
Chronology of Events January 2001 – December 2001

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- 3 January
Alberta
- The Government of Alberta reduces its flat rate tax from 10.5 percent to 10 percent. Last spring the province introduced the flat tax rate to separate from the federal tax system, but it made the current reduction coincide with the recent federal tax cuts put into effect on 1 January, since earners in the \$35,000 – \$65,000 bracket would have been better off in the federal tax system. This move is also made to ensure that Alberta has the lowest tax regime in all of Canada.
- 8 January
*Health Care/
Organized Labour*
- Thirteen hundred physicians across New Brunswick reluctantly go on strike to protest poor medical fees and the refusal of the provincial government to hire more doctors. Blame is also placed on federal transfers to the province. The strike is ended three days later without resolution, and there is warning of an exodus of physicians from New Brunswick because of their inability to negotiate with the Progressive Conservative government.
- 9 January
Health Care
- Federal Health Minister Allan Rock confirms the verbal warnings made by federal officials to the health ministers of New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, and Manitoba to begin covering the full cost of abortions performed outside hospitals. Mr Rock also faces pressure from

multiple sources regarding the proliferation of private magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) clinics across Canada.

11 January
Political Leaders

Premier Lucien Bouchard retires from politics. Although disagreeing with his goal of sovereignty for Quebec, several current, retiring, or retired premiers praise Bouchard's intellect, civility, political acumen, grasp of policy, and personal integrity. Prime Minister Jean Chrétien states, "While our visions of the future of Quebec in Canada were fundamentally irreconcilable, I want to salute Lucien Bouchard as an able parliamentarian who has fought for his beliefs with passion and determination."

15 January
Supreme Court of Canada

Justice Michel Bastarache states that the Supreme Court of Canada is not the best forum for resolving disputes over Aboriginal land claims and other "ill-defined" native rights, arguing that such complex conflicts are better settled by negotiation instead of litigation. Two days earlier he made statements referring to the tendency of the Supreme Court of Canada to rule in favour of the rights of the accused over the rights of society in Charter cases.

17 January
Constitution

Quebec Liberal Party leader Jean Charest leaves the door open to an eventual referendum on Meech Lake – style constitutional improvements that would be presented within the first mandate of a Liberal government. The ultimate aim is to include Quebec as a signatory to a Canadian constitution modified to suit the province's interests.

21 January
Health Care

Nurses and doctors across Canada warn of widespread strikes unless governments raise wages and recruit more professionals to enhance the workforce. This threat is issued as the federal and provincial governments are poised to inject billions of dollars more into health care.

22 January
Aboriginal Peoples

Indian Affairs Minister Robert Nault makes proposals to strengthen the democratic process and government efficiency at the band-council level, which he hopes to introduce as legislation next fall. These include the creation of professional services at the band-government level, having Elections Canada oversee band-council elections instead of Indian Affairs, and lengthening the terms of band-council government from the current two years.

- 26 January
Parliament
- Prime Minister Jean Chrétien appoints Liberal Senator Dan Hays from Alberta as the new Speaker of the Senate. He replaces Manitoba Senator Gildas Molgat.
- 26 January
Party Politics
- Supporters of Finance Minister Paul Martin win a critical power struggle to force an early vote on Jean Chrétien's leadership if he does not announce his intention to resign by the fall of next year. The Liberal Party's constitution requires that the next convention, which would include an automatic leadership vote, be held in March 2002, but the management committee of the party's national executive agreed to an extension out of respect for Mr Chrétien's winning a third majority government. This means that the next party convention, and therefore the next leadership review, will likely be held in the fall of 2002.
- 29 January
Parliament
- Liberal Member of Parliament Peter Milliken of Kingston, Ontario, is elected the new Speaker of the House, winning by secret balloting by fellow members. As Speaker, he is expected to function in a non-partisan manner, overseeing debates and the House of Commons' approximately \$250 million budget.
- 30 January
Aboriginal Peoples
- The departments of Indian and Northern Affairs and Fisheries and Oceans earmark \$500 million to help Aboriginal peoples in the fishery and to expand First Nation reserves throughout Atlantic Canada. The fund is to be spread over the next three years.
- 30 January
Speech from the Throne
- The new session of the 37th Parliament officially gets underway with the Chrétien government spelling out its agenda for the nation. The throne speech promises a world-leading economy and a more inclusive society to improve the lives of disadvantaged Canadians in the twenty-first century, with particular reference to children and the problems facing Aboriginal peoples. The Liberal government also announces its goal to negotiate a comprehensive free trade agreement that will include the three Americas by 2004 to ensure Canada's economic growth.
- 30 January
Parliament
- The leader of the Canadian Alliance, Stockwell Day, uses a major speech in the House of Commons to distance himself from western separatists while appealing to Jean

Chrétien to address what he calls the growing alienation of Canadians from coast to coast.

8 February
Municipalities

Ontario Premier Mike Harris confirms that future amalgamations will be at the request of municipalities – they will not be imposed by legislative decisions: “If other municipalities come to us and say, ‘Will you help us save money, operate services more efficiently, be able to deliver more for less?’ then it would be our responsibility and obligation to assist them any way we can.”

8 February
Ontario

Ontario Premier Mike Harris shuffles his cabinet, signaling what many call a pronounced shift to the right for the Progressive Conservative Government of Ontario. Among the key changes is the replacement of retired Finance Minister Ernie Eves by Jim Flaherty, who will also take on the role of deputy premier, and Canadian Alliance supporter Tony Clement as the new minister of health. Other changes are Chris Hodgson as the minister of municipal affairs, Bob Runciman as minister of economic development and trade, and Elizabeth Witmer as the minister of environment.

8 February
Saskatchewan

Roy Romanow is officially replaced when Lorne Calvert is sworn in as the thirteenth premier of Saskatchewan, along with his New Democrat-Liberal coalition cabinet. Three new members are added to the cabinet while fourteen remain from the former cabinet. Mr Calvert was elected to succeed Mr Romanow as the New Democratic Party leader on 27 January this year, garnering 57.6 percent of the party vote in the fourth round of ballots.

