



Annual Report

Rapport annuel

**2006-07**



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**BRIAN LEE CROWLEY,**  
Founding President/président

This annual report marks the last in my tenure as Chairman of the Board. After nearly two full terms on the Board, the last four years as Chair, I am stepping down at the November AGM.

In the past dozen years, we have seen phenomenal growth at the Institute and have made important contributions to the public policy debate locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. I am particularly proud of the impact of our High School Report Card in changing the nature of debate about public education and results in Atlantic Canada and with the affect of our Atlantica and Health Care Consensus projects.

The ideas embodied by these projects have gone from the embryonic to the mainstream in fairly short order. This is why AIMS exists, not only to have good ideas but to share those ideas with others so that the uncommon becomes commonplace and the lives of individual Canadians get better. This is why I accepted the role of Chairman when invited and why I look forward to keeping abreast of AIMS' continued success in the years ahead.

AIMS makes a difference – a reality that is directly attributable to the men and women who make it their business to ensure that the organization attains the highest standards with each and every initiative. For their energy, expertise, and dedication, I would like to extend my deepest appreciation to the AIMS team.

This past year saw a significant change at the Institute. The founding president, Brian Lee Crowley, took a secondment position as the Clifford Clark Visiting Economist with the Finance Department in Ottawa. This prestigious appointment speaks volumes about Brian's remarkable dedication to research excellence and communication. It is also a tribute to the Institute itself and the depth of work it has compiled in its brief history.

I want to particularly thank Charles Cirtwill for effectively and effortlessly stepping into the position as acting President. Under his leadership the Institute continued to grow and prosper. AIMS' publications made headlines across the country and its expertise and informed comment was sought by editors, politicians, academics and the general public. The tradition of quality leadership continues.

Charles is, of course, supported by a stellar staff. Ian Munro who joined the Institute in December as the Director of Research; Barbara Pike as Director of Communications and acting Director of Operations; Bobby O'Keefe, a senior policy analyst; Lori Peddle, the administrative assistant; Holly Chisholm, the AIMS' Manning Centre Policy Intern; and Alex Wilner, Defence and Security Policy Intern; are all dedicated to their jobs and the work of the Institute. I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank Sara Colburne for her efforts as development coordinator; Karen Fraser for her years as our finance officer; Robert Laurie who spent the past year as Director of Education Policy; John Huang as Atlantica project manager; and Stephen Kymlicka for his years as the senior policy analyst on the Atlantica project. Their

Ce rapport annuel est le dernier de mon mandat à titre de président du conseil. Après presque deux mandats complets au conseil, dont les quatre dernières années comme président, je quitterai mes fonctions à l'assemblée générale annuelle en novembre.

Au cours des douze dernières années, l'Institut a connu une croissance phénoménale et a apporté d'importantes contributions aux débats sur la politique publique aux plans local, régional, national et international. Je suis particulièrement fier de l'impact de notre Bulletin scolaire des écoles secondaires qui a contribué à changer la nature des débats sur l'éducation et des résultats obtenus dans la région de l'Atlantique, de même que des répercussions des projets Atlantica et du Consensus en soins de santé.

Les idées formulées dans ces projets sont passées du stade embryonnaire et se sont imposées dans un laps de temps relativement court. AIMS existe non seulement pour avoir de bonnes idées, mais aussi pour les partager avec d'autres afin que ce qui est peu commun devienne courant et contribue à améliorer la vie des Canadiens. Voilà pourquoi j'ai accepté le rôle de président lorsque l'on m'a invité, et c'est pourquoi je me ferai un plaisir de me tenir au courant des succès continus d'AIMS dans les années à venir.

AIMS change les choses – voilà une réalité qui est directement attribuable aux hommes et aux femmes qui ont pour tâche de s'assurer que l'organisation atteint les plus hautes normes de performance pour chacune de ses initiatives. J'exprime ma plus profonde appréciation à l'équipe d'AIMS pour leur énergie, leur compétence et leur dévouement.

L'année dernière a été marquée par un changement notable à l'Institut. Le président fondateur, Brian Lee Crowley, a accepté un poste de détachement à titre d'économiste invité Clifford Clark, au ministère des Finances à Ottawa. Cette nomination prestigieuse en dit long sur le remarquable dévouement de Brian et l'excellence de son travail en recherche et en communication. C'est également un hommage à l'Institut lui-même et à l'ampleur du travail qu'il a accompli au cours de sa brève histoire.

Je désire particulièrement remercier Charles Cirtwill qui l'a remplacé efficacement et sans heurts comme président intérimaire. Sous sa direction, l'Institut a continué de croître et de prospérer. Les publications d'AIMS ont fait les manchettes à travers le pays et les commentaires compétents et bien informés de notre organisation ont été sollicités par les rédacteurs, les politiciens, les universitaires et le grand public. La tradition de la qualité du leadership se poursuit.

Il va sans dire que Charles est soutenu par un brillant personnel : Ian Munro, qui a joint l'Institut en décembre à titre de directeur de la recherche, Barbara Pike, directrice des communications et directrice intérimaire des opérations, Bobby O'Keefe, analyste principal, Lori Peddle, adjointe administrative, Holly Chisholm.

contribution to the success of AIMS is greatly appreciated.

There are two other groups that make an inestimable contribution to the Institute: the Advisory Council and the Board of Research Advisors. I would like to thank the Advisory Council for its continuing guidance and the Board of Research Advisors under the chairmanship of Robin Neill for its consistent research excellence.

My deepest thanks to our funders whose support allows AIMS to do the important work it does. We are truly indebted to them.

And finally, I want to thank all of my fellow Board members for their hard work and support during my tenure. The Institute is in good hands and I have no doubt that our collective success will continue.

David McD. Mann  
Chair

Manning Centre, chercheuse, et Alex Wilner, chercheur, Politique de la défense et de la sécurité, tous dévoués à leurs tâches et au travail de l'Institut. Je désire également profiter de cette occasion pour remercier Sara Colburne pour son travail comme coordonnatrice du développement; Karen Fraser pour les années consacrées au poste de responsable des finances, Robert Laurie . qui l'année dernière, occupait le poste de directeur de la Politique de l'éducation, John Huang, directeur du projet Atlantica; et Stephen Kymlicka pour les années consacrés au projet Atlantica, à titre d'analyste principal en politique. Leur contribution au succès d'AIMS est vivement appréciée.

Le Conseil consultatif et le Bureau des conseillers en recherche sont deux autres groupes qui apportent une contribution inestimable à l'Institut. Je désire remercier le Conseil consultatif pour ses avis continus et le Bureau des conseillers en recherche sous la direction de Robin Neill pour la constante excellence de leurs recherches.

Mes remerciements les plus sincères à nos investisseurs dont le soutien permet à AIMS de faire l'important travail qu'il accomplit. Nous leur devons beaucoup.

Enfin, je désire remercier mes collègues du Conseil pour leur travail ardu et leur soutien au cours de mon mandat. L'Institut est entre bonnes mains, et il ne fait aucun doute que nos succès collectifs continueront.

Le président,  
David McD.Mann



We have always provided Atlantic Canadians with much more than charts, graphs, and tables. AIMS makes a difference by linking ideas with today's key public policy challenges. We want to make sure that business leaders, the media, policy-makers, and ordinary citizens have the knowledge and understanding necessary to ensure that government action will contribute to a safer, freer, more prosperous region and country for all of us.

AIMS is now entering its 14th year, well into its second decade of providing research that offers a uniquely Atlantic Canadian voice on key public policy issues.

Last year, the impact of our research was immediate and obvious. The Atlantica and Atlantic Gateway debate galvanized around AIMS research material. We proved to be prophetic in our work on the labour shortage and were first with a paper dealing specifically with Chinese business immigration to Atlantic Canada. Our annual report card on Atlantic Canadian high schools continued to make headlines and generate debate around the region. A research paper on the impact of teachers' union on public education policy was vilified by unions and praised by policy analysts, parents, teachers and students from coast to coast. Commentaries and background papers published through the Canadian Health Care Consensus Group continued to move forward the debate on health care reform and pharmaceuticals.

Clearly, the work we do makes a difference. That's because we've remained true to the goals and vision that initially drove our founders to launch AIMS more than a decade ago.

This past year our founding president, Brian Lee Crowley, accepted a secondment to one of the country's most prestigious economic posts. He is now in Ottawa acting as the new Clifford Clark Visiting Economist in the federal Department of Finance. The post attests to the critical work Brian has conducted at the helm of AIMS and recognizes him as one of the foremost economic minds in Canada. It's also an indication of the calibre of work being done by AIMS in our short history and establishes us as a leading public policy think tank driven to make a difference. Congratulations to Brian for this honour and achievement.

The 2006/07 year has been a busy one for the Institute. We released a record number of publications at 65 for the year, there was a 25% increase in projects over the previous year and there were almost twice as many events. The following are some of the highlights.

Nous avons toujours offert aux Canadiens de l'Atlantique beaucoup plus que des cartes, graphiques, et tableaux. AIMS modifie le cours des choses en liant des idées aux défis que pose la politique publique à l'heure actuelle. Nous voulons faire en sorte que les dirigeants d'entreprises, les médias, les décideurs et les citoyens ordinaires disposent des connaissances et de la compréhension nécessaires pour s'assurer que l'action gouvernementale contribuera à rendre la région et le pays plus sécuritaire, plus libre et plus prospère pour nous tous.

AIMS entre maintenant dans sa 14e année d'existence, et entame une deuxième décennie à publier des recherches, pour offrir ainsi une voix unique au Canada Atlantique sur les principales questions de politique publique.

L'année dernière, l'impact de nos recherches s'est avéré immédiat et évident. Le débat au sujet d'Atlantica et de la porte d'entrée de l'Atlantique s'anime autour du matériel de recherche d'AIMS. Nous nous sommes révélés prophétiques dans nos travaux sur la pénurie de main d'œuvre et nous avons été les premiers à traiter spécifiquement de l'immigration d'entrepreneurs chinois au Canada Atlantique. Notre bulletin scolaire annuel sur les écoles secondaires du Canada Atlantique a continué de défrayer les manchettes et de susciter des débats dans la région. Un document de recherche sur l'impact des syndicats d'enseignants sur la politique de l'éducation publique a été dénigré par les syndicats, mais louangé par les analystes politiques, les parents, les enseignants et les étudiants, d'une côte à l'autre. Les commentaires et documents de travail publiés par le biais du Groupe canadien pour un consensus en soins de santé ont continué de faire avancer le débat sur la réforme des soins de santé et les médicaments.

Il est manifeste que notre travail modifie les choses. Il en est ainsi parce que nous sommes demeurés fidèles aux objectifs et à la vision qui, au départ, ont incité nos fondateurs à lancer AIMS il y a plus d'une décennie.

L'année dernière, notre président fondateur, Brian Lee Crowley a accepté un détachement à l'un des postes économiques les plus prestigieux du pays. Il est maintenant à Ottawa à titre d'économiste visiteur Clifford Clark au ministère fédéral des Finances. Ce poste témoigne du travail crucial que Brian a dirigé à la barre d'AIMS, et le reconnaît comme l'un des plus éminents économistes au Canada. Il faut y voir également une indication de la qualité du travail effectué par AIMS au cours de notre brève histoire, et une confirmation nous établissant comme l'un des principaux groupes de réflexion sur la politique publique, déterminé à changer les choses. Nos félicitations à Brian pour cet honneur et cette réussite.

L'année 2006-07 a été très active pour l'Institut. Nous avons publié un nombre record de publications, soit 65 pour l'année, ce qui représente une augmentation de 25 p. 100 de nos projets par rapport à l'année précédente, et le nombre d'événements a presque doublé. Voici quelques-uns des faits saillants;

## A few gold stars

When AIMS issued its first Atlantic Canadian high school report card in 2003, six schools received at least an A. In 2006, only half that number received marks worthy of a gold star. The news is not all bad, though: the annual report card, published in its entirety in *Progress* business magazine, demonstrates that schools can achieve success – or experience problems – regardless of how big they are, what community they are located in, or what level of formal certification their teachers have achieved.

