

Right Wing Tasties

The right wing refers to supporters of the PC's and Reform. They tend to be fiscally conservative and advocate tax cuts, debt repayment, and a better military. What Martin did to placate these people was end what is known as "bracket creep." What this is is when people make more money (thanks to inflation increasing income), they move up a tax bracket (which increases the percentage amount they pay in tax in our progressive taxation system). It has served as a revenue boon for the government (it will cost the government \$1 billion to return to indexing). By ending it and indexing tax rates to inflation, Martin is doing two things. One is serious tax relief (especially for lower income people who are most hurt by the creep which has pulled in 1.9 million people into higher tax brackets over the last 10 years without them seeing any real increase in their income). The second is that Martin silenced his critics and pulled the rug out from under the right. In terms of debt repayment, Martin continues to pay down the \$570 billion monster in increments of \$3 billion (which he calls contingency funds for emergencies but doesn't use when they

arise... see health care, farmers, coal miners and fisheries). Interest on the debt alone is the government single biggest cost at \$41 billion per year. The government also boosted spending on defence by \$2 billion over 3 years for improved pay (translation: get military spouses off the food bank line) and new equipment.

The Right Spending or...

Spending for the left depending on ones perspective. Several initiatives were announced amounting to about \$5.8 billion (with overall government spending going from \$116 billion to \$121.8 billion). Included in this was another \$2.5 billion for the block transfer Ottawa gives the provinces to manage health and education (far short of the Premiers' demands). This drop in the bucket does not amount to much especially when it is spread over several years. While health is clearly the nations priority, Ottawa seems content to let the provinces take this criticism on the chin. This could begin to create an unCanadian disparity between rich provinces with good care and poorer ones with weaker systems. The government also began spending money

(\$700 million) on the environment again as they must gear up to meet pollution levels agreed upon in Kyoto in 1997 as well as a renewed commitment to protect endangered species. The big ticket items were children getting \$850 million more per year which comes in the form of the Canada Child Tax Benefit. The second item was to increase maternity/parental leave to one year from 6 months at a cost of \$900 million, which will come from Employment Insurance. Another big initiative was increasing the basic tax free exemption to \$8000 over 5 years (this year it will go from \$7131 to \$7231 and is beneficial to students as well as low income earners). The middle

POLITICS

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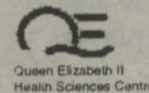
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UPEI Sexual Harassment Policy on Campus

You may or may not know this, but UPEI has a policy on sexual harassment (it is on the web) and a committee to oversee policy development and deal with any questions or complaints that may arise. For this academic year the committee is composed of:

Barb Curley (curley@upei.ca), Matt Hogan (mhogan@upei.ca), Bob Gibson (bgibson@upei.ca), Roberta MacDonald (romacdonald@upei.ca), Genesta MacInnis (gmacinnis@upei.ca) and David Sims (sims@upei.ca).

Your university has a strict policy of dealing with sexual harassment, if you have any concerns, please contact any of the committee members.