9 February
Aboriginal Rights

Minister of Indian Affairs Robert Nault and Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Herb Dhaliwal officially announce a two-track process to address the Supreme Court of Canada’s decision to uphold the 1760 treaty rights allowing Mi’kmaq and Maliseet bands to earn a moderate livelihood through hunting, fishing, and gathering. One track, under Indian Affairs, is a long-term process aimed at reaching agreements on treaty issues and economic development. The other, under Fisheries and Oceans, is aimed at expanding Aboriginal access to the East Coast

fishery through agreements with bands that can last up to three years.

9 February
*Ministerial
Conferences*

Provincial and territorial ministers of agriculture meet in Regina to discuss the critical situation in the agricultural sector. The ministers maintain that integrated risk management in agriculture will require a joint response, meaning a substantial contribution from the federal government. They also agree that the aid must be available without delay and must be flexible enough to take into account the strategy developed by the ministers to meet the acute needs of farmers.

13 February
*Newfoundland and
Labrador*

Former Minister of Health Roger Grimes is sworn in as the new premier of Newfoundland. On the third of this month, at the Liberal Party convention, he won the leadership on the second ballot with a fourteen-vote margin, defeating former Fisheries Minister John Efford.

15 February
Aboriginal Peoples

In an effort to increase fiscal accountability of native leaders across Canada, Minister of Indian Affairs Robert Nault states that he will delay cash transfers to twenty-two First Nations this year until they complete last year's audits.

19 February
Political Leaders

Former premier of Saskatchewan Roy Romanow retires from politics as he resigns his seat in the provincial legislature. Mr Romanow was born in Saskatoon on 12 August 1939 and obtained law and arts degrees from the University of Saskatchewan. He was first elected to the Saskatchewan legislature in 1967 in the Saskatoon Riverdale riding as a New Democrat, and he served as deputy premier as well as Saskatchewan's attorney general from 1971 to 1982, becoming the minister of intergovernmental affairs in 1979. He was elected leader of the province's NDP in 1987 and on 21 October 1991 became premier of Saskatchewan.

23 February
Aboriginal Rights

In the case of *R. v. Powley*, the Ontario Court of Appeal throws out a provincial bid to charge two Métis men with hunting without a licence, stating that they share the same hunting rights granted to Aboriginal people by the Canadian constitution. This is believed to be a landmark decision with implications for Métis across Canada.

25 February
Municipalities

Mayors and councillors from twenty of Canada's largest cities agree that the upper levels of the federal and provincial governments need either to share tax revenues or to provide more money for infrastructure programs. Discussion continues to the following day at the Federation of Canadian Municipalities mayors' caucus, where most attention is placed on the inability of cities to unilaterally keep up with demands on municipal infrastructure and social programs through property tax collection.

26 February
Natural Resources

At the annual dinner of the Canadian Association of Petroleum Landmen, Nova Scotia Premier John Hamm asks for the same rules on energy royalties with the federal government that Alberta experiences: "We want simply to have our resource treated exactly the same way as the resource was treated here [in Alberta] during a comparable stage of development." For every dollar of royalties from Nova Scotia's offshore oil and gas development, the province keeps \$0.19, while \$0.81 is kept by the federal government as the result of jurisdictional arrangements.

26 February
Equalization

Federal Finance Minister Paul Martin, at a meeting with three of four of his Atlantic provincial counterparts in Halifax, states that amendments will not be made to the equalization formula. The provincial ministers argued that it is a matter of fairness for Ottawa to lift restrictions on the payments to East Coast governments, but Mr Martin states that nothing will change until the end of the current fiscal arrangement in 2004.

27 February
Nunavut

In presenting his third budget, Nunavut Finance Minister Kelvin Ng reveals that the territorial government is in financial crisis and is expected to have a \$12 million deficit in the next fiscal year. Mr Ng warns that the crisis will worsen unless his federal counterpart intervenes to provide the territory with more transfers.

27 February
Health Care

A for-profit cancer treatment clinic opens in Toronto. According to the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), this is a violation of the guidelines set out by the *Canada Health Act* and is the first step towards a two-tier health-care system. CUPE officials warn that this clinic, as well as other small-scale for-profit clinics across

Canada, will open the door to American and European investments in large-scale private health-care institutions within Canada's borders.

1 March
Agriculture

Among a number of announcements made by the federal government in preparation for its fiscal year-end of 31 March is the statement that Canadian farmers will receive \$500 million in emergency aid this spring. After the expected provincial contributions, the total package will be worth \$830 million, but farm leaders and provincial agriculture ministers say this is not enough to compete with U.S. and European subsidies. They originally lobbied for \$900 million.

1 March
Budget

The federal government expects a \$16.5 billion budget surplus for the fiscal year ending on 31 March. Last October, Finance Minister Paul Martin pledged at least \$10 billion towards reducing the \$457 billion federal debt. Earlier projections placed the budget surplus at \$12.2 billion, and any unspent surplus at the end of the fiscal year is automatically used to reduce the federal debt.

2 March
*Health Care/
Organized Labour*

Around 6,000 hospital workers across New Brunswick go on strike after talks break off between the provincial government and the Canadian Union of Public Employees. A 12.5 percent pay raise over four years was rejected by CUPE, initiating the strike. Workers are forced back into the hospitals after the passage of back-to-work legislation three days after the strike begins, and one day later hospital workers vote for a tentative agreement in favour of the province's previously proposed pay increase.

6 March
*Health Care/
Organized Labour*

Quebec's Coalition of Physicians for Social Justice states that the provincial government must inject \$1 billion immediately to stabilize the ailing Quebec health-care system. Overcrowding and waiting lists for surgery have reached a critical situation in Quebec; these also are issues facing hospitals and governments across Canada.

7 March
Aboriginal Peoples

At the First Nations Summit in Vancouver, Minister of Indian Affairs Robert Nault states that the federal government's *First Nations Governance Act* will provide the tools to achieve effective, accountable, and responsive local

government for Aboriginal communities. Mr Nault speculates that the legislation, which could be tabled in the fall, may be an interim step towards self-government.

