



CCPA Nova Scotia **OUTLOOK**

*The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives - Nova Scotia
Raising debate • Creating policy alternatives*

Fall 2005 Issue **What's Inside:**

A summary of recent publications, including:

- Securing our energy future?
- Time for a Real Raise - the Nova Scotia minimum wage
- Repairing the Nets
Nova Scotia Alternative Provincial Budget 2005/2006

Also:

- Commentary by Pauline Raven, author of the annual Nova Scotia Child Poverty Report Card - **Liberal's Economic Platform Cheats 1 Million Children**
- How to join the CCPA - NS



CCPA-NS Research Advisory Committee Chair Larry Haiven, Provincial Director John Jacobs and CCPA-NS Steering Committee Chairperson Pauline Raven at the 25th anniversary of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives in Ottawa.

CCPA - NS Steering Committee member Fred Furlong at the October Nova Scotia Federation of Labour Convention during which delegates unanimously voted to continue and increase support for the CCPA - NS.



Recent publications

Securing our energy future? by Larry Hughes, July 26, 2005

This review of Nova Scotia's energy sector in 2004 is a compelling look at some of the major developments in Nova Scotia's energy sector in 2004, including developments in the natural gas industry, offshore worker health and safety, electricity regulation, home heating programs, climate change, and energy security in Nova Scotia.

Time for a Real Raise - the Nova Scotia Minimum Wage by John Jacobs, May, 2005

This report examines the recent changes in minimum wage. It reviews the inadequacy of the of the minimum wage support to households that are attempting to make ends meet. It addresses the economic impact of minimum wage in the context of an economy that is producing too many low wage jobs, and considers some of the arguments against increasing the minimum wage.

Repairing the Nets Nova Scotia Alternative Provincial Budget 2005 - 2006, April, 2005

The 2005 Alternative Provincial Budget Fiscal Plan assesses the province's fiscal

situation. It examines the reasons for the improved fiscal situation and the price that continues to be paid. It assesses the sustainability of the current government's fiscal management strategy and presents a fiscal plan that prudently manages the province's public finances while investing in sustainable social and economic development.

The Alternative Provincial Budget (APB) provides a fiscal plan that manages the provincial debt and invests in social and economic development. All surpluses in the APB fiscal plan are allocated to addressing the social and infrastructure deficit that has accumulated.

Chronicle Herald Columns by John Jacobs

Since March, 2004, CCPA NS Provincial Director John Jacobs has been filing a monthly column in the Chronicle Herald. Recent columns:

"In whose hands is our energy policy?" October 4, 2005

"Unions are still our best hope" September 14, 2005

"Let's make daycare a great place to learn" July 13, 2005

"Is Globalization losing momentum?" June 14, 2005

"Scandal, politics and democracy" May 17, 2005

"N.S. budget must put people first" April 26, 2005

Coming soon:

"Fairness in Education" by Katherine Reed

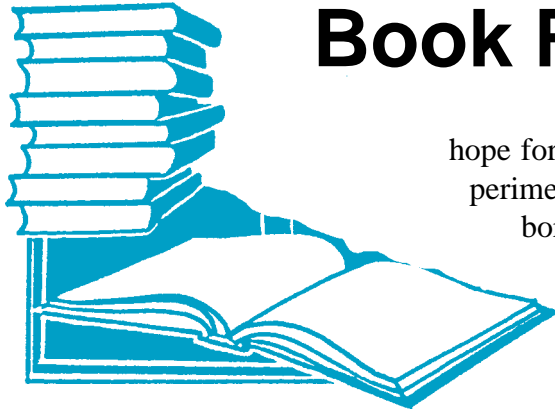
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Best wishes for a safe and happy holiday season!



Book Review

Too Close For Comfort:
Canada's Future within For-
tress North America
By: Maude Barlow
Published by McClelland and
Stewart Ltd - \$19.99

Maude Barlow is the chair of the Council of Canadians and has written fifteen books on subjects such as trade, water, health and education. In this book, the author turns her attention to another important issue – the integration of Canada and the United States.

