

Bank workers begin organizing

Canada's chartered banks have always promoted, and benefited from, the image of an honest, safe and rewarding place to do business. For years, they have put forward a human face, a pretty, cheerful, female face to charm money out of your hands and into their vaults.

The system has worked well. Profits of Canada's Big Five—the Royal Bank, Bank of Montreal, Bank of Nova Scotia, Toronto-Dominion and Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce—have grown healthily and totalled about \$1 billion in 1978. The wages of their employees, meanwhile, have risen at about the rate of the cost of living and now average less than \$9,000 a year in the Atlantic region. It is in this light, many bank workers are turning towards unions.

"People think of the tellers as the bank," says one Halifax bank worker. "But when the bank talks of customer service, they spit on the tellers. They say you're only meeting the public, not that you're making the money for them. The tellers are the lowest paid yet they're the ones that get things rolling."

More than 70 per cent of Canada's 150,000 bank workers are women and only about two per cent of them rise to managerial positions or higher. They don't have any grievance procedure or job security and in many cases, they receive raises and promotions on the basis of a merit report.

Another bank worker, a clerk who earns more than the average wage, says that with a union, they would have a say in working conditions and wage rates and would have job security. Now, she says, "we're at their mercy."

Her co-worker, a teller, says the banks have a technique of "keeping you as a little person. They want to keep you under thumb."

The bank they work in is not yet organized but seven other branches in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia have been certified or await certification under the Union of Bank Employees, sponsored by the Canadian Labour Congress. One Royal Bank branch in Pictou has entered negotiations for a first contract.

About 60 branches have been organized across the country, most of them in Quebec. Organizing was made easier in 1977 when, after the efforts of the Service Office and Retail Workers Union of Canada, the Canada Labor Relations Board ruled that unions could organize on a branch-by-branch basis. The banks argued that all of their branches from coast-to-coast should be considered as one bargaining unit.

Peter Jackson, Personnel Manager in the Royal Bank's regional office in Halifax, says "it's difficult to see any advantages" to the bank with unionization. He foresees the banks becoming "more rigid and less flexible towards a bargaining unit especially in the case where exceptions may have been possible before. Now we must stick with the contract."

He says the bank cannot by law, and has not tried to, interfere with an employee's right to decide whether or not to support a union.

However, Johanna Oosterveld, Nova Scotia organizer for the Union of Bank Employees, says the banks are using subtle methods to get their anti-union message across.

The Halifax bank clerk agrees and says the bank uses psychological pressure to promote distrust and suspicion among co-workers. This has resulted, she says, in a "lot of hate power and boot-licking".

The banks' merit report on employees, used as the basis for promotions and

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Free

Atlantic Issues

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Baie d'Espoir, NFLD.

Bowater strangles a community

—by Sandy Martland

Unemployment in Newfoundland's south coast communities of Bay d'Espoir is 80 per cent. Yet Bay D'Espoir has a rich history of forest development and is the source of hydro power for most of the island.

What changed the once thriving economy based on forestry, fishing and agriculture into a pocket of Newfoundland's highest unemployment is characteristic of much resource development in the province.

Some residents of Bay d'Espoir remember how it changed. "They had their gardens," one man recalled. "They raised potatoes, turnip, cabbage. They had their sheep and an awful lot of them had cattle. People had an awful lot of land. I used to take loads of potatoes out of Bay d'Espoir. A year after she went under Confederation (in 1949), I was bringing them in."

They also remember why it changed.

In the 1940's, Bowater, a British-based pulp and paper company, was enticed to the bay to be a major exporter of lumber. As an incentive, they were given timber rights in Bay d'Espoir to all but a three-mile coastal strip.

Bowater offered better wages and greater stability to the people, who gave up their local sawmills and boats to work with the company. But some 16 years later, Bowater decided it was more profitable to harvest wood on the west coast and so they closed their door on Bay d'Espoir, throwing the loggers out of work.

When the people tried to go back to their sawmills, they found that the wood they had harvested before was no longer available - Bowater retained the timber rights.

In the pre-Confederation days, the people of Bay d'Espoir were basically employed in sawmilling and boatbuilding.

"the wood they had harvested before was no longer available—Bowater retained the timber rights"

The area exported planks and other wood products to nearby St. Pierre and also supported a major boat-building industry. These two- and three-masted schooners then provided work for other residents of the area, who fished off the coast of Labrador each summer, salted their fish, sold their catch and their boats in Spain and Britain, and then returned home to build another schooner. These industries were supplemented by agriculture, which enabled the people to provide their own meat and vegetables.

HYDRO - A PROMISE UNFULFILLED

Before residents could organize to solve the question of timber rights, government announced the development of hydro in the bay. Bay d'Espoir, designated as a growth centre under the Liberal resettlement program, was to be the headquarters of Newfoundland hydro operations. It was to become an industrial centre, supporting such industries as an aluminum smelter. A national harbour would be built and major transportation systems established.

Not only did these industries never materialize, even the jobs directly related to distribution of hydro were eventually located in central Newfoundland and St. John's. The people of Bay d'Espoir gained only those construction jobs which were necessary to build the powerhouse.

When the first phase of construction was completed in 1973, there were only 80 hydro jobs in the bay. "So the end result, while we had the major resource," explains John Tremblett, chairman of the Bay d'Espoir Development Association, "was that we got few jobs. Now, over that period of time, all the basic skills fishing—was gone, because the older people died off, retired, and the younger people didn't bother picking it up because they were in high paying jobs. They became, instead of self-dependent, dependent. They became truck drivers, heavy equipment operators and that sort of thing. The basic trades they had were no longer applicable in the bay and so they had either to go to Labrador, to B.C. or Alberta in the mines and this kind of stuff."

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Safety ignored

Since the explosion last month that killed eleven Cape Breton miners, and severely injured five more, job safety has been paramount in the minds of Cape Breton coal miners.

While officials from the United Mine Workers of America, inspectors from the federal labour department and British experts were brought in by the Cape Breton Development Corporation (DEVCO) to examine the disaster site, miners returned to their jobs with their own suspicions about what happened in Number 26 colliery on February 24.

It is now commonly assumed that the explosion was caused by a build-up of methane gas—something that warning systems should have detected. But something prevented the warning system from operating.

Many think that the "incentive-bonus" system of payment is at the root of the problem. Workers are paid cash bonuses for exceeding production quotas. To qualify for these bonuses the workers can't afford to have the mine shut down to clear out any build-up of methane gas, so it seems that sometimes workers sabotage the very equipment that is there to protect them. They gamble that they'll make it through their shift alive and with a bit more money. DEVCO turns a blind eye because only through the workers gambling with their lives can the company meet their "quotas" and balance the books.

Two weeks before the disaster, workers at a union meeting complained about the ventilation and warning systems. And, they complained about the pressure they were under in the "incentive-bonus" system. The DEVCO official called their concerns "rubbish".

That's also how DEVCO, a federal Crown corporation, responded to the federal inquiry into job safety in 1974. The recommendations of the inquiry were all but ignored.

Last fall, though, the labour department took DEVCO to court charging two dozen violations of the job safety code. The charges were eventually dropped because of problems within the laws themselves, but none of this has been forgotten in the job safety controversy raging in Glace Bay.

Now the United Mine Workers, the Glace Bay workers' union, is calling for an end to the bonus systems. Will DEVCO respond any more favourably to this than they did to the federal inquiry's recommendations?

In the last issue of *Atlantic Issues* we saw the ALCAN company moving out of St. Lawrence, Newfoundland because they didn't want to meet minimum safety standards in flourspar mining. They now import their flourspar from Mexico where they do not have to meet any safety standards: and they make more money. And more money is what is stopping DEVCO from living up to its responsibilities in the realm of job safety. Meeting federal standards will cost them money and it won't necessarily increase profits.

As long as DEVCO—and other companies like them—can get away with these kinds of attitudes and practices they will. But the Glace Bay workers can stand firm against DEVCO on the question of job safety in their next round of contract negotiations. And, they can win.

Atlantic Issues

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roadholding, flexibility, mileage,
sécurité, souplesse, kilomètres,

MICHELIN X



**Motoring in Africa
with MICHELIN maps**

Michelin trade-off

by Michael Donovan

In France, the "Michelin Guide" is highly regarded by tourists because of its accuracy and research. Restaurants, historic sites, museums and even cities are given ratings of one-to-four stars.