The highest-ranked schools in New Brunswick and Newfoundland and Labrador received A or A+ while those in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island came in with a mark of B+.

Newfoundland and Labrador continued to lead Atlantic Canada with the highest percentage of schools, 60 percent, scoring grades of B or higher. Only 40 percent of Prince Edward Island schools earned a similar grade. Demerits were earned by New Brunswick because the province eliminated provincial high school exams in the anglophone schools and reduced the number of exams in the francophone schools.

In Nova Scotia, Queen Elizabeth High School moved into first position – going out on top. The school closed this year and merged with St. Patrick's High to form the new Citadel High. The perennial number one, Islands Consolidated School in Freeport, saw its grade slip from the only A of last year's report card to a B+ this year due to a lower C+ grade on overall engagement.

The New Brunswick francophone system had the top performer in Atlantic Canada. Ecole Marie-Gaétane in Kedgwick earned an A+ while the highest-ranked school in anglophone New Brunswick, Upper Miramichi Regional High School in Boiestown, secured an A.

This year's report card strongly confirms that what occurs in a school is more important than what a school has to start with. Small and large schools, urban and rural schools, schools serving strong communities and those serving communities facing serious challenges, they're sprinkled throughout the rankings again this year.

Our online version of the report card continues to attract traffic to our website proving that Atlantic Canadians remain keenly interested in the annual assessment and want to know how it can be used to improve our public schools.

Despite Atlantic Canadians' clear desire to understand and improve our education system, AIMS's paper on teachers' unions *Getting the Fox out of the Schoolhouse: How the Public Can Take Back Public Education* concludes that provincial governments, parents, the public and individual teachers have all failed to defend the public interest in education. Released just as the fiscal year was coming to a close, the paper, written by Manitoba educators

## Quelques médailles d'or

Lorsque AIMS a publié son premier bulletin scolaire sur les écoles secondaires de l'Atlantique Canada en 2003, six écoles au moins, avaient obtenu un A. En 2006, seulement la moitié de ce nombre ont obtenu une note leur méritant une médaille d'or. Cependant, les nouvelles ne sont pas si mauvaises, car le bulletin annuel publié en entier dans le magazine *Progress* démontre que les écoles peuvent connaître du succès – ou se heurter à des problèmes – peu importe leur taille, la communauté où elles sont situées, ou le niveau de diplôme obtenu par leurs enseignants.

Les écoles les mieux notées au Nouveau-Brunswick, à Terre-Neuve et au Labrador ont obtenu un A ou un A+ alors que celles de la Nouvelle-Écosse et de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard ont obtenu la note B+.

Terre-Neuve et le Labrador ont continué à dominer le Canada Atlantique avec le plus haut pourcentage d'écoles, 60 p.100 d'entre elles obtenant des notes de B ou plus. Dans l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard, 40 p. 100 des écoles seulement, ont obtenu une note semblable. Pour sa part, le Nouveau-Brunswick s'est attiré des points de démerite du fait que la province a éliminé les examens provinciaux des écoles secondaires anglophones, et diminué le nombre d'examen dans les écoles francophones.

En Nouvelle-Écosse, l'école secondaire Queen Elizabeth est passée en première place et a terminé ses activités alors qu'elle était au sommet. L'école a fermé ses portes cette année et a fusionné avec l'école secondaire St-Patrick pour former la nouvelle école secondaire Citadel. La perpétuelle numéro un, Islands Consolidated School de Freeport, a vu sa note glisser du seul A sur le bulletin scolaire de l'année dernière à B+ cette année, en raison d'une plus faible note C pour l'engagement global.

Le système francophone au Nouveau-Brunswick a obtenu la meilleure performance du Canada Atlantique. L'École Marie-Gaétane de Kedgwick a obtenu un A+ tandis que dans le secteur anglophone, Upper Miramichi Regional High School de Boiestown, a mérité un A.

Le bulletin scolaire de cette année montre nettement que ce qui se fait à l'école est plus important que les actifs qu'elle possède au départ. De petites et grandes écoles, des écoles urbaines et rurales, des écoles desservant des communautés prospères et d'autres aux prises avec de graves défis, sont éparpillées dans tout le classement encore cette année.

Notre version en ligne du bulletin scolaire continue d'attirer nombre de visiteurs sur notre site Web, prouvant ainsi que les Canadiens de l'Atlantique demeurent vivement intéressés à l'évaluation annuelle, et veulent savoir comment l'utiliser pour améliorer nos écoles publiques.

Malgré le désir manifeste des Canadiens de l'Atlantique de

Michael Zwaagstra, Rodney Clifton, and John Long, was greeted with immediate media response and commentary. The paper emphasizes the importance of discussing teacher's unions as entities separate and distinct from teachers themselves. It traces the origins of teachers' unions and how they have journeyed from labour relations to exerting a disproportionate influence on public education policy.

What is good for the union, though, isn't necessarily good for students and individual teachers; the report makes a number of recommendations provinces can implement including fine-tuning and expanding standardized testing and giving parents more choice in where to send their children to school. The report also argues for a number of changes to collective agreements with teachers including removing the right to strike, getting principals out of unions, and adding merit as a factor in paying teachers.

Strong public response to both our report card and this paper indicates that Canadians care passionately about public education. It's time to turn our good intentions into action by urging accountability in education across the board.

### All things not being equal

With the 2007 federal budget, the Government of Canada launched a new equalization formula. Unfortunately, it is not an improvement. To put it bluntly, equalization-receiving provinces are getting more than their fair share.

Our special Commentary series, produced in the wake of the Expert Panel on Equalization and Territorial Formula Financing's latest report, continues to examine how believing that a dollar is a dollar anywhere in the country yields surprising – and perverse – results.

*Still More Equal than Others: Capped equalization still too much* by AIMS Senior Policy Analyst Bobby O'Keefe examines how Ottawa overpays equalization-receiving provinces. The latest version of the equalization program continues to assume, wrongly, that the cost of essential public services is the same from province to province. The Commentary demonstrates that, when you adjust for the fact that a dollar does not buy the same amount of goods in Ontario that it does in Nova Scotia or Alberta, equalization results in unequal access to public services. It is unequal access that favours equalization-receiving provinces.

For more than a decade, AIMS has published papers and commentaries about Canada's equalization program, pointing out its flaws and making suggestions for improvement. When the Senate Standing Committee on National Finance met to discuss the issue of equalization and examine whether there is a fiscal imbalance, it turned to AIMS for answers. In

comprendre et d'améliorer notre système d'éducation, le document de AIMS sur les syndicats d'enseignants *Getting the Fox out of the Schoolhouse : How the public can Take back public education*, conclut que les gouvernements provinciaux, les parents, le public et les enseignants ont tous failli à défendre l'intérêt public dans l'éducation. Publié juste avant que l'année financière était sur le point de se terminer, le document par Michael Zwaagstra, Rodney Clifton, et John Long, éducateurs du Manitoba, a été accueilli par des réactions et commentaires immédiats des médias. Le document souligne l'importance de traiter les syndicats comme entités séparées et distinctes des enseignants eux-mêmes. Il retrace les origines des syndicats d'enseignants, et comment à partir des relations de travail, ils en sont venus à exercer une influence disproportionnée sur la politique de l'éducation publique.

Cependant, ce qui est bon pour les syndicats, ne l'est pas nécessairement pour les étudiants et enseignants individuels. Le rapport formule un certain nombre de recommandations que les provinces peuvent mettre en œuvre, notamment la mise au point et l'expansion de tests standardisés, et plus de choix aux parents pour ce qui est de l'école que les enfants devront fréquenter. Le rapport préconise également un certain nombre de modifications aux conventions collectives avec les enseignants, notamment la suppression du droit de grève, l'exclusion des directeurs d'écoles des syndicats, et l'ajout du mérite comme facteur dans la rémunération des enseignants.

De fortes réactions du public à l'égard de notre bulletin scolaire et de ce document indiquent que les Canadiens se préoccupent vivement de l'éducation publique. Le temps est venu de concrétiser nos bonnes intentions en action et d'exhorter le système d'éducation dans son ensemble à une plus grande responsabilisation.

### Toutes choses ne sont pas égales

Dans le budget fédéral de 2007, le gouvernement du Canada a lancé une nouvelle formule de péréquation. Malheureusement, ce n'est pas une amélioration. Disons-le sans ménagement; les provinces bénéficiaires de la péréquation touchent plus que leur juste part.

Notre special Commentary Series produite dans le sillage du dernier rapport du Groupe d'experts sur la péréquation et la formule de financement des territoires, continue à examiner comment la croyance qu'un dollar vaut un dollar partout au pays, donne des résultats étonnants et pervers.

*Still More Equal than Others : Capped equalization still too much* par Bobby O'Keefe, analyste politique principal d'AIMS examine de quelle façon Ottawa surpasse les provinces recevant de la péréquation. La dernière version du programme de péréquation continue de présumer, à tort, que le coût des services

October 2006, Bobby O'Keefe and I travelled to Ottawa to meet with the Senate Committee.

The resulting Commentary *The Brick on the Scale: How Equalization weighs heavily on us all* draws on comprehensive AIMS research, including our most recent series, which gained headlines and response from across the country. It shows that equalization-receiving provinces often spend more on government services than other provinces.

I told the senators that equalization-receiving provinces tend to have larger numbers of public service employees on a per capita basis and pay their public servants a greater wage premium (compared to the average industrial wage) than the national average of these measures. On top of this, the equalization receivers have higher-than-average debt levels.

I explained to the senators, in short, that the current system continues to over-equalize, a practice that stands to hurt us all.

### Atlantica here and now

Atlantica emerged in 2006/07 on the front pages of newspapers across the country as a cause célèbre. In op-eds, news releases, town hall sessions – and over the noise and heat of protests – proponents and self-proclaimed opponents of Atlantica engaged in an emotional debate about whether the vision should be allowed to materialize. What many people didn't seem to realize is that Atlantica is already here and delivering benefits, such as construction and operation jobs in the oil and gas industry in the Strait region; trucking, management and administrative jobs in Truro; jobs created by the containerized feeder service from Halifax to St. John's; and more.

As I note in an op-ed piece that appeared in newspapers across the region:

*"The question before us isn't whether we will allow Atlantica to exist. The question before us is whether we will take advantage of its existence in order to make our lives better. The answer to that has, so far, been an unequivocal yes."*

*Charting the Course*, the second Atlantica conference organized by the Atlantic Provinces Chambers of Commerce, attracted regional and national attention, demonstrating that interest in Atlantica has never been greater. The conference became a media lightning rod for a coalition of groups opposed to the concept, and AIMS used the public spotlight that resulted from their staged protests as an opportunity to inform the public about Atlantica.

Throughout fiscal 2006, AIMS, as the leading proponent of Atlantica, continued to be the voice and face for news media. Throughout the year, we worked hard to dispel myths and address

publics essentiels est le même d'une province à une autre. Les Commentaires démontrent que lorsque vous tenez compte du fait qu'un dollar n'achète pas la même quantité de produits en Ontario qu'en Nouvelle-Écosse ou en Alberta, la péréquation se traduit par un accès inégal aux services publics.

Il s'agit d'un accès inégal jouant en faveur des provinces bénéficiaires de la péréquation.

Depuis plus d'une décennie, AIMS publie des documents et des commentaires sur le programme de péréquation du Canada, dans lesquels il en souligne les lacunes et formule des recommandations visant à l'améliorer. Lorsque le Comité permanent des finances nationales du Sénat du Canada s'est réuni pour étudier la question de la péréquation en vue de déterminer s'il existe un déséquilibre fiscal, il s'est tourné vers AIMS pour obtenir des réponses. En octobre 2006, je me suis rendu à Ottawa avec Bobby O'Keefe pour rencontrer les membres du Comité du Sénat.

Le Commentary qui en est résulté *The Brick on the Scale : How equalization weighs heavily on us all* fait appel aux recherches globales d'AIMS, y compris notre plus récente série, qui a fait les manchettes et suscité des réactions à travers le pays. Il montre que les provinces bénéficiaires de la péréquation dépensent plus en services publics que les autres provinces.

