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## Chronology of Events July 1990 - June 1991

*Darrel R. Reid*

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6 July 1990  
*Social Assistance -  
Intergovernmental  
Aspects*

The Federal Court of Appeal rules that Manitoba cannot legally deduct overpayments from monthly social assistance cheques. The court ruled that federal transfer payments to Manitoba are illegal as long as the province's Social Assistance Act continues to allow collection of overpayments by reducing welfare cheques. The decision upheld a 1989 ruling that threatened \$5 billion in annual transfer payments to the provinces.

10 July 1990  
*Regulation -  
Environment -  
Alberta*

Federal Justice Minister Kim Campbell announces that the Alberta government will not face federal prosecution over construction of the Oldman River dam in southern Alberta. The decision followed a RCMP investigation under Fisheries Act charges that construction of river diversion tunnels would disrupt and destroy fish habitat. In reaching her decision, Campbell said she took into consideration that Alberta has a program to address environmental consequences of the project. The impact study was ordered by the Federal Court of Appeal in March, but the Alberta government has asked the Supreme Court to hear arguments against the ruling.

11 July 1990  
*Aboriginal Peoples  
- Land Claims*

Quebec provincial police (Sûreté) and Oka Mohawks clash over the latter's barricades to prevent a proposed golf course on land claimed by the Mohawks. A Sûreté

officer is killed. The incident provokes a tense standoff involving armed Mohawks and 1000 police officers. The siege prompts the nearby Kanewake Mohawks to close off the Mercier Bridge, causing massive traffic problems for thousands of commuters on the south shore of the St. Lawrence River.

16 July 1990  
*Western Premiers –  
 Western Governors*

Saskatchewan Premier Grant Devine, Manitoba Premier Gary Filmon and a delegation of officials from Alberta meet with the United States' western governors in Fargo, ND. The meeting, a first, is described as an opportunity for the premiers to become better acquainted with the governors and some of the issues the two have in common. Discussions in a session entitled "Beyond the Free Trade Agreement" are held on trade, tourism, the environment, energy and regional development.

18 July 1990  
*Aboriginal Peoples –  
 Land Claims  
 – Northwest  
 Territories*

In a joint assembly after days of debate the Dene and Métis of the Mackenzie River Delta of the Northwest Territories vote to send a major \$500 million land claim agreement back to Ottawa for sweeping revisions. The agreement, which was to be ratified by 31 March 1991, would give the natives 180,000 sq. kilometres of land, subsurface mineral rights to another 10,000 sq. kilometres and special hunting and fishing rights as recognized in the constitution. The key concern is what is known as the "extinguishment clause," which cedes all Dene rights to the lands and water they now have under treaties 8 and 11 to the federal government.

25 July 1990  
*Bloc Québécois*

A group of independent MPs led by former environment minister Lucien Bouchard announce the formation of the Bloc Québécois, the goal of which is to act in Parliament in the interests of a sovereign Quebec. According to its policy statement, the group will not form a party and individual members will be free to speak and vote according to their consciences. The Bloc Québécois declares that its "national allegiance is to Quebec," and they consider the Quebec National Assembly to be the "supreme democratic institution of the people of Quebec."

27 July 1990  
*Western Premiers'  
Conference*

Canada's western premiers meet for two days in Lloydminster to discuss the "new realities" of Confederation after the failure of the Meech Lake Accord. The premiers conclude that it may be time to draft a new fiscal federalism for the country and radically curtail Ottawa's spending powers. In a series of communiqués the premiers agree that the west's concerns continue to be given short shrift by a federal government preoccupied with Ontario and Quebec. They agree to set up a permanent western premiers' council that will consult the public on constitutional and other issues affecting western Canada. They also release a report by western finance ministers that recommends establishing a regional income tax to eliminate the need for federal transfer payments and to stop money flowing to central Canada. Other issues examined were the need for the establishment of provincial income tax systems to replace federal ones and the need to establish environmental guidelines and to press Ottawa for more provincial control.

9 August 1990  
*Aboriginal Peoples  
Land Claims -  
British Columbia*

British Columbia Premier Bill Vander Zalm announces that his government will reverse its 117-year old policy of refusing to negotiate native land claims. According to the premier, the province will join the federal government in trying to find a "just settlement of Indian land claims."

13-14 August 1990  
*Annual Premiers'  
Conference*

Canada's premiers meet for their annual meeting in Winnipeg. Quebec Premier Robert Bourassa, however, does not attend. The main achievement of the two-day meeting is a tentative agreement to reduce interprovincial trade barriers by allowing companies to bid freely for government contracts in other provinces. The agreement, to take effect 31 October, does not include Quebec, although Quebec Intergovernmental Affairs Minister Gil Rémillard indicates 15 August that the province endorses the pact in principle and will likely sign it. The premiers also urge Ottawa to push ahead with a first ministers' conference on the economy in November. Senator Lowell Murray states on 15 August that there are no plans for such a meeting and, with Meech Lake dead, all such conferences must be reevaluated.

15 August 1990  
*Regulation –  
 Environment –  
 Prince Edward  
 Island*

A federal panel examining the environmental risks involved in building a fixed link between Prince Edward Island and the mainland reports that the \$600 million project would cause unacceptable environmental damage to the fisheries in the Northumberland Strait.

20 August 1990  
*Aboriginal Peoples –  
 Land Claims*

At the request of Quebec Premier Bourassa, the Canadian Armed Forces move in to replace the police at the barricades at both Oka and Kanewake.

22 August 1990  
*Constitutional  
 Committees –  
 Quebec*

Quebec Premier Bourassa and Parti Québécois Leader Jacques Parizeau announce the appointment of Jean Campeau, former chairman of the Caisse de Dépôt et de Placement du Québec, and Michel Bélanger, president of the National Bank of Canada, as co-chairmen of the special parliamentary commission on the constitutional and political future of Quebec in the aftermath of the demise of the Meech Lake accord.

22 August 1990  
*Constitutional  
 Committees –  
 Alberta*

Alberta acting Premier Jim Horsman announces the creation of a ten-member constitutional committee drawn from government members, to hold hearings in Alberta beginning in the fall of 1990 and to consult with other governments. The committee is to be chaired by Mr. Horsman, who serves as Alberta's Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs.

27 August 1990  
*Aboriginal Peoples –  
 Land Claims*

After suspending formal negotiations between federal and provincial representatives and Mohawk representatives, Quebec Premier Robert Bourassa requests that the army move in and destroy barricades at both Oka and the Mercier bridge. The next day armed forces troops begin dismantling the barricades at Oka and Kanewake.

30 August 1990  
*Senate –  
 Appointments*

Prime Minister Brian Mulroney announces the appointment of five new Progressive Conservative senators. Called to the Senate are: Pat Carney of Vancouver, a former federal energy minister; Mario Beaulieu, a Montreal businessman; Nancy Teed, a former New Brunswick cabinet minister; Gerald Comeau, a one-time Tory MP from Nova Scotia and Consiglio di Nino of Toronto, president of Cabot Trust. The appointments boost Conservative seats to 36 compared to the Liberals' 52, four Independents, one Liberal-Independent and one Reform Party member.