Although Michelin has not officially rated countries or provinces on the basis of generosity to multinational, there is little doubt that, if they did, Nova Scotia would receive an unqualified four-star rating.

In order to create the approximately 3,800 jobs in Nova Scotia, Michelin has received:

- a three-year duty-free concession on Michelin Tires imported into Canada (the normal tariff is 17½ per cent; and there is a rumour that the tariff exemption is still in effect);
- direct grants of 12.6 million dollars from DREE;
- accelerated depreciation of land and buildings against Income Tax;
- importation of machinery duty free;
- a \$500 million loan at 3½ per cent below the prime lending rate arranged by I.E.L. (it has been estimated that this Industrial Estates Limited "loan" will cost Nova Scotia \$30 million during its life);
- I.E.L. grants of \$7.6 million;
- a \$60,000 cash grant from the Nova Scotia Power Corporation;
- taxes reduced to 1 per cent for 10 years by the municipalities of Pictou and Bridgewater; and
- the Bridgewater forty acre site donated free.

In return Nova Scotia has received:

- wages which are well below the North American tire-making industry average;

- no commitment on the part of Michelin to stay in Nova Scotia;
- no contracts of employment between Michelin and the Nova Scotian employees;

- a campaign of intimidation against pro-union employees at Michelin;
- the alteration of certain Nova Scotian law regulations to suit Michelin's anti-union campaign;
- the creation of an industry which is of no benefit to the region other than the creation of extremely low-skill jobs; and
- essentially an industry over which the government and the workers have virtually no control.

The question is: has Nova Scotia made a good bargain? Would it not have been better to invest the approximately \$20,000 per job to create indigenous industries which are owned and controlled by Nova Scotians for the benefit of Nova Scotia—industries which are ultimately responsible to the people of Nova Scotia.

Multi-nationals may provide short term jobs but, in the end, they leave Nova Scotians dangerously dependent upon the vicissitudes of international finance.

For example, in the Fall 1978 edition of *Atlantic Issues* it was reported that ALCAN had closed

down Canada's only flourspar mine in St. Lawrence, Newfoundland, throwing 400 people out of work. The workers had won concessions in the area of safety and health, although previously, 117 of them had died from cancer as a result of radon in the mines. But ALCAN decided it was cheaper to buy flourspar on the world market and now Mexico is one of the countries from which ALCAN imports flourspar.

In this issue of *Atlantic Issues* (see pages 4 and 5) we see Noranda phasing out its operations in northern New Brunswick, while it increases its operations in Chile.

Nova Scotia must, in the future, use its capital to build industries controlled by the people so the capital is reinvested to build this province, it must not use its own capital to allow foreign corporations to export the capital which represents the fruits of their labour to other areas in accordance with the forces of the "free" market.

Letters

Job safety an issue

To the Editors:

I have just read the spring/summer 1978 issue of your paper which documents the victorious struggle waged by the workers and residents of Baie Verte against Advocate Mines Ltd. By forcing the company to incorporate clauses on occupational health and safety into their collective agreement, the workers of Baie Verte have won an important victory.

Workers are refusing to see themselves and their workmates appearing with increased frequency as notations on injury, morbidity and mortality graphs and tables. Forced to choose between a more healthful and safe working environment and increased profits, management has invariably chosen the latter. In response to the occupational health and safety crisis, local unions across the country are now viewing progressive clauses on health and safety as an integral part of a good collective agreement. Documenting positive collective bargaining precedents is an important aspect of this campaign. Your contribution is appreciated.

The Canadian Union of Public Employees has just published an inventory which documents the health and safety hazards associated with public sector work. I have enclosed a copy of this study. I hope you find it useful.

Larry Katz
Senior Research Officer

Trains set on new track

—by glen wanamaker

If there was one recent issue that the federal government and the three Maritime governments all badly misunderstood, it was the debate over rail passenger service.

In 1977, Transport Minister Otto Lang and the three Maritime Premiers blithely signed their names to the Atlantic Region Inter-Modal Passenger Study saying in effect "you take the high road, I'll take the low road and let the romantics take what's left of the railroad."

By identifying themselves with the study, the politicians supported the elimination of all but one rail link to Montreal. Bus and air services would be improved with government assistance to take the place of the train.

The report was mauled by the public in hearings two years ago and according to a Canadian Transport Commission (CTC) official, the provinces have been doing "a lot of back-tracking" ever since. The report was also rebutted, though more politely, by the CTC's Preferred Plan for passenger service issued in December of 1978.

Rather than sharp reductions, the Preferred Plan recommends re-shuffling three of the long-distance trains into two, with inter-city trains handling service between major centres in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. The re-alignment, together with the use of different equipment, is designed to save money, encourage increased use through better scheduling and, last, but strangely not forgotten, fulfill the Confederation pacts of 112 years ago.

The Plan rejects most of the arguments contained in the Inter-Modal study, which Peter Dawes of the Research Branch of the CTC's Railway Review Committee says was "hurriedly put together and seemed to be geared to the people who commissioned it." The Commission, he said, "never seriously considered dropping much service."

The Preferred Plan, which is now undergoing public scrutiny before being turned into a Final Plan, does not bring back the good old days of the 1950's and early '60's when the region was served by five and then four trains to Montreal in summer. But it does put some common sense back into the system which the railroads and the politicians seemed so eager to abandon.

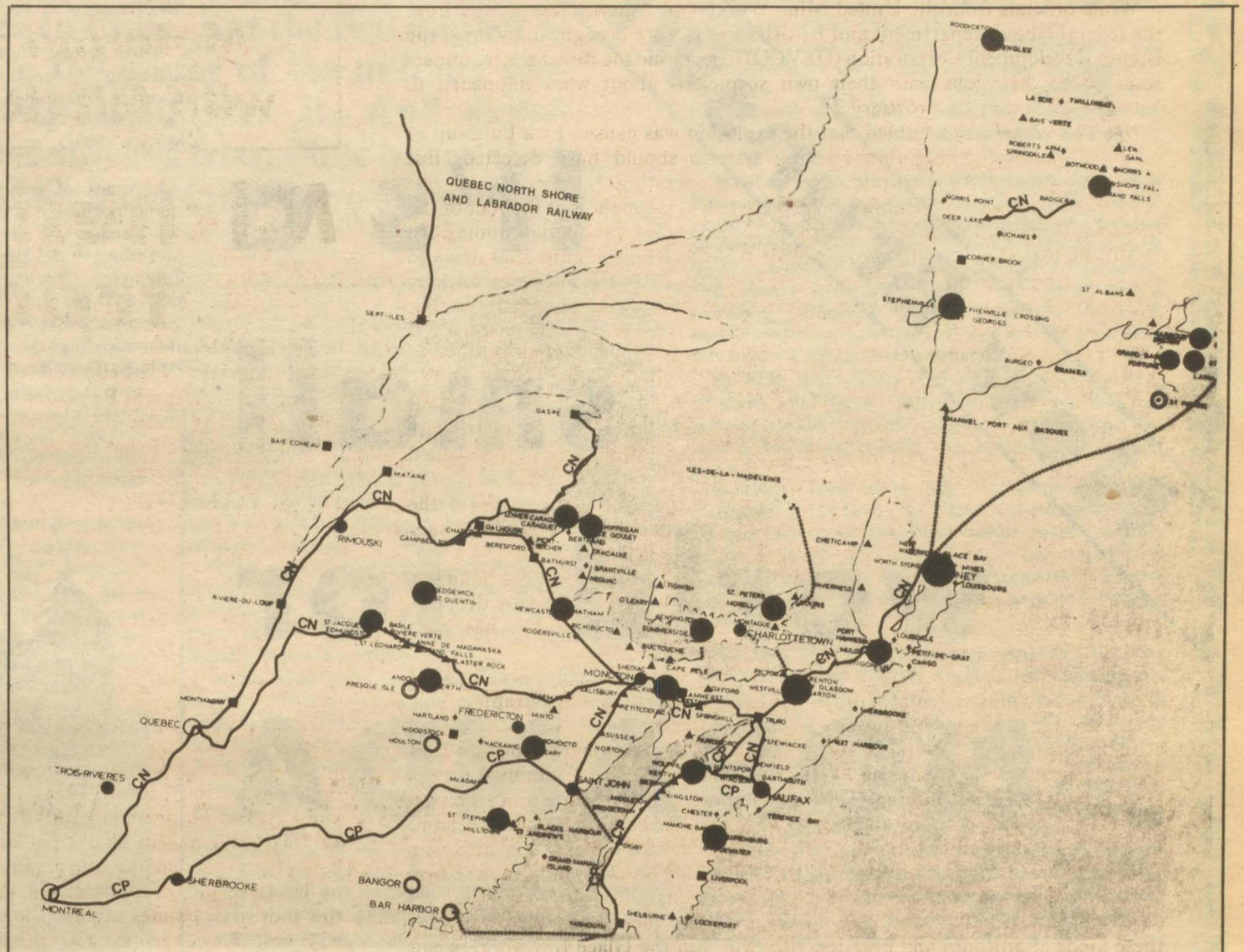
At the same time, however, it has upset the bus companies who say they will run in direct competition with the trains. Instead of luring a portion of the 90 per cent of travellers who use cars for inter-city trips, they say the two services will compete with each other for one small market. John Pearce, Secretary of the Atlantic branch of Transport 2000, a national consumers' group, says it would be unfortunate if this happens, but he says the aim is to produce a coordinated public transport system using both buses and trains.