8 March
Quebec

Former Finance Minister Bernard Landry is sworn in as Quebec's twenty-eighth premier (fifth Parti Québécois leader) and successor to Lucien Bouchard. Mr Landry announces that eliminating poverty and promoting sovereignty will be the two main objectives of his cabinet. Many believe that Mr Landry will be a stronger force in the goal of Quebec sovereignty when compared to his predecessor. Alberta Premier Ralph Klein states that he is a threat to national unity, to which Mr Landry replies, "Damn right."

10 March
Aboriginal Rights

First Nations bands in British Columbia sign a treaty with the provincial and federal governments that gives these groups self-rule, a large cash payment, and shared control with non-Aboriginals of old-growth forests and other natural resources. Twelve separate bands within the Tribal Council are given autonomous rule over almost 760 square kilometres of old-growth forests, beach fronts, and mountainsides on Vancouver Island and nearby Meares Island.

12 March
Alberta

The Progressive Conservatives are re-elected as the governing party of Alberta under Premier Ralph Klein, maintaining their strong hold on provincial governance. Of the 83 legislative seats, the Conservatives win 74, with a popular vote of 61.8 percent. Mr Klein assures Albertans that the goals of his government are "of having a very competitive tax regime, very low fees and premiums, being debt-free, the ability to invest in education and health care." The expanded Cabinet is sworn in on 19 March.

20 March
Parliament

The Canadian Alliance introduces a bill in the House of Commons calling for an additional \$400 million in emergency aid for the agriculture industry. The party hopes that Liberal backbenchers will validate their claims of fighting for farmers by voting in favour of the bill. Farming all over Canada, particularly in the West, has been suffering from export bans, poor crop production, and competition from U.S. and European subsidies to agriculture. The bill is defeated.

- 21 March
Political Leaders
- Preston Manning, the founder and former leader of the Reform Party and the Canadian Alliance, announces that he will resign his Calgary Southwest seat in the federal legislature by the end of the year, quitting elected politics: “As a former leader, I’m in an awkward position in our own party and in our own caucus ... If I vigorously advocate new ideas for change, there’s a danger of that being misconstrued as being competitive or undermining the current leadership. If I don’t do anything like that, it can also be misconstrued as being not supportive [of the leader].”
- 28 March
Environment
- Premier Roger Grimes states that Newfoundland is prepared to defy federal and provincial governments as it pushes ahead with plans to revive the debate over bulk water exports. The previous day, he resurrected the idea of exporting large quantities of fresh water from Gisborne Lake, a plan rejected in 1999 by Premier Brian Tobin.
- 29 March
Aboriginal Peoples
- In a signed letter read during the opening ceremonies of the Indigenous Summit of the Americas, Prime Minister Jean Chrétien pledges that he will put the concerns of indigenous peoples on the agenda of the upcoming Summit of the Americas in Quebec City. As well, Chrétien invited the national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, Matthew Coon Come, to be present at the Quebec Summit to be held on 20–22 April. This is the first time in its history that an indigenous leader has been invited.
- 29 March
Quebec
- Quebec Finance Minister Pauline Marois announces a tabled \$3.5 billion cut in personal income tax over three years in Queen’s 2001–2 budget. The cuts are made to provide the most benefit to lower-income earners. The minister adds that the new budget will help prepare Quebec for independence, making it “into a country capable of taking its place at the forefront of the new world emerging.”
- 1 April
Newfoundland and Labrador
- Two unions representing 19,000 public workers reject a last-minute offer from the provincial government and begin the largest provincewide strike in history. Provincial Finance Minister Joan Marie Aylward admits that public-service workers deserve raises but states that the province can only afford 13 percent over three years and not the 15

percent the unions are asking for. The strike is ended five days later after a severe snowstorm places enormous pressure on both sides to reach an agreement.

4 April
*Health-Care
Commission*

The former NDP premier of Saskatchewan, Roy Romanow, is appointed by Jean Chrétien to head a national inquiry into Canada's health-care system. The report, expected to be finished by the end of next year, will assess a wide range of questions pertaining to the future of health care in Canada, such as privatization, payment methods for doctors, and whether medicare should insure new and expensive drug treatments and technologies. Quebec Health Minister Remy Trudel states that he will not participate in the inquiry, because the Government of Quebec sees the commission as a federal intrusion in provincial jurisdiction.

4 April
Municipalities

In the ongoing battle between the city of Toronto and the Ontario government, Finance Minister Jim Flaherty announces that provincial caps on commercial property taxes will not be raised to allow city council to initiate tax increases in this sector. Mr Flaherty states that the industrial and commercial property taxes are already above average, and raising the taxation cap will perpetuate discrimination against business owners.

5 April
Revenue

The federal government introduces a tax hike on cigarettes across Canada and at the same announces that it will pour money into anti-smoking and anti-smuggling initiatives in the hope of reducing the number of smokers and cigarette sales; \$480 million and \$10–15 million, respectively, will be spent on each initiative.

6 April
*Supreme Court of
Canada*

At a legal conference at York University, Chief Justice Beverly McLachlin appeals to the legal profession and academia for more research to assist the Supreme Court of Canada's "daunting" struggle to set limits on equality rights. She states that new claims are raising increasingly cumbersome and abstract issues that were not contemplated in the infancy of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which has led to the "uncertain sea of value judgements" with which the Supreme Court is now faced.

- 17 April
Natural Resources
- The former premier of Alberta, Peter Lougheed, is enlisted by Nova Scotia's premier, John Hamm, to assist in the battle for greater provincial control of revenues produced from its offshore oil and natural gas. Mr Lougheed successfully battled the federal government in the 1970s over royalties from similar resources. The current Alberta premier, Ralph Klein, is also a strong supporter of Nova Scotia's bid for a larger share of royalties, stating that the province should experience the same arrangements that exist between Alberta and the federal government.
- 19 April
Party Politics
- Supporters of Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and Finance Minister Paul Martin reach a truce, deciding to hold the federal Liberal Party's leadership review in February 2003 instead of the fall of 2002. This formally ends a push by some Paul Martin supporters to force Mr Chrétien to make a decision about his political future early in his third mandate.
- 26 April
Equalization
- With the possibility of federal budget surpluses of up to \$17 billion, finance ministers from Atlantic Canada state that the federal government should raise the \$10 billion ceiling on equalization payments to allow a larger share for the "have-not" provinces. The main purpose of this federal transfer is to supply each province with the funding to support basic standards of public goods and services, but the Atlantic ministers argue that the cap on equalization is increasing the gap between the wealthier and poorer provinces.
- 26 April
Agriculture
- The United States announces the terms of a deal that will dissolve the ban on Prince Edward Island potatoes. All potatoes exports from PEI were banned in October of last year because a single commercial field suffered an outbreak of potato wart, a harmless but disfiguring virus. The ban posed an economic crisis for potato farmers and the province. All restrictions are to be lifted on 1 August.
- 30 April
Aboriginal Peoples
- Minister of Indian Affairs Robert Nault announces that an overhaul of the 125-year-old *Indian Act* will be introduced to the legislative assembly after a cross-Canada consultation with about six hundred bands and Aboriginal