- 30 August 1990  
*Taxation – Quebec; Goods and Services Tax*
- Quebec Finance Minister Gérard D. Lévesque announces in the Quebec legislature that Quebec will become the first province to harmonize its taxation policy with the federal government's Goods and Services Tax (GST). Quebec will replace its current provincial sales tax with a GST-type tax similar to the federal one and will also collect the federal GST for Ottawa. According to Mr. Lévesque, the province was forced into changing its fiscal policy by the federal government's determination to put the GST into place on 1 January.
- 6 September 1990  
*Elections – Ontario*
- In a stunning upset, the Ontario New Democratic Party wins the Ontario provincial election, giving the province its first New Democratic government and the first east of Manitoba. The NDP captures 74 seats to the Liberals' 36 and the Conservatives' 20. On 30 July when Liberal Premier David Peterson called the election just three years into his second term, the Liberals held a massive majority of 93 seats to 18 for the NDP and 17 for the Tories.
- 11 September 1990  
*Constitutional Committees – New Brunswick*
- New Brunswick Premier Frank McKenna announces the creation of a nine-member commission to examine his province's interests in a reformed federal system. The commission will include two cabinet ministers, two MLAs, one native chief and several community activists.
- 11 September 1990  
*Regional Development – New Brunswick*
- The federal and New Brunswick governments sign three long-term agreements totalling \$66 million aimed at assisting in the revitalization of urban, industrial and mineral development in the province.
- 11 September 1990  
*Elections – Manitoba*
- Manitoba Premier Gary Filmon leads his Progressive Conservatives to a slim majority victory in today's provincial election. The Tories, who had 24 members before, capture 30 seats and 42 percent of the popular vote. The New Democratic Party becomes the official opposition with 20 seats, and the Liberals are reduced to seven.
- 12 September 1990  
*Senate – Appointments*
- Prime Minister Brian Mulroney appoints John Buchanan, premier of Nova Scotia, to the Senate. Also named to the Senate is Noel A. Kinsella, a public servant and academic, raising to ten the number of Progressive Conservatives appointed to the Senate in recent weeks.

In Nova Scotia, Roger Bacon, former deputy premier and housing minister in Mr. Buchanan's Progressive Conservative government is sworn in as premier until a new Conservative leader can be chosen at a party convention.

14 September 1990  
*Megaprojects –  
Hibernia*

Federal Energy Minister Jake Epp, International Trade Minister John Crosby and Newfoundland Premier Clyde Wells sign an agreement on the \$5.2 billion Hibernia offshore oil project. The agreement between Ottawa, Newfoundland and a consortium of four companies led by Mobil Oil Canada will not be final until Parliament passes legislation authorizing the federal contribution of \$2.7 billion. The project is expected to create up to 6,000 jobs during construction and about 1,100 during production. About \$3 billion worth of construction work will go to Canadian firms, with \$1.6 billion in Newfoundland alone. Companies in Quebec and the Maritimes will also get contracts.

17 September 1990  
*Supreme Court –  
Appointments*

Prime Minister Mulroney names William A. Stevenson, formerly a judge of the Alberta Court of Appeal, to the Supreme Court of Canada. Mr. Stevenson's appointment fills the vacancy created when former chief justice Brian Dickson resigned 30 June and was succeeded by Antonio Lamer. He is the seventh judge named by Mr. Mulroney to the nine-member court since 1984.

23 September 1990  
*Senate –  
Appointments*

Prime Minister Mulroney brings the Senate to full strength by appointing five new members. Appointed to the Senate are: former federal solicitor-general James Kelleher; Brascan president Trevor Eyton; former Quebec Liberal cabinet minister Claude Castonguay; John Lynch-Staunton, chairman of de Kuyper Canada Inc.; and Mabel DeWare, a former New Brunswick cabinet minister.

25-27 September 1990  
*Senate; Goods and  
Services Tax*

The Liberal-dominated Senate Banking Committee recommends that the Conservative government's Goods and Services legislation be scrapped. Despite a Tory filibuster, the report is tabled in the Senate on 26 September. In response, the Mulroney Cabinet passes an order noting that three important financial measures passed by the Commons — unemployment insurance

reform, tax changes and the GST — have been stalled in the Senate for at least five months. The government then asks the Queen for permission under section 26 of the constitution to invoke a never-before used clause to expand the Senate to get the bills passed.

Having received royal assent on 27 September Mr. Mulroney appoints eight new members to the Senate, claiming that Liberal Senators were undermining the principle of responsible government by blocking the GST and other legislation. The move raises the number of Senators to 112, giving the Conservatives a plurality in the Senate. With the latest appointments there are 54 Conservatives in the upper house, 52 Liberals, one Reform Party member, four independents and one Independent-Liberal. The eight new Senators are: Ontario heart surgeon Wilbert Keon; Michael Meighen, former national president of the Conservative party; Michael Forrestall, a former Nova Scotia Conservative MP; Normand Grimard, a Quebec lawyer; Thérèse Lavoie-Roux, a former Quebec Liberal cabinet minister; James Ross, a Fredericton lawyer; Janis Johnston, a Winnipeg consultant; and Eric Berntson, former deputy premier of Saskatchewan.

26 September 1990  
*Aboriginal Peoples*  
– *Land Claims*

The standoff between Oka Mohawks and army troops at Oka comes to an end when about 50 Mohawks lay down their arms and surrender to military custody.

27 September 1990  
*Regulation –*  
*Financial*  
*Institutions*

Gilles Loisele, federal Minister of State for Finance, introduces long-delayed legislation in the Commons to revise the Trust and Loan Companies Act. The bill is to serve as a model for two more bills to be tabled later to complete the restructuring, to introduce changes to the Bank Act and a new insurance companies act. Under the new rules, the big banks will be able to own insurance and trust companies, but trusts and insurers may not own big banks. Most of the key proposals are virtually identical to those of a 1986 policy paper and draft bill that died in June 1988 amid bickering that pitted Ottawa against the provinces and much of the financial sector.

27 September 1990  
*Regulation –*  
*Energy*

The National Energy Board rules that Hydro-Québec may proceed with two major export contracts to Vermont and New York. According to the ruling, however, Hydro-

Québec is required to submit plans for new dams or generating stations to fulfil the U.S. contracts to "appropriate environmental reviews." The conditions take into account concerns of Quebec Cree and environmentalists that new dams in the North will flood large areas of land and destroy native habitat.

28 September 1990  
*Senate -  
Appointments*

Federal New Democratic Party leader Audrey McLaughlin observes that the Mulroney government's appointment of eight new Senators leaves New Brunswick with one more senator than members of Parliament — a situation she claims violates the constitution. At a news conference the next day Justice Minister Kim Campbell states that the eight new Senators represent regions, not provinces, and therefore there are "no implications for the number of seats in the House of Commons."

4 October 1990  
*Megaprojects -  
Hibernia*

Legislation for the Hibernia oil megaproject is approved by the House of Commons.

4 October 1990  
*Taxation -  
Saskatchewan*

Saskatchewan Premier Grant Devine announces that his government will take steps to harmonize its sales tax with the federal government's Goods and Services Tax, but will not piggyback its tax on GST-inclusive prices.

