

Prairie Manifesto Project

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Province: Alberta Saskatchewan Manitoba

Party: NDP Election Year: 1971

AA = Alberta Alliance
CON = Conservative Party
LP = Liberal-Progressive Party
PC = Progressive Conservative Party
SKP = Saskatchewan Party
UFM = United Farmers of Manitoba

CCF = Cooperative Commonwealth Federation
LIB = Liberal Party
NDP = New Democratic Party
SC = Social Credit
UFA = United Farmers of Alberta
WCC = Western Canadian Concept

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AB = Alberta
SK = Saskatchewan
MB = Manitoba

UofA = University of Alberta
UofC = University of Calgary
UofR = University of Regina
UofS = University of Saskatchewan
UofM = University of Manitoba
BU = Brandon University

PARC = Provincial Archives
LEG = Legislative Library
SPC = Special Collections
ULIB = University Library

ALBERTA
NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY
ELECTION PLATFORM

Alberta is a province rich with promise of prosperity for all. Yet we see unemployment, pollution, urban and rural slums, and great extremes of wealth. We commit the people of Alberta to policies that provide employment, social justice, balanced growth, an unpolluted province, and greater control of our common destiny.

RESOURCES - Public ownership of a Tar Sands Development Company, of all intraprovincial pipelines, of all coal-producing interests, and of gas in the ground for future use; increase in oil and gas royalties to market potential.

Alberta's natural resources are the rightful heritage of the people of this province, not the preserve of private interests, especially foreign interests. The New Democratic Party believes that the sacred policy of selling out our birthright is both unwise and unnecessary. Development must be aimed at maximizing benefits for people, not maximizing profits for big business and its promoters.

Public control gives us the power to plan to stimulate our own economy and to keep profits at home. The New Democratic Party would establish public ownership of a Tar Sands Development Company, of all intraprovincial pipelines, of all coal-producing interests, and of gas in the ground for future use.

Only the New Democratic Party is committed to raising oil royalties to a reasonable market level. This is a key election issue, as oil and gas royalties come up for review in 1972.

FARMING - A Provincial Land Bank, greater farmer bargaining power, two-price system, legislation preventing corporate take-over, incentive grants to preserve rural life, provincial weed control program. 50% of the cost of wild oats control to be borne by the province.

The continuing degradation of Alberta agriculture and the related decline of our rural communities are critical issues before the people of the province.

To meet the problem of the high cost of agricultural rural housing the New Democratic Party will provide, through publically owned agency CSA approved mobile and fixed homes for Albertans. Financial arrangements, similar to those of the C.M.H.C., will include basement construction and the provision of water and sewage.

Social Credit policy makers in the name of "economic efficiency" are doing everything in their power to promote ever larger corporately-managed farms and to hasten the depopulation of rural Alberta. Witness the recommendations of their Task Force on Agriculture.

It is time to take a stand. The NDP rejects the economic doctrine that human values must be sacrificed if they stand in the way of technology and "efficiency".

Technology and efficiency are means, not ends. We need to shape and control them to build, not destroy, our rural communities. An NDP government will give highest priority to stabilizing agriculture and developing our rural community centers on a rational basis.

A primary objective of the NDP program will be to create the conditions which will promote the maximum number of viable family farms in Alberta. To this end we support greater farmer bargaining power, a two-price system, legislation restricting corporate ownership to family farms and groups of families farming co-operatively, a program of incentive grants to preserve rural life, and a provincial land bank.

EMPLOYMENT - Full employment in an expanding economy through incentive grants and public projects in community development and recreation; Alberta Development Corporation to create secondary industry; using Alberta oil, steel, and pulp under public control.

Unemployment is both tragic and wasteful; tragic because it deprives the worker of his right to make a living for himself and his family; wasteful because society loses the productive capacity of his energy and skill.

The figure of 3.7% translates into a trauma of unemployment and financial hardship for 25,000 Albertans. The Premier's figure is misleading; many have given up looking for work; many more are underemployed or have never bothered to register with Manpower. Students and professionals such as teachers, as well as ordinary working men and women are feeling the bite of joblessness.

To achieve full employment Alberta must develop secondary industry to process and manufacture goods from our raw materials. Rather than export our resources and the jobs that go with them, we must keep those raw materials and work here for Albertans.

TAX REFORM - Eliminate residential property tax for education; capital gains tax, with exceptions for homes and farms.

New Democrats recognize that taxation is essential. But in a democratic society, taxes should be levied on the principle of "ability to pay" and citizens are entitled to maximum value for dollars spent in terms of services rendered. If new revenues are required, they should be raised from resource royalties, income and corporation taxes and other taxes related to ability to pay.

On the field of taxation, the New Democratic Party will remove education from property tax and thereby sharply reduce property tax mill rates on homes, farms, and small businesses. Further, the New Democratic Party would introduce a capital gains tax, but would be careful in making exceptions for homes and farms.

MUNICIPAL RIGHTS - Guarantee autonomy in the provision and financing of utilities; revise grant structure in housing, hospitals, education, libraries, and recreation, particularly with respect to the sharing of oil revenues.

Alberta municipalities are facing a crisis in meeting their responsibilities to citizens. By imposing a 6% limit on increases in municipal spending in education and hospitalization, the Social Credit government has backed the municipalities against the wall and has rejected the concept of local autonomy and grass roots decision making.

The NDP recognizes that local governments must meet the needs of their communities, and must receive a larger share of provincial revenue. Specifically, the NDP would guarantee autonomy in the provision and financing of utilities, revise grant structures in housing, hospitals, education, libraries, and recreation, particularly with respect to the sharing of oil revenues.

ENVIRONMENT - Enforce strict anti-pollution standards, with such temporary exceptions as may be dictated by public interest only.

