

Great articles produced through the *Access to Information Act*

Below are exemplary stories that I compiled and marked with {**}, a double gold star, in the *ATIA News Story Index*. The full texts are worth finding and reading; see “Notes on Method” in the Explanatory Notes on how to locate them.

I believe that the production of any one of these stories would have been enough to justify the passage of Canada’s *Access to Information Act* in 1982. It was also my reading of such articles that inspired me to enter the FOI journalism field in 1995, and to persist there today despite its many challenges. If the question is posed of “Why should the public care if we have good FOI laws?”, the answer is suggested below.

- Stanley L. Tromp, editor, 2021. stomp@telus.net

Ending Canada's pandemic alert system was a mistake, internal government e-mails show

By Grant Robertson, *Globe and Mail*, Oct. 5, 2020.

Internal e-mails obtained via the ATIA show at least one senior manager at the Public Health Agency of Canada believed the decision that caused the country's pandemic early warning system to go silent last year was a mistake. In an e-mail sent to staff July 27 - two days after The Globe published an investigation into the Global Public Health Intelligence Network (GPHIN) - an official acknowledged the shutdown shouldn't have happened. The investigation detailed how Canada's globally respected pandemic alert system went silent in early 2019, after the department issued an edict requiring GPHIN's doctors and epidemiologists to obtain "senior management" approval before they could warn of potentially deadly outbreaks. The alert system went silent. And with it, much of the unit's advance warning and intelligence gathering soon dried up - less than a year before the COVID-19 outbreak hit.

Watchdog asked food inspector to alter records; Stationed at infamous Maple Leaf plant

By Sarah Schmidt, *Canwest News*, April 29, 2009

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency instructed one of its inspectors stationed at the Maple Leaf plant that produced contaminated meat last year to amend some of his records at the height of the media coverage on the outbreak to minimize concerns and highlight there was "no food safety risk," Canwest News Service has learned. Hundreds of inspection worksheets from the CFIA show he added hand-written notes to select records on Aug. 26, 2008 - after the death toll from the listeriosis outbreak linked to the Toronto plant had risen to 12 confirmed cases and on Day 15 of a CFIA listeria investigation of the plant.

Salmonella inquiry 'excessive,' letter says; Food inspectors cancelled probe after company wrote to ministers

By Laura Eggertson, *Toronto Star*, Feb. 28, 2000. ATIA research by Ken Rubin

A company whose cheese was implicated in a food-poisoning outbreak that left 800 schoolchildren ill invoked former prime minister John Turner's name and protested the "excessive" investigation, documents reveal. On the eve of a key inspection of one of its dairies, Parmalat Canada phoned and wrote to Agriculture Minister Lyle Vanclief and Health Minister Allan Rock. The company protested the way Ottawa was investigating a 1998 outbreak of salmonella in children who ate J.M. Schneider's Lunchmates. The day after Parmalat spoke to Vanclief and the day the letter was received by Art Olson, president of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, the food regulators *cancelled* their plans to re-inspect one of the dairies owned by Parmalat - whose Black Diamond plant is in Vanclief's riding.

Govt. altered records on possible hazards of implant, paper says

By Nicholas Regush, *Ottawa Citizen*, March 29, 1989. ATIA research by Ken Rubin

Officials in the Department of Health ordered the destruction of some key government records and the modification of others relating to the hazards of a popular type of breast implant. Documents reveal a trail of altered records that played down health concerns about the safety of the Meme silicone-gel implant used by women to increase their bust size. The implant has a foam coating that contains a cancer-causing chemical. Medical studies show that the coating can break down, become entangled with breast tissue and promote infection. In 200 pages of government documents on the implant, one orders the destruction of a scientific report calling Meme "unfit for human implantation." As well, a "memo recall" wiped out all mention in official files of a recommendation by Health Department scientists that the implant be temporarily withdrawn from the market.

Ottawa beefs up dietary guideline

By Brad Evenson, *Ottawa Citizen*, Jan. 15, 1993. ATIA research by Ken Rubin

Ottawa put more meat and eggs in the revised Canada Food Guide and backed off other recommendations after complaints from the food industry, documents show. Health and Welfare Canada redrew its colorful rainbow chart to double the recommended servings of meat and eggs, alter recommendations on fat, and drop suggested limits for sweets and coffee. Prepared in a secretive manner similar to the federal budget, 4.5 million copies of the Food Guide were released after five years of consultation. Documents outline the significant changes won by the food industry before the guide was published. The proposed guide cut the recommended minimum servings of meat from two a day to one. And it suggested meat alternatives, such as tofu, beans and legumes. The Food Guide now recommends two to three servings of meat or alternatives daily.

Bankrupt debtors cheat their lenders: inquiry

By Andrew McIntosh, *Montreal Gazette*, Feb. 8, 1993.

Unscrupulous financial consultants and bankruptcy trustees in Quebec are helping consumers and small businesses to circumvent federal bankruptcy laws, a federal inquiry concluded. The consultants help them cheat their creditors by fraudulently disposing of assets just before they go bankrupt, the inquiry's investigators state in a confidential report. And the bankruptcy trustees they work with turn a blind eye to the abuses, it adds. The inquiry was launched in 1991, following a *Gazette* investigation that revealed widespread unethical conduct by consultants, debtors and bankruptcy trustees. The report of the federal inquiry was obtained by *The Gazette* under the ATI Act.

Keeping the public in check: Special Mountie team, police tactics threaten right to free speech and assembly, critics say

By David Pugliese and Jim Bronskill, *Ottawa Citizen*, Aug. 18, 2001.

The RCMP has quietly created a special unit to deal with public dissent. The new team of Mounties, called the Public Order Program, was established to help the force exchange secret intelligence on crowd-control techniques with other police agencies, according to an RCMP document. The new unit will also examine how to make better use of "non-lethal defensive tools," such as pepper spray, rubber bullets and tear gas. Targets of such intelligence operations in recent years range from former NDP leader Ed Broadbent to the Raging Grannies, a senior citizens' satire group. And in what some consider blatant intimidation, RCMP and CSIS agents are showing up unannounced on the doorsteps of people who voice opinions critical of government policy or who plan to take part in demonstrations. Intelligence agencies also infiltrated legitimate political gatherings.

RCMP shootings violate policy; Internal report by the force says only 10 of 30 incidents involving guns met test for lethal force

By Chad Skelton, *Vancouver Sun*, July 28, 2008.

Most shootings by RCMP members do not meet the force's own standards for the use of deadly force, according to an internal RCMP report obtained by *The Sun*. According to the report, of the 30 RCMP shootings nationwide in 2006, only 10 met the RCMP's test for using lethal force -- namely, to protect someone from death or "grievous bodily harm." Another two were outside the officer's control, such as a gun going off in a struggle with a suspect. The internal RCMP report, says the number of shootings that violate RCMP policy is troubling. B.C.'s relatively low rate of

police shootings is in stark contrast to the province's record on in-custody deaths. The report states the high rate of police shootings in Alberta is "disturbing."

RCMP shelved hundreds of organized-crime cases after terror attacks

By Colin Freeze, *Globe and Mail*, Sept. 17, 2017

Internal documents obtained by The Globe highlight how bolstering of counterterrorism - which involves pre-empting possible threats rather than waiting for incidents to happen - has started resulting in understaffed organized-crime cases at a pivotal time. The RCMP sidelined more than 300 investigations, mostly into organized-crime, as it redirected more than \$100-million to its national-security squads after two Canadian soldiers were killed by Islamic State sympathizers. Records obtained by The Globe under the ATIA speak to how big of a bite the force's counterterrorism contingent has been taking out of its traditional law-enforcement work. These massive RCMP redeployments started in October, 2014 - the month that a terrorist shot dead a Canadian Forces soldier, before being killed while storming Parliament.

Canada's militarized police forces face defunding and 'de-tasking', experts say

By Michael MacDonald, *Canadian Press*, July 16, 2020

The armoured rescue vehicle that Halifax Regional Police had planned to buy for more than \$300,000 spoke volumes about the militarization of law enforcement agencies in Canada. The 8,000-kilogram, armour-plated truck - equipped with a rotating roof hatch, eight gun ports and a powered battering ram - looked like it was ready for the worst of war zones. Yet mayor said the money would be used instead for anti-Black racism programs.... Kevin Walby, an associate professor of criminal justice at the University of Winnipeg, said there's more to militarization than the purchase of armoured vehicles, automatic weapons and tactical gear. Using information gleaned through the ATIA, Walby found that police forces across Canada are increasingly using SWAT members to serve low-risk warrants: "It is happening all the time, but we don't see it. And they even assign SWAT team members to do mental-health checks."

Polish-speaking officer was in airport at time of taser, agency documents show

By Jim Bronskill and Sue Bailey, *Globe and Mail*, March 31, 2008

A Border Services officer who spoke a few words of Robert Dziekanski's native tongue may have come within minutes of helping avert the Polish immigrant's death, documents show. Dziekanski died in the wee hours of Oct. 14 after the RCMP zapped the 40-year-old with a taser and pinned him to the floor of the Vancouver International Airport. Internal documents and accompanying security camera video of Dziekanski provide fresh glimpses into the confusing sequence of events that led up to the incident. The records, obtained from the Canadian Border

Services Agency by The Canadian Press and CBC, help flesh out a series of encounters with several border staffers.

One in three hit with RCMP Tasers need medical care: The Canadian Press-CBC analysis

By Jim Bronskill, *Canadian Press*, June 17, 2008

Nearly one-third of the people the RCMP has zapped with Tasers needed medical treatment afterward, prompting new questions. A joint investigation by CP and CBC-Radio-Canada of more than 3,200 incidents in which Mounties fired the powerful electronic devices reveals more than 28 per cent were later examined by medical personnel. The figures, covering the last six years, ranged from 16 per cent of cases in Nunavut to almost 42 per cent in Prince Edward Island. Of 3,226 people the RCMP hit with a Taser from 2002 through last year, 910 were examined in a hospital or other medical facility. The data also show the Mounties zapped people with Tasers more than once in almost half of cases despite an internal policy that warns repeated stuns may be hazardous.

Stolen weapons arm bad guys: Hefty firepower. 17,000 legal guns go missing since 2000

By Glen McGregor, *Ottawa Citizen*, Feb. 27, 2007

The list reads like a SWAT team's inventory: Uzis, AK-47s, vintage Tommy guns, German assault rifles and a compact submachine-gun capable of firing 900 rounds a minute. They are some of the most efficient combat firearms ever made - and many of them are in the hands of Canadian criminals. More than 1,200 of these prohibited-class firearms have been reported stolen in the past six years, and only a fraction of them have been recovered. Although only a small percentage of Canada's seven million registered guns go missing, the numbers add up: as of last November, more than 17,000 legally registered firearms had been reported lost or stolen in Canada since 2000. Gun-registry data obtained by the *Ottawa Citizen* through the ATIA show that of the 1,209 prohibited-class weapons stolen and 185 reported lost since 2000, only 10 per cent have been found.

Fast ban on Chilean fruit a byproduct of mussels fiasco

By Joan Bryden, *Southam News*, March 16, 1989

Ottawa leisurely responded in 1987 when it learned several people had fallen seriously ill after eating mussels from Prince Edward Island. Health and Welfare Canada documents, obtained by Liberal MP Sheila Copps through the ATIA, confirm the department's Health Protection Branch learned on Nov. 24 that PEI mussels were suspected in two cases of illness. On Nov. 27, with six people ill after eating the mussels, the branch tested an unknown toxin (later found to be demoic

acid) discovered in the mussels on six lab mice. All six died. Still, claiming the epidemiological evidence was inadequate, the government waited two more days before halting shipments of PEI mussels. Despite further testing and more dead mice, it waited another two days, until the evening of Dec. 1, before finally issuing a health warning and pulling the shellfish off store shelves.

Truckers exposed to high dose of radiation during cross-country haul: report

By Steve Rennie, *Canadian Press*, Aug. 3, 2009

Two truckers were exposed to excessive doses of radiation last year while hauling a radioactive device across the country. A preliminary investigation by Canada's nuclear-safety watchdog found the drivers got more than their yearly limit of radiation on a six-day trip. The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission learned of the problem when the shipment triggered a radiation alarm on arrival at an MDS Nordion office in Ottawa. The commission traced the problem to a technician with Nomad Inspection Services of Olds, Alta., who didn't fasten a safety lock to a radioactive device before it was packaged and shipped. The company didn't tell anyone that the safety lock wasn't in place, says a report into the incident, which CP obtained under the ATIA. The device's radioactive source shifted from its shielded to unshielded position somewhere between Edmonton and Ottawa, exposing the drivers to high doses of radiation.

Dangerous and careless driving behind thousands of hazardous cargo crashes

By Steve Rennie, *Canadian Press*, July 26, 2011

Truckers hauling explosive or flammable loads have killed and badly injured people after getting drunk or stoned behind the wheel. Government crash reports reveal that thousands of people who transport dangerous cargo put themselves and others at even greater risk by driving while impaired and not taking enough care on Canada's roads and rails. Government officials record accidents in the Dangerous Goods Accident Information System when a spill or leak poses a danger to human health, property or the environment. CP obtained the database under the ATIA. Over half of the database's 20,000 entries list "human" error as a factor. That's three times more than the runner-up, "equipment." An analysis found sleeping drivers, carelessness and negligence, speeding and handling cargo the wrong way are just some of the many reasons -- besides drugs or booze -- for thousands of crashes in the last 20 years.

New safety reports reveal holes in pipeline company: Former employees warned TransCanada of potential infrastructure defects

By Mike de Souza, *Toronto Star*, Apr. 14, 2014

Management at TransCanada Corp. were dismissive to employees who raised concerns in recent years about the safety of the company's existing and new North American pipelines. Thousands

of pages of records, released by the Senate energy and environment committee, show cases where engineers were told in internal emails to stop searching for potential pipeline defects. TransCanada engineer Evan Vokes, specializing in a type of inspection known as non-destructive examination, submitted the documents, including numerous emails between him and colleagues along with a collection of records obtained through the ATIA, when he appeared before the Senate committee in 2013 that was studying Canadian energy policies.

Ottawa wanted U.S. to accept more lenient meat inspection regime

By Bill Curry, *Globe and Mail*, Aug. 29, 2008. Ken Rubin ATIA research

The Canadian government strongly opposed tougher U.S. rules to prevent listeria and lobbied the United States to accept Canada's more lenient standards. Briefing notes prepared by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency for an April 7, 2006, meeting with the board of directors of the Canadian Meat Council outline how both industry and the Canadian government were frustrated with the increased precautions the U.S. was demanding. Specifically, Canada opposed daily inspection visits and the testing of finished products for *Listeria monocytogenes*. The notes outline Canada's objections to the U.S. rules, which were imposed in response to a deadly listeria outbreak in 1998.

Turpentine and propane are contained in cigarettes

By David Vienneau, *Toronto Star*, Sept. 2, 1986

Included among the ingredients of cigarettes are some that might make even the most hardened smokers gag include turpentine, shellac, butane, ammonia, propane, volcanic ash and acetone, which is used in the making of varnish. There is even an in between or "We're not sure" category. It includes deertongue, vinegar, coffee, saccharin, salt, oak bark, chalk, gum and geranium oil. A previously secret list of hundreds of ingredients that are added to cigarettes for flavoring and to preserve them and keep them from drying out was obtained by The Toronto Star under the ATIA. But while the 12-page list identifies all of the additives, it is not possible to tell you which brand of cigarette contains what ingredients because the four cigarette manufacturers say that is a trade secret. It is the first time such a list has been made public.

Govt. altered records on possible hazards of implant, paper says

By Nicholas Regush, *Ottawa Citizen*, March 29, 1989. Ken Rubin ATIA research

Officials in the Department of Health ordered the destruction of some key government records and the modification of others relating to the hazards of a popular type of breast implant. Documents reveal a trail of altered records that played down health concerns about the safety of the Meme silicone-gel implant used by women to increase their bust size. The implant has a foam coating that contains a cancer-causing chemical. Medical studies show that the coating can

break down, become entangled with breast tissue and promote infection. In 200 pages of government documents on the implant, one orders the destruction of a scientific report calling Meme "unfit for human implantation." As well, a "memo recall" wiped out all mention in official files of a recommendation by Health Department scientists that the implant be temporarily withdrawn from the market.

The tragic truth about medical devices

By Brad Everson, *Ottawa Citizen*, Jan. 5, 1991. Ken Rubin ATIA research

In 1980, within a month of each other, two women died in Calgary's Holy Cross hospital. Both died of heart failure, both had Bjork-Shiley heart valves implanted in them. And both died within 24 hours of the implant surgery. In a memo, Health and sWelfare scientist Dr. Pierre Blais warned his department head: "I feel that this new valve is conceptually faulty and, in addition, is transparently recognizable as such," and concluded: "It seems to me that these two deaths in Calgary were totally unnecessary." Although it was found the valves were installed incorrectly, Blais blamed the lack of labelling on the device for this as much as the surgeons. In 1987, Health Canada finally advised hospitals to stop using the valves, but hospitals were warned about the valves as early as 1982. Although it asked Bjork-Shiley to stop selling the devices in Canada in 1984, it allowed hospitals to continue using valves they already had.

Blood untreated despite HIV data; Hemophiliacs' plight known

By Andre Picard, *Globe and Mail*, March 5, 1993

Ottawa knew in late 1984 that 55 per cent of Canadian hemophiliacs were infected with the AIDS virus from contaminated blood products, but continued to use untreated and untested blood that was "already in the pipeline." The government also knew in early 1985 that four in every 100,000 blood donors were infected but continued to distribute blood without testing until late that year, according to the documents, obtained through ATIA and compiled by the Canadian Hemophilia Society. The new revelations lend weight to charges by victims that poor communication between bureaucratic agencies and an odious administrative structure exacerbated the problem and directly contributed to the infection of hundreds more people. "We are repeating our call for an independent public inquiry because our fear is that, 10 years later, it is not inconceivable that a similar situation could repeat itself," said the Society's president.

Ottawa was aware of tainted-blood responsibility, documents indicate

By Mark Kennedy, *Ottawa Citizen*, March 19, 1998

Documents reveal Ottawa knew more than a year ago that its actions in the tainted-blood scandal likely contributed to some Canadians being infected with hepatitis C. Despite that, it continued for several months to resist calls from victims for compensation. Only with the arrival of a new

minister, Allan Rock, in the summer, and the impending release of the Krever report, did the government soften its stance. In 1997, the government was admitting internally that a key decision it made with the provinces and the Red Cross probably left some Canadians suffering from the potentially fatal liver disease. The evidence is contained in documents released to the Citizen through the ATIA, such as briefing notes prepared by bureaucrats for the health minister before a meeting he had with the head of the Hepatitis C Society of Canada.

U.S. prisoners' blood fed hep-C infections: Ottawa Documents show for the first time that government knew about risk of supply

By Anne McIlroy, *Globe and Mail*, June 30, 1999. Ken Rubin ATIA research

Ottawa has for the first time acknowledged that U.S. prison blood imported into Canada in the early 1980s led to more Canadians being infected with hepatitis C, in a briefing note for the Health Minister about blood imported into Canada in the early 1980s from an Arkansas prison and made into products that were used by hemophiliacs. "Plasma from such high-risk populations may indeed have contributed to the transmission of blood diseases such as AIDS and hepatitis C," it said. Lawyers representing tainted-blood victims say this is significant, because Ottawa and the provinces have refused to compensate Canadians infected with hepatitis C before 1986, arguing that there was no government negligence. They have admitted liability from 1986 to 1990, because during that period Canada was not using a test that was in use in the U.S. that might have screened for the virus.

Diabetics demand insulin safety probe

By Andre Picard, *Globe and Mail*, Feb. 6, 2002

A group of diabetics and their physicians are calling for a public inquiry into the safety of insulin, saying that newer, genetically engineered products are sickening and perhaps even killing Canadians. They are also demanding that Health Canada ensure that an old-fashioned form of insulin, derived from animals, be made more widely available. "In the last year, I've spoken to about 250 people who've had serious reactions to genetically engineered insulin," said a spokeswoman for the Society for Diabetic Rights. In fact, using the ATIA, the group has discovered that eight Canadians had died after taking synthetic insulin as of January, 2001. Another 465 people had adverse reactions. By comparison, only nine diabetics reported adverse reactions to pork insulin, and none to beef insulin. In the U.S., there have been 92 reported deaths, and 4,000 adverse reactions reported by diabetics using synthetic insulin.

Federal funds used to boost nicotine level in smokes: researcher

By Staff, *Ottawa Citizen*, March 17, 1997. Ken Rubin ATIA research

Federal scientists have worked for years to help the tobacco industry boost the addictive hit of cigarettes at the same time other branches of government have worked to curb smoking, says Ken Rubin. "The documents I have obtained reveal the complicity of the Canadian government," he said. "Some departments are trying to reduce tobacco consumption while others are deliberately promoting its use. The Canadian government is in effect in the business of killing Canadians." CTV News says minutes of meetings held since 1980 between Agriculture Canada scientists and industry representatives reveal a campaign to hike the nicotine content of tobacco. "Lines containing up to four per cent nicotine have been selected in the high nicotine gene pool," says a report submitted to the group in 1985. "These lines should be advanced and tested further."

Marketplace 2003-04-01

By David McKie and Erica Johnson, *CBC TV*, April 1, 2003

One in ten of us has a synthetic body part: a pacemaker, heart valve, hip joint, breast implant. We believe medical devices are safe, rigorously tested, closely monitored. But our Marketplace investigation reveals how faulty, even dangerous, devices are getting to market. We teamed up with CBC reporter David McKie to create a database using Health Canada documents we obtained through the ATI Act. We wanted to know how often medical devices fail. Just last year, 800 devices were recalled. Some complaints: malfunctioning heart valves, hairs found in "sterile" products, surgical screws that popped right out, a lens for the eye that clouds over. Even a presentation Health Canada gave to medical device manufacturers admits to big problems.

Ottawa rates health risk from human remains in farm meat

By Larry Pynn, *Vancouver Sun*, Oct. 29, 2004

A Health Canada study commissioned by RCMP investigating alleged serial killer Robert Pickton has calculated the odds of contracting a disease from eating pork products contaminated with human remains from the accused's Port Coquitlam pig farm. The health-risk assessment study, obtained by The Sun through an ATIA request, concludes the chance of someone contracting a potentially fatal viral disease such as HIV is extremely low, and that unsanitary food handling conditions at the Pickton pig farm posed a greater health hazard. "It is believed that there is the possibility that human remains were fed to pigs," reads the report by Dr. Tony Giulivi of Ottawa's blood safety surveillance and health care acquired infections division. "This poses no known risk to the food supply. The viruses ... do not cross the species barrier and would be inactivated by the pig digestive system."

There's a good reason why David fights Goliath; Big stories, from the sponsorship scandal to illegal daycares, began with a single request

By Bill Curry, David McKie, Mike Gordon. *Globe and Mail, CBC*, Sept. 22, 2007

An ATIA request in the late 1990s by CBC reporters David McKie and Mike Gordon made public a key database inside Health Canada chronicling cases of adverse drug reactions. The data allowed the CBC to report a major rise in such reactions among youth taking certain antidepressants, yet no public warning had been issued. A second story using the same database showed that thousands of seniors were dying each year from the drugs prescribed to them by doctors. "We've heard from countless Canadians about the usefulness of this," McKie said. "Canadians have used this information to go to their doctor to ask questions about the drugs they're taking." In 2005, Health Canada made this searchable database permanently available to the public, on a matter that could conceivably affect any Canadian.

