INSIDE RCMP ATLANTIC TEXTILES UNEMPLOYMENT

Atlantic Issues

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The chaos of our prisons

by James MacLean

Riots, hostage-takings, shoot-outs, suicides, fires . . . Canada's prison system is in a state of chaos. In Atlantic Canada we had grim reminders of this fact during the summer. On June 21st a tragic fire at the Saint John city jail left twenty-one inmates dead. When thirteen prisoners were shot and wounded by a guard at the Dorchester Penitentiary on September 4th, the inmate population refused to return to their cells. Meanwhile out in Saskatchewan several deaths resulted from prison disturbances at Prince Albert and Regina. Last year there were no fewer than twenty-seven major incidents in Canadian prisons.

Prison riots make the headlines, but there is another frightening reality which we hear much less about: **imprisonment is simply not working as a means of dealing with criminality.** Prisoners are not being reformed, and society is not being protected. This fact was acknowledged in the recently published Report to Parliament by the Sub-Committee on the Penitentiary System in Canada. "Incarceration," the MPs said, "has failed in its two essential purposes—correcting the offender and providing permanent protection to society." That such is the case is amply demonstrated by the high rate of "recidivism", that is, the proportion of former inmates who commit further crimes and end up in jail again. The recidivism rate in Canada is as high as 80 per cent.

"The hole." Inmates can be confined to a cell like this for weeks, months, or even years.

A World Unto Themselves

Compared with many other advanced industrial societies, Canada imprisons a large number of people. There are at present about 19,000 adult prisoners in Canada. The annual rate of incarceration is 240 per 100,000, whereas in the United Kingdom it is only 59 per 100,000. All but 450 of the Canadian prisoners are men. About 9,400 inmates are serving sentences of two years or more in federally-administered penitentiaries; the remainder are in provincial jails.

Prisons are a world unto themselves. The inmates are desperately unhappy and as a group are hostile to the most immediate representatives of the oppressive system, the guards. They have their own hierarchy and their own set of rules, which includes giving only the minimum necessary co-operation to those supervising their detention. In general inmates and guards see themselves locked into a perpetual state of opposition and confrontation: it is "them against us". Custodial staff and inmates cannot in these circumstances work toward mutually acceptable goals. As journalist Michael Enright has observed, if an inmate "is too friendly with the guards, he becomes the object of hatred or even violence by his fellow inmates. If he conforms too readily to his peers, he opens himself up to harassment from the guards and administration."

Degrading Treatment

The physical conditions of detention vary from one penal institution to another. Probably they are worst in the large, overcrowded federal penitentiaries, some of which still house prisoners in the same quarters used over a century ago. The work, educational, and recreational programmes which have been developed by well-meaning senior administrators have had little positive effect on the overall prison population. In reality the prisons do little more than confine and cause torment. Prisoners are subjected to the most degrading forms of treatment with no recourse to a grievance procedure outside the prison authorities. The Parliamentary Sub-Committee Report described practices which were until recently common at the Millhaven Institution in Kingston, Ontario:

"Dogs were let loose on the inmates in the yard and in their cells. Gas was used to punish inmates frequently—in March, 1973, as often as three or four times a week. Inmates who were first shackled, sometimes hands and feet together, were then beaten with clubs, made to crawl on the floor, and finally gassed."

The Report notes that such practices have now given way to less violent forms of harassment, such as unnecessarily waking inmates during the night, adulterating their meals, not allowing them sufficient time to wash, etc. Nevertheless,

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The unemployed speak

This article is a transcript of a CBC radio documentary, which was prepared by Susan Perly, and which appeared in August on the national CBC show Sunday Morning. The transcript is reproduced with the permission of Sunday Morning.

Introduction:

In parts of Canada's Maritime provinces, one family in four relies on welfare cheques, or unemployment insurance, in order to get enough money to eat. Some of the most economically depressed areas in this country are here, in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, PEI, and Newfoundland. For the people who live here, the future holds little promise. The Canadian dream has passed them by. This is especially true in the hinterlands within the hinterlands, in areas like the North Shore of New Brunswick, in areas like Nova Scotia's Cape Breton Island.

Cape Breton's unemployment rate is extremely high. The official unemployment rate for the island is called at 14.8 per cent. The actual rate is probably triple that figure.

This summer, Cape Bretoners concerned about unemployment began to publicly protest these facts. Three times, they occupied federal government offices. First, the Post Office; second, the office of Manpower and Immigration; and third, the Canada Works office. The protests were spearheaded by the Committee of Concern for the Unemployed, a loose coalition of unemployed

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Freedom and the police

The view of Canadian society which has always been presented by our politicians, school textbooks, and information media is that of a "free" society. We have been told that if economic inequalities are much greater here than in certain other countries, at least we enjoy civil liberties like the rights of association, expression, dissent, and privacy which citizens of those countries do not. Most Canadians who have offered their lives in war did so in the belief that they were defending such liberties.

In reality our civil liberties in Canada can be swept away by the arbitrary power of the State and the police. This became obvious seven years ago when in Quebec 497 persons were incarcerated without charges and denied bail, access to legal counsel, and communication with the outside world.

Disclosures in recent months about the covert activities of our national police force once again raise disturbing questions concerning fundamental freedoms in this country. When policemen are, for political reasons, listening to people's telephone and bedroom conversations, keeping files on the personal lives of opposition parliamentrians and union members, and infiltrating legal organizations, is not our right to freedom of association being abused?

When (as happened in connection with the police break-in of a Montreal news agency) a senior officer who pleads guilty to a serious criminal act is released without penalty and restored to his position, has not the principle of equality before the law been deeply eroded?

When there exists legislation like the Official Secrets Act allowing the government in power to tap telephones and open mail without judicial authorization, have not the politicians taken from us our right to privacy?

When a branch of the RCMP has a mandate to survey "peace" and "protest" groups, and to warn employers against hiring members of such groups, is not the basic security of citizens and their ability to work for a better world seriously menaced?

There have always been and probably always will be segments of the community which are unwilling to recognize the human rights of others. Earlier this year, for example, the president of the Canadian Association of Police Chiefs called for the outlawing of some opposition political organizations. Those of us who consider civil rights important must be vigilant in seeking their observance. The present Prime Minister seems unconcerned about such matters as the police surveillance of his parliamentary opponents, and only under considerable pressure did he consent to an enquiry into the criminal activities of the RCMP. Similarly, the Solicitor-General has withheld evidence from the Quebec provincial investigation of these activities, arguing that to do otherwise would threaten "national security." Yet the Royal Commission and the Quebec enquiry may provide an occasion for all of us to reflect on the power granted the police in our society, and in various ways to insist on the full recognition of civil liberties in Canada.

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Letters

To the Editors,

Thanks for the Atlantic Issues. They're great! . . . I'm enclosing the latest **Dimension**. Thanks for the plug. We will be plugging Atlantic Issues in our next.

Cy Gonick,
Canadian Dimension Magazine

[*Ed. note: The magazine's address is:* 44 Princess Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 1K2 $7.00 per year, 12 issues.)

To the Editors,

. . . We have more than enjoyed these publications and look forward to future issues.

Mrs. Constance Atcheson,
Information Centre,
Saint John Regional Library

To the Editors,

. . . I think (Atlantic Issues) is one of the most refreshing vital analyses I have seen in some time . . .

