

# CIT newsletter September 21, 09

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- 1) [Here is a good piece from Gilles about how the Frazer institute and how to be careful about what gets presented as "news".](#)
- 2) [Now, here is some real news, which should be provoking much discussion within the Guaranteed Income community. There are some very bad times ahead for low income people.](#)
- 3) [More from Gilles. For those who like statistics, here are some every interesting graphs about OW and ODSP in the past few years, and the relation between welfare and minimum wages over time.](#)
- 4) [Ho, hum. Here is another poverty group. There is a new one every year in Ontario, with the same old faces as the last one. What happened to the 25 in 5 campaign, the ten dollar minimum wage campaign, the "end child poverty" thing, and so on and so on? I wish these poverty pimps would at least find the right tree to bark up. <http://www.recession-relief-coalition.org/>](#)
- 5) [Here is something good from Chandra at CPI](#)

2. The Fraser Institute and the Flat Earth Society - September 3  
(National Union of Public and General Employees)

### The Fraser Institute and the Flat Earth Society

By Larry Brown, National Secretary-Treasurer  
Ottawa (3 Sept. 2009)

Pointing out that the [Fraser Institute](#) has released a perverse study ignoring established facts in order to make its case is a bit like pointing out that the sun rises in the east. It's kind of self-evident. But the institute's latest bit of silliness is over the top even for the notoriously fact-averse Fraserites. In a report released in late August [ [Labour Relations Laws in Canada and the United States, 2009 Edition](#) ] comparing labour laws in Canada and the U.S., the institute argues that our labour laws are too "tilted in favour of unions". This "imbalance" is a problem because, it claims, "empirical evidence from around the world indicates that jurisdictions with more flexible labour markets enjoy better labour market performance." Empirical evidence? It's possible. There actually is a Flat Earth Society claiming to prove that the earth is flat. And some people still claim to have seen Elvis alive. But most people expect proof of a theory to be based on a bit more substance.

Source:

[National Union of Public and General Employees \(NUPGE\)](#)

### A Cautionary Tale:

#### Here's an excerpt from the conclusion of the above article:

"(...) Of course, the Fraser Institute has received millions of dollars from the Donner Canadian Foundation and the Max Bell Foundation. These groups are known for their devotion to right-wing ideological causes in Canada, such as anti-union laws, for-profit health care, private schools and the private delivery of social services. The Fraser Institute also routinely collects money from big oil and gas companies, such as EnCana and Sabre Energy, and big pharmaceutical companies, such as Pfizer. One could suggest that the Fraser Institute, therefore, is only doing what its sponsors want, irrespective of the facts. That might suggest that this report was deliberately slanted to reflect the views of its right-wing corporate sponsors and once more attack laws that protect employees. But let's be fair to the Fraser Institute. If you believe the world is flat you aren't going to venture out to the edge for fear of falling off."

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According to the Fraser Institute website's [Who We Are](#) page, "[T]he Fraser Institute is a registered non-profit organization. We depend entirely on donations from people who understand the importance of impartial research and who support greater choice, less government intervention, and more personal responsibility."

After I finished giving my head a shake about Fraser's status as a registered non-profit organization, I had to smile (y'know, the jaundiced smile...) when I read the words "impartial research". How can research be touted as impartial, I wondered, when it's funded by the big corporations that stand to benefit most from 'supportive' research? [*Never mind - it's a rhetorical question...*]  
Ya gotta dance wit de one dat brung ya, eh...

The reference to Big Pharma and Pfizer in the above NUPGE excerpt reminded me of a surprising (to me, at least...) CBC report back in the mid-nineties stating that the Fraser Institute was endorsing not only the legalization of marijuana in Canada, but also its regulation and taxation, based on a June 2004 study entitled [Marijuana Growth in British Columbia](#), funded by the Fraser Institute. [ See also [Fraser Institute study calls for legal pot](#) (June 2004) - CBC ]

After reading the Fraser study, though, I concluded that it was perfectly logical for the Fraser Institute (Motto: "A free and prosperous world through choice, markets and responsibility") to favour an option that reduced government control over people's lives. Because that's what Fraser and their kindred libertarian spirits (Donner, Max Bell, etc.) are all about --- getting government out of people's faces and reducing taxes.

