

LePage says Atlantic situation desperate

"The Atlantic provinces' situation is growing desperate. We have the highest unemployment in the country, the highest costs and the hangover of a fractured economy that is the direct result of badly conceived government policies over many years."

Those were the words of New Brunswick Federation of Labor President Paul LePage in an interview printed in a recent edition of "Steel Labour," the official organ of the United Steel Workers of America.

Mr. LePage was speaking in his capacity as District five subdistrict director for the USWA.

"Unless there is some basic change of direction of economic policy under Chretien (Jean Chretien, recently appointed federal finance minister) I don't suppose he will last long either," Mr. LePage said, after saying that Edgar Benson, John Turner and Donald Macdonald were "disasters" in the finance portfolio.

"If a board of directors of a company or the executive board of a trade union screwed up things as badly as the Federal Cabinet, they would be turned out and sent packing. But our ballots don't let us do that... except in a general election. Instead, they slip somebody else into the main slots and proceed to continue to give us more of the same garbage. That is

hardly democracy to me. The electors simply have to learn to vote for political parties that are responsive to their needs," Mr. LePage said.

He said in the article he thought the ballot box was the "best political system devised by men," but said, "I can't help but wonder about its efficiency and meaning when you see the ongoing crisis we have in the Atlantic Provinces."

He said the labour movement in the Atlantic Provinces was mounting a campaign against the federal Anti-Inflation Program, and that, "Opting into it in the Atlantic Provinces in the first place was a disaster that shouldn't have been."

High unemployment rates, welfare rolls, substandard of living, and the economic backwardness of the region should indicate the Atlantic Provinces were not the cause of inflation, Mr. LePage said.

He said a turn-about in the steel and shipbuilding industries would be a great boost to the economy of the Atlantic region, and that Canada should rebuild its merchant marine.

"Why should practically all of Canada's shipping be done on foreign bottoms when we have the ores, the coal, the steel making facilities, the technical know-how,

and most important, the people, all living with a four or five hundred mile radius of Halifax, St. John's, Saint John, and Charlottetown to build a fleet that would reflect and serve Canada's needs?" he asked.

He also stressed the need for "massive injections of capital" into the region.

This would include the development of an Atlantic Provinces power grid, improved port facilities, connecting roads to the American Atlantic seaboard markets, and a greater development of the Atlantic fisheries.

"I predict that the labour movement is going to unite to fight for these developments in the Atlantic Provinces," LePage said.

"For us it's now a matter of sheer survival for the people of the entire area. We can no longer accept the old hand-outs and welfare attitude towards us and we're going to fight. We need the support and the unity of the entire labour movement in the country with us."

"The last depression of the 1930's was 'cured' by the second world war. Today war is unthinkable and would be no cure for anything but life itself. The trade union movement has a truly massive responsibility to make sure we get the economic and political cures our people and society need... and damned soon," Mr. LePage said.

'Water bomb'

Antioch, California is a town on edge these days. The Bay Area city of 35,000 could be blown sky-high at any time — by a pond and some storm drains.

The pond is a "potential bomb" because it was an industrial chemicals dump until 1974. After that was stopped, it became a dumpsite for flammable garbage and woodpulp, which now float on top of the ooze.

Meanwhile, the storm drains could explode because residents have been dumping gas and oil wastes into them for years. And with no rain, the gas and oil haven't been washed, as usual, into the San Joaquin River. (Newscrip)

TRAVEL TALK



by Brenda Johnston

Back by popular demand — what I can't afford to do at Christmas.

PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE Read this if you are flying at Christmas. Again I use Montreal for sample airfares, but most of the information below will apply to any Canadian city within the immediate area.

Conveniently, for the airlines, certainly not for students, at Christmas there are black-out times when you cannot use special airfares. These BLACK-OUTS are as follows:

There is no STUDENT STAND by (Air Canada) on Friday or Sunday or from December 19-24 and January 2-4.

There is no YOUTH FARE (Eastern Provincial Airways) on Friday or from December 19-24 and January 2-4.

There is no WEEK END FARE (E.P.A.) from December 23-December 26 and December 30 to December 31 and January 1 and January 2.

Please note that there is NO black-out on Air Canada WEEK-END Fare.

Below are the applicable airfares as described above:

REGULAR CONFIRMED seat on E.P.A. or Air Canada* from Fredericton to Montreal is \$56.00.

WEEK END FARE (available on Saturday or Sunday going and Saturday or Sunday returning within a year and using the same airline both ways) is Fredericton-Montreal return E.P.A. \$73.00 Air Canada \$84.00 There is no one way week-end fare. It must be a return booking.

STAND BY FARE (get your ticket at the Travel Office but you must register at the airport before you know if you have a confirmed seat.) Fredericton to Montreal \$34.00 Air Canada. You must be under twenty-two for this fare.

YOUTH FARE (CONFIRMED seat, available on E.P.A.) Fredericton to Montreal \$42.00 Eastern Provincial Airways. You must be under twenty-two for this fare.

Please do not make reservations for Christmas until you are sure of your exact travelling dates, but do book as soon as you know when you can Travel I hold block space on key flights but certainly not sufficient space for everyone so don't leave your reservations until the week before you go home.

The above information has proven to be so beneficial that I am submitting it again for those who missed it the first time.

Be sure to read next week's column and find out why the office was closed for two days - very interesting!

APOLOGY tions. CORRECTION - Brenda is In last weeks issue of the Bruns, accepting reservations, right now. Brenda Johnson's Travel Talk said Sorry Brenda, even roving cub she was NOT accepting reser- reporters make boo-boo's.

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