Betty Peterson
Janvrius Harbour
West Arichat, Cape Breton

To the Editors,

. . . I have received a first copy and enjoyed it very much—will pass it on to my neighbours, who are also interested in keeping informed about local affairs and their wider implications.

I enclose a donation.. Thank you very much.

Barbara Conway
Antigonish County, Nova Scotia

To the Editors,

Thank you for the copies of Atlantic Issues. I found it most interesting and could serve a very useful place in Atlantic Canada as perhaps an alternative press or perhaps more an issue identifier where our problems would be brought out in some detail.

. . . Personally, I think someone should look at where workers in Atlantic Canada will be when the Wage Controls Programme ends, considering that increases of 8, 6 and 4 per cent for Canada were on wage rates already (Oct. 1975) from 70-80 per cent below national averages.

Leo F. McKay
Nova Scotia Federation of Labour

To the Editors,

Enclosed is a cheque. Now that you have produced your second issue you have demonstrated evidence of staying power. I hope you will be able to sustain the effort. I plan to use the issues as case studies in my training laboratories for Development Workers. As a learning resource, it will save me a great deal of time and effort—hence this is not a contribution but a payment for resource material.

It is important to my role as an Adult Educator to have resource material which is not opinion, nor activist, but grounded in fact with measured evidence. I hope you can avoid the temptation to "spout off" or become political..What we need is a support system for the activist and politician to make them credible.

Keep up the effort!

Luke L. Batdorf
Continuing Education,
St. Francis Xavier University,
Antigonish, Nova Scotia

Why is the maritime textile industry dying?

Your socks, clothes, the carpet under your feet, and nets for trawlers: all of these are products of the textile and clothing industry. At one time, most of these goods were produced in the Maritimes. Today the manufacturing of these products here is minimal. What happened to the textile industry in the Atlantic Provinces? How is it related to the underdevelopment of this area, and how has the textile industry developed vis-a-vis the rest of the Canadian economy?

by Elizabeth Beale

In 1885, with less than a third of the total Canadian population, the Maritimes had more than a third of the country's cotton mills. But the large dry goods wholesalers in Montreal controlled the marketing and distribution of the products of Maritime cotton mills. In 1879, when effective tariff protection was introduced to promote domestic secondary manufacturing under the National Policy, two of Montreal's largest wholesalers—with the financial backing of the Bank of Montreal—were able to push for the consolidation of the existing Canadian grey cotton mills. Under the pressure tactics of this high-powered business group, several of the large cotton mills were bought out and Dominion Cottons was formed. However, conditions under tariff protection were still favourable for the smaller independent mills which were scattered over New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. By 1895, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia's total production in textiles reached a net value of $3,600,000, and as many as 5,705 people had jobs in this sector.

After the turn of the century, while net value of production rose, automation and increased consolidation into larger units of production resulted in a decline in the number of mills and employees. Dominion Cotton managed to acquire new mills and become Dominion Textiles. Throughout the 20's, the Maritimes enjoyed a brief period of prosperity. Yet by 1929 production in textiles and clothing had declined by 30% in New Brunswick, and Dominion Textiles had closed all its Maritime mills.

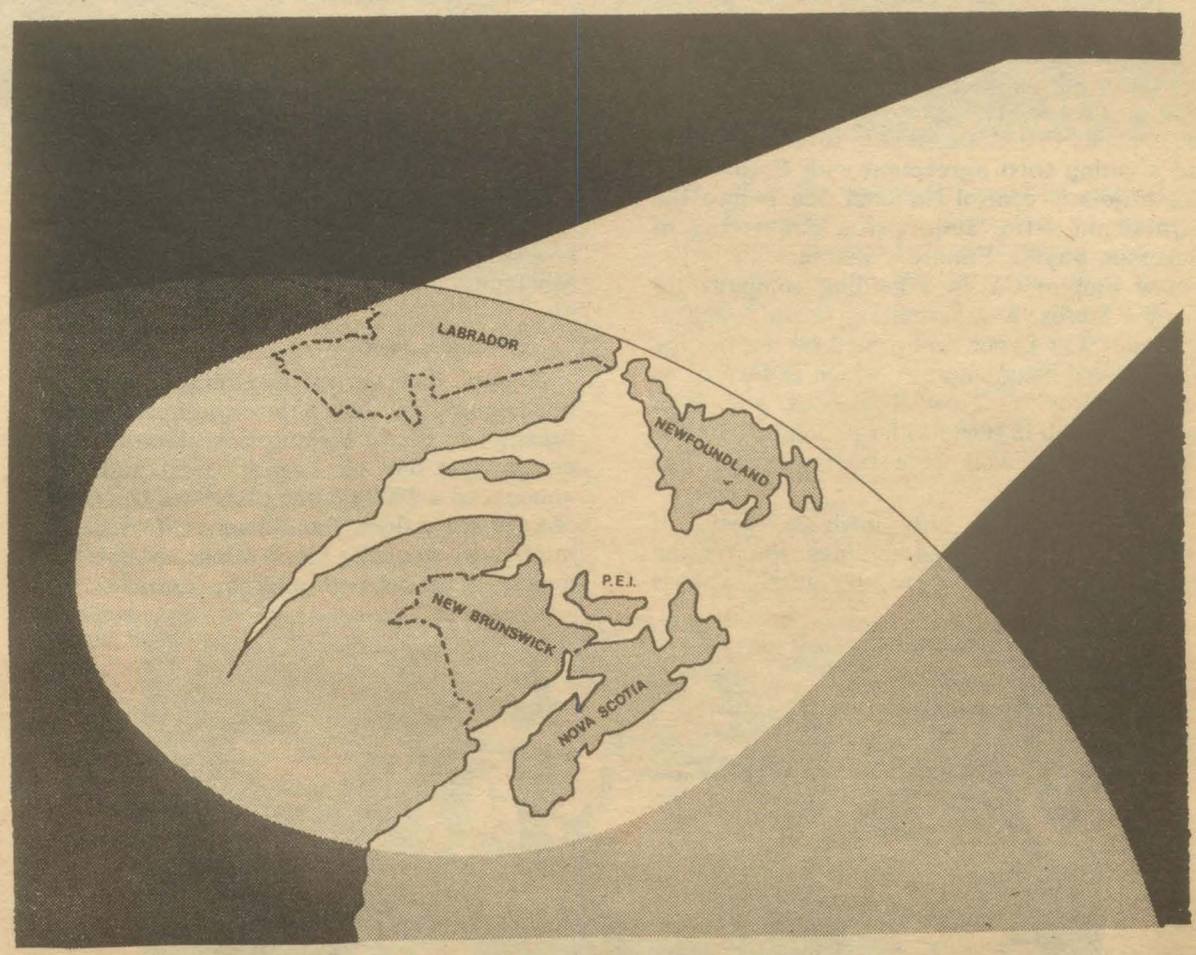
Decline of the industry

The industry maintained its 1929 level of production until 1949. In the next decade, the textile industry declined, and in so doing, contributed greatly to the total decline of 3.8% in employment in the Atlantic Provinces. Employment in clothing and knitted goods went down 30%, and by over 60% in textiles. The textile industry had been an important source of employment, accounting for 7.2% of secondary employment in 1949. This proportion fell to 2.9% in 1958. Indeed, the decline in employment in textiles and clothing was almost enough to offset the benefits of increased jobs created in all other industries.

. . . we might be tempted to think that Quebec has benefited at our expense . . . but this is hardly the case!