associations. The changes will include the legal status of First Nations in terms of self-government, development of democratic and accountable institutions for native self-government, and women's issues. This means that much of the federal control over Aboriginal affairs will be assigned to the Aboriginal peoples.

9 May
Ontario

Ontario Finance Minister Jim Flaherty unveils the new provincial budget. The only major surprise is the installation of tax credits for private schooling. The tax credit will begin by reimbursing 10 percent of the first \$7,000 of fees for private schools, and when fully implemented it will cover 50 percent, or \$3,500. Some see this as the end of a century of constitutional discrimination against ethnic and religious minority groups, in terms of education in Ontario, while others speculate that this will weaken the already ailing public school system.

10 May
Aboriginal Peoples

National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations Matthew Coon Come publicly rejects federal plans to overhaul the outdated *Indian Act*, stating that First Nations should undertake such changes or at least play an active part in the legislation, rather than having the federal government acting unilaterally. He also calls for all First Nations communities to boycott any consultations with the federal government regarding changes to the *Indian Act*.

14 May
*Ministerial
Conferences*

Provincial and territorial tourism ministers, at a meeting in Toronto, call upon the federal government to take a more active role in ensuring continued growth of the industry in Canada. Tim Hudak, the minister of tourism, culture, and recreation in Ontario, states that "all levels of government must work together and with the industry if Canada is to get its fair share of the estimated \$1.5 trillion the world's tourism industry is expected to generate by the year 2010." The ministers concede that a meeting with their federal counterpart, Brian Tobin, is essential to address key issues such as intergovernmental funding agreements and airline restructuring.

15 May
Party Politics

Eight Canadian Alliance members of parliament announce that they will not sit in the House of Commons under the leadership of Stockwell Day. Of the eight members (Chuck

Strahl, Val Meredith, Gary Lunn, Grant McNally, Jim Gouk, Jay Hill, Jim Pankiw, and Art Hanger), two of them – Mr Lunn and Mr Hanger – have already been removed from the Alliance for earlier comments against the party leader. The other MPs will also be suspended by the party. On 24 April 2001 Deborah Grey, the deputy leader and longest-serving Canadian Alliance MP, resigned her position, as did Chuck Strahl as House leader.

16 May
British Columbia

Winning 77 of 79 seats in the provincial legislature (the New Democratic Party wins the other two), the Liberal Party, headed by Gordon Campbell, becomes the new governing party of British Columbia. The former premier, Ujjah Dosanjh, loses his seat in the legislative assembly. He previously stated that he would resign as leader of the NDP if the party failed to obtain the required four seats for official party status. One of the Liberals' major campaign promises was tax relief within the first ninety days of the new government's term and to have, by the end of its term, the lowest personal income tax rate in Canada for the two bottom brackets. Mr Campbell's government is sworn in on 5 June, with the new premier promising accountability from his cabinet by restricting 20 percent of ministerial salaries if goals and campaign promises are not met.

17 May
Budget

Federal Finance Minister Paul Martin announces that there will be an estimated \$15 billion surplus from last year after year-end adjustments are calculated, but he warns that the government must remain prudent in spending due to a slowing Canadian economy, which signals lower surpluses for the upcoming years. To cover election campaign promises, he states that in 2003–4 the Liberal government may have to use reserves from the contingency fund, which is kept by the Treasury in case of unexpected costs and shortfalls.

24 May
*Health Care/
Organized Labour*

A report released by the British Columbia Medical Association suggests that the provincial government should hand the managerial responsibilities of its health-care system to an independent, non-partisan body, depoliticizing the decision-making process. The recommendation makes British Columbia the third province to propose the

administration of health care through an independent body, Ontario and Quebec being the others.

24 May
Aboriginal Rights

In the case of *Mitchell v. M.N.R.*, the Supreme Court of Canada rules against the Akwasasne Mohawks' claim to an Aboriginal right to import goods from the United States without having to pay duties. The Cornwall, Ontario, native group argued that transporting goods across the border was a necessity prior to European contact and that this made them exempt from paying duties, but the court unanimously decided there is lack of evidence to support the case. Native leaders argue that steps towards Aboriginal self-government will be impeded if they cannot control taxation pertaining to First Nations.

25 May
*Ministerial
Conferences*

Ministers responsible for consumer affairs from all governments meet in St John's to take action on the growing number of consumer issues related to e-commerce. The ministers set a collaborative action plan to modernize and harmonize consumer legislation and policies, to develop effective marketplace practices in cooperation with business and consumer groups, and to provide reliable consumer information regarding online transactions.

30 May–1 June
*Western Premiers'
Conference*

The annual Western Premiers' Conference takes place in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan. The conference provides a forum for the leaders of the four western provinces and three territories to discuss issues and coordinate efforts in areas such as energy, climate change, agriculture, postsecondary education, health, transportation, and trade. Among the major agreements is the reaffirmation of their commitment to continue to strengthen the relationship between the provinces and territories, both on a western and on a Canada-wide basis, in order to make progress on key priorities and when dealing with the federal government, as well to demand that the federal government give energy-producing provinces a seat at the table during negotiations on a continental energy policy.

4 June
Aboriginal Rights

The Federal Court of Appeal rules that Aboriginal people who do not live on reserves must pay federal income tax. This ruling, which reverses an earlier Federal Court of Canada decision in the *Shilling v. Canada* case of 9 June

1999, is expected to save the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency hundreds of millions of dollars and allow for 750 Aboriginal tax files to be processed, which were on hold pending the ruling.