As it is now, adds CTC's Dawes, the bus system in New Brunswick is poor and "we felt we had to replace local functions that had been provided by the Scotian (a long-distance train)".

While railroad watchers are waiting to see what happens to schedules and fares under Via Rail Canada, which has been given responsibility for the passenger rail operations of Canadian National and Canadian Pacific, most are relatively pleased with the Preferred Plan.

Pearce says the Plan reflects a series of trade-offs, such as the loss of sleeping car facilities on some short-haul routes in exchange for quicker service. But he says the CTC's decision that passenger service should be maintained places it among the "good guys".

He praises the Commission for rejecting the argument, used by the Treasury Board



Under the Preferred Plan, the existing Canadian Pacific line from Montreal to Saint John via Maine would become the main long-distance link to the region. It would be extended through Moncton to Halifax with a connection at Truro for Sydney. The Canadian National train through Rimouski and Campbellton would go as far as Moncton, with a connection at Matapedia for the Gaspé. Rail diesel trains would provide inter-city service, probably between Montreal and Mont Joli, and Campbellton and Moncton. Similar service would link Halifax and Saint John, and Sydney and Halifax.

and the provinces, that the system should be drastically reduced because it is now unprofitable. The Plan agrees the service is uneconomic, but it disagrees that it is "incapable" of becoming profitable, and wonders if this is even a valid yardstick.

The Plan similarly dispels the notion that only passenger trains run up deficits, pointing out that highways and airports also received public assistance. Though usually not in the form of direct subsidy payments to road or air operators, tax dollars have been delivered to pay for air infrastructure costs and the operation of highway networks.

Eastern Provincial Airways was an exception though, it said, receiving a direct subsidy of about \$1.7 million a year in recent years. Both EPA and Air Canada have also reported operating losses on their Maritime routes.

The operation of airports, runways and other related services cost the federal government about \$30 million in the three Maritime provinces in 1975-76, and highways produced a net deficit of \$149 million for Nova Scotia and New Brunswick in 1974.

Bus companies pay gas and licensing charges and the Plan says whether or not they pay their "fair share" is a "matter of philosophical speculation". But it says revenues from motor vehicles covered only 47 per cent of the total road costs borne by the governments; the rest was covered by general taxes.

In comparison, the total losses on rail passenger services in the Maritimes in 1977 were \$47.9 million of which \$38.3 million was covered by federal subsidies.

The Plan suggests the railroads have not tried to make the service economical and have expected the long-distance trains to service effectively as inter-city carriers.

"Because of the multiplicity of demands, the long-haul service doesn't per-

form any of its functions well. . . . Yet, in spite of this, the actual distribution of passenger trips reflects a surprising balance between long and short-haul markets. But undoubtedly, (the dual function) contributes to the losses."

If adopted as proposed, most long-distance travel will be carried on the existing CP line through Maine to Saint John, Moncton and on to Halifax. A second train will travel the CN line through Quebec City and Campbellton, ending at Moncton.

Travellers to the Gaspé and Sydney will make connections at Matapedia and Truro respectively, but instead of the conventional trains, rail diesel cars will be used allowing economy of operation and faster service. Inter-city trains also using rail diesel cars will move between Montreal and Mont Joli, Campbellton and Moncton, Halifax and Moncton and Sydney and Halifax. By 1981, Via plans to be using LRC (light, rapid and comfortable) trains.

This system will slightly reduce costs, increase revenues and therefore reduce losses, it says. But besides the strictly economic arguments, the Plan points out that this region's high unemployment, the lower than average per capita income and lower than average rate of car ownership indicate a "greater tendency to use public transport, especially train and bus."

The commissioners also took seriously the many references made in public hearings to the federal government's constitutional obligation to maintain the railroad. They checked the record and concluded the Confederation agreement clearly accepted the demands of the two Maritime provinces: no railroad, no federation.

Via has been asked to implement changes in time for the summer schedule taking effect the end of April. But because the changes will require re-negotiating labour agreements, officials say the romantics and others should not expect new service before the Fall.

Gallup-ing political illiteracy

A Gallup Poll survey of the political knowledge of American youth has produced unsettling results for American educators.

According to the *Manchester Guardian*, significant numbers of the 17- and 18-year olds interviewed could not correctly answer basic political and geographic questions—a result which prompted George Gallup Sr. to speak of "tremendous political illiteracy" among the young.

Some responses:

Question: "In what year did Columbus discover America?" **Answer:** 1942.

Question: "Which were the last two states admitted to the United States?"

Answers: "Florida", "Mexico", and "Canada".

Question: "Where is Angola?" **Answers:** "In Siberia", "In the Philippines".

Question: "Name two agencies through which the United Nations organization carries on its work throughout the world." **Answer:** "CIA and FBI".

One answer may indicate profound wisdom. **Question:** The economy of Russia is described as communistic; that of Sweden, socialistic. How is ours described?" The student's answer: "Inflationary."

New Brunswick

It's a small world for NORANDA

Canadian nickel mining companies are laying off workers in Sudbury while expanding in places like Guatemala and Indonesia. In St. Lawrence, Newfoundland the fluorspar mines were closed by Alcan when they discovered they could purchase the mineral more cheaply in Mexico. And now another Canadian multinational mining company, the Toronto-based Noranda Corporation, is laying off workers in New Brunswick at the same time as it is developing and expanding mines in Chile.

The way we live in Atlantic Canada—the kind of work we do, our degree of participation in the workforce, and our standard of living—is not determined simply by us here, our initiative or drive or even by the resources in the region.

We are locked into a system of work, money and power relationships which extends throughout much of the world. This system is not designed to meet the needs of the majority of people living in it, but to maintain or increase the wealth and power of a small minority. It is through the operations of large corporations, often implanted in many different countries, that the wealthy minority (often called the corporate elite) preserves and expands its privileged position.

Since the primary commitment of a multinational corporation is to its owners rather than those who buy their product or those who work in their factories, it will naturally seek out areas which yield the highest rate of profit. This means that companies based in Canada try to get a foothold in other parts of the world where wages and working conditions are poor—and therefore inexpensive for the company). This can mean reducing operations in Canada.

Often the working and living conditions of people in these other countries can only be maintained by a reign of terror: in the mid 1960's, an estimated 500,000 to one million people were massacred in Indonesia for seeking social reforms, and for the same reasons about 20,000 have been killed in Guatemala in the last 10 years.

While creating unemployment in New Brunswick, Noranda is taking advantage of and contributing to the terrible living conditions which a brutal military dictatorship has imposed upon the people of Chile.