12 October 1990  
*Regulation -  
Environment -  
Saskatchewan*

Saskatchewan Premier Devine announces that construction of the controversial Rafferty-Alameda dam projects would proceed "full steam ahead" after members of a federal environmental review panel quit in frustration over continued work on the project. Ottawa and the province had agreed in January to halt work on the half-built Rafferty dam until a court-ordered federal review was completed. On 15 October federal Environment Minister Robert de Cotret announces his intention to force Saskatchewan to stop construction of the dams either by cancelling the project's federal licence or by taking court action. The same day, Saskatchewan Environment Minister Grant Hodgins indicates that his province is prepared to defy Ottawa over the project.



- 17 October 1990  
*Taxation –  
Federal-Provincial  
Relations*
- Ontario Premier Bob Rae announces that his province will intervene in cases launched by both British Columbia and Alberta challenging both the federal government's controversial Senate legislation and the GST.
- 18 October 1990  
*Supreme Court;  
Justice,  
Administration of*
- In a Supreme Court of Canada ruling the court stays extortion charges against four Ontario men because of the "unreasonable and intolerable" case backlog at the Peel Region courthouse in Brampton, Ontario. The ruling prompts hundreds of cases to be dismissed on similar grounds across the province. On 31 October Ontario Attorney-General Howard Hampton announces that the province will appeal the dismissal of some of the more serious charges thrown out of the courts.
- 25 October 1990  
*Language Policy*
- Charging that the Conservative government is dealing a blow to bilingualism and risking more damage to national unity by its inaction, Official Languages Commissioner D'Iberville Fortier tables a special report in Parliament urging the Conservative government to speed implementation of the *Official Languages Act*.
- 25 October 1990  
*Regulation –  
Environment –  
Quebec*
- Quebec Energy Minister Lise Bacon announces that Quebec will go to the Federal Court of Appeal to overturn a National Energy Board ruling of 27 September which made the construction or upgrading of hydro generating facilities subject to federal environmental review. According to Ms. Bacon, "The federal government's intervention in the management of natural resources is a serious and intolerable encroachment upon Quebec's constitutional jurisdiction."
- 30 October 1990  
*Council of  
Maritime Premiers*
- The Council of Maritime Premiers meets in Charlottetown to discuss greater economic integration between the three provinces and the reduction of interprovincial barriers. According to Prince Edward Island Premier Joe Ghiz, the Council accepted in principle the recommendations of a report by Charles McMillan of York University that recommends removing interprovincial trade barriers, opening up government procurement programs and making professional service guidelines in medicine and law portable.

- 1 November 1990  
*Spicer Commission*
- Prime Minister Mulroney announces the creation of a "Forum on Canada's Future," headed by Mr. Keith Spicer, former chairman of the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission. The Forum, which is to be composed of eminent Canadians from all walks of life, is to travel across Canada to seek a consensus on what people want from their country, reporting back to the government by Canada Day, 1 July.
- 6 November 1990  
*Bélanger-Campeau Commission – Quebec*
- Hearings for the Bélanger-Campeau Commission begin in Quebec City. According to Premier Robert Bourassa he is counting on a strong consensus from the Commission looking into the future of Quebec to ensure that the province's demands for change are heard in the rest of Canada.
- 6 November 1990  
*Taxation – Federal-Provincial Relations*
- Yukon Government leader Tony Penikett announces that the Yukon government has joined British Columbia's court challenge of the Conservative government's enlargement of the Senate. The B.C.-Yukon challenge will argue that the appointment of eight extra senators to ensure passage of the GST would upset regional balance in the Senate.
- 7 November 1990  
*Aboriginal Peoples – Land Claims*
- Federal Indian Affairs Minister Tom Siddon announces that Ottawa's \$500 million land claim agreement reached in April with the Dene and Métis of the Western Arctic is dead. Instead, Ottawa has decided to negotiate with each region in the area to divide up more than 180,000 sq. kilometres of land. The decision means Ottawa will no longer formally negotiate with the Métis Association of the Northwest Territories and the Dene Nation.
- 8 November 1990  
*Aboriginal Peoples – Land Claims*
- In a report to the federal government made public by Secretary of State Gerry Weiner, Quebec Public Security Minister Claude Ryan declares that calling out soldiers to deal with armed Mohawk warriors at Oka was the only way to establish law and order. Ryan states that the Sûreté du Québec did not have the manpower and equipment to end the 77-day disturbance.
- 15 November 1990  
*Regulation – Environment*
- Saskatchewan wins the first round of its court battle with Ottawa over the Rafferty-Alameda dams when Chief Justice Donald K. MacPherson of the Saskatchewan

Court of Queen's Bench turns down Ottawa's application for an injunction halting work on the project. Mr. MacPherson rules that a temporary stop-work order would hurt the province by causing costly delays, more than the project would harm the environment. On 19 November federal Environment Minister Robert de Cotret announces that his department will appeal the ruling.

15 November 1990  
*Regulation – Energy*

The National Energy Board approves a TransCanada Pipeline's plan to build the \$546 million initial phase of a \$2.6 billion expansion of its cross-country natural gas pipeline. The board agrees with TransCanada that increased capacity is needed to deliver 155 million cubic feet of gas daily from Alberta gas fields to Ontario, Quebec and the New England States beginning late next year. The TransCanada expansion is designed to meet growing demand for natural gas in Ontario and Quebec, but its primary function will be to serve markets in the northeastern United States.

16 November 1990  
*Regulation – Environment*

Federal Environment Minister Robert de Cotret announces the appointment of a six-member panel to review the Oldman River dam project in southern Alberta. The committee is to conduct an independent examination of the environmental and socio-economic effects of the controversial \$350 million project. The Federal Court of Appeal had ruled 13 March that Ottawa must apply its environmental assessment and review process to the Oldman project.

28 November 1990  
*Regulation – Environment*

Federal-provincial meetings are held in Victoria aimed at harmonizing federal and provincial environmental assessment procedures. Provincial environment ministers express their concern to federal Environment Minister Robert de Cotret that Ottawa is using new environmental legislation to expand its jurisdiction over provincial projects. The ministers are also briefed on a final draft of Ottawa's long-awaited Green Plan, the federal government's environmental strategy.

3 December 1990  
*Aboriginal Peoples – Land Claims*

The federal and British Columbia governments, as well as the First Nations Congress, announce the formation of a committee to study negotiating all British

Columbia's aboriginal land claims at the same time. According to Indian Affairs Minister Tom Siddon, it is hoped that the negotiation process will be in effect by June 1991.

4 December 1990  
*Regulation -  
Environment*

In a joint submission to a Commons committee the provincial governments demand major changes in the federal government's proposed environmental assessment legislation. The provinces put forward a series of amendments which would allow Ottawa to turn over its authority over environmental assessment to provincial governments, provided they have in place comparable assessment standards. The provinces also want additional guarantees that they be consulted at various points in the assessment process.

5-6 December 1990  
*Federal-Provincial  
Fiscal Relations*

Provincial finance ministers meet in Winnipeg to seek ways to support social programs such as medicare in the face of declining federal support. The provinces agree that the biggest threat to social programs is the federal government debt, and called on Finance Minister Michael Wilson to meet with them soon to discuss bringing spending under control.

