

A horrid week for Harper



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The Commons was on holidays this week. But that doesn't mean nothing's been happening. Stephen Harper went out to Brampton last week to console the folks out there. The town has had it rough – 1,1 00 Chrysler workers lost their jobs. They still gave him a warm welcome. Too warm.

It went to Harper's head. He began making it up, reading things that weren't in his written speech. Harper said Canada is not suffering as much as other countries during this crisis, and Canada will be the first country back on its feet. And we soon won't have a deficit. Not True, Not True and Not True.



Stephen Harper winging it in Brampton

Canada has worse unemployment than the U.S. Our stock markets are in worse shape. Commodity sales are down. Only our banks are better. It'll be at least four years of straight deficits.

It took the former governor of the Bank of Canada to break a year's self-imposed silence and set Harper straight. "Unrealistic," said Dodge. Somebody had to step in before Harper ruined our credibility.

TD Bank economist Don Drummond added his two cents – it'll be a long, slow grind back for several years.

Harper spent the rest of the week trying to explain what he really meant to say. Not inspiring.

He wasn't the only one who stepped into it.

His science minister Gary Goodyear refused to tell a Globe and Mail reporter whether he believes in creationism or in the evolution of the species.

"It's my religion," Goodyear begged off. "It's not pertinent."

Canadian scientists say it is very pertinent whether the science minister believes in science. They add it

may explain Goodyear's reluctance fund more pure science research. Quebec scientists immediately demanded his resignation.

What's worse, a minister of science who doesn't believe in science or a government that doesn't believe in government?

Why not appoint Goodyear religion minister. That would solve the problem. Liberal bloggers ran cartoons all week of Fred Flintstone and his pet dinosaur on their websites. No comment needed.

But wait, it gets better.

One of those rare birds in the Conservative caucus, MP Garry Breitkreuz accepted an invitation as guest of honor at a Toronto gun club banquet.

Breitkreuz is famous for his fight against gun control laws. People kill people, not guns. He once said guns kill fewer people than kitchen knives. The raffle prize was a beautiful Beretta Px4 handgun, the weapon of choice of European hit men.

When a Dawson College shooting victim complained about the message Breitkreuz was sending, he politely cancelled his attendance. One of the banquet organizers replied that the Dawson College guys are "whiners who just want to get their name into the newspapers again." Nice guys Breitkreuz hangs out with.

Finally:

The news came out that Harper could change media Canadian ownership laws that would mean millions to media giant CanWest which is in deep money trouble, and maybe millions as well to Québecor.

The lobbyist registry shows that David Asper of CanWest and Pierre Karl Péladeau of Québecor twice met Harper for talks in Ottawa. Not the sort of news Harper wanted to see come out right now.

Especially since CanWest has hired Harper's old friend, lobbyist Ken Boessenkool, his old campaign organizer, the guy who spent election night on a sofa next to Harper.

And this weekend everyone is expecting a Nanos Research survey which could show that Harper's Conservatives could be less popular in Quebec right now than Stéphane Dion's Liberals were when he was their leader.

Harper can't wait for the session to start up again.