

Dion says Harper can't be trusted

Spat with Atlantic provinces 'bad federalism'

ELIZABETH THOMPSON
Montreal Gazette
DRUMMONDVILLE, QUE.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper will break his word to other provinces the way he broke it to the Atlantic provinces, Liberal Leader Stephane Dion warned Saturday.



Speaking to about 150 supporters gathered for a meeting of his party's Quebec wing, Dion portrayed Harper as a man whose word cannot be trusted.

"What he did to the Atlantic provinces, he can do at any moment to any other region," Dion said. "That is bad federalism."

Dion's comments come as Harper is in the midst of a battle with two Atlantic provinces — Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador — over whether the Conservative budget respects the terms of the Atlantic Accord, which was negotiated in 2005. Meanwhile, Saskatchewan Premier Lorne Calvert is threatening to take Ottawa to court, charging that Harper broke his promise on how non-renewable resources would be treated when equalization payments are calculated. Dion said he has never made promises he couldn't keep — that's in part why he never promised to resolve the fiscal imbalance between Ottawa and the provinces.

"I have always said the same thing, in English and in French. You can believe it. I have never broken my word to anyone." When he tabled the government's budget, Finance Minister Jim Flaherty pronounced that the era of federal-provincial bickering was over, Dion pointed out.

"I have never seen a federation as badly busted as the one that Mr. Harper is in the process of producing."

Dion said he served as intergovernmental affairs minister longer than anyone else since Confederation and always respected provincial jurisdictions.

"I am a son of the quiet revolution," Dion said. "I believe in Quebec institutions. I believe in them a lot. I have always defended them and I will always defend them."

The statement was one of the few to elicit an enthusiastic standing ovation in an otherwise lacklustre reception from supporters. While many party stalwarts were present in the audience, others, who have often been in attendance in the past, were nowhere to be seen and there appeared to be far fewer in attendance than there had been just a year ago in the same venue.

With the exception of the leader's speech and a report from spokespeople from policy workshops, the party took the exceptional step Saturday of closing all other discussions to the media.

Consequently, reporters were not present to hear what many said was an impassioned speech by Liberal candidate Justin Trudeau.

CanWest News Service

Making gravity work for you



There was no revving of engines at the Canary Derby in Victoria on Saturday. Todd Hooe in car 301 and Dan Gunn in car 13 let gravity do the talking as they rocket down the starting ramp in a qualifying heat.

VICTORIA TIMES COLONIST, CANWEST NEWS SERVICE

Into the game
Dan Barnes
Journal Sports



Cam Tait
Tuesdays in Sports

Halifax documentary crew finds gold off Florida coast

Filmmakers toast discovery of sunken treasure

PAUL McLEOD
Halifax Daily News

Apparently, the curse of the black pearl doesn't apply in Florida. Quite the opposite, in fact. A Halifax documentary crew has helped unearth a dead man's chest full of jewels, gold chains and more than 1,000 rare black pearls. A film crew from Halifax-based Arcadia Entertainment was in Key West, Fla., last week filming treasure hunters for their *Go Deep* television show.

The treasure hunters took the crew through an example dive that predictably didn't find anything.

Then, when they pulled up their anchor to move on, they found a golden chain wrapped around it. They dove back down and discovered a box made of almost pure silver.

The crew wanted to break it open right away, but caution prevailed and they waited two days until professional archeologists and conservators could be brought in to examine it.

The chest was opened Friday to reveal gold chains, gold bars, jewels and a massive number of black pearls (they stopped counting at 1,000).

Then the fun really started. "They spent two days in Key West partying, covered in gold chains, drinking \$500 bottles of champagne. So it was pirate days in Key West," said *Go Deep* producer John Wesley Chisholm.

The Halifax crew was understandably seen as a good-luck charm by the treasure hunters.

The loot comes from the Margarita, a Spanish galleon sunk in 1622. It's the largest find in Key West since the famous treasure hunter Mel Fisher discovered more than 40 tons of silver and gold worth \$450 million in 1985.

The team doesn't yet know how much the recently discovered treasure could be worth. "You can't spend treasure. It's worth whatever someone's willing to pay for it," Chisholm said.

"Usually things that come from shipwrecks and have more interesting stories to them, they have more value."

The crew caught the entire find on tape and will be in a future episode of *Go Deep*. The show, made for the Discovery Channel and National Geographic, looks at the different ways treasure hunting is handled in different parts of the world.

Sandra Sperounes
listens.
In Culture



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