

Only in Canada, eh

Taxpayers are paying millions of dollars to keep an eye on five suspected terrorists declared a “security risk” by the federal government.

The federal court stripped these suspects of their Canadian residency, but at the same time wouldn't allow Ottawa to deport them because of how they might be treated in their home county. Then the court further ruled these suspected terrorists couldn't be detained as it would be “inhumane.”



As a result, officials are forced to monitor them in quasi-house arrest, which allows limited freedom of movement, but requires a constant eye be kept on them.

Through a series of Access to Information requests, Phd candidate Mike Larsen — York University — discovered Ottawa annually spends \$500,000 to approximately \$1-million monitoring each individual.

Algerian Mohamed Harkat is considered a “possible al-Qaeda sleeper agent.” According to Larsen, in 2006-07, Ottawa had six people keeping an eye on Harkat at a cost of \$868,700. Costs include \$31,000 for a new car and \$5,000 for gas. The federal government insists it only spent \$576,886 watching Harkat that year.

Two other suspected terrorists, both Egyptians, are under similar surveillance. A fourth, a Moroccan, is also being watched but has less stringent monitoring arrangements.

A fifth detainee, Hassan Almrei, is jailed in a special terrorist prison set up in Kingston. As the jail's only customer, he costs taxpayers \$2.6-million a year.

By-the-way, at the time of this writing, the cheapest cost for a one way ticket to Cairo, Egypt out of Toronto was just under \$500.

With files from *The Globe and Mail*

But baby it's cold outside

Despite being blasted by one of the coldest winters in recent memory, Health Canada bureaucrats are proceeding with the construction of a \$8-million “heat alert system.”

Travelling the world with Lotto proceeds.

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In November, the department tendered out research to determine what would be the best type of heat alert system to set up in towns and cities. The study will see test sites set up in four communities of different sizes across Canada.

Along with this, a program will be designed to educate health care professionals and individuals on heat related problems.

According to a spokesman from Health Canada's Climate Change and Health Division — yes, there is a whole department for this — they expect a dramatic increase in heat waves due to global warming.

The money comes out of an \$85-million program set up by the federal government to help Canadians adjust to global warming.

With files from the *National Post*

Taxpayers backstop Indy losses

In May 2008, Edmonton's city council quietly approved a deal with Northlands, a non-profit corporation operating the Rexall Edmonton Indy Race, to cover losses associated with the race over the next three years. At the time, Northlands informed council that losses in 2008 would be in the \$1-million to \$1.3-million range.

This past January, Northlands announced the 2008 Indy race lost \$5.3-million dollars. It also stated that Edmonton's city council

cil agreed to cover the full shortfall.

“This is plain and simple corporate welfare,” stated CTF-Alberta director Scott Hennig. “Indy Racing League (IRL) and their drivers rake in millions upon millions of dollars a year. If their race loses money, perhaps IRL or their drivers should be covering the losses, not taxpayers.”

Many Edmontonians were stunned the city agreed to back stop losses at \$1 million but are totally dumbfounded as to why an additional \$4 million was kicked in.

Unfortunately, taxpayers have two more years left to bailout the race in a worsening economy.

With files from the *Canadian Taxpayers Federation* / www.northlands.com

Where to spend the auto bailout

With the US and Canadian governments committing billions of dollars to bailout the North American auto industry, the question on everyone's minds is what will the “shrinking three” do with the money?

According Jaime Ardilla, president of General Motors (GM) in Brazil, GM is planning to use \$1 billion of what it receives from American taxpayers to invest in its plants in Brazil. Silly US taxpayers, here they thought the money was being used to keep jobs at home.

Speaking of the “shrinking three,” it was also reported that GM spends nearly \$17 million a year supplying viagra for its employees.

With files from the *Latin American Herald Tribune* / Consumeraffairs.com

Lotta lotto travel

Documents obtained by the *Halifax Chronicle Herald* revealed that executives working with the Atlantic Lottery Corp racked up travel and related expenses of nearly \$550,000

between September 2006 and the fall of 2008. The

corporation is owned by the provinces of New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and PEI.

According to the documents obtained through Freedom of Information, lottery executives travelled to such exotic destinations as Paris, London, Athens and France.