In Nova Scotia, the gross value of textile production decreased from $5.5 million to $4.9 million, and the gross value of clothing and knitted goods rose by less than a million. In New Brunswick, this process was even more pronounced. By 1958, the gross value of textile production had slipped to less than one quarter of its 1949 value, or from $10.6 million to $2.5 million. New Brunswick in 1949 had 23,400 people employed in manufacturing—1,709 of them in textiles. Nine years later, only 412 remained in textiles—a 76% drop, while jobs in manufacturing had declined overall to 20,744 (or by 11%).

Since 1958, the absolute number employed in textiles, clothing and knitting mills has stayed pretty well constant for the four Maritime provinces. However, those employed in textiles clothing and knitting as a percentage of those in manufacturing has fallen over the last 20 years. The value of the product of textile industries is now so small that it is no longer considered as a major export industry for the Atlantic Provinces. In 1974, the total value of regional exports was slightly over $3 million. The textile mills in Nova Scotia can now be counted on the fingers of two hands—including Stanfields Ltd. (Truro and Oxford) and Dominion Textiles (Yarmouth).



What happened to the industry that once gave work to thousands of Maritimers?

Quebec

Since the early 1900's, the production of textiles has been concentrated in Quebec. From this brief history of the textile industry, we might be tempted to think that Quebec has benefited at our expense . . . but this is hardly the case!

Like all labour-intensive industries, the textile industry tends to pay its employees low wages. Most of the plants are situated in small towns which are largely dependent on the industry. A large number of the independent firms have been gradually swallowed up by larger corporations, and the attachment and responsibility of these new owners to the communities where they are located is minimal. Regular, seasonal layoffs occur, and little attention has been given to the health problems posed by the large quantity of dust released in the processing of the fibres. Many of the companies have used the threat of import competition from low wage producers to weaken the bargaining positions of unions in wage disputes. Thus, they force the unions to take a narrow protectionist viewpoint as regards imports and tariff policies.

Corporate concentration

The process through which the various mills have left the Atlantic Provinces and moved to Quebec, and to a lesser extent to Ontario, is not of course peculiar to the textile industry. The same pattern can be seen in many industries that originally had a strong base in the Atlantic region. But one factor in that process that has been especially noticeable for the textile industry since 1920 is corporate concentration. There has been a trend toward company mergers and vertical integration of firms. Dominion Textiles (Canadian owned), Dupont (75% American owned) and Celanese (60% American owned) are the three firms which now dominate the industry. They were ranked by the Financial Post among the top 100 industrials for 1976.

Small companies have either been bought out or been forced out of business. Cosmos Imperial of Yarmouth is a case in point. It was a medium-sized textile company whose only external links were with a group of Hamilton financiers not well known in Canadian banking circles. In order to modernize its facilities in Yarmouth, N.S. and Marysville, N.B., Cosmos borrowed from Industrial Estates Limited (IEL), a Nova Scotia Crown corporation.

IEL foreclosed on the loan before Cosmos was able to negotiate alternative financing, forcing Cosmos into bankruptcy. I.E.L. then sold the Yarmouth plant to Dominion Textiles in 1973.

The first chairman of Industrial Estates Limited was Frank Sobey (of Sobey's food stores). He also was a director of Dominion Textiles.

Dominion Textiles, then, was able to eliminate a competitor and acquire "additional spinning and weaving capacity and a trained labour force" in Yarmouth. —As for the Marysville plant, it was purchased by a large American firm, Whittaker.

The clothing industry

The clothing industry, on the other hand, consists primarily of small establishments, excepting Monarch Wear and Levi-Strauss. Most of these small firms have been concentrated in the Montreal and Toronto areas.

The increasing size and concentration is directly linked to the changing technology. Textile production has become increasingly capital intensive, with the shift to man-made fibres and the use of new machinery which reduces the number of necessary operations.

Government's role

Another contributing factor to the increasing size and concentration of the industry has been Government policy, in both areas of financial assistance and tariff protection. From the time of

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Federal-provincial rivalry

What is happening to the fishery?

by Ralph Surette

In August, H.B. Nickerson and Sons Ltd. of Sydney, one of the largest fish companies in Nova Scotia, announced the takeover of a controlling interest in National Sea Products Ltd., which is **the** largest.

"Maybe the federal people should look into this," said Dr. Dan Reid, the provincial fisheries minister. The federal people, moved with pity by such a distressed appeal, obliged. An official of the Bureau of Competition Policy announced that the transaction was being "monitored," letting slip at the same time the proviso that "we can't do much about it" anyway.

Not that it would have mattered even if anyone could—or had wanted to—do anything about it anyway. The takeover was just a bit of hocus-pocus that changed very little. Nickerson had a voting trust agreement with Empire Co. Ltd. to jointly control National Sea before the acquisition,—the acquisition consisting of Nickerson buying Empire's shares.

Now Empire Co. is a holding company for Sobey's Stores, a supermarket chain which at last count was 40 per cent owned by the George Weston food conglomerate, which in turn owns Connors Bros. of New Brunswick and B.C. Packers, which in turn has large holdings on the East Coast, as well as a rash of other fish companies.

With their vast and intricate webs of subsidiaries and assorted holdings, the Weston and Nickerson interests are very nearly what is

Whose Limit?

For some people, especially small-boat or "inshore" fishermen, this movement of monopoly forces tends to answer a rhetorical question that has been doing the rounds of the Atlantic shore: **for whom the 200-mile limit?**

Yet, as if to prove—as song and legend has it—that a fisherman's lot is a hard one, monopoly sources aren't the only ones trying to

An Icelander called Canada's offshore fishery "primitive." An Englishman called it "laughable."

muscle him out of what, for a moment, he thought to be his share.

When the 200-mile-limit was imposed last January 1st, it unlocked a vast potential. It may or may not be an exaggeration to say, as the governments of Newfoundland and Nova Scotia have, that it could make these two provinces into "haves," assuming the potential is fully realized.

One of the first effects of the 200-mile-zone—and the declaration of similar management areas off the shores of other Maritime countries—has been to idle a large part of the roving deep-sea fleets of the most advanced fishing nations, notably Japan, the Soviet Union, Germany, Poland, Spain, plus a half dozen more European countries with lesser fleets. Within the Canadian zone, the foreign boats have not been eliminated but simply reduced by about 50 per cent. The remaining trawlers fish mostly for species that Canadians do not yet fish, species that require quick freezing at sea in freezer-trawlers not possessed by Canadian companies.

Thus these nations find themselves with an excess of trawlers, technology, know-how, capital and—more importantly—markets. They're eager to put that excess capacity back to work on the East Coast of Canada. So are Dr. Reid and Walter Carter, the fisheries ministers of Nova Scotia and Newfoundland.

It need not be insisted that it's been a long time since the great powers of the world were knocking at the doors of Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, looking for economic opportunity.

Ottawa's position

Ottawa, however, is resisting and there's a tussle going on. Just before the opening of the prestigious World Fishing Exhibition in Halifax on the last day of August, Reid and Carter announced a $900 million plan for a fast buildup of a Canadian fleet. Details were not spelled out, but Ottawa would be asked to put up most of the money. If it did not (and the country's fiscal health being what it is, chances are that it will not), then there's all that foreign capital lying around. "The thing we must do is convince Ottawa the foreign capital is available and we should take advantage of it," Reid said.

