

# Noteworthy

July 4, 2003



## Premier welcomes Commission's report

Premier Roger Grimes welcomes the final report of the Royal Commission on Renewing and Strengthening our Place in Canada. He said commission Chair Mr. Vic Young, and commissioners Sister Elizabeth Davis and Judge James Igloliorte met the critical and ambitious task set before them to develop a broad consensus on a vision for the future which would identify ways to achieve prosperity and self-reliance for Newfoundland and Labrador within Canada.

"The report of the Royal Commission meets the test set out in the terms of reference established 15 months ago," said Premier Grimes. "Mr. Young said his objective at the time was to search for new ideas, new solutions and new directions in the context that the next decade will be a true turning point in our history. He and the other commissioners have indeed met this objective, and I thank them for their tireless work over the past year." The Premier said the work of the commission has allowed Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to have open dialogue about their expectations and hopes, be respectful of differing positions on issues, and allow for innovative ideas for the future.

"While many issues covered in the commission's report, *Our Place in Canada*, are familiar to the government and the people of the province, the real value of the report is the factual basis which this independent commission has developed on these issues. The report and the research program will add tremendous weight and credibility to the case which the government has been advancing to Ottawa on several fronts.

"Issues such as the confirmation of our view that Newfoundland and Labrador must be the principal beneficiary of our offshore oil resource; the development of the Lower Churchill River in Labrador requiring a federal presence at the table; sustaining rural Newfoundland and Labrador; and, developing a new relationship with the federal government which sees both levels of government dealing jointly with key issues for the long-term best interests of our people - are all priority issues for the government."

Premier Grimes said he believes a renewed relationship with Ottawa is worth pursuing. "The time is ripe for us to reflect with other Canadians on the kind of Canada we need. There are exciting possibilities, as the commission puts it, for creating a new kind of Canada." At a recent meeting of Atlantic Premiers, Premier Grimes received an endorsement from his Maritime colleagues for his proposal for a new Code of Conduct. This Code of Conduct outlines a set of principles of cooperation to strengthen and renew the Canadian Federation. "We will be advancing this proposal at next week's meeting of all premiers and territorial leaders in Charlottetown," he said.

The report and related research documents are available on the web at:  
<http://www.gov.nl.ca/royalcomm>

## Council of Atlantic Premiers announces formation of task force

The Atlantic Premiers have taken another step in fulfilling their commitment to lower automobile insurance rates. On June 27 they announced the appointment of the Atlantic Insurance Harmonization Task Force. The Task Force will be chaired by Fred Morash of Truro, Nova Scotia, former president and CEO of Island Tel and a former chair of the Atlantic Procurement Coordinating Committee.

Barbara Wakeham, Deputy Minister, Department of Government Services and Lands has been appointed as the member representing the province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Premier Grimes is optimistic that the Task Force will identify concrete steps that can form the basis of legislation to be introduced in respective provincial legislatures. "These Atlantic Canadians have tremendous experience in regulatory reform environments that will guide our decisions in this very important issue."

The Task Force will commence its activities immediately and will report to the Council of Atlantic Premiers by September 30, 2003.

## Minister Noel speaks at Voisey's Bay and Beyond Conference

June 24, Minister Noel opened the 8th annual Voisey's Bay and Beyond Conference, entitled "Seize the Opportunities."

"Since we negotiated the Voisey's Bay agreement with Inco, there has been a great deal of progress," said Minister Noel.

"It's a very exciting time for Labrador, and indeed for our province. Inco has already invested approximately \$55 million in its sites at Voisey's Bay, Argentia, and St. John's, and employed approximately 250 people.

"All of this work and investment will be an enormous economic boom to our province. The impact on the provincial Gross Domestic Product over the 30-year period is expected to be \$11 billion."

Minister Noel said Government will continue to monitor the progression of this project to ensure that Newfoundlanders and Labradorians remain the primary beneficiaries of this development.