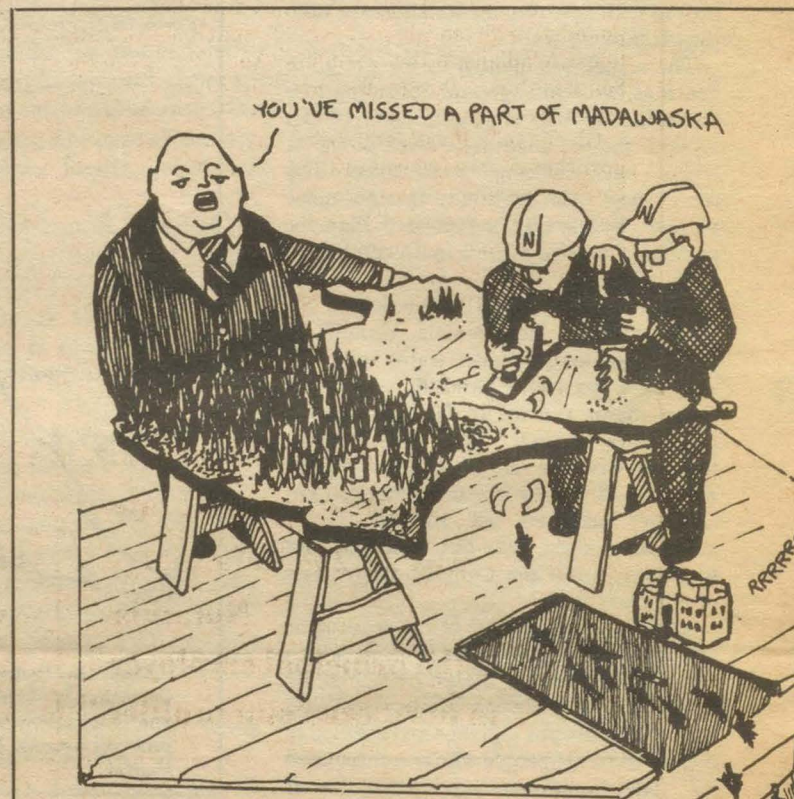
Since its founding in 1922, Noranda has become a corporate giant with mines and plants in over 20 countries. Its assets now total more than \$2 billion, and it employs over 42,000 workers around the world.

Noranda has been able to obtain such concentration of wealth and power in several ways: by "vertical integration" (controlling all stages of production from the manufacture of equipment through ore-mining to

processing of the final product); by diversification (expanding into the forestry and other industries); and by acquiring facilities in parts of the world where, because of low wages and bad working conditions, the profit margin is high.

Since before World War II, Noranda has been investing in lucrative mining operations in Latin America. These include two gold mines in Nicaragua (acquired in 1937 and 1940), a fluorspar mine in Mexico (1957), and a copper mine in Chile (1964).

In times of economic difficulty, a multinational company finds it profitable to divest from a country like Canada and invest capital in the Third World. According to the Department of Trade, Industry and Commerce, Noranda's investments in Latin America yield a 20 per cent profit (as a percentage of equity) compared to 10 per cent in Canada. This is the key to understanding the current lay-offs by Noranda in northern New Brunswick.



ATLANTIC ISSUES feature

by James MacLean and Marc LePage

Noranda: Takeover of Northern N. B.

In New Brunswick, Noranda owns the rich lead-zinc-copper-silver deposits in the Bathurst area, a refinery, a sulphuric acid plant and a chemical fertilizer plant in Belledune, pulp mills at Edmunston and Atholville, a planer mill at Plaster Rock, a sawmill at Kedgewick, a particleboard manufacturing plant in Chatham, a wire and cable plant in Saint John and a car recycling plant in Moncton.

With a total work force of 3,847 people, it is a very powerful body. In an area where the official unemployment rate was 20.2% in January, Noranda is the principle employer in five northern communities. Noranda is not easily influenced by government or public pressure over matters such as pollution or working conditions. Nor is it overly worried about pressure from unions when there are layoffs.

This dominance in Northern New Brunswick has come about fairly recently. An outline of the economic situation in New Brunswick can explain their presence.

Over the years, the northern part of the province has been a chronically depressed area. Although rich in primary resources (lumber, minerals) its economy has not gone much beyond the basic extraction of resources and as a result, income, employment and other economic indicators have always been low in comparison to the southern part of the province.

Noranda claims that their Chilean projects will improve the standard of living and act as a liberalizing force in Chile. But the real impact of these investments will be to reinforce the power of the military dictators. This is how the dictatorship itself sees it. And exiled democratic political leaders and union officials from Chile have called on Noranda to terminate its dealings with the junta for precisely this reason.

To a large extent, New Brunswick has a North-South split: the North economically depressed, its economy based on primary production; the South industrially more diversified with a relatively better economic state. This dichotomy has been compounded with an almost parallel split on linguistic lines: Acadians to the North and Anglophones to the South (although this division gets quite blurred in some urban areas).

Given this bleak scenario, the New Brunswick government courted Noranda hoping to lure this giant corporation into the province in the belief it would pull the province out of its economic doldrums. In a classical demonstration of government developmental theory, subsidies, tax-exemptions, free infrastructure, interest-free loans (both provincial and federal) were offered as bait. And Noranda bit hard.

"where the official unemployment rate was 20.2% in January, Noranda is the principal employer in northern communities"



In 1967, it paid approximately \$50 million for a 51% controlling interest in Brunswick Mining and Smelting Corporation. In the process, K. C. Irving was ousted as majority shareholder. (To this day the Irving interests continue as a strong minority interest in the company, voicing strong opposition over policy differences.)

In 1972, Noranda acquired 50% of Belledune Fertilizer for \$4 million. In 1974, it was Fraser Ltd. for \$63 million, followed by the acquisition of Aircrow-Weyroc.

With these acquisitions, Noranda has gained control of one of the more important mining interests in Canada as well as a good foothold in the forestry sector (almost 10% of New Brunswick's forestland is directly Noranda-controlled).

In this whole process, Noranda's game has been to acquire existing companies rather than risk new undertakings. Such corporate behaviour brings little new wealth to the area, and has raised the ire of many critics over the years, least of which was Eric Kierans.

A former Liberal cabinet minister and past president of the Montreal Stock Exchange Kierans was hired in 1974 by the NDP premier of Manitoba Ed Schreyer to study the impact of proposed new fiscal measures for the natural resources sector. In the course of his study, Kierans dealt with corporations such as Noranda. He pointed out that companies such as Noranda, far from being squeezed by the corporate tax rate, were in fact able to use the wealth produced in Manitoba, the Gaspé and Northern N.B. to create vast conglomerates, in which most activities have nothing to do with mining. Mining companies become holding companies.

For such a large and diversified entity, investment priorities change very quickly, reflecting its new interests in other economic sectors or in different geographical areas. Like INCO in Sudbury, Noranda is laying off workers in northern New Brunswick at the same time as its investments in Latin America are growing.

The economic boom anticipated by Noranda's activities in northern New Brunswick has never materialized.

In January 1976, production of chemical fertilizer at Belledune Fertilizer Ltd. ground to a halt when 100 men were laid off. In February 1976, 20 employees of Brunswick Mining and Smelting Corp. were laid off. In September 1978, Noranda announced the permanent lay-off of 185 workers, 125 at the mines and 60 at the smelter. The Noranda corporate interests were shifting.

The announcement of lay-offs in New Brunswick comes only one year after Noranda signed a contract with the military dictators of Chile for a \$350 million investment. Since 1973, when the democratic government of the country was overthrown in a bloody coup d'etat, the people of Chile have been living under a military regime which has brought massive

"the New Brunswick government courted Noranda hoping to lure this giant corporation into the province"

killings, political detention, torture, unemployment and extreme poverty.

Noranda is only one instance of involvement by Canadian firms in Chile. In addition to substantial loans to Chile by the major Canadian chartered banks, such companies as Falconbridge Mines, Placer Development, Bata Shoes and Canadian Javelin has given a vote of confidence to the military junta in the form of their dollars.

Canadian investments do little to help the condition of ordinary Chileans. In the last five years that such investments have been made, unemployment in Chile has increased at least five-fold.

An investment like Noranda's is capital intensive and is expected to create only 600 to 900 jobs. Yet it does provide foreign exchange for the military junta. Noranda's investment enables, among other things, the purchase of more armaments. It also gives legitimacy to the dictatorship.

Santiago's pro-junta newspaper "El Mercurio" put the matter this way: "The agreement reached with Noranda Mines, in the present national and international conjuncture, reiterates the confidence that foreign investors are demonstrating towards our country."