At the opening ceremonies for the exhibition, federal fisheries minister Romeo LeBlanc warned against being "overzealous" in building up a Canadian deep-sea fleet in particular. Given the history of overzealous industrial schemes that went bankrupt in the Atlantic area, it was a not-so-subtle putdown of the provincial fisheries ministers. Newfoundland's Walter Carter, sitting in the back, seethed. Any more of this kind of talk by the federal government, he fumed later, and Quebec won't be the only place around with separatists. Nova Scotia's Reid called LeBlanc "naive." There's something close to bad blood frothing forth, obviously.

LeBlanc has since stated that he intends to take a "hard line" in resisting too fast a buildup of the Canadian fleet. He is also going to resist, he says, too many "joint ventures" between the provinces and the fishing nations—which are the main technique by which the provinces and especially the European countries want to exchange fish for technology and markets. Ottawa has okayed a couple so far—including one between Newfoundland and West Germany last spring whereby German trawlers catch part of the Canadian quota that Canadians can't catch, deliver it to Newfoundland fish plants for processing and then buy it for the German market. A recent arrangement between France and Quebec was also ratified. But Reid, who toured Europe in mid-summer and came back bubbling with enthusiasm, and Carter, want a free hand in setting up such arrangements on a regular basis.

The Provincial scheme

The provinces want the following to happen: through joint ventures, the Europeans, over the next decade, will share their technology (mostly

Any more of this kind of talk by the federal government, [Carter] fumed later, and Quebec won't be the only place around with separatists.

freezer-trawlers, some capable of fishing in ice fields and equipped with specialized gear for processing) in exchange for fish, giving Canadians access to their markets. Within ten years Canadians will have secured the European markets and be in full possession of the capacity (assuming Ottawa builds up the fleet) to catch most of the fish within the 200-mile-zone. The happy day will have arrived.

LeBlanc says nonsense to this provincial scheme. The intent of the 200-mile-zone was to preserve the fish stocks and give them a chance to recover. Simply continuing to fish as before under new arrangements is not going to give them that chance. Furthermore, LeBlanc says that a fast buildup of deep-sea capacity will continue the same old prejudice to the inshore fishery, with big draggers sweeping up the fish and ploughing through the small boats' nets. He has not gone as far, however, as to endorse the aims of a campaign by inshore fishermen to have a 50-mile zone from shore in which trawlers over a certain size would be excluded.

The provincial ministers answer in their turn that what they want primarily is to have Canadians catch fish now caught by the foreign trawlers anyway and quick-frozen at sea—capelin, silver hake, argentines and others.

Meanwhile representatives of the foreign fishing nations at the World Fishing Exhibition were almost savage in pointing out the backwardness of Canada's fishing capacity—which was just what Reid and Carter wanted to hear. The fact that this exhibition was held in Halifax at all—its first time outside Europe—underscores the importance given the Atlantic Coast fishing potential by the European countries.

An Icelander called Canada's offshore fishery "primitive". An Englishman called it "laughable". Even a Russian, although he allowed that it was none of his business, said he couldn't for the life of him see why Canada wasn't developing a deep-sea fleet as fast as possible.

The message was that you dumb Canuckskis had better move your ass for a change and deal with us, as these two enlightened gentlemen from Nova Scotia and Newfoundland are proposing. But it was the director of Spain's fish export association, Julio Laquilhoat, who drove the point home. Spain, he said, is ready to buy anything Canada has to sell. But the Spanish market has to be supplied immediately or it will disappear, for already the poultry industry is being expanded to take up the protein void left by the idled Spanish fleet. The same was true of other European countries.

The risks

The upshot of this rather complicated set of forces is as follows.

The risk—indeed the virtual certainty—involved in the Reid-Carter approach favouring joint ventures is that the foreign superiority, once rooted on Canadian shores, will be maintained. The fishery will indeed be "developed"—but it will be a development that might merely upgrade it from a Newfy joke to a Canuck joke—i.e., it will attain the status of the timber and mining industries in Canada as an investment frontier.

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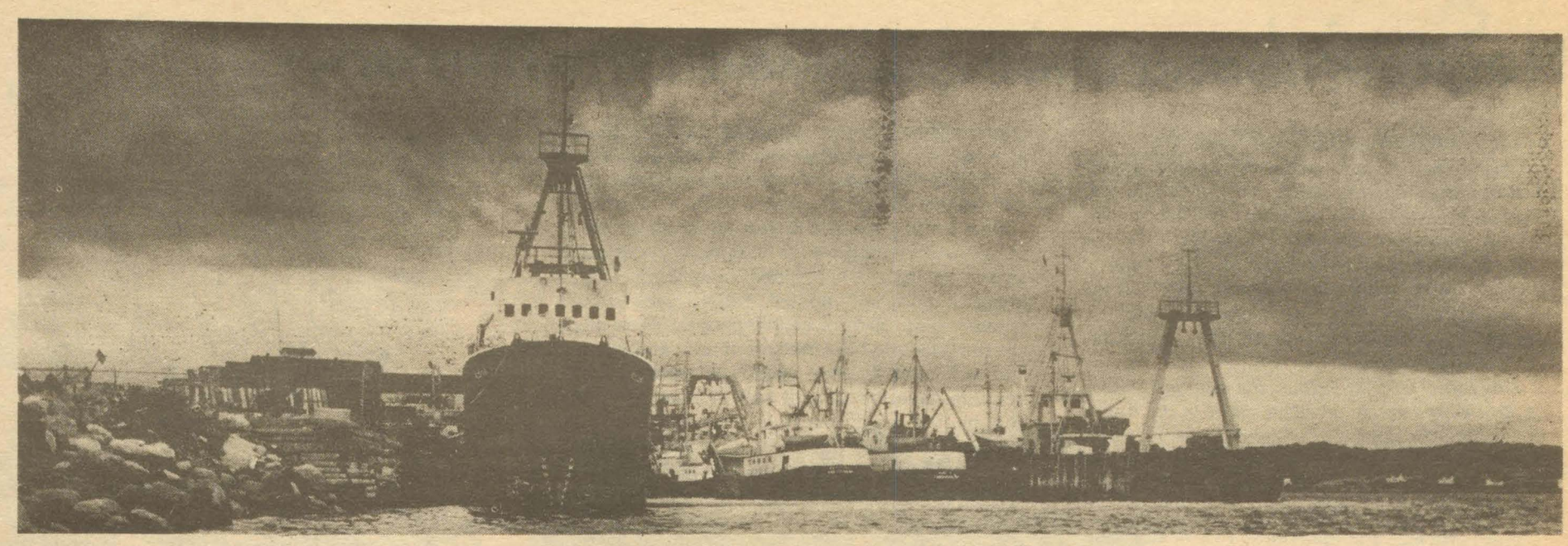

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Reid and Carter of course have a point in saying that Canadians should move to take over the species now harvested by the foreigners. And they add that under any joint ventures Canadian control and equity should dominate. But even if this is so, what "Canadians" are they talking about?

This brings us back to H.B. Nickerson and George Weston. If the federal government were to lay down hundreds of millions of dollars for new superships, who would likely be the beneficiaries except the corporations? And if not, whose "equity" and "control" would dominate in joint ventures?

. . .the fisheries department is just one desk in the corner at Environment Canada.

