



Nova Scotia
Federation
of Labour, CLC

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PRESS RELEASE

Atlantica proposal "deeply flawed" and "unrealistic," economic analysis finds

For Immediate Release

Halifax, N.S. - Rick Clarke, President of the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour, Cliff White, Regional Organizer for Atlantic Canada - Council of Canadians and MLA Maureen MacDonald, Labour Critic of the Nova Scotia New Democratic Party hosted a press conference on February 15th to “Atlantica – Myths or Reality”, a document released by The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA).

Atlantica is the name given to a proposed “border-free” entity spanning the Maritime provinces, a portion of Quebec and the New England States. This proposal could have serious effects on Atlantic Canada. The CCPA document looks at the myths of these proposals and suggests other options for this region.

Representatives from the Canadian Labour Congress, OXFAM, the Nova Scotia Public Interest Group (NSPIRG) were also in attendance at Province House.

The release of this study "Atlantica: Myths and Reality," is a wake-up call for the Nova Scotians and the Governments of the Atlantic provinces, according to the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour.

The study shows, according to Federation President Rick Clarke, that the cross boarder arrangement being proposed by the Atlantic Institute of Market Studies (AIMS) and championed by the Atlantic Provinces Chambers of Commerce could irreparably harm our social and economic future. The Atlantica proposal is based on "unrealistic claims" and is "deeply flawed."

"The Atlantica proposal is not in the best interests of working families in Nova Scotia and we call on our provincial government to reject it" says Clarke.

"Nova Scotians who read this economic analysis will be shocked to find that the Atlantica proposal is about exporting to outside private interests our new found energy resources with little benefit residents of the province.

It's also about investing public funds in infrastructure that will make us a bigger, quicker transit point to move goods that will be produced and consumed elsewhere and make other people prosperous. What will it contribute to economic development prospects and prosperity for Nova Scotians?" asks Clarke.

The study "Atlantica: Myths and Reality" prepared by Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) senior researcher Scott Sinclair following a request from the labour movement for a comprehensive examination of the Atlantica proposal.

Conceived by big business circles and fiercely promoted by the Atlantic Institute for Market Studies (AIMS), the Atlantica scheme would create an integrated cross-border economic region that encompasses the four Atlantic provinces of Canada, a piece of Quebec, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and a large swath of northern New York State all the way to Buffalo.

In that region of "business without boundaries," according to the proponents, "the removal of barriers and harmonization of regulations" will provide corporations with more privileges than those they already enjoy with NAFTA (the North American Free Trade Agreement).

"This study is a shocking/incredible wake-up call to everyone. We call on our government leaders and economic decision-makers to read this and join with us in putting a stop to all discussions on this Atlantica proposal. It is not about our working families: it is a truly a radical agenda to give away our assets and our economic future to outside corporate interests. Let us instead think of real ways of promoting homegrown opportunities and prosperity," concludes Clarke.

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