Canada's drug bill could be cut if doctors knew prices: federal report

By Dean Beeby, *Canadian Press*, Oct. 21, 2007

Soaring drug bills in Canada could be cut if doctors simply paid attention to the cost of the medications they prescribe, says a study commissioned by Industry Canada, which found that Canadian physicians are generally oblivious to drug prices and often prescribe an expensive pharmaceutical when a cheap one would do. "In Canada, there is no formal mechanism that credibly brings cost into the physician's decision-making process" when issuing prescriptions, says the report by IMS Health Consulting Inc. The situation is better in the U.S. and Great Britain, where health-management systems that do take drug prices into account help reduce pharmacy bills. IMS Health Consulting fought its release in Federal Court for several months before recently withdrawing the legal challenge.

Feds quietly chop money for fetal alcohol program

By Dean Beeby, *Canadian Press*, March 21, 2009

Federal money earmarked to fight the tragedy of fetal alcohol disorders has been quietly chopped back year after year. "Each year the initiative has received only a portion of the dollars allocated," says an internal evaluation. "It is unclear why this cutback has become the norm." The Public Health Agency of Canada has been budgeting \$3.3 million each year for its fetal alcohol spectrum disorder initiative, but consistently spends only about two-thirds of the cash, it says. The disorder, the result of alcohol consumption during pregnancy, causes a broad range of physical, mental and behavioural disabilities. It's believed to affect 300,000 Canadians, costing about \$24,000 annually in social services and health care for each afflicted child, many of whom suffer severe learning disabilities.

The antiviral Tamiflu may not be very effective and may have adverse side effects

By Frederic Zalac, *CBC TV*, May 23, 2011

The government spent millions to protect you from a flu pandemic, but our investigation raises questions about Tamiflu's effectiveness and safety, and we confront the flu experts who advised the government while having ties to drug companies. Hundreds of troubling cases had already been reported in Japan, including some accidental deaths. Using the ATI Act, CBC obtained Tamiflu adverse reaction reports from Health Canada and the FDA. We found a noticeable increase of reported cases of neuropsychiatric reactions in Canada and the U.S. Many of those accounts are disturbing.

Liberals accused of diabetes tax grab with apparent benefit clawback

By Mike Blanchfield, *Canadian Press*, Oct. 23, 2017

Diabetes Canada publicly denounced what they say is a clawback of a long-standing disability tax credit to help them manage a disease that can cost the average sufferer \$15,000 annually. In May, the revenue department stopped approving a disability tax credit for people with Type 1 diabetes for those who had previously claimed it. People who need more than 14 hours per week for insulin therapy, and had a doctor's certification previously qualified. But other than citing a spike in applications for the benefit, the government offered no explanation for the change during initial interactions earlier this spring, said Kimberley Hanson of Diabetes Canada. Thousands of claimants from across Canada who had previously been given the \$1,500 annual benefit have been rejected, but Hanson said she can't get an exact number from the Canadian Revenue Agency and has had to file an ATIA request to find out. Agency officials and the Minister have for the most part rebuffed their overtures.

Investigation on implants and the ravages they can do

By Vik Adhopia, *CBC TV*, Nov. 25, 2018

From cochlear implants to heart valves, breast implants and artificial hips, more and more Canadians have medical devices in them or on them, but when they fail they can harm us. Our data journalists analysed thousands of device incident reports we obtained from Health Canada using ATI Act requests. We found artificial hips coming loose, pelvic mesh inflicting pain, and heart implants delivering shocks. Over the last decade devices are said to have played a role in about 1,400 deaths in Canada, more than 14,000 injuries, and 80,000 incidents that had the potential for injury or death. Companies were also late in reporting these problems to Health Canada, almost 15,000 times.

Drug-approval process criticized; Some Health Canada managers passed products despite reviewers' concerns, insiders say

By Laura Eggertson, *Globe and Mail*, May 28, 1997

Some managers at Health Canada have repeatedly bypassed or ignored their drug reviewers' questions about possibly dangerous side effects of human and animal drugs and approved them anyway, current and former employees say. In interviews and documents obtained by The Globe, regulators who have quit or filed grievances describe a department riddled with managers who go too easy on the pharmaceutical companies whose drugs they review. In a memo involving one such veterinary drug, the acting chief of the veterinary drugs bureau outlined a promise to the manager of product development with Hoechst Canada Inc. to clear the way for the company's next drug submission. "I told him I would make up for the rough time he's had with Revalor-H when we review his next submission," it says.

Ottawa's help to big drug firms revealed; Generic industry calls Liberal pledge a sham

By Tim Harper, *Toronto Star*, Oct. 9, 1997. Ken Rubin ATIA research

Officials in John Manley's Industry department were seeking ways to provide stronger market protection to multinational drug companies only days after the industry minister promised changes to help cheaper, generic products, documents show. A series of meetings held in the days following the report of a parliamentary committee that reviewed drug legislation showed the Liberals' pledge to help Canadian manufacturers of generic drugs was a sham, representatives of the generic industry say. All MPs urged the Liberals to change the regulations under which Health Canada blocks the introduction of a lower-cost generic drug any time a brand-name company claims patent infringement. In a statement April 25, he indicated to the generic companies such changes to regulations would be a priority. The NDP asked the Commons Speaker to rule whether Manley is in contempt of Parliament.

Judge orders file release

By Peter Calamai, *Montreal Gazette*, May 9, 1986

Ottawa has been ordered to make public 200 pages of secret immigration files in a precedent-setting court decision that marks the first legal victory for the information ombudsman. Federal Court Associate Chief Justice James Jerome harshly criticized bureaucrats and, indirectly, a cabinet minister for trying to thwart the spirit of open government enshrined in the 1983 access law. "This will open the doors," predicted Gerald Goldstein, a Vancouver lawyer who has been battling Immigration Department secrecy for more than two years. The secret files were used by immigration officials who denied permanent residence to a Filipino woman by rejecting the sponsorship of her husband, a Canadian citizen. Goldstein expects the documents show that immigration officials used unreliable material from the Philippines concerning a previous marriage by the woman. He applied for the documents on the husband's behalf after the wife waived any privacy barriers.

'Better to die, my name intact': Marilla Lo took on Treasury Board and won. But she won't get so much as an apology.

By Kathryn May, *Ottawa Citizen*, July 18, 1998.

The longtime public servant returned to work at the Treasury Board last week, branded a troublemaker and owing more than \$80,000 in legal costs. Her house is for sale, the steely nerves she showed as a former policewoman in Hong Kong are shot, and she must pay back the severance pay and pension she collected while waiting for a year for her case to be heard. And she's still waiting for a personal apology. Her vindication came when the Public Service Staff Relations Board recently ruled that the Treasury Board had acted in "bad faith" by attempting to disguise her firing as a layoff. The adjudicator ordered the government to reinstate her with full back pay. She pieced together evidence mined from the many requests she filed under the ATIA and privacy laws. And over the years, Lo eventually won all her cases -- but the Treasury Board fought her every step of the way.

Health Canada knew of massive gaps in First Nations child health care, documents show; Officials were unprepared to implement changes prescribed by landmark human rights ruling

By Jorge Barrera, *CBC*, Oct. 24, 2017

Health Canada officials were sent scrambling after a landmark human rights ruling last year that found Ottawa discriminated against First Nation children by underfunding services for First Nation children, according to internal correspondence provided to CBC News. The tribunal ordered Ottawa to immediately increase child welfare funding, overhaul the child welfare system and apply Jordan's Principle on all publicly delivered services, including health and education, for children. At the time of the ruling, Health Canada's data showed on-reserve First Nation children faced a massive gap in health services compared with what was available provincially, according to the internal correspondence obtained by NDP MP Charlie Angus through the ATIA.

Birds dying in agony from lead poisoning

By Staff, *Toronto Star*, June 27, 1995. Ken Rubin ATIA research

Hundreds of thousands of Canadian geese and ducks are dying slow, agonizing deaths from poison each year after swallowing lead shotgun pellets, a draft Environment Canada study says. Millions more are sick and weakened from lead poisoning - many probably dying when they can't escape natural enemies. But Canadian hunters pump more than 2 million kilograms of lead into the environment every year. Lead shot is legal in Canada, except in British Columbia and the Yukon.

Dozens of pigs died in frigid transport; CFIA documents detail case of 27 hogs dying on way to Langley

By Larry Pynn, *Vancouver Sun*, Dec. 19, 2016

The deaths of 27 pigs being trucked from Alberta to Metro Vancouver for slaughter in sub-zero weather is shedding light on the inhumane transport of animals in Canada. Canadian Food Inspection Agency inspection documents obtained by Postmedia News through an ATIA request show Kunsman Transport Ltd. hauled a shipment of pigs this year to Donald's Fine Foods (Britco Pork) in Langley. Upon arrival, 25 pigs were dead and two were destroyed because of their poor condition. Another 255 pigs survived the trip, which involved temperatures of as low as -10 C. A necropsy on three of the dead pigs concluded that "environmental challenges" during the trip affected the pigs' ability to regulate their body temperature and they died of "cardiopulmonary failure." The documents noted the driver of the transport "did not show any concern" for what happened.

Conservatives eye Arctic reindeer reserve for oil and gas exploration

By Steve Rennie, *Canadian Press*, Feb. 20, 2014

Tracts of land that had been set aside for reindeer grazing in Canada's North have instead been offered up by the Conservative government for oil and gas exploration. Companies interested in obtaining petroleum exploration rights in the Mackenzie Delta and Beaufort Sea region of the Northwest Territories were asked last year to nominate blocks of land that they wanted to see included in a subsequent call for bids. Reindeer-grazing reserves near the communities of Inuvik and Tuktoyaktuk were among the lands that were included in that call for nominations. Documents show officials at Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada have discussed just such an amendment in order to allow the reindeer-grazing land to be included in the bidding for exploration licences. CP obtained the documents under the ATIA.

Millions of litres of sewage accidentally dumped in cities: analysis

By Steve Rennie, *Canadian Press*, June 13, 2010

Far more sewage has been spilled in Canadian urban centres over the last six years than any other harmful contaminant. An analysis by CP reveals hundreds of millions of litres of sewage, as well as many other dangerous liquids, have been dumped right under Canadians' noses. This has been kept in a classified government database called NEMISIS - National Enforcement Management Information System and Intelligence System. Federal enforcement officers use the database to go after polluters. It took CP two years and a complaint to the information commissioner to pry the data from Environment Canada under the ATIA. CP then created its own spills database using the government information, which covers the period from January 2004 to this past April. The analysis looked at spills in 18 civic areas across 10 provinces.

Ottawa cancels 3,000 environmental reviews; Harper government stops screenings on proposed pipeline, energy projects

By Mike De Souza, *Postmedia News*, Aug. 24, 2012

The Harper government's budget legislation has forced the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency to cancel nearly 3,000 screenings into potential environmental damage caused by proposed development projects across Canada, including hundreds involving a pipeline or fossil-fuel energy, according to records obtained via the ATIA. Out of 2,970 project reviews that were stopped by the legislation that rewrote Canada's environmental laws and weakened federal oversight on industrial development, 678 involved fossil-fuel energy and 248 involved a pipeline, including proposals from Alberta-based companies Enbridge and TransCanada. The numbers were calculated using the agency's new online database, which is still undergoing some revisions. Prime Minister Stephen Harper and his cabinet have said their reforms would strengthen environmental protection while removing administrative delays.

Satellite data sound alarm on safety of bitumen extraction

By Jason Fekete, *Postmedia News*, Feb. 2, 2014

Satellite imagery used by Ottawa to review a major bitumen leak in Alberta has found the project's steam-based extraction caused "measurable levels of ground deformation in the area of the leak" at a rate 10 times faster than other oilsands operations. The data obtained from satellite observations - and presented to senior officials at Natural Resources Canada - are sparking new questions about the incident at a Canadian Natural Resources Limited (CNRL) operation in northeast Alberta and the safety of bitumen extraction. The information is also sounding more alarm bells for the nearby Cold Lake First Nations, who are worried various oilsands operations in the area are contaminating local groundwater and damaging their traditional lands. Briefing materials prepared for the deputy minister of Natural Resources Canada, and obtained by Postmedia News under the ATIA, show Ottawa used satellite imagery from RADARSAT-2

Fisheries Act change guided by industry

By Gloria Galloway, *Globe and Mail*, Aug. 6, 2013

The Conservative government consulted with both environmental organizations and industry associations before making controversial changes to the Fisheries Act last year, but listened primarily to industry. When a section of one of the massive 2012 omnibus budget bills limited the scope of the legislation governing the protection of fish and their habitats, some ecologists said it was the biggest setback to conservation law in 50 years. One of the most significant changes was to remove the broad protections that covered all fish habitats and to specify the law would now prohibit only "serious harm" to fish "that are part of a commercial, recreational or aboriginal fisheries, or to fish that support such a fishery." Documents released recently to The Globe under the ATIA suggest that wording was offered by industry associations.

Indian status cards being sold illegally: The cards, which provide access to benefits, can fetch up to \$1,000 each

By Rick Mofina, *Ottawa Citizen*, Sept. 4, 2000

Indian status cards entitling natives to special benefits are a prize on the black market because a single card can be improperly issued up to 20 times. Criminals have "seized upon the value" of the cards and placed a street price for each at \$500 to \$1,000, according to a 1999 study conducted for the Indian affairs department, obtained by the Canadian Taxpayers Federation under the ATIA . Known as a Certificate of Indian Status Card, it is issued to Canada's 700,000 registered Indians. The card determines who receives special federal services and tax exemptions, totalling as much as \$8,000 in benefits per cardholder per year in such areas as sales taxes, drugs, dental work and eye examinations.

Back UN on native rights, Ottawa urged

By Gloria Galloway, *Globe and Mail*, June 8, 2007

Bureaucrats recommended that Ottawa champion the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples - a declaration that Canada is now lobbying the UN to revisit and revise. Amnesty International has obtained documents through the ATIA that show officials within the departments of Indian Affairs, Foreign Affairs and Defence have all recommended that the government back the UN statement of aboriginal rights. Although Canada helped write the document, the Conservative government has withdrawn its support, arguing that the declaration is unconstitutional, could prevent military activities on aboriginal land and could harm existing land deals. In July, as it became apparent that Canada's position was changing, officials wrote again to the minister: "Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and Foreign Affairs Canada initially advised DND/CF that they were recommending that Canada support the adoption of the draft declaration."

Feds provide inadequate mental health care for First Nations: internal memo

By Joan Bryden, *Canadian Press*, Dec. 23, 2016

Even as Ottawa pressures provinces and territories to take up its offer of billions to improve mental health services for Canadians, an internal memo suggests it's failing in its own responsibility to provide adequate care for mentally ill children in First Nations communities. In extreme cases, it says, desperate parents are giving up their children to child welfare agencies as the only way to ensure their kids get treatment for mental illnesses. The memo prepared for the Health Minister was uncovered through the ATIA by NDP MP Charlie Angus. Compared to provincially funded services, it says, some First Nations and Inuit Health Branch services are

"less accessible and/or not funded to similar levels." Where mental health services are available, "they are provided by paraprofessionals or generalists."

Ottawa took years to warn First Nations about fraud: Man charged with misappropriating money from children's fund had contracts with six other nations

By Gloria Galloway, *Globe and Mail*, Feb. 10, 2017

The Auditor-General alerted the department of Indigenous Affairs in 2011 that a man hired to co-manage a First Nation's finances may have been engaged in fraud - the year before the RCMP alleges Joe Crupi pocketed of hundreds of thousands of dollars misappropriated from a breakfast program for children on the impoverished Kashechewan reserve. But six other First Nations that employed the Crupi Consulting Group were not told by the department until 2016 that "some anomalies" had been detected in work done by their third-party manager. Documents obtained under the ATIA by NDP MP Charlie Angus say "in 2011, the Office of the Auditor-General informed the department [of Indigenous Affairs] of possible fraudulent practices... of Crupi Consulting." The department ordered a forensic audit by KPMG and then turned the results of that investigation over to the RCMP in 2012.

Judge orders file release

By Peter Calamai, *Montreal Gazette*, May 9, 1986

Ottawa has been ordered to make public 200 pages of secret immigration files in a precedent-setting court decision that marks the first legal victory for the information ombudsman. Federal Court Associate Chief Justice James Jerome harshly criticized bureaucrats and, indirectly, a cabinet minister for trying to thwart the spirit of open government enshrined in the 1983 access law. "This will open the doors," predicted Gerald Goldstein, a Vancouver lawyer who has been battling Immigration Department secrecy for more than two years. The secret files were used by immigration officials who denied permanent residence to a Filipino woman by rejecting the sponsorship of her husband, a Canadian citizen. Goldstein expects the documents show that immigration officials used unreliable material from the Philippines concerning a previous marriage by the woman. He applied for the documents on the husband's behalf after the wife waived any privacy barriers.

Top court affirms right to information, with limits

By Kirk Makin, *Globe and Mail*, June 18, 2010

The Supreme Court of Canada has recognized a Charter right to obtain suppressed information, but it stopped short of allowing the exercise of that right to force the disclosure of an Ontario

police report that exonerated officers in a botched 1983 murder investigation. In a 7-0 ruling, the court said that government documents may be disclosed if it can be shown that suppressing them "precludes meaningful public discussion on matters of public interest." It ends a 25-year legal saga that began with the death of Toronto mobster, Dominic Racco, who was shot in the head by fellow mobsters near Hamilton. A 300-page OPP investigative report exonerated authorities. The Criminal Lawyers Association tried to obtain it, but was thwarted. CLA lawyer Brad Elberg said the ruling makes Canada "the first Western country to recognize that freedom of information is not just a gift to Canadians. It is guaranteed to us as part of our constitutional right of freedom of expression."

Internal Justice report suggests sentencing bill has uneven impact

By Dean Beeby, *Canadian Press*, Sept. 25, 2010

The preliminary statistics from Justice Canada lend support to critics who warn that Bill C-25, the so-called Truth in Sentencing Act, unfairly targets the poor, the illiterate and Canada's aboriginal community. The bill, now law, ended the widespread practice of giving convicted persons double credit for time spent in custody awaiting trial. The study, conducted before the tougher sentencing rules were imposed, also showed that judges in Winnipeg gave two-for-one credits about 80 per cent of the time - something now forbidden. The study was cited in a secret memo to cabinet about Bill C-25, but was not made public as the House of Commons and Senate debated the proposed legislation. CP obtained a copy under the ATIA.

Tories to reduce temporary releases; Decision runs counter to Correctional Service report that inmates fare better if given controlled freedom

By Douglas Quan, *Ottawa Citizen*, July 29, 2013

The Conservative government says it is pushing forward with plans to place more restrictions on temporary releases of federal inmates, even as an internal Correctional Service of Canada briefing document highlights their benefits. Inmates can be granted escorted and unescorted "temporary absences" for a variety of reasons: to perform community service, attend medical appointments or treatment programs, and visit family members. They can last a few hours, a few days or even weeks. A briefing document sent to the public safety minister, obtained under the ATIA, said temporary absences play an important role in helping offenders re-integrate into society. It cites the "low rate of failure" arising from temporary absences and notes that offenders who participate in the program are less likely to be readmitted following release on full parole.

In Canada, nearly all accused money launderers get their charges dropped

By Marco Oved and Andrew Bailey, *Toronto Star*, July 26, 2019

White-collar criminals have little to fear from the Canadian judicial system, in which nearly all money laundering charges get thrown out before trial. Eighty-six per cent of charges for laundering the proceeds of crime laid between 2012 and 2017 were withdrawn or stayed, according to data from Statistics Canada's Integrated Criminal Court Survey. A mere nine per cent of money laundering charges during that period resulted in a guilty plea or a conviction. A data set, which the Star obtained from the PPSC through an ATIA request, shows only the charges that were pursued by federal prosecutors, which generally involve tax and drug offences. The track record for securing convictions there isn't much better. According to the database, 63 per cent of federal money laundering charges during the same five-year period were either withdrawn or stayed, while 28 per cent led to a guilty finding.

Early-exit prisoners killed 130 in 12 years

By Stephen Bindman, *Ottawa Citizen*, Sept. 14, 1987

In the past 12 years, 130 killings were committed by inmates released early from prison on parole or mandatory supervision. The National Parole Board study also found that nearly one of every five convicted murderers released on parole are later sent back to prison for committing crimes. It identified at least nine repeat killers - people who were convicted of murder or manslaughter, released and then convicted again of a killing. The parole board study, to be published later this year, was obtained by the Citizen under the ATIA. Because the figures were compiled earlier this year, they do not include Allan Sweeney, convicted in December of sexually assaulting and stabbing to death an Ottawa halfway house worker. Sweeney was on parole from a similar sex killing 10 years earlier at the time of the 1985 murder.

Report slams Quebec corrections officials over killer's release

By Dean Beeby, *Canadian Press*, Jan. 25, 2004

Corrections Canada officials failed to properly assess the risks posed by a convict who was released on parole, only to murder a woman he befriended, says a report. Poorly paid freelance psychologists hired by Corrections Canada were not provided with Conrad Brossard's complete file, did not investigate his patterns of sexual aggression and did not determine whether he was a psychopath. Indeed, most psychological profiles of potential parolees in Quebec "do not meet the minimum standards for conducting adequate assessments," says a board of investigation report into the case. The report, obtained under the ATIA, examined the parole of Brossard who pleaded guilty to the second-degree murder of Cecile Clement. He had met her at a nursing home in Trois-Rivieres, Que., where he worked as a volunteer. Brossard was a longtime offender, imprisoned for many violent offences beginning in 1966.

Prisons desperate to control diseases: Providing heroin, tattoo services among proposed measures

By Jim Bronskill, *Canadian Press*, June 23, 1999

The federal prison service is studying everything from prescription heroin to sanitary tattooing to help control serious drug and health problems behind bars. The ideas are among the options outlined in a draft strategy paper prepared by the Correctional Service of Canada. It says the prison service is "facing an epidemic of infectious diseases" related to intravenous drug use, sexual activity, tattooing and body piercing. Prison infection rates for HIV/AIDS are 10 times that of the Canadian population. Between 25 and 40 per cent of all offenders, and 90 per cent of injection drug users, have hepatitis C. "Staff and offenders fear the threat of infectious diseases as much as the general public," it says. "There is now a greater possibility of acquiring these diseases while incarcerated and of spreading them to the community at large."

Compensate inmates for drug tests: report

By Jim Bronskill and Mike Blanchfield, *Canadian Press*, May 29, 2000

Ottawa should stop stalling and agree to compensate prisoners who were subjected to unethical experiments behind bars, recommends a report commissioned by the Correctional Service of Canada. It suggests the prison service set up an independent committee to review the claims of federal inmates who were used as scientific guinea pigs in research involving hallucinogenic drugs, unproven pharmaceuticals, sensory deprivation and electric shock in the 1960s and '70s. The report was prepared by members of McGill University's Centre for Medicine, Ethics and Law. A 1998 investigation by Southam News and the Ottawa Citizen showed that hundreds of federal inmates were used as scientific test subjects. The revelations prompted the Correctional Service to hire two McGill medical ethicist to study documentation on such testing and recommend a course of action.