An organizer for the new Maritime Fishermen's Union, which is trying to unionize the inshore fishermen, points out the ultimate likelihood: foreign-operated freezer-trawlers, with Canadian corporations having a majority of equity (probably financed with public funds), catching and processing fish on the high seas and shipping directly to Europe. Possibly, too, since Canadian crews for freezer-trawlers would be hard to get, the workforce on board would continue to be foreigners.

Given such "benefits" to Canadians, there is virtue in simply letting the Russians and others to go on fishing and charging them whatever the traffic will bear in terms of licencing fees.

But what about the LeBlanc approach? This is: take a hard line against foreign involvement and any quick buildup of Canadian capacity and wait for the stocks to recover, thereby giving the inshore fishermen a chance to participate in the benefits of the new management zone.

The risk here is that the European market may not wait ten years for the fish to recover. And there's another, even graver, pitfall. If the Canadian fishery is backward, it could until now at least pride itself on the fact that the American fishery was even more backward, thanks to Canadian federal subsidies for the building of fishing boats that did not exist in the U.S. Canadians, in fact, have traditionally caught fish off American shores and landed them in American ports, much to the dismay of American fishermen. The American market consumes 80 per cent of the Canadian fish catch.

That is in the process of changing. The American 200-mile-zone has for the first time awakened the American government's interest in the fishery, and chances are that it will more and more be supplying its own markets.If that happens, and the European market is not there to pick up the slack, the result would be simply another old-style round of recession on the coast: a fish glut, no markets and crumbling prices.

Them that has, gets

Thus, in the final analysis, European interests—with Canadian corporations, Reid and Carter in tow—hold most of the trump cards. There is one of the great laws of capitalism and commissar-communism alike at work here: them that has, gets.

The chances are now that Canada, having considered the fishery a sub-human activity since day one, will pay for having fallen behind by remaining behind.

Many of these pitfalls can be avoided, of course, assuming that Ottawa is interested. For despite Romeo LeBlanc's stance as the Fisherman's Friend, the problem is as much with Ottawa's attitude as with the provinces'.

Ottawa's hope all along has been that with the 200-mile limit, plus a couple of hundred million dollars in temporary subsidies, the fishery can be safely forgotten and left to its own devices again. Bureaucrats in Tunney's Pasture, it is safe to say, do not particularly like fish.

A Canadian deep-sea fleet must be developed, but a) - if it is to be paid for in public funds, it must be publicly owned; and b) - it must not conflict with the needs of the inshore fishery - (a 50-mile limit or variable equivalent is also needed). The dangers of losing the European market on the short term could be compensated for if Ottawa was interested in agressive marketing. Romeo LeBlanc himself—one of the more competent ministers in the Trudeau cabinet—probably is. But one thing that few people on the East Coast tend to forget is that the fisheries department is just one desk in the corner at Environment Canada. Fisheries, like Regional Economic Expansion, is not part of "national" policy, but rather an aberration brought about by circumstances which do not fit into the priorities of the centre of the country.

As such, Reid and Carter are justified in not trusting Ottawa to develop the fishery and insisting on doing it their own way. The problem is that their way is the way of foreign and monopoly domination. And the fact that this situation of choosing between the lesser of evils exists at all is due exactly to the fact that Ottawa never has been serious about the fishery, except as a temporary problem to be disposed of as quickly as possible.

Ottawa's lack of policy

The last time Ottawa got serious was during the recession years of the 1920's. At that time the fisheries cooperative movement was started with federal support, after a royal commission reported. The co-ops did some good at the local level. But Ottawa, having done its duty, then more or less dropped the whole thing. Now it's the 200-mile limit and some allied administrative programmes which, like the co-ops, will not by themselves make of the fishery what it should be.

If everything goes true to form, Romeo LeBlanc will soon go to his reward in a higher portfolio, the fishery will be left to its own devices and 50 years from now the "problem" will be once again addressed. Meanwhile—as a recent study of the U.S. Commerce Department pointed out—there's going to be a fish protein shortage in the world within ten years, despite possible short-term gluts on existing markets. Fish, far from being that slimy stuff despised of the elect except when properly served up at the Parliamentary Restaurant, is a hot commodity of the future. Potentially it is a national resource, if Ottawa wants it to be. If not, it remains merely a "problem."

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ATLANTIC TEXTILES

National Policy in 1879, the federal government's industrial strategy has been to establish the Canadian position as a branch plant of the U.S. economy. Since American industrial capital was more advanced than Canadian in organizational methods and technique, American interests were able to take advantage of tariff protection and establish subsidiaries in Canada. The passing of the recent Textile and Clothing Board Act has in many ways contributed to this same process.

On the surface, the federal policy since 1971 has attempted to assist the industry by offering effective protection to domestic producers, provided that they moved into lines of production which were not in competition with those goods from low-wage countries. This policy was a response to the cries of the major textile producers to control foreign imports which have increased in both quality and quantity over the last 5 years. In 1970, 10% of Canadian sales of clothing were foreign; in 1976, 17% of all sales were foreign. 13,000 jobs were lost last year alone in the industry. Over the past couple of years, some import controls have been placed on sweaters, hosiery, some yarns, etc.

However, the real effect of this policy has been to enhance the position of the largest companies, who, with the exception of Dominion Textiles, are foreign controlled. In addition, parts of the operations of some of the major textile companies have been moved to third world countries where they can take advantage of wages which are literally one-tenth of the wages of Canadian workers. This will mean a further loss in the number of jobs in the industry.

The textile industry serves as ar excellent example of the process of underdevelopment in Atlantic Canada. Both through its own initiative and through a government policy which has aided and abetted it, the textile industry has managed to transfer most of its resources and employment opportunities out of the Maritimes and into regions of Quebec and Ontario. There, it has been able to maintain its position as a low-wage employer in the branch-plant economy, closer to the major American and central Canadian markets. The consolidation of the industry into an increasingly small number of corporations has meant that these companies can put great pressure on the Canadian government and influence the protective tariff structure to their own advantage. While in the future, stiffer controls on imports will certainly raise the price of textiles and clothing for the consumer, they may also create severe problems for the third world countries—some of which are very dependent on textile exports to countries such as ours.

The textile and clothing industry is now worth approximately $6.6 billion. But who profits from this? . . . —Certainly not the Atlantic Provinces, nor the low-paid workers in the textile plants in Quebec—nor those with still lower wages in textile producing countries of the Third World.

Newfoundland unemployment: the human reality

by the Newfoundland Research Collective

This is the first in a series for Atlantic Issues *dealing with unemployment in Newfoundland. The analysis of this problem applies to the Atlantic provinces as a whole, since the impact of Federal Government policies in the Atlantic Region along with the control which large corporations and financial institutions exercise are essentially the same in the Maritime provinces as in Newfoundland.*

This initial article outlines the size and nature of the unemployment problem, while in the future there will be a more detailed look at specific cases such as the Alcan mine in St. Lawrence, the Come-By-Chance oil refinery and the Labrador Linerboard Mill in Stephenville.

The "official" unemployment rate of 15.8% in Newfoundland, as reported by Statistics Canada, is an inaccurate picture of the problem of unemployment. Common personal experience indicates that at least every third person in the province is out of work. By its "official" statistics, the Federal Government would have us believe that 31,000 Newfoundlanders are without work. There are, however, some 60,000 people in the province who are drawing unemployment insurance benefits along with the 5,000 individuals and families who receive able-bodied relief from the Provincial Government.