When I saw the reference to Pfizer in the NUPGE article, I was curious what Fraser was saying about the legalization of pot these days. Supporters of legalized pot have long maintained that the biggest barrier to legalization is the sustained pressure on government

by several industries that are concerned about the impact on their sector if hemp in all its forms (including marijuana) is made legal. Given the increasing volume of evidence and testimonials about the medicinal advantages of marijuana over traditional medicine for treatment of certain conditions and illnesses, it stands to reason that big drug companies like Pfizer would have the required motivation to lobby government against any form of decriminalization of pot. Indeed, when I went to the Fraser Institute's home page while writing this and did a search for "marijuana", the most recent content on the subject from Fraser is the 2004 study that advocated legalization. According to the CBC story, Fraser issued a second press release the same day, to emphasize that the recommendation to legalize pot were from the author, not the Institute. Gee, I wonder how long it took the folks at Pfizer to contact Fraser to demand the second release to distance themselves from the views of the author...

Suffice to say that 2004 (the year of the pot study and recommendations) appears to be the last time Fraser dared say anything substantive about marijuana on their site. Funny thing about that.  
(Now I need a Valium, a coffee and a smoke.)

[Aside: The issue of decriminalization of marijuana is one of those 800-lb gorillas - like abortion, universal day care and the death penalty - that cut across political party lines and that can polarize a roomful of social advocates OR a meeting of the Canadian Taxpayers' Federation.]

**So what's the "cautionary" part of all of this?**

1. Be wary of websites of organizations that describe themselves or their work as "impartial".
2. Be wary of websites of organizations that strive for *a free and prosperous world through choice, markets and responsibility*.

## Predicting Worse Ahead from America's Economic Crisis

by Stephen Lendman

Austrian economist Ludwig von Mises (1881 - 1973) said:

"There is no means of avoiding a final collapse of a boom brought about by credit expansion. The alternative is only whether the crisis should come sooner as a result of a voluntary abandonment of further credit expansion, or later as a final and total catastrophe of the currency system involved."

Under Alan Greenspan, Ben Bernanke and successive US Treasury Secretaries, America chose the latter path and now faces the consequences of their reckless, criminal behavior.

In early 2009, economist Michael Hudson said:

The (US) economy has reached its debt limit and is entering its insolvency phase. We are not in a cycle but (at) the end of an era. The old world of debt pyramiding to a fraudulent degree cannot be restored," only delayed to postpone a painful day of reckoning.

Economist Hyman Minsky (1919 - 1996) described a "Ponzi finance" system during prolonged expansions and economic booms. Speculative excesses create bubbles, triggering structural instability, then asset valuation collapse that turns euphoria to revulsion and market crashes.

On December 29, 2008, the Wall Street Journal online headlined: "As if Things Weren't Bad Enough, Russian Professor Predicts End of US," then continued:

"For a decade, Russian academic (and former KGB analyst) Igor Panarin has been predicting the US will fall apart in 2010" to include an "economic and moral collapse, a civil war, and the eventual breakup of the country." For years, no one took him seriously, but no longer. He's invited to Kremlin receptions, gets interviewed twice a day, publishes books, is a frequent lecturer, and appears regularly in the media as an expert on US - Russia relations as well as the great interest in his predictions and new book titled, "The Crash of America."

On March 25, 2009, RussiaToday.com headlined: "Is there anything Obama can do about the US Collapse?" No, according to Panarin, for these reasons:

- "the moral and psychological factor and the stress of the American population;"
- America's deepening financial and economic crisis; and
- "the increase of anti-Americanism in the world," the result of continued US belligerency.

Panarin sees America collapsing into six areas of foreign influence and perhaps disintegrating as a nation:

- depressed northern states close to Canada "in their mentality and economic development;"
- the Southwest "fuel and energy complex, the oil sector" close to Mexico;
- California and the Pacific Northwest falling under Chinese influence;
- the Northeast and Middle Atlantic regions under the EU;
- Alaska may be returned to Russia; and
- Hawaii may become a Japanese or Chinese protectorate.

Panarin sees 2010 as America's tipping point and says no miracle rescues can save it. In addition, he cites French political scientist Emmanuel Todd's 1976 prediction of the Soviet Union's dissolution that got him laughed at and scorned at the time but proved right.

