resisted the deal because the lumber exports in the province would have faced a higher tax.
1 April <i>Softwood Lumber</i>	Prime Minister Stephen Harper and US President George W. Bush discuss the softwood lumber dispute at the North American Summit in Cancun. Although Harper-Bush talk is non-committal
7 April <i>Softwood Lumber</i>	The US Court of International Trade rules that duties collected from Canadian Softwood Lumber cannot, as US firms expect, be funneled to rival companies. International Trade Minister David Emerson says the ruling may help speed up a settlement or agreement. However, it does not mean that the US must stop charging duties or return duties already charged.
10 April <i>Softwood Lumber</i>	International Trade Minister David Emerson says the government is prepared to offer loan guarantees to softwood lumber producers if they are not able to reach a successful agreement with the United States, or if the US launches a challenge to the March ruling that lowered duties from 10.8 % to 2.1% and questioned the rationale behind the duties. The US has until April 27 to decide whether they will appeal the ruling. Both the Prime Minister and Industry Minister, Maxime Bernier, have given their support and say that a loan guarantee package is already underway.

- 13 April
Softwood Lumber
- The WTO strikes down an earlier ruling regarding softwood lumber duties, but does not rule conclusively on the legality of the duties. Prime Minister Harper promises loan guarantees to producers if needed.
- 26 April
Softwood Lumber
- Provincial Ministers of Natural Resources, David Ramsay in Ontario and Rich Coleman in British Columbia form an alliance with respect to softwood lumber. Ontario suggests to BC to present a unified front in pushing for change in the proposed deal. Each province has threatened to “scuttle” the deal, therefore an alliance may help remove roadblocks.
- 15 May
Softwood Lumber
- International Trade Minister Emerson admits the proposed softwood lumber agreement does not constitute free trade but adds that it is the best arrangement that can be hoped for.
- 16 May
Softwood Lumber
- Ontario Softwood lumber producers, the Ontario Lumber Manufacturers Association (OLMA), and the Ontario Forest Industry Association (OFIA), are seeking a review and files a lawsuit with the Court of International Trade, and with the Conservative government under the Federal Arbitration Act. Experts worry it is too much and will shake the fragile negotiations.
- 1 July
Softwood Lumber
- Canadian and U.S. governments finalize the text for a softwood lumber agreement, in spite of debate and protest from groups such as the Ontario Forest Industry Association. Ontario Natural Resources Minister David Ramsay argues that he cannot support the agreement in Ontario if the forestry industry does not. The British Columbia Lumber Trade Council says the deal needs more work. Industry officials are weary of the 20% of the \$5 billion the U.S. has collected in tariffs since 2002 that will not be returned. Critics also argue that the proposed exit or termination clause makes the agreement temporary.
- 5 July
Softwood Lumber
- Prime Minister Harper states that the softwood lumber deal is going ahead. International Trade Minister David Emerson says he has no intention of reopening the deal in response to the British Columbia government’s request for a twelve-month dispute-free period if Canada cancels the deal. The Forest Industries can block the deal by refusing to cancel the dispute-related legal actions against Washington, and by the majority of industry refusing to sign up for the duty refund program. The US timber lobby says it is content with the current text.
- 15 July
Softwood Lumber
- Prime Minister Harper states a softwood lumber vote would be treated as a confidence issue in the House of Commons. Liberal leadership candidate Bob Rae urges Liberals to oppose the plan even if it means an early election before the Party has a leader.

21 July
Softwood Lumber

The Court of International Trade backs a Canadian claim that the US illegally continued to impose punitive tariffs on softwood lumber after NAFTA ruling prohibiting it, and states that British Columbia should receive an additional \$1.2 billion (USD). This figure represents 26% of the total duties since 2002. The US Coalition for Fair Lumber announces that it will appeal the ruling.

31 July
Softwood Lumber

International Trade Minister David Emerson announces that the softwood lumber deal could die without industry support and never even reach Parliament in the fall. In order for the deal to pass, Canadian lumber interests need to withdraw thirty lawsuits against US producers. The Minister also suggests that if this deal fails negotiations will likely not be reopened and a new deal not reached for at least three years.

9 August
Softwood Lumber

International Trade Minister David Emerson announces that the deadline to gauge support and decide whether to instruct the government to go ahead with the Softwood Lumber deal has been set for August 21, 2006.

