

March 31, 2003

## **The Fifth Annual Ted Weatherill Awards (The “Teddies”)**

### **Origin**

The award is named in honour of Ted Weatherill, a senior federal civil servant, terminated in 1998 for “expenses incurred by him...incompatible with his position as Chairman of the Canada Labour Relations Board,” according to the Office of the Minister of Labour. Examples, uncovered by the Auditor General, included:

- A \$733.43 lunch in Paris for two at the RPG Arpege;
- A dinner at the Royal Windsor Hotel in Brussels for \$531.50;
- Average dinner expenses in North America of \$91. (The average public servant allowance was between \$19.75 and \$25.00);
- Average accommodation expenses in North America of \$59 to \$375. (Other civil servants spent between \$52 and \$168 at the same hotels); and
- \$70,700 spent on taxpayer-reimbursed meals in North America between 1989 and 1997 as opposed to the estimated \$19,400 that would have been spent had Mr. Weatherill followed Treasury Board guidelines.

A spoof of the Oscars, the Teddies are given out at a black tie news conference in Ottawa, each March prior to the Oscars event in Hollywood.

### **Eligibility**

The Ted Weatherill Award (a Teddy) is awarded annually to a public office holder, civil servant or agency of government, that most exemplifies government waste, overspending, over-taxation, excessive regulation, lack of accountability, or any combination of the five. A Teddy may be awarded to said recipient on the basis of past accomplishments in such areas, or on the basis of proposed initiatives in the aforementioned categories.

### **The Federal Teddy**

Awarded annually to a federal public office holder, civil servant, or agency, that most exemplifies government waste, overspending, over-taxation, excessive regulation, lack of accountability, or any combination of the five.

### **The Provincial/Municipal Teddy**

Awarded annually to a provincial or municipal public office holder, civil servant, or agency, that most exemplifies government waste, overspending, over-taxation, excessive regulation, lack of accountability, or any combination of the five.

The Lifetime Achievement Teddy

The CTF may, on occasion, confer the Ted Weatherill Lifetime Achievement Award to a public office holder or civil servant most deserving of recognition for their lifetime contribution to depriving taxpayers of their wealth through government waste, overspending, over-taxation, excessive regulation, lack of accountability, or any combination of these five qualities.

### **Selection Process**

Submissions for nominations are encouraged throughout the year. The final decision on the awards rests with the directors of the CTF. This year's nominees were drawn from nominations by CTF staff and

supporters as well as those submitted by the media and the public through the CTF web site ([www.taxpayer.com](http://www.taxpayer.com)) from January to March, 2003.

## Past Award Winners

**1999** – Federal Teddy: Public Works and Government Services (PWGSC) for sole sourcing \$1.4 billion in government contracts and allowing Parliament Hill renovations to soar an estimated \$1.4 billion from the original \$440 million.

**1999** – Provincial/Municipal Teddy: The Government of British Columbia for contracting an American firm to the tune of \$400,000 for a 22-page photo radar manual. At 2,637 words the manual cost BC taxpayers \$152 a word!

**1999** – Lifetime Achievement Teddy: Hon. Michael Wilson for his implementation of “bracket creep” which cost taxpayers \$90 billion in extra taxes between 1986 and 1990.

**2000** – Federal Teddy: Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) for the \$1 billion job grants scandal.

**2000** – Provincial/Municipal Teddy: The Government of British Columbia for its Fast Ferry fiasco.

**2000** – Lifetime Achievement Teddy: Hon. Sheila Copps for various misadventures including her support of government assistance for the film industry, the Canada Information Office, free-flag fiasco as well as the tape tax on blank recording media.

**2001** – Federal Teddy: The majority of Canadian Alliance MPs for flip-flopping on their long-standing opposition to the MP pension plan and opting back into a plan they once so vehemently denounced.

**2001** – Provincial/Municipal Teddy: The Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority (SIGA) for allowing its former CEO to squander \$1.7 million of public money.

**2001** – Lifetime Achievement Teddy: Former B.C. Premier Glen Clark for hiking taxes by \$1.5 billion in two budgets, presiding over a doubling of B.C.’s debt from \$17 billion to \$34 billion and a variety of other fiscal misdeeds, far too many to mention.

**2002** – Federal Teddy: Farm Credit Canada for its \$433,000 name change from its original name, Farm Credit Corporation. Of that \$140,000 was spent to research this single word adjustment, and the remaining \$293,000 to change logos, signs and door nameplates.

**2002** – Provincial Teddy: The Alberta government for failing to properly determine Stockwell Day’s eligibility for legal coverage provided by taxpayers and for refusing to challenge the legal bills in the Goddard-Day lawsuit. Day’s legal bills totaled \$732,064 to defend him against a defamation claim of \$60,000.

**2002** – Lifetime Achievement Teddy: Former Industry Minister Brian Tobin for his “leadership” role in promoting subsidies to Canadian shipbuilders, depriving Newfoundland taxpayers of revenues and 1,300 jobs that would have come with the Voisey’s Bay project and for his championing the \$2 billion to \$5 billion broadband boondoggle project.