Todd now predicts a similar fate for the US in his 2002 book, "After the Empire: The Breakdown of the American Order." He cites:

- unilateral militarism shows weakness, not strength;
- America is parasitic, relying on voluntary or extracted "tributes" from vassal states;
- global terrorism is a myth;
- many nations, including EU states, China and Russia, are beginning to resist US adventurism;
- terminal corruption and decay;
- economic weakness and decline;
- producing little, America's "specialty is consumption (so) relies on foreign imports" to satisfy it;
- a declining middle class and growing poverty will curtail spending sharply;
- if capital inflows cease, the dollar will crash:
- a coming collapse of the stock market, financial institutions and the dollar;
- a ballooning trade deficit and shrinking manufacturing base;
- a predatory ruling class plundering the world with impunity, yet out of touch with its own people growing poorer, more desperate and angrier;
- America's abandonment of universalism and egalitarianism;
- excess consumption trapping people in an ocean of debt and lowering their living standards;
- "the rest of the world....is on the verge of discovering that it can get along without America; America is realizing that it cannot get along without the rest of the world;"
- an emerging Eurasia will end US supremacy, then isolate and curtail its dominance; and
- "If America continues to endeavor to show its power, it will simply reveal (to) the world its impotence."

For his part, Panarin compares America to the Titanic after hitting an iceberg when it was unclear whether the crew would try to save the ship or more importantly its passengers. Unfortunately, under Bush and Obama, they're trying to save themselves at the expense of the ship and passengers.

After disintegration, Panarin sees three dominant influence areas emerging - the EU, Russia and China. After 11 years of monitoring US policies, he believes his prediction is largely confirmed and states the following:

America's FY 2009 "budget deficit is 4.5 times the 2008 deficit, while firearms sales are up 40%. On October 1, the coupons that were given state workers are to be cashed out. When (they) realize that they are getting nothing for (them), they will take out their firearms and chaos will unfold."

Further, on September 30, 2009, results will be published that are "destined to shock investors worldwide. After that, and (Japan and China's) snubbing of the dollar....which will transfer 50% of (their) international operations to Yuan starting in 2010, the currency will then flow like a landslide out of style." Already

nations like China, Russia, Brazil, Argentina and others are trading in their own currencies or will do so shortly.

In Panarin's view, "the probability of the US ceasing to exist (in its present form) by June 2010 exceeds 50%. At this point, the mission of all major international powers is to prevent chaos" because what hurts America also harms them.

## A Multiple-Dip Depression

Economist John Williams publishes the shadowstats.com electronic newsletter with updated sample data on his site. He calls government figures corrupted and unreliable because manipulative changes rigged them for political and market purposes. To correct them, he reverse-engineers GDP, employment, inflation, and other key data for greater reliability to subscribers.

On August 1, Williams called the "Current Economic Downturn (the) Worst Since (the) Great Depression." It began a year earlier than reported, triggered a systemic solvency crisis, and the effects of "a multiple-dip depression (are) far from over."

The July 31, 2009 national income accounts "confirmed that the US economy is in its worst economic contraction since the first downleg of the Great Depression, which was a double-dip" one like today's.

Intermittent upturns are common, like from spiked auto sales from the cash-for-clunkers program that borrowed future purchases for today's. "Yet, this downturn will continue to deteriorate, proving to be extremely protracted, extremely deep and particularly nonresponsive to traditional stimuli."

The economy suffers from deep structural problems related to household income. Consumers are over-indebted, can't borrow, and Washington's policies aren't helping them. Continued economic decline will follow. "The current depression is the second dip in a multiple-dip downturn that started in 1999 (and triggered) the systemic solvency crisis" that was visible by August 2007 but started in late 2006.

The worst lies ahead, the result of the "government's long-range insolvency and (dollar debasing that risks) hyperinflation during the next five years," and perhaps sooner in 2010. It will cause "a great depression of a magnitude never before seen in" America, disrupting all business and commerce and reverberating globally.

Williams defines deflation as a decrease in goods and services prices, generally from a money supply contraction. Inflation is the reverse. Hyperinflation debases the currency to near worthlessness. Officially, two or more consecutive declining quarters means recession, but better measures are protracted weakened production, employment, retail sales, construction, capital investment, and demand for durable goods among other factors.

A depression occurs when inflation-adjusted peak-to-trough contraction exceeds 10%, and a great depression when it's 25% or worse.

Today's economic downturn preceded the systemic solvency crisis after key data "hit cycle highs and began to weaken in late-2005 for housing and durable goods orders....early-2006 for nonfarm payrolls, (and) late-2006 for retail sales and industrial production, patterns more consistent with a late-2006" real recession onset. Gross Domestic Income (GDI) data confirms this analysis.