15 August
Softwood Lumber

Four hundred workers are laid off in the Quebec forest industry bringing the year's national total of layoffs to over 6000 people with more layoffs expected. The first reason behind the changes is falling demand for products due to an unfavourable lumber market in North America and an increased value of the Canadian dollar. Other reasons include a 20% slash to logging activity in the last year caused by unsustainable practices and an increase in costs. The proposed softwood lumber deal may lead to an additional 10% laid off by punishing Canadian companies and forcing production down.

15 August
Softwood Lumber

The World Trade Organization rules that the US practice for calculating dumping duties - "zeroing" - violates international free trade rules. The ruling will mean little if the proposed softwood lumber deal is approved next week (August 21) before it affects industry member's opinion of the deal. Zeroing denies credit for non-dumped goods sold at a premium when calculating dumping charges and was allegedly used by the US to distort dumping charges.

16 August
Softwood Lumber

British Columbia Premier Gordon Campbell declares his support for the proposed softwood lumber deal citing "significant improvements" from the original version presented in April and urges forestry companies to support the deal as well. The announcement also raises expectations that Ontario and Quebec will support the deal even though industry support in British Columbia is not yet clear.

21 August
Softwood Lumber

Tallying of industry views on softwood lumber is inconclusive. There is no comment from the federal government as to whether or not there is sufficient support on this, the deadline day, was gained. It had been said that duties will rise to 14% in December if the agreement fails.

- 22 August
Softwood Lumber
- Prime Minister Harper says there is a clear majority of Industry support over the softwood deal but not the original goal of 95% of tariffs owed and all companies litigating in the US. There is no announcement made of the actual percentage of support, but the deal will none the less go to parliament next month. US trade lawyer says now that the majority of companies give their support, the lawsuits are moot.
- 7 September
Softwood Lumber
- The Bloc Quebecois announces they will support the softwood lumber deal because of support of Quebec industry and not because of a threat that a federal election would be called. Industry has stated that they are not pleased with the deal but believe that there is no better alternative. The Liberal Party then confirms their opposition to the proposal.
- 19 September
Softwood Lumber
- The proposed softwood lumber agreement passes 172 to 166.
- 29 September
- The federal government announces that the planned softwood lumber agreement implementation date of October 1, 2006 will be pushed back to November 1, 2006 because of problems regarding the required withdrawal of legal actions in Canada as well as requirements not met on the US side. The US government agrees to the delay.

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Supreme Court

- 4 February
*S.C.C.,
Reforms to Appointments*
- Beverly McLachlin, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada (S.C.C.), responds to promises made by the Conservative Party during the election campaign that called for political vetting of candidates for the Supreme Court. McLachlin emphasized that the Constitution gives the Prime Minister powers of appointment, not Parliament. It is feared that public hearings could discourage qualified candidates from serving on the Court.
- 24 February
*S.C.C.,
Public Confirmation
Process*
- Judge Marshall Rothstein is nominated to the Supreme Court by Prime Minister Stephen Harper. Rothstein takes part in an unprecedented three-hour, all-party public confirmation process.
- 28 April
*S.C.C.,
Federal Politics*
- The Supreme Court of Canada rejects the bid to undo the amalgamation that created the new Conservative Party made by a veteran PC Minister.
- 21 June
*S.C.C.,
Divorce Legislation*
- The Supreme Court of Canada overturns no fault divorce provisions to the extent that emotional trauma can be considered a ground for continuing support payments.

19 October
Ontario Court
Security of Information
Act

The Ontario Court rules that the anti-leakage provisions in the Security of Information Act violates the Charter; the provision is struck down as it is found to be unconstitutional.

7 December
S.C.C.,
Aboriginal Rights

The S.C.C. acquits three Aboriginal person of illegal logging saying that because of the cultural relevance to Mi'kmaq and Maliseet people, the groups are allowed to cut and use timber for things such as furniture and homes. The permission is extended only to areas of significant cultural importance prior to European contact.

21 December
S.C.C.,
Aboriginal Rights

The S.C.C. rules that Aboriginal people of the Tsartlip Indian band can hunt at night contrary to the BC Wildlife Act.

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