

Comment

Job creation ineffective

by Cheryl Downton

Unemployment is certainly not a stranger to Nova Scotia. The number of jobless in this province is intolerably high and there does not appear to be an end, or even a marked decline, in sight. "Not so" might well be the response of government. "What about the relocation and job creation programmes that have been, and will continue to be, initiated?" One obvious response might be: who are you trying to kid?

Anyone with a few grains of intelligence or the ability to reason, will quickly see that these manoeuvres i.e. job creation and relocation of industry/business, are at best only short term measures which are useful to rearrange statistics and create a temporary smokescreen. These programmes can not logically be expected to in any real way provide a cure, or even be seen as steps in the right direction.

Relocation has become increasingly popular with government bodies as a method to combat demands made upon them for jobs by any number of groups and individuals these days. Here in Nova Scotia, the group who received the most publicity was based in Cape Breton, where Labour leaders maintain the unemployment figure is close to 40%. The government's response to the Coalition of Concern for the Unemployed in Cape Breton could not be described as earthshaking. (Perhaps some fault lies at the feet of the Coalition itself for not making more worthwhile demands.)

The government has initiated a relocation of a government office to the troubled Cape Breton area. This is progressive?? Seemingly the Cape Breton region benefits from this transfer, while the area where the office was previously set-up loses. Who is to say the same

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applicants. In these cases we did not stop to ask where anybody lived, we simply appointed the best candidate. The fact that most of these came from one place should perhaps tell us mainlanders something.

In the one or two cases where a lot of debate took place, the qualifications of the persons involved were admitted to be essentially equal. In these instances, people's personalities and their abilities in speaking before a group were what decided most council members. The political patronage suggested by the author of "Family Compact" was just not evident, as the author would have seen if he had had the ambition to attend all the meetings at which council appointments were made.

The rest of the aforementioned article seems to consist of a partial list of those people who voted for Mr. Sampson and Mr. Mancini: more people did, after all, vote for this team than for any other. It is not at all surprising to find this trend reflected within the council as well as outside of it.

The fact remains that most of the council was elected democratically and the rest of them were appointed democratically. If we now have the group solidarity for which the Family Compact was noted, then good! For we will have the strength which is necessary to govern fairly and honestly!

Peter D. Mack

thing won't happen again, and this office (or another) is relocated to a theoretically more deserving area? This most definitely is a juggling of not only statistics but people's livelihoods, with the sole winner being, or so it would appear, the present government.

Job creation programmes are another 'hot' item in these times of high unemployment and economic instability. Currently there are three programmes in existence or nearly so: Canada Works and its subsidiary Young Canada Works, Job Corps and the recently uncovered Winter Works programme. The latter two are (were) provincially funded, while Canada Works is a federal package.

These programmes have their differences, but similarities are evident: (1) They are programmes

designed to create temporary / short term employment for a privileged few. (2) Wages are usually minimum wage i.e. \$2.75 / hr. x 40 hr. week equals \$110.00-deductions equals take home pay \$97.98 (ex.) (3) Jobs created are usually tedious, unmotivating, require little if any initiative, and are poorly organized. (This is especially true of the most recent provincial Job Corps programme.) (4) They are political tools whose implementation makes government bodies 'look good' and relieves the pressure, even temporarily.

Do they serve a purpose? Some may argue that a little is better than none, and even if only a comparative handful of people are employed for a short term period working at menial low paying jobs, this, at least serves a purpose; the short

term purpose **can** get needed work done and **can** supply those persons with enough work weeks to reapply for UI benefits. But what about long term achievements? Make work programmes most often involve jobs which are for the most part irrelevant, unnecessary and superfluous. Having 'jobs' for people to work on for **perhaps** enough weeks to collect unemployment insurance can only be seen as a trap and a never ending circle. It shifts one group of workers and exchanges their position on the wheel with another, and so on and so on. Nothing of any REAL value is accomplished.

There is much to be done and as long as these short term band aid methods are accepted, we can come no further towards an end, or even a break in the cycle.



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