6 December 1990  
*Constitutional  
Committees -  
Manitoba*

Manitoba Premier Gary Filmon announces the establishment of an all-party Manitoba Constitutional Task Force to be chaired by University of Manitoba Professor Wally Fox-Decent. According to the premier, the Task Force is to follow up on the work of the province's Meech Lake Task Force and provide advice on priorities for future constitutional negotiations.

7 December 1990  
*Health Policy -  
Quebec*

Quebec Health Minister Marc-Yvan Coté announces sweeping changes to that province's health system. The reforms, in the making since 1985, are aimed at streamlining Quebec's health-care system, which consumes almost one-third of the province's budget. In addition to the introduction of user fees for medical service in some cases, the new proposals would also tax such supplementary services as medication for the elderly, dental work and eye care, and encourage doctors to set up practice in underserved regions. According to Mr. Coté, the Quebec government is prepared to lead a fight against

Canada Health Act provisions aimed at deterring medical user fees in the provinces.

11 December 1990  
*Regulation –  
Environment*

Federal Environment Minister Robert de Cotret announces details of the federal government's long-awaited \$3 billion Green Plan, promising more than 100 measures to protect Canada's land, water, soil, forests and wildlife over the next five years.

13 December 1990  
*Constitutional  
Change*

Prime Minister Mulroney announces the establishment of a special joint committee of MPs and senators to examine the processes of constitutional amendment in Canada. The 17-member committee, which is to be headed by Quebec Senator Gerald Beaudoin and Alberta Conservative MP Jim Edwards, is to hold public hearings and report back to Parliament by 1 July.

13 December 1990  
*Manpower Training  
– Federal-Provincial  
Relations*

In a statement to the Quebec legislature, Quebec Manpower Minister André Bourbeau announces that Quebec will ask Ottawa to give up all control it has in the province over manpower training programs. According to Mr. Bourbeau, having two governments active in the same domain has created competing and contradictory programs. For this reason, the Quebec Cabinet decided to ask for full jurisdiction after consulting labour and business groups.

17 December 1990  
*Taxation – Goods  
and Services Tax*

After months of bitter wrangling, federal legislation to implement the Goods and Services Tax is given royal assent in the Senate. Liberal senators and MPs boycott the ceremony.

17 December 1990  
*Interprovincial  
Trade Barriers –  
Quebec*

In a letter to the other premiers and Prime Minister Mulroney, Quebec Premier Robert Bourassa announces his willingness to go along with an agreement reached by the other provinces in August to bring down some interprovincial barriers, but on the condition that a dispute settlement panel is established. As well, Quebec will also participate only through signing bilateral agreements with each of the other provinces and Ottawa, not the multilateral accord set to come into effect on 1 January.

- 17 December 1990  
*Industrial Development – Nova Scotia*
- The federal and Nova Scotia governments sign a \$63 million agreement to foster industrial development in Nova Scotia. The agreement, funded equally by the two governments, will be used primarily to establish new manufacturing and secondary processing plants in the province.
- 19 December 1990  
*Regulation – Financial Institutions*
- The federal government introduces legislation to revise the Bank Act, as part of its overhaul of regulations governing all financial institutions. The new bank law is designed to help meet the government's objective of letting banks, trust and insurance companies cross more freely into each others' turf in a less-regulated environment. The bill dovetails with changes already introduced 27 September in a new trust and loan companies bill. Still to come is an overhaul of legislation governing insurance companies and credit cooperatives.
- 19 December 1990  
*Constitutional Change – Ontario*
- Ontario Premier Bob Rae announces the creation of an all-party committee chaired by New Democratic MPP Tony Silipo that will tour the province in February to gauge public opinion on the province's role and future in a renewed federalism. Rae wants Ontarians to voice what economic, social and political expectations they have of all levels of government, to help the province negotiate change that makes the country more responsive to their needs.
- 19 December 1990  
*Aboriginal Peoples – Land Claims*
- The federal and Alberta governments announce that they have reached a land claim agreement worth up to \$56 million with a northern Indian band known as the Woodland Cree. The band was formed 18 months ago when a small group of natives sent a petition to Ottawa after talks broke off between the federal government and the Lubicon band over a long-standing land claim.
- The same day the Stoney Indian band, located near Calgary, accepts Ottawa's offer of \$19.6 million to compensate for land taken from the band 60 years ago to build a hydroelectric dam.
- 20 December 1990  
*Constitutional Change – Quebec*
- Quebec's Bélanger-Campeau Commission completes a six-week, province-wide tour in Quebec City after hearing more than 200 briefs, the majority of them endorsing sovereignty as the province's best option.

21 December 1990  
*Federal-Provincial  
Energy Disputes*

Finance Minister Michael Wilson and Alberta Treasurer Dick Johnston announce that their two governments have partially settled the province's claim of compensation for energy revenues lost following the collapse of world oil prices in 1986. According to the agreement, Ottawa will pay the province \$148.5 million in addition to \$75 million Alberta has already received. The remainder of Alberta's \$418 million claim will be decided by arbitration. Alberta's claim was made in 1987 under the federal-provincial oil-price stabilization fund created to cushion oil-producing provinces from rapid industry downturns.

21 December 1990  
*Supreme Court*

Prime Minister Mulroney appoints Frank Iacobucci, Chief Justice of the Federal Court of Canada and a former deputy minister of justice, to the Supreme Court of Canada to replace retiring Justice Bertha Wilson.

27 December 1990  
*Immigration Policy*

Federal Immigration Minister Barbara McDougall announces a five-year agreement with Quebec which is to give that province exclusive responsibility for the selection of independent immigrants. The agreement also gives Quebec responsibility for both the linguistic and cultural integration of immigrants, as well as economic integration services available to permanent residents. The agreement, based on the 1978 Cullen-Couture agreement, is designed to enable Quebec to recruit francophone immigrants and to provide more money for French-language training for non-francophones. Ottawa will contribute \$332 million over the life of the deal as compensation for Quebec's taking over some of its responsibilities for immigration.

11 January 1991  
*Agriculture*

Federal Agriculture Minister Don Mazankowski announces two new federal "safety net" programs to help farmers through tough times. The Gross Revenue Insurance Program, expected to be the more popular, will guarantee farmers a certain return per hectare despite low prices; its costs will be shared between farmers, each province and the federal government. The Net Stabilization Account will see government and farmers setting aside money that can be used when farmers' incomes fall. Each province will have the opportunity to opt into either or both programs.

28 January 1991  
*Federal-Provincial  
 Relations – Canada  
 Pension Plan*

Canada's federal and provincial finance ministers meet in Toronto. After discussions the ministers agree to double worker and employer contributions to the Canada Pension Plan over the next 20 years. Without the changes, the CPP would run low by 2011 because more people than expected are taking early retirement and productivity is rising more slowly than anticipated.

