



Volume 12, Issue 1 *Where Tomorrow's Public Policy Begins Today* January 11, 2006

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Part One: Saving Our Public Schools: Your opportunity to hear first hand how to make it happen.

Public education is without a doubt one of the hottest topics on both sides of the border. Opinion poll after opinion poll indicates the general public is not happy with what's happening in our public schools. However, that's not the case everywhere in North America.

Edmonton, Alberta is considered one of the best public school systems on the continent. Former Edmonton Schools Superintendent Angus McBeath is now AIMS Fellow on Public Education Reform and is Superintendent Emeritus of Focus on Results, an international consulting firm specializing in results driven improvement efforts. He's hitting the road to spread the word of how Edmonton succeeded and how its model can be adapted anywhere.

Click here to learn more about the remarkable success in Edmonton, and how you can take advantage of the AIMS Angus McBeath North American Tour.



Part Two: "Tomorrow's Successful Port" is waiting to be found, right here in Atlantica.

In the fourth of the AIMS Atlantica papers, UNB Professor Michael Ircha discusses the characteristics of "tomorrow's successful port" and concludes that Atlantica's ports are ideally situated to step into this role.

Dr. Ircha is a frequent international lecturer on ports and containerized port traffic. He was named "Distinguished Transportation Professor" by the International Intermodal Expo in Atlanta, and has received several research awards for his transportation publications.

He explains that by 2015, Canadian ports will need to handle a minimum throughput of about 6.3 million TEUs*, as compared to some 3.6 TEUs in 2004. The actual demand might be higher, as some US ports might not be able to expand their container-handling facilities to serve the coming generation of mega container ships.

On the other hand, Atlantica ports have the water depths needed to handle the mega ships. Dr. Ircha writes, "Capacity constraints in US and Canadian west coast ports have caused Asian shipping lines to re-orient their trade through the Suez and Mediterranean to the East Coast. This shift provides opportunities for Canadian East Coast ports to capture some of the forecast growth in container trade."

Canadian container ports that are able to build the necessary infrastructure and maintain competitive rates and tariffs to go along with the natural advantages of their location have an opportunity to be key players in the development of the North American economy.

Click here to link to this paper, and read how ports in this region can take advantage of their natural assets to become the gateway to the lucrative North American market.

* A TEU or twenty-foot equivalent unit is a measure of containerized cargo equal to one standard 20 foot by eight foot by 8½ foot container.



Part Three: Charting a new course: Port of Halifax as portal to Atlantica.

"The tyranny of distance no longer limits trade," so states an article in the December issue of Port of Halifax magazine.

Under the title "Charting a new course", the article places the Port of Halifax as the key link in the Atlantica concept, and details how the Port plans to utilize its natural assets to capture more of that trade.

The author came to AIMS to explain the new trading reality. President Brian Lee Crowley used the example of Halifax's new business with Asia as a sign of a shift in how international trade moves.

"The new network activities that increasingly dominate the globe and the continent connect the industrial heartland of North America with Europe and Asia via a series of trade corridors radiating out from the Port of Halifax to major destinations in North America."

Federal transportation minister Jean Lapierre concurs and the article uses comments made by the minister at a recent conference on intermodalism in Shanghai.

"China is Canada's second largest trading partner," Lapierre explains. "Our two-way trade has grown to some \$25 billion annually, up from \$5 billion a year only a decade ago. In fact, our trade increased by 50 per cent last year alone. And there is no doubt that it will continue to expand. This growth is taking place as both Canada and China evolve as trading nations."

"In Shanghai, there is a shipping tidal wave. Traffic has increased at a staggering rate. The number of containers handled in Shanghai has increased from 1.5 million TEUs to 14.6 million today. [It is] now the third largest container port in the world and ranks as the second largest freight port in the world." That offers opportunities for Halifax. "Halifax boasts the only seaport on the eastern coast of North America deep enough to accommodate fully laden, post-Panamax vessels."

To read the complete article, [click here](#).

Part Four: Tax cuts, not bailouts: Newfoundland's Peter Fenwick suggests a better way to deal with the closure of a paper mill.

The chains are on the gates. The Stephenville paper mill is closed. The workers have received their severance and are being recruited for jobs outside of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The last ditch effort by the Newfoundland and Labrador government to keep the Stephenville paper mill open failed. That's not to say the government won't try to use millions of dollars to entice another operator to re-open it. In this commentary, AIMS Fellow on Newfoundland Issues, Peter Fenwick, says it's a strategy that has been used before and failed repeatedly. He says there is a much better plan the government should consider for that money – use it for tax cuts and that will create job opportunities and economic growth.

To read the complete commentary, [click here](#).

Part Five: Counting our blessings: Reflections on politics, politicians and democracy.

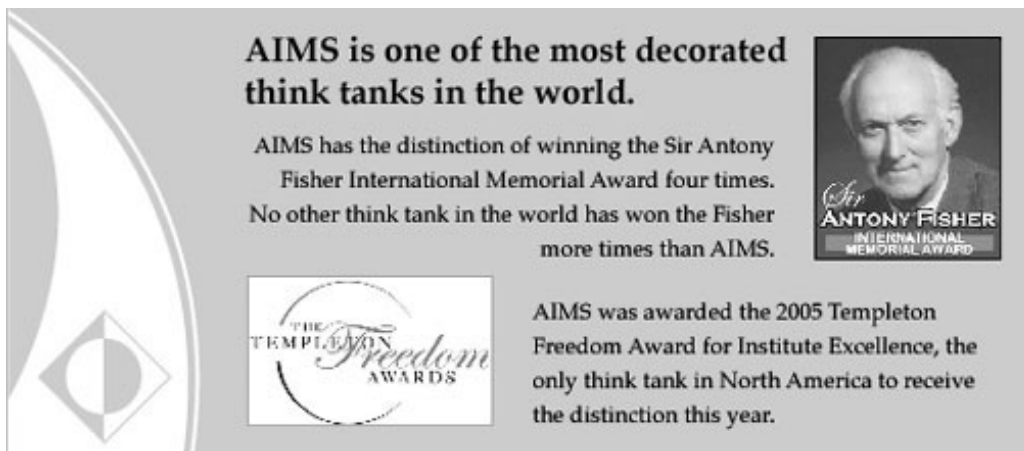
In his regular fortnightly column, AIMS president Brian Lee Crowley uses the spirit of the recent holiday season to reflect on our political and democratic system.

As he points out:

"Regular readers of this column know they can count on a reliable stream of skeptical analysis of the motivations, the strategies, the plans, the policies, the diversions, the foibles and the delusions of our elected officials. But make no mistake: For all their failings, they are owed a huge debt of gratitude by all of us.

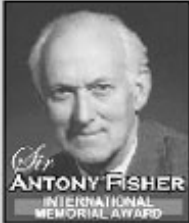
Your healthy skepticism is certainly justified. As is so often the case, though, to see the true value of something, you need to think about how the world would be in its absence, not what you don't like about it once you have it."

To read the complete article, [click here](#).




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AIMS has the distinction of winning the Sir Antony Fisher International Memorial Award four times. No other think tank in the world has won the Fisher more times than AIMS.



AIMS was awarded the 2005 Templeton Freedom Award for Institute Excellence, the only think tank in North America to receive the distinction this year.



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