The book starts with the May 2005 report of the *Independent Task Force on the Future of North America*. The task force was chaired by William Weld, former Republican governor of Massachusetts, Pedro Aspe Armella the ex-Finance Minister of Mexico and John Manley, the former deputy prime minister of Canada. Manley had help from his Canadian vice-chairs Thomas d'Aquino and Michael Wilson-Mulroney's Finance Minister. The final report of the Task Force was everything the business community could

hope for: a common security perimeter by 2010; a unified border action plan; a North American energy strategy; a common external tariff; a tested once policy for pharmaceuticals and finally a review of some sectors of NAFTA that were excluded from the original agreement.

The author uses the report to touch on a number of related subjects– the growth of the religious right, the growth of privatization, the US administration (including the new US ambassador), the food industry and the energy industry. In the final chapter she suggests, “a range of possible solutions for maintaining the kind of country and society we want.” Barlow calls on various groups to apply pressure on the Liberals to effect change.

I believe she has the right idea but doesn't go far enough. Who will lead this movement/protest and how do we defeat the right wing mentality instead of just postponing it or replacing one group of right wing politicians with another? The obvious choice to lead such a coalition is the labour and social justice movements but she doesn't discuss this as an option.

This book is well researched and easy to read. It will help us understand the important issues and players in

Canada-US relations. This book should be read by every Canadian who cares about keeping their country separate from the United States.

Review by Bob Haywood,
owner of **Outside the Lines -
“Books for Critical Minds”**,
6297 Quinpool Rd.

The work of the CCPA-NS work is directed by a steering committee elected by CCPA-NS members. CCPA-NS comprises CCPA members who reside in Nova Scotia.

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Liberal's Economic Platform Cheats 1 Million Children

Commentary by Pauline Raven, author of the annual Nova Scotia Child Poverty Report Card

In the last poll I saw Canadians said they thought addressing social issues should have a higher priority for government than tax cuts (Ekos, November 14, 2005). But Goodale is recommending rolling out tax cuts in the order of \$30 Billion. This move will greatly erode Canada's fiscal capacity to respond to Canadian's prime social issue, child poverty.

The Nova Scotia Child Poverty Report Card for 2005 has been released. Like previous years it shows a lack of progress – or to be more accurate lost ground – in governments' battle to end child poverty.

Over 1 million Canadian children live in families where income simply can't be stretched where it needs to go, despite parents' valiant efforts. So, our nation continues to rack up a costly social deficit. While no progress is hard enough to accept in Canada's 16-year battle against child poverty, lost ground is a true disgrace to parliamentarians everywhere. The cost of such inaction is borne by successive generations of children in our communities.

Goodale's income tax cuts will not help very many low-income families with children. Families with children at the bottom of the income ladder don't pay much income tax to begin with. Sometimes they are even income tax exempt, but that doesn't mean parents have

On average Nova Scotia's female lone-parent families with children affected by poverty are \$8,000 below the low income cut-off line, while two-parent families struggle with a gap of over \$9,000. That's why thousands of families with children receive emergency supplies from Nova Scotia food banks each and every month. It's why all too often bill collectors hover at the family door.

adequate money in their pockets when they head out to the grocery store.

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Countries that have significantly reduced their child poverty rates have used social

transfers as a primary strategy, while working to ensure a strong marketplace based on creation of high quality, well paid jobs. Martin's Liberals must know this. So why are we seeing this persistent stalling on cash transfers to poor families as annual surpluses, that have been as predictable as the tides for several years now, continue to roll in?

What the lowest income families need is better distribution of this nation's wealth. They need government transfers, cash, social spending.

Goodale's proposed annual break of about \$500 per year for the average household, robs Canada of the chance to address this severe imbalance between "us" (families who have enough) and "them" (families who constantly struggle). Do citizens want this "us-and-them" kind of Canada that is being created and sustained by the Liberals' past and current fiscal policy? I guess the pending election will provide an answer.

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Organizational memberships are also available. For more information, please call CCPA - NS Provincial Director John Jacobs at 902-477-1252.



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