29 January 1991  
*Quebec Liberal  
 Party –  
 Allaire Report*

The Quebec Liberal Party releases a report written by a committee headed by Quebec City lawyer Jean Allaire, which recommends a radically different form for Canada. The report proposes that Quebec should be given exclusive control over a wide range of areas, including communications, energy, environment, agriculture and regional development. Ottawa would retain sole jurisdiction over defence, customs and currency, while there would be shared powers in such fields as foreign and native affairs, taxation, justice, fisheries and transport. Quebec and the rest-of-Canada would retain a common Parliament, but the Senate would be abolished and the Bank of Canada reorganized to add regional input. A new constitution would be drafted, with an amending formula including a veto for Quebec. The report is to be debated at a Liberal convention in March after which negotiations would begin with Ottawa. If the rest of Canada rejects these proposals, Quebecers would be asked to vote on political sovereignty in the fall of 1992, along with an offer of economic union with the rest-of-Canada.

29 January 1991  
*Regulation –  
 Telecommunications*

Manitoba Tel becomes the last provincially-owned telecommunications firm to come under the regulation of the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission. Although in 1989 the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that Ottawa had the power to regulate all phone companies in Canada, Manitoba and other provinces had vowed to fight the loss of provincial control. Manitoba Minister responsible for Manitoba Tel Glen Findlay and Federal Communications Minister Marcel Masse sign an agreement under which Manitoba Tel will be regulated by the CRTC. In return, the provincial government will be consulted on policy matters by the federal regulatory body and will receive an improved



voice on the CRTC through a Manitoba-based commissioner and an expanded regional office.

5 February 1991  
*Regulation –  
Environment*

Federal Environment Minister Robert de Cotret names a new three-member panel to review the environmental impact of the controversial Rafferty-Alameda dams project in Saskatchewan. The panel, chaired by provincial historian John Archer, replaces a five-member panel that resigned last October to protest Saskatchewan's continued construction of the project.

6 February 1991  
*Senate*

The British Columbia Court of Appeal rules that Ottawa had the constitutional authority to appoint eight new senators last September. In a 5-0 decision the court rejects arguments by British Columbia, joined by Ontario and Yukon, that the obscure section of the constitution used to enlarge the Senate by eight members is no longer valid. The court rules that section 26 of the constitution gives the Queen independent discretion to direct the appointment of additional senators on the recommendation of the Governor-General.

7 February 1991  
*Constitutional  
Committees –  
Alberta*

Alberta Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs Jim Horsman announces the creation of a new all-party legislative committee to hold public hearings across the province to determine what Albertans see as Canada's future. As part of the process, a 20-page discussion paper which outlines possible courses for Canada's future is released. The Alberta committee is to submit its recommendations by 1 July.

12 February 1991  
*Constitutional  
Committees –  
Manitoba*

Manitoba's constitutional task force completes its hearings. According to chairman Wally Fox-Decent, Manitobans want Quebec to stay in Confederation, but not at the cost of dismantling the central government. The all-party task force, set up by Premier Gary Filmon to help Manitoba develop a position for future constitutional negotiations, held hearings in five communities.

12 February 1991  
*Regulation –  
Environment*

Federal Environment Minister Robert de Cotret and his Quebec counterpart Pierre Paradis sign an agreement for a joint environmental study of the James Bay 2 hydroelectric project. The agreement sets out the participation of Ottawa, Quebec, Cree Indians and Inuit in the environmental assessment of the \$8 billion Great Whale

project, which is to include joint public hearings. The agreement applies to the Great Whale complex only; the two governments remain in disagreement over federal participation in the assessment of roads, airports and other infrastructures needed to build the complex.

12-13 February 1991  
*Constitutional  
Change*

In speeches in Toronto and Quebec Prime Minister Mulroney outlines what he believes to be the basic principles that must be respected in any upcoming constitutional change. According to Mr. Mulroney, any constitutional changes must:

- lead to a more prosperous Canada;
- reduce overlapping jurisdictions between the federal and provincial governments and barriers to trade between provinces;
- respect the diversity and equality of Canadians;
- be practical and achievable;
- maintain standards so that, for example, pensions are portable and health care is accessible to all;
- move decision-making "closer to the people"; and
- preserve the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

13 February 1991  
*Federal-Provincial  
Fiscal Relations*

Maritime finance ministers meet to discuss the state of federal-provincial fiscal relations. According to the ministers, the economic gap between their region and the rest-of-Canada is widening and Ottawa must do something about it. Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island are getting poorer and their ability to deliver services is deteriorating. The ministers urge Ottawa to lift the limit on equalization payments to the region, which they maintain has so far cost the Maritimes \$400 million in lost revenue.

19 February 1991  
*Regulation -  
Environment;  
Supreme Court*

In a case prompted by the Alberta government in its disagreement with Ottawa over the construction of the Oldman dam, seven of the ten provinces open arguments in the Supreme Court of Canada over the legality of Ottawa's environmental assessment guidelines. The provinces argue that Ottawa has improperly delayed provincial projects that are suspected of having only minor impacts on such federal jurisdictions as fisheries,

wildlife, transportation or Indian affairs. A ruling on the case is expected to take six months.

19 February 1991  
*Regulation – Energy*

New Brunswick Premier Frank McKenna, in an appearance before the National Energy Board, argues the need for a \$1 billion natural gas pipeline extension that would cut Atlantic Canada's dependence upon imported oil. According to Mr. McKenna, new licences to export natural gas to the United States should be limited until the Atlantic provinces are connected to the pipeline system. Until that time, he argues, New Brunswick will oppose all future gas export applications presented before the NEB.

20 February 1991  
*Taxation –  
Saskatchewan;  
Goods and Services  
Tax*

On the occasion of presenting a mini-budget to the Saskatchewan legislature Finance Minister Lorne Hepworth announces that the province will merge its provincial sales tax with the federal Goods and Services Tax, a move which is expected to raise an additional \$126 million for the province. Saskatchewan joins Quebec as the second province to fully harmonize its sales tax with the GST.

26 February 1991  
*Budgets*

Federal Finance Minister Michael Wilson introduces a tough budget of spending cuts and wage restraints designed to fight the recession and to hold the federal deficit in check. The budget cuts \$1.2 billion in government spending, restrains public servant wages, raises cigarette taxes and increases unemployment insurance premiums. The most controversial elements of the budget are a series of cuts to federal transfer payments to the provinces for welfare, education and health costs that are estimated to save the federal government \$4.48 billion over a five-year period. This will be accomplished in two ways:

- a two-year freeze on all health and post-secondary education payments under the Established Programs Financing scheme imposed last year will continue for another three years, saving the federal treasury at least \$2.14 billion over five years;
- similarly, the cap of five percent on increased welfare payments to the three richest provinces, Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta, will be extended for another