CSIS can share info despite 'substantial' torture risk

By Staff, *Canadian Press*, March 2, 2012

Ottawa has given Canada's spy service the go-ahead to provide information to foreign agencies even when there is a "substantial risk" it will lead to torture, a document shows. Public Safety Minister Vic Toews outlines instructions for sharing information in such cases in a directive to the Canadian Security Intelligence Service director. A copy of the 2011 document, secret until now, was released to CP. The directive is squarely at odds with Canada's international commitments against torture -- which have no loopholes, said Amnesty International Canada. Interim Liberal Leader Bob Rae said the federal policy is "unprecedented in our history."

Military closes books on gang-rape claim

By Stephen Bindman, *Ottawa Citizen*, Oct. 13, 1989

Up to 10 male soldiers engaged in group sex with a female militia officer at Canadian Forces Base Petawawa in 1984, a military investigation concluded. And documents obtained by Southam News under the ATIA reveal deficiencies in the way the military handled the investigation in 1984 and again last year. Despite the woman's claim five years ago that she was gang-raped, military officials decided no criminal charges could be laid and that too much time had lapsed to take disciplinary action against the soldiers. The only action taken was a "formal warning" against three soldiers that their conduct was unacceptable; they received "counselling and probation." The case was reopened after a former soldier told a TV station the woman was lured into a barracks by two soldiers and then threatened unless she performed sexual acts with about 15 men. ATIA records indicate that although the woman's allegations were referred to the Ontario Provincial Police, the police never prepared a report for senior officers.

Six soldiers 'warned' in death of Somali Sergeant put on probation

By Stephen Bindman, *Ottawa Citizen*, Oct. 16, 1994

What convinced Major Barry Armstrong to talk were the photographs, the ones released last week of Shidane Arone, the Somali who was beaten to death by Canadian soldiers. The military surgeon says those photos don't tell the whole story. He says senior officers issued orders to destroy all the other photos of Somali patients or prisoners. He didn't obey. He says he still has documentation, and that's all he'll say. The government had promised to be more open about what happened in Somalia. Major Armstrong doesn't think that's happened. And it was just learned today that seven other soldiers have been censured in connection with Shidane Arone's death. That was disclosed not freely by the military, but only through the ATI Act.

Report to Campbell on slain Somali said injuries slight; Teen bore no evidence of excessive force, military told then defence minister

By Paul Koring, *Globe and Mail*, Oct. 6, 1995

Top military officers knew within hours that Canadian soldiers had shot two Somalis in the back as they fled, killing one, wounding the other and raising obvious questions about whether the restrictive "rules of engagement" of a peacekeeping mission had been flouted, according to secret military communications released under the ATIA. Despite allegations of murder made by a military doctor within hours of the shootings, the local commanding officer's inquiry was allowed to languish for weeks. In the meantime, 12 days after the first incident, Canadian soldiers on a UN peacekeeping mission tortured and killed defenceless Somali teen-ager Shidane Arone. Defence documents show that the first report of the shootings in 1993, in a "Secret and Immediate Significant Incident Report" - itself an unusual communication from a peacekeeping mission - prompted a series of questions from the top brass in Ottawa.

Somalia: What went so wrong?

By David Pugliese, *Ottawa Citizen*, Oct. 1, 1995

A military police report found that soldiers and two officers in Somalia tried to initially cover up the cause of Shidane Arone's death. Blood-soaked sand in the bunker where the teenager was held was disposed of, his body was cleaned up, and the murder weapons were washed and hidden. The police investigation found that officers concluded the shooting was "fully justified" without even questioning Canadian military doctor Maj. Barry Armstrong who claimed one of the shootings was an "execution"- style murder. Internal military documents released through the ATIA also show that Armstrong talked to the chief of the defence staff, about the killing shortly after it. Defence files released to the inquiry and ATIA documents show members of the regiment had different interpretations of orders on how to deal with civilians in the war-torn African country.

'Military can't be trusted to investigate itself': Air force captain alerted Eggleton's office of impropriety, but they passed

By David Pugliese, *Ottawa Citizen*, Oct. 13, 1999

Canadian air force officials ignored a recommendation to remove an officer from command for using government equipment and soliciting money from military personnel for an investment scheme that lost \$1.5-million. The decision last year not to discipline Lt.-Col. Richard Clements came despite an internal military investigation that concluded he had used government resources for the business venture and openly recruited investors during work hours at Air Command headquarters in Winnipeg, according to documents obtained through the ATIA. Some military investors lost large portions of their government buyout packages, which they planned to use for retirement, according to CF, and one captain lost \$110,000. In total, about 45 investors, most serving or retired military personnel, lost money.

Army's lack of firepower a danger, study warns: Soldiers at risk, DND finds

By David Pugliese, *National Post*, Feb. 7, 2000

Large numbers of Canada's soldiers could be killed or wounded because of the army's lack of firepower and limited types of some ammunition, a DND report warns. The bluntest official assessment yet of the army's woes, it also points out that the army's ability to fight a war is eroding and "the quality of the force is diminishing." Army units are lacking everything from proper camouflage to heavy digging equipment so soldiers can protect themselves from enemy forces, says the study produced for a high-level meeting of army leaders. But the main threat to the lives of Canadian soldiers is the lack of long-range guns and deficiencies in direct-fire capability, such as that provided by tanks and other armoured vehicles with large guns. "The

performance of current firepower equipment is assessed as unsatisfactory and presents a high risk of excessive casualties or mission failure," says the report, obtained through the ATIA

Military knew about abuse of Afghan boys, records show; Feared Publicity

By David Pugliese, *National Post*, Sept. 19, 2000

National Defence headquarters officials were told in 2007 that young boys had allegedly been sexually abused by Afghan security forces at a Canadian base in Afghanistan, but the main concern at the time was that the incident might be reported in the media, according to military records obtained through the ATIA by the Citizen. The commander of Land Force Central Area passed on to senior army leadership concerns raised by military police who said they had been told by their commanders not to interfere in incidents where Afghan forces were having sex with children. The CF's position is that its troops have no jurisdiction over Afghan military and police personnel, even those on Canadian bases. A 2008 email written by an advisor on operational stress injuries says a staff meeting focused on controversies that might be brought out in the media, including, "ANP/ANA members having anal sex with young boys." ANP stands for Afghan National Police while ANA refers to Afghan National Army.

Canadian Forces failed to properly investigate allegations of commando gunning down surrendering Afghan: report

By David Pugliese, *National Post*, Sept. 19, 2000

The Canadian military either ignored or failed to properly investigate allegations the country's JTF2 special forces violated rules about the use of force during the Afghan War, a board of inquiry has concluded, fuelling a perception among soldiers their leaders were trying to cover them up. At one point, the board's report reveals, military police considered laying charges against Canadian special forces commandos over allegations they failed to report the execution of an Afghan by U.S. forces. Though much of the 63-page summary was censored before its release this week in response to an ATIA request - the body of the report so far remains secret - the unredacted portions are damning in their appraisal of the culture of the units and the professionalism with which the complaints were investigated.

Military police investigate CTV reporter; Defence department orders probe after story on use of government jets by then-top general

By David Pugliese, *National Post*, June 4, 2013

The military's elite police force was called in to investigate how a CTV News reporter obtained embarrassing information involving the country's top general and his spending of more than \$1 million using government air-craft to jet to hockey games and to a Caribbean vacation spot. The

information was all legally obtained through the ATIA, however, raising new questions about the government and military's use of the Canadian Forces National Investigation Service, NIS. The police report involving CTV is one of several NIS investigations into media outlets the Citizen has obtained using the Access law. The newspaper filed the access request after sources said the military police force was being used inappropriately to investigate journalists who wrote or broadcast embarrassing information about Defence Minister Peter MacKay and the Canadian Forces leadership.

Documents detail sex abuse in the military's cadet program

By Staff, *Global TV News and Canadian Press*, June 29, 1997

More than 150 incidents of sexual abuse were reported in the Canadian Forces cadet program between 1993 and 1995. The incidents ranged from fondling and touching to rape and a cadet being tied up and sexually assaulted, say documents obtained by Global News under the ATIA. Sixty-five cases of abuse were reported in 1993, 34 in 1994 and 53 in 1995. These indicate two main forms of abuse - cadets assaulted by fellow cadets and cadets abused by instructors or other leaders. The director of the air cadets program said the numbers must be kept in perspective. "Size is very important when you consider that the Canadian cadet movement involves 53,000 youths across the country, male and female, ages 12 to 18," he told Global News.

Poorly paid army staff more violent, study says

By Murray Brewster, *Canadian Press*, Aug 5, 1997

Poorly paid soldiers and sailors forced to moonlight or line up at food banks are among those most prone to family violence, says a Defence Department study. "Financial strain may result in feelings of frustration, low self-esteem and the lack of time to nurture family relationships," it said. Although abuse occurs across ranks, studies indicate that the higher (the rank), the lower the rate of abuse. Military wages were frozen in 1991. Since then, there have been reports of privates and ordinary seamen relying on welfare and charity to make ends meet. There were 2,242 cases of family violence or violence against women reported to military police between 1991 and 1994. During that time, the number of reported cases of domestic violence more than tripled, to 20 per cent in 1994 from 6 per cent in 1991.

Racism alive, well in Forces: documents: 25 incidents reported from coast to coast

By Mike Blanchfield, *Ottawa Citizen*, May 17, 2000

The Canadian Forces are plagued by persistent outbreaks of racist behaviour by troops from coast to coast. Military intelligence documents obtained by the Citizen detail 25 racist incidents between 1995 and 1999 involving military personnel from B.C. to Nova Scotia. The incidents

encompass a broad range of behaviour: uttering racial slurs, scrawling racist graffiti, spreading hate literature on bases, sporting Nazi tattoos, collecting Hitler memorabilia, and military links with white supremacist groups. The Forces have publicized the occasional firings of soldiers involved in racist activities but were reluctant to publicize much of the information about these incidents, released under the ATIA. One report notes the infiltration of the racist Heritage Front into B.C.'s Seaforth Highlanders. A former Highlander, Nathan Leblanc, was sentenced to 15 years in prison after pleading guilty to the 1998 beating death of a Sikh temple caretaker

Canadian commanded AWACS on night of friendly fire deaths: Major told U.S. F16 pilots not to attack, but couldn't overrule their claim of 'self-defence'

By Glen McGregor, *Ottawa Citizen*, Oct. 27, 2002

The AWACS air controllers involved in the friendly fire accident that killed four Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan were under the direct command of a Canadian Forces officer aboard their plane. The officer is part of a Canadian unit assigned to a U.S. Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) squadron based in Oklahoma. He was serving as mission crew commander on an AWACS plane on April 17, when two F16s under its control bombed Canadian troops on a firing range south of Kandahar. The Canadian officer is expected to play a key role in the upcoming legal proceedings against the two F16 pilots charged in the accident. Documents obtained by the Citizen under the ATIA show that the AWACS expert on the U.S. board was also Canadian - Lt.-Col. Marsh Simpson, also section head of the Canadian Forces' Command and Control modernization projects.

Dummy grenade mislabelled as inert sends four Edmonton soldiers to hospital

By Dean Beeby, *Canadian Press*, June 8, 2003

The Canadian military is reviewing safety procedures after a dummy training grenade turned out to be the real thing, sending four soldiers to hospital. The incident involved an M79 chemical-weapon grenade labelled "inert" that was to be used in a training exercise at Canadian Forces Base Suffield, Alta. A soldier packing munitions in a vehicle in Edmonton accidentally dropped the grenade, which burst open spewing CS powder (a form of tear gas) on the floor of a military warehouse. Records show that winds coming through a warehouse entrance whipped the brownish-yellow powder into a cloud, exposing four soldiers who were then sent to hospital. "None of the exposed individuals . . . are suffering from any lasting effect and have returned to full duty," says one report. An investigation has found at least one other mislabelled M79 training grenade full of CS powder at CFB Petawawa.

Nerve gas tests revealed; Document outlines Canadian tests 75 soldiers, scientists exposed to sarin, VX gas, papers show no followup on health effects of 40-year-old project

By Bruce Champion-Smith, *Toronto Star*, June 18, 2005. Ken Rubin ATIA research

Scientists and soldiers crawled through terrain contaminated with deadly VX nerve agents and exposed themselves to the dangerous chemicals to understand how they worked, documents show. Military officials say the tests, done in the 1950s and '60s and involving up to 75 people, would never be allowed today. But it was a different story 40 years ago, as scientists worked to understand these deadly nerve agents amidst fears that the Cold War would turn Europe into a chemical battleground. News that humans had been subjected to nerve agent testing sparked an outcry in 1988, led by the NDP, but the government clamped down on the release of information. Officials have said that virtually no one's health was affected by the tests, but they admit that they're not doing any follow-up today.

Dangerous Mission- The National 2005-11-24

By David Common, *CBC News*, Nov. 24, 2005

The LAV 3 armoured vehicle the soldiers were using is modern, designed to protect troops from bullets, rockets, and mines, though this is not its first rollover accident. Just last year in Bosnia, two Canadians were injured when their LAV rolled into a ravine. In the six years it's been in use, two soldiers have previously died in a total of ten rollover accidents. Documents obtained by CBC News through the ATI Act show the army has warned before that speed and driver inexperience were frequent causes of rollovers in the LAV 3, as was going too close to the edge of the road. Investigators in Afghanistan are looking into what caused this accident.

Defence minister and military at odds on use of G-wagons: documents

By Dean Beeby, *Canadian Press*, Aug. 13, 2006

Defence Minister Gordon O'Connor assured Canadians that the military was restricting its G-wagons to the Canadian compound in Kandahar, after the vehicles proved highly vulnerable to roadside attacks in Afghanistan. But records indicate the minister's announcement surprised military commanders, who had imposed no such restrictions and continue to use G-wagons in dangerous convoys. "It has come to our attention that a statement by the [minister] regarding G-wagons was not correct," says an internal e-mail to the minister's office. "Please advise the MND not to repeat that statement as G-wagons will continue to operate outside the camp," a public affairs official warned. "The risk here is that we could suffer additional casualties in the G-wagon while they are operating outside the camp." On Friday, a soldier died when a suicide bomber hit the G-wagon he was riding in as part of a convoy in Afghanistan.

U.S. chopper killed Afghans during 'confused' battle involving Canadians

By Murray Brewster, *Canadian Press*, Sept. 27, 2006

An American attack helicopter killed four Afghan National Police officers and a teenage boy in a botched battle involving Canadian troops last spring. But military authorities never determined whether the pilot acted on his own initiative - or was called in by Afghan and Canadian forces on the ground in Afghanistan - because no detailed coalition investigation took place. After-action reports, obtained by CP under the ATIA, show an AH-46 Apache was responsible for the deadly mistake, which prompted Afghan President Hamid Karzai to warn coalition commanders about the need to safeguard civilian lives. The documents are the first official confirmation of what took place on Good Friday in Sangisar. "Preliminary investigation found that there were two versions of what may have occurred," say the reports.

Forces enlists former Afghan warlord for protection

By Andrew Mayeda, *Ottawa Citizen*, Nov. 22, 2007

The Canadian Forces has hired a former Afghan warlord to provide private security guards at one of Canada's remote forward operating bases deep in the heart of Taliban country. Ottawa employs private security contractors to protect its forward operating bases in Kandahar province, but refuses to identify the contractors or the bases they protect. However, an analysis of publicly available contract records and documents obtained under the ATIA shows that one of the contractors is Gen. Gulalai, a former warlord aligned with Afghan President Hamid Karzai; the Defence Department awarded him a \$168,150 contract. Gen. Gulalai was one of several Afghan warlords who helped drive the Taliban from Kandahar in 2001, enabling Karzai to consolidate power in Kabul. In 2002, forces loyal to Gen. Gulalai clashed with police in Kandahar City, with several deaths.

Military probing child sex abuse

By Steven Chase, *Globe and Mail*, Jan. 18, 2011

The Canadian Forces Provost Marshal told senior officials that figures analyzed by his office suggest Canada's defence community - soldiers and civilians connected to the military - has a "noticeably and disturbingly higher per capita rate of sexual violations against children, including child pornography," than the rest of the country's population. Its findings have puzzled the military - and the report prepared by his staff says as much, suggesting repeatedly that there may be differences from the civilian world in the reporting, investigating and recording of offences. The report, which examined alleged offences in the years 2003 to 2009, was obtained by The Globe under the ATIA. For the vast majority of crime categories, the DND community has a significantly lower incidence rate than the Canadian population, but several glaring exceptions stood out - including sexual violations against children and child pornography.

Canada's hired guns in Afghanistan slammed in U.S. Senate report: Canada spends \$41 million on hired guns in Afghanistan

By Murray Brewster, *Canadian Press*, Feb.6, 2011

Canada spent more than \$41 million on hired guns in Afghanistan over four years, much of it going to security companies slammed by the U.S. Senate for having warlords on the payroll. Both the Defence and Foreign Affairs departments have employed 11 security contractors in Kabul and Kandahar since 2006, but have kept quiet about the details. Now documents tabled in Parliament at the request of the NDP provide the first comprehensive picture of the use of private contractors, which have been accused of adding to the chaos in Afghanistan. Kandahar warlord Col. Haji Toorjan earned \$2.5 million since 2008 providing security outside of the provincial reconstruction base. But there are questions about how much was spent for his service because the documents tabled in the House of Commons are not consistent with ATIA records that show he was on the payroll in 2007.

Canada's real new mission in Afghanistan; DND documents supplied to Governor General reveal deal that frees up U.S. troops to fight Taliban

By Lee Berthiaume, *Ottawa Citizen*, March 15, 2012

Since the Canadian training mission in Afghanistan began, Ottawa has said the purpose is to help the Afghan army and police develop the skills needed to take responsibility for the country's security in 2014. But shortly before visiting Afghanistan, Gov. Gen. David Johnston was told of another reason 950 Canadian troops have been deployed to Kabul and two other Afghan cities: to free up U.S. soldiers for combat. It's the first time such an objective has been mentioned. It is found in briefing notes prepared in advance of Johnston's visit to Afghanistan, Kuwait and HMCS Vancouver in the Mediterranean and obtained by Postmedia News through the ATIA. Canada has become the second-largest contributor to the NATO training mission in Afghanistan after the U.S., which has long complained about other nations not contributing sufficient military trainers.

Cost of 'Canada 150' commemorations comes out of military operations budget

By Bruce Cheadle, *Canadian Press*, March 13, 2014

The cost of six years of military commemorations surrounding Canada's 150th birthday is to come out of existing Canadian Forces operational budgets. Almost 300 pages of documents obtained by the Liberal party under the ATIA detail something called "Operation Distinction" -- a campaign mandated by Prime Minister Stephen Harper that will include dozens of events through to the year 2020. "This series of commemoration events will have significant resource implications for DND organizations and CF units," says a draft communications plan prepared by National Defence. Throughout the planning documents, one point is repeatedly stressed: the

army, air force and navy will have to eat the cost of the many military events demanded by the government, right down to the regimental level.

Our military's disgrace: An investigation uncovers the sexual violence plaguing our soldiers - and a military hierarchy with its own justice system, and its own rules

By Noémi Mercier and Alec Castonguay, *MacLean's Magazine*, May 16, 2014

Rape in the Military. That was the headline on a Maclean's cover in 1998 - one of four cover stories that year stemming from a nine-month investigation into disturbing behaviour in the Canadian Forces. Now, 16 years later, Maclean's and its sister publication, L'actualité, have come together to publish another months-long investigation into the sexual violence that still plagues our military. L'actualité reporters Noémi Mercier and Alec Castonguay talked to dozens of victims, attended court martials, culled statistics and documents under the ATIA, and visited bases across the country and Afghanistan.

Some military personnel linked to hate warned, disciplined but allowed to stay

By Lee Berthiaume, *Ottawa Citizen*, Nov. 18, 2019

Documents obtained by CP under the ATIA show military officials initially wanted to charge and kick out an officer cadet who belonged to the Proud Boys group in 2018, before reversing course. Military leaders found his comments and his association with a group that promotes hatred, misogyny, discrimination and harassment violated the Forces' values and demonstrated a lack of judgment. He was charged with conduct to the prejudice of good order and discipline, but military prosecutors eventually opted not to pursue the case, saying there was no reasonable chance of conviction because of his Charter right to freedom of thought, belief and expression. And while officials initially moved to remove him from the Forces, he was allowed to stay after admitting a "failure in judgment" and leaving the group.

Temperature reached 65C on new sub: Crew feared shells would start blowing

By Bill Curry, *Ottawa Citizen*, March 9, 2004

Temperatures inside one of Canada's problem-plagued submarines soared as high as 65C during a trip last year from Halifax to Victoria through the Panama Canal. In comparison, the highest temperature ever recorded on land is 58C at Al-azizyah, Libya, on Sept. 13, 1922. Conservative MP Bill Casey, who obtained the travel records through an ATIA request, said they raise questions as to whether the subs are incapable of working in the Middle East. "Living conditions quickly deteriorated after departing Halifax. Poor ventilation in most areas of submarine. Commanding Officers' cabin are the worst areas with temperatures consistently over 28C," stated

the trip report. The intense heat raised concerns about storage of .410 cartridges, similar to shotgun shells, used to light oxygen candles. The trip report recommends the cartridges' storage locker be moved, or the sub switch to a more "temperature tolerant" munition.

\$4.5 million lost in veterans' fraud; 145 cases involve false claims

By Dean Beeby, *Canadian Press*, Oct. 9, 1995

Veterans Affairs Canada is tracking more than 170 fraud cases involving theft of almost \$4.5 million. An audit of the Charlottetown-based department shows most of the fraud involves bogus claims from Greek-Canadian men, who can claim as much as \$11,000 a year under the program. In 1985, Parliament passed a law extending the War Veterans Allowance to immigrants who've lived in Canada for at least 10 years and who fought in WW2 resistance movements. But by 1989, veterans affairs learned of dozens of suspect claims from Greek-Canadians with falsified documents, claiming background in the Greek resistance. The Greek embassy in Ottawa was enlisted to screen suspect documents and the department has reported all confirmed cases to the RCMP since 1991. The audit of veterans affairs cites about 145 such cases as current despite four years of police work.

'Nothing is to be removed' from files

By Jim Bronskill, *Canadian Press*, July 31, 1999

A records manager at the Defence Department says the general rule on military medical files is that no document is to be removed from a soldier's dossier. "The information should be kept and retained," said the health records manager for the Defence Department's director general of health services. The rule raises questions about whether proper procedures were followed in the cases of Canadian peacekeepers potentially exposed to toxic chemicals in Croatia. The government has convened a board of inquiry into the matter. Department documents released to the Reform party under the ATIA indicate someone ordered the removal of a 1995 letter from peacekeepers' files that noted their exposure to toxic chemicals. It was replaced with a more qualified version that said they had been "potentially" exposed.

Bureaucracy gap leaves some soldiers without benefits; Programs, services under Veterans Affairs often unavailable for months after leaving the military

By Murray Brewster, *Toronto Star*, July 25, 2007

Soldiers returning to civilian life after being wounded in Afghanistan face the possibility of being unemployed and without medical benefits for months following their discharge because of a gap in the bureaucracy between the military and Veterans Affairs Canada. Applications for programs and services under the new Veterans Charter are not considered until after a Forces member is released and that "typically results in a delay of several months before eligibility is

determined and benefits are received," say documents released to CP under the ATIA. At the same time, public service regulations restrict military members who are about to be discharged from applying for priority appointments in the civil service until after they're out of uniform, said a briefing note prepared for the Defence Minister. "Both circumstances are significant sources of stress for medically releasing members."