J'ai dit aux sénateurs que les provinces bénéficiaires de la péréquation ont tendance à compter un plus grand nombre de fonctionnaires par habitant et à verser à leurs fonctionnaires une prime salariale plus élevée ( par rapport au salaire industriel moyen) que la moyenne nationale de ces mesures. En outre, les bénéficiaires de la péréquation ont un niveau d'endettement plus élevé que la moyenne

Bref, j'ai expliqué aux sénateurs que le présent système continue d'excéder l'égalité, pratique qui reste d'être nuisible à tous.

### Atlantica fait des vagues

En 2006-2007, Atlantica est apparu sur les premières pages des médias à travers le pays et a fait figure de cause célèbre. Dans des pages de libre expression, des bulletins de nouvelles, des séances du conseil municipal – sans compter le bruit et l'ardeur des protestations – les partisans et les soi-disant adversaires d'Atlantica se sont engagés dans un débat émotionnel pour déterminer si cette vision devait se concrétiser. Ce que bien des gens ne semblent pas réaliser, c'est que Atlantica est déjà en place et nous vaut des avantages comme des emplois dans la construction et dans l'industrie pétrolière et gazière de la région du Détroit, des emplois dans la gestion et l'administration à Truro, des emplois créés par la liaison de conteneurs entre Halifax et St-Jean, etc.

Comme je le mentionnais dans une lettre à la rédaction publiée

exaggerated fears about Atlantica. And, as always, to provide clear, comprehensive research.

### Taking the pulse of the health care debate

The Canadian Health Care Consensus Group (CHCCG) continued to provide a platform for bold, reasoned and practical plans for genuine reform of the health system and to demonstrate that there is an emerging consensus among observers about the direction that real reform must take. The CHCCG, established in 2005 and coordinated by the Atlantic Institute for Market Studies, includes medical practitioners, former health ministers, past presidents of the Canadian Medical Association, provincial medical and hospital associations, academics, and health-care policy experts, all of whom are signatories to its Statement of Principles.

The beginning of fiscal 2006 saw Julia Witt and Brian Ferguson tackle the issue of increasing drug costs in *The Good News: Pharmaceuticals and the Cost of Health Care*. In this paper, the authors point out that better coverage for pharmaceuticals actually saves money on hospital and emergency department budgets.

We continued to dispel some of the myths surrounding the public/private debate by calling attention to the widespread confusion that surrounds data relating to this crucial and controversial issue. The background paper *A First Look at the Numbers* argues for a clear distinction to be made between the terms “private” and “public,” correctly noting that either term can refer to sources of health-care funding and to the delivery of health-care services, even though the larger part of what gets measured as health-care expenditure in Canada is entirely publicly funded.

New Brunswick Health Minister Michael Murphy's statement in a front page story in the *Telegraph Journal* of his desire for a debate with New Brunswickers on whether they want a system where people have the option of paying for some services offered AIMS an opportunity to point out that private health care in the region could, in fact, surpass the rest of the country.

*Form Over Function*, a Commentary by Brian Ferguson, explores the Medicare debate further and concludes that Canadians need to take a step back and carefully consider not only what we really value, but also what private health care advocates are actually proposing when they talk about alternate health-care delivery.

AIMS's paper *Taking the Pulse* was released in late summer and sparked immediate media interest and discussion. The paper, the second in a two-part background series that serves as a foundation for the much-needed hospital report card we are preparing, examines indicators commonly used as tools to measure, compare and improve the quality of care in hospitals. Author Julia Witt outlines the vital need for other indicators that quantify health

dans les journaux à travers la région :

*« La question qui se pose n'est pas de savoir si nous allons permettre à Atlantica d'exister. La question est de savoir si nous profiterons de son existence pour améliorer nos vies. Jusqu'ici, la réponse à cette question est un oui sans équivoque. »*

*Charting the Course*, la deuxième conférence Atlantica, organisée par les Chambres de commerce des provinces de l'Atlantique, a attiré l'attention à l'échelle régionale et nationale, démontrant ainsi que l'intérêt pour Atlantica n'a jamais été aussi grand. La conférence est devenue un catalyseur pour une coalition de groupes opposés au concept, et AIMS a utilisé les feux des projecteurs sur le public suscités par les protestations organisées comme une occasion de renseigner le public sur Atlantica.

Tout au long de l'année financière 2006, AIMS, à titre de principal porte-parole d'Atlantica, a continué d'être la voie et la figure de proue pour les médias. Durant toute l'année, nous avons travaillé arduement pour dissiper les mythes et réfuter les craintes exagérées au sujet d'Atlantica. Et comme toujours, pour fournir des recherches précises et complètes.

### Au cœur du débat sur les soins de santé

Le Groupe canadien pour un consensus en soins de santé (GCCSS) a continué d'offrir une plateforme comportant des plans audacieux, raisonnés et pratiques pour une véritable réforme du système de santé et de démontrer qu'il se dessine un consensus parmi les observateurs au sujet de la direction que devrait prendre une véritable réforme. Le GCCSS, établi en 2005 et coordonné par l'Atlantic Institute for Market Studies, comprend des médecins, d'anciens ministres de la Santé, des ex-présidents de l'Association médicale canadienne, des associations médicales et hospitalières provinciales, des universitaires, et des experts en politique de soins de santé, tous signataires de l'Énoncé de principes.

Au début de l'année financière 2006, Julia Witt et Brian Ferguson se sont attaqués à la question des coûts croissants des médicaments dans *The Good News: Pharmaceuticals and the Cost of Health Care*. Dans ce document, les auteurs font ressortir qu'une meilleure couverture des médicaments permet aux budgets des hôpitaux et des services d'urgence de réaliser des économies.

Nous avons continué à dissiper certains mythes entourant le débat secteur public/privé en attirant l'attention sur la confusion généralisée qui règne autour des données relatives à cette question cruciale et controversée. Le document de travail *A First Look at the Numbers* fait valoir qu'il faut établir une distinction très nette entre les termes 'privé' et 'public' et note à bon droit que l'un ou l'autre terme peut s'appliquer aux sources de financement des soins de santé et à la prestation des services de soins de santé, même si la plus grande partie des sommes calculées à titre de

outcomes and provide valuable information to patients trying to assess which hospital offers the best care.

Response to an AIMS-created hospital report card was swift; editorials and articles appeared almost instantly in newspapers across the region. An editorial in the *Daily Gleaner* applauded the plan stating that although measuring hospital performance is a tricky job, it's a job well worth doing.

dépenses en soins de santé au Canada est financée par des fonds publics.

La déclaration du ministre de la santé du Nouveau-Brunswick, Michael Murphy, parue en première page dans le *Telegraph Journal*, et dans laquelle il exprimait son désir d'un débat avec les Néo-Brunswickois en vue de savoir si les gens veulent un système leur donnant l'option de payer pour certains services offerts, a fourni à AIMS l'occasion de souligner que les soins de santé par le secteur privé pourraient effectivement excéder ceux du reste du pays.

*From Over Function* : un commentaire de Brian Ferguson, examine plus à fond le débat sur l'assurance-santé pour conclure que les Canadiens doivent prendre du recul et considérer attentivement non seulement ce à quoi ils attachent véritablement beaucoup d'importance, mais aussi ce que les promoteurs des soins de santé privés, proposent réellement lorsqu'ils parlent de prestations de soins de santé alternatifs

Le document de AIMS *Taking the Pulse*, publié à la fin de l'année a soulevé l'intérêt et des débats immédiats dans les médias. Ce document, le second d'une série de documents de travail en deux parties qui sert de fondement au bulletin des hôpitaux que nous préparons, et dont le besoin s'impose, examine les indicateurs généralement utilisés comme outils pour mesurer, comparer et améliorer la qualité des soins dans les hôpitaux.

L'auteure, Julia Witt, souligne la nécessité vitale d'autres indicateurs quantifiant les résultats en santé et pouvant fournir des données utiles aux patients qui tentent d'évaluer quels sont les hôpitaux offrant les meilleurs soins.

Les réactions à un bulletin des hôpitaux créé par AIMS ont été rapides; des éditoriaux et des articles ont été publiés presque instantanément dans les journaux à travers la région.. Un éditorial dans le *Daily Gleaner* a applaudi le plan, et a déclaré que mesurer la performance des hôpitaux est une tâche difficile, mais qu'elle en vaut la peine.

As you can see, fiscal 2006/07 was an eventful and productive year for the Atlantic Institute for Market Studies. Other issues we continued to explore in depth throughout the year included electricity, oil and gas, regional development, urban affairs, and social problems.

We were honoured again to be a partner in the Grano Series, the annual speakers' forum widely considered to be the most influential in the country. The theme for the 2006-2007 series was titled *Whither Europe?* and explored the roots of the current internal crisis within Europe as well as the possibility of its regeneration. The list of invited speakers included some of the most well-known, illustrious thinkers of our time: Aayan Hirsi Ali, an outspoken critic of fundamentalist Islam and its treatment of women; Bernard-Henri Lévy, one of France's most popular philosophers, journalists and filmmakers; Anne Applebaum, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Gulag: A History* and columnist for the *Washington Post*; and last, but not least, American literary icon Gore Vidal.

AIMS continues to have a strong impact on public policy throughout this region and throughout this country. I want to extend my deepest gratitude to the AIMS team for its outstanding work: Bobby O'Keefe, Senior Policy Analyst; Barbara Pike, Director of Communications and acting Director of Operations; Ian Munro, Director of Research; Alex Wilner, Security and Defence Policy Intern; Holly Chisholm, AIMS Manning Centre Policy Intern; Mark Sears-Gamache, Communications Assistant; and Lori Peddle, Administrative Assistant.

Together we will continue to set the benchmark by providing quality research firmly rooted in the reality of our times and our region.

Charles Cirtwill  
President (acting)

Comme vous pouvez le constater, l'année financière 2006-2007 a été fertile en événements et productive pour l'Atlantic Institute for Market Studies. D'autres questions que nous avons continué d'examiner en profondeur durant l'année, comprenaient l'électricité, le pétrole et le gaz, le développement régional, les affaires urbaines et les problèmes sociaux.

Nous avons encore l'honneur d'être un partenaire de la Grano Series, forum annuel des conférenciers, largement considéré comme le plus influent au pays. Le thème pour la série 2006-2007 était *Whither Europe*, et se voulait une exploration des racines de la crise interne actuelle en Europe de même que de la possibilité de sa régénération. La liste des conférenciers invités comprenait quelques-uns des mieux connus et des plus illustres penseurs de notre temps; Aayan Hirsi Ali, un critique cinglant du fondamentalisme islamique et de son traitement des femmes; Bernard-Henri Lévy l'un des plus populaires philosophes, journalistes et cinéastes de France, Anne Applebaum, l'auteure de *Gulag : A History*, lauréate du prix Pulitzer et chroniqueuse pour *The Washington Post*, et le dernier, mais non le moindre, l'icône littéraire américaine, Gore Vidal.

AIMS continue d'exercer un impact considérable sur la politique à travers la région et le pays. Je désire exprimer ma plus profonde gratitude à l'équipe d'AIMS pour son travail exceptionnel : Bobby O'Keefe, analyste politique principal, Barbara Pike, directrice des communications et directrice intérimaire des opérations, Ian Munro, directeur de la recherche, Alex Wilner, chercheur, Politique de la sécurité et de la défense, Holly Chisholm, Manning Centre, chercheuse ; Mark Sears-Gamache, adjoint aux communications, et Lori Peddle, adjointe administrative.

Tous ensemble, nous continuerons à établir la norme en offrant des recherches de qualité fermement enracinées dans la réalité de notre temps et de notre région.

Le président intérimaire,  
Charles Cirtwill

October 2006

**The Stockholm Solution.**

It used to be that traffic jams were a thing of big cities and that commuting for an hour only happened in Toronto. But traffic-congestion – and the headaches that go with it – is no longer just a big-city problem as AIMS Senior Fellow in Urban Policy Patrick Luciani explains in this commentary. Interestingly, there are solutions that can be found by looking to the old world.