6 June
British Columbia

Carrying through with his election promise, Premier Gordon Campbell announces a cut on the provincial portion of personal income tax by about 25 percent over the next two years. The intent of the reduction is to stimulate economic growth in British Columbia. When fully implemented, it will give the province the second-lowest marginal tax rate in the country, with the lowest rate for the bottom two brackets.

7 June
Parliament

The House of Commons votes 211 to 52 to adopt a bill that gives members of parliament and senators a 20 percent salary increase. The base pay of members will move from \$109,000 to \$131,400, while the prime minister will make \$262,988, a 42 percent increase from the original \$184,600. Senators will now earn \$106,000. The bill was introduced by the Liberals and supported by MPs from all federal parties except the NDP.

9 June
*Health Care/
Organized Labour*

Over 12,000 Saskatchewan health-care workers begin a strike after talks end between the provincial government and the Canadian Union of Public Employees. The union is asking for a 14 percent increase in wages and benefits over the next three years but is being offered only 3 percent in each year of a three-year deal. The strike is ended on the 15 June with a package that includes the latter proposal as well as enhanced benefits and pensions.

14 June
*Ministerial
Conferences*

Provincial and territorial finance ministers meet in Montreal to advance their work on fiscal arrangements in response to the direction by premiers at last year's Annual Premiers' Conference. They will be reporting to the premiers at this year's conference on options and solutions to issues revolving around federal social service transfers. The ministers issue an urgent call to the federal government to revitalize the federal-provincial relationship by funding an increased and more equitable share of vital social programs, such as health care and education. One of the key arguments discussed involves the diminished

federal financing of services within provincial jurisdictions. Since the federal government has lately been experiencing budget surpluses in the billions, the ministers feel that money should be used to return federal/provincial transfers to the 1994/95 levels.

19 June
*Health Care/
Organized Labour*

Fourteen thousand members of the Health Sciences Association in British Columbia conduct a provincewide walkout. Along with the B.C. Nurses' Union, the association is protesting provincial legislation to end the nurses' overtime ban and an initiative to disallow a strike by health-care workers. The legislation, if passed, will end the job action by 40,000 health-care workers. The association members return to work two days later, and legislation is passed to prevent a ban on overtime work by nurses.

27 June
British Columbia

British Columbia Premier Gordon Campbell has initiated a "first" in the history of Canadian politics by opening the doors of a cabinet meeting to the public and the media. The meeting was televised, and twenty reporters and twenty members of the public (first come first serve) were invited to view the talks directly. This is to be the first of many such occasions in the province.

28 June
Municipalities

Justice Maurice Lagace of the Quebec Superior Court dismisses a court challenge against plans to merge eighteen municipalities into an amalgamated Montreal. The municipalities state that they will continue to fight the imposed amalgamation which, according to them, poses a threat to their bilingual status and constitutional rights.

28 June
*Supreme Court of
Canada*

In a landmark decision, the Supreme Court of Canada, in the case of *114957 Canada Ltée (Spraytech, Société d'arrosage) v. Hudson*, rules that it is in the jurisdiction of the town of Hudson to ban or restrict the use of pesticides. The court decision for this Quebec town implies the same right for municipalities across Canada. According to Stéphane Brière, who represented Hudson, the judgment would apply "in principle to all 10 provinces, conditional on whether they bring in specific legislation governing pesticide use."

- 29 June
Ministerial Conferences
- Agriculture ministers from all governments take a step towards securing the long-term success of the sector at a meeting in Whitehorse. They agree in principle on a national action plan to make Canada the world leader in food safety, innovation, and environmental protection by initiating a range of technological advancements and updating farming equipment across Canada. Safety net programming is also discussed in the meeting.
- 3 July
Health-Care Commission
- Although initially opposing the commission, the Quebec government appoints an official from the Department of Intergovernmental Affairs to assist in the national inquiry on the future of health care, headed by Roy Romanow.
- 4 July
Alberta
- To strengthen the provincial agriculture industry, the Alberta government will assume legislative responsibility for intensive livestock operations. Agriculture Minister Shirley McClellan states that money is being lost from operations running outside the province due to relaxed regulations posed by municipalities. Beginning on 1 January 2002, municipalities will hand approval authority for operations to the Natural Resources Conservation Board. The industry accounts for more than 60 percent of Alberta's farm cash receipts.
- 12 July
Aboriginal Rights
- British Columbia Supreme Court Chief Justice Don Brenner finds the United Church 25 percent and the federal government 75 percent liable for the sexual assaults against six Aboriginals at the Alberni Indian Residential School on Vancouver Island. The *B. (W.R.) v. Plint* case is seen as a precedent-setting case, since it is the first civil trial in Canada to reach the stage of determining damages for abuse in the Indian residential school system. Across the country, thousands of similar lawsuits have been launched by Aboriginal people seeking restitution for long-term suffering caused by the school systems.
- 18 July
Equalization
- Ontario Premier Mike Harris states that "have-not" provinces should not receive equalization payments from the federal government if they are allowed to keep all offshore oil and gas royalties. As Ontario is a "have" province, federal revenues from the region are used for transfers to

the poorer provinces. Nova Scotia Premier John Hamm has previously stated that the province should remain an equalization recipient if it is allowed to keep the royalties.

19 July
Party Politics

Twelve rebel Canadian Alliance members of parliament announce they will create a new parliamentary caucus in the House of Commons, although they will not form a new party. Naming the group the Democratic Representative Caucus, the MPs state that they cannot return to the Alliance caucus because of the uncertainty of Stockwell Day's promise of resignation.

20 July
Environment

An annual report by the North American Free Trade Agreement Environmental Agency places Ontario behind the American states of Ohio, Texas, and Pennsylvania as the worst polluter on the continent, based on data from 1998 that covers 165 chemicals, including 49 known carcinogens. The report also shows that Canadian facilities, on average, produce 30 percent more pollution than American facilities.