We Are the Dead; The Citizen's Twitter memorial will recite the names of Canada's war dead, one each hour

Glen McGregor, *Ottawa Citizen*, Nov. 9, 2011

Starting today and continuing well into the next decade, the Citizen will keep the ancient faith through the modern channel of social media. Beginning at 11 minutes after 11 a.m. today, the Twitter account "WeAreTheDead" will begin reciting the names of Canada's war dead, one each hour of every day. A computer algorithm will select at random each name from an electronic scroll of military dead and post it to Twitter. It will take more than 13 years to tweet all the names, finishing sometime in late June 2025, depending on the number of new entries added to the list. It is drawn from a database the Citizen obtained from Veterans Affairs through the ATIA. It details more than 119,000 Canadians who died in service of the country, including those killed in the two World Wars, the Korean War, Afghanistan and on peacekeeping or peace-time duties.

At least 2,250 veterans are homeless, according to groundbreaking analysis

By Murray Brewster, *Canadian Press*, Jan. 5, 2016

At least 2,250 veterans are homeless, according to groundbreaking analysis. For what's believed to be the first time, Ottawa has estimated how many of Canada's homeless are former soldiers -- but the department that compiled the report warns the data is far from complete. The 2015 study by Employment and Social Development Canada estimates that 2,250 former soldiers use shelters on regular basis. The information, released to CP under the ATIA, comes from a database that tracks 60 emergency shelters across the country and added veterans as an identifiable category in 2014. It noted that the data still has some holes in it and does not capture the number of veterans who do not use shelters. The national findings contradict counts being done in individual cities, which analysts suggest means that "veterans are more likely to be found outside shelters."

Injured veterans having to wait longer for service, internal documents show

By Lee Berthiaume, *Ottawa Citizen*, Nov. 6, 2017

Injured Canadian Forces veterans are being forced to wait longer than in years past to find out whether they qualify for financial aid, show reports obtained by CP through the ATIA. They

reveal Ottawa has made progress in hiring more case workers for injured veterans. But the time it takes to process applications for disability benefits and other financial aid has shot up under the Liberals, leaving many veterans in limbo for months as they wait to find out whether they qualify. The documents suggest Veterans Affairs was surprised by a large increase in the number of disability claims in recent years. It also represents a potential stumbling block as Ottawa moves to implement its new strategy to combat suicide and improve mental health among Canada's military members and veterans.

More than 6,700 veterans from Afghan war receiving federal assistance for PTSD

By Lee Berthiaume, *Ottawa Citizen*, Apr. 22, 2019

Canada's war in Afghanistan ended five years ago but the price of that effort continues to grow. Figures show the number of veterans from the war in Afghanistan receiving support for mental-health conditions nearly doubled from 2014 to 2018. The figures are in a report provided to the attorney general, obtained from Veterans Affairs Canada through the ATIA. They highlight the importance of adequate mental-health services for veterans, which successive governments have sought to address over the years with mixed results. According to the document, more than 6,700 military members who served in Afghanistan received disability benefits for mental-health conditions in March 2018 -- an increase of nearly 3,200 from the same month in 2014.

Canada kept feared Afghan governor in power despite rep as 'human-rights abuser'

By Murray Brewster, *Canadian Press*, Dec. 13, 2009

A former governor of Kandahar who is accused of personally torturing Afghans might have been removed from office as far back as 2006 if Canadian officials hadn't defended him, according to diplomatic memos that have never been made public by the Canadian government. The revelation about Asadullah Khalid, who stayed on as governor two years after concerns about his notorious reputation were raised, opens up another embarrassing avenue of inquiry over Afghan prisoner abuse. The new allegation is contained in a end-of-mission report by Richard Colvin, the whistleblower foreign service officer. Documents obtained previously by CP under the ATIA show Khalid was initially popular with the military because of his anti-Taliban zeal. But as the governor spent more and more time outside of the province, not attending to day-to-day business, Canadian officials became impatient.

Afghan women set themselves on fire to escape brutality: Foreign Affairs report

By Murray Brewster, *Canadian Press*, Jan. 6, 2010

More Afghan women are choosing suicide to escape the violence and brutality of their daily lives, says a new human-rights report prepared by Canada's Foreign Affairs Department. The 2008 annual assessment paints a grim picture of a country where violence against women and girls is common, despite rising international condemnation. "Self-immolation is being used by increasing numbers of Afghan women to escape their dire circumstances and women constitute the majority of Afghan suicides," said the report, obtained by CP under the ATIA. The director of a burn unit at a hospital in the province of Herat reported that in 2008 more than 80 women tried to kill themselves by setting themselves on fire. It was written against the backdrop of debate over the Afghan government's so-called rape law. Aimed at courting votes in the Shiite community, it legalized rape within a marriage, and prompted outrage in many countries.

Harper approved Libyan leader Gadhafi's planned Newfoundland stopover: documents

By Steve Rennie, *Canadian Press*, Apr. 7, 2010

Prime Minister Stephen Harper personally approved Moammar Gadhafi's planned Canadian layover last year, even as his government was rebuking the Libyan strongman for celebrating a convicted terrorist. The Libyan leader cancelled a planned stop in St. John's, N.L., after the Prime Minister's Office warned he would be scolded for throwing a party for a man jailed in the Lockerbie bombing. Internal emails obtained by CP show a Foreign Affairs Department official told colleagues Harper approved Gadhafi's stopover more than a week before the Libyan leader was to arrive. CP obtained the email and other documents under the ATIA. At the time of Gadhafi's planned visit, the prime minister's spokesperson joined an international chorus rebuking the Libyan leader for throwing a huge welcome-home party for convicted terrorist Abdel Baset al-Megrahi, which outraged the relatives of the 270 victims killed in the 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103.

Suffering of Afghan women and children remains widespread: report

By Mike Blanchfield, *Canadian Press*, Dec. 10, 2010

Afghanistan's women and children continue to live a mainly wretched existence, despite a decade of well-intentioned, international intervention. Mothers die in childbirth at alarming rates, aspiring female politicians face death threats and most school-age girls never see the inside of a classroom. That portrait emerges from a 2009 Foreign Affairs human-rights audit of the country, obtained by CP under the ATIA. It contrasts sharply with the Harper government's upbeat talking points on the pace of progress in Afghanistan. With Canada withdrawing combat troops next year, it underscores the formidable challenges that remain. "Afghan women and children continued to suffer amid ongoing insecurity, sexual violence, pervasive poverty and socio-cultural and economic exclusion.... Child labour was prevalent and social discrimination of some minorities continued. Malnutrition remained high."

Pro-Palestinian remark cut from Baird's UN address, documents show

By Mike Blanchfield, *Canadian Press*, Feb. 19, 2012

A Canadian expression of goodwill toward the Palestinian people was left on the cutting-room floor when Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird addressed the United Nations General Assembly last fall. Baird rejected early departmental drafts of his maiden address to the UN that said Canada is a "leading supporter" of the Palestinian people and outlined major spending that backed that assertion, CP has learned. Baird ended up delivering a much tougher address than envisioned by his speech writers, one that unequivocally emphasized Canada's support for Israel -- a position for which he makes no apologies. Copies of the draft texts of the speech, obtained under the ATIA, show Baird used a radically reworked text when he drew a parallel with pre-Second World War appeasers of Nazi Germany.

Baird urged Libyan rebels to keep fighting; Revelation sheds new light on Canada's role in civil war

By Lee Berthiaume, *Ottawa Citizen*, Apr. 28, 2012

During a trip to eastern Libya last June, at a time when rebel forces were locked in a stalemate with troops loyal to dictator Moammar Gadhafi and many countries were calling for a ceasefire, Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird actively encouraged the rebels to keep fighting. It raises questions about whether this country violated the spirit of the UN Security Council resolution that authorized international involvement in the conflict. Following his meeting with foreign officials, Baird told reporters: "Obviously, this thing can't end too soon - the killing and the disruption of daily life." What he didn't reveal - and is known only now in speaking notes for a meeting with his Norwegian counterpart, obtained through the ATIA - is that he had urged the rebels to continue with their attacks. Canada was one of the most hawkish outside nations involved in the Libyan conflict, conducting a disproportionately large percentage of the air strike missions

Cdn arms sales to Ukraine a mystery as federal government keeps mum on exports

By Lee Berthiaume, *Ottawa Citizen*, May 71, 2018

An internal report obtained through the ATIA shows that the government approved the export of more than \$717 million worth of military equipment in 2016, not including exports to the U.S. Yet Ottawa has found itself under fire in recent years for approving the sale of arms to several countries with questionable human rights records. Those sales include a multi-year, \$15-billion contract for the provision of armoured vehicles to Saudi Arabia. The internal report said that country was the top non-U.S. destination for Canadian arms in 2016. The government also faced pointed questions about its plan to sell military helicopters to the Philippines despite Prime Minister Justin Trudeau criticizing its human-rights record only a few months earlier.

Officials warned China, India could use communities in Canada to advance agendas

By Lee Berthiaume, *Ottawa Citizen*, July 12, 2019

Some of Ottawa's top bureaucrats have been warned about China and India trying to use their respective ethnic communities in Canada to advance their own agendas. The stark warning is in a secret report prepared for deputy ministers attending a retreat on national security that also pointed out the challenge in preventing foreign countries from launching "hostile-state activity" against Canada. Such actions include cyberattacks, efforts to spread misinformation and using diaspora communities, either directly or indirectly, to steal technology, influence elections and target Canada's economy, infrastructure and democratic institutions. Obtained by CP through the ATIA, the report's release comes ahead of a federal election in which fears of foreign-government interference are likely to figure prominently.

Canada had key role in fighting Palestinian UN bid: documents

By Campbell Clark and Justin Ling, *Globe and Mail*, Apr. 10, 2012

Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird personally took to the phones last year to try to swing countries to oppose Palestinian efforts to be recognized as a state by the United Nations, according to documents that for the first time reveal how intensely Canada worked behind the scenes to block the statehood resolution. These contain details of a high-level lobbying campaign in the preceding months. Canadian diplomats have lobbied other countries on other UN votes, but when the Foreign Minister personally does the calling, it's a signal that Ottawa considers the issue a priority. Briefing notes obtained under the ATIA - partially blacked out - show Baird was briefed for calls last August to the foreign ministers of Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand, Chile, Panama and El Salvador.

Border guards break rules allowing criminals into country: report

By Dean Beeby, *Canadian Press*, May 3, 2009

Border guards have been breaking rules in allowing hundreds of serious criminals to come to Canada, says an internal review. The Canada Border Services Agency allowed 535 people convicted of serious crimes to enter the country last year for compassionate or economic reasons, under so-called temporary resident permits. And a sample of about half those cases found a litany of problems, including failure to get the required permission from the immigration minister's designated officials. It also found the files frequently lacked key information about exactly why some criminals were given a pass into the country, some for repeat visits. A draft copy of the report was obtained by CP under the ATIA.

Sticky fingers; Always be on the alert in an airport

By Andrew McIntosh and Kinia Adamczyk, QMI Agency, Sept. 21, 2011

A QMI Agency investigation found that an airport security screening officer, Denis Bouffard, may have robbed hundreds, possibly thousands, of unwitting air travellers in Montreal in 2001-02. Bouffard later told authorities that other screeners also robbed passengers. Oversight was so lax, he and other rogue screeners didn't bother to hide their thefts from security cameras. Canadians and foreigners using airports across the country have reported thefts of money, jewelry and other valuables, according to hundreds of pages of heavily censored reports obtained from the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority under the ATIA. CATSA, a Crown corporation, contracts out screening jobs to private security companies. That's who Bouffard worked for until a fellow screener finally went to police.

Refugee claimants vanish

By Colin Freeze, Globe and Mail, Nov. 7, 2001

Canada's security is being jeopardized by refugee claimants who arrive without identification and walk free without having to prove who they are. Documents from Citizenship and Immigration Canada say many undocumented asylum seekers fail to complete within a month of their arrival a kit of required forms, as demanded by law. Instead, they disappear into society without a trace. Ten to 20 per cent of the thousands of refugees arriving each year at airports in Toronto and Montreal do not return the papers, an unnamed Citizenship and Immigration Canada enforcement official quoted in the documents told colleagues during a departmental meeting held in 2000. "These cases leave Canada vulnerable to criminal and security risks," he said in speaking notes obtained under the ATIA by immigration lawyer Richard Kurland.

Immigration ministers approved of dozens with terrorist links

By Colin Freeze, Globe and Mail, Dec. 4, 2002

Dozens of people who were involved in foreign terror groups have been permitted to immigrate to Canada in recent years -- because immigration ministers personally decided they have "renounced violence and now accept democratic principles," documents show. Generally, immigrants who have been found to be involved in terrorism are not allowed to stay in Canada. But the immigration minister can make exceptions for those he or she decides have changed their ways and are not risks to national security. At least 81 people linked to terrorist causes have been allowed to immigrate since 1996, according to a 2001 Citizenship and Immigration document titled "Rationale for Ministerial Relief." It was obtained under the ATIA by Richard Kurland, a Vancouver-based immigration lawyer and policy researcher.

Ministers ignored own officials; HRDC exemptions allowing exotic dancers to work contradicted foreign policy against human trafficking

By Robert Fife, *Montreal Gazette*, Dec. 21, 2004

Human Resources Development Canada gave a blanket exemption to foreign exotic dancers to work in Canada, despite serious warnings from inside government the young women would be forced into prostitution at strip clubs controlled by biker gangs, triads and other elements of organized crime, say documents. Nonetheless, then human resources minister Pierre Pettigrew approved the special exemption for foreign strippers under a labour mobility program. He and successive HRDC ministers ignored calls to cancel the program from officials in other departments. Memos obtained under the ATIA by Vancouver immigration lawyer Richard Kurland show officials at Citizenship and Immigration voiced strong objections to the blanket exemption and recounted horror stories of exotic dancers being forced into sexual slavery in Canada.

Class-action suit over visa fees to proceed

By Gloria Galloway, *Globe and Mail*, Jan. 5, 2008

The Immigration Department is being accused of inflating the costs of visa fees for as many as three million immigrants and foreign visitors in a case that could ultimately cost Ottawa hundreds of millions of dollars. The Federal Court ruled that the lawsuit brought against the Immigration Minister by Alan Hinton of Coquitlam, B.C., who was charged \$75 to sponsor his Russian wife to come to Canada in 2001, could proceed as a class action. Richard Kurland, a lawyer for Hinton, obtained documents under the ATIA that show the cost to the government of processing a sponsorship immigration application was \$36.69. He said it took him 13 years of requests under the ATIA to find out the true costs of processing the visas. Kurland accuses the government of reaping an "illicit profit."

Feds tell immigration officers to treat U.S. deserters as criminals

By Murray Brewster, *Canadian Press*, Aug. 3, 2010

The Conservative government has given immigration officers tough new marching orders for dealing with military deserters seeking refuge in Canada, painting them as criminals who may be inadmissible. The Immigration Department is leaning on officers to give a more critical assessment in new cases and telling them to report more often about existing files. It recently issued a bulletin to field officers saying flight from military service in another country may make certain refugee claimants inadmissible. The new directive points to existing provisions of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act - sections that bar refugees from Canada on the "grounds of serious criminality" - in order to make the case. Previously released ATIA documents make a clear distinction between the current crop of conscientious objectors and those who fled to Canada by the thousands in the 1960s during the Vietnam War.

King of federal access laws

By Stephen Bindman, *Ottawa Citizen*, Jan. 5, 1993

Claude Desy is the tax collector's nightmare and the taxpayer's dream. He's also the king of the Access to Information Act. For the past seven years, the Montreal lawyer-accountant has turned prying information out of Revenue Canada into a successful business. Using the ATIA and about \$100,000 so far, Desy has collected more than 400,000 pages of previously confidential government tax information. With his team of accountants and lawyers, he edits, digests and tries to make sense of the taxman's bureaucratese and then sells it to hundreds of other tax practitioners in a newsletter. Desy has filled an office with internal memos, policy statements and directives written by Revenue officials on how the Income Tax Act should be interpreted and letters written to taxpayers and their advisers on tax problems.

Tory order switched prison to Mulroney riding

By Andrew McIntosh, *Globe and Mail*, Sept. 15, 1986

The site for the government's new protective-custody prison in Quebec was arbitrarily switched to Prime Minister Brian Mulroney's riding, sources familiar with the decision say. Information gathered by The Globe shows that before Mulroney announced plans to build the prison in Port-Cartier, Que., in 1985, the Conservatives ordered Correctional Service Canada to scrap its 7-year-old plan to build the prison in Drummondville, Que. "It was on direct orders from the Prime Minister," a senior government source said. As a result, between \$500,000 and \$1-million spent by the Department of Public Works on preliminary work at the Drummondville site was wasted. In 1984, CSC rejected the idea of choosing a site for a new stand-alone prison such as the one being built in Port-Cartier because its operating costs would be prohibitive, say documents released under the ATIA.

HRDC workers `abusing' fund: audit: Staffers suspect fraud `exists around them,' says censored report

By Kathryn May, *Ottawa Citizen*, Apr. 25, 2000

Bureaucrats at Human Resources Development Canada suspect some fellow workers are abusing and filching from a \$900-million portion of the department's operating budget. An internal audit to examine any financial risks and gaps in internal controls concluded that "many employees, supervisors and managers have a suspicion that fraud exists around them." The audit, which was heavily censored before being released, provides no indication of the extent of fraud or even the kinds of risks and abuses suspected or uncovered. It does cite the respected U.S. Association of Certified Fraud Examiners' estimates that governments and business alike lose \$9 a day in fraud for every worker employed. A similar rate at HRDC, which employs 23,000 workers, and other

federal departments could cost Canadians billions of dollars a year. Sections of the audit that detailed the kinds of problems or abuses found were withheld under the ATIA

\$150-million federal deal broke rules, audit finds

By Daniel Leblanc, *Globe and Mail*, June 20, 2001

Public Works Canada broke basic contracting rules to award a \$150-million advertising deal to a Montreal firm that has political ties to minister Alfonso Gagliano, according to internal documents obtained by The Globe under the ATIA. In 1997 Gagliano's department appointed Media IDA Vision as the government's agency that places advertising for five years for about \$30-million a year. Departmental auditors who scrutinized the deal found that the contract process was "not carried out fairly." They said the process lacked transparency, broke government guidelines and did not guarantee the best price. In looking at the government's sponsorship deals, the auditors also uncovered cases of improper and double billing, shoddy work, and companies that inflated their labour costs to get more money.

\$550,000 report found; But questions remain whether Ottawa got adequate value for spending on document

By Daniel Leblanc, *Globe and Mail*, March 15, 2002

After saying the file was hopelessly lost, Ottawa and an advertising agency announced yesterday that they have finally found "the major part" of a \$550,000 report that caused them grief and embarrassment. Groupaction Marketing Inc., a Montreal-based company that had said it did not keep government work for more than two years, said yesterday morning that it had just located "the major part of the [1999] report's content" on a computer hard drive. The Globe had requested a copy of the document under the ATIA, but was recently told that neither Groupaction nor the government had been able to find it after a thorough search. After the story came out, the opposition jumped on the fact that Groupaction has been a major donor to the Liberal Party of Canada. (P.S. This ATIA request triggered "the Quebec sponsorship scandal," which in turn contributed to the downfall of the Liberal government in the 2006 federal election).

PM was told jet purchase a waste, but spent \$100 million anyway

By Andrew McIntosh and Mike Blanchfield, *Ottawa Citizen*, Oct. 21, 2003

The Clerk of the Privy Council Office raised questions about the "cost effectiveness" of buying new executive jets for the prime minister and other ministers only two months before Jean Chretien hastily awarded an untendered \$100-million contract to Bombardier Inc. for two new Challenger jets. The memos, obtained by the Post, outlined three options for Chretien's "consideration" on Jan. 29, 2002. Chretien went ahead with the purchase March 28, 2002, rushing the signing of a contract on the last day of the government's fiscal year, and ignoring the

other two options. The PCO is believed to have recommended against buying new jets after military officials concluded the \$100-million plan to replace older Challengers with newer aircraft would generate "no (or practically nil) reliability advantage."

Inquiry into defence fraud says problems ignored as far back as 1999

By Dean Beeby, *Canadian Press*, March 8, 2005

Auditors raised red flags about problems with computer contracts at National Defence as far back as 1999 - at least four years before any action was taken in a \$146-million fraud, a report shows. But officials at Public Works, which managed the contracts, were so keen to cultivate good client relations with National Defence that they remained blind to the problems for years. "Service delivery overshadowed control responsibilities," concludes the Public Works document, obtained by CP. It says managers failed to appreciate the significance of audits in 1999, 2001 and 2003 that suggested at least three computer contracts were going terribly wrong. The five suspect contracts, spread over 10 years, were collectively worth about \$250 million; they are at the heart of a continuing RCMP investigation.

Contract specifies that consultant leave no paper trail in federal offices

By Dean Beeby, *Canadian Press*, Oct. 10, 2005

Federal officials are under fire for a \$132,000 contract signed with an outside consultant that specifies the firm must leave no paper trail in government offices. The deal Indian and Northern Affairs Canada signed with Ottawa-based Totem Hill Inc. explicitly states that "presentations shall be oral with supporting material provided to aid comprehension but not retained by the department." The 2005 contract ensures there are no documents in office filing cabinets that auditors can later verify and citizens can consult through requests under the ATIA. The Liberal government has already been excoriated for previous consulting contracts that carefully specified that no paperwork be generated. In a scathing 2004 report, the Auditor General uncovered five contracts the Finance Department had signed with Earncliffe Strategy Group to provide secret "verbal" briefings and no written work.

Audits chasing big names in corporate Canada for alleged overcharging

By Dean Beeby, *Canadian Press*, Jan. 29, 2006

Federal auditors are targeting some of the biggest names in corporate Canada for allegedly overcharging millions of dollars in their contracts with government, documents show. Most of the problems are at National Defence, which is still recovering from a massive \$146-million contract fraud uncovered in 2003. There were 62 contracts in dispute as of Aug. 31 last year, with auditors alleging some corporations have claimed for ineligible costs, excess profits, overpriced goods, incorrect wage rates and a dozen other problems altogether worth about \$9.5

million. Heavily censored documents outlining the alleged problems were obtained from the Public Works Department. They black out key information, such as the dollar value in individual disputes and the audit issue in each case.

Privy Council seeks extra \$1.7 million as PMO rolls out video to media

By Bruce Cheadle, *Canadian Press*, Dec. 8, 2009

Taxpayers are being asked to pay an extra \$1.7 million this fiscal year to help bolster Stephen Harper's communications support services - just as the Prime Minister's Office begins distributing government videos of Harper to the news media. Supplementary estimates tabled last month by the Privy Council Office boosted internal operational spending by almost \$7.3 million for 2009-10. That's on top of existing budgets. The PCO already has an archive of more than 300 videos of Harper dating back to his first months in power, according to an ATIA request by CP. In these cash-strapped news times, it makes the government-provided photos and video all the more alluring to some media outlets, especially smaller ones - and all the more unsettling to critics of media manipulation.