Fall 2006

**Ideas Matter 5: Who Should Own the Sea?**

Vigorous intellectual and practical debate continues to swirl around public policy in fishery management in Canada and abroad. In the more-than-10 years since our first foray into fisheries and aquaculture, AIMS has published profusely on the topic, held major conferences that have brought together national and international experts, and generated dozens of newspaper articles. In that time one question has remained unanswered: Who owns the fish off the east coast of North America? This issue of our magazine highlights our work on this issue.

November 2006

**The Good News: Pharmaceuticals and the Cost of Health Care.**

Is the increasing cost of prescription drugs bankrupting the health-care system? AIMS authors Julia Witt and Brian Ferguson examine this question in their commentary. They conclude that better access to pharmaceuticals actually saves money on hospital and emergency department budgets. The evidence demonstrates how better drug care is lowering costs by treating conditions early and preventing the serious and expensive consequences of advanced illness.

December 2006

**The Brick on the Scale: How Equalization weighs heavily on us all.**

For more than a decade, AIMS has provided insight into Canada's equalization program, pointing out its flaws and making important suggestions for improvement. This commentary draws on our in-depth research into the topic and grew out of a meeting that AIMS Acting President Charles Cirtwill and Senior Policy Analyst Bobby O'Keefe had with the Senate Standing Committee on National Finance, which turned to AIMS for answers on the issue of equalization.

January 2007

**A New Golden Rule.**

Bigger is not necessarily better, particularly with municipal governments. This commentary, based on remarks by AIMS Acting President Charles Cirtwill, explains why amalgamation does not provide for the most efficient local government. Instead, local governments are much better off with competition, cooperation and accountability. In *A New Golden Rule*, Cirtwill provides a number of tips on how to tell whether your local government is applying these principles using New Zealand as an effective case study on how it should be done.

January 2007

**A First Look at the Numbers.**

The public private debate in health care is fraught with misconceptions and misinterpretations about the data related to spending. In this background paper from the Canadian Health Care Consensus Group (CHCCG), a detailed examination of the numbers and the reality of health-care expenditures is provided. *A First Look at the Numbers* fills an important gap in this ongoing debate and calls attention to the mis-perception that private health-care spending has accelerated dramatically since the early '90s. In fact, private contributions have increased at a slow steady rate since the establishment of Medicare in 1968.

January 2007

**Factoring Ourselves Out.**

Alberta may appear to be the sponge absorbing every excess body from across Canada, but that province's labour shortage and its impact, rippling across the country, is just the beginning wave of our labour problems. Rather than prepare for this shortage, a reactive approach to immediate issues dating back to the 1960s and 1970s has been government's response. In this commentary, based on remarks made before the House of Commons Standing Committee on Industry Trade and Technology, AIMS Acting President Charles Cirtwill explains why we have to change the way we think.

January 2007

**Mother May I?**

Nova Scotia lead the way 30 years ago when it became the first province in Canada to enact Freedom of Information legislation. Since 1977, all other provinces have enacted their own version. Nova Scotia's original Act was replaced in 1993 by the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Within some government departments the acronym has actually become a noun, a verb and an adjective, but one thing it has not become is easy. This paper, based on comments by AIMS Acting President Charles Cirtwill to the Right to Know Forum held in Halifax at the University of King's College, explains AIMS's experience with the legislation and the common misuses of it.



January 2007

**Taking the Caller Off Hold.**

One of the main preoccupations of the CRTC has been to ensure that telephone companies cannot easily offer consumers a lower phone price. In an effort to put accelerate local telephone service deregulation and loosen the constraints that prevent companies from offering lower prices, federal Industry Minister Maxime Bernier called upon AIMS for input. Taking the Caller off Hold is AIMS's submission – and it shows that unfettered competition will lead to the lowest possible prices and the best possible service offerings for Canadian consumers.

February 2007

**A Truce is Required.**

There is little that can divide a crowd faster than talk about Canada's health-care system. The public-private debate, waiting lists, number of specialists, training for health-care workers: for each issue there is a different solution depending to whom you are speaking. Recently in Quebec, the talk has been of salaries and, more particularly, salaries for doctors. In this paper, Claude Castonguay, the former Quebec Minister of Health and Social Affairs, argues that it is time to cooperate and seek common solutions.

February 2007

**Moving On Up – The Transition from Poverty to Prosperity.**

Sometimes simply getting out of the way is the most helpful approach. In this commentary, AIMS Acting President Charles Cirtwill explains that Canada's labour shortage is really a poor worker's best friend. He says rural communities need to accept change and that the best governments can do is step aside and resist the urge to butt in. Cirtwill's commentary is based on a presentation made to the Senate Standing Committee on Agriculture and Forestry hearings on rural poverty. AIMS was one of a select group of organizations invited to make a presentation – a presentation that quickly garnered national attention.

March 2007

**Could Do Better 3:**

**Grading Atlantic Canada's 2006/07 Finances.**

Could Do Better 3, by David Murrell and Ian Munro, is AIMS's third annual review of budget performance in Atlantic Canada. Using budgets from the 2006/07 fiscal year, the authors compare the performance of the Atlantic Provinces relative to each other and to the Canada as a whole. Could Do Better 3 is also proof of the troubling trend that has been keeping Atlantic Canadians either in the poorhouse or on their way to Fort McMurray: governments have not learned the lessons that out-of-control spending increases and crushing debt should have taught them. This paper discusses what needs to be done to ensure the state of provincial finances improves.

March 2007

**Setting them up to fail? Excellent school marks don't necessarily lead to excellent exam marks.**

AIMS's Director of Education Policy Robert Laurie examines the relationship between teacher-assigned marks and provincial examination results for math in this AIMS education commentary. Laurie shows that significant grade inflation is present in New Brunswick and in Newfoundland and Labrador high schools, and is all too often accompanied by lower-than-average results on provincial math examinations. This paper uncovers a clear link between grade inflation and student performance on provincial exams, a link raises urgent questions.

March 2007

**Give a Plum for a Peach: Chinese Business Immigration to Atlantic Canada.**

In this AIMS' paper, John Huang takes a close look at what needs to be done to encourage business immigration from China. He argues the region needs to let more people in, let them in faster, and let them do more things when they get here. The region also needs to do a better job of promoting itself to immigrants from all walks of life and in as many regions as possible. This paper, which made headlines across the country, suggests that welcoming more immigrants is a key success factor. Atlantic Canada has a long way to go on that front.

March 2007

**Self-interest or Self-importance – Afghanistan's Lessons for Canada's Place in the Modern World.**

Using elements of recent policy debate and media focus on Canada's role in Afghanistan that have been misconstrued, AIMS Security and Defence Policy Intern Alex Wilner analyzes Canada's role in Afghanistan in this commentary. Wilner points out that Afghanistan is well on its way to political, economic, and social recovery with the exception of the south of the country where conflict pits international and Afghan forces against a revisionist bloc espousing a return to the decades of fractious and brutal terror. Ensuring that battle is won is of the utmost importance for Afghanistan but also for Canada.

April 2007

**AIMS 5th Annual Report Card on Atlantic Canadian High Schools.**

AIMS 5th annual report card on Atlantic Canadian high schools shows that schools can achieve success or run into trouble regardless of how big they are, what community they are located in, or what level of formal certification their teachers have achieved. This report card confirms what AIMS understood five years ago: that what happens in a school is more important than what a school has to start with. Small and large schools, urban and rural schools, schools serving strong communities and those serving communities facing serious challenges are intermingled throughout the rankings again this year.

May 2007

**Unfinished Business - A NAFTA Status Report.**

This AIMS paper analyzes the impact on trade of non-tariff barriers and inequalities in the transportation sector. Authors Dr. Mary Brooks and Stephen Kymlicka offer several recommendations, most notably increased regional cooperation, enhanced focus on existing opportunities for value-added production and export, and border infrastructure improvements within Atlantica. They also recommend that Canada pursue policies to level the transportation environment with the U.S., which includes leveling corporate and fuel taxation, removal of the 25 percent tariff on purchased ships, adjustments to coast guard rates, and easier access to private capital within the port system.

May 2007

**Health Care: Towards significant changes.**

In this paper, published by the Canadian Health Care Consensus Group, author Claude Castonguay, considered one of the fathers of Quebec's health-care system, offers a step-by-step process to reform health care in that province. Among those things in urgent need of change: the Canada Health Act and the separation of the roles of the purchasers and the providers of health-care services.

May 2007

**Canada's Place in the World.**

Canada has slipped on the world stage. Unfortunately, we are no longer holders of the coveted honor "best place in the world to live". However, AIMS Senior Policy Analyst Stephen Kymlicka says there is a road back to the top if Canada is ready to take it. This commentary, based on Kymlicka's remarks to the 6th Annual Student Research Symposium held at Dalhousie University's Centre for International Business, examines how the country generates wealth, evaluates Canada's performance, and highlights areas where improvements can be made.

June 2007

**Technicolour Dreams and a Cold Splash of Reality: Waking up to the labour shortage and what to do about it.**

Atlantic Canada has to wake up to the reality of the labour shortage before it is too late. A tremendous shortfall of workers has already begun to wreak havoc on certain industries and impede economic growth. This commentary, based on remarks delivered by AIMS Acting President Charles Cirtwill to the Nova Scotia Trucking Human Resource Sector Council, outlines how this shortage is the "number one" problem facing every industry in Canada, and it is only going to get worse. Technicolour Dreams also examines the causes and effects of Atlantic Canada's labour woes while applauding measures taken by the industry as an excellent contribution to help solve the problem.

June 2007

**Still More Equal than Others: Capped equalization still too much.**

With the 2007 federal budget, the government of Canada launched a new equalization formula; the trouble is that it perpetuates the same old inequity. Equalization-receiving provinces are getting more than their fair share. The root of the problem is that the program continues to assume, wrongly, that the cost of essential public services is the same from province to province. This commentary by AIMS Senior Policy Analyst Bobby O'Keefe examines how Ottawa overpays equalization-receiving provinces.

June 2007

**Defining Atlantica: Bridges to Prosperity.**

This commentary is based on the comments made by AIMS Acting President Charles Cirtwill during the second annual Atlantica conference Atlantica 2007: Charting the Course. Cirtwill's comments made headlines as he debated one of the chief opponents of the Atlantica concept, Scott Sinclair. Using the conference as an opportunity to further explain Atlantica, this commentary reinforces key messages and clears up gaps in information.

June 2007

**Private Supply, Public Benefit: Reduce wait times with specialty hospitals.**

What if there was a proven way to reduce wait times for certain surgical procedures? What if it was being ignored by health-care stakeholders? This paper examines the reluctance of authorities to acknowledge that the private supply of health-care in a publicly funded system works. It provides examples of cases inside Canada and outside where private specialty hospitals helped reduce waiting times for patients in a publicly funded system, and it also debunks the common argument often used against private supply of health care: that it is of inferior quality. This commentary is one of a series of background papers prepared for the Canadian Health Care Consensus Group.

June 2007

**Everybody Wins: Why Growing the Port of Halifax Matters to Moncton (and Saint John, Amherst, Bangor ...).**

This AIMS paper provides an in-depth case study on the Port of Halifax as a regional "cluster" within Atlantica. Authors Stephen Kymlicka and Peter de Langen analyze the structure of the Halifax cluster and examine the associated port-led industry to draw several conclusions. Their findings bode well for regional development opportunities in other cities within Atlantica and show that analysis of port-led economic activity confined strictly to the Halifax geographic area leaves significant gaps when measured against other Canadian ports with similar shipping volumes.

July 2007

**Reaching Out: Transload extends the accessible market in Halifax.**

In this third paper of the AIMS Atlantica Ports Series, authors Jim Frost and Stephen Kymlicka examine what needs to be done to grow port traffic by increasing transload facilities. By taking an in-depth look at the state of warehousing and distribution in Halifax, the authors look closely at the strengths and weaknesses of a generic transload strategy and the potential application of such a strategy to Halifax. They conclude that such a strategy makes a great deal of sense.