The biggest spender was CEO Michelle Carinci who spent \$119,000 on travel over the two year period. Many of Carinci's expense claims were blotted out by bureaucrats who claimed they did not fall under the terms of the request. But the censors missed notes by Carinci, such as one where she tried to justify why hotel rooms were so expensive.

Her destinations included Napa, Paris, London, Athens and San Francisco. She even managed to spend \$10,488 on a charter flight for her and other lotto executives to neighbouring St John's.

Should taxpayers bailout the Indy Racing League?



Second on the list was corporation senior VP Adrienne O'Pray who spent \$38,000 in travel. Included in this was a \$1,550 lunch. On another trip she paid \$749 for a hotel room.

Not to be outdone, executive Pierre La France, spent \$30,000 over this period which included taking in an Aerosmith concert. When he wasn't attending concerts he travelled to such to such locales as London and Las Vegas.

With files from the *Halifax Chronicle Herald*

Déjà vu

The Saskatchewan government is spending \$11 million to transform a government build-

ing into classroom space for training much needed nurses. The building will be used by SIAST, a government-run training college.

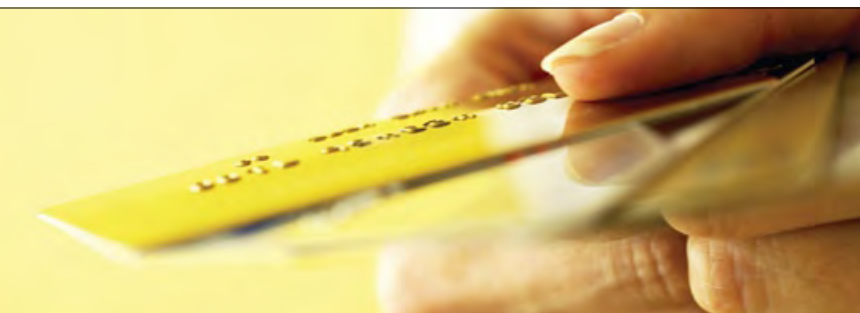
This is the building's second major renovation. Four years ago, the previous NDP government spent \$5 million turning the building into office space

What was it before that, you ask? It was classroom space for the nursing program at SIAST.

With files from CTV News / Canadian Press

Wanton corporate welfare waste

In mid-January, two textile mills in northern New Brunswick announced bankruptcy and closed down. The mills, Atlantic Fine



Yarns in Pokemouche, and Atlantic Yarns in Athoville, are owned by Sunflag Canada.

The mills struggled financially for years and over the past decade received repeated subsidies from the New Brunswick government. As recently as 2007, the government provided the mill in Athoville \$1-million for a waste recovery system and \$3.4-million for operational costs.

Now all the taxpayer loans appear lost. The New Brunswick government was not a secured lender, and there is little chance taxpayers will see any of this money, once the mills' assets are liquidated.

New Brunswick officials insist they did due diligence when providing the assistance including a careful analysis of the company's financial position and future markets.

One New Brunswick taxpayer quipped to the media that the only business plan the pol-

iticians looked at was how many votes could be bought with the hand-outs.

With files from CBC.ca

Get your own house in order

An audit of credit cards at the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) uncovered a litany of abuse so bad the police were called in. It also revealed the department had very lax controls, a disturbing shortfall for a department intent on making sure Canadians pay their taxes.

CRA has 1,704 credit cards assigned to employees. In fiscal 2007-08, these employ-

ees spent

nearly \$55 million with the cards. The auditors did sample surveys of credit card usage. They discovered:

Department has credit cards handed out to people who no longer work for it.

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In a survey of 115 active cards, 12 belonged to employees who no longer worked at the CRA and at least three cards had been used to purchase items valued at \$576.50 suggesting

CRA has 170 active cards in the hands of individuals no longer employed with the agency.

In an analysis of spending on another 128 cards, 25% of the cards had questionable purchases. This included spending on items prohibited by the department such as charitable contributions, greeting cards, flower deliveries and cards. There were also numerous missing receipts and purchases being made

without approval. The auditors also found instances of fraudulent spending and passed them on to CRA officials.

With files from The Globe and Mail

Strange expenses at Sunrise

A little holiday turned into a big bill in Invermay, Saskatchewan, population 260. Town council declared a civic holiday on August 22, 2008 in celebration of its hundredth anniversary.

sary. However, five days later, the Sunrise Health Region had a surprise announcement at its annual board meeting: the holiday cost them \$8,000.

