

Jelinek will receive \$66,198 annual pension

Defeated and retiring Tory MPs needn't worry about where their next paycheck will be coming from. Thanks to the MPs' generous pension scheme, Canadian taxpayers will be making sure the former MPs are kept in the lifestyles they became accustomed to on Parliament Hill.

For instance, retiring Oakville-Milton MP Otto Jelinek, a 21-year veteran on Parliament Hill, will receive an annual pension of

\$66,198, according to figures released by Toronto-based National Citizens Coalition.

The pension payouts for Jelinek, 53, and other defeated or retired MPs will begin in November with cheques backdated to Oct. 26th.

The cheques will arrive regardless of the MPs' employment status or their age. The only requirement is that they have served at least six years in the House of Commons.

In Jelinek's case he has already

landed a job as Matthews Asia Inc., a large international developer/contractor. The parent company of Matthews Asia is Mississauga-based Matthews Group Inc., part of the Paxport Development consortium which has leased Terminals 1 and 2 at Lester B. Pearson International Airport in Toronto. During the election, Jean Chretien promised to review the controversial deal with the Paxport Development consortium if his party won the election.

In addition, Jelinek has started up Jelinek International, a business based in Prague to aid Canadian firms investing in trade and joint ventures in Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

The MPs' pensions are indexed

to inflation and if Jelinek lives to the age of 75, the National Citizens Coalition estimates he will have received \$2,667,017 from his pension.

Jelinek's pension payout, however, is meager combined to the windfall enjoyed by defeated Ontario Tory Perrin Beatty. First elected to parliament when he was 22 years old — he's now 43 — Beatty, a former cabinet minister, will receive an annual pension of \$70,436. If he lives to be 75 the payout would total more than \$5 million.

At least Beatty is not double dipping like former Tory health Minister Benoit Bouchard, 54, who will pick up a \$50,000 pension and as much as \$170,000 a year as the new ambassador to France.

Closer to home, retiring Burlington MP Bill Kempling will receive a \$51,238 annual pension and defeated Mississauga South MP Don Blenkarn will receive an annual pension of \$46,750.

Defeated Halton-Peel Tory MP Garth Turner isn't so lucky, however. Since he failed to remain in the House of Commons for the required six years, the former Toronto Sun Columnist is not eligible for the pension. Instead he will receive six months severance pay.

And in case you were thinking the MPs were entitled to the pensions since they contributed to the plan — think again.

The scheme is underfunded, so taxpayers contribute \$5.75 for every \$1 paid by the MPs.

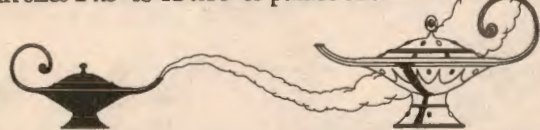
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