July 2007

**The Best Defence is a Terrific Offence.**

Alex Wilner, AIMS security and defence policy intern, tackles international terrorism in this commentary by outlining the evolving global security environment and explaining how terrorist groups are now more easily able to organise and thrive than they once were. However, Wilner contends, offensive counter-terror tactics will prove most effective in combating the scourge of international terrorism.

August 2007

**Taking the Pulse: Hospital performance indicators from the patient's perspective.**

AIMS author Julia Witt goes beyond the ordinary in this analysis. Most reports examine hospital performance by concentrating on whether they rank above or below average on numbers or types of procedures conducted. She suggests other indicators are more important to patients, ones that quantify desirable health outcomes rather than focusing on processes within the hospital. Taking the Pulse is the second in a two-part background series in preparation for a hospital report card to be issued by AIMS. Its purpose is to familiarize readers with some of the indicators often used to assess health-care providers and to draw attention to areas where improvements are necessary.

August 2007

**Form Over Function? Why the CMA is right to consider private methods to deliver health care to Canadians.**

Do Canadians value form over function? In suggesting that governments should consider expanded opportunities for private delivery of health care in Canada, the Canadian Medical Association has been accused of putting profit for doctors ahead of Canadian values. In Form over Function, a commentary from the Canadian Health Care Consensus Group, author Brian Ferguson explores the debate about Medicare in Canada and concludes that we need to take a step back and consider not only what Canadians really do value, but also what, exactly, is being proposed.

September 2007

**Getting the fox out of the schoolhouse: How the public can take back public education.**

In this AIMS commentary, which generated significant attention around the region, AIMS authors and experienced educators, Michael Zwaagstra, Rodney Clifton and John Long conclude that provincial governments, parents, the public, and individual teachers have failed to defend the public interest in education. This paper reviews the origins of teachers' unions and how they moved from labour relations to education policy. The authors point out that what is in the best interest of the union is not necessarily in the best interest of students and their education – or even supported by individual teachers.

**How do you beat City Hall? Measure what they do, report the results, hold them accountable.**

On October 5, 2006, the Prince George Hotel in Halifax was the site of one of AIMS's well-known breakfast briefings. The guest speaker for this event was Larry Mitchell, one of the world's foremost experts on municipal performance. Using New Zealand as a benchmark, Mr. Mitchell identified specific changes that have been made and how those changes have provided better accountability to and more information for residents. He was quick to point out that a change to legislation means that the elected officials in local government are now responsible for policy while the paid officials take care of the operations. "That means there is nothing an elected official can do to have your road paved now or a pothole filled, that's operations and that's the CEO's job," explained Mitchell. AIMS President Brian Lee Crowley concluded the breakfast briefing with a word to those in the audience in the municipal field, "You've just seen the future! Expect this at a think tank near you, real soon!"

**The Grano Speaker Series 2006-2007 – Whither Europe?**

Again this year, AIMS was pleased to be a partner in what has been called the most influential speakers' series in the country.

In December 2006, the series was launched with the theme for the 2006-2007 year focusing on the impact of the collapse of the Soviet Union. With its fall, some thought that Europe would become the counterweight to U.S. global dominance. Instead, Europe has struggled with issues ranging from under-employment, an aging population, labour strife, growing Islamic radicalism, terrorism, and failed immigration policies. This has generated questions such as: What are the sources of these troubles? Can the continent bounce back? What would the decline of Europe's power and status mean for the rest of the world?

The first speaker in the series was Aayan Hirsi Ali, an outspoken critic of fundamentalist Islam and its treatment of women, and a Resident Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington D.C.

Bernard-Henri Levy, one of France's most popular philosophers, journalists and filmmakers was the second speaker in this season's series. The final two speakers for 2006-07 were Anne Applebaum, the Pulitzer Prize winning author of *Gulag: A History* and a columnist for *The Washington Post*, and American literary icon Gore Vidal.

**Selling to the West instead of moving there.**

In June 2007, AIMS provided a unique opportunity for anyone interested in learning more about the hottest Canadian trade-related topic since NAFTA. The TILMA – Trade Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement – and the opportunities it presents was discussed with Alberta's key negotiator, Shawn Robbins. Robbins, who is the Director of Internal Trade in the Trade Policy Section of the Alberta Department of International and Intergovernmental Relations, explained how Atlantic Canada can get in on the ground floor of this innovative agreement, which allows freer movement of goods, cash and people (trade, investment and labour) between economies.

**Equalization: Deal or No Deal? Does it Matter? Ontario is not going to take it anymore.**

In June 2007, AIMS waded directly into the debate on equalization. With the threat of legal action over broken promises and the airwaves filled with one-sided information, AIMS hosted an enlightening policy briefing on the new equalization formula.

National equalization expert and former Ontario Chamber of Commerce Policy Advisor David MacKinnon echoed much of AIMS's research in his insightful analysis. He pointed out that there are considerable inequalities in the program, but not the ones that are being vociferously denounced by some in Atlantic Canada. MacKinnon pointed out that Ontario, Canada's most populous province, is the one left holding the bag while equalization-receiving provinces remain stuck in a rut.

**Over-Equalization: AIMS Presents to the Senate Standing Committee on National Finance.**

October 18, 2006. Ottawa, Ontario.

For more than a decade, AIMS has been publishing papers and commentaries about Canada's equalization program. As the Senate Standing Committee on National Finance met to discuss the issue of equalization and examine whether there is a fiscal imbalance, it turned to AIMS for answers. Acting AIMS President Charles Cirtwill and Senior Policy Analyst Bobby O'Keefe met with the entire Committee to explain that there is no such thing as a vertical or horizontal fiscal imbalance. While not eliminating the need for equalization, AIMS analysis provides further support to the argument that the current system over-equalizes.

**Help Wanted: Strategies for addressing the labour shortage in Atlantic Canada.**

October 24, 2006. Ottawa, Ontario.

In a presentation to the Standing Committee on Human Resources, AIMS Senior Policy Analyst Stephen Kymlicka noted that immigration is simply not enough. Although it may provide a short-term softening of the blow, more help is needed if we are to get serious about addressing labour gaps.

**Factoring Ourselves Out: How Canada's late 20th century thinking equals a failing grade in the early 21st century global economic calculus.**

November 20, 2006. Ottawa, Ontario.

With labour shortages a clear and ever-present danger in every corner of Canada, AIMS was called upon to provide thoughts and recommendations. Acting AIMS President Charles Cirtwill appeared before the House of Commons Standing Committee on Industry Science and Technology to put this shortage in perspective and provide government with an appropriate approach for addressing it.

**Moving On Up: The Transition from Poverty to Prosperity.**

February 15, 2007. Ottawa, Ontario.

The Atlantic Institute for Market Studies was one of a select group of organizations invited to make a presentation to the Senate Standing Committee on Agriculture and Forestry hearings on rural poverty. AIMS Acting President Charles Cirtwill appeared before the Committee to explain that this country's labour shortage is a poor worker's best friend. He stated that rural communities do face challenges, but also need to accept change. Transition is happening, and the best that governments can do is step out of the way and resist the urge to interfere.

**ATCan Economy Forum.**

June 7-9, 2007. Sackville, New Brunswick.

With financial support from the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Enterprise South-East, the Centre for Canadian Studies, and Mount Allison's Department of Social Sciences, close to 100 economic experts gathered in Sackville, N.B. The topic of discussion was economic development in the Atlantic region and Acting President Charles Cirtwill was one of the influential guest speakers invited to take part.

**Atlantica 2007: Charting the Course.**

June 14-16, 2007. Halifax, Nova Scotia.

The Atlantica 2007 Conference hosted by the Atlantic Provinces Chambers of Commerce once again put the Atlantica concept on the front pages and put AIMS front and centre. With business leaders from every corner of the Northeast, AIMS Acting President Charles Cirtwill took to the stage during a panel discussion on Atlantica and its critical role in shaping the region's future.

**“You Don’t Know What You’ve Got Till It’s Gone.”**

In reply to an ad campaign by the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) urging Congress to legalize the importation of prescription drugs from Canada, AIMS President Brian Lee Crowley explains that the issue isn’t simply one of price controls. Crowley discusses the real reason brand-name drugs cost less in Canada and warns Americans to be very careful what they wish for.

By Brian Lee Crowley.

October 3, 2006 – *The New York Post*; *The Patriot-News*.

**“Stay East, Young Entrepreneur?”**

On its November 8th editorial page, *The Guardian* commended the PEI Legislative Assembly’s Standing Committee on Social Development for addressing the question of how young entrepreneurs could be encouraged to stay on the Island. *The Guardian* and the Committee are right to be concerned about this issue, but while the Committee’s recognition of the looming problem is encouraging, there are worrisome signs that its search for a solution will focus on the same old approaches to “economic development” that have failed consistently for longer than today’s young entrepreneurs have been alive.

By Ian Munro.

November 14, 2006 – *The Charlottetown Guardian*.

**“Is Somalia the Next Afghanistan?”**

History is repeating itself in the Horn of Africa. The rise of Somalia’s Islamic Courts Union (ICU) is strikingly similar to the path pursued by the Taliban in its march to power in the 1990s. The danger for Canada is that both fundamentalist groups have ties to international terrorism. Might Canadian soldiers head to Somalia in the coming decade?

By Alex Wilner.

November 24, 2006 – Various.

**“A ray of hope for Atlantic Canada.”**

More Atlantic Canadian premiers should follow the lead taken by New Brunswick Premier Shawn Graham and get this message out: self-sufficiency should be our goal. Despite headlines from the national media to the contrary, Atlantic Canada is booming. Now is the time to seize the opportunity and move away from a dependency on equalization payments.

By Charles Cirtwill.

December 13, 2006 – *The National Post*.

**“Margo’s got the cargo, but where’s Reggie with the rig?”**

Stompin’ Tom Connors once wrote a song about Newfoundlanders Margo and Reggie, who loaded Margo’s cargo onto Reggie’s rig and hit the road for Toronto. If Margo needed to ship her cargo today, though, it might get no further than Moncton. Why? Because New Brunswick firms cannot find enough Reggies. In this commentary, AIMS Director of Research Ian Munro focuses on the proposed immigration policy changes for transportation industry workers in the region. There are advantages to consider and both the underemployed and younger people about to join the workforce should take heed. Companies in Atlantic Canada are begging for skilled workers in very specialized trades.

By Ian Munro.

January 11, 2007 – Various.

**“Should Some Pigs Be More Equal Than Others?”**

Arguments imploring governments to preserve a traditional way of life arise from time to time, particularly when the farming or fishing industries hit a rough patch. Typically these pleas are accompanied by foreboding comments that unless local farmers are bailed out by taxpayers, surely we all will soon go hungry. But, should this way of life be treated differently than any other family business? No.

By Ian Munro.

January 16, 2007 – *The Cape Breton Post*; *The ChronicleHerald*.

**“Three Reasons to be in Afghanistan.”**

Recent CBC polls suggest that a majority of Canadians continue to badly misinterpret Canada’s mission in Afghanistan. This poll, even taken with a grain of salt, represents the unhealthy state of the collective Canadian mind on this issue. There are three compelling reasons why Canada’s continued military involvement in the beleaguered state is necessary.

By Alex Wilner.

January 22, 2007 – Various.

**“Last thing consumers need is protection from lower prices.”**

It’s easy to complain about the way in which certain government agencies serve us, but at least it’s generally pretty clear what the mission is: The post office delivers the mail from here to there, the transportation department gets the roads paved, and the bureaucrats with the label fetish make sure we’re told exactly how much potassium we’re getting in our bran every morning. But did you know that one of the main preoccupations of late of our telecommunications regulator, the CRTC, has been to ensure that telephone companies cannot easily offer us a lower phone bill? Thankfully, federal Industry Minister Maxime Bernier is trying to put an end to this type of “protection.”

By Ian Munro.

January 30, 2007 – *The Chronicle-Herald*

**“Protect Yourself: Stay Informed.”**

A 62-year-old man who died after waiting nine months for critical surgery shows the structural problems within our health-care system. Platitudes and good intentions are not sufficient to help people who are sick nor are they enough to help people to stay well. Moreover, it is unreasonable to expect patients to be active and involved when health organizations do not give them the information they need to make thoughtful political and personal decisions about their own health care.