Its real growth peaked in Q 1 2006, and revised GDI data contracted in seven of the last nine quarters. "Revised GDP shows the sharpest annual decline in the history of the quarterly GDP series," suggesting a much deeper and protracted downturn than previously reported.

July 2009 marked the 19th consecutive month of contraction, "the longest downturn since the first downleg of the Great Depression." More recent GDP declines of 3.3% and 3.9% in Q 1 and Q 2 2009, "are the worst showings in the history of the quarterly GDP series" dating back to 1947-48. In 1946, a greater contraction occurred because of post-war production cutbacks, but it was short-term.

Today's most reliable economic indicators show the downturn is deepening, not abating as deceptive media accounts report. "The SGS (Shadow Government Statistics) alternative measure of GDP suggests (a) 5.9% contraction....versus the official year-to-year" 3.9% figure.

The official estimated annualized Q 2 2009 decline was 1% compared to SGS's figure "in excess of five-percent." Its alternative data show "deeper and more protracted recessions" than officially reported, suggesting a deepening crisis ahead.

## The CBO's Grim Forecast

Even the conservative Congressional Budget Office sees a weaker economy ahead, contrary to most consensus views of a sustainable upturn. Its latest projections are as follows: -- 2010 U-3 unemployment at 10.2%, edging down to 8% by 2011 and 4.8% by 2014;

-- in 2010, 12 million will be underemployed;

-- for the next five years, economic weakness and lower demand will pressure workers with unemployment or underemployment;

-- part-time work only will be available for millions wanting full-time jobs;

-- low consumption will persist through 2014;

-- unemployment benefits will be exhausted;

-- households will be pressured to make mortgage payments, pay for health care, meet other obligations, and provide for their families at a time state and city budget crises force deep cuts in vital social services, not made up for by the federal government;

-- tax revenues are down 17%, the sharpest decline since 1932;

-- \$600 billion in investment losses will result plus another \$5.9 trillion in lost output through 2014; and

-- the federal deficit will nearly double over the next 10 years to about \$20 trillion.

In sum, CBO projects a more severe protracted downturn than it earlier forecast in January.

## Troubled Times Ahead

On July 14, Egon von Greyerz, Founder and Managing Partner of Zurich-based Matterhorn Asset Management AG, specializing in precious metals and other investments, said "The Dark Years Are Here" and explained why.

Because of "the devastating effects of credit bubbles, government money printing (and) disastrous actions that governments are taking, (upcoming) tumultuous events will be life changing for most people in the world." They'll begin by year end, last for two to three years, then be followed by extended economic, political, and social upheaval, perhaps continuing for two decades.

Greyerz cites three main concerns: -- exploding unemployment and government deficits;

-- trillions of unreported bank losses and worthless derivatives; and

-- rising inflation, high interest rates, collapsed Treasury bond (and UK gilt) valuations resulting in more money creation, worthless paper, and a "perfect vicious circle (leading to) a hyperinflationary depression followed by the collapse of the dollar and British pound.

America is hemorrhaging financially and economically. Other countries now realize they hold "worthless" US dollars. Reckless money creation achieved short-term hope, benefitted Wall Street alone short-term, elevated world stock markets, and led some to believe the crisis was over when, in fact, it's worsening.

Aside from expected short-lived upturns, "every single sector of the real economy is deteriorating whether it is production, unemployment, corporate profits, real estate, credit defaults, construction, federal deficits, local government and state deficits etc."

In response, the Fed keeps printing money and destroying its value. "This is total lunacy! How can any intelligent person believe that printed pieces of paper can solve an economic catastrophe?"

We're in "the first phase of this tragic saga." Likely by year end, a second more serious one will start. Real unemployment now tops 20%. It hit 25% in the Great Depression with 35% of the nonfarm population out of work and desperate.

"It is our firm opinion that (US) non-farm unemployment levels will reach 35% at least....in the next few years" with all uncounted categories included.

Growing millions with no jobs, incomes, savings, or safety net protections will create "a disaster of unimaginable consequences that will affect the whole fabric of American society" to a degree far greater than in the Great Depression.

Growing unemployment now plagues Western and Eastern Europe as well, and by 2010 will more greatly affect most parts of the world, "including China, Asia and Africa. Never before has there been a global unemployment crisis affecting the world simultaneously." Ahead expect sharp drops in consumption and global trade leading to depression, poverty, "famine and social unrest."