There is but one job vacancy for every one hundred unemployed Newfoundlanders.

The apparent conclusion to be drawn from these figures is that up to half the people on U.I.C. are somehow receiving taxpayers' money without really being unemployed. But before any of us begin a campaign to eliminate "U.I.C. cheaters" it might be wise to first take a glimpse at the way in which the Government defines being without a job. The Government, of course, has the power to make its own definitions and issue its own statistics for anything under its jurisdiction. The nature of official statistics, therefore, reflects the interests and purposes of government, including the need to maintain political credibility.

Officially, an unemployed person is one who either has been actively searching for work during the past four weeks or has been on lay-off for less than six months. Consequently, thousands of Newfoundlanders living in areas of chronically high unemployment, such as Bay D'Espoir and large sections of the Northeast Coast, no longer fit this category. There is no work where they live, and they are classified as "not being in the labour force". The continual transfer of Newfoundlanders out of the labour force, combined with other factors, has resulted in Newfoundland having the lowest participation rate in the labour force in Canada: 47% of its adult population as opposed to a national average of 70%. This means that more than half of the potential labour force in Newfoundland is without work.

In order to get a true picture of unemployment in Newfoundland it would be necessary from the outset to include everybody receiving U.I.C. benefits and able-bodied relief. This would amount to upwards of 65,000 people. Then there are the uncountable numbers of men and women laid off more than a year ago whose U.I.C. benefits have lapsed and who are not receiving able-bodied relief because their spouses are working. In addition, there are many women who would participate in the labour force if the jobs and facilities such as daycare were available. Finally, all those young people who are "forced" back into the educational system because they realize that job opportunities are virtually non-existent and who are able to "stave off" unemployment in this way should be included.

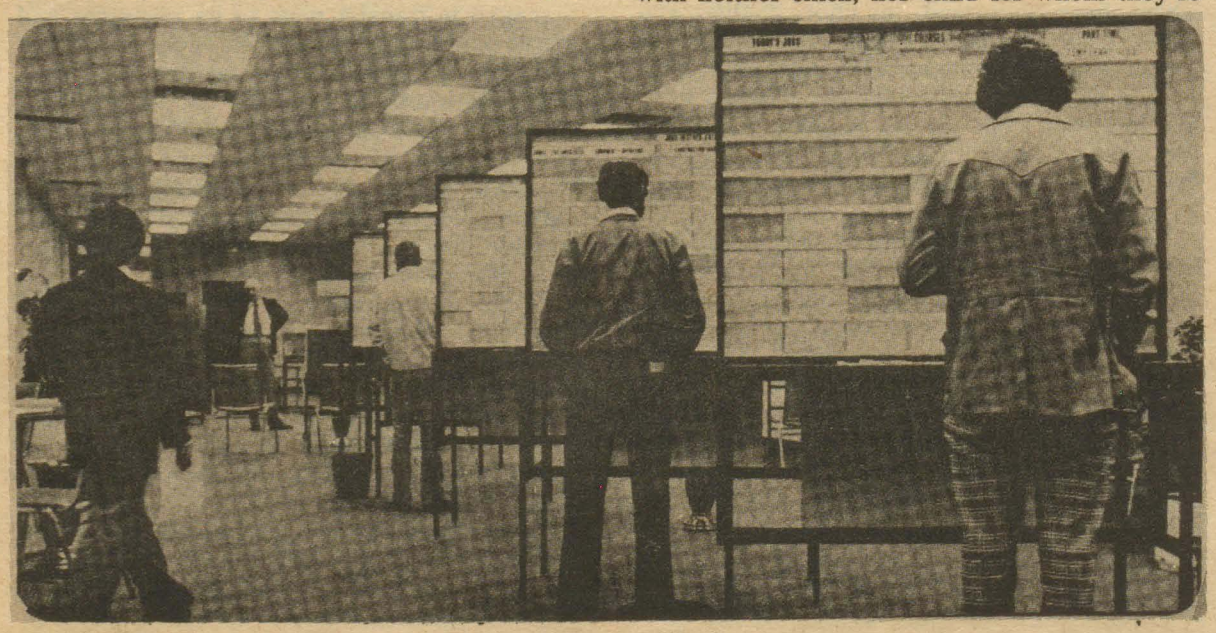
The Human Factor

The official unemployment statistics (however useful for economic planning or other purposes) are incapable of conveying the frustration, boredom and depression which comes with being unemployed for extended periods of time. Yet neglect of the human factor is an inherent aspect of our economic system, in which the driving forces are profit maximization and economic growth. So, despite the tragically high numbers of unemployed, the Governor of the Bank of Canada could state that 1976 was a good year for the Canadian economy because of a growth rate of 5 per cent. Recently Premier Frank Moores described the Newfoundland economy as "buoyant" because there was an increase in the Gross Provincial Product. How much more of this prosperity can we endure!

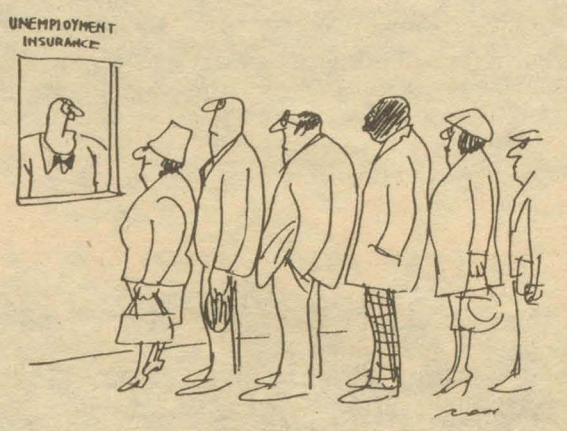
Being unable to find a job in our society, where a person's degree of well-being is so heavily dependent on income, is a disaster, destructive of body and soul. After all, it is through their work that most people establish self-esteem and a feeling of success.

For young people unemployment is especially disastrous; it means starting their working lives "on the dole". Many of them are forced to move to Ontario and Alberta in search of work. Indeed, if single people cannot find work in Newfoundland and fail to qualify for Unemployment Benefits, the attitude of the Provincial Department of Social Services will give them that extra motivation to move to the mainland that they need.

Maximum assistance to a single able-bodied person is $92 per month, and many young people are openly discouraged from applying for this pittance. The Deputy Minister of Social Services has been reported as suggesting that he thought it unfair for single able-bodied individuals to have their idleness reinforced through welfare payments, especially when opportunities exist elsewhere. After all, he added, ". . .they're foot loose and fancy free with neither chick, nor child for whom they're



Looking for a job—a full-time occupation in Newfoundland.



"Go home, I tell you! The recession is over!"

responsible".

For many other Newfoundlanders - married, with a variety of valuable work and social skills and attributes - lack of employment opportunity also means job-hunting on the mainland. Not only is this an emotional and financial strain on family life, but it constitutes a severe loss to the province's skilled work force.

For example, of the 525 members of the Iron Workers Union, almost 225, or more than 50%, have left the province for work in other parts of Canada over the last 18 months. A similar situation exists with electricians in the province: out of 953 members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, only 65% have jobs and many of those are on the mainland, with 184 of them being in Fort McMurray, Alberta. Newfoundland, as well as the other Atlantic provinces, is continuing the age-old tradition of supplying skilled and unskilled migratory labour to the industrial core of the country. With more and more Newfoundlanders leaving the province to work in Ontario and Alberta, the economic prospects for Newfoundland are something less than promising.

