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Part One: Get out of the way: AIMS tells Senate Standing Committee on Rural Poverty

AIMS acting President Charles Cirtwill caused waves and raised at least one Senator's blood pressure during a recent appearance on Parliament Hill by offering innovative suggestions to a Standing Committee on how they could alleviate poverty by doing less instead of more. He says the disincentives to work that have been created over the years need to be eliminated.

This Commentary, **Moving On Up: Transitioning from poverty to prosperity**, is based on remarks made to the Senate Standing Committee. Cirtwill gives examples of how the pending labour shortage offers an excellent opportunity to combat rural poverty. Traditionally underemployed groups like women, visible minorities and those facing special challenges will all have greater opportunities to participate in our economy as labour becomes increasingly scarce and employers adapt to this reality by reaching out to these groups.

These opportunities, particularly in rural areas will spur growth, drive job creation, and attract investment; provided government does not mess up this virtuous circle with short-sighted, interventionist policies.

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



Part Two: No Village Left Behind: As NB explores the route to self- sufficiency AIMS explains how rural communities can benefit

New Brunswick's Self-Sufficiency Task Force started down the road to economic independence amidst a storm of controversy as co-Chairman Francis McGuire recently implied that the depopulation of the province's rural, northern communities is necessary for New Brunswick to thrive. In this front page story from the Telegraph-Journal AIMS acting President Charles Cirtwill explained that this does not have to be the case.

He agrees that some communities will suffer but goes on to explain that governments should not try to decide which community lives or dies. They should, rather, invest in infrastructure and implement the policies that give the widest possible latitude to communities to save themselves.

"Roads, airports, communications and - most importantly – education, can bolster opportunities for towns and villages. There are all kinds of ingenious ways that are cost-effective to bring economic value to these communities – consider access to wireless Internet province-wide for instance."

He added that development of a region or town does not necessarily come at the expense of another and that the key to success is finding the appropriate solutions for each individual area.

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



Part Three: India's rise to economic superpower: Manna for Atlantica

Atlantica has the closest North American ports to this Asian nation that is quickly becoming a trade behemoth and represents a substantial opportunity as manufactured goods start to fly out of Indian factories.

In an article that appeared in the Globe and Mail, AIMS Senior Policy Analyst Stephen Kymlicka points out how trade with India suffers from misconceptions. Highlighting the amazing strides India has made in terms of public and private sector investment, Kymlicka gives the facts on the country's potential as a trading partner and stresses the need to get moving or lose the opportunity.

"India is about agriculture (the second largest producer in the world which, together with allied industries accounts for over 18% of GDP and over 60% of the workforce), automobiles, textiles, gems/jewellery, chemicals, steel, transportation equipment, cement, mining, petroleum, and pharmaceuticals. In fact, Indian industrial growth last quarter came in at a torrid 14.4% annual rate."

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



Part Four: Don't keep deregulation on hold: AIMS Director of Research tells Commons Standing Committee on Science and Industry

It may seem odd, but customers of telephone companies across Canada have been on hold for a while - on hold waiting for lower prices. Current regulations restrict telephone companies from offering lower prices for local service. Yet others that offer local telephone services are under no such restrictions.

This Commentary, **Taking the Caller off Hold**, is based on remarks by AIMS Director of Research Ian Munro to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology. It explains why telecom deregulation should be accelerated. AIMS was invited to appear after making a submission to Industry Canada supporting the ministerial proposal to accelerate the deregulation process.

While some argue this will hurt consumers in small markets, Munro says that's not the case.

"By drilling down to smaller areas, regulation can be kept in place where competitors are not present and the benefits of full competition can be provided where competitors are present."

To read the complete Commentary based on Munro's remarks, [click here](#).

To read AIMS' submission to Industry Canada, [click here](#).

To read a recent op-ed on this subject, [click here](#).

Part Five: Mother May I?: AIMS exposes Nova Scotia's Freedom of Information Act as anything but

This Commentary reviews the trials and truths of Nova Scotia's *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. Thirty years ago Nova Scotia became the first province in Canada to enact Freedom of Information legislation. All other provinces followed suit and enacted their own rules governing the release of information to the public.

Nova Scotia's original Act was replaced in 1993 by the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* commonly known today in the province as FOI/POP. Application of the legislation has become a veritable minefield for many applicants thereby discouraging fair and timely release of information.

AIMS has used the Act extensively in its ongoing search for data for its annual High School Report Card. It has successfully fought for the release of basic information about our schools. AIMS acting President used that first hand experience in remarks to the Right to Know Forum at the University of King's College in Halifax.

"Mother May I?" is based on those comments explaining the common misuses of Nova Scotia's *Freedom Of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

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

Part Six: Holding officials accountable: The dismissal of the Halifax Regional School Board is a lesson for public education.

Many have watched the debacle of the Halifax Regional School Board with amusement, that is if your children don't attend schools that operate under that board.

For months, there was a litany of feuds, fights, and failures. In the end, Nova Scotia's education minister removed the elected members of the School Board and appointed a one person board. The action was called undemocratic and for weeks critics debunked the action in letters to the editor, calls to radio shows, and columns in the newspapers.

However, the tale of the Halifax Regional School Board is a lesson for everyone interested in public education. What is the role of a school board? Who is in charge? And who is accountable?

This op/ed written by AIMS acting President Charles Cirtwill explains the law, the lesson and a solution.

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

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