Internal audit: contractors overbilled Ottawa by tens of millions for "decades"

By Murray Brewster, *Canadian Press*, March 14, 2016

Ottawa is routinely overcharged by its contractors to the tune of tens of millions of dollars in a practice that has been going on for decades, says an internal report at Public Services and Procurement Canada. A team of 30 government auditors has been working for the last few years to get a handle on the contracts process, as well as examining a number of agreements and payment terms. They had looked at \$7.3 billion of contracts and cumulatively found \$72 million in potential "over claims and excess profits." The team has been slowly ramping up its work over the last four years. In 2013-14, they had only reviewed \$960 million in multi-year agreements and discovered \$65 million in over-billing, according to a series of documents released to CP under the ATIA

Pensioned MPs to be named

By David Vienneau, *Toronto Star*, Oct. 25, 1996

Ottawa must make public the names of all former MPs receiving taxpayer-funded pensions, the Federal Court of Canada has ruled. The public interest in knowing who is receiving a generous public pension far outweighs the privacy interests of the recipients, Justice John Richard wrote. Ottawa resident Matthew McCreery applied in 1993 under the ATIA for a list of former MPs who were receiving pensions. The government of Brian Mulroney refused to release the information, arguing it would infringe on the privacy of the former MPs. McCreery then asked Information Commissioner John Grace to appeal that decision to the Federal Court. Grace did so,

arguing the public had a right to know who was receiving taxpayers' money. The Chretien government did not appeal the decision.

Censured mandarins got bonuses: Performance pay given in departments lambasted by Auditor

By Robert Fife, *National Post*, March 24, 2001

Senior federal public servants received millions of dollars in performance bonuses last year including those running agencies and departments that were harshly criticized for waste and mismanagement by the Auditor-General. Alliance MP John Williams said the government has set the performance bar so low that "even bureaucrats who trip over it" are entitled to generous bonuses, some as high as \$10,000. According to documents obtained under the ATIA for the fiscal year 1999-2000, Ottawa paid out \$19-million in performance pay to 3,136 senior civil servants. Williams discovered all of the executives at the Canadian Human Rights Commission received bonuses, as did **92%** of 226 civil servants at Human Resources Development Canada.

\$189,000 given to businessman with ties to PM: Quebecer received federal grants for inn bought from Chretien

By Andrew McIntosh, *National Post*, Feb. 2, 1999

A Quebec businessman with a criminal record who bought a money-losing hotel business from Jean Chretien and his business partners in 1993 received \$188,799 worth of job creation grants last year. Those came in addition to two federal loans totalling \$665,000 that the Grand-Mere Inn received to build a 24-room addition in 1997. The inn, owned by Shawinigan businessman Yvon Duhaime, benefitted from five job creation grants during the 1997-98 fiscal year, say internal documents from Human Resources Development Canada. The documents were originally disclosed to researchers from the Reform Party under the ATI Act. Duhaime, who has twice been convicted for drunk driving and once for assault, bought the business of the Grand-Mere Inn from 161341 Canada Inc. in 1993. At the time, Chretien's family holding company owned 25% of 161341 Canada Inc.

Taxpayers' group tracks \$3.9 billion in fishy funding

By Staff, *Canadian Press*, Apr. 23, 2009

Thousands of initiatives were paid for by the Western Economic Diversification fund since the Conservatives took office in 2006, according to a study by the Canadian Taxpayers Federation. An exhaustive ATIA search by the lobby group found that the Harper Tories have disbursed more than \$440 million across the four western provinces on everything from flagpoles and cemeteries to museum renovations, and airport runway extensions. When Harper returned to

politics from his stint as head of the National Citizens Coalition, he promised a "radical departure" from a "whole range of economic development, regional development, corporate subsidization programs."

Results show Ottawa afraid taxpayers would be upset

By Joan Bryden, *Southam News*, Nov. 20, 1992. Ken Rubin ATIA research

What exactly was it that Ottawa fought so hard to prevent Canadians from seeing in the results of taxpayer-funded national unity polls? It claims release of the polling and focus group results would have jeopardized federal-provincial relations in the midst of constitutional negotiations. That's why it went to court to block ATIA release of the data. But the 700 pages of polling results finally released - one day before the Federal Court ruled against the government - suggest that Ottawa was afraid taxpayers would be upset to find their money had been spent for partisan, political purposes, such as rating the success of Prime Minister Brian Mulroney's speeches; and that Ottawa feared Canadians would be angry if they knew how much its constitutional initiatives were propelled by the demands of Quebec sovereignists

Politics greased federal job grants: report: Consultants suggest Liberals may have twisted arms to get funding for projects approved

By Jim Bronskill, *Canadian Press*, Feb. 18, 1999

The controversy surrounding a federal job-creation plan has deepened with the release of an independent review that says grants may have been approved for "political reasons" rather than strong business assessments. It raises new questions about Liberal-government influence in the selection of projects under the \$300-million Transitional Jobs Fund. It has provided money to hundreds of initiatives, including manufacturing, tourism and fishery-related projects. Consulting firm Ekos Research Associates reviewed the program for Human Resources Development Canada, the department responsible for the fund. Ekos officials interviewed HRDC staff, provincial representatives involved in evaluating proposals and various partner agencies. Key players "expressed concern with respect to some political presence in the program at times."

Copps got federal rules eased for hometown firm

By Mark MacKinnon, *Globe and Mail*, Oct. 13, 2000

Heritage Minister Sheila Copps used her political weight to exempt a company in her Hamilton East riding from new environmental standards that will apply to all its competitors, *The Globe* has learned. Natural Resources Canada has mandated that, as part of an effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, all refrigerators sold in Canada meet tough new energy efficiency standards. But it was announced this week that certain models made by Camco Inc. will get an 18-month reprieve, against the advice of senior department officials. The cabinet gave Camco

the exemption despite a recommendation from the deputy minister of natural resources, that no such extensions be given, in a memo obtained under the ATIA. The company's parent, General Electric Canada Inc., has donated more than \$16,000 to the Liberal party in the past two years.

Government let referendum go unchallenged: 1995 vote was unconstitutional, but permitted to avoid backlash new documents show

By Elizabeth Thompson, *Ottawa Citizen*, June 4, 2001

Quebec's referendum bill was unconstitutional, but Ottawa decided against challenging it for fear of prompting a backlash, according to Privy Council documents. "In fact, Bill 1 was unconstitutional, but the circumstances surrounding its introduction meant that a challenge, at that time, would not be conducted with serenity and might well have been counterproductive," wrote a senior civil servant in a Nov. 30, 1995 memo to Jocelyne Bourgon, Canada's top civil servant. His memo, giving some rare insight into how the federal government dealt with the aftermath of the 1995 referendum, is among an estimated 300 pages of documents concerning Ottawa's Operation Unity released following an ATIA request by the Bloc Quebecois.

Red File alert; Public access at risk; Federal surveillance system flags files Ministries, Privy Council delay requests

By Ann Rees, *Toronto Star*, Nov. 1, 2003

Amber Light means caution. The Prime Minister's Office calls them "Red Files." Justice Canada prefers Purple Folders. Some ministries use the designation "Amber Light." But there is no denying the existence of a highly sophisticated, government-wide FOI surveillance system designed and controlled by communications spin doctors bent on protecting the political interests of their bosses from the public's right to know. A Star investigation has found every ATIA request filed is under watch to determine whether it should be sent for closer scrutiny by communications offices and ministers' political staff. Requests from media and opposition are automatically added to the watch list in most ministries; up to 75 per cent of requests in some ministries coded for review. Yet e-mails, obtained under the ATIA show several senior ATIP officials balked at the suggestion they should help communications advisers write media lines for requests they had received, while others questioned delaying the release of requested records until the communications staff had finished preparing media lines for the minister.

Federal scientists free to speak, once Ottawa tells them what they can say

By Bruce Cheadle, *Canadian Press*, Sept. 19, 2010

Canada's scientific community is buzzing over newly tightened rules that further restrict government researchers from speaking with the media about their work. Recent ATIA documents obtained by PostMedia News reveal that all media inquiries to scientists working for

Natural Resources Canada must now pass through a Byzantine thicket of "subject matter experts" and the minister's director of communications - "no exceptions." As one bureaucrat warned in an internal email: "What may appear to be a simple request for facts may actually relate to policy or high-profile issues." It simply puts in print what journalists covering the Harper government deal with on a daily basis. In one celebrated 2006 incident, an Environment Canada scientist was ordered not to attend the launch of his own novel, an apocalyptic piece of fiction revolving around global warming.

Light on facts, heavy on patriotism, focus groups help hone NRCan advertising

By Bruce Cheadle, *Canadian Press*, Feb. 18, 2013

Focus-group testing on what the Harper government calls its Responsible Resource Development campaign found the advertising to be light on facts but uplifting and patriotic, according to a government-commissioned study. This spring a second wave of ads - designed to persuade Canadians of "the importance and impact of Canada's energy sector" - hits the air. NDP MP Mathieu Ravignat pointed to the Responsible Canadian Energy campaign being run by the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP). He called the CAPP and NRCan campaigns "carbon copies." At a meeting in 2011, CAPP's president showed Environment Canada officials a poll that illustrated the opinion-moving success of its ads. The Harris-Decima survey, obtained by PostMedia under the ATIA, noted that for the first time in 18 months of polling, more respondents had a positive opinion of oil patch companies than a negative opinion.

1941 papers reveal Ottawa cipher spies

By Stevie Cameron, *Southam News*, March 18, 1986

Intercepted Japanese cables that might have forecast the attack on Pearl Harbour in 1941 were not passed to a secret Canadian intelligence-gathering unit in Ottawa until days after the raid, previously secret documents reveal. A letter from Lester Pearson, then assistant undersecretary for external affairs, chastises Col. W.W. Murray, Canada's wartime military intelligence chief for the delay in passing cables dated Dec. 2 and 5 until Dec. 9, 17 and 19 - well after the Dec. 7 Japanese raid. It was among hundreds of fascinating cables, memos, letters and minutes obtained by the Ottawa Citizen via the ATIA.

Despair led Canadian diplomat to suicide; Last note of man called a spy finally revealed after 29 years

By David Vienneau, *Toronto Star*, Sept. 10, 1986

Former Canadian diplomat Herbert Norman killed himself in 1957 because he no longer had the strength or desire to fight off American allegations that he was a Communist spy, an unpublished

suicide note reveals. "I am innocent on the central issue, that is, I have never conspired or committed an act against the security of our state or of another state," says a handwritten note recovered from his ambassadorial residence in Cairo. "Never have I violated my oath of secrecy. "The forces against me are too formidable, even for an innocent man, and it is better to go now than to live indefinitely pelted with mud - although so much of it will be quite incorrect and false." His note is among dozens of documents obtained by The Star under the ATIA. They had been classified "top secret, secret and confidential" by the RCMP and then by the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS).

Cabinet fought Trudeau on FLQ, papers show

By Kirk LaPointe, *Globe and Mail*, Feb. 11, 1991

In the hours before the War Measures Act was invoked in October, 1970, several cabinet ministers openly challenged then-prime minister Pierre Trudeau, who was stopped short of pushing through even tougher measures. Cabinet documents indicated that Trudeau contemplated illegal police seizures and special legislation later to legalize them retroactively - and "was afraid that civil libertarians would remember that eventually." Cabinet minutes from the October Crisis, obtained under the ATIA, show that several ministers were skeptical about the extent of the public threat posed by the Front de Liberation du Quebec - even after it had kidnapped British diplomat James Cross and Quebec labour minister Pierre Laporte. Many also doubted that insurrection was imminent in Quebec - even though apprehended insurrection was supposed to be a key to invoking the War Measures Act.

Secret files show Mounties opposed War Measures Act

By Mark Kennedy, *Montreal Gazette*, Jan. 29, 1992

Two days before invoking the War Measures Act during the 1970 October Crisis, the federal cabinet was advised by the country's top police officer to reject such an action and take a calmer approach to the emergency. The revelation is contained in once-secret government documents released under the ATIA. The records also show William Higgitt, RCMP commissioner at the time, told the cabinet to disregard "inflated" estimates. "The commissioner said that he saw no necessary action being prevented now by existing laws," the minutes reported. "In addition, Commissioner Higgitt said that a broad sweep and preventive detention of suspects was not likely to lead to the spot at which either set of abductors were.... He could, therefore, not recommend the use of special powers at this point in time."

Mounties staged massive hunt for gay males in civil service; Police kept files on 8,200 during Diefenbaker-Pearson era

By Dean Beeby, *Globe and Mail*, Apr. 24, 1992

The RCMP launched a massive hunt for male homosexuals in 1959 that identified 8,200 individuals by the late 1960s and led to hundreds of dismissals from the civil service, documents show. The investigation extended far beyond the ranks of government to include files on every known or alleged homosexual in the Ottawa area. An earlier account of the so-called homosexual "witch hunt" relied on unidentified sources, but now Ottawa for the first time has released documentation. The material obtained by CP under the ATIA shows that the RCMP net was cast far more widely than previously believed. Of 460 alleged or confirmed homosexual civil servants identified by 1961, about one-third resigned or were dismissed once their secret became known, a memo advised Prime Minister John Diefenbaker.

A prison guinea pig speaks out: Plied with test drugs, Richard Carlson recounts his horrifying dreams.

By Jim Bronskill and Mike Blanchfield, *Canadian Press*, Oct. 13, 1998

Hundreds of federal inmates were used as guinea pigs in the name of science in the 1960s and '70s. Volunteers took part in experiments involving the hallucinogenic drug LSD-25, trials of untested pharmaceuticals and food additives, sensory deprivation and electric shock studies. The prison service banned such research in 1978. "This place was the house of horrors of Kingston Penitentiary," says Bob McDonald, a Kingston inmate from 1963 to 1970. In March, the Ottawa Citizen disclosed details of a 1961 experiment in which 23 inmates at Kingston's Prison for Women were given LSD. The assistant corrections commissioner wrote to his boss: "You may wish to request we conduct a formal review of the matter."

Consumers still being overcharged: survey

By Dean Beeby, *Canadian Press*, Feb. 1, 2000

More than half the Canadian retailers surveyed last year to monitor the accuracy of their checkout price scanners flunked the test, says a federal study. The results, which showed some retailers overcharging customers 10 per cent of the time, have prompted the Competition Bureau to press retail executives for improvements. The survey involved undercover checks of checkout price scanners at 83 stores across the country. Thirty-nine stores passed the test; they overcharged customers on fewer than two items of every 100 purchases in the survey, the limit set by the Bureau. But the rest crossed this threshold, overcharging customers for as many as 10 items of every 100 purchases. The names of all retailers have been removed from the released documents.

You're not getting the gas you pay for: Five per cent of pumps cheat buyers, probe shows

By Glen McGregor, *Ottawa Citizen*, May 10, 2008

An Ottawa Citizen investigation found about 1 in 20 gas pumps in Canada was pumping less gas than indicated on the readout when inspected, according to Measurement Canada inspection data obtained under the ATIA. By using the most conservative figures, pumps that fell outside the tolerance zone would have shortchanged consumers by at least \$17 million annually if projected across the entire industry. Days after the story appeared, Industry Minister Jim Prentice ordered increased inspection of retail gas pumps across the country, saying, "I've instructed that there be beefed-up inspection and beefed-up verification, that pumps are honest and accurate."

Mad cow disease may be here: Brain-wasting menace 'could be incubating' in human population; Report obtained by Citizen warns of 'an international problem'

By Mark Kennedy, *Ottawa Citizen*, June 2, 2001

The fatal brain-wasting disorder commonly known as mad-cow disease may be incubating in cattle and humans in this country, according to an internal "risk-assessment" report prepared for Health Canada, obtained by the Citizen through the ATIA. Bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) infected at least 180,000 British cattle in the 1980s and 1990s. In recent months, Canadian government officials have issued strongly worded assurances that this nation is "BSE free" and that there is relatively little to worry about. The internal report paints a less rosy picture. It concludes that while the risk is "low," there is a possibility that BSE and vCJD are already present in Canada. If so, it warns, people may be unknowingly spreading the disease -- which can incubate from 10 years to perhaps 40 years -- to other humans.

Canadian bank failed to report 1,200 suspicious transactions, documents show

By Robert Cribb, Marco Oved, Mike de Souza. *Toronto Star*, *National Observer*, Dec. 22, 2016

A convicted felon attempted to move at least \$12 million through a Canadian bank, which failed to report the transactions to authorities in a breach of anti-money-laundering law, documents show. For keeping the transactions secret, the bank, whose name has been removed from the documents, was fined \$1.15 million -- the first and only time a bank has been penalized for this kind of offence in Canada, according to heavily censored documents obtained through an ATIA request by the National Observer. From early 2012 to the end of 2013, the unnamed bank processed 1,179 international electronic transfers of \$10,000 or more from the mystery client, who used a "potential shell company" and operated out of an unnamed country associated with money laundering.

Ottawa's secret report on money-laundering points finger at Canada's banks; The report tabled in Parliament calls banks good citizens. The internal report tells a different story.

By Dean Beeby, *CBC News*, Apr. 5, 2018

An internal report by Ottawa's money-laundering watchdog paints a picture of Canada's banks that's far less flattering than the one presented in a public sanitized report. The Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre (FINTRAC) released its 2016-2017 annual report through Parliament, wherein it praises the banking sector for fighting human trafficking in the sex trade. "Canada's major banks, led by the Bank of Montreal, invited Fintrac and police to work together to target this heinous and often hidden crime by focusing on the money laundering component of the crime," it says in reference to Project Protect. But a confidential annual report, described as "not meant for public release" - was delivered to the Finance Minister weeks earlier. It looks at Fintrac's probes of nine banks in 2016-2017. This document, obtained by CBC News under the ATIA, found "significant" problems at six of the nine banks - including problems in providing Fintrac with suspicious transaction reports.

Feds tap telecoms for customer data at 'staggering' rate

By Colin Freeze, *Globe and Mail*, Apr. 30, 2014

Government agencies obtained customer data from Canadian telecommunications companies nearly 800,000 times in a single year, with at least one companies installing a "mirror" on its networks to more easily route data to authorities. The new disclosure underscores the sheer volume of government requests for access to information about customers of phone and Internet service providers, and how easily those requests are fulfilled. It flows from questions that the Privacy Commissioner put to leading Canadian telecommunications companies three years ago. The records were disclosed upon an ATIA request from University of Ottawa Law professor Michael Geist. "The magnitude of the number of requests is staggering," Mr. Geist said. "The deep reluctance of the telcos to disclose this information is part of the story, too."

Public servants used by CSIS as informants: Governments at all levels involved

By Jim Bronskill, *Canadian Press*, Sept. 6, 1996

Public servants at all levels of government have acted as secret informants for the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, declassified documents show. It is believed to be the first official confirmation that the intelligence agency relies on confidential sources in public service ranks. The revelation, contained in a report by the Security Intelligence Review Committee, raises questions about the type and number of government departments involved, and what sort of information the sources have passed on. It says the use of public servants as sources is guided by a set of directions from the solicitor general approved in 1986. It has no authority to probe organizations such as lobby groups or unions engaged in legitimate political dissent. There is

often a fine line, however, between a security threat and justifiable political activity, said Prof. Reg Whitaker.

CSIS watchdog warns of potential for abuse: War on terrorism could infringe human rights: report

By Jim Bronskill, *Canadian Press*, Jan. 22, 2002

The federal watchdog over the Canadian Security Intelligence Service has quietly warned the government the "rights and liberties of Canadians" could be trampled in the war on terrorism. In a top-secret document prepared for the Solicitor-General of Canada, the CSIS Inspector-General says the Sept. 11 attacks on the U.S. and the ongoing campaign against terrorism are placing considerable pressure on the spy service. Acting as the Solicitor-General's eyes and ears with regard to CSIS, he expresses concern about the potential for the infringement of civil rights in his latest certificate, an annual report card to the Minister.

More than six dozen CIA-linked landings in Canada: declassified memos

By Jim Bronskill, *Canadian Press*, Feb. 22, 2002

Declassified memos show the number of Canadian landings by planes tied to the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency far exceeds previously known figures. Internal government briefing notes also reveal senior intelligence officials from six federal agencies met to discuss the flights. The memos underscore the level of concern in government circles about public fears the CIA has been ferrying terrorist suspects through Canada to foreign prisons. One note says 20 planes with alleged CIA ties have made 74 flights to Canada since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. The note adds the Canada Border Services Agency, which compiled the figures, and Nav Canada, the civil aviation regulatory body, "have indicated that proper administrative and operational procedures were followed in relation to those flights."

Toxic herbicide found in B.C. wells, papers show

By Ken MacQueen, *Vancouver Sun*, Oct. 5, 1990. Ken Rubin ATIA research

Traces of a herbicide linked to birth defects and reproductive problems have been found in farm wells in B.C. and New Brunswick. Tests by Agriculture Canada of 54 wells found 11 were contaminated with Dinoseb, a highly toxic herbicide that is banned in the U.S. and facing new restrictions in Canada. Although Dinoseb has been registered in Canada since 1947, a review by the federal health and welfare department "indicates appreciable risk for birth defects, cataract formation and male reproductive effects, even with full protective clothing," according to Agriculture Canada documents.

Federal review proposes outright ban: Tests find babies at risk with every seat model

By Carly Weeks, *Edmonton Journal*, Dec. 15, 2006

Every baby bath seat and ring reviewed by Health Canada failed safety tests and a federal ban on the products would have a "positive" effect on the health of infants. Results of safety tests and a subsequent risk-management assessment were presented to Health Canada in 2005. The department says the devices pose a drowning hazard, but no regulatory action has been taken. "The potential hazard represented by infant bath seats is not well publicized in Canada. While there are product warnings that caution caregivers not to leave the infant unattended, this is insufficient," says the risk-management assessment, obtained by the Post under the ATIA. Ten babies have drowned in Canada in the last six years after being placed in the bathtub seats or rings, Health Canada said. The federal safety review was prompted by the deaths of three Canadian babies in 2004.

Internal report pans Transport air safety plan; Department opts to go ahead with changes despite dangers listed in risk assessment

By Carly Weeks, *Ottawa Citizen*, April 13, 2007

Transport Canada's plan to eliminate regular safety audits of Canadian airlines could increase risks to the public and undermine the country's aviation industry. Safety problems could be overlooked, airlines might not comply with federal aviation regulations, and trained inspectors could lose the necessary skills to conduct large-scale safety audits if the department's audit program is reduced, says the risk assessment obtained under the ATIA by Canwest News. Transport Canada is in the process of changing federal aviation regulations and has come under heavy fire in recent weeks from critics who say the department is reducing federal regulatory oversight and allowing the industry to police itself in order to save money.

Oil sands rules in works, EU was told

By Shawn McCarthy, *Globe and Mail*, March 22, 2011

Canada's ambassador to the European Union privately promised EU politicians a year ago that the government would bring in regulations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the oil sands, documents indicate. But Ottawa has yet to act on that commitment. Meetings between Ambassador Ross Hornby and European parliamentarians were part of a campaign to derail the EU's proposed clean-fuel standards that would penalize the oil sands as "dirty fuel." The Harper government was also lobbying to prevent the European Parliament from adopting fuel standards that would single out the oil sands as particularly heavy emitters, say documents obtained under ATIA by the environmental group Climate Action Network Canada.