Already, conditions are worse than in the 1930s, but the worst is yet to come. Expect:

- an extremely severe global depression in most countries with grave economic, political, and social consequences;
- social safety net protections will end;
- private and state pensions will likely collapse; and
- unemployment, poverty, homelessness, hunger, and famine will cause a protracted period of economic, political, social, and institutional upheaval.

If von Greyerz, Panarin, Todd, and others with similar views are right, a deepening, protracted, unprecedented global catastrophe approaches that "will be life changing for most people in the world."

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Also visit his blog site at [sjlendman.blogspot.com](http://sjlendman.blogspot.com) and listen to The Global Research News Hour on RepublicBroadcasting.org Monday - Friday at 10AM US Central time for cutting-edge discussions with distinguished guests on world and national issues. All programs are archived for easy listening.

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**draw your own conclusions**

## ONTARIO SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

### MONTHLY STATISTICAL REPORT

### Ontario Works

**Ontario Works** provides employment and financial assistance to people who are in temporary financial need. The employment assistance helps people become and stay employed and includes job search support services, basic education and job skills training, community and employment placement, supports to self-employment, Learning, Earning and Parenting program, addiction services and earning exemptions that allow participants to earn income as they move back into the workforce.

**Temporary Care Assistance** provides support for children in financial need while in the temporary care of an adult who does not have a legal obligation to support the child. In July 2009, there were 4,261 TCA cases\* receiving social assistance on behalf of 5,909 children.

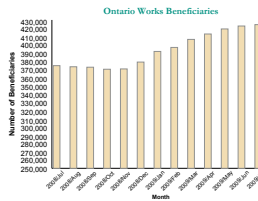
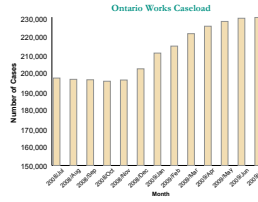
#### Ontario Works Caseload and Beneficiaries

	Singles		Couples		Sole Support Parents		All Family Structures	
	Cases <sup>1</sup>	Beneficiaries <sup>2</sup>	Cases <sup>1</sup>	Beneficiaries <sup>2</sup>	Cases <sup>1</sup>	Beneficiaries <sup>2</sup>	Cases <sup>1</sup>	Beneficiaries <sup>2</sup>
<b>Jul 2009</b>	<b>131,327</b>	<b>131,327</b>	<b>25,280</b>	<b>91,250</b>	<b>73,198</b>	<b>201,750</b>	<b>229,805</b>	<b>424,327</b>
Jun 2009	131,552	131,552	25,228	90,972	72,597	200,118	229,377	422,841
May 2009	130,917	130,917	25,092	90,532	71,656	197,619	227,665	419,068
Apr 2009	130,180	130,180	24,668	88,802	70,239	193,974	225,086	412,956
Mar 2009	127,442	127,442	24,169	87,125	69,468	191,825	221,079	406,392
Feb 2009	122,320	122,320	23,250	84,110	66,793	190,218	214,363	396,547
Jan 2009	119,122	119,122	22,739	82,532	68,736	190,127	210,597	391,781
Dec 2008	112,761	112,761	21,483	78,119	67,878	187,994	202,121	378,874
Nov 2008	107,783	107,783	20,673	75,375	67,621	187,407	196,077	370,565
Oct 2008	107,011	107,011	20,463	74,806	67,946	188,381	195,421	370,199
Sep 2008	106,825	106,825	20,314	74,490	69,072	191,342	196,212	372,657
Aug 2008	106,796	106,796	20,350	74,693	69,265	191,712	196,441	373,201
Jul 2008	107,235	107,235	20,583	75,470	69,311	191,839	197,129	374,544
Jun 2008	107,709	107,709	20,695	75,988	69,495	192,425	197,899	376,121
May 2008	109,164	109,164	21,039	77,135	69,118	191,304	199,321	377,603
Apr 2008	110,184	110,184	21,108	77,347	68,221	189,188	199,513	376,719
Mar 2008	108,638	108,638	20,726	75,899	67,565	187,481	196,929	372,018
Feb 2008	108,007	108,007	20,838	76,449	68,141	189,050	196,986	373,506
Jan 2008	107,431	107,431	20,566	75,685	68,519	190,206	196,515	373,321
Dec 2007	102,748	102,748	19,890	73,280	67,918	188,641	190,556	364,670
Nov 2007	101,726	101,726	19,757	72,783	68,586	190,539	190,069	365,047
Oct 2007	101,419	101,419	19,427	71,564	68,605	190,410	189,451	363,392
Sep 2007	102,225	102,225	19,788	72,852	69,992	193,964	192,005	369,041
Aug 2007	104,008	104,008	20,012	73,549	70,625	195,511	194,645	373,068
Jul 2007	104,385	104,385	20,047	73,705	70,297	194,396	194,729	372,486
Jun 2007	106,412	106,412	20,596	75,745	70,595	195,212	197,604	377,369
May 2007	108,655	108,655	20,924	76,927	70,388	194,470	199,967	380,053
Apr 2007	109,042	109,042	21,155	77,540	69,387	191,952	199,584	378,534
Change since Jun 2009	-224	-224	52	278	601	1,632	428	1,686
	-0.2%	-0.2%	0.2%	0.3%	0.8%	0.8%	0.2%	0.4%