Myths

Despite the hardships endured by many unemployed people and their families, government does nothing to discourage the usual myths about unemployment. For those who insist that there are jobs available if people look hard enough, blunt reality demonstrates that there is but one job vacancy for every one-hundred unemployed Newfoundlanders.

There is, as well, always the old stand-by

. . .government does nothing to discourage the usual myths about unemployment.

accusation that the unemployed are lazy. With thousands of people "on relief" in Newfoundland during the late 1930's, the St. John's newspapers were full of articles berating the indolence and depravity of the unemployed at that time. Nevertheless, within six months after World War II had begun, there were no cases of able-bodied relief in Newfoundland; the poor and unemployed were willing to work in the construction of naval and air force bases in the province.

More recently the Kroll Senate Report (1971) concluded that less than 2% of all people receiving unemployment benefits or welfare do not want to work. Yet Newfoundland's Minister of Social Services, Charlie Brett, has stated that some of the single able-bodied persons who apply for social assistance should have their "posteriors kicked", and ". . . if they had any guts or gumption, they wouldn't come to the welfare office".

Just as the response of the Provincial Government has been to remove people from the welfare rolls, so too the federal government's reaction to high unemployment has been to emphasize the abuses of the U.I.C. system and

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the use of tear gas (to remove forcefully unco-operative prisoners from their cells) and solitary confinement remains frequent.

Solitary Confinement

A word should be said about solitary confinement. This is a practice which the prison authorities call "administrative dissociation", and it involves isolating an inmake in a small, unfurnished cell for 23 or 23½ hours a day. The cell is called "the hole" by inmates and guards, and euphemistically an "environmental control area" by prison administrators. Inmates are placed in solitary confinement at the discretion

"Inmates who were first shackled, sometimes hands and feet together, were then beaten with clubs, made to crawl on the floor, and finally gassed."

of prison officials, either for some breach of the regulations, for some apparent threat to security, or because the authorities deem it to be in the inmates' own interest. Prisoners are sometimes isolated in solitary confinement for continuous periods of up to a year or more. British Columbia Penitentiary inmate John Emmet McCann spent over four of seven years between 1967 and 1974 in dissociation, including an uninterrupted period of two years and twenty-four days. As might be imagined, this type of punishment (or "protection") has extremely dehumanizing effects. The Inmate Committee of the Archambault Institution in Quebec recently gave this report concerning an individual who had just been released from solitary confinement:

"We asked him how long he was there, and he replied, 'I think three days, four days, maybe a

week.' He had been in the hole two months. He had completely lost his feelings, what you call his sensory perception."

Imprisonment a Failure

Confinement to prisons is meant to punish serious anti-social behaviour. Historically, dealing with such behaviour in this way is a relatively new practice—until about 200 years ago criminals normally paid for their deeds with capital punishment, corporal punishment, exile, or fines. But why do we punish offenders by imprisonment today? Punishment just for the sake of punishment is absolutely pointless. And if incarcerating offenders is meant to **accomplish** something— to protect society, to rehabilitate delinquents, or to dissuade wrongdoers—the statistics are telling us that it is a miserable failure. Our prison system is doing nothing but eating our tax dollar and inflicting incalculable pain on thousands of individuals to no apparent purpose.

We should remember also that the State is quite discriminatory in defining the types of anti-social behaviour which are punished in this way. Acts like theft, fraud, assault, and the selling or possession of narcotics are declared to

If incarcerating offenders is meant to accomplish something, the statistics are telling us that it is a miserable failure.

be criminal, whereas other acts equally harmful to the well-being of society, such as speculating on land, commodities and currency, polluting the environment, or becoming excessively rich at the expense of workers and consumers, are tolerated. In these circumstances the great majority of prisoners come from already underprivileged groups like the poor, the unemployed, and native peoples.

Crime is essentially a social, not an individual problem. Under the present form of social organization certain acts are defined as criminal, and social inequality creates the conditions in which they are committed. Yet even within the present social framework, morality and self-interest demand that we find some alternative to the existing prison system. The Parliamentary Sub Committee has suggested reforms which might make this system a little more workable and humane. However, the fundamental goal of any correctional procedure should be the formation of positive social attitudes in persons who have behaved in an anti-social manner. This cannot be achieved by removing them from society and thereby accentuating their hostility towards it, although some form of detention and supervision may be necessary in the case of exceptionally dangerous individuals. For the great majority of offenders, what needs to be created are alternatives to incarceration which will enable them to develop satisfactory relationships in the real world.

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extend the qualifying period for unemployment benefits.

Yet another common myth is that because a large proportion of the unemployed are young people and women, who unlike the "man in the family" are not the main bread winners, the current unemployment levels are less than serious. However it is clear that both women and young people work out of economic necessity, and many working women are the sole means of support for their families.

Conclusions

According to projections from the Federal Department of Manpower, the official unemployment rate in Newfoundland is due to increase by 2 per cent over the next two years. The people affected by this increase matter little as far as government policy goes, because lowering the inflation rate and providing a healthy climate for private investment take priority.

All of this should help to maintain a good credit rating for Newfoundland with the major investment agencies on Wall Street in New York. (Newfoundland's credit rating is currently the lowest of any province in Canada). That is of prime importance to people like Bill Doody, Newfoundland's Finance Minister. In reply to the Canadian Paper Workers' Union Brief on maintaining the operation of Labrador Linerboard in Stephenville, (which affects 5,000 jobs directly and indirectly), Doody stated: "Excellent, impressive, but ineffective". How is that? Because according to Doody, if the provincial government were to assist the Linerboard Mill any more, then the province's credit rating would fall.

That's a fairly blunt admission that government policy is less responsive to the needs of the mass of people in Newfoundland than it is to a handful of powerful New York financiers. Perhaps the occupations of Manpower offices by unemployed workers in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia are a vain effort. It is their intention to bring government attention to the problem of unemployment there. The assumption is, of course, that elected representatives of the people both have the power to affect unemployment and are interested, when pushed, in helping to alleviate it. In fact, however eager the government might be to solve unemployment, it has very little power to do so when the major investment decisions which create employment and unemployment are in the hands of private corporations, whose main criterion for investment is a high rate of profit. Even so, without political action on the part of the unemployed and others with related interests, this system will never be changed and the curse of unemployment never removed.

Cape Breton unemployed

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people, working people and students. Journalist Susan Perly was with the Cape Breton demonstrators when they struck for the third time, sitting in for 24 hours at the Canada Works office.

[Transcript Begins:]

COMMITTEE MEMBER:—Ladies and gentlemen, I think we're ready to go now. We're going to drive down to the college parking lot, right behind the post office building which is close to Charlotte Street, and we'll walk down Charlotte Street to the Canada Works office which is about—which is in the Eaton's building. Okay? So we're going to leave now.

SUSAN PERLY:—These people are about to walk through the doors of a federal Canada Works office here in Sydney. On this sunny morning, about two dozen protestors marched down Charlotte Street, the main street in Sydney, with the intention of occupying another office of the federal government.

This is the third time in a week the people concerned about unemployment in Cape Breton have moved in to occupy a federal office in Sydney. They are fed up with the lack of jobs in the industrial area, and they are fed up with the lack of attention from Ottawa. They feel this is the most effective way of getting the government to sit up and take notice.