Food agency ignored risk of botulism; Maritime consumers not warned of suspect meat

By Laura Eggertson, *Toronto Star*, Nov. 26, 1999

Canada's food safety watchdog failed to warn the public about an outbreak of botulism in cattle slaughtered at a Maritime meat plant last year, even though federal officials knew 2,300 kilograms of meat from some infected animals had likely made it to dinner tables. An investigation by The Star and documents obtained through the ATIA have confirmed the Canadian Food Inspection Agency did not detain or recall nine carcasses of cows showing symptoms of botulism, which were later diagnosed with a strain of botulism not harmful to humans. Only after Health Canada wrote and told the food agency the meat must be destroyed - even before definitive test results on confirming the botulism and which strain - did the agency order the plant to condemn the meat still in the slaughterhouse.

Nunavut suicides a "public health emergency"

By Laura Eggertson, *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, Nov. 3, 2015

Nunavut's government "shall immediately declare suicide a public health emergency," and appoint a cabinet minister responsible for suicide prevention, recommended a coroner's jury in Iqaluit at the close of the inquest into a record 45 suicides in Nunavut in 2013. Calling the inquest was Nunavut coroner Padma Suramala's after the government had ignored her previous request for urgent help. The territory's suicide rate is 9.8 times greater than elsewhere in Canada. She pleaded with the Nunavut health and justice ministers for the emergency declaration, which could have resulted in additional federal funding or expertise. "We have reached a breaking point and our community is under crisis," Suramala said in an email, obtained via the ATIA.

Interrogators knew grilling could kill suspected Canadian spy

By Jonathan Manthorpe, *Canwest News*, Nov. 27, 1987.

John Watkins, retired ambassador to Moscow, died of a heart attack in a Montreal hotel room at the very end of a month of questioning by an interrogation team from the counter-espionage section of the RCMP. He had been trapped into a homosexual affair by the Soviet espionage service, the KGB. But documents obtained by the authors of a new book on Watkins show the team was aware of Watkins' frail health before they approached him for questioning in Paris in 1964. Copies of the interrogation team's messages to RCMP headquarters show that former governor-general Jules Leger, then ambassador to Paris, repeatedly warned them Watkins might die under the pressure of questioning. The documents were obtained by Ottawa University law faculty member William Kaplan and CP reporter Dean Beeby under the ATIA.

Tobacco probe goes up in smoke; Stopped despite suspect labels

By Geoffrey York, *Globe and Mail*, April 22, 1992.

Documents obtained under the ATIA by the Non-Smokers' Rights Association reveal that the Consumer and Corporate Affairs Department warned the tobacco companies of possible misleading advertising in 1991. Despite evidence of possible offences by the tobacco manufacturers, the department eventually dropped the case without any public explanation. A letter of 1991 which warns the tobacco companies that they may have violated the federal laws against misleading advertising. The investigation was prompted by complaints that the manufacturers had put misleading labels on tins of roll-your-own tobacco. Many of the tins are labelled as "light", "mild", "extra light", "extra mild" or "ultra light." Yet lab tests by federal researchers have found that these products are virtually identical to the regular brands of roll-your-own tobacco, and have much more nicotine and carbon monoxide than regular cigarettes.

See no evil: How Canada is bankrolling companies accused of bid-rigging, graft and human-rights violations

By Geoffrey York, Matthew McClearn, *Globe and Mail*, June 1, 2019.

In Latin America, billions of dollars in Canadian government-backed loans have been funnelled to two of the region's most notorious oil companies: the state-owned petroleum corporations of Mexico and Brazil, each riddled with frequent reports of bribery, bid-rigging and inflated contracts. In Africa, hundreds of millions of dollars has been channelled to companies at the heart of South Africa's worst post-apartheid corruption scandal: the state-owned freight rail monopoly and the business empire of the infamous Gupta brothers. Our investigation included a review of nearly 14,000 transactions since 2001. It allowed The Globe to build a unique database and to identify the Export Development Canada's largest customers for the first time. The Globe also used the courts and the ATIA, along with a cache of leaked e-mails, to obtain thousands of pages that document EDC activities.

Taser use 'exploding' among cops despite absence of rules: Expert

By Suzanne Fournier, *The Province* (Vancouver), May 22, 2008

Vancouver pathologist Dr. John Butt warned that despite the fact "there are deaths due to the Taser," its use is "exploding" among police forces in the absence of strict-usage rules or monitoring. Butt, a former coroner and chief medical examiner with 45 years' experience, told the Braidwood Inquiry into Taser use that "it's difficult to say they are a non-lethal weapon." Butt said a complicating factor in looking at Taser-related deaths is that "an autopsy cannot determine a recent cardiac arrhythmia nor seizure" which may have been brought on by the use of the stun gun. The overall use of Tasers by the RCMP soared to 1,119 incidents in 2006 and

1,414 in 2007, compared with only 597 incidents in 2005, according to a Canwest ATIA search. In B.C., the usage jumped from 218 incidents in 2005 to 496 in 2007. Details of incidents, injuries or the reason for usage were blacked out.

Mulroney's office initiated action to hold up entry of Rushdie book

By Richard Cleroux, *Globe and Mail*, June 7, 1989

It was the Prime Minister's Office that initiated action to ban Salman Rushdie 's controversial novel *The Satanic Verses* temporarily from entry into Canada. The import halt imposed by Canada Customs on Feb. 16 led to a massive protest from Canadian authors and civil liberties advocates. The order was revoked Feb. 19 and the book was allowed into Canada and became a bestseller. Prime Minister Brian Mulroney criticized Canada Customs at the time for barring the book, and said he couldn't understand how Customs could have made such a decision. But documents (obtained by the *Globe* the ATIA) written before the Customs decision show that Mulroney had been informed before Jan. 18 of the request by the Islamic Circle of North America that the novel be kept out of Canada, and that his office had passed on a copy of the request to Canada Customs, which made the final decision to impose the ban.

Soldiers suffer high rate of brain trauma

By Julian Sher, *Globe and Mail*, March 7, 2011.

Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan were hospitalized for traumatic brain injury in 2006-2009 at almost three times the rate of Americans fighting there in earlier years before the war escalated. The military attributed the "significantly higher" hospitalization rate to "the risky nature of our Kandahar operation" in a National Defence study obtained by *The Globe* under ATIA. Considered to be a disturbing hallmark of casualties in Afghanistan and Iraq because of the many roadside bombs that forcefully rattle the brain, TBI can result in severe concussions, long-term memory loss, depression and changes in behavior. While the proportion of Canadian soldiers injured - what the study called "a small but important minority" of about 6 per cent of all personnel in Afghanistan - had been disclosed, the comparison to American numbers is new.

Sex offenders free to travel abroad: Loopholes in Canadian law mean no restrictions on short trips, and few limits on longer ones, making it easy to prey on kids

By Jennifer Quinn, Rob Cribb, Julian Sher. *Toronto Star*, March 16, 2013.

The job of keeping track of child sex tourists is becoming even more challenging as destinations such as Cuba emerge, eclipsing hotspots in Southeast Asia, said an internal 2011 RCMP report,

released to the Star under the ATIA. In Canada, even if sex offenders do comply and notify authorities they are travelling, they don't need to tell anyone where they're going, or provide an itinerary. The U.S., the U.K. and Australia all require detailed travel plans in advance. Unlike other jurisdictions, Canada doesn't monitor who is leaving the country, and so can't catch sex offenders on the way out. On the way back into Canada, a child sex tourist is unlikely to be caught because border agents aren't on the lookout for them and don't have the tools to catch them, such as front-line access to police data of criminal histories or the names in sex offender registries.

Canadian mining firm under fire: Blackfire accused of involvement in killing of Mexican activist

By Julian Sher, *Toronto Star*, May 6, 2013.

Secret diplomatic emails and briefings suggest the Canadian embassy in Mexico provided "active and unquestioning support" to a Canadian mining company before, during, and after it became embroiled in controversy over the murder of a prominent local activist in Chiapas and corruption allegations, according to a report issued by MiningWatch Canada. The study, made available by the advocacy group to the Star and La Presse, is based on 900 pages of documents obtained through the ATIA from the Department of Foreign Affairs about its dealings with Calgary-based Blackfire Exploration. In 2009, three men with links to the company were arrested after the drive-by shooting of Mariano Abarca, who was leading the fight against Blackfire's barite mine in the often turbulent state of Chiapas.

Crime suspects get visas through embassy fraud: Papers reveal bribery at Kyiv mission

By Stewart Bell, Marina Jimenez, *National Post*, Aug. 22, 2001.

Suspected organized crime figures and other illegal migrants have slipped into Canada as a result of fraud and mismanagement at the Canadian embassy in the Ukrainian capital, Kyiv. At least two major smuggling rings of people infiltrated the embassy using bribes and fraud and succeeded in duping a seasoned diplomat and corrupting a local employee at the mission. Following an RCMP investigation, the Ukrainian employed in the embassy's trade section was fired and the commercial attache, was disciplined for "lack of due diligence and judgment." Documents released under the ATIA show the problems surfaced in 1998 when CSIS and Citizenship and Immigration Canada officials complained the Kyiv embassy was failing to properly screen visa applicants for organized crime connections. Three months later, the concerns were again raised.

Their dangerous dose: Canadian soldiers were given anthrax vaccine to protect them against biological warfare during UN and NATO Persian Gulf operations in the '90s.

By Ann Rees, *The Province* (Vancouver), June 25, 2000.

Canadian soldiers have received thousands of doses of suspect anthrax vaccine. They've been given everything from batches that may not be potent enough to protect them from biological warfare to a batch that was highly contaminated with gasket particles. The Department of National Defence had even planned to use vaccine that it feared was tainted with mad-cow disease. That plan was foiled when DND accidentally spoiled the entire shipment. Defence Minister Art Eggleton -- who has staunchly defended the quality of anthrax vaccine used by his department -- unknowingly received his vaccine from the batch contaminated with bad material, say documents released under ATIA. His vaccine was under quarantine when he got his shot in 1998. About 100 doses from the lot were given to soldiers; they also received several hundred doses from other U.S.- made batches that were later placed under quarantine and have since failed testing.

Banks helping wealthy Asian investors bend Chinese rules to bring money into Canada

By Kathy Tomlinson, *Globe and Mail*, Sept. 8, 2015.

Some Canadian banks allow wealthy Asian investors to skirt Chinese law by helping them bring in large amounts of money that is often used to buy real estate in Vancouver. Financial institutions in the area have flagged more than 8,200 suspicious transactions since 2012, the year China began cracking down on citizens they suspect of corruption; 96% of those transactions were also facilitated by the banks, however, even though the vast majority of that business involved suspected money laundering, according to FinTRAC, the federal agency responsible for tracking money laundering. These findings, obtained by *The Globe* via the ATIA, come as a debate rages over the source of foreign investment and Vancouver's soaring luxury housing markets. It is illegal for Chinese citizens to remove more than \$50,000 (U.S.) a year from China without permission, partly to stop corrupt millionaires from fleeing with their money.

Food agency ignored risk of botulism; Maritime consumers not warned of suspect meat

By Laura Eggertson, *Toronto Star*, Nov. 26, 1999.

Canada's food safety watchdog failed to warn the public about an outbreak of botulism in cattle slaughtered at a Maritime meat plant last year, even though federal officials knew 2,300 kilograms of meat from some infected animals had likely made it to dinner tables, government

documents say. An investigation by The Star and documents obtained through the ATIA have confirmed the Canadian Food Inspection Agency did not detain or recall 9 1/2 carcasses of cows showing symptoms of botulism. As it turned out, the carcasses were later diagnosed with a strain of botulism not harmful to humans. Only after Health Canada wrote and told the food agency the meat must be destroyed - even before definitive test results on confirming the botulism and which strain - did the agency order the plant to condemn the meat still in the slaughterhouse.

The Oberlander Files: The secret history of the last suspected Nazi war criminal in Canada

By Terry Pender, *Toronto Star*, Oct. 2, 2020.

It was 1970, and for the first time Helmut Oberlander faced questions about what he did and saw as a member of Einsatzkommando 10a. WW2 was long behind Oberlander by then. He was a successful Toronto developer and the married father of two girls. The unit Oberlander was part of, Einsatzkommando 10a, executed more than 40,000 people as it moved through 30 villages and towns in northern Russia The interview transcripts are among 2,000 pages of documents about Oberlander, including many previously secret files, released under the ATIA. The records are from the RCMP, the departments of justice and foreign affairs, and the royal commission on Nazi war criminals in the mid-1980s. Some of the released documents are heavily redacted, but others nearly complete.

Ventilation issues on subs raised in 2003

By Bruce Campion-Smith, *Toronto Star*, Oct. 8, 2004.

More than a year before the deadly fire aboard HMCS Chicoutimi, the captain of a sister ship raised serious concerns about the poor ventilation in the subs. The concerns are revealed in reports by the skipper of HMCS Victoria as it steamed from Halifax to its new base in Victoria in summer, 2003. The captain was saying he was really concerned about the safety and welfare of his people," said Conservative MP Bill Casey, who obtained the documents under the ATIA. During the long voyage to Victoria, the hot weather in the Caribbean and lack of air circulation meant "living conditions quickly deteriorated" as temperatures in parts of the submarine soared to 65C, according to a report from the sub. Casey wonders if the poor ventilation played a role in the aftermath of the devastating electrical fire on the Chicoutimi, when its tight confines filled with smoke. Nine crew members suffered smoke inhalation.

PCO blinks, gives documents to information watchdog

By Bruce Campion-Smith, *Toronto Star*, June 27, 2009.

Privy Council officials have ended months of stonewalling and handed over documents requested by the information watchdog. Yesterday's disclosure of files came only after Information Commissioner Robert Marleau threatened to have his staff enter the PCO and seize the paperwork themselves. Privy Council staff delivered some documents yesterday, the deadline set by Marleau, and promised to deliver the rest soon. At the heart of the dispute is his investigation into public complaints that the PCO is frustrating some ATIA requests. The office supports the Prime Minister's Office and cabinet. In particular, he's looking at 150 cases that involve "administrative" issues - complaints that could include the PCO's demand for photocopying costs and time extensions.

Ottawa loses 7-year feud on safety data: Transportation board finally releases to the Star 162-page package outlining range of complaints

By Bruce Campion-Smith, *Toronto Star*, June 27, 2009.

The reports tell of medical evacuation flights pushed to the limits in bad weather, of a helicopter accident in B.C. and malfunctioning approach lights at Pearson airport. And for the past seven years, the Transportation Safety Board of Canada has fought to keep these and other records of possible safety hazards under wraps and out of the public domain. The Star has won a battle under the ATIA to force the safety board to disclose a portion of the reports it collected from a dedicated hotline. However, it took an appeal by the Star to the Information Commissioner, who launched protracted negotiations with the safety board, to secure the release of the records. The TSB released a 162-page package, revealing a range of "safety" complaints.

Mounties should be charged, 1983 royal commission urged

By Iain Hunter, *Ottawa Citizen*, May 28, 1989.

The government has finally released parts of a 1983 McDonald Royal commission report suggesting criminal and civil charges be laid against RCMP members involved in wrongdoing. Evidence in the cases would support charges of breaking and entering, unlawful possession of explosives, mischief, conspiracy, kidnapping and forgery, the commission found. Although the findings were forwarded to provincial attorneys general in Ontario, B.C. and Alberta in 1982, they refused to lay charges on grounds of insufficient evidence. The chapters released in response to a request under the ATIA were withheld in 1983 to keep secret the identity of RCMP undercover agents and because of the possibility charges could be laid. Some charges were laid in Quebec between 1977 and 1982 but the Mounties involved were either acquitted or given absolute discharges.

The CF-18 dogfight; A behind-the-scenes look at how politics decided who won the contract for maintenance

By Iain Hunter, *Ottawa Citizen*, May 14, 1989.

A contract, worth a potential \$1.4 billion over 20 years, was to be awarded to maintain the sophisticated technological systems aboard the CF-18, Canada's most up-to-date fighter jet. Consortiums headed by Canadair Ltd. of Montreal and Bristol Aerospace Ltd. of Winnipeg had spent millions of dollars battling each other to prepare bids for the work. Now, records released to the Citizen under the ATIA give a glimpse of the behind-the-scenes manoeuvring within government in the runup to the decision. The documents repudiate claims that "in no way was this prejudged on a regional basis." Though heavily censored, the records show senior officials in three government departments spent months trying to find reasons for the cabinet to award the contract to Canadair. They didn't come up with much, but it was enough for Mulroney and those ministers anxious to placate Quebec.

Tory tames tobacco bill; Neville 'bullied' bureaucrats, non-smokers' group alleges

By Iain Hunter, *Ottawa Citizen*, June 26, 1989.

An influential Tory insider bullied bureaucrats into watering down advertising restrictions and health warnings for the tobacco industry he represents, the Non-Smokers' Rights Association has charged. Its president made public records he says show how Bill Neville, president of the Canadian Tobacco Manufacturers' Council, persuaded federal health officials to "emasculate" the regulations before they came into effect Jan. 1. Neville was chief of staff to prime minister Joe Clark in 1979 and senior adviser to Prime Minister Brian Mulroney. The documents, obtained under the ATIA, show the proposals to govern health warnings on tobacco product packages, restrict advertising and disclose toxic constituents and additives were still being changed during last year's federal election campaign.

Alleged misconduct dogs Revenue staff

By Peter Zimonjic, *Ottawa Sun*, Nov. 18, 2009. Ken Rubin ATIA research

The civil servants tasked with ensuring Canadians pay their taxes are being investigated by their own department for everything from accessing child porn at work to bribery, harassment and fraud. Documents released through the ATIA reveal hundreds of these investigations have been carried out on Canada Revenue Agency staff over a three-year period after evidence of misconduct emerged. The most common is the misuse of CRA computers for sending e-mail and surfing the Internet; the CRA conducted 91 investigations into these offences in 2005-06, and 102 in 2006-07. The second is the unauthorized accessing of personal tax information by CRA staff, of which there are between 23 and 33 cases a year going back to 2005-06. The documents,

obtained via the ATIA, don't say why staff were accessing the private information of taxpayers, but they do reveal several more serious offences.

Radioactive water leaks into river for nearly two decades

By Tom Spears, *Canadian Press*, May 28, 1997.

For nearly 20 years, the nuclear complex in Chalk River leaked more than 4,000 litres of radioactive water each day through the soil to the Ottawa River. And the complex's bosses didn't tell their neighbors. Even though Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd. removed the source of its leak in 1995, water is still percolating through soil that remains contaminated with radioactive tritium and strontium then into the river a few hundred metres away. The regulator Atomic Energy Control Board acknowledged that Chalk River's NRX reactor had experienced a "mild" leak. It said that the Ottawa River dilutes the pollution, and there is no danger to people who drink the water. But an ATIA request filed by Lynn Jones of nearby Pembroke shows the leak carried large amounts of radioactive water into the river, which supplies drinking water for many communities downstream, for nearly two decades. "We're appalled that they would keep this secret," she said.

Politics get in way of Canadian Space Agency discovery; 'During the election, no one was allowed to speak'

By Tom Spears, *National Post*, Nov. 8, 2008.

It should have been a proud Canadian moment in space as our first mission to Mars made a surprising discovery: snow is falling on the red planet. But the Canadian Space Agency wasn't allowed to talk about its achievement, because its staff was muzzled during the federal election. Instead it left NASA to make the announcement and grab the glory. Canadian space officials refused to speak to reporters, even to tip them to NASA's announcement, despite years of planning and \$37-million of Canadians' tax money invested in this Mars mission. Now the agency's own documents, released under the ATIA, have explained the silence: political orders got in the way. As Tory communications staffers and scientists exchanged e-mails about how to announce the find, the space agency announced it wouldn't be involved. The agency's communications staffer wrote: "bc [because] of the election campaign, CSA is not allowed to issue a release ... "

Agriculture Canada critiqued WHO meat warnings; Meat producers asked for help fighting report

By Tom Spears, *National Post*, July 8, 2016.

When international cancer experts warned last fall that eating some meats can cause cancer, staff at Agriculture Canada responded by attacking the warning's credibility. The warning came from

the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), part of the World Health Organization. Its announcement that too much processed meat causes cancer and too much red meat probably does too has worried meat producers, which asked Agriculture Canada for help. Its staff drew up a set of criticisms of the IARC and its work, labelled "confidential" but released under an ATIA request. These attack IARC for allegedly considering too small a set of studies, and for not giving its panel of 22 experts time to read and analyze all the relevant material.

Fraud allegations soar on First Nation reserves; Sixteen cases being investigated by the RCMP

By Sue Bailey, *Toronto Star*, Nov. 10, 1999

In the wake of recent high-profile incidents, allegations of fraud on native reserves have soared. Forty-eight allegations were passed to the RCMP in 1998-99, up from 26 in 1997-98 and three in 1996-97, say documents released under the ATIA. To date this year, 16 cases have become active investigations. The figures were released by the Indian Affairs Department, following persistent calls from the auditor general and some native people for more accountability on reserves. Alberta tops the list with 25 allegations. There are no statistics showing how many of these have led to charges. More than 200 protesters briefly took over a federal government office in Winnipeg last fall, demanding Ottawa help end the corruption that gives elected band leaders and their supporters a better life than other reserve residents.

Inmates overpaid due to fears of retribution

By Chad Skelton, *Vancouver Sun*, Jan. 31, 2005.

Inmates working at a furniture-making shop at Kent maximum-security prison were routinely given "incentive pay" they didn't deserve because instructors were too afraid not to give it to them, said an investigation report obtained by The Sun under the ATIA. "Incentive pay was supposed to be tied to production orders. [But] instructors just gave maximum [pay] most days," the shop business manager said in the report. "Shop instructors feared there would be a big revolt by the inmates." It concluded that shop instructors at Kent "did not effectively manage incentive pay," a problem it attributed in large part to the "the high-pressure maximum-security inmate work environment ... which usually involves the supervision of aggressive offenders seeking to obtain incentives -- whether earned or not."

Border guard fired, got job back

By Chad Skelton, *Vancouver Sun*, March 27, 2007.

Mindi Niedermeiser, the B.C. border guard who partied with the Hells Angels, had been previously fired by the Canada Border Services Agency for misconduct, but was reinstated after

an appeal. She was investigated in 1996 after U.S. Customs detained her fiancé at the border for alleged people-smuggling and found confidential Canadian and U.S. border enforcement manuals in his car. The CBSA fired her over this, but she appealed and was reinstated. Years later, she was investigated again after co-workers complained about her association with the Hells Angels. The Sun reported the contents of a CBSA investigation - obtained through the ATIA - which found she partied with the Angels twice at a concert in Merritt and attended a party at one of their clubhouses; her driver's licence also tested positive for contact with cocaine.

Indian doctor accused of faking medical records for seriously ill immigrants

By Chad Skelton, *Vancouver Sun*, July 24, 2007

Most immigrants to Canada must undergo extensive medical checks before arrival to ensure they don't have any infectious diseases or serious medical problems. To ensure the checks are done properly, only doctors pre-approved by Citizenship and Immigration Canada, known as Designated Medical Practitioners (DMP), are allowed to do them. But an internal Canada Border Services Agency report, obtained by The Sun through the ATIA, reveals serious questions have been raised about the work of one such doctor in India. It states the CBSA is investigating allegations that two seriously ill immigrants from India "paid a [DMP] to submit medical results of other people with their applications for permanent residence." The two sick immigrants were then allowed to immigrate to Canada.