Noranda's interest in Chile dates back to 1964 when it opened a small copper mine in there. By 1971, it had recovered most of its original investment, and decided to withdraw at a time when Chile was being governed by Salvador Allende's left-wing coalition government. But almost immediately after the government's overthrow, Noranda was back on the scene. It reclaimed its mine and agreed to undertake a study of the whole Chilean copper industry.

In 1976, the military dictatorship announced that Noranda had been chosen to join the state in developing the important Andocollo copper reserves, and a formal agreement was signed the following year.

Noranda holds a 51 per cent interest in the Andocollo corporation; the Chilean government holds 49 per cent. The Canadian multinational company plans to invest \$250 million in the mine and \$100 million in a smelter. At present, exploratory studies are being made and construction is expected to begin early in the 1980's.

Noranda (and other companies investing in Chile) claims that their Chilean projects will improve the standard of living and act as a liberalizing force in Chile. But the real impact of these investments will be to reinforce the power of the military dictators. This is how the dictatorship itself sees it. And exiled democratic political leaders and union officials from Chile have called on Noranda to terminate its dealings with the junta for precisely this reason.

In fact, it is not hard to surmise that Noranda's interest in Chile relates directly to the poverty of the people, or what corporate managers call "low labour costs". Under the Popular Unity government of Allende, there were efforts to alleviate poverty through re-distribution of wealth. But the economic policies of the rebel military government have been what the junta itself describes as a "shock treatment". They are aimed at reducing the well-being of the common people while reinforcing the privileges of the upper class.

With the trade union movement broken up—the army simply executed many union leaders—real incomes in Chile have officially declined 50 per cent since the coup d'etat. Unemployment, which was only three per cent in Allende's time, has varied between 15 and 20 per cent in the last few years according to official statistics. The actual rate is much higher, up to 30 per cent according to former union leaders.

Social assistance is non-existent except for some charitable work done by church agencies. Such conditions are conducive to high rates of profit for employers, but the effects on ordinary people are devastating. The junta itself admits that at least two million (out of 10.5 million) Chileans are in "extreme poverty", and 800,000 children are known to be suffering from malnutrition.

The ruling generals of Chile have been able to impose this kind of life on the country's people only by the most terrible violence. Within months of seizing power, they executed over 30,000 people, imprisoned (and often tortured) nearly 100,000, and sent into exile tens of thousands of others. Today, it is still common for people to "disappear", never again to be seen by their families. This is the situation which

makes Chile attractive for Canadian investors like Noranda, and it is this situation which they are necessarily reinforcing.

Noranda's actions in New Brunswick and Chile have been examined here not because they are unique or because we wish to single out Noranda. Its actions are indeed an example of a process which is occurring in many parts of the world. We have looked at them in order to illustrate the fact that our problems in Atlantic Canada are not unrelated to those of people in the Third World, and that our work for justice and equality cannot be separated from that of people in a country like Chile.

Community film

People involved in alternate film projects always face extra problems. Their equipment is old, money is in short supply and their films cover controversial topics that traditional outlets for their work are reluctant to use.

In January 1978, when Bill McKiggan and Tom Burger began work on the video tape "Work and Wages", they were responding to what they call "unfair persecution of unemployed people, particularly in the Maritimes."

The federal government was just launching its "Cheaters" campaign to shift the blame of unemployment from their own backdoor to those who had no jobs; other politicians were calling Maritimers "lazy"; and the media in the region was duly reporting all this without comment.

At the same time, Maritimers were hearing about more and more suicide attempts that were linked to joblessness-depressions. And, the Halifax Coalition for Full Employment was just getting on its feet.

With some funding from the Canada Council and physical resources provided by the Halifax Video Theatre, McKiggan and Burger set about filming the Coalition's endeavors. Using antiquated black and white 1/2 inch video equipment, they produced a five minute tape to be used by the Coalition in community work.

When they requested that the ATV community public affairs program "I.D." broadcast the tape, it was rejected. "I.D." said, "we take 1/2 inch black and white only if it's an airplane crashing". CBC radio agreed to air the audio track from the tape but refused to give it TV time on the grounds that the technical limitations of black and white prohibited its use on TV.

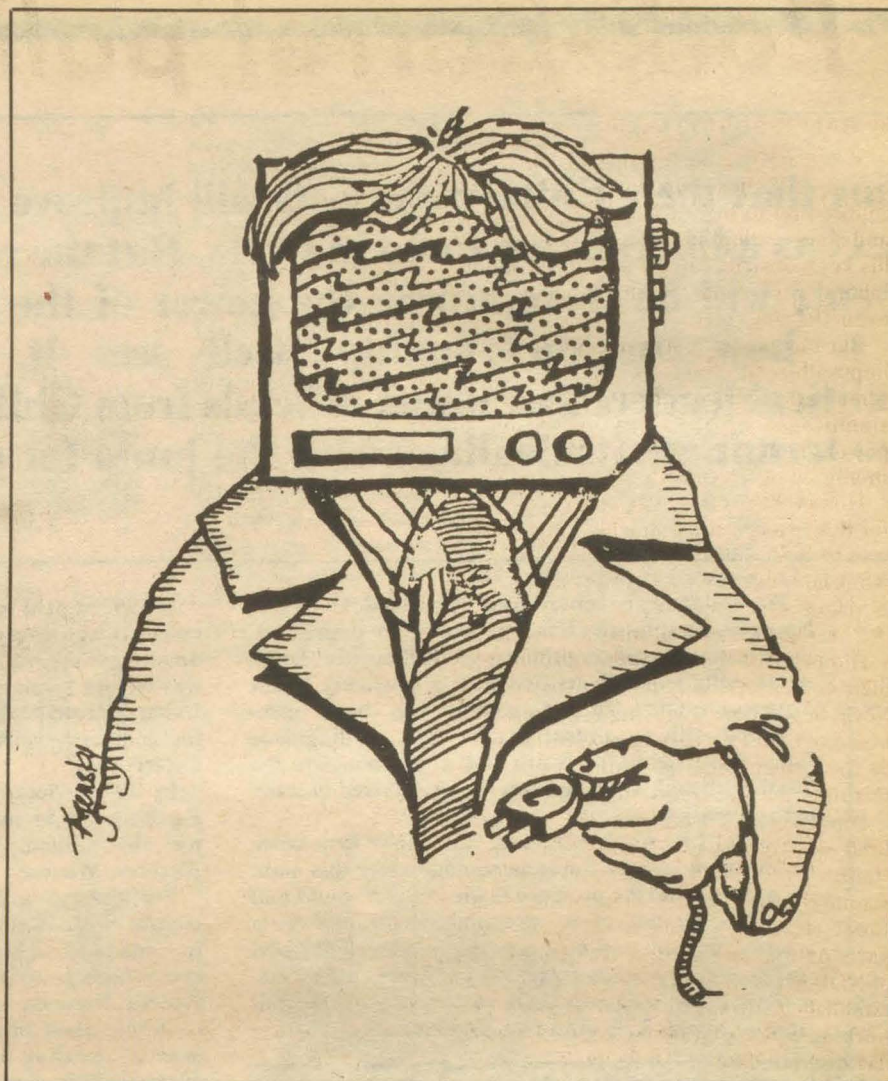
But McKiggan and Burger didn't lose their interest in filming what they found around them: the joblessness of the Maritimes in the '70's. From men on the breadline in the northend of Halifax, to unemployed shipyard workers: it all formed the base of their work in video. While the regular media of the region were promising brighter days ahead—depending on which government was advocating more grants to multi-national companies—the real situation hadn't changed much through the year, and McKiggan and Burger continued their work.

CHARLIE MURRAY TAPED

Charlie Murray was involved in one of the first attempts to organize a fisherman's union in Nova Scotia. In the late thirties he began working with fish plant workers and fishermen along the south shore. In 1940, after warnings from the provincial minister of labour that Murray had to stay "off shore or else", he was arrested and shipped to an internment camp in Pettawawa, Ontario. For 16 months Murray was held without trial.

While the government charged that Murray was a "communist", others—particularly the people he was working with on the south shore—found it easier to believe he was interned because of the threat a union would have posed to businesses in Nova Scotia at the time.