## 2003 Federal Nominees

- **Best Adaptation of a Keystone Cops Routine:** Established in 1995, the Canadian Firearms Centre, better known as the federal gun registry was originally pegged to cost \$119 million with \$117 million recouped through fees, for a net cost to taxpayers of \$2 million. The December 2002 Auditor General's report projected the registry to cost \$1 billion by 2004-2005 with \$140 million collected in fees ... a whopping cost overrun of 430 times the original estimate. This is the second year in a row that the gun registry has received a Teddy nomination.
- **Biggest Flush Performed by a Crown Corporation:** The National Capital Commission (NCC), Canada's most secretive Crown Corporation, spent \$250,000 for an outdoor public toilet in Rockcliffe; a ritzy, old-money Ottawa enclave that is home to senior public service mandarins and foreign diplomats. The stone structure (worth \$187,000) and surrounding landscape improvements (valued at \$63,000) is only open on weekends in the winter. Heritage Minister Sheila Copps, who is ultimately responsible for the agency, refuses to be accountable for the NCC's decision. Needless to say, the whole thing stinks.
- **Fuzziest Excuse for an Advance Screening Party:** Industry Canada – also known as corporate welfare central or Subsidy Canada – had its bureaucrats beaver away for weeks to come up with 13 possible titles plus supporting “tag lines” for its Innovation Paper. It then commissioned Ipsos-Reid Canada to conduct focus groups at a cost of \$37,000 to determine which titles worked best for Canadians. In the end, none of the titles were chosen ... and it was the same story in French as well.
- **Most Expensive Use of Dead Royalty as Extras in an Independent Production:** The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) granted \$1.6 million to Marie-France Wagner, a French Studies professor at Concordia University in Montreal to study “the evolution of royal processions in French towns between 1484 and 1615.” This is the same agency that funded a study of the history of exotic dancing in British Columbia's lower mainland.
- **Worst Imitation of a Cheech and Chong Film:** Health Canada awarded Saskatoon-based Prairie Plant Systems a \$5.7 million contract to grow marijuana for “medicinal use.” The company set up its hydroponic equipment in an abandoned mine in Flin-Flon Manitoba. When Prairie Systems harvested its first batch of weed – some 2000 plants in total – the quality was so poor and the potency of the plants was so inconsistent that the department ordered the company to grow a better batch. Will the sequel be Fast Times at Flin Flon High?
- **Runaway Budget for Set Design:** Indian and Northern Affairs Canada for spending approximately \$44 million to build a brand new reserve in Northern Manitoba for 278 Marcel Colomb band members. The new reserve is being built 30km away from the Town of Lynn Lake – which is 80% vacant due to defunct mining operations – and where the Marcel Colomb band members currently live.

## 2003 Provincial/Municipal Nominees

- **Best Remake of a WWII Film Featuring Drunken Sailors on Leave:** Members of the Ontario legislature who were caught in an expense account fiasco (35 bankers boxes of claims) that revealed (among other things) charges for: 2 tickets to Vegas for a boxing match (\$1,000); a handwritten dinner receipt (\$1,700); canceling an aide's Cuban holiday (\$2,103); beer purchased under the heading of “caucus supplies” (\$190); steak dinners charged all over Toronto, bizarre Tropicana orange juice addictions and numerous unreceipted expenses.
- **Worst Use of Land Titles “On Location”:** The Saskatchewan NDP government initiated an \$18 million renovation project to modernize Saskatchewan's land titles system. The plan was to turn the land registry system into a crown corporation, commercialize it with public seed money, and then sell the “automated, web-based system” around the world. While land registry bureaucrats were jet-setting to places like Albania, Hong Kong and Australia to sell the system, it was crumbling under the weight of its own deficiencies including scores of complaints from local users. Fees were raised, travel halted and today the system has cost taxpayers \$107 million ... with not a single buyer in sight.
- **Biggest Flush Performed by a City Government:** Winnipeg Mayor Glen Murray's pet project of a \$1 million toilet – mostly for plumbing and wastewater improvements – on the Provencher footbridge as part of an ambitious \$5 million urban facelift to build 3,000 square feet of commercial space including a restaurant. Instead of giving this idea a good dose of Imodium and using the \$1 million instead to reduce property taxes, fix other city infrastructure or pay down the

City's debt, the Mayor pushed forward smoothly. We can only hope the restaurant will serve a lot of high-fibre meals so the City can maximize the return on its investment.