By Dr. David Zitner.  
February 5, 2007 - *Seniors' Advocate*.

**“The End of Consumer Protection . . . from Lower Prices.”**

Building on a paper submitted at the request of federal Industry Minister Maxime Bernier regarding telephone deregulation in Canada, AIMS Director of Research Ian Munro comments further in this opinion editorial making it clear that deregulation – at an accelerated pace – is the only way to go.

By Ian Munro.  
February 5, 2007 - *The Charlottetown Guardian*.

**“Board saga opportunity for a lesson in democracy.”**

The removal of elected members of the Halifax regional school board has been characterized by some as undemocratic. That argument includes comparing the situation to the introduction of the *War Measures Act* in Quebec in the 1970s and characterizing the person appointed to replace the former elected members as a policeman. The court is not the place to play the democracy card. If the former board members really believe they have been treated unfairly, they should resign and force a new election.

By Charles Cirtwill.  
February 7, 2007 – *The Chronicle Herald*.

**“Some inconvenient facts on equalization.”**

Never let an inconvenient fact get in the way of a good argument. That appears to be the approach of some provinces when discussing potential changes to Canada's equalization program. Ken Bossenkool, author of several AIMS papers, points out in this article that provinces are balking at proposed changes to equalization calculations not based on sound reasoning but rather because they want to argue. Bossenkool highlights that the suggested changes – to include half of resource revenues in the calculation – mirror what has been happening in the provinces most opposed to the change: Alberta and Saskatchewan.

By Ken Boessenkool.  
February 7, 2007 – *The Globe and Mail*.

**“Don't overprescribe for catastrophic drugs.”**

Pardon me sir, would you happen to have a more-expensive, less-efficient model? This is not the question taxpayers want their governments asking when shopping – especially not when shopping for prescription medication. Unfortunately, that is precisely what is being done in terms of pharmacare. Acting President Charles Cirtwill points out why the lessons he learned from his own family physician should be used to help address this burgeoning problem. The bottom line: A \$2 billion solution is not needed for a \$50 million problem.

By Charles Cirtwill.  
February 21, 2007 – Various.

**“What Happened to Miracle Cures?”**

With the ongoing debate about prescription drugs dominating headlines in the U.S., *The American Spectator* asked AIMS Acting President Charles Cirtwill to provide an analysis into the nation's pharmaceutical legislation. He notes that none of the debate over the cost of prescription drugs really matters because what we should be concerned about is the total cost of care – drugs, primary and emergency care, and chronic and tertiary care. Comprehensive care analysis is necessary and limiting debate to the cost of prescription drugs is “penny wise but pound foolish”.

By Charles Cirtwill.  
February 28, 2007 – *The American Spectator*.

**“Try not thinking about Atlantica.”**

Atlantica is everywhere. Our everyday economic realities confirm the presence and the importance of Atlantica and the opportunities inherent within it. AIMS Senior Policy Analyst Stephen Kymlicka explains that Atlantica is about creating wealth, not lowering a minimum wage; it is about creating good jobs to keep our graduates here, and it is about neighbours building an economy that can sustain itself. These factors are ever present in the daily lives of Atlantic Canadians and, as a result, so is Atlantica.

By Stephen Kymlicka.  
March 2, 2007 – *Times and Transcript*.

**“Everything had been going so well...”**

Following his much-publicized analysis of the New Brunswick budget, the *Telegraph-Journal* called AIMS Director of Research Ian Munro to write an opinion editorial explaining what the government could have done better. Munro points out that a firm stand on tax rates this year would have reinforced the message that the government is absolutely committed to making New Brunswick a great place to do business. Then he shows how it could have been done.

By Ian Munro.  
March 15, 2007 – *Telegraph-Journal*.

**“Ding, Ding, Ding – It’s subsidy season.”**

Talk of ploughing \$400 million into the Atlantic Gateway reached thunderous levels in advance of the Canadian federal budget. In this commentary, AIMS Acting President Charles Cirtwill points out that while there’s much to do for the Atlantic Gateway, the major items have little to do with money. Unfortunately, the rumour of government money, much like the ding, ding, ding of Pavlov’s bell, was a sound that generated a lot of unnecessary excitement.

By Charles Cirtwill.  
March 16, 2007 – Various.

**“Bartender, make mine a TILMA.”**

The Alberta-British Columbia Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement (TILMA) came into effect three weeks after this article appeared in the paper. The TILMA is the most aggressive attempt to tear down inter-provincial trade barriers in Canadian history and will create the second-largest economy in the country after Ontario. B.C. and Alberta, says AIMS Director of Research Ian Munro, have the right idea and smaller economies of Atlantic Canada should be leading the charge to trade liberalization as they stand to gain the most.

By Ian Munro.  
March 19, 2007 – *Telegraph-Journal, The Chronicle-Herald, Edmonton Journal, Peace River Block Daily News.*

**“Welcome to the New Nova Scotia.”**

Since being elected last June, Premier MacDonald has sought to engage Nova Scotians in his vision of a new Nova Scotia. Aside from the clear expectation that Ottawa will give Nova Scotia more money for equalization, more money for health care, more money for education and some real money for an Atlantic Gateway, the new Nova Scotia has lacked substance. AIMS Acting President Charles Cirtwill gives Nova Scotians some big ideas to think about and explains that looking to Ottawa for more cash is not the way to the new Nova Scotia promised in the last election.

By Charles Cirtwill.  
March 22, 2007 – Various.

**“The Sound of One Hand Clapping.”**

In this opinion editorial which appeared in a number of Nova Scotia newspapers, AIMS Director of Research Ian Munro responds to the Nova Scotia budget with one word – timid. Munro points out that while the government has named debt reduction as a priority, the debt to gross domestic product (GDP) ratio is forecast to decline, and the amount that we’re shelling out in interest payments each year is on the way down. All of this is good news. Additional good news showed some progress with the government trying to curb its spending. However, more could have been done to cut spending and then cut taxes.

By Ian Munro.  
March 26, 2007 – Various.

**“If wishes were horses, then beggars would ride.”**

AIMS acting president Charles Cirtwill was asked by the *Halifax Chronicle Herald* to write a regular fortnightly column. In his first column, Cirtwill sifts through the back and forth arguments about equalization and gets to the heart of the matter. Nova Scotia, in the end, got exactly what it wanted – something for everyone and a little more for ourselves. Yet, we still have not asked the real question, a question that should be front and centre – what kind of Nova Scotia do we want?

By Charles Cirtwill.  
April 9, 2007 – *The Chronicle Herald.*

**“Polite applause, but no curtain calls for this year’s budget.”**

In reviewing another provincial budget – this time in Prince Edward Island – AIMS Director of Research Ian Munro points out how a good budget could have been better. Munro noted that some praise is due to Finance Minister Mitch Murphy for his handiwork, but the budget contains scenes of bad and ugly along with the good. Looking ahead to next year’s assessment, it appears that the Island will score good marks for recording a surplus and reducing taxes, but poor ones for increased interest charges and significantly greater spending. It could have been better.

By Ian Munro.  
April 16, 2007 – *The Charlottetown Guardian.*

**“Are Public Servants More Important Than Public Services?”**

Is it the service or the servant that needs protecting? That is the question pondered by AIMS acting president Charles Cirtwill in this Commentary for the *Halifax Chronicle Herald* after a senior public servant explained to him that a public service could only be considered a public service if it was delivered by public employees, managed by public employees, and in a facility owned by the public and operated by public employees. Cirtwill asserts that this thinking is not only flawed – it’s ridiculous.

By Charles Cirtwill.  
April 24, 2007 – *The Chronicle Herald.*

**“The Public has a Right to Know.”**

In reference to the AIMS Report Card, Halifax Regional School Board Superintendent Carole Olsen was quoted as saying “we believe we have more in-depth data that’s more directly related to student achievement than what the AIMS report provides us”. In response, acting AIMS president Charles Cirtwill submitted this open letter, carried by various media outlets, to the Superintendent stating that hoarding valuable information does nothing to help students be the best that they can be. The public should know what you know, and they should know it now.

By Charles Cirtwill.  
April 30, 2007 – Various.



**“Let’s be honest, gas regulation has failed.”**

In his fortnightly column for the *Chronicle Herald*, AIMS acting president Charles Cirtwill shows that regulated gas pricing in Nova Scotia doesn’t accomplish its intended goals. On the contrary, notes Cirtwill, it results in higher prices, rural gas station closures and the same number of price changes as before regulation. But, this should come as no surprise since economists and market analysts and even the government itself predicted that this would happen. Yet, the decision to regulate was made anyway.

By Charles Cirtwill.

May 22, 2007 – *The Chronicle Herald*.

**“Toward sustainable rural schools.”**

The stakes involved in deciding to close or maintain small rural schools are very high indeed. Parents and community leaders argue that shutting down rural schools kills the heart of the community. Government and educational leaders argue that students in rural areas don’t have the same quality education opportunities as their peers in larger communities. They suggest that closing rural schools and ensuring that rural students receive these services in larger, and more distant, schools is the way to go. AIMS Director of Education Policy Robert Laurie weighs in on this sensitive debate making one thing clear- parents and community leaders have to be willing to take control of their school in order to respond effectively and efficiently to calls for more closures.

By Robert Laurie.

May 29, 2007 – *The Telegraph-Journal, The Cape Breton Post*.

**“For once, let’s not be satisfied with second best.”**

Imitation may be the sincerest form of flattery, but the fact remains that there is no substitute for the original, as AIMS acting President Charles Cirtwill points out in his fortnightly column in the *Halifax Chronicle Herald*. Cirtwill explains why signing on to the established Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement (TILMA), would be better for the region than a separate Atlantica trade deal.

By Charles Cirtwill.

June 5, 2007 – *The Chronicle Herald*.

**“Arguing the case for provincial exams.”**

Would PEI Premier Robert Ghiz buy a car without a speedometer or a gas gauge? Of course not, because without them he couldn’t drive safely and reach his desired destination. Why then is he going to renege on the commitment to introduce provincial exams? Guessing games are not the way to ensure children receive the best education argues AIMS’s Director of Education Policy, Robert Laurie. Newly elected Premier Ghiz should implement provincial exams and other performance measures if he is serious about education.

By Robert Laurie.

June 13, 2007 – *The Charlottetown Guardian*.

**“Cap on equalization payments is what’s created all the fuss.”**

With so much fuss and static clouding the debate over the new equalization formula, AIMS was asked by the *Globe and Mail* to explain the intricacies of the Atlantic Accord more clearly. In response, senior policy analyst Bobby O’Keefe prepared this overview taking readers back in time to the formal introduction of equalization in 1957 and pointing out that the greatest source of debate is the treatment of natural-resource revenues within the formula.

By Bobby O’Keefe.

June 14, 2007 - *The Globe and Mail, The Daily News*.

**“Put our money where your mouth is.”**

When choices exist – everyone benefits. That’s the conclusion that acting AIMS president Charles Cirtwill makes in his column in the *Chronicle Herald* on the ongoing debate over public sector versus private sector schools. Beyond explaining why choice in education benefits everyone, Cirtwill suggests that those who value public sector schools should be willing to let our money do the talking.

By Charles Cirtwill.

June 19, 2007 – *The Chronicle Herald*.

**“Minimum Wage and The Laws.”**

A suggestion in the *Telegraph-Journal* that New Brunswick increase its minimum wage prompted AIMS Director of Research, Ian Munro, to fire back with a quick response - bad idea. Munro explains why increasing the minimum wage actually hurts the very people one would expect such an increase to help – the workers. Munro further encourages those contemplating such changes to minimum wage statutes, to pay close attention to two other laws: the law of demand and the law of unintended consequences.

By Ian Munro.

June 25, 2007 – *Telegraph-Journal*.