Both of these tapes are available to community groups and schools interested in this different perspective in Maritime history. McKiggan and Burger, working out of the Atlantic Film Makers Co-operative, are interested in discussing their work with those who view it: for the tapes, you can contact the Co-operative at 1671 Argyle St., in Halifax.



Bowater in NFLD.

continued from page one

Many of the men went to Churchill Falls, Labrador, leaving their families behind. When they returned upon completion of that construction project, many did not want to leave. As Tremblett says, "they knew the misery of it, leaving their families behind. Why should a man with 16 children leave his children and his wife behind and head off to Labrador? Is that living? He had a home which was paid for; it was his. He had a piece of land which was his. It wasn't economic sense for him to sell his home, take his family and move them somewhere else and then start all over again with a \$40,000 or \$50,000 mortgage around his neck; and he might have been 45 years of age."

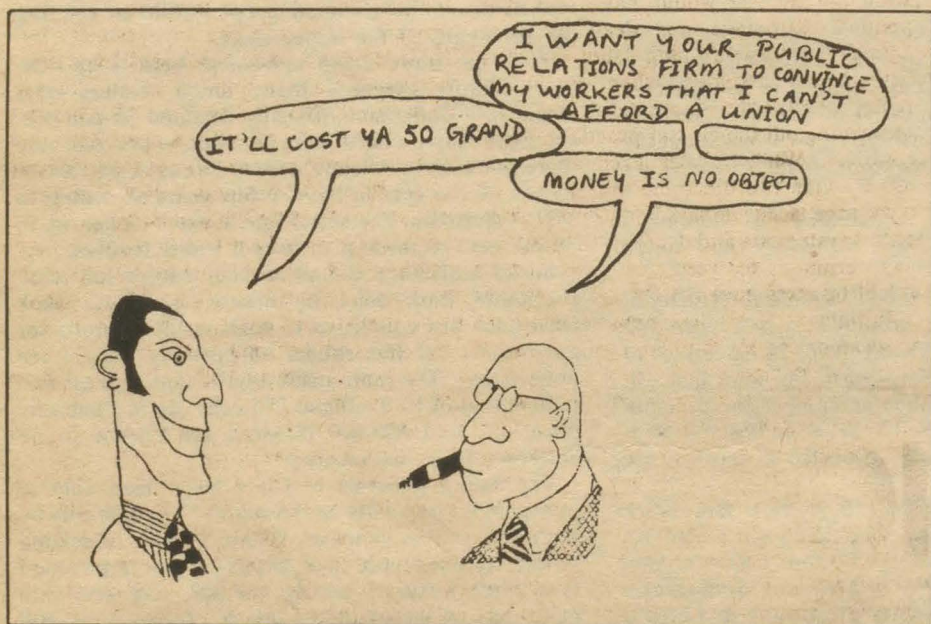
But many did not want to return to sawmilling, boatbuilding and farming, either. Most had been taught for 20 years, "If you're dumb, you're going to be a fisherman," explains Tremblett, and so they gained skills in construction trades. "How do you tell him now he's got to go and break ground and put in spuds?"

The Bay d'Espoir Development

boat-building operation which has since been taken over by a resident of the bay. Owner John Augot, whose shipyard won contracts to build three 55-foot longliners last year, estimates he could get 90-95 per cent of the materials he needs from local sawmills if those sawmills were geared up for production.

The association has also secured a Canada Works grant to start up a sawmill in the area and views other government programs as potential sources of the initial capital needed for such ventures. The funds, says Tremblett, will not be used for "doing up graveyards, painting picket fences and such, but rather starting up a sawmill to create 100 permanent jobs."

They also want changes in the way Canada Works funds are distributed. What the association proposed, says Tremblett, was that the amount of funding available be divided within the constituency according to the unemployment rates. Then the local organizations would put forth proposals for using these funds



Bank workers organize

continued from page one

wage increases above the normal cost-of-living increase, are also used to make employees work harder and discourage pro-union feelings.

But the harder the employees work, says Oosterveld, the greater the chance of making mistakes and getting a bad staff report.

"And it's also a question of favouritism by the boss and it allows the banks to play God. It's an abused system in those ways because it's not objective and it's not based on merit."

The banks have generally abandoned the practice of forcing tellers to pay them up to 10 per cent of any shortfall, but Oosterveld says it remains a stressful and demanding job. Tellers estimate they handle an average \$20,000 a day in cash.

Organizing bank workers has not been easy because of traditional fears of trade

unionism, the tactics of the banks and the sheer magnitude of the banks' operations.

Workers must be contacted in cloak and dagger fashion at home individually because any union talk at work could result in dismissal.

The teller says the banks play on the employees' traditional fears about unions and tell them that a minority of union supporters can force their will on the majority.

Oosterveld says many have had little exposure to unions and "don't know that 90 per cent of contract negotiations are settled without a hint of a problem. It's not labour who tries to negotiate fantastic contracts. More often than not, it's management that's at fault. The bank workers are afraid of having to go on strike, but they won't have to unless they decide themselves."

"the only route to prosperity for Bay d'Espoir is to rely on forestry, fishing and agriculture"

Association, now seven years old, has determined that the only route to prosperity for Bay d'Espoir is to rely again on forestry, fishing and agriculture and to make these resources work for the people of Bay d'Espoir.

"It's no good to cut the raw material—lumber, for argument's sake—and ship it out of the bay. But rather you have to look at it from the point of view, what can be done with the secondary processing of lumber to give us those few additional jobs," asserts Tremblett.

"And the development association came to the conclusion that the only way that can be done is if it is utilized for that very purpose, not utilized for the maximum amount of profits by an industrialist but rather maximizing it for its potential for the overall development of the area."

In line with this, the association is drawing up a five-year development plan for the bay, focusing not on one big industry but drawing upon all available resources. They have already initiated a

and, upon approval from the Member of Parliament, would act upon these proposals. But the member for Bay d'Espoir, External Affairs Minister Don Jamieson, replied negatively to this suggestion, he said.

Fearing that the sawmill proposal would be rejected, the association organized a 129-person caravan to Gander, where the decisions were being made. They got their sawmill.

The association is also vocal about the past developments which have led Bay d'Espoir into their present state. In February, 1978, it organized a march of 800 people to the power site of Newfoundland Hydro to protest the transfer of various branches of the operation to central Newfoundland.

"And in regards to Bowater, "Bowater will have to go," said Tremblett, "It's as simple as that. It's our resource. It wasn't given them forever and tomorrow. They can't give them the resource and starve the people."

Pork-barrel politics = democracy

by RALPH SURETTE

When he was in the opposition, Nova Scotia's Premier John Buchanan could be counted on to mount a high moral horse and come galloping down hard whenever his keen nostrils caught a whiff of the old Liberal pork barrel being cracked open even the slightest.

But obviously, justice of any kind was impossible as long as the evil Grits remained in power. Thus, the awesome significance of the Tory ascension to power last September: justice would finally come to pass.

However, no one was quite prepared for the new morality on which this justice was to be based: that a sin is a sin only when committed by a Grit; for a Tory it is a virtue.

Thus, virtuously, the infidel was slain.

Highway workers by the dozens lost their jobs. Although it is customary in Nova Scotia for some highway foremen who owe their jobs to political affiliation to be fired whenever a government changes, this time the slaughter didn't stop there.

Some unionized highway workers were fired as well, government boards from Halifax's Metro Centre down to the Nova Scotia Harness Racing Commission were swept clean and, generally, Conservative party patronage committees, in the words of NDP MLA Paul MacEwan, "have been established throughout the province to work on every area where the government has discretionary power."