Jailers fear PM's justice overhaul; Federal prison officials say plan violates Charter, hits natives hardest

By Tonda McCharles, *Toronto Star*, Jan. 11, 2007

Ottawa's proposals to get tougher on criminals would hit aboriginal people the hardest, violate Charter rights of inmates, and likely not make for safer streets, says the agency that oversees federal prisons. It voiced concern about dramatic increases in the prison population that would result from the Conservatives' approach. Among the targets in an analysis prepared by Correctional Services Canada's strategic policy division are proposals for mandatory minimum sentences and for the so-called three-strikes law, key elements of the Tories' law-and-order agenda. The analysis says minimum sentences don't have a deterrent effect and drain away funds available for social programs that prevent crime. The final version of the document, obtained by the Star under the ATIA, is dated the day after the Conservatives won the election.

Internal memo braces RCMP for deluge of abuse claims; Avalanche of residential school complaints descends as force grapples with own role in tragedy

By Tonda McCharles, *Toronto Star*, July 10, 2008.

More than 3,000 people have applied to Ottawa's program to settle outstanding sexual or physical abuse claims arising from the Indian residential schools era. An internal RCMP memo, obtained by the Star through the ATIA, said discussions had already been held with various levels of government and aboriginal communities about how the RCMP should respond. Most of the abuse disclosures made through the compensation process "will not be pursued criminally," it says. Many complainants will not want to go through the criminal justice system, and are guaranteed anonymity under the compensation program. The documents flag another significant issue for the RCMP - allegations of "missing children" from Indian residential schools and suggestions that some deaths were "criminal in nature."

Military police records expose domestic violence, counsellors cite Afghanistan

By Alison Auld, *Canadian Press*, July 18, 2010

Military police records describe spousal sexual assault, hitting, shoving and screaming matches on or near Canadian Forces bases - family violence that counsellors link to repeated tours in Afghanistan. Such tensions and conflict that regularly erupt in military homes across the country. Case summaries detail 49 incidents in 2008 - 2009 in which charges were laid or complaints were deemed as "founded." Several other reports of assault - physical and sexual - were handled through "alternative" measures or "departmental discretion." The heavily censored records were released by National Defence eight months after CP requested them under the ATIA. Charges included aggravated spousal assault, sexual assault, assault on a child, assault causing bodily harm, assault with a weapon and uttering threats. Frontline counsellors say police reports just scratch the surface because so many victims of domestic abuse don't report it.

Sale of military goods to Indonesia okayed

By Allan Thompson, *Toronto Star*, July 29, 1997

Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy approved the sale of military equipment to Indonesia, which has been criticized for its human rights record and occupation of East Timor. Export permits for the sale of \$1.6 million worth of military goods to Indonesia were approved in 1996 by Axworthy, according to documents obtained under the ATIA by Ottawa-based Parliamentarians for East Timor. "This is more than appalling, this is a complete abandonment of human rights in Canadian foreign policy," said the director of the group's international secretariat. A foreign affairs spokesperson said no permits would have been issued "if it was judged that there was a likelihood the goods might be used to exacerbate the human rights situation." By some accounts, more than one-third of the people of East Timor have been killed in organized genocide since Indonesia seized the area by force.

Canada has taken in 81 with links to terror groups; Allowed to settle from 1996 to 2001 Given special relief with minister's OK

By Allan Thompson, *Toronto Star*, Dec. 4, 2002

More than 80 people who once belonged to terrorist groups have been allowed to settle in this country since 1996 after being granted special relief by the immigration minister, an internal report shows. The program, essentially grants a pardon for past activity in a small number of cases. One immigration official said some of those with terrorist links who have been allowed to stay are now helping Canada by providing intelligence or working as informants. The report does not name the groups they belonged to, nor name the officials involved in the decision-making. The report includes the minutes of a meeting of the immigration department's Litigation Strategy Committee, obtained by Vancouver immigration lawyer Richard Kurland through an ATIA request. "It's not clear to me why benign terrorists should be granted landed immigrant status in Canada," he said. "How much death on the fingertips is enough to kick you out of Canada?"

Hep C victims questioning Ontario fund; Debate begins over money expected to be left over

By Tim Harper and Edison Stewart, *Toronto Star*, Feb. 3 1999

Only a fraction of the money available to Ontario tainted blood victims is now expected to be dispersed in initial payouts by Queen's Park - spurring debate on the fate of remaining funds. Blood victims already are privately expressing concern that Premier Mike Harris may quietly return unspent portions of a \$200 million hepatitis C fund to general revenues. According to federal research, Harris was unable to force Ottawa to extend compensation to all hepatitis C victims because Canadians suspected their motives. "The general assumption was that the motivations were almost entirely driven by politics and 'PR,' " the researchers concluded in a report released to The Star under the ATIA. The findings are based on "focus group" interviews with two groups of 10 people in Toronto. Researchers cautioned in their report that the findings "cannot be taken to be representative of Canadians at large" but are more likely to be "indicative."

Government spies keep watch on aboriginal aid worker

By Tim Harper, *Toronto Star*, Nov. 16, 2011

Why is Ottawa spying on Cindy Blackstock? When does a lifelong advocate for aboriginal children become an enemy of the state? The answer, it would seem, is when you file a human rights complaint accusing your government of willfully underfunding child welfare services to First Nations children on reserves. That's what Blackstock, as executive director of the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada, did in 2007. Since that time, federal officials attended 75 to 100 meetings at which she spoke, then reported back to their bosses. Blackstock went public, after learning through her own ATIA request, in a mountain of

documents, that the government had been spying on her. They went on her Facebook page during work hours; on at least two occasions, they pulled her Status Indian file and its personal information. She found that at least 140 different officials, from deputy ministers down, have read her personal information.

MP blasts Tories over cash for natives; Memos suggest schools in opposition ridings had money withheld

By Richard Brennan, *Toronto Star*, Feb. 26, 2009

The Conservatives withheld funds for badly needed native school construction because the communities were located in opposition ridings, documents obtained by NDP MP Charlie Angus via the ATIA suggest. An internal memo advising Indian Affairs Minister Chuck Strahl of the situation caused a furor in the Commons. "No real issue (about the school project), just sitting in an opposition riding," states a 2008 memo from a senior Indian Affairs Canada official in Toronto, released to the media by Angus. "The Ontario region (of INAC) had identified three key priorities - Wabaseemoong, North Spirit Lake and Attawapiskat - all because of serious health and safety concerns, and in the case of Attawapiskat overcrowding and badly deteriorated portables," Angus told MPs.

Were Haitian orphans photo-op victims?: Critics say children destined for Quebec rerouted unnecessarily

By Richard Brennan, *Toronto Star*, Oct. 4, 2010

Haitian orphans destined for Quebec, many of them cold and exhausted, were rerouted through Ottawa for what critics say was nothing more than a photo-op for the Harper government. The Star has learned from documents obtained via the ATIA that they were originally supposed to go to Montreal and to other destinations in Canada after that. Haiti was devastated by an earthquake on Jan. 12 and many children were left homeless and alone. "Most are destined to Quebec but some to other regions," wrote a senior Citizenship and Immigration Canada official. "The plan is that (they) will most likely arrive at Dorval and final destination flight departing soon after." However, when they arrived three days later it was in Ottawa, not Montreal's Pierre Elliott Trudeau International Airport. The children, many of them carried off the Air Canada flight in blankets and wiping sleep from their eyes, were then bused to points beyond, such as Quebec.

Census decision lacked numbers: 'Thousands' of complaints cited by Conservatives for ending long-form never existed, papers reveal

By Richard Brennan, *Toronto Star*, Jan. 8, 2011

The Conservative government listened to only a relative handful of Canadians - including conspiracy theorists fearful the government was going to round them up - before scrapping the mandatory long-form census, according to Statistics Canada documents obtained by the Star via the ATIA. These Canadians were unhappy with so-called intrusive questions and the aggravation of filling it out, and a few were even convinced the census was part of a government plot. But there is no overwhelming evidence in the documents to support the government's contention of widespread privacy concerns - the argument it used to kill the mandatory long-form census. According to records, fewer than 100 complaints were lodged with StatsCan - far short of the thousands that Tory MP Maxime Bernier said he was receiving.

Federal forestry report left out critical aspects

By Anne McIlroy, *Ottawa Citizen*, Aug. 12, 1992

A public report on the state of Canada's environment left out passages that were critical of the forestry industry. At the time, officials involved in its preparation said the forestry chapter had been "sanitized." Environment Canada refused to release the final draft of the report so it could be compared with what was published. It did so only after Southam News complained to the Information Commissioner. Here is what was taken out: A statement that "very little of the ancient forest remains uncut" in B.C.; a section saying herbicides that remove "weeds" such as aspen, poplar, red alder and red maple also kill species that help replenish the soil. The draft says fenitrothian, one of the most studied pesticides, has poisoned workers exposed to it in accidents; that's missing in the published document, which says the product's health effects are unknown.

Federal officials at odds over Winnipeg germ lab spill

By Anne McIlroy, *Globe and Mail*, Aug. 27, 1999

The deputy minister of health says the people of Winnipeg should have been informed when waste water was accidentally released from a lab designed to contain the world's deadliest microbes, including the Ebola virus. But correspondence obtained under the ATIA shows that the deputy minister is having difficulty convincing the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, which shares responsibility for the Level 4 lab, that the public had the right to know about the spill that took place on June 23. More than 2,000 litres of effluent from the lab's waste-water system was accidentally emptied into a blending tank and released from there into the city's sewer system. The incident at the Canadian Science Centre for Human and Animal Health, first reported by The Globe last month, was deemed harmless by federal officials.

Patent '738: The untold story of how a single pill sparked Canada's deadly opioid crisis and ignited one of the biggest pharmaceutical battles in the country's history

By Grant Robertson, Karen Howlett. *Globe and Mail*, Dec. 30, 2016

In 2000, after millions of OxyContin tablets had been prescribed to patients, Purdue's medical-services department told their supervisors that it had received a report about a patient who was unable to stop taking 10-milligram OxyContin tablets without experiencing withdrawal. Similar concerns were showing up in the Adverse Reaction Reports filed with Health Canada, where drug manufacturers must report "serious and unexpected" side effects to the regulator. Purdue began sending reports to the department in 2000, say documents obtained by The Globe through a ATIA request. A draft report of 2003, prepared by the government's Marketed Health Products Directorate says there were 20 such adverse-reaction reports involving OxyContin, "and in two of these, death was listed as the outcome." However, there is no evidence anything was done.

Investigation: White-collar thieves are repeatedly stealing millions from the unsuspecting, without fear of reprisal

By Grant Robertson, Tom Cardoso. *Globe and Mail*. Dec. 16, 2017

In 2003, the Integrated Market Enforcement Teams (IMET), a collection of dedicated RCMP investigators focusing on financial crimes, were launched with much fanfare. But over the years, the units have struggled to land convictions for some of their most high-profile cases - including the fraud charges laid against former executives of Nortel Networks for inflating the books, which ended in acquittals. In the case of Bre-X, which involved fabricated tales of a massive gold mine in Indonesia, the RCMP laid no charges. ATIA documents obtained by the Globe indicate the IMET program was never used to its full capacity. Though it was allocated more than \$19-million for potential prosecutions between 2005 and 2017, it spent just \$514,649 of that money. In recent years, the RCMP has been dealing with staffing shortages and a shifting focus towards terrorism investigations, which critics suggest has pushed white-collar crime down the priorities list.

Health Canada warned of lead in raisins: memo: Repeated pleas by staff: Bureaucrats didn't want to offend Turkish exporters

By Adrian Humphreys, *National Post*, July 8, 2002

Health Canada scientists wrote repeated pleas and health hazard warnings over lead-tainted raisins being sold in Canada, including a memo from a senior government scientist recommending they be removed from store shelves. Instead, Health Canada allowed raisins with alarmingly high levels of lead to be imported and sold for another growing season, partly to avoid undue hardship on Turkish exporters, internal documents show. Some raisins were found

by Health Canada's scientists in 1992 to be contaminated with lead, a substance that can devastate a child's brain development. In 1993, scientists found some brands of Turkish raisins had 110 times the lead level as raisins from other countries, prompting a three-year flurry of memos and reports within Health Canada that were obtained by the Post under the ATIA.

Think about it: tobacco tax cut equals death warrant on teenagers

By Ken MacQueen, *Ottawa Citizen*, Feb. 1, 1995

It's a rare government that is accused of signing the death warrants for 40,000 adolescents.... It is the price, or one estimate of the price, to be paid in lives for last February's decision to slash tobacco taxes to combat the smuggling of cheap tobacco from the U.S. The draft study was obtained under the [ATIA] by the Non-Smokers Rights Association. The report -- which Health Canada now calls an incomplete, "less than satisfactory" draft -- says this: "It is estimated that a 20-per-cent reduction in the price of cigarettes for the next five years will result in over 142,000 new adolescent smokers (age 11-19) in Canada by the end of 1998. Among these persons, almost 16,900 smoking-attributable deaths will occur before age 70."

Political dynamite: Canadian role in plot to bomb Statue of Liberty can now be read as comedy or cautionary tale

By Ken MacQueen, *Ottawa Citizen*, Feb. 9, 1995

Strange acts are committed in the cause of an independent Quebec but none more bizarre than a plot revealed 30 years ago to blow up the Statue of Liberty. Thanks to the ATIA, we have a censored version of what has to be one of the weirder case files of the former RCMP security service. The motley collection of radical Quebec separatists and American black extremists also intended to blow up the Liberty Bell and the Washington Monument. But the Statue of Liberty was the grand prize. When our freedom fighters were arrested in New York on Feb. 17, 1965, they had enough smuggled Canadian dynamite in their possession to blow the head and torch arm off that "damned old bitch," as one of them put it. How the cause of Quebec separatism would be furthered by decapitating a U.S. national shrine - especially a statue that was a gift of France - was never terribly clear.

Patent drug law didn't work, report says

By Ian Austen, *Ottawa Citizen*, Sept. 17, 1992

Ottawa's plans to further reduce prescription drug competition came despite an internal report showing that benefits promised from a similar move five years ago haven't happened. Contrary to the pharmaceutical drug industry's claims in 1987, a draft study for the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs shows limited job gain, little growth in basic research, and

almost no capacity to produce the active ingredients of drugs in Canada. As well, its authors warn that the full impact of the earlier changes on prices hasn't been felt yet. The undated study, obtained by Southam News under the ATIA, was produced to help the government review its patent laws following pressure during negotiations for a global trade agreement and the Canada-U.S.-Mexico free trade pact. The House of Commons was to resume debate today on legislation to give new prescription drugs 20 years of full patent protection.

Harper concerned that RCMP apology in Dziekanski case was not genuine

By Ian Bailey, *Globe and Mail*, June 16, 2010

Prime Minister Stephen Harper is concerned about a "troubling" internal RCMP communication that suggests the force's apology to Robert Dziekanski's mother did not mean they were actually sorry for the specific conduct of their officers in a 2007 taser confrontation that left the Polish immigrant dead. Harper's comments marked an unusual executive-level intervention into case. "The apology was very important to Mr. Dziekanski's family and his mother in particular," Harper's press secretary said. "We find the e-mail troubling." RCMP Deputy Commissioner Gary Bass discusses the apology in an e-mail among documents released via the ATIA. "Even though the word 'apology' worries some, we are not apologizing for the actions of specific members or saying anything about specific actions," Bass writes in the March 31 e-mail to a staff-relations representative.

Ottawa winks at arms policy linking sales to human rights

By Robert Matas, *Globe and Mail*, Aug. 25, 1986

While such sales are only a small portion of the \$2-billion annual defence industry exports, the permits for foreign arms sales are approved in secret and never made public. Fourteen of 28 countries to which Ottawa recently permitted the export of military equipment have been cited for some type of human rights violation, according to a profile of the exports by a research institute in Waterloo. Canada was willing in 1984-85 to send military equipment to Argentina, Chile, India, Indonesia, South Korea, Mexico, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Taiwan and Venezuela. An internal federal review of military exports policy began in 1985 after NDP MP Nelson Riis released copies of export permits obtained under the ATIA. About 40,000 jobs now rely on Canada's military export trade.

Meat reports are public, court rules

By Robert Matas, *Globe and Mail*, Dec. 12, 1987

In a landmark decision expected to open up new areas of government information, the Federal Court of Canada has ruled that the public has a right to see Department of Agriculture inspection reports on meat plants. "The public interest in disclosure in this case clearly outweighs any risk

of harm to the applicants," Associate Chief Justice James Jerome stated in a decision. Jim Romahn, a reporter from The Kitchener-Waterloo Record, and Ken Rubin, a consumer activist, had asked for reports on more than 30 meat packing plants across Canada. Ten companies asked the court to overrule a decision of Information Commissioner Inger Hansen that the reports should be released.

Ships brought A-arms into Canadian ports, Greenpeace contends

By Robert Matas, *Globe and Mail*, May 12, 1988

Warships and submarines capable of carrying nuclear weapons visited Canada 63 times last year and, according to the environmental group Greenpeace, they were carrying the deadly arsenal. The group bases this conclusion on a government record of such visits obtained by Project Ploughshares, a church-sponsored anti-nuclear group, under the ATIA, and a statement by a retired U.S. admiral that any ship capable of carrying such weapons is carrying them. The record of visits during 1987 shows Halifax had 18 visits from such warships and submarines; a training range at Nanoose, B.C., had 11; Vancouver had 10 and Esquimalt, B.C., had 24. Four of the submarines that visited Halifax were capable of carrying Trident intercontinental ballistic missiles. Each missile can be armed with eight warheads, with the explosive power of 100 kilotons each.

Pembroke puzzled by theft of tritium; Three-year-old mystery surrounds enough radioactive material to make two atom bombs

By Martin Mittelstaedt, *Globe and Mail*, Apr. 22, 1999

Police have a three-year-old nuclear mystery on their hands: the theft of tritium, a radioactive isotope of hydrogen used to make glow-in-the dark signs and atomic bombs. In 1995, 23 green garbage bags filled with stolen signs were discovered in Pembroke. The signs originally had come from atomic weapons plants run by the U.S. Department of Energy. The bags contained enough tritium to make perhaps two atomic bombs. In the three years since then, information about the stolen signs and the concern they caused nuclear regulators has never been fully made public. The incident is described in nearly 1,000 pages of documents released under the ATIA to Nuclear Awareness Project, an environmental group. These indicate nuclear watchdogs worried that a significant amount of highly dangerous radioactive material had gone missing in Canada.

Increasing number of Canadians arrested for sex tourism; Consular services reveal extent of overseas issue

By Daphne Bramham, *Vancouver Sun*, March 23, 2012

At least 73 Canadians have been arrested outside the country for abusing or molesting children or possessing child pornography in the last three years. That number only hints at how many

Canadians may actually travel abroad to have sex with children. Provided by Foreign Affairs in response to an ATIA request, it accounts only for those who asked for consular assistance after they were detained, not any who were detained on those charges but didn't ask for help. It doesn't include Canadians detained in countries such as Cambodia where Canada does not have an embassy. Still, it marks a steep increase. University of B.C. law professor Benjamin Perrin made a similar ATIA request for 1993 to 2008. In a book, he wrote that during that 15-year period Foreign Affairs had provided assistance to "more than 150 Canadian men."

Westray probe may take feds to court; Documents hidden, inquiry lawyer says

By Julian Beltrame, *Southam News*, March 31, 1993

The inquiry into the Westray mine disaster that killed 26 miners may go to court to get key documents it says are being hidden by Ottawa. Inquiry lawyer John Merrick said that the government is withholding a memo to the former energy minister relating to the \$80-million government subsidy for the operators of the Westray mine. He said an assessment of the Westray project, called the CANMET report, was withheld by the government and had to be obtained by the inquiry from other sources. He believes the version obtained is incomplete. The Industry Minister said the government has released 7,000 pages of documents to the Nova Scotia inquiry and will release "thousands and thousands" more pages about to be cleared by ATIA officials.

Trudeau cabinet talked of partition and military force in Quebec: Previously secret memos show the federal cabinet discussed getting tough with Quebec after Rene Levesque's 1976 victory

By Jack Aubry, *Ottawa Citizen*, June 16, 1997

The partition of Quebec and the use of the military to defend federal territory were discussed by the Trudeau cabinet only two months after the first separatist government was elected in 1976. The minutes of the cabinet meeting of Jan. 13, 1977 and a memo outlining a national-unity strategy were obtained by *The Citizen* under the ATIA. Warren Allmand, an anglophone MP from Montreal at the cabinet table, first brought up the need for a hard line with the separatists. He told cabinet the government should make it clear it would not accept any kind of referendum. As minister of Indian affairs, Allmand said he had told the aboriginal peoples in northern Quebec, who occupy the northern two-thirds of the province, "that was their territory."

\$1.6B in tech loans unpaid: Industry Canada gets woeful return on 'corporate welfare' to business giants

By Jack Aubry, *Ottawa Citizen*, Jan. 28, 2002

Industry Canada has managed to collect less than two per cent of the \$1.66 billion it has shelled out in repayable loans to large corporations, such as Bombardier and Pratt & Whitney, in the past five years. Figures obtained through the ATIA show Industry Canada has been paid back a meagre \$24.48 million of the loans made since 1996 under the department's Technology Partnerships Canada program (TPC). The figures indicate that the woeful return on the high-priced loans is consistent with another much-criticized program -- the Defence Industry Productivity Program (DIPP), which was replaced by TPC -- which only collected about 15 per cent of the \$2.47 billion in loans it gave out between 1982 and 1995. Industry Canada has also neglected to publicly announce some of the taxpayer-funded multimillion-dollar deals for research and development at technology, aerospace and defence corporations.

Ottawa in dark on how many fall ill from vaccines; Children can suffer fever or brain damage

By Margaret Munro, *Montreal Gazette*, Jan. 27, 1987

Health authorities concede they have only a rough idea how many thousands of Canadian children are being made sick by the two million vaccinations routinely given each year. Health and Welfare documents show that: Quebec, Ontario, and the Maritime provinces do a particularly dismal job of reporting adverse reactions - ranging from fevers to brain damage - to federal authorities. Despite a pledge six years ago to increase the amount of money for "urgently" needed research into vaccine safety, the Health Department has yet to live up to that commitment. The documents cover minutes of 1980 to 1985 meetings of the National Advisory Committee on Immunization, which oversees Canada's vaccination programs. They were requested under the ATIA in 1985, but the Health Department refused to release them for more than 18 months, despite court action begun by the information commissioner.

Privy Council Office linked to muzzling of top scientist; Researcher silenced over study into crash of salmon stocks, documents show

By Margaret Munro, *Ottawa Citizen*, July 27, 2011

Top bureaucrats in Ottawa have muzzled a leading fisheries scientist whose discovery could help explain why salmon stocks have been crashing off Canada's West Coast, according to documents obtained by Postmedia under the ATIA. These show the Privy Council Office stopped Kristi Miller from talking about one of the most significant discoveries to come out of a federal fisheries lab in years. Science, one of the world's top research journals, published Miller's findings in January. Major media outlets were soon lining up to speak with Miller, but the Privy Council Office said no to the interviews. The PCO also nixed a Fisheries Department news release about Miller's study, saying the release "was not very good, focused on salmon dying and not on the new science aspect."