- three years, costing those provinces at least \$2.3 billion over five years.
- 26 February 1991  
*Premiers – Nova Scotia*
- Following his election as leader of the governing Nova Scotia Conservatives on 9 February, Donald Cameron is sworn in as the province's twenty-first premier.
- 1 March 1991  
*Constitutional Committees – Ontario*
- Ontario's Confederation Committee ends its month-long series of hearings. According to Chairman Tony Silipo the need for leadership was a recurring theme during the legislative committee's 20-city tour. Other themes included a demand for public consultation in any future constitutional changes, the need to address native issues and self-government and a desire to keep Quebec within Canada, although not at the expense of dismantling Canada's central government.
- On 21 March the committee tables its report in the Ontario legislature. While it finds that Quebec's separation would be especially damaging to Ontario, constitutional renewal cannot focus solely on the demands of Quebec.
- 2 March 1991  
*Agriculture*
- At a meeting of federal and provincial agriculture ministers in Regina, Federal Agriculture Minister Don Mazankowski signs a statement of principle on a so-called "third line of defence" payment to farmers. The payments would be temporary supplements to two recently-announced income support programs. The "safety net" programs will be paid for by Ottawa, the provinces and individual farmers.
- 3 March 1991  
*Federal-Provincial Fiscal Relations*
- Federal Finance Minister Michael Wilson and his provincial counterparts meet in Montreal to review the federal government's recent budget. High on the agenda is Mr. Wilson's move to save \$4.5 billion over three years in federal payments to the provinces for health, education and welfare, a move which the provinces believe will sharply cut services in the poorer provinces. For his part, Mr. Wilson urges the provincial ministers to follow Ottawa's lead in restricting wage increases for public servants and warns them that taxpayers cannot afford to pay the rising bill for medicare and there will have to be changes.

4 March 1991  
*Forestry*

Newfoundland and the federal government sign a \$64.3 million deal to develop forests and increase the number of private woodlot owners in the province. The money will be spent over four years to prepare and plant about 20,000 hectares of forest. Ottawa will contribute \$45 million to the program, while Newfoundland will provide \$19.3 million.

5 March 1991  
*Regulation –  
Environment*

Federal Environment Minister Robert de Cotret announces a \$25 million plan called the Pollution Prevention Initiative designed to sharply reduce toxic discharges into the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River within 10 years. The plan — the first under Ottawa's \$3 billion Green Plan — provides for the establishment of pollution prevention program and an information centre.

9 March 1991  
*Quebec Liberal  
Party –  
Allaire Report*

At its party convention the Quebec Liberal Party endorses the constitutional proposals of the Allaire committee with only minor modifications. The next day Premier Robert Bourassa, in a speech designed to placate party federalists, stresses that federalism is still the party's first choice. According to Mr. Bourassa, Quebec does not want "to cut the bridges" with the rest-of-Canada but there must be major changes to federalism to make the country more "functional."

13 March 1991  
*Regulation –  
Environment*

U.S. President George Bush and Prime Minister Mulroney sign an agreement in Ottawa committing the two countries to curb emissions that cause acid rain and to reduce other air pollutants. It is aimed at airborne pollution drifting north from the United States to damage Canadian lakes and forests and Canadian-caused damage to New York state. Under the agreement, U.S. industry is to pay an estimated \$4 billion annually to cut in half its emissions of sulphur dioxide by the year 2000, while Canadian industry will pay \$500 million annually under Canadian acid-rain control programs.

18 March 1991  
*Aboriginal Peoples  
– New Brunswick*

New Brunswick Premier Frank McKenna announces that his province is to become the first in Canada to set aside at least one seat in the legislature for aboriginal people. Mr. McKenna appoints an electoral reform committee to "consider and propose the best approach to

ensure that New Brunswick's aboriginal people are given the best representation in the Legislative Assembly." According to Mr. McKenna, the seat or seats would be non-voting, but would give native people a voice in the legislature, which now consists of 58 Liberals and no opposition members.

20 March 1991  
*Spicer Commission*

The Citizens' Forum on the Future releases an interim report of its findings entitled *What We Have Heard So Far*, which identifies seven major areas of concern expressed by more than 75,000 Canadians in discussion groups, written briefs and on the Forum's toll-free hot line. These include: national identity; the economy; native peoples; Quebec; provincial equality; multiculturalism and political leadership. According to chairman Keith Spicer, the value most cherished by those interviewed was "the notion of individual equality, with no special treatment for any group."

25 March 1991  
*Constitutional  
Committees -  
Alberta*

A federal-Alberta task force on native justice issues its report in Edmonton. The task force, headed by Mr. Justice Robert Cawsey of the Alberta Court of Queen's Bench, was established to examine why natives make up such a high proportion of Alberta's prison population. Among its findings the committee suggests that the present judicial system is racist and unfair to Indians and should be replaced by native courts and police. White judges should also get to know more about native culture.

25 March 1991  
*Language Policy*

Commissioner of Official Languages D'Iberville Fortier releases his annual report to Parliament. According to the report, Canada has made substantial progress in the area of linguistic rights. However, Mr. Fortier warns, those rights could be threatened in future constitutional negotiations. However, the report, entitled *A Partial Thaw*, is uncharacteristically optimistic in its observation that equality of English and French in federal institutions has been achieved beyond expectations.

25 March 1991  
*Council of  
Maritime Premiers*

The Council of Maritime Premiers meets in Woodstock, New Brunswick to discuss the development of an integrated, regional economy for the region. The three premiers agree to draw up a white paper on economic

integration to present to their legislatures late this spring. Then the cabinets of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island are to meet in Moncton in June to discuss the issue. Economic integration would include the gradual elimination of interprovincial trade barriers including more open government procurement and greater mobility for business and workers. The premiers agree initially to a year-long moratorium on new regulations that would inhibit the free flow of goods, services and people among the provinces.

27 March 1991  
*Constitutional  
Committees -  
Quebec*

Quebec's Bélanger-Campeau Commission on Canada's future releases its final report. Among its findings, the Commission recommends that the Quebec legislature should adopt a law this spring making provision for a referendum on sovereignty no later than October 1992, if a suitable proposal for renewed federalism is not offered by the rest-of-Canada. The Commission also recommends the establishment of two legislative committees: one to examine the mechanics of sovereignty, and the other to evaluate new constitutional offers from the rest-of-Canada.

27 March 1991  
*Constitutional  
Change - Ontario*

After a four-day discussion of the Silipo committee's interim report and only hours after the report of Quebec's Bélanger-Campeau Commission, Ontario Premier Bob Rae sets out for the first time his broad ideas for renewed federalism. According to Mr. Rae, Ontario is ready to discuss a new division of roles between Ottawa and the provinces but is not in favour of slicing away so many federal powers that the Canadian government ceases to exist. He calls for a convention of federal and provincial legislators and territorial and native leaders which would seek to find common ground from which new rules for Confederation would be drafted. A new constitution should recognize Quebec's unique character, strengthen the Charter of Rights concerning native people and women and include an amending formula that would not require the unanimous consent of the provinces. He also indicates his willingness to discuss Senate reform, a key demand of the western and Maritime premiers.

29 March 1991  
*Premiers –  
 British Columbia*

British Columbia Premier Bill Vander Zalm announces that he will step down as soon as the Social Credit Party can choose a new leader. Mr. Vander Zalm had been dogged by allegations of mixing private business with government affairs in the sale of his family's Fantasy Gardens theme park.