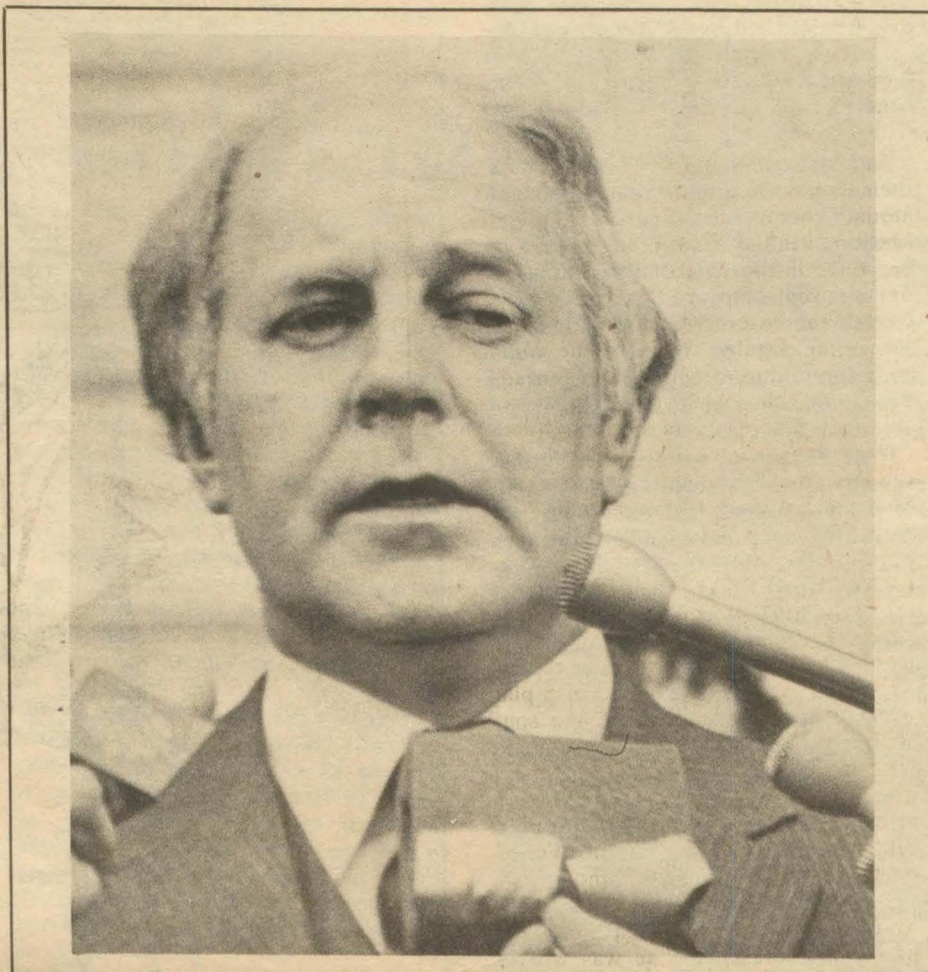
Just before the election Premier John Buchanan proclaimed a "no firings" policy far and wide. On a phone-in radio show on CJFX in Port Hawkesbury on September 9 a caller asked if he intended, if elected, to "follow the Conservative policy of firing all the Liberals who are working for you."

"Certainly not," Buchanan replied. "Good gracious, because a person is a Liberal or Conservative or New Democrat, if that person is qualified and performing... and is in a useful position, that person remains."

CUPE local 1867 was promised specifically, in a meeting between union officials and Buchanan four days before the election, that highway workers wouldn't be fired.

Now the number fired probably exceeds a hundred. Some are overt political workers, but some have virtually no link to politics at all except that they obtained jobs during the Liberal reign.

Of these, seven are CUPE members. The union has appealed to both the Highways and the Labour Ministers to have their cases reviewed by an arbitration



NS Premier John Buchanan

Dal Photo / Delorey

board. The appeal was turned down on grounds that the workers had been still in their probationary period.

Perhaps the most revealing incident, however, involved the firing of the King's County crown prosecutor, Donald Hall, on grounds that he had served as official agent for the defeated Liberal MLA.

"I consider a crown prosecutor's role akin to that played by a civil servant," said Attorney General Harry How in a revealing statement. "It's fine to have political beliefs one way or the other but there is no room for active participation." How gave the job to a non-active Tory.

Paul MacEwan contrasted the firing with the "precociously rapid advancement of Frank Edwards, defeated Tory candidate in Cape Breton West." Edwards was appointed crown prosecutor in Cape Breton County after only four years on the provincial bar.

Pork barrel politics is an old tradition in Nova Scotia, and perhaps a more open one

than elsewhere. Until the 1950s a change in government pretty well meant that everyone working on the road, in particular, got sacked.

When Robert Stanfield was elected Tory Premier in 1956 there was some reduction of these traditional practices. During his administration the highway workers unionized, and when Liberal Gerald Regan took over in 1970 the more overt "pork barrel" practices diminished even more. Although no one would have said that political patronage was dead in Nova Scotia—not by a long shot—it was nevertheless assumed when Buchanan took power that this more recent tendency of weeding out the grosser practices would continue. While former Premier Regan admits that "we did some things too" in patronage terms, he says he has never seen such a systematic and determined effort by a government to weed out anyone who might be an opponent from within.

Initially at least, the Tories seem to be motivated less by duplicity and political

chicanery than by a kind of blundering innocence. John Buchanan gives every indication that he truly believes that party Tories are inherently good and everyone else bad.

What is perhaps most interesting in this whole case is the defence the Conservatives offer for their actions. Buchanan has been quoted as saying that the firings constitute "democracy in action." He has also said that it's "a fundamental principle of democracy" that when a new government comes in anyone in a sensitive position of advising on government policy be changed because you don't want your opponents in top jobs working against you.

This seems to mean that everyone in a highly sensitive function, such as carrying a shovel in the highways department, must fear for his job—a state of mind which many civil servants with no connection to politics have been in since the election.

Buchanan brings to power one of the most narrowly partisan attitudes seen in politics in Canada for some time. His electoral sweep, the near-upset of the Liberals in P.E.I., the clinging-to-power against the odds of Tory Richard Hatfield in New Brunswick, the fact that Newfoundland is Tory provincially seems to have convinced him that a holy Tory millenium is at hand. It will come to earth completely when Joe Clark becomes Prime Minister.

This has led the Buchanan government to take a truculent attitude towards Ottawa and also led Buchanan himself out on a rather presumptuous limb at times.

For example, a few weeks after his election he was in the United States (where else?) making his first major policy speech. The Atlantic provinces, he told a Portland, Maine, audience, have plenty of energy to sell to New England—nuclear power from New Brunswick, tidal power and coal power from Nova Scotia, hydroelectricity from Newfoundland. Apart from this being nonsense, there was the even stickier problem of Buchanan presuming to speak for the other Atlantic provinces. He was quickly sat upon by spokesmen for Newfoundland, who reminded him they had other plans in mind.

In economic policy, the Buchanan government is off on a program of restraint and is describing itself as a "government of business." Not that this makes it any different from the government it replaced—the difference being that it's admitting it. This minor piece of honesty may be the most auspicious part of the Buchanan government's first six months in power.

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Community rejects govt plans

Lawrencetown is a small self-contained community 14 miles north of Halifax where the two main topics of conversation are, in winter, the fog which rolls in from the Atlantic, and in summer, the influx of Halifax area residents to the local beaches.

For the most part, Lawrencetown is a quiet community: many people commute to Halifax for jobs and the families have been in the area for years.

Three years ago, however, a noisy controversy erupted which shook the community to its foundations.

It all began in April 1975 when a man living in the area decided to winterize his mobile home and made the routine application to the provincial Department of Municipal Affairs for the building permit. He was surprised when this normal request was denied and even more surprised by the reason: he was told, "you're living in a park."

At the same time another resident wanting to add a garage to his house was also denied a building permit on the same grounds—he was told that he was living in a park and all "development" was prohibited.

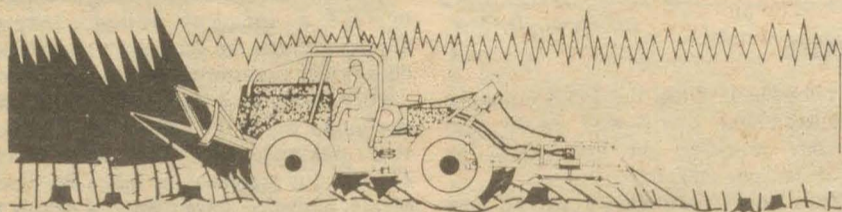
A few quick enquiries revealed that it was true. On April 15, 1975 the Liberal cabinet of Gerald Regan had approved by an order-in-council the Halifax Dartmouth Regional Plan, thus making Lawrencetown a park.

community feelings: "Overnight our growth was being restricted and we were threatened with the prospect of being removed from our homes by government expropriation."