- **Worst Rendition of "Give Peace a Chance" by Elected Officials:** The City of Vancouver voted to allocate \$25,000 over three years for a "peace and justice" committee. The social engineering socialists may have been routed from Victoria but it seems they have taken refuge at city hall. This follows a trend among city councils around Canada to pass anti-war resolutions and other peace related motions. Somehow the folks in charge of potholes, buses and garbage pickup missed the part of their orientation session that pointed out foreign policy issues are a federal responsibility.
- **Worst Film ... The Hunt for Blue, French October:** Two consultants charged the City of Quebec \$30,000 for design options to change the city's logo: A stylized depiction of Champlain's ship along with the words "Ville de Québec." The three options presented kept the ship, kept the colours, kept the words and merely tinkered with case of the word Quebec (from uppercase to lowercase) or changing the ship's direction. Needless to say, this film will not be appearing on English screens with subtitles.
- **Worst Animated Feature: Spudco – Mr. Potatohead Buys a Business:** In the late 1990's the Saskatchewan government decided the province needed a "value-added" potato industry to take advantage of the already government-subsidized irrigation network. In 2000, "Spudco" the province's potato Crown Corporation went bust, taking countless private businesses down with it. So far, taxpayers are on the hook for \$28 million in losses and investors are now suing the province, it might be a long time before we know the actual cost. A Canadian Taxpayers Federation complaint to the RCMP has resulted in a criminal investigation being launched.

## 2003 Lifetime Achievement Recipient

In order to receive this award, a member of Canada's political class must demonstrate a commitment that goes above and beyond the ordinary ability to tax and spend. In addition to such skills, one must demonstrate ability to waste tax dollars beyond even the normal ability of run-of-the-mill governments engaged in penny ante squandering. In recent memory, there has not been a more deserving lifetime achievement award winner than the Right Honourable Jean Joseph Jacques Chrétien – soon to be former Prime Minister.

He was first elected forty years ago, in April 8th 1963 as Member of Parliament for Saint-Maurice – Lafleche, and has had a long and expensive career in federal politics. He has served in Cabinet for 26 years and the last 10 years as Prime Minister.

Once referred to as having served in every ministry, his cabinet posts include the following: Minister of Finance, Minister of National Revenue, President of Treasury Board, Minister of Industry, Minister Energy, Minister of Indian Affairs, Minister of Justice and Minister of External Affairs. He is expected to retire with the largest Prime Ministerial Pension, estimated to be worth \$171,000 per year, fully indexed for life.

- When he was elected in 1963 the federal government spent \$8.3 billion it will rise to \$180.7 billion in his retirement year of 2004 ... a 2,000% increase;
- As Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, he unveiled a White Paper on Indian Policy in 1969. It was designed to lead to the full, free and non-discriminatory participation of Indians people in Canadian society. The White Paper was ambitious in its scope but never implemented. By 2003 his legacy on Aboriginal peoples is \$7.5 billion in federal spending, race-based taxation, affirmative action hiring, Reserve land held in trust by the crown, continuation of the Indian Act and aboriginal commercial fishery – quite the opposite of what his initiative set out to accomplish;
- As Canada's finance minister between 1977 and 1979, he presided over an 18% increase in government spending (\$8.4 billion increase);
- Since becoming Prime Minister in October 1993, the Canadian dollar relative to the US has declined from 75 cents US to 68 cents US – a 9% decline in purchasing power of Canadians;
- He cancelled the \$5.4 billion helicopter contract in 1993 which cost taxpayers \$500 million in penalties and a decade later, the combined total cost to replace the Marine and Search and Rescue helicopters will probably top \$6 billion;

- One broken promise to scrap the GST which was a central pre-election promise in 1993. Since then he claims he was misquoted – he only wanted to replace the GST. But for taxpayers his 1993 promise was clear ... no more GST. A tax that will net over \$30 billion in revenues 2003-2004;
- One billion dollars and counting for a gun registry that was to cost a mere \$2 million dollars, a whopping 430 times cost overrun;
- The billion dollar boondoggle at HRDC in 2000;
- Under his watch ethically challenged, ministers of Defence, Public Works and Solicitors General, were all forced to resign – there were six resignations last year alone;
- Who could forget the Shawinigan shuffle – did he own the golf course, was it sold; did he engineer a \$600,000 loan to his friend? Who knows, but the questions remain unanswered – only he knows the dance steps;
- Changes to election financing, introduced this year. Now ½ of recognized party financing will come from tax dollars. It could cost \$50 million or more per year;
- Ramming the Kyoto Protocol through Parliament late last year – both arrogant and expensive. The cost per household by 2010 could be as high as \$2,700;
- Ignoring the advice of Defence department brass and spending \$100 million on two unnecessary Challenger jets on the last day of fiscal year 2001/2002;
- A farewell budget full of more spending, long-term commitments, a legacy initiatives that taxpayers will be paying over the next decade;
- The books may be balanced, but this was done on the backs of taxpayers, from downloading costs to the provinces, hikes to CPP premiums, a \$40 billion EI surplus, and a 50% increase in taxation revenues; and
- He has dwarfed former Prime Minister Brian Mulroney's farewell tour – His Long Kiss Goodbye is lasting three times long than Mulroney's and will cost taxpayers untold millions more.

The buck always stops with "da Boss" – The Prime Minister. For this record, outgoing Prime Minister Jean Chrétien has earned the 2003 Lifetime Achievement Teddy.