Transport ministry fought passenger rights bill; Airlines told to lobby against popular initiative

By Sarah Schmidt, *National Post*, Nov. 17, 2009

The Transport Minister's office privately pleaded with Canada's big airlines to step up their lobby campaign to kill a proposed passenger bill of rights even as the minister publicly rallied behind the popular initiative, according to documents obtained by Canwest News via the ATIA. The motion by a Newfoundland Liberal MP calling on the government to bring forward a bill to enact a passenger bill of rights, passed in the Commons unanimously last year. The effort to kill the motion is revealed in correspondence sent from the minister's office to top executives at Air Canada, WestJet Airlines and Air Transat. The government intended to block the release of the records in response to an ATIA request, but the full, uncensored documents were sent to Canwest News - apparently by mistake. "Gentlemen, you're going to have to do some lobbying to stop this motion in its tracks," the minister's senior policy advisor told officials at Canada's largest airlines.

Health Canada testing missed lethal playpen problem; Two-month-old baby died in bassinet attachment described as 'significantly hazardous'

By Sarah Schmidt, *Ottawa Citizen*, Apr. 27, 2010

Health Canada testing of a playpen bassinet conducted six months before an infant died in the equipment did not spot a problem, but a test conducted after the death identified a design feature that was "significantly hazardous," according to internal records. A two-month-old boy from Winnipeg died in the bassinet attachment of a Dorel Safety 1st playpen on Feb. 18, 2009, and Health Canada launched an investigation. Health Canada concluded the bassinet attachment was "significantly hazardous" and "required design changes" because of a design flaw apparent at assembly. The "bassinet bars appear to be too short, are easy to push out of the short sleeves, and even when properly assembled, the bassinet did not provide a flat sleeping surface," said a summary of the followup test results. The records were released to Canwest News via the ATIA.

Food doesn't match label hype; Sugar-coated claims rarely check out, federal tests reveal

By Sarah Schmidt, *Ottawa Citizen*, Sept. 3, 2010

Six out of 10 candies, baked goods and breads at the grocery store overstated claims such as "sugar free," "low in fat" or "100-per-cent whole wheat" to convince shoppers to indulge in a treat or pay a premium. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency tested 252 candy items such as chocolate bars, soft candies and fruit snacks for the accuracy of their composition claims, and found 159 confectionary products failed to live up to their billing. The record for breads and

baked goods, such as cookies and muffins, that claim to be low in fat or to contain certain grains wasn't much better, with 59 per cent not living up to their claims. Of 161 snack foods pitched as low in sodium or other composition claims, half violated the rules. According to minutes concerning CFIA's Fair Labelling Practices Program, released to Postmedia News under the ATIA, these product categories were targeted between 2006 and 2010 because inspectors suspected compliance problems.

Fast-food fat claims miss the mark; 14 of 33 items tested had more fat -- sometimes a lot more -- than the restaurants claimed

By Sarah Schmidt, *Ottawa Citizen*, Dec. 18, 2010

McDonald's advertised its chicken fajita as containing 2.5 grams of saturated fat but, on at least one occasion, the fast-chain chain served up the dish with about 75 per cent more than it claimed. At one KFC location, the chicken strips packed in a total fat count of 19.37 grams, not the 12 stated by the company. And Taco Bell's fresco soft taco had a trans fat level to be 3.5 times greater at one outlet. These aren't the only chain restaurants whose products have sometimes failed government tests of the accuracy of nutrition claims. According to Canadian Food Inspection Agency results released to Postmedia News after an ATIA request, Panago Pizza, Greco Pizza and other chains have all posted at least one "unsatisfactory" test result. (CFIA allows a margin of 20 per cent to account for natural variations among ingredients.)

Diplomacy drove regulation change; Caffeine rule relaxed to aid Scottish firm

By Sarah Schmidt, *Ottawa Citizen*, Aug. 5, 2011

Pressure from officials at Foreign Affairs was the driving force behind Health Canada's controversial decision to allow the addition of caffeine to non-cola soft drinks. Records released under ATIA show Health Minister Leona Aglukkaq approved the wider use of caffeine in soft drinks following a request from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, and had nothing to do with any consumer campaign seeking greater choice. Rather, the regulatory change, made through a ministerial tool called an Interim Marketing Authorization, was requested by Foreign Affairs on behalf of Earn-Bru, a popular caffeinated drink from Scotland. To aid its brand owner A.G. Barr of Glasgow, the department asked Canada's food regulator for "prioritized treatment of amended regulations related to caffeine additives in beverages thereby permitting the sale of Earn-Bru in Canada."

Minister killed plan to limit trans fats

By Sarah Schmidt, *Ottawa Citizen*, Feb. 7, 2012

Health Minister Leona Aglukkaq killed a government plan to impose strict limits on trans fats in food products that would have been in place by now. The announcement, set for the fall of 2009

with a two-year phase-in period, was needed "to protect all Canadians from high trans-fat intakes and to ensure there is a level playing field for industry," according to Commons question period notes prepared for her. The move, to which large food companies objected, was to be announced alongside the release of the final set of data from Health Canada's Trans Fat Monitoring Program, according to Health Canada records released to the Centre for Science in the Public Interest under ATIA. The group says Aglukkaq's decision to block strong action on trans fats is part of an ongoing pattern of ignoring the advice of departmental experts and letting down provinces looking for federal leadership on nutrition and public health.

Ottawa accused of suppressing report on need to arm wardens: 'Only a matter of time before a warden is seriously injured or killed'

By Tom Blackwell, *National Post*, Oct. 30, 2002

It is only a matter of time before a park warden is killed or seriously hurt if the officers keep working without guns, warns a strongly worded report commissioned by Parks Canada -- but kept under wraps for a year. It tried to have the report watered down and then failed to submit it at labour hearings on whether wardens should be armed; there, lawyers for the wardens were told no such report was available, said the Public Service Alliance of Canada steward for the park officers. They recently obtained a copy through an ATIA request. The wardens have been fighting for years for the right to carry pistols and they won an early Human Resources Development Canada decision in their favour last year. But this year an appeal officer ruled they face no significant danger and need not be given handguns. The final report of 2001 by the Justice Institute of B.C. painted a different picture.

Gangs rule in Canada's prisons: Internal papers show power of 1,707 imprisoned thugs

By Tom Blackwell, *National Post*, Oct. 30, 2002

Organized crime figures from outlaw bikers to terrorists and even white supremacists are increasingly taking up residence in the penitentiaries, and often bringing their illicit enterprises with them, according to the internal papers obtained by the Post under the ATIA. Their expanding presence -- a total of 1,700 offenders at last count -- is being blamed for gang feuds, intimidation and corruption of staff and a widespread drug trade. A particular concern is the rising number of top-level organized crime figures, whose "limitless resources and influence" pose a special threat to corrections. The street gang contingent specifically has tripled in the last three years. The workload of intelligence officers is "increasing substantially" as they tackle the complex problems posed by organized crime inside prison, says one report, while a new strategic intelligence unit at headquarters was recently set up to co-ordinate anti-syndicate efforts.

Immigrants flowing in with dormant TB: report: Call for targeted testing

By Tom Blackwell, *National Post*, March 30, 2006

Canada's outdated handling of tuberculosis in immigrants must be modernized to better cope with the growing ranks of newcomers with dormant TB, a condition that can later turn into full blown, contagious disease, says a government-commissioned report, obtained by the Post through the ATIA. The current screening methods were developed 50 years ago, and "much has changed" since then, with a flood of arrivals from countries where TB is widespread, it says. A third of the world's population is believed to be infected with the lung ailment, and "tens of thousands" of people with latent TB arrive in Canada yearly, says Dr. Brian Gushulak, the report's author. Most of the 1,600 active cases reported every year occur in people who entered the country with dormant infection and afterward developed the active disease.

Blackwater trained our troops; Defence spent more than \$6M at controversial U.S. security firm

By Tom Blackwell, *National Post*, March 30, 2006

The National Defence Department has spent more than \$6-million having its troops trained by the controversial Blackwater security company, whose own employees have been accused of needlessly killing civilians in Iraq and Afghanistan. The department sent personnel to Blackwater's Moyock, N.C., training compound from 2005 to as recently as 2009, some of them learning tactics for working in dangerous settings, records obtained through the ATIA indicate. The work continued even after the U.S. State Department cancelled its pricey security contract with the company in Iraq amid mounting criticism of Blackwater's actions. The training courses included defensive driving and "close protection" in hostile environments, as well as specialized weapons use. One critic called the contracts "appalling" and said the government should be prohibited from doing business with any such company accused of serious human-rights abuses

Transfusion Errors Pose Risks: Study; 'High-severity' mistakes found at 11 hospitals

By Tom Blackwell, *National Post*, Aug. 7, 2012

A pilot study at 11 Canadian hospitals uncovered thousands of "high-severity" errors in the blood-transfusion process with the potential to seriously harm patients and pose a "staggering" cost in terms of wasted blood. A study by the Public Health Agency of Canada, released to the Post under the ATIA, recommends urgent action to make the system safer. Many of the mistakes involved mislabelling of blood samples taken from patients for testing, raising the danger of the wrong blood type being administered to a sick person. "Errors came with a considerable patient and financial burden," it says, noting that more than 6,000 patients had to have samples re-taken

and their transfusion delayed because of mix-ups. Agency officials commenting on the report, however, stressed that most of the errors were "near misses," caught before anyone was harmed

'There's a lot of lying, there's a lot of coverup'; Thousands of medical errors occur every year at Canada's hospitals and other care facilities.

By Tom Blackwell, *National Post*, Jan. 17, 2015

Most instances of the health system hurting rather than healing patients are not even reported by staff internally, a Post investigation has documented. A landmark study published a decade ago estimated that as many as 23,000 Canadian adults die annually because of preventable "adverse events" in acute-care hospitals alone. The rate of errors may be even higher today, despite the millions of dollars spent on much-touted patient safety efforts. In 2012, a flurry of emails between Health Canada staff, health-care facilities and a manufacturer revealed a disturbing trend involving one device, a lift used to move immobile patients about their rooms. The emails, which were obtained through ATIA legislation, detailed a string of incidents in which patients plummeted out of one brand of the machines, three of them apparently dying.

Recruits probed about neo-Nazi activities

By Stewart Bell, *Vancouver Sun*, July 27, 1993

The department of national defence took away security privileges last year from several recruits at Canadian Forces Base Esquimalt following allegations they were involved in white supremacist activities. The suspension was ordered by the director of security operations in Ottawa in 1992, after allegations surfaced that at least two naval trainees at the base near Victoria were associated with neo-Nazi skinhead groups. The Security Intelligence Unit of the armed forces conducted a five-month investigation, producing two reports. But the documents, obtained by the Sun under the ATIA, are so heavily censored it is impossible to tell if the allegations were found to be true, and if so whether the trainees were ever disciplined or fired from the military.

\$300,000 spent after outbreak of plague

By Stewart Bell, *Vancouver Sun*, Aug. 14, 1995

Ottawa spent \$300,000 to safeguard Canadians against last year's bubonic plague outbreak in India, even though the disease never made it to this country. Health Canada spent the money inspecting passengers arriving at airports and keeping the public and physicians informed about the disease, according to documents obtained under the ATIA. Although hospital budgets are tight across the country, health officials said the expenditure was necessary to ensure the deadly disease did not spread to Canada. It activated its emergency crisis centre in 1994 after a plague

outbreak that began in the state of Maharashtra and later spread to other parts of India, killing dozens of people. In Canada, health-department staff were sent to international airports to conduct visual inspections of passengers and warn them of plague symptoms.

Canada cuts aid program in Jamaica: \$18M not accounted for: Agency in charge shredded files requested by auditors

By Stewart Bell, *National Post*, Oct. 28, 1998

Canada has quietly suspended a foreign-aid program in Jamaica because the government there refuses to explain what happened to nearly \$18-million in Canadian development assistance. The dispute arose when Canadian auditors began looking into a program in which Ottawa shipped commodities such as fertilizers to Jamaica and the local government sold them to help finance aid projects. Auditors at the Canadian International Development Agency said that when they visited Jamaica to try to track the money, the government agency in charge of the aid program refused to hand over any files and began shredding them. "CIDA does not have assurance that (the funds) are being used for the purposes for which they were intended," says the report, released under the ATIA.

RCMP, CSIS investigated each other's employees: Relations 'broke down'

By Stewart Bell, *National Post*, Apr. 22, 1999

Feuding between the RCMP and Canada's spy service has reached such proportions that the rival federal agencies have been quietly investigating each other's employees, says a top secret report obtained by the Post under the ATIA. After the Canadian Security Intelligence Service launched a terrorism probe of an RCMP worker, the Mounties retaliated by investigating spy agency staff and in turn tried to charge one with forgery, it says. Co-operation between the two agencies "broke down" at the time, says the 1998 study, which promised a more thorough review of relations between CSIS and the RCMP "to ascertain if the problems observed in this case exist elsewhere." The report by the Security Intelligence Review Committee, a group that monitors Canada's spy activity, criticized both federal bodies for their conduct. A heavily censored version of the report was released under the ATIA.

First wives lived in lap of luxury at poverty seminar: Ottawa spent \$2.6-million: Spouses of heads of state of government were wined, dined and fed canapes

By Stewart Bell, *National Post*, Jan. 15, 2000

The first ladies of the Americas slept in hotel rooms costing up to \$900 a night, were wined and dined at a sum of \$200,000 at a two-day conference in Ottawa at which they lamented the plight of women and children in the nations led by their husbands. Documents obtained under the

ATIA suggest the government spent at least \$2.6-million on canapes, bottled water and other items associated with hosting the Ninth Conference of Spouses of Heads of State of Government of the Americas. As chaired by Aline Chretien, the prime minister's wife, the event ended with the Ottawa Declaration, in which delegates set out their support for "the promotion of well-being of women and children," health care and efforts to combat "nutritional deficiencies" among children. Some NGOs that attended a fair held in conjunction with the event complained it was a waste of time and that the first ladies paid them little attention.

Ottawa helpless to stop global sex traffic: Thousands of women and children bought and sold

By Stewart Bell and Marina Jimenez, *National Post*, May 17, 2000

Despite growing evidence that Canada is a hub in a global industry that recruits poverty-stricken women and children into prostitution, the drug trade and mail-order marriages, Ottawa lacks a strategy for dealing with the problem. A "domestic policy vacuum" is preventing government agencies from responding adequately to the trafficking of women and children, says a report prepared for Citizenship and Immigration Canada, obtained under the ATIA. Consulting and Audit Canada said thousands of women and children are being traded like consumer goods across international boundaries. Traffickers buy and sell them to pimps and drug lords, while others are recruited for mail-order marriages or to work as household servants. Canada has become a destination for women and children trafficked from poor nations and a transit point for those on the way to brothels and sweatshops in the U.S.

Diplomat's memo raised concern over Tamil event: Martin attended dinner: Comments about alleged terrorist fundraising censored

By Stewart Bell, *National Post*, March 10, 2001

Documents the Department of Foreign Affairs tried to withhold from public view suggest government officials were concerned about plans by Liberal Cabinet ministers to attend a Toronto dinner last May because similar functions were being used to raise money for terrorism. A Canadian diplomat in Sri Lanka sent a memo to Foreign Affairs headquarters in Ottawa two days before the ministers of Finance and International Co-operation were to speak at the Tamil New Year's dinner. In response to the ministers' "possible attendance" at the event, he warned that "recent public events in Toronto have involved fundraising activities, including 'passing the bucket' for donations of cash and jewelry." But the comments were blacked out from an internal government memo released last fall under the ATIA; these were only released later after Canadian Alliance researchers challenged the censorship.

Illegal Citizen Probe Widens; 11,000 Investigated; 2,900 expected to be stripped of citizenship

By Stewart Bell, *National Post*, Sept. 10, 2012

A widening federal crackdown has identified a record number of people suspected of acquiring their Canadian citizenship and immigration status through fraud. The number of newcomers under investigation for misrepresenting themselves in their dealings with Citizenship and Immigration Canada has ballooned to an historic 11,000 as a result of nationwide enforcement. Many of those involved in the scam are from the Middle East, particularly Lebanon. While they do not wish to actually move to Canada, they want an escape hatch in the event their home countries become unstable, according to a federal study, released under the ATIA to Vancouver lawyer Richard Kurland, which found a significant level of fraud among permanent residents applying to sponsor family members in Lebanon.

Memo downplayed high Canadian losses; Post obtains secret document six years after filing request

By Stewart Bell, *National Post*, June 19, 2013

A memo that was sent to Prime Minister Stephen Harper during the height of the Afghanistan mission downplayed statistics showing Canadian troops were suffering significantly higher casualty rates than their allies. After a roadside bomb killed six Canadians in 2007, he was advised in a briefing note that 2% of Canadians serving in Afghanistan had been killed in action since 2003, about double the rate of the U.S. and Britain. The memo was only recently released in response to an ATIA request filed by the Post. The Privy Council Office, which wrote the memo, had previously declined to make it public, but did so after the Office of the Information Commissioner intervened. But the prime minister was told Canadians were "protected as well as possible against the dangers of their mission" and that it "would be simplistic and misleading" to compare the casualty rates of different nations in Afghanistan.

Kenney blocked gay rights in citizenship guide: documents

By Dean Beeby, *Canadian Press*, March 2, 2010

Citizenship and Immigration Minister Jason Kenney blocked any reference to gay rights in a new study guide for immigrants applying for Canadian citizenship, CP has learned. Internal documents show an early draft of the guide contained sections noting that homosexuality was decriminalized in 1969; that the Charter of Rights and Freedoms forbids discrimination based on sexual orientation; and that same-sex marriage was legalized nationally in 2005. But Kenney, who had fought against same-sex marriage, ordered those sections removed when his office sent

its comments to the department. Senior department officials duly cut out the material, but made a last-ditch plea with Kenney in to have it reinstated.

Only 5% of federal business loans repaid

By Jack Aubry, *National Post*, Jan. 31, 2005. Ken Rubin ATIA research

The government's Technology Partnerships Canada program, which has shelled out about \$2-billion in so-called corporate investments, is collecting less than one-fifth of its promised repayments, documents reveal. Blacked-out lists of corporate repayments show that only about \$55.6-million was repaid during the past five years, even though the expected return from the corporations was originally forecasted to be \$283-million between 1999 and 2004. In total, the program has so far managed to collect less than 5% of the \$1.88-billion it has disbursed to such corporations as Pratt & Whitney Canada Corp., Bombardier and Research In Motion Ltd.

Canada OKs pesticides despite proof of faked tests

By Tom Spears, *Ottawa Citizen*, June 28, 1991. Ken Rubin ATIA research

An American laboratory may have faked results of safety tests on 11 common pesticides sold in Canada, but Agriculture Canada says the chemicals are safe anyway. The pesticides, which include the common weed-killer Round-up, were tested to find out how much chemical residue remains in fruit and vegetables shoppers buy. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency says Craven Laboratories of Texas, hired by pesticide-makers to do the tests, faked the results.... "It's all based on the solid rock of lab results, and who pays for that testing?" said Ken Rubin . He got the Craven information through the ATIA, and says the federal government should have told people about the tainted data when the EPA learned of it.

Major charter airline flew illegally, review says; Long-delayed release of secret Transport Canada document on Nationair reveals planes operated without airworthiness certificates

By Martin Mittelstaedt, *Globe and Mail*, Feb. 6, 1998. Ken Rubin ATIA research

Nationair, once Canada's largest charter airline, illegally flew planes containing safety defects, had overworked staff and deferred repairing problems on its aircraft "beyond reasonable time periods," says a confidential Transport Canada safety review of the company. It was conducted in 1991 shortly after a Nationair plane crashed in Saudi Arabia, killing all 263 people on board. The safety review was released yesterday under a Federal Court of Appeal order obtained by Ken Rubin who requested it under the ATIA and fought a 6 year battle to obtain it. It painted a picture of Nationair as a problem airline whose flight attendants told interviewers that they "were very nervous" about flying on its planes and found it "nerve-wracking."

Mulroney-era documents reveal detailed debate of Canada's abortion laws

By Stanley Tromp, *Canadian Press*, Nov. 17, 2013

The minutes of Ottawa cabinet meetings in the late 1980s, obtained under the ATIA after being sealed for 20 years, show some ministers argued that abortion be outlawed, punishable by up to 10 years in prison for those who performed it. The Conservatives privately considered criminal penalties for women who self-aborted, and one draft resolution would have banned the abortion of malformed fetuses. The Tories struggled for three years to forge and pass a new abortion Bill, only to have it struck down in the Senate by a tie vote. The records also provide a window on an era where ministers and government backbenchers had more freedom to publicly dissent from the Prime Minister. (An 80 page PDF file of the complete minutes was attached to the story.)

Tax workers using government computers to snoop

By Dean Beeby, *Canadian Press*, June 21, 2010

Dozens of workers at Canada's tax agency have been caught snooping on their ex-spouses, mothers-in-law, creditors and others by reading confidential tax files. Internal reports at the Canada Revenue Agency show that rogue employees are improperly reviewing the private financial affairs of taxpayers without their knowledge. And some are using agency computers to give favoured treatment to colleagues, friends, family -- and themselves. Documents outlining the forbidden invasions into private tax data were obtained by CP under the ATIA. In one case, a worker secretly operated a business on the side with her spouse, and between 2004 and 2009 "accessed the accounts of two creditors and the spouse of one of those creditors." CTV News reported last year that a tax agency worker was found to be leaking confidential information to a violent gang in B.C.

Proof that idle hands are the devil's workshop

By Michael Friscolanti, *National Post*, Dec. 30, 2002

More than a dozen public servants lost their jobs over the past three years for using a national police database to carry out their own detective work -- from spying on neighbours to keeping track of former boyfriends. According to documents obtained under the ATIA, the offenders -- some of whom ended up in jail -- sold the confidential data to private investigators, gave it to friends, and in one instance, used it "to meet (and harass) persons of the opposite sex." While the system is primarily used by police officers, many civilians -- including secretaries, 911 dispatchers and ministry agents -- can also tap in to the system..... "CPIC is a bit of a murky world," said Murray Mollard, director of the B.C. Civil Liberties Association. "It's deeply

troubling that there are that many breaches, but the question is, 'How many breaches are there that aren't being discovered?' "

Gangsters' port of call; Hells Angels and others with criminal connections have a long history working at Canada's major ports, a Vancouver Sun investigation has found

By Kim Bolan, Vancouver Sun, May 9, 2015

More than two dozen of the longshoremen unloading container ships on the docks of Metro Vancouver are Hells Angels, their associates, other gangsters or people with serious criminal records, a Vancouver Sun investigation has found. There has been two decades of damning documentation about the problem. A 2012 Transport Canada report obtained by the Sun identified the potential "exploitation of the commercial marine transportation system to smuggle narcotics from the Americas to Canada's Pacific Coast." Most of the report was censored for security reasons. A 2010 CBSA report, also obtained under the ATIA, said that while the Mafia and Hells Angels "have exerted the most significant criminal influence at major Canadian marine ports, many other international OCGs, including Asian, East Indian, Persian, Middle Eastern, Eastern European and local groups have developed a presence in Canada."

Cancer group failed to warn patients experimental drug might kill them

By Harold Munro, Vancouver Sun, Sept. 2, 2004

National Cancer Institute of Canada researchers broke several federal regulations last year by failing to alert patients that an experimental drug provided as part of a clinical trial might kill them, according to Health Canada documents obtained via the ATIA. The Canadian research group also failed to act promptly on an action letter from the U.S. National Cancer Institute advising it to inform patients of the potential dangers of the medication which had been linked to several deaths in Japan, say the documents. They show how the Canadian researchers stalled for five months before telling patients the drug, known as Iressa or gefitinib, could cause potentially deadly inflammation of the lungs.

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