**“Gasoline pricing: the aspirin helps, but radical surgery is really what’s needed.”**

Fresh off the mark, new Prince Edward Island Premier Robert Ghiz, fulfilled one of his key campaign pledges by implementing a 4.4 cent reduction in the provincial tax on gasoline. AIMS Director of Research, Ian Munro, is quick to note the welcome news that this politician followed through on a promise to voters. However, Munro argues, if the new government is really serious about promoting the interests of Island consumers it should move beyond the 4.4 cent aspirin and conduct major surgery by repealing gasoline price regulation.

By Ian Munro.

July 6, 2007 – *The Charlottetown Guardian*.

**“No pain, no gain.”**

It is a well accepted truism in almost every aspect of human existence, “no pain, no gain”. This, argues acting AIMS president, Charles Cirtwill, is something that most people in Atlantic Canada apply to numerous areas of daily life including personal development, physical fitness and even to the raising of our children. A little pain now is seen as the price to pay for a lot of benefit later. Yet, there is one area of human endeavour where we as Atlantic Canadians do not apply this rule – the economy.

By Charles Cirtwill.

July 6, 2007 – *Atlantic Business*.

**“Imagine, We Want Modern Drugs and Equipment.”**

In this look from the inside, AIMS Fellow on Health Care Policy, Dr. David Zitner, points out that not all Nova Scotians have equal access to modern equipment or expensive care. Using the example of Avastin, an expensive drug that lengthens the survival of people with colorectal cancer, Zitner suggests government needs to re-examine its role as insurer and accept that as the insurer it should pay for necessary but expensive care, even if it means that some people would have to pay for services they can afford.

By Dr. David Zitner.

July 20, 2007 – *The Chronicle Herald; The Cape Breton Post*.

**“Like it or not, Atlantica does exist, thankfully.”**

With the Atlantica concept continuing to gain ground and generate interest – both from proponents and detractors – newspapers around the region were interested in learning more. AIMS acting president Charles Cirtwill obliged explaining that Atlantica is not something that requires approval and it is absent of firm borders. It is an opportunity. And, that opportunity must be seized to encourage economic growth and solve problems that are common to the region.

By Charles Cirtwill.

August 14, 2007 – *The Chronicle Herald; Telegraph-Journal; Daily Gleaner; Times and Transcript*.

**“Don’t count your have-nots until they hatch.”**

The coverage of the tentative deal agreed to between Newfoundland and Labrador and the oil and gas consortium that currently owns the rights to develop the Hebron field has been understandably upbeat. A project that seemed destined to languish has been revived, a province that has always been portrayed as backward and poor gets a huge win that all Canadians can celebrate, and a political mudslinging match over equalization has, it is assumed, been brought to a neat and tidy end. According to the enthusiastic reports, Newfoundland and Labrador will now take its place among the have provinces. Not so fast. In this opinion piece, requested by *The Globe and Mail*, AIMS Acting president Charles Cirtwill examines the flaws in this offshore oil deal.

By Charles Cirtwill.

August 27, 2007 – *The Globe and Mail*

**“Education, just asking the usual suspects is, well, suspect.”**

Every legal drama on television has used the same line – good attorneys never ask a question they don’t already know the answer to. In his regular column for *The Chronicle Herald*, AIMS Acting President Charles Cirtwill suggests that the Department of Education has taken this same approach in its decision-making process by establishing committees that hinder innovation in our school system. These committees do not include parents, taxpayers and businesspeople and the result is suspect.

By Charles Cirtwill.

August 28, 2007 - *The Chronicle Herald*.

**Atlantica makes Ottawa debut.**

October 18, 2006.

*Telegraph-Journal; Halifax Daily News; Halifax Chronicle Herald; Valley Today; The Canadian Press; Yahoo.ca.*

In a highly anticipated event with significant media coverage, Ottawa's government officials and business elite were officially introduced to Atlantica when AIMS presented to the Senate Standing Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce. After the presentation, delivered by AIMS senior policy analyst Stephen Kymlicka, AIMS was heralded in the media for raising the profile of the Atlantica concept and providing real solutions to current barriers to trade in the region.

**Brian Lee Crowley Praised for Courage.**

November 2, 2006.

*Atlantic Business Magazine.*

Atlantic Business Magazine editor, Dawn Chafe, praised AIMS President Brian Lee Crowley for his courage in incessantly questioning the status quo and the ferocity of his intellect. Chafe made the comments in her introduction to the first on-line discussion for Atlantic Business Magazine noting that Mr. Crowley is a choice she fully expects will generate debate about public policy.

**Edmonton Public Schools official sparks ideas on how to improve education system.**

November 3, 2006.

*The Daily Gleaner.*

Former superintendant for Edmonton Public Schools and an AIMS senior fellow, Angus McBeath, was heralded by local school officials in the Fredericton area for given them valuable ideas to try to implement in area schools. The comments praising McBeath were delivered after he held meetings in the area to discuss public-education reform, site-based decision making and improving student achievement. In some cases, those attending were quoted as saying they wished there were more meetings like the one held by McBeath.

**Crowley to advise Tories on economics.**

November 8, 2006.

*Halifax Chronicle Herald.*

Numerous media outlets carried the story about the year long appointment of AIMS president Brian Lee Crowley as a visiting economist advising the federal Finance Department. Often referring to him as "an outspoken Nova Scotian," the media were also quick to point out that the Tories came under immediate attack in the House of Commons for his appointment. Mr. Crowley dismissed the attacks and welcomed the new opportunity presented to him.

**Think-tank gets access to grades, attendance rates in compromise.**

November 15, 2006.

*Halifax Chronicle Herald*

After fighting through layers of freedom of information laws for six years, some advancement was finally made in achieving more openness in public institutions. Halifax Chronicle Herald Education reporter Rick Conrad was quick to assign the progress made to the efforts of AIMS and focused his story on the ongoing battle begun by AIMS to make this change and gathered quotes from AIMS acting president Charles Cirtwill.

**Australians can find public education reform in Canada.**

November 22, 2006.

*The Australian.*

Media outlets in Canada are not the only news agencies to discover important messages coming from AIMS Fellow in Public Education Reform Angus McBeath. McBeath has also made news in Australia. Less than a year away from a general election, the issue of public education was expected to be a key issue among voters with 75 per cent of Australian voters rating it as very important in determining who gets their vote. McBeath's work was highlighted as an example of how to improve things.

**Still time to flip population decline.**

January 8, 2007.

*The Telegraph-Journal.*

With indications that in the next five years that deaths will outpace births, the Telegraph-Journal wanted to take a closer look at the potential population decline in New Brunswick and turned to AIMS acting president Charles Cirtwill to explain how the decline can be turned around. Cirtwill was quick to note that New Brunswick still had time to address the issue and come out ahead.

**Solutions sought to student debt load problem.**

January 15, 2007.

*Times and Transcript.*

In a story about the ongoing problems existing within the student loan system, AIMS was contacted for a quote and given the final word in this front page story. Amid numerous unofficial recommendations about changes to the program that would see fewer people defaulting, AIMS acting president Charles Cirtwill explains people defaulting on the loans are only the result of the problem, not the cause. If, argues Cirtwill, we are to make the system better we need to do an in-depth analysis of how it is working now and where the weaknesses are. Throwing money at the problem through tuition freezes won't improve anything.

**Leader's comments spur R&D debate.**

January 15, 2007.

*The Telegraph-Journal.*

When Liberal Leader Stephane Dion made his first official visit to New Brunswick, he spoke with the Telegraph Journal praising Premier Shawn Graham's efforts to move toward self reliance and pointing out that New Brunswick could play an important role in the growing area of research and development. The paper turned to AIMS for comment on this front page story. AIMS acting president Charles Cirtwill weighed in adding that the best way to encourage research and development is to provide tax credits to companies.

**Cities can provide for themselves.**

February 6, 2007.

*CBC Radio – Calgary.*

At the invitation of CBC Radio in Calgary, AIMS acting President Charles Cirtwill hit the airwaves to discuss municipal finances and a report that suggested there should be more transfers from federal and provincial governments to municipalities to cover their operating expenses. Cirtwill made it clear that cities across the world raise money through taxation of their residents and that it would be a mistake to fund municipal development with money from taxpayers from the province or the country to whom municipal governments are not accountable.

**Atlantica critiques get a dose of fact.**

February 15, 2007.

*CBC Radio – Halifax.*

AIMS acting president Charles Cirtwill was once again beating down the misconceptions about Atlantica. In response to a report critiquing the concept, Cirtwill used this CBC radio interview to outline that Atlantica is an exercise in regional cooperation. Cirtwill asserted that the authors of the report have a limited knowledge of the realities of Atlantica adding that its goal is to create regional solutions to regional problems for the benefit of Atlantic Canadians.

**Labour shortage is good news for the poor - institute exec.**

February 16, 2007.

*The Daily Gleaner.*

Comments made by AIMS acting president Charles Cirtwill to the Senate committee examining the issues of rural poverty in Atlantic Canada made headlines. Cirtwill said that the demographic changes facing the region are actually good news for the poor because the shrinking population will alleviate rural poverty as long as the government gets out of the way. Media picked up the story and focused their attention on Cirtwill's message that the demographic shift will mean that there will be jobs for all those who wish to work, including those in rural settings.

**New Brunswick trying to stop population drop - But effort already under fire.**

February 19, 2007.

*Halifax Chronicle Herald.*

In a Canadian Press news story that was carried across the country, AIMS acting President Charles Cirtwill had a message for Atlantic Canada’s Premier’s hoping to lure workers back to the region – stop using vain marketing ploys and lower taxes. Reversing the flow of skilled workers moving on to greener pastures will happen if the government stops using glossy brochures and starts addressing taxation issues.

**Conflicting poverty fixes.**

February 20, 2007.

*Halifax Chronicle Herald.*

The Halifax Chronicle Herald carried the story of AIMS acting President Charles Cirtwill causing waves in Ottawa and raising at least one Senator’s blood pressure during his appearance at a Senate committee set up to study poverty in Atlantic Canada. Cirtwill argued that the first step is eliminated the existing disincentives to work and his message was that government should just get out of the way.

**Mayor fears job cuts coming.**

March 13, 2007.

*The Daily Gleaner.*

As the New Brunswick government prepared to table its first budget, the news media in that province turned to AIMS for an explanation of what would make a good budget. In this article in the Daily Gleaner, AIMS Director of Research Ian Munro cautions the New Brunswick government against raising taxes. He also echoes AIMS ongoing message that the best way to keep young people from leaving home for greener pastures is to offer personal income tax cuts.

**Education minister says standardized tests should be part of curriculum.**

April 13, 2007.

*The Daily Gleaner.*

AIMS spoke and the New Brunswick Government got the message. In this article by the Daily Gleaner, the New Brunswick Government is following AIMS’ suggestion and plans to reinstate standardized testing in its anglophone high schools. This news came out as AIMS was releasing its 5th annual report card on Atlantic Canadian high schools.

**AIMS provides insight on public school performance.**

April 16, 2007.

*CBC Radio – Maritimes.*

The “Minister’s Report to Parents” in Nova Scotia shows all is not well in the province’s schools. Only 28 percent of high school students passed their math exams last year. The provincial average was just 39 per cent. The Elementary Literacy Assessment was a bit better, but not by much. As the news media tried to make sense of the report, many turned to AIMS for expert comment. In this story on CBC Radio’s Mainstreet, reporter Rob North talked to AIMS acting president Charles Cirtwill.

**A heavy toll on the eastern front.**

April 16, 2007.

*The Globe and Mail.*

As the number of Canadian casualties in Afghanistan continued to grow, the Globe and Mail turned to AIMS acting president Charles Cirtwill to help make sense of the issue for national readers.

**RC5 attracts attention around the region.**

April 17, 2007.

Various.

Love it or hate it, there is no doubt that even after five years, the AIMS Report Card on Atlantic Canadian High Schools attracts attention. Once again this year the report card grabbed regional headlines. After five years it is clear that AIMS original thesis was correct. Good schools come in all shapes and sizes. Unfortunately, that is equally true of schools that may be experiencing difficulties. There is no ideal school size, location or structure.