<sup>1</sup>A case refers to a single individual or a family unit on social assistance.

<sup>2</sup>The number of beneficiaries refers to the total number of single individuals and heads of family units on social assistance plus all their dependents (i.e., spouses, dependent children and dependent adults).

Numbers may not add up due to rounding.



**July 2009**

Statistics and Analysis Unit  
Policy Research & Analysis Branch  
Social Policy Development Division  
Ministry of Community and Social Services

{s3-0812009}

## ONTARIO SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

### MONTHLY STATISTICAL REPORT

### Ontario Disability Support Program

The Ontario Disability Support Program is designed to meet the income and employment support needs of people with disabilities. The program provides income support and health-related benefits to people with disabilities who are in need of financial assistance. The employment supports component of the program offers a range of goods and services to help people with disabilities to look for, obtain or maintain jobs on a voluntary basis.

Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities provides a benefit for parents caring for children with severe disabilities at home. In July 2009, there were 23,683 ACSD cases<sup>1</sup> receiving this benefit on behalf of 27,644 children.

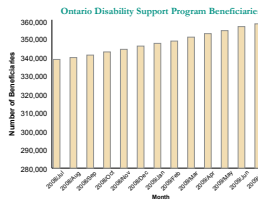
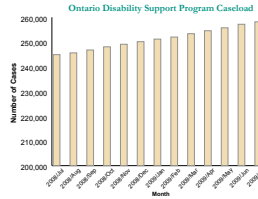
Ontario Disability Support Program Caseload and Beneficiaries

	Singles		Couples		Sole Support Parents		All Family Structures	
	Cases <sup>1</sup>	Beneficiaries <sup>2</sup>	Cases <sup>1</sup>	Beneficiaries <sup>2</sup>	Cases <sup>1</sup>	Beneficiaries <sup>2</sup>	Cases <sup>1</sup>	Beneficiaries <sup>2</sup>
<b>Jul 2009</b>	<b>199,640</b>	<b>199,640</b>	<b>36,291</b>	<b>102,430</b>	<b>22,233</b>	<b>55,746</b>	<b>258,164</b>	<b>357,816</b>
Jun 2009	198,921	198,921	36,181	102,048	22,073	55,355	257,175	356,324
May 2009	197,878	197,878	36,008	101,510	21,855	54,766	255,741	354,154
Apr 2009	196,977	196,977	35,894	101,162	21,690	54,383	254,561	352,522
Mar 2009	196,088	196,088	35,702	100,465	21,569	54,077	253,359	350,630
Feb 2009	195,140	195,140	35,458	99,781	21,406	53,594	252,004	348,515
Jan 2009	194,490	194,490	35,369	99,387	21,317	53,390	251,176	347,267
Dec 2008	193,730	193,730	35,182	98,860	21,228	53,214	250,140	345,904
Nov 2008	193,022	193,022	34,939	98,104	21,130	52,930	249,091	344,056
Oct 2008	192,238	192,238	34,770	97,716	21,048	52,708	248,056	342,662
Sep 2008	191,192	191,192	34,616	97,236	20,961	52,524	246,769	340,952
Aug 2008	190,233	190,233	34,447	96,888	20,928	52,500	245,608	339,621
Jul 2008	189,708	189,708	34,424	96,861	20,755	52,044	244,867	338,613
Jun 2008	188,870	188,870	34,341	96,680	20,634	51,726	243,845	337,276
May 2008	188,158	188,158	34,264	96,419	20,502	51,373	242,924	335,950
Apr 2008	187,280	187,280	34,189	96,097	20,385	51,063	241,854	334,440
Mar 2008	186,394	186,394	34,065	95,666	20,198	50,567	240,657	332,627
Feb 2008	185,602	185,602	34,019	95,512	20,056	50,178	239,877	331,492
Jan 2008	185,205	185,205	33,943	95,239	19,921	49,874	239,069	330,318
Dec 2007	184,366	184,366	33,850	94,887	19,818	49,529	238,034	328,782
Nov 2007	183,948	183,948	33,870	94,858	19,742	49,332	237,560	328,138
Oct 2007	182,910	182,910	33,671	94,337	19,614	48,975	236,195	326,222
Sep 2007	182,125	182,125	33,579	94,071	19,518	48,744	235,222	324,940
Aug 2007	181,406	181,406	33,477	93,799	19,491	48,713	234,374	323,918
Jul 2007	180,729	180,729	33,338	93,437	19,383	48,426	233,450	322,592
Jun 2007	179,955	179,955	33,252	93,113	19,244	48,012	232,451	321,080
May 2007	179,035	179,035	33,160	92,834	19,078	47,541	231,273	319,410
Apr 2007	178,102	178,102	32,922	91,980	18,881	47,018	229,905	317,100
Change since								
Jun 2009	719	719	110	382	160	391	989	1,492
	0.4%	0.4%	0.3%	0.4%	0.7%	0.7%	0.4%	0.4%