23 July
Environment

As 180 countries, including Canada, discuss the Kyoto Protocol in Bonn, Germany, Alberta Premier Ralph Klein announces that the adoption of the accord will cost the provincial economy billions of dollars. The protocol is an agreement among most nation-states in the world to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 6 percent from 1990 levels by 2012. Since Alberta's economy is centred around industries with high emissions of these gases, the province is expected to be hardest hit by the adoption of the accord.

23 July
*Health Care/
Organized Labour*

Eleven thousand health-care workers go on illegal strike after failed meetings between the British Columbia Health Employers Association and the provincial government. The health-care workers are asking for a 24 percent wage increase but are offered only 5.5 percent to 15 percent, depending on profession. The strike is called off by the representing union two days later without resolution. This incident comes nearly a week after Health Services Minister Colin Hansen announces that British Columbia has already spent \$400 million more than budgeted just three months into the fiscal year. He warned that if spending is not controlled, an additional \$1 billion will be needed to

fund the health-care system for the rest of the fiscal year, which would result in dollars being taken from other important social programs. B.C. nurses are still negotiating with the province over contracts, having recently rejected an offer of a 22 percent wage increase.

30 July
Education

A report by Statistics Canada reveals that Canadian universities received \$8.2 billion for the 1999–2000 school year from federal, provincial, and municipal governments – a 15 percent increase over the previous school year. This indicates funding similar to that of the early 1990s, before transfers were reduced and reorganized by the federal government to create the Canada Health and Social Transfer.

31 July
Health Care

A day before the Annual Premiers' Conference, Finance Minister Paul Martin tells the provinces to halt demands for federal health-care funding, stating that the federal government does not have the extra money to distribute: "I certainly don't know where we would find that kind of money ... if you take a look at the amount that we have already transferred to the provinces for health care and education, it would be very hard to find that kind of money." Although the provinces are claiming fiscal imbalances, Mr Martin states that increased spending will create much larger problems in the long run, particularly for the future of the federal pension program and the aging baby boomer generation. This comment is reaffirmed after the premiers' meeting, when the federal government states that provincial demands are unrealistic and threaten to place Ottawa spending on a track towards deficit.

1–3 August
Annual Premiers' Conference

At the 42nd Annual Premiers' Conference in Victoria, British Columbia, government leaders across the country agree that they will push to restore Ottawa's share of health-care funding, a share that has been steadily dropping over time, since health-care costs have been rising at a much higher rate than federal transfer payments. To achieve adequate and sustainable fiscal arrangements over the immediate and medium term, the premiers ask the federal government to immediately remove the equalization ceiling; to immediately work on the development of a strengthened and fairer equalization program formula; to restore federal health transfers through the Canadian Health

and Social Transfer to at least 18 percent, combined with an appropriate escalator; and to work on alternative CHST measures such as tax points.

Among other discussion topics is the energy sector and its importance to the Canadian economy, as well as the effort for a coordinated North American focus on energy supply and development, but the premiers express concern for the federal government's exclusion of provincial and territorial representatives from the North American Working Group discussions. The premiers also review technology advancements for a variety of energy sources, such as Atlantic oil and gas, additional nuclear and hydropower, and the development of environmentally friendly "green power." They ensure that new projects will adhere to the principles of sustainable development. Re-vamping equalization payment methods and allowing Newfoundland and Nova Scotia to keep all oil and gas royalties are also some of the main discussion topics in the three-day meeting.

12 August
*Supreme Court of
Canada*

In a speech to the Canadian Bar Association, Chief Justice Beverly McLachlin states that the capabilities of the Supreme Court of Canada are being pushed to the limit by mandatory appeals that can waste valuable resources. She states that the rising workload and limited space for additional staff is causing administrative backlog, thereby compromising the number of cases the court can handle. She suggests moving the Federal Court of Canada to a separate building, in order to free up space, a move long requested by federal judges.

13 August
Health Care

In its 2001 National Report Card on Health Care, the Canadian Medical Association gives the nation a B, noting that the major deficits in the system are access to specialist services, access to technology, and emergency room services. Another report, released on 24 September, warns that the Canadian health-care system is heading to ruin as a result of systemic underfunding by both the federal and the provincial governments.

13-16 August
*Ministerial
Conferences*

A series of meetings take place in London, Ontario, involving ministers and deputy ministers responsible for local government and housing from all provinces and

territories. Drinking water safety is a high priority. They state that the federal government must assist the provinces and territories by building on the work of these governments to meet drinking-water safety needs. The ministers also discuss the provision of the necessary tools and flexibility for local governments to fulfill their responsibilities properly, as well as covering the issues of new legislative frameworks for local governments. On the final day of meetings, all ministers of housing agree on the urgent need for a coordinated effort on an affordable housing program, which is boosted by a federal contribution of \$680 million.

26–28 August 2001
*Annual Conference
of New England
Governors and
Eastern Canadian
Premiers*

The 26th Annual Conference of the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers takes place in Westbrook, Connecticut. A number of formal resolutions are made: to cooperate in the development, improvement, and promotion of the information technology workforce; to adopt the 2001–3 work plan of the Standing Committee on Trade and Globalization; to accept the Climate Change Action Plan and have the related committees and state/provincial officials oversee and coordinate its implementation; to do further study and hold conferences regarding specific environmental issues and to do the same for energy development and management.

28 August
Parliament

The Democratic Representative Caucus, the informally recognized group of Canadian Alliance rebels, strikes an unprecedented deal to work together with the Progressive Conservative members of parliament, both in the House of Commons and in committees. They announce plans for a joint strategy meeting in Edmonton on 10 September. At the same time, Jim Gouk, one of the dissident Alliance MPs, announces that he will return to his party's caucus if his suspension is lifted, stating that Alliance leader Stockwell Day's promise of resignation makes it satisfactory for him to return.

6 September
Budget

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development urges the Canadian government to restrict spending, especially on social programs, during the current economic slowdown in order to reduce its relatively high deficit and taxes. In its annual assessment of the country's economic performance and outlook, the organization

expresses particular concern at the rising health-care spending by provinces, the increasing social assistance disability claims, and the federal government's year-end spending sprees.