2 April 1991  
*Constitutional  
 Change*

Liberal Party leader Jean Chrétien unveils his proposals for resolving Canada's constitutional crisis. Mr. Chrétien urges the prime minister to present a "detailed and concrete" package of reform proposals by 1 June. This would then be referred to a joint Commons-Senate committee that would hold public hearings, with the results of its deliberations to be submitted to a national referendum early next year. The referendum would not be binding but, if the public agreed to the changes, it would provide a strong moral impetus to governments to push the reforms through their legislatures. Other components would include:

- a reformed, elected Senate;
- the reduction of interprovincial trade barriers;
- the right of aboriginal peoples to self-government;
- allocation of federal-provincial powers to whichever government "can handle the matter best"; and
- a new amending formula that would give a veto to four regions of the country — Atlantic Canada, Quebec, Ontario and the west.

2 April 1991  
*Premiers –  
 British Columbia*

British Columbia Premier Bill Vander Zalm resigns as premier of British Columbia and is succeeded by Rita Johnston, Canada's first woman premier. Ms. Johnston, former Deputy Premier and Minister of Transportation and Highways is sworn in several hours after the release of a report that found Mr. Vander Zalm guilty of conflict of interest in the sale of his Fantasy Garden theme park.

6 April 1991  
*Reform Party of  
 Canada*

At a party convention in Saskatoon the Reform Party of Canada votes overwhelmingly to amend its constitution to allow the party to field candidates east of Manitoba. The party hopes to capitalize on the discontent of English-speaking voters in Ontario and the Atlantic



provinces. Reform Party leader Preston Manning expects the move east will put to rest the party's image as a narrow-minded fringe group — a notion the convention took pains to dispel. In a speech to the convention Mr. Manning stressed that the party wants Quebec to stay in Canada, but not at any cost. Rather, a new Canada must be more than a reaction to Quebec demands and aspirations.

7 April 1991  
*Bloc Québécois;*  
*Parti Québécois*

At a Parti Québécois policy convention in Montreal the party votes overwhelmingly to throw its support behind the sovereigntist Bloc Québécois in future federal elections. The Bloc Québécois hopes to win at least 60 of Quebec's 75 seats in the next federal election.

18 April 1991  
*Agriculture*

Federal officials in eight cities announce another \$400-million infusion of cash for farmers. The aid package is a complicated mix of interest-free loans, income insurance, soil conservation and cash. Much of the new money is aimed at supplementing two new national "safety-net" programs announced in January which farmers and provinces have been slow to join. About one-quarter of the aid will go toward a 25 percent reduction in farmers' premiums for the Gross Revenue Insurance Plan. Costs for provincial governments will also be cut by about 10 percent.

21 April 1991  
*Constitutional*  
*Change*

Prime Minister Mulroney announces the appointment of Joe Clark, former Secretary of State for External Affairs, as Minister Responsible for Constitutional Affairs. Mr. Clark is to be responsible for the development of the government's constitutional position and for the consultative processes to be followed in seeking a new national consensus. As well, Mr. Clark is to chair a new Cabinet Committee on Canadian Unity and Constitutional Negotiations, which replaces the Cabinet Committees on Federal-Provincial Relations and on Cultural Affairs and National Identity.

23 April 1991  
*Aboriginal Peoples*  
*— Land Claims*

Speaking to the First Nations Congress in Victoria, Prime Minister Mulroney announces plans to establish a royal commission on aboriginal affairs as the first step in his government's program for addressing aboriginal concerns. Mr. Mulroney also promises to have native

participation in the constitutional process and to put more federal effort and money towards resolving hundreds of land-claim issues. Acting mainly on the recommendations of a committee headed by aboriginal leaders, he promises a five-part solution:

- a commitment to spend \$355 million on resolving land claims over the next five years;
- the establishment of a land-claims commission that will act as an arbiter of disputes between the government and native people;
- a fast track process for dealing with land claims under \$500,000;
- a decision to increase the authority of the Indian Affairs department by allowing it to approve settlements of up to \$7 million without reference to the Treasury Board; and
- the establishment of a joint native-government working group on land claims.

7 May 1991  
*Aboriginal Peoples*  
 – *Land Claims*

A Commons committee publishes its report on the Oka crisis, which it calls an avoidable tragedy for which natives, governments and everybody else involved should take more blame. The committee recommends that Ottawa establish an independent judicial inquiry into events at Oka, inviting Quebec to participate. The inquiry would also look at native justice and policing issues in the province and other sources of possible conflict.

9 May 1991  
*Regulation –*  
*Environment*

The federal and provincial governments release the main elements of a \$100 million plan to combat ground-level ozone — the most dangerous ingredient of city smog. The five-year plan is to be modelled on the existing program to combat acid rain. It provides for the negotiation of bilateral agreements between Ottawa and the provinces to cap emissions of the pollution that causes ground-level ozone.

10 May 1991  
*Constitutional  
Change –  
British Columbia*

The British Columbia government releases a report *The Renewal of the Federation – a British Columbia Perspective*, prepared by longtime civil servant Mel Smith. According to the report, half the senators from each province should be chosen as part of provincial elections and provinces should have six, eight or ten senators, depending on size. The Supreme Court of Canada should be increased to ten members drawn from all regions, but Quebec should no longer be guaranteed three representatives. Court appointments should be made by what Smith calls a council of the federation, a permanent body to broker "federal-provincial issues" on which provinces and Ottawa would have an equal vote.

13-14 May 1991  
*Western Premiers'  
Conference*

The western premiers and territorial leaders meet in Nipawin, Saskatchewan. High on the agenda is national unity. The premiers outline four vague principles that any new national arrangement must meet, demanding that it reflect the federal nature of Canada, address the practical problems and be flexible and fair in the process. According to the premiers, the west will not take a back seat on constitutional change or free trade talks with Mexico. According to Saskatchewan Premier Grant Devine, the west will not be pushed around by Quebec. "We are not going to be intimidated by some province's ultimatum." The leaders also issue a communiqué calling for reaffirmation of a 1985 agreement giving provinces a role in continental free trade talks. The premiers also call for more provincial control over immigration and chastise Ottawa for cutting back funding for health, post-secondary education and social services.

14 May 1991  
*Regulation – Energy*

The National Energy Board turns down a major electricity export application by Ontario Hydro. The utility had applied for a permit to export electricity to a group of seven U.S. utilities over a 15-year period. The board instead issues a permit for only three years, saying it does not have enough information to assess the environmental impacts of the exports beyond that time.

15 May 1991  
*Constitutional  
Change – Quebec*

Quebec's Liberal government tables a bill establishing the mechanism for a referendum on sovereignty for Quebec by October 1992. The body of the bill says Quebec will hold a referendum in either June or October

1992. But a lengthy preamble states the legislature "continues to hold the sovereign power to decide any power pertaining to the referendum and to pass appropriate legislation." The bill also creates two legislative committees — one to study the impact of sovereignty and the other to assess constitutional offers from the rest-of-Canada.

16 May 1991  
*Regulation –  
Environment*

In a ruling a Federal Court of Canada judge orders a full environmental review of Alcan Aluminum Ltd.'s half-built, \$800-million hydroelectric project in northern British Columbia, saying the federal cabinet erred in exempting the controversial project from the legally-required assessment process. Ottawa approved the project in September 1987 and exempted it from independent review last October. The court case was launched by the Carrier-Sekani Tribal Council and other groups opposed to Alcan's expansion of existing hydroelectric facilities on the Nechako River.