<sup>1</sup>A case refers to a single individual or a family unit on social assistance.

<sup>2</sup>The number of beneficiaries refers to the total number of single individuals and heads of family units on social assistance plus all their dependents (i.e., spouses, dependent children and dependent adults).

Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

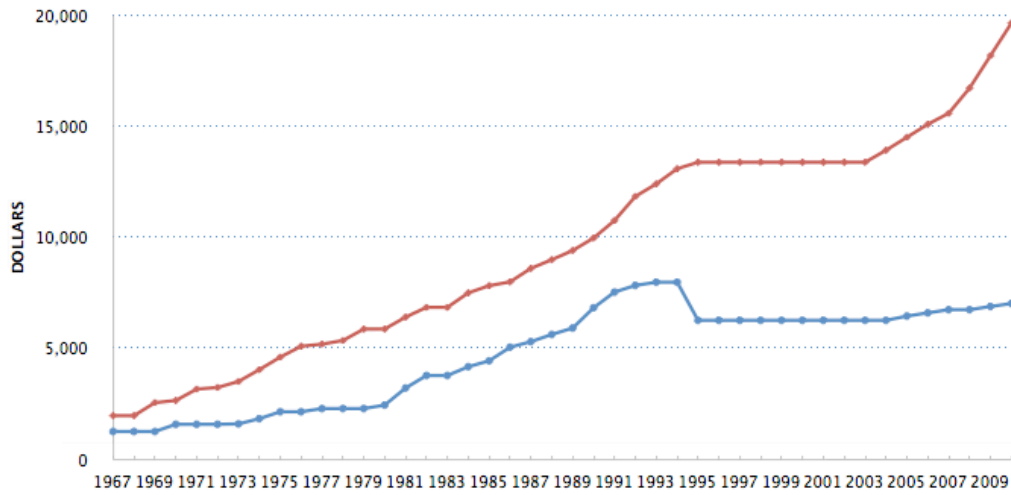


**July 2009**

Statistics and Analysis Unit  
Policy Research & Analysis Branch  
Social Policy Development Division  
Ministry of Community and Social Services

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**ONTARIO: SINGLE EMPLOYABLE PERSON Annual Income from SA versus Full-Time Employment at Minimum Wag**

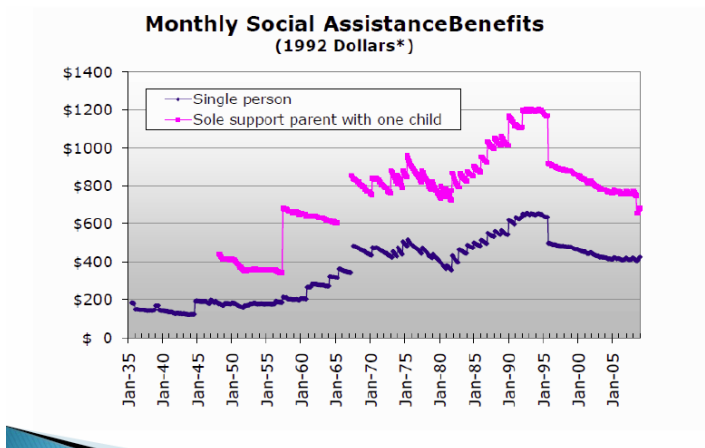


◆ Annual SA  
◆ Gross Annual Income at Minimum Wage (37.5 hour week)