What most angered Lawrencetown residents was the arbitrariness with which they had been handled. There was never a public meeting of any sort in the area to discuss the Halifax-Dartmouth plan before it was implemented. There was no indication that they were being included in any rethinking of the Metro area's development. Lawrencetown only learned of the implications of the Plan after it had been made law.

These feelings of outrage were further exacerbated when residents seeking building permits learned that the government wasn't able to say whose land or how much land was affected by the Plan. No surveys had been done of the area, so all that existed was a splash of green ink of varying widths on the official map and the designation that 'green' meant 'recreational and park'. The government wasn't sure whose property was included in their splash of green ink but, taking no chances, they were denying permits to anyone in the proximity.

In the fall of 1975, 300 people attended a public meeting in the Lawrencetown Community Centre. By this point people feared that government expropriation of



The Plan had generated a lot of debate in the Halifax-Dartmouth Metro area since it was first proposed in the early '70's. A number of meetings, sponsored by various government bodies, had been held in the twin cities over a period of a few years, and the people in the urban areas were well aware of the Plan and its effects.

But while the Plan was billed as the **Halifax-Dartmouth Plan**, no one noticed that an over-eager planner had included Lawrencetown in their work. On the upper right hand corner of the fancy colour-coded map, Lawrencetown was painted green and deemed to be "a green belt"—and that meant no development.

No one was more surprised and angered by this discovery than the residents of Lawrencetown. One resident summed up

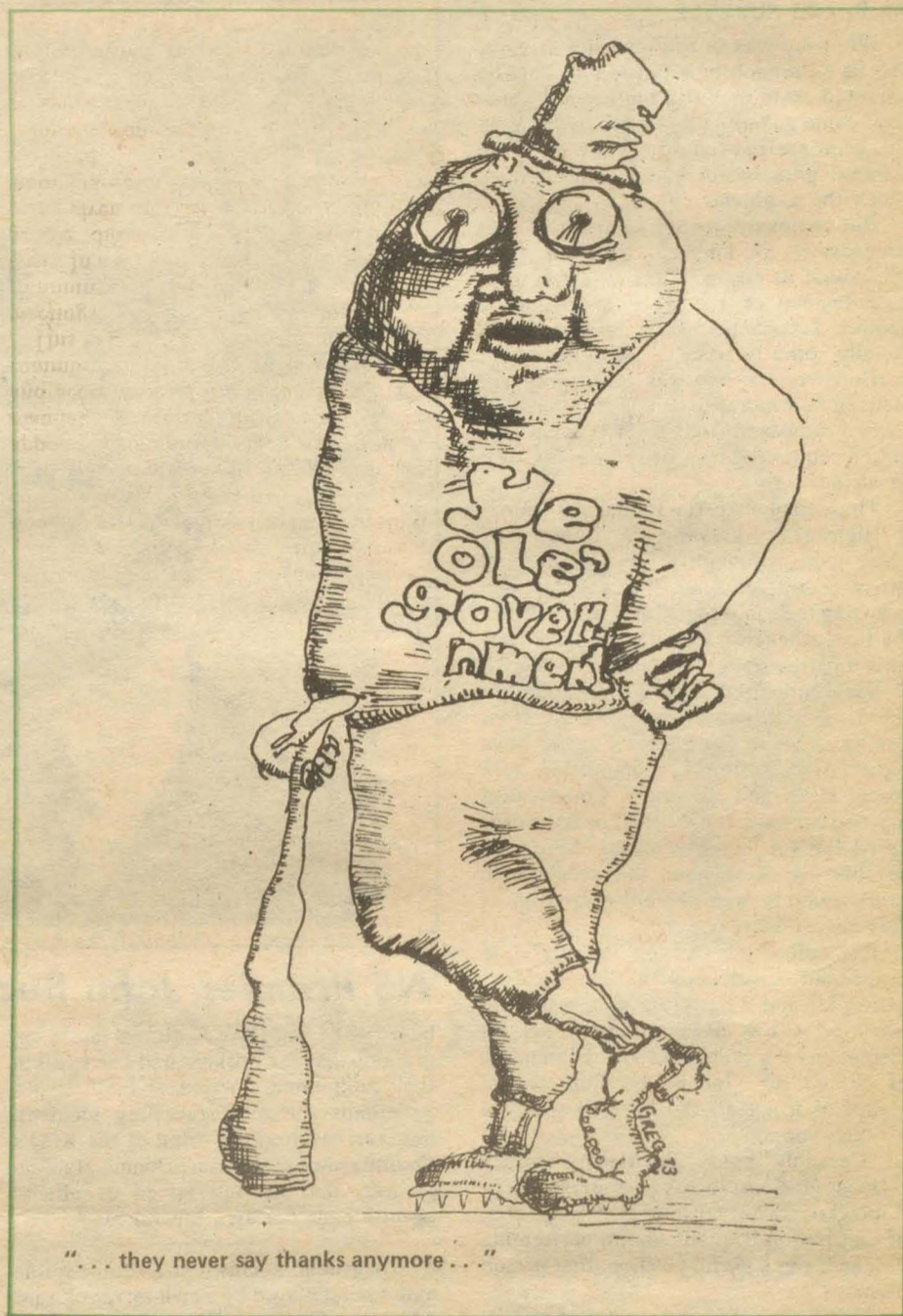
their land was around the corner.

At that meeting a committee of six community residents was elected and given the mandate to meet with the Minister of Municipal Affairs, Glen Bagnell, to express "in no uncertain terms" the concerns of the community on the matter.

When the Lawrencetown committee met with the Minister things seemed to go well. They were told that a consultant would be hired to come up with a more appropriate plan for the area.

In the late fall of 1975, H.J. Porter and Associates Ltd.—"environmental consultants" they were called—were hired.

Fifteen months later, the Lawrencetown community was called to a public meeting organized by the citizens' committee. This time 700 people turned out to be presented



with the "Porter Plan". The summaries of the Plan were distributed in the meeting and people were told that their committee had already endorsed the plan as being better than the original.

But the community wasn't satisfied, and wholeheartedly rejected the Porter Plan. At the meeting people pointed out that this new plan affected less land, but the land that was still designated as "park" was more restricted in use than it was in the original plan. Some more cynical members of the community also pointed out that all of the properties of the six Lawrencetown committee members were now in unrestricted areas on the map.

The Lawrencetown people saw through the government's attempt to divide them into two camps, and with near unanimity, they refused to endorse this new plan.

The meeting dissolved without resolution. Shortly thereafter the Lawrencetown committee dissolved as well.

It was replaced by a government-appointed committee which was given the mandate to oversee the implementation and acceptance of the Porter Plan in the community that had just rejected it.

This committee refused to hold public meetings and would only meet with community residents on a one-to-one basis. In a series of these private meetings, people discovered that neighbours are being given different stories by committee members—everyone was suspicious and confused.

Finally, on September 12, 1978 the committee called a public meeting, this time to tell the community that their new and improved revised plan had already been adopted by the government.

Outraged, the people voted non-confidence in the government appointed committee and decided to organize their own ad-hoc committee. An interim committee was created at this time to plan

a new public meeting, at which meeting a responsible citizens' committee could be elected.


This meeting was held October 5, 1978 and a new committee of ten people was elected—two from each of the five regions in Lawrencetown. The terms of reference for the committee were to be:

- limitation of the regional development plan to areas which do not interfere with the rights of citizens (i.e. the beaches and salt marshes);
- acquisition of all property at fair market value;
- any planning process has to involve an elected and responsible citizens' committee;
- protection of the environment through strict enforcement of already existing regulations; and
- community approved controls to prevent the exploitation of the resources of the area by developers.

Meanwhile, the Nova Scotian provincial election intervened. Prior to the election the new Lawrencetown committee succeeded in securing a promise from the Progressive Conservatives, then in opposition, that the park would not be imposed against the wishes of the people and that the terms of reference of the new committee would be honoured.

The residents of Lawrencetown are confident that they won their battle against development plans. Their newly-elected MLA, Tom McInnes, a Conservative Cabinet Minister, fought his campaign, in part, on this issue and Lawrencetown is counting on his support. It remains to be seen whether this promise will be compromised—as many other Conservative election promises have been. However, the residents have already shown they can organize quickly and forcefully, and know only too well they cannot afford to ease the pressure.

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