16 May 1991  
*Education,  
Post-Secondary*

Federal Employment and Immigration Minister Bernard Valcourt is appointed to head a federal initiative on education aimed at exploring ways in which the federal and provincial governments can cooperate in encouraging more students to undertake scientific, technological and engineering education. He calls for a new "national learning culture" which will make Canada's education system more effective. The announcement is criticized by several provinces, who see this as another federal intrusion into what is a field of provincial jurisdiction.

17 May 1991  
*Mayors of Great  
Lakes*

Mayors of Great Lakes cities sign a maritime agreement entitled the "Declaration of Indiana" at the close of the fifth annual international Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Mayors Conference in Merrillville, Indiana, calling on the Canadian and United States governments to keep the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Seaway "strong and healthy" into the next century. Among resolutions passed at the conference are calls for a binational strategy and adequate funding to reduce the discharge of industrial pollutants, an education program to stop the spread of dangerous exotic species, and better reaction and clean-up programs for toxic spills.

29 May 1991  
*Regional  
Development –  
Quebec*

Federal Health Minister Benoît Bouchard announces that the federal government plans to create a department of regional development exclusively for Quebec. The department, which is to be headed by Mr. Bouchard, is to operate along the lines of the Western Diversification Office and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency.

30 May 1991  
*Law Enforcement*

Solicitor-General Doug Lewis agrees to extend the current contract for RCMP services to the provinces for one more year. In return, he expects authorities in eight provinces and two territories to return to the bargaining table to negotiate a longer-term contract that will see them assume a greater share of the estimated \$761-million annual policing cost. When the last agreement expired 31 March without a new agreement, former federal Solicitor-General Pierre Cadieux had threatened to impose a deal unilaterally upon the provinces.

31 May 1991  
*Atlantic Premiers'  
Conference*

The Atlantic premiers meet in Sydney, Nova Scotia to discuss the prospects for economic integration between their provincial economies. Newfoundland Premier Clyde Wells announces that he will ask his cabinet whether Newfoundland should sign a year-old agreement that lets any Maritime business bid on procurement contracts offered by the three governments. A discussion paper released by the Maritime premiers called for removal of a wide range of trade barriers. The premiers have rejected the idea of a political union, but they want economic changes because of the uncertainty of federal transfer payments and regional economic development money. The premiers also meet with federal Constitutional Affairs Minister Joe Clark to discuss the best process for bringing about constitutional changes.

6 June 1991  
*Supreme Court*

The Supreme Court of Canada upholds Saskatchewan's electoral map, ruling that boundaries for the 66 provincial ridings, drawn up two years ago, do not violate the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, but fall within reasonable limits. The 6-3 judgement overturns a March Saskatchewan Court of Appeal decision that the boundaries were unconstitutional because they were weighted too heavily in favour of rural voters and strayed too far from the principle of one person, one vote. The ruling has implications for several provinces and the federal

- government, which might have had to redraw electoral boundaries had the Supreme Court upheld the earlier ruling.
- 7 June 1991  
*Constitutional Committees – Nova Scotia*  
Nova Scotia Premier Don Cameron announces the creation of a committee to develop a constitutional position for the province. Led by former federal Liberal cabinet minister Eric Kierans, the 12-member non-partisan committee is to begin public hearings in September.
- 7 June 1991  
*Regulation – Environment*  
The federal and Manitoba governments announce that they will conduct a joint environmental review of the massive Conawapa hydroelectric project in a move designed to alleviate Canada's "chaotic assessment system." An independent six-member panel has been given a broad mandate to study the proposed \$5.7 billion hydroelectric generating station and dam on the Nelson River about 800 kilometres north of Winnipeg.
- 9-10 June 1991  
*Federal-Provincial Tax Relations*  
Canada's federal and provincial finance ministers meet in Charlottetown, where discussions centre upon a federal plan that would give provinces more control over how their income tax is collected. Under the scheme, Revenue Canada would continue to collect income tax for all provinces except Quebec, which collects its own. But each province would have more flexibility to decide how much individual taxpayers would pay. Currently, the provinces' tax cut is based on a percentage of the federal tax owed when Canadians fill out their combined federal and provincial tax returns. The provinces also receive a commitment from federal Finance Minister Don Mazankowski to renew the system of equalization payments to the poorest provinces.
- 12 June 1991  
*Constitutional Change*  
A group of prominent Canadians calling themselves the Group of 22 releases a report entitled *Some Practical Suggestions for Canada*, which proposes a significant adjustment of federal and provincial powers. According to the group — which includes former premiers William Davis and Allan Blakeney, among others — the federal government should withdraw totally from contributing to health care, education and other social programs delivered by the provinces. Aboriginal people should be given the right to self-government, and Ottawa would

withdraw from most areas involving energy, natural resources and the environment. To strengthen the economic union, the provinces would be forced to eliminate barriers to the free movement of people, goods, services and capital within the country.

19 June 1991  
*Language Policy*

Parliamentarians choose Mr. Victor Goldbloom, a former Quebec cabinet minister, as Canada's new Commissioner of Official Languages. He replaces D'Iberville Fortier, who retired recently after a seven-year term.

20 June 1991  
*Constitutional  
Committees –  
Beaudoin-Edwards*

The Beaudoin-Edwards committee on constitutional amendment issues its report. The committee recommends a new amending formula, similar to the "Victoria formula" agreed to by the premiers in 1972. Under this plan the new amending formula would give a veto over constitutional change to Quebec, Ontario, and two Atlantic or two western provinces containing more than 50 percent of the region's population. Other recommendations by the committee include:

- only three areas require unanimous consent in order to be changed: the status of official languages, Canada's relationship to the monarchy and provincial control over natural resources;
- that the government hold a referendum on proposed constitutional amendments, which would have to be approved by a majority in all four regions to carry;
- that aboriginal Canadians be given a permanent seat at the constitutional negotiating table;
- that a constituent assembly not be held at this time. Instead, the report suggests another parliamentary committee be sent across the country to search for a consensus.

27 June 1991  
*Spicer Commission*

The Citizen's Forum on Canada's Future, otherwise known as the Spicer Commission, makes public its report, which calls for new thinking about Canada's national institutions and symbols. The committee's recommendations include:

- urging the government to review and coordinate its thinking on national institutions and symbols to "give

them more evident importance and to avoid the impression among Canadians that they are losing their sense of Country”;

- suggesting that people outside Quebec could accept that the province “should have the freedom and the means” to be its own unique self with a distinctive place in a “renewed Canadian family”;
- calling on federal and provincial governments and the private sector to tell Canadians of the economic, political, social and international consequences of an independent Quebec;
- an independent review of the application of official languages policy;
- “prompt, fair settlement of the aboriginal land and self-government claims”;
- elimination by the federal government of overlapping jurisdictions;
- a relaxation of overly rigid party discipline; and
- the need for a constituent assembly to address the country’s constitutional problems.

28 June 1991  
*Aboriginal Peoples*  
 – *Land Claims*

Representatives from Inuit groups and the government of Quebec sign an agreement on self-government which lays out a framework for negotiations leading to the establishment of an autonomous regional government. The body would govern residents — both Inuit and non-native — who live north of Quebec’s 55th parallel.



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