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*Where Tomorrow's Public
Policy Begins Today*

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Part One: Of Interest – Economics and Liberty Seminar



Join the Institute for Liberal Studies and the Dalhousie Liberty Society in their premier seminar in Halifax. Policy experts – and friends of AIMS – will discuss the importance of responsibility, economics and freedom in the public policy process.

Saturday, March 5, 2011
Dalhousie University
Weldon Law Bldg, Room 207
10:00am to 4:00pm

This seminar is being hosted in cooperation with the Dalhousie Liberty Society.

Speakers will include:

- Charles Cirtwill (Atlantic Institute for Market Studies) - Easy Money Undermines Student Responsibility; and without responsibility there can be no freedom
- Lawrence Reed (Foundation for Economic Education) - Seven Principles of Sound Public Policy
- Fred McMahon (Fraser Institute) - Still looking the gift horse in the mouth

Cost: Free for students and faculty (of any school); \$20 for members of the public, payable at door.

Lunch will be provided.

[Click here](#) to register for this seminar.



Part Two: Pensions in Crisis

Sixty percent of Canadians (sixty-two percent of Nova Scotians) do not belong to any pension plan and most of them do not have any RRSP savings either. In *Pensions in Crisis*, Bill Black of www.newstartns.ca suggests that the government must take steps to ensure that pension promises are properly managed, and their funding properly protected. It also has to take steps to encourage greater participation in retirement savings programs.

But Black maintains that this will only work if taxpayers have enough money left to save for an adequate retirement.

There has been considerable recent publicity concerning the level of pensions provided in the public sector compared to what is available to private sector employees. Hard pressed taxpayers will be unwilling to support programs that are dramatically more favorable and more expensive than they themselves have.

Going through several "big" public pension plans, Black identifies where the government could find savings. *Pensions in Crisis* contains three updates: May 2010, June 2010, and February 2011. Included also is Black's conversation with Nova Scotia Finance Minister Graham Steele.

[Click here](#) to read the full commentary.

Part Three: Think! – The West needs to wake up to common sense

In this commentary, John Risley, President of Clearwater Fine Foods Inc., member of the World Presidents' Organization, director on the Board of the Canadian Council of Chief Executives and Chair of the Canadian Youth Business Foundation, discusses the decline of common sense and long-term thinking in the Western world.

Common sense seems to be in very short supply. Examples of this are everywhere. We send an email, one which is important, and we expect a reply virtually instantly. Indeed, if one is not forthcoming within 15 minutes we begin to wonder if the recipient has died.

Now think about this: assume that the question being asked is important. We must therefore want a careful and considered response, a response which has had the complete attention of the recipient. Is it reasonable to assume this could possibly have occurred within 15 minutes?

We know intuitively when a government builds a road that someone has to pay for it. Yet we resist vehemently any attempt at imposing such costs, by way of tolls, on those who would use that road. Now just think about that, if the users don't want to pay for it, who should?

In *Think!*, Risley writes what needs to be done to turn this around. We all need to wake up to the value of common sense. We need to take personal responsibility, not look for someone else to pass it on to or blame. We need to demand change in our health care and education systems, to insist on accountability. But most of all we need to slow down and think, to make use of that valuable feature called common sense.

[Click here](#) to read the full commentary.

Part Four: Five Steps to Fiscal Sanity

In light of the New Brunswick government passing a new budget, AIMS President and CEO Charles Cirtwill recommends five steps to fiscal sanity in his recent Op-Ed, originally published in the Telegraph-Journal. He suggests a clear understanding that the population is in decline – and this means the rules have changed.

In ***Five Steps to Fiscal Sanity***, Cirtwill suggests the New Brunswick government invest in early childhood education, and make cuts elsewhere. Step one is to do things in the right order: cut spending, lower taxes, then invest to grow the economy; step two: don't just cut once, cap and control spending going forward; three: spend, yes spend, in places where spending needs to happen (as opposed to spending everywhere there is a want); four; encourage people to spend too (yes on health and education) and finally: trade, with the world not just with your neighbour.

By following these steps to fiscal sanity, Cirtwill hopes the government of New Brunswick can pave the way to a sustainable future for the province.

[Click here](#) to read the full article.

Part Five: Note to Premier: Get on with pension review

Four Nova Scotia MLAs were recently charged with various criminal offences related to a few thousand dollars. They were charged, but now the Nova Scotia government won't look into historical spending without specific criminal complaints.

In this Op-Ed, originally published in the Chronicle Herald, AIMS President and CEO, Charles Cirtwill reminds readers that criminal complaints did not spur the initial review. He explains why a review is necessary.

In ***Note to Premier: Get on with pension*** review, Cirtwill suggests that, at the very least, the government needs to swiftly move forward with the MLA Pension Review, and offers some terms of reference. Ultimately, the MLAs need to remove the ugly cloud of self-indulgence that is currently hanging over their heads, allowing them get on with the more important work they have to do.

[Click here](#) to read the full article.

Part Six: Of Interest – Atlantic Canada CFA Society 2011 Forecast Dinner



The Board Members of the Atlantic Canada CFA Society invite you to the 20th Annual Forecast Dinner

Wednesday, April 11th, 2011
Casino Nova Scotia, Schooner Room
Halifax, Nova Scotia

Featuring Dr. Marc Faber of Marc Faber Limited

Cost: \$100 per person; \$800 per table of 8; \$1000 per table of 10

RSVP to cfaatlantic@cfaatlantic.com by March 31st, 2011.

[Click here](#) for more information.

Part Seven: AIMS in the Media

'That's progress, as they say' – The people of Melford, NS, have seen many proposed projects fail. AIMS President Charles Cirtwill would like to see the proposed container terminal project go ahead.

University Funding: Just a matter of market economics? - University funding is discussed by the Halifax Chamber of Commerce and AIMS President Charles Cirtwill, who encourages bursaries, loans and debt relief.

How Canada's 'haves' get had - Kevin Libin references James Buchanan talk with AIMS - federal transfers were a good idea, but have gone bad due to the incentive structures within politics.

Editorial: Time to overhaul equalization - As the Ontario Chamber of Commerce joins Alberta in pushing for equalization reform, fellow critics wonder if Ottawa will finally listen to their concerns.

Province warned not to follow N.S. example - As New Brunswick pursues university funding agreement, AIMS President Charles Cirtwill warns not to follow Nova Scotia example.

Rural N.B. enjoys power surge - As New Brunswick population moves from country to cities, rural voters have stronger voice than urban voters in the NB Legislature. This trend is not unique to the province.

Amalgamation: no quick fix - In light of recent discussions about whether Rothesay and Quispamsis should amalgamate into a city, the pros and cons of amalgamation are discussed.

Ontario Chamber of Commerce calls for more sense within equalization - The Ontario Chamber of Commerce released a report suggesting Canada's productivity is being jeopardized by transfer payments between provinces. AIMS refers to equalization and transfer payments as 'the help that hurts.'

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