Union agreements required that all 42 employees at the Invermay Health Centre be paid overtime for the civic holiday as if it were any other statutory holiday. Although private employers are not obligated to recognize civic holidays, under union contracts, public employers apparently are.

Sunrise Health Region also paid \$12,000 for a high-temperature dishwasher for Canora Hospital. Allan Dae-dlick, a vice-president with Sunrise said the existing low-temperature dishwasher had to be replaced “because an employee was allergic to items in it.”

With files from Yorkton This Week

Priorities at the UN

When we understand that the United Nations is accountable to no one but governments — many of them corrupt — it’s easy to understand how it has become a monument to waste and corruption.

This past fall, the UN’s Human Rights Council unveiled a \$23-million mural in Geneva which covers the 16,000 square foot ceiling of its new chambers. The painting by Miquel Barcelo has drawn comparisons to the Sistine Chapel.

Ironically, the extravagant mural was funded by foreign aid budgets. Money — intended for starving children — was instead spent on a sprawling painting.

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, who attended the unveiling, thanked Barcelo for “putting unique talents to work in the service of the world.”

with files from foxnews.com

Bad boy severance

British Columbians were outraged the pro-

vincially owned Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC) paid severance worth \$825,000 to three fired employees.

The three worked at ICBC’s Material Damage and Training Research Facility in Burnaby, but were fired after the findings of a Price Waterhouse audit released in July 2008. It was discovered that 55 vehicles repaired at

Paying \$2,500 to a murderer for “hurt feelings!”



the facility had been bought by ICBC employees or their relatives and friends at “bargain-basement prices.” Not only did employees use the facility to repair vehicles, they also used the agency’s auction system to sell them. In addition, the employees did not disclose the vehicles’ accident histories as required by law.

Prior to the investigation, which began in January 2008, there had been three complaints to ICBC about activities at the facility. The crown corporation chose to ignore them.

Access to Information requests brought the dismissals to light, though the disclosure was somewhat suppressed. Two dismissed employees petitioned the privacy commissioner to have their activities omitted. ICBC provided heavily censored information on six others. Of these, one had been fired without cause, two left voluntarily and three received reprimands.

B.C. residents are forced by law to buy their basic car insurance from ICBC.

With files from The Globe and Mail

Oh the shame of it all

Muri Peace Chilton won a \$2,500 lawsuit against taxpayers because of the demeaning

treatment he received after cutting his thumb in jail.

Chilton was imprisoned in 1977 for the rape and attempted murder of a young female hitchhiker. After failing to run her down with his car after she fled his unwanted advances, Chilton caught her, stripped her naked, choked her unconscious, raped her, and then left her to die on a cold January night. The young woman survived and spent three months in the hospital recuperating from severe frostbite.

Then in 1996, while on mandatory supervised parole, he raped and murdered a 15-year-old girl. Be-

fore fleeing, he set fire to her body in the basement while her family slept upstairs. Fortunately, they were awakened by the smoke. After pleading guilty to second degree murder, Chilton was sentenced to "life" imprisonment making him eligible for parole in 15 years.

Chilton has since been working in the manufacturing arm of the prison system. There, faulty equipment was partly to blame for an accident that led to his thumb being cut

and most of his nail pulled off. He sued for both phys-

ical and emotional injury because one of his supervisors laughed at him.

In his suit launched in 2002, Chilton asked for \$100,000. His claim stated: "The self respect of [Chilton] and inherent dignity of [Chilton] as a person suffered greatly due to the laughter."

Corrections Canada argued it was liable due to negligence, but the injury was minor.

The judge awarded Chilton \$2,500,

With files from the *National Post*

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- 1) Go to google.ca
- 2) Click "News" at the top of the screen
- 3) Click "News Alerts" on the left side of the screen
- 4) Enter "Canadian Taxpayers Federation" in the "Search Items" box
- 5) Beside "How often" decide if you would like e-mail alerts "once a day" or "as it happens"
- 6) Enter your e-mail address and click "create alert"
- 7) Check your e-mail inbox and verify your subscription

Please note that Google does not pick up every story that features the CTF. However, it does do a good job at catching many.