**Succeeding in education.**

April 17, 2005.  
*CBC Radio – Mainstreet.*

AIMS 5th annual high school report card should be used to better understand what is going on in our public schools. AIMS acting president and report co-author Charles Cirtwill discusses the importance of such an understanding in this interview on CBC Radio’s Mainstreet in Nova Scotia.

**Grade inflation sets up students to fail: study.**

May 7, 2007.  
*Times and Transcript.*

AIMS Commentary on grade inflation made front page news in New Brunswick. Author and AIMS Director of Education Policy, Robert Laurie, explains that students are being set up to fail when teacher assigned grades are consistently higher than grades earned on provincial exams.

**What’s the score in Nova Scotia? Students’ test marks don’t seem to add up correctly.**

May 28, 2007.  
*The National Post.*

AIMS Senior Policy Analyst Bobby O’Keefe is featured in this National Post article that covers the Commentary, “The Numbers Don’t Add Up.” O’Keefe explains the province would better serve students if it marked provincial math exams centrally and reported the data on a school by school basis.

**Province wants children ready when they enter kindergarten.**

June 6, 2007.  
*The Telegraph-Journal.*

New Brunswick’s Telegraph Journal turned to AIMS for its education expertise when the provincial government announced plans for pre-school education programmes. AIMS acting president Charles Cirtwill suggests that the government is overstepping its bounds when it tries to legislate how children are educated before they enter the education system.

**Equalization uncovered.**

June 14, 2007.  
*770 am Calgary.*

AIMS’ expertise on equalization was requested for a radio interview with 770 am Calgary. During the interview, AIMS acting President Charles Cirtwill gave insightful analysis on the equalization debate surrounding the revised formula and the Atlantic Accords. He points out that Newfoundland and Labrador and Nova Scotia are receiving fair treatment under the new formula while the whole situation would be moot if the government took natural resources out of the equalization formula as it said it would when it was in Opposition.

**Demographics threaten Atlantic Canada.**

June 18, 2007.  
*The Globe and Mail.*

AIMS cutting edge research on demographic trends and implications of the Atlantic Canadian labour shortage is featured in this Globe and Mail article. AIMS Director of Research Ian Munro points out that as the workforce shrinks the region will struggle to have an adequate tax base to provide the necessary public services.

**Our future: Grey and gloomy.**

July 18, 2007.  
*Halifax Chronicle Herald.*

A decade ago AIMS warned of pending problems caused by Atlantic Canada’s ageing and declining population. Now the latest Statistic Canada report supports AIMS original research. The Halifax Chronicle-Herald turned to AIMS to review some of the public policy options for a population that is rapidly turning grey.

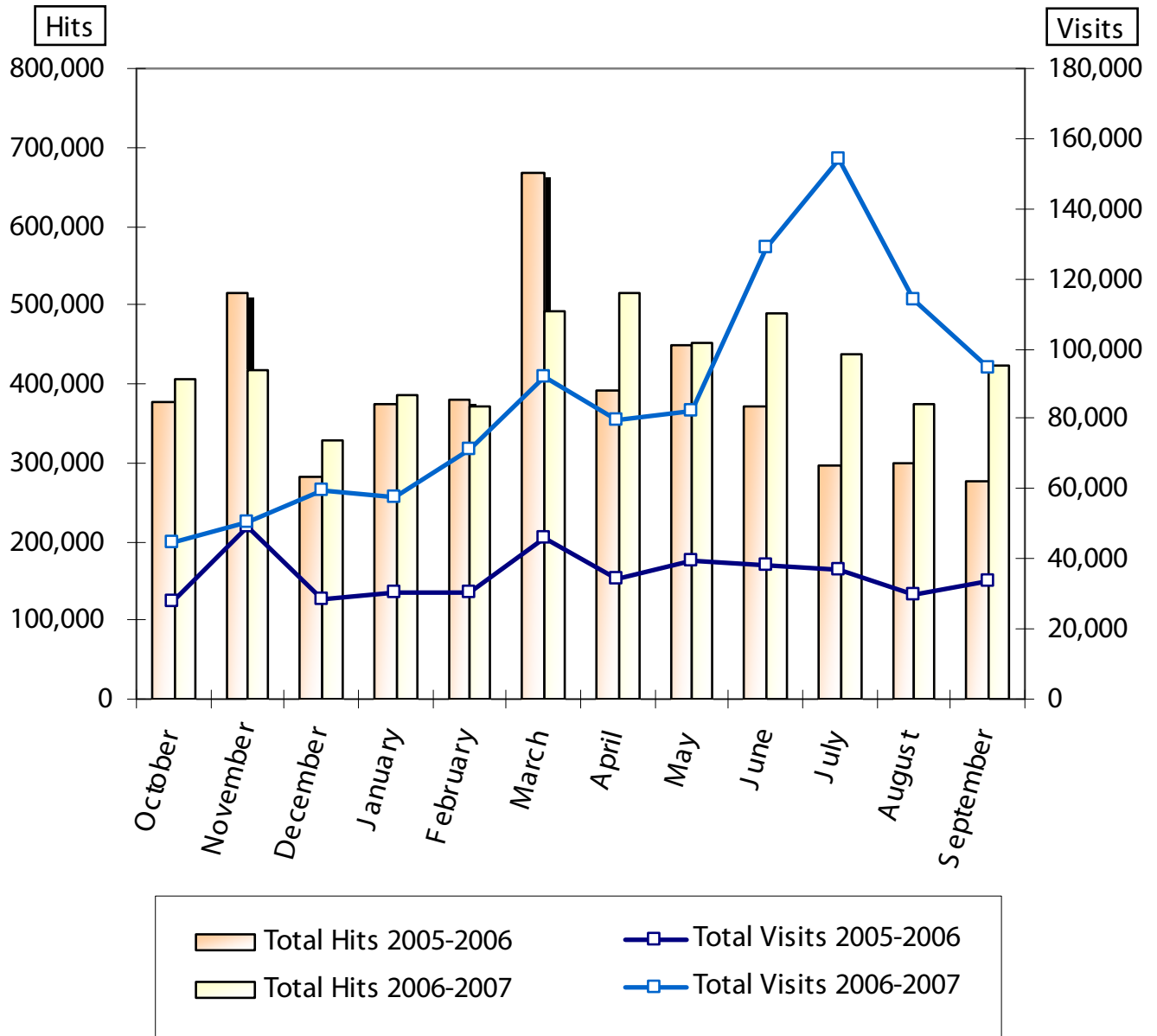
**Governments need to take tougher line with teachers unions - think-tank.**

September 7, 2007  
*The Canadian Press; The St. John’s Telegram*

The *release* of AIMS’ paper on the influence of teachers’ union on education policy sparked debate across the country. This story by The Canadian Press, explained that AIMS latest Commentary effectively argues that it is time for governments and school boards to take a more aggressive stance with teachers unions.

Visits to the AIMS website more than doubled this past fiscal year from 425,000 to just over one million.

There were almost 5.1 million hits to the website in this fiscal year, an increase of more than 400,000 hits or about eight percent from 2005-2006.



	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Total
<b>Total Hits</b>	405,328	416,412	328,353	384,185	370,478	493,192	513,684	452,518	490,039	437,688	375,352	422,345	5,089,574
<b>Total Visits</b>	44,850	50,528	59,589	57,692	71,308	91,731	79,786	82,448	129,141	153,935	114,276	94,237	1,029,521

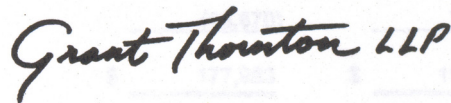
**To the Directors of the Atlantic Institute for Market Studies**

The accompanying summarized balance sheet and statements of revenue, expenditures and fund balance are derived from the complete financial statements of the Atlantic Institute for Market Studies as at September 30, 2007 and for the year then ended on which we expressed an opinion without reservation in our report dated November 16, 2007. The preparation of summarized financial statements from the complete financial statements is the responsibility of management. Our responsibility, in accordance with the applicable Assurance Guideline of the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants, is to report on the summarized financial statements.

In our opinion, the accompanying summarized financial statements fairly summarize, in all material respects, the related complete financial statements in accordance with the criteria described in the Guideline referred to above.

These summarized financial statements do not contain all the disclosures required by Canadian generally accepted accounting principles. Readers are cautioned that these statements may not be appropriate for their purposes. For more information on the entity's financial position, results of operations, changes in general fund equity and cash flows, reference should be made to the related complete financial statements.

Halifax, Nova Scotia  
16 November 2007



Grant Thornton LLP  
Chartered Accountants

**Aux administrateurs de l'Institut atlantique des études de marché**

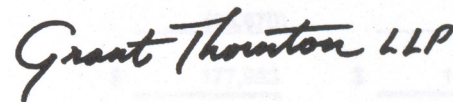
Le bilan condensé ainsi que les états condensés des revenus, dépenses et balance du fonds ci-joints ont été établis à partir des états financiers complets de Atlantic Institute for Market Studies au 30 septembre 2007 et pour l'exercice terminé à cette date à l'égard desquels nous avons exprimé une opinion sans réserve dans notre rapport daté du le 16 Novembre 2007. La préparation d'états financiers condensés à partir des états financiers complets relève de la responsabilité de la direction de l'Institut. Notre responsabilité, en conformité avec la Note d'orientation concernant la certification, publiée par l'Institut Canadien des

Comptables Agréés, consiste à faire rapport sur les états financiers condensés.

À notre avis, les états financiers condensés ci-joints présentent, à tous les égards importants, un résumé fidèle des états financiers complets correspondants selon les critères décrits dans la note d'orientation susmentionnée.

Les états financiers condensés ci-joints ne contiennent pas toutes les informations requises selon les principes comptables généralement reconnus du Canada. Le lecteur doit garder à l'esprit que ces états financiers risquent de ne pas convenir à ses fins. Pour obtenir de plus amples informations sur la situation financière, les résultats d'exploitation, changement du fonds de fonctionnement et les flux de trésorerie de l'Institut, le lecteur devra se reporter aux états financiers complets correspondants.

Halifax, Nouvelle-Écosse  
le 16 novembre 2007



Grant Thornton LLP  
Comptables agréés



**Summarized Statement of Revenue, Expenditures and General Fund Equity**

**État des revenus, dépenses et surplus du fonds de fonctionnement**

Year ended September 30, 2007 • Pour l'exercice terminé le 30 septembre, 2007

**Revenue/Revenus**

Donations/Dons		
Foundations	\$ 852,096	
Corporate and Individual	406,930	
Events/Events	2,795	
Interest/Intérêts	5,527	
Other/Autres	30	
	<u>                    </u>	\$ 1,267,378

**Expenses/Dépenses**

Salaries and Benefits/ Salaires et benefices	909,524	
Contract Fees/Frais de contrats	55,816	
Other/Autres	288,013	
	<u>                    </u>	<u>(1,253,353)</u>

**Excess of Revenue over Expenditures/  
Excédent les revenus seu des dépenses**

\$ 14,025

Fund balance, beginning of year /  
Surplus du fonds de fonctionnement, début de l'exercice

\$ 235,059

Excess of Expenditures over Revenue /  
Excédent les dépenses sur des revenus

14,025

**General Fund Equity, End of year/  
Surplus du fonds de fonctionnement, fin de l'exercice**

\$ 249,084

**Balance Sheet /Bilan**

September 30, 2007/ le 30 septembre, 2007

**Assets/Actif** \$ 645,648

**Liabilities/Passif** (396,564)

**Fund Balance/Solde de fonds** \$ 249,084

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Cara Operations	Haven Manor	NB Tel	The Co-operators
CIBC	Hay Hospitality Limited	Neurochem	The John Dobson Foundation
Canadian National	High Liner Foods Incorporated	New Brunswick Chambers of Commerce	The Shaw Group Limited
Canadian Pacific	Hilda Stevens	Nova Corporation	The Toronto-Dominion Bank
Canadian Petroleum Products Institute	Hyndman and Company Limited	Nova Scotia Chamber of Commerce	Theriault Financial
Charles Cirtwill	Ian Munro	O'Regan's	Tim Powers
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