13 September
Finance

The federal government announces a \$10.7 billion surplus for the first quarter of this fiscal year. Even after tax cuts at the beginning of the year, which are said to be costing the federal government billions of dollars, it is higher than last year's accumulation for the same quarter of \$10.5-billion.

17 September
National Security

Members of parliament return to the House of Commons today in unified form to discuss the terrorist attacks against the United States, the role Canada should play in combatting terrorism inside and outside national borders, and what steps need to be taken to ensure greater national security and the prevention of terrorist activity. Anti-terrorism legislation is proposed by many, including Stockwell Day, who also suggests that border control and immigration policies should be reviewed in order to strengthen national security. Federal Finance Minister Paul Martin announces that the government is prepared to spend whatever it takes to ensure the security of the nation. The extra spending will be afforded by using federal reserves, he says; tax cuts and health care/education spending will not be affected, though he admits that it likely will decrease revenues.

18 September
Aboriginal Peoples

Mi'kmaq fishermen set lobster traps in Miramichi Bay, against federal government regulations. Although a benign action in itself, this comes after thirty gunshots are fired between native and non-native fishermen who are at odds with one another about fishing rights. A month earlier, there was controversy from both sides of the debate concerning the communal licence issued by federal Fisheries and Oceans Minister Herb Dhaliwal. The licence lasted for a week, beginning on 22 July. Mi'kmaq fishermen stated it was too short a time and was against a Supreme Court of Canada ruling, while non-native fishermen argued against the differential treatment of both groups.

- 19 September
Intellectual Property Ontario Premier Mike Harris states that his administration will continue to pay \$800 for predictive breast and ovarian cancer testing, even though Myriad Genetic Laboratories Inc., an American company demanding \$3,850 for the test, threatens legal action. The test involves BRCA 1 and BRCA 2 genes, both of which are patented by the company. Mr Harris argues that patents should not be placed on discoveries such as genes, for they are not inventions, and he states that Canadian laws should be amended to prevent further patenting of human genes.
- 22–23 September
Ministerial Conferences Among a wide array of initiatives for the reduction of toxic chemical emissions, the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment, in a meeting in The Pas, Manitoba, reaffirms its commitment to clean and secure water for the health and safety of all Canadian citizens. The ministers initiate a series of collaborative actions to complement their individual initiatives, which include reviewing existing and additional water quality guidelines and development; setting research priorities for addressing human-induced water quality issues; and providing extensive information to Canadians through the CCME web site pertaining to water quality.
- 26 September
Ministerial Conferences Health ministers from both levels of government meet in St John's, Newfoundland, to discuss progress in the sector since their meeting last year. It is agreed that, since the last meeting, intergovernmental collaboration has resulted in significant advances on the action plan developed by the first ministers, which includes developing a multifaceted and collaborative approach to pharmaceuticals management; addressing the issue of the supply and retention of health-care professionals; ongoing development of performance indicators; and setting the groundwork for better integration of home care and community care into the health system.
- 27 September
British Columbia After tax cuts and a growing provincial deficit, Premier Gordon Campbell asks all his ministers, except those of health and education, to examine three scenarios: budget cuts of 20 percent, 35 percent, or 50 percent over the next three years for their respective departments. Many have

criticized the tax cuts as a means of stimulating the British Columbia economy, stating that they will merely throw the province into a deeper deficit.

27–28 September
*Ministerial
Conferences*

Ministers from both levels of government responsible for northern development conclude a two-day conference in La Ronge, Saskatchewan, with an agreement to establish a Northern Development Ministers Forum with a mandate to advance the common and diverse interests of northerners, which will be designed over the next few months.

1 October
Quebec

Quebec Liberals win two of the four open seats in the National Assembly in the provincial by-elections. Françoise Gauthier wins in Jonquière – the riding of the former premier, Lucien Bouchard – and Julie Boulet wins in the Laviolette riding, which has been a Parti Québécois stronghold since 1976. PQ members Sylvain Page and Richard Legendre win in the other ridings.

3 October
British Columbia

British Columbia Finance Minister Gary Collins announces that the provincial government will freeze health-care and education spending and will cut the rest of government spending by 35 percent in order to achieve a balanced budget in three years.

5 October
Agriculture

Just days after the announcement of a \$160 million bail-out package by the federal government to compensate loss of business for Canadian airlines (due to the terrorist attacks in the United States), Saskatchewan Agriculture Minister Clay Serby states that the federal government should compensate Canadian farmers as well: “Like the airlines, agriculture needs interim support to address factors beyond their control.” Farmers across Canada have been dealing with severe cases of drought, which is threatening yields and revenues.

11 October
*Ministerial
Conferences*

Provincial and territorial ministers of finance meet in Vancouver, British Columbia, to discuss economic security, fiscal stability, and the uncertainties that the terrorist attacks on the United States pose for the short-term economic outlook. Low interest rates, reduced taxes, and sound fiscal management on behalf of all governments are

recognized as the key to providing a secure base on which to build economic recovery. The ministers announce their support of federal measures to enhance security while maintaining a strong relationship with the United States, but they call on the federal government to follow through on the demands of the premiers from their annual conference to remove the equalization ceiling and restore transfer funding to 1994–95 levels.

15 October
Aboriginal Peoples

In a town near Yellowknife, a consortium of energy companies (Imperial Oil, Shell Canada, Conoco Inc., and ExxonMobil Canada) signs a deal with the representative group, Mackenzie Valley Aboriginal Pipeline Corporation, which will give northern Aboriginal people a one-third share in the natural gas pipeline project. The deal, which is believed to be the first of its kind in Canada, will cost about \$3 billion and could take up to ten years to become operational after regulatory applications and construction are completed.

16 October
Aboriginal Peoples

The Assembly of First Nations issues layoff notices for 70 of its nearly 150 employees, stating that federal funding for the organization has dropped from \$19 million to \$10 million for this fiscal year. National Chief Matthew Coon Come states that the funding shortage is a reactionary measure by Indian Affairs Minister Robert Nault because of Aboriginal opposition of the proposed overhaul of the *Indian Act*. Mr Nault has previously stated that funding will be delayed if annual financial audit requirements (which the AFN has not yet completed) are not met by the 31 July deadline.