We're inside the Canada Works office and the demonstrators have spread out their sleeping bags and settled in. They've come well supplied with food and books, radios and a TV set. They're planning to spend the night camped on the carpeted floors of this government office.

The workers in this office don't seem to mind the sit-in, well in progress at their feet. That makes sense. The Canada Works office is part of the Manpower program to create jobs, and the people sitting at the desks here share many of the feelings of the people sitting on the floor. They know that Ottawa is more than 1000 miles away and that the politicians making decisions about their future and future employment on the island don't really care what happens to Cape Breton.

In some people's eyes, the policies of central Canada towards Cape Breton Island could be called economic genocide. Father Al Maroun, a Roman Catholic priest, is the leader of today's demonstration.

"If I'm able and willing to work any time, any time day or night, I don't see why I can't feed my family in Canada."

AL MAROUN:—We are being violated. There is actually. . . the government is practising violence on us. The government has a policy of unemployment to lower the rate of inflation. Now, they are also, I think, deliberately putting the money they do have into the larger centres, where they want to keep the level of unemployment down because there's a lot of votes there—in those larger centres.

There's just no way you could be kind and gentle and nice to people who are violating you. The violence is coming from Ottawa and Halifax. There's a form of violence that they're imposing on us—lack of work, and causing us to lose . . . to break up our families, to commit suicide, lose our homes. And if a person commits suicide because of a deliberate government policy which drives him to suicide, that is almost, I would say, a murderous act, where you force people to kill themselves.

PERLY:—Across town from the Canada Works office in Sydney is the Steel City Tavern. After a 24 hour sit-in at a government office, it's to this big, busy tavern that Ernie Lewis has come. Ernie is 21 years old and he hasn't worked for the last four months. He's had the typical experience of leaving Cape Breton Island to find work anywhere he can find it in Canada, and he has also, typically, been drawn back to Cape Breton. But, as far as job prospects go, it might be the worst decision he could have made. Ernie Lewis is not very optimistic about finding work at home.

ERNIE LEWIS:—I've been as far as Thompson, Manitoba with Inco Mines up there, because there was no work here then. That was three years ago. I've been to Toronto and Niagara Falls for a short time, but I always come back because this is my home and I'd like to stay here. Now, my wife has to work. It's a big strain on the wife and children of the family.

PERLY:—If it's this bad now, what do you see in the future?

LEWIS:—The future is very, very dim. I don't plan on the future. If I can feed my family today, then I feed them today. If I can't tomorrow, then somebody's got to answer why I can't. If I'm able and willing to work any time, any time day or night, I don't see why I can't feed my family in Canada.

PERLY:—To most people, Sydney means steel, specifically Sysco, the Sydney Steel Corporation.

AT LEAST OUR KIDS WILL HAVE JOBS !!!

The steel plant was taken over by the province of Nova Scotia in 1967 when Hawker Siddeley pulled out. That pullout, and the economic insecurity it heightened, reminded Sydney residents how closely their personal fates are tied to the industrial fate of the steel plant. So they put up with the pink billowing pollution and an outdated plant which limps along, because it still manages to put money into the pockets of thousands of Cape Bretoners.

Without steel, Sydney will die, and people here know that. Some attempts have been made to change that fact and to diversify the economy. About the time the province was taking over Sysco, incentives were being offered to secondary industries to move into the area. One company which came was Canadian Motor Industries. They moved into the Point Edward Industrial Park in 1967 to make Toyotas. They left in 1975.

CMI was the last place that 35 year-old Peter MacNeil worked. He hasn't worked in 21 months, and he hasn't been back to this one-storey white building since he was laid off.

PETER MacNEIL:—I earn $80 a week now, on unemployment, with four children. Try to outfit two children for school on $80 a week and maintain rent and lights. I'd like to see some of our politicians do it. They speak of the work that's available. Well, there is work available, probably through grants, LIP grants, but that is not, in my opinion, work. To work 10, 12, 14 weeks, whatever, on a grant, you don't plan anything. You just stay on it 'till you're finished, then you get your forms ready, file for unemployment again, you know. It's not very much to look forward to.

PERLY:—How does being unemployed affect your family life, your personal life at home?

MacNEIL:—To read sometimes I pick up a book and read it. You might read a chapter three times and you really don't know what the first page is about. Your concentration is very bad. And to go to a window and be looking out a window and have somebody pass, you wouldn't really know that they passed. You're looking out the window but you're not seeing. Your concentration takes a very bad beating.

And I think it's a very bad thing for children. They're just starting their lives, and they see you doing this, you know, and some of them wonder, "Is this what it's about? Is this what's going to happen to me?"

PERLY:—Back across Sydney harbour, high above the city at Hardwood Hill, Jack Haley has come to gain a perspective on the problems of the industrial area. Haley wears many hats. He's a social worker, he's president of the Cape Breton Labour Council and he's chairman of the Cape Breton Committee of Concerned for the Unemployed. Haley is normally a friendly, optimistic man, but he has a lot of bitter things to say these days. He knows that the government has not been able to end the economic cycles of boom and bust which private capital set in motion here over 100 years ago. He knows that Cape Breton is a sore example of what federal neglect has done to the Maritimes. He knows that the young people have been forced to leave in droves. Most of all, Jack Haley knows that the final price of unemployment will be calculated in human terms, not in statistics reading out of a computer onto the desk of an Ottawa bureaucrat.

"There's a minimum of 3,000 jobs that the government can provide, and they're sitting on them simply because they're waiting for an election to be called. . ."

JACK HALEY:—Well, as we stand on top of this point, one of the highest points, I suppose, in the city of Sydney, and I look down at the industrial heartland on one side and the very peaceful, tranquil Kelly Mountain on the other side, you know, I can say that you can see what private enterprise has done to a community like Cape Breton. A community with a stunted growth rate, a lot of uncertainty, mass exodus of people leaving the island, and one of every four in the work force is unemployed and has no hope of getting a job unless something is done soon. It makes me feel, you know, very, very sad that the federal government can allow this to go on in a country that's so wealthy.

There are lots of things that can be done. There's a minimum of 3,000 jobs, a minimum of 3,000 jobs that the government can provide, and they're sitting on them simply because they're waiting for an election to be called and it would be opportune to announce the jobs at that time. They're going to come, there's no question about it, but it's timing, and in the meantime people are suffering while politicians play political games, and we're getting damn well fed up about it.

PERLY:—How far are people willing to go?

HALEY:—Wherever this route will take us. And whatever course of action is required to bring this to the attention of a government and make them act, we're going to do it with every bit of blood that runs in our body. We're deeply committed to seeing this through.

PERLY:—Jack Haley has said that the committee concerned about unemployment in Cape Breton is prepared to go to great lengths to get some action from Ottawa. Violent confrontation is a possibility that has crossed the minds of people here many times. But, whatever the strategy, Haley and the other people angry about unemployment see themselves as part of a long tradition of Cape Breton militants. The miners and steelworkers of the island went through bitter struggles and the people on the committee are willing to do that themselves.

"I earn $80 a week now, on unemployment, with four children. Try to outfit two children for school on $80 a week and maintain rent and lights. I'd like to see some of our politicians do it."

After all, they ask, how much more unemployment can be tolerated?

How many more people will go onto the UIC roles and then onto the welfare roles?

And how many will give up trying completely, and take off down the road?

A large part of that answer lies with the people here in Cape Breton, but the biggest part of the answer lies with Ottawa.