**ONTARIO Unemployment Rates and Percentage of Population on SA 1981 to 2008, Monthly for 2009**



— Unemployment Rate — % of Population on SA




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## Canadian politics about power, not governance

By Chandra Pasma | Tuesday, September 8th, 2009

Next week, Members of Parliament will be back in the House of Commons as the fall session of parliament begins. The June show-down which resulted in the creation of the Blue Ribbon Employment Insurance panel looks like it will resume where it left off, as within two weeks there is another confidence vote on the government's handling of the economic crisis. And the recent confrontations and accusations between Liberal and Conservative MPs on the panel have served as a backdrop to various parties pushing for the show-down to move to the election arena.

In fact, this has been the pattern in the past few years of minority government: high stakes confrontations between political leaders, little or no policy vision, and attempts at cooperation destroyed by hyper-partisan behaviour.

In July, a poll from Harris-Decima suggested that Canadians are growing tired of minority governments and would prefer a majority government. The same poll also found that more Canadians would support than oppose a coalition government after the next election.

While some commentators considered this evidence of the schizophrenic nature of Canadian voters, I think

the truth is far simpler: Canadians want to see government that works. Whether it's through the increased decision-making power entrusted to one party in a majority government or the collaborative approach of a coalition government, Canadians want to see an end to the constant bickering, hyper-partisanship and lack of vision that has characterized the last several years of parliament.

In 2004, when Canada's first minority government in 25 years was elected, there was hope for a new, more collaborative kind of politics that could involve all of the political parties in making policy decisions for the common good of the whole country. Stephen Harper, then leader of the Official Opposition, noted that after 12 years of Liberal majority governments, "[F]or all the other parties we've been in a kind of relatively powerless position for a long time. I think we're looking forward to the opportunity of having some influence for the next few years."

Instead of adopting a consultative, cooperative approach, successive Liberal and Conservative minority governments have opted instead to govern as if they had a majority, minimizing cooperation except when they needed support on a crucial vote of confidence. Opposition parties have responded in kind by simply opposing the government, instead of putting forth policy suggestions of their own, or aiming to influence the government through strategic support.

Rather than read the writing on the wall that minority governments are here for awhile, parties behave as if a majority government is inevitably beyond the next election.

Everything then is about that upcoming election: jockeying for position, scoring a few points, slinging mud at their opponents. The result is that politics is about power, not about government. The only vision political parties have to offer is self-centered and self-interested their own pursuit of power. And the harder they try to make us vote for them through this constant electioneering, the more they turn off voters and foster cynicism about the whole process.

It doesn't need to be this way. In many other countries, minority governments work successfully. In Germany, for instance, no party has ever won a majority government since 1949. Only one party governed by itself in that period, and only after other parties declined the offer of a coalition. Otherwise, all of Germany's governments have been coalition governments.

"We cooperate because there's no other choice," said Niels Annen, Social Democratic Member of Parliament at a conference on coalition governments in March. "We have an obligation to work with the electoral result the voters have given us." Previous Canadian minority governments also demonstrate that the current state of affairs is not inevitable. Canada's first Bill of Rights, universal health care, the Canadian flag, and the Canada Pension Plan are all accomplishments of minority parliaments in the 1950s and 1960s.

Imagine what a minority government could achieve today, during this time of economic crisis. The Canada Pension Plan protects many Canadian seniors, but those dependent on private pension plans or personal savings have seen their security wiped out over the past year. Universal health care, the quintessentially Canadian program, could be extended to include pharmacare and dental care, ensuring that every Canadian has access to all of the healthcare they need. A poverty elimination strategy could promote the rights and dignity of every Canadian, by enabling them to live free of the crippling grasp of poverty.

This is a time of opportunity, a time for vision. Minority governments don't need to be an excuse for failing to deliver to Canadians. In fact, they should be a time of collaboration for the common good.

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