16 October
Political Leaders

Said to be one of the most controversial and confrontational premiers in the history of Ontario, Mike Harris announces his retirement from politics after twenty years on the provincial stage. He will officially step down when his replacement as party leader is chosen. Mr Harris was born on 23 January 1945 in Toronto but grew up in North Bay, Ontario. He became a Trustee of the Nipissing Board of Education in 1974 and president of the Northern Ontario Trustees' Association in 1980. A year later he was elected to the Ontario legislative assembly for Nipissing, keeping this riding for his entire political career. He was

chosen leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario in 1990 and served as premier when his party was voted into government for two consecutive terms – in 1995 and 1999. He is most widely known for his “common sense revolution.”

18 October
Alberta

Alberta Finance Minister Pat Nelson announces she is cutting \$1.3 billion from the government budget to bring order to provincial finances that were caught off guard by plummeting natural gas prices.

28 October
*Health-Care
Commission*

Roy Romanow, the head of a national inquiry in the future of health care in Canada, reiterates that the commission will examine all options and alternatives to medicare in Canada, promising that the \$15 million inquiry will be the most extensive review since the 1960s Royal Commission on Health Services. “The only thing that is not on the table is the status quo.”

30 October
Constitution

The House of Commons approves an amendment to the constitution that officially changes the name of the last province to join Confederation, in 1949. The most eastern province will henceforth be called Newfoundland and Labrador.

4 November
Aboriginal Peoples

After less than a year of operation, the federally appointed First Nations Governance Institute announces that it will shut down because of a recent decision by federal Indian Affairs Minister Robert Nault to cease funding. The federal government originally pledged \$5 million for the institute, which received \$1.4 million for start-up. Aimed at providing an information-sharing network on Aboriginal self-government for communities across Canada, the institute was expected to become self-sustaining after a few years of operation.

8 November
Atlantic Canada

The four Atlantic premiers agree to set up an expert panel to review drug policies for the entire region, with the goal of eliminating duplication and reducing costs in bulk purchases through regional cooperation.

10 November
Environment

At a United Nations–sponsored conference in Morocco, environment and energy ministers from nations all over the world, including Canada’s David Anderson, reach an

agreement on the fine print of the Kyoto Accord. The deal provides a detailed rulebook governing the complex treaty aimed at reducing global emissions of greenhouse gases, particularly carbon dioxide.

13 November
Budget

The federal Department of Finance announces that the budget surplus is continually shrinking because of declining tax revenues, although the surplus is still at \$14 billion after the first half of the fiscal year.

21 November
Revenue

Don Drummond, Toronto Dominion Bank chief economist and former senior official of federal Finance Minister Paul Martin, urges the government to increase the GST to 10 percent and spend all additional revenues from the 3 percent increase towards a cut in income taxes. According to Mr Drummond, doing so would boost economic growth because sales taxes, unlike income taxes, do not drive investments out of the country.

28 November
*Anti-Terrorism Bill
(Bill C-36)*

Bill C-36 passes final reading in the House of Commons with a voting result of 190 to 47 with strong support from Liberal, Canadian Alliance, and Progressive Conservative/Democratic Representative Caucus members of parliament. The anti-terrorism legislation receives royal assent on 18 December after passing through the Senate.

29–30 November
*Ministerial
Conferences*

Ministers responsible for housing from both levels of government, in a meeting in Quebec City, reach an agreement on a framework to increase the supply of affordable housing across Canada. Under this agreement, the federal government will negotiate bilaterally with each province and territory in an effort to create more affordable housing throughout Canada more effectively.

30 November
Health Care

An official for Health Canada announces that the department is setting aside \$600,000 to commission a major study on the affects of growing privatization of health care in Canada. The two-year research project has three purposes: to quantify current private services by province or territory and the type of service; to identify existing mechanisms to regulate private services delivery; and to explain the role of guidelines in preventing conflicts of interest in cases of similar services offered by private and public health-care providers.

- 5 December
Aboriginal Peoples
- The Assembly of First Nations votes 126 to 49 against a strategy for cooperation between the organization and the federal government to change the outdated *Indian Act*. Federal Indian Affairs Minister Robert Nault, who worked with an AFN committee to outline the new governance law, states that the federal government is “going to move ahead with the governance initiative, with or without the AFN.”
- 7 December
Municipalities
- The Supreme Court of Canada refuses to hear an appeal by thirteen of the twenty-eight Montreal suburbs that are contesting the constitutionality of Bill 170. The municipalities contesting the bill state that the amalgamation will create a primarily francophone city and will limit services to the anglophone population.
- 10 December
Budget
- As a result of the terrorist attacks on the United States and the implications the events have had on national security issues and the economies of the world, the federal government unveils a new budget. Naturally, the focus is on security, which will receive \$12 billion over the next five years (this includes extra funding for the military and defence, border control, airline security, and intelligence). The other big announcement is the future of the contingency fund. If it is not needed, the government has earmarked \$500 million for an assistance package for Africa. Finance Minister Paul Martin also mentions investments in technology, improving the living status of Aboriginal people, and enhancing basic infrastructure by working with provincial and municipal governments.
- 12 December
Political Leaders
- Stockwell Day resigns as Leader of the opposition, bringing an end to his eighteen-month tenure as head of the Canadian Alliance. He will retain his seat in the House of Commons for the Okanagan-Coquihalla riding.
- 18 December
Anti-Terrorism Bill (Bill C-36)
- As was done in the House of Commons, the Liberal majority in the Senate forces closure on the controversial Bill C-36, and the anti-terrorism legislation is given royal assent shortly afterwards. The major implications of the new law will allow the government to create lists of suspected terrorists; and allow the suppression of evidence to protect classified information; impose consecutive sentencing

for terrorists; allow preventative arrests for suspected terrorists; allow law enforcement officers to force self-incriminating evidence from suspects in court.

20 December
Justice

In an 8 to 1 ruling of the *Dunmore v. Ontario* case, the Supreme Court of Canada rules that Ontario's *Labour Relations Act* violates constitutional freedom of association rights. The decision is a victory for the United Food and Commercial Workers, since Ontario farmers are now legally able to unionize. This ruling may also have implications for Alberta, which has a law similar to the *Labour Relations Act*.

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