Compared to many other regions in North America, our air, water, soil are relatively clean, undamaged and uncluttered. This is no cause for pride or complacency. It is more the result of delayed exploitation and slow growth than it is of any virtue or foresight on the part of governments and citizens.

But whatever our immediate advantages, the delicate balance of our environment is affected by many factors, some of which are outside the province's control. The physical

facts are obvious: air, water and wildlife pass freely across all political boundaries, carrying with them man's pollutants. But perhaps more important is the fact that we are bound up in larger economic, political, and technological systems, the products and values of which threaten to turn North America into a gigantic garbage heap.

New Democrats in government would lead the way in educating people about environmental issues and in strictly enforcing pollution control standards.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE - Reduce premiums up to 40% by public auto insurance.

The Alberta New Democratic Party is committed to public automobile insurance. We reject the Sacred principle of "public compulsion for private profit".

Private insurers are clearly not meeting the needs of the people with cancellations, high risk classifications, annually inflated premium increases, and liability conflicts with negligence laws.

In 1971, for example, Alberta premiums in a selected class (single under 24) are 45% higher than Manitoba and 40% higher than Saskatchewan, both of which have public schemes. Even with much lower premiums, the Saskatchewan Government Insurance Office has turned over nearly \$9 million to the Provincial Treasury.

Saskatchewan and Manitoba have led the way and have proven that public no fault automobile insurance saves consumers money, pays out higher claims, prevents costly legal battles, and returns profits back to the government. Alberta can do the same--only under the policies of the New Democratic Party.

UTILITIES - Public ownership of all privately-owned utilities.

Alberta is the only province west of New Brunswick which still has private power. As a result our power rates were 21% higher than the national average in 1968, 30% higher than in Manitoba. Private monopolies under Sacred regulations have not protected the public interest, nor could they do so except under public ownership. Public utilities would save Alberta consumers at least \$9,000,000 per year, would attract industry to the province and promote economic growth and development through cheaper power. The NDP commits itself to the public ownership of all privately-owned utilities.

HOUSING - 10,000 urban and rural public housing units in the next two years, complete with community services; curbs on land speculation; crown land assembly program; tenants' rights.

Housing policies at both the provincial and federal levels have been prime examples of "socialism for the rich, free enterprise for the poor". Alberta has a dismal record in the provision of low cost housing.

It is time that housing be recognized as the focal point of social policy, rather than an economic lever to slow down or speed up the economy.

An NDP government would build 10,000 urban and rural public housing units in the next two years complete with community services. We would establish a Land Bank Commission to undertake crown land assembly, in cooperation with municipalities and to curb private land speculation.

The Landlord and Tenant Act would be revised to provide for rent review boards, the right of tenants to organize and bargain, standard lease forms and regulations with teeth requiring landlords to make necessary repairs.

LABOUR - Revise Labour Act to protect the rights of all workers (including civil servants) as to collective bargaining, job redundancy due to automation, industrial health, higher compensation pensions, transferable pensions, and discrimination by race, sex, or age.

A New Democratic government would revise the Alberta Labour Act to protect the rights of all workers (including civil servants) as to collective bargaining, job redundancy due to automation, industrial health, higher compensation pensions, transferable pensions, and discrimination by race, sex or age.

In the area of labour legislation, the Social Credit government has taken a hypocritical stance. While making pious pronouncements on individual freedom, they have consistently denied freedom to a sizable group of Albertans, our civil servants. The Alberta New Democratic Party defends collective bargaining in a free society.

PUBLIC HEALTH - Eliminate medicare premiums and extend coverage to include dental care and prescriptions; community clinics; provincial drug purchasing agency.

The New Democratic Party will institute a program to provide a health rather than a sickness service and will develop an organization which assures that Alberta citizens receive more value for their health dollar.

An NDP government will eliminate medicare premiums and extend coverage to include dental care and prescriptions. We will abolish nuisance deterrent fees, establish a provincial drug purchasing agency, and promote community and regional extensions of all health services, particularly psychiatric, in implementing on an immediate priority basis the recommendations of the Blair Report on mental health.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE - Establish and respect rights of recipients; public ownership of nursing homes; eliminate private profit from public welfare.

The proper role for social security and assistance programs is to provide aid to disadvantaged members of society (the poor, the ill, the aged; the orphaned, the unemployed, the handicapped, the widowed, the deserted parent, the released prisoner, the retarded).

The main burden of direct contact with assistance recipients is taken by social workers. The role of the social worker should extend far beyond provision of money; he should also have the capacity and the time to understand emotional and social needs.

A first big change needed is a change of attitude. The Socred government is callous, looking on welfare clients as lazy and taking advantage of the system. This leads to a rejecting attitude toward those who need help; it destroys their dignity and alienates them from society.

A second change needed is the decentralization of authority. Well-qualified social workers should have enough leeway to meet the needs of their clients flexibly and humanely.

An NDP government will eliminate private profit from public welfare, (we reject the Socred RFP concept) and would bring all nursing homes under public ownership.

NATIVES - Sustain cultural and economic development in accordance with the policies of the Indian and Metis Association.

The New Democratic Party believes the policies of the present government toward the native people are failing and doomed to failure.

They are failing because:

- (1) they are policies imposed by the government rather than policies developed co-operatively with native people and their leaders;

- (2) they are policies rooted in the middle class values of the white majority;
- (3) they are policies which fail to recognize the wide variation in the conditions and aspirations of people of Indian ancestry, ranging from treaty Indians on reserves to Metis in colonies to urban natives locked into poverty on the fringe of Alberta towns and cities.

Above all, they are doomed to failure because they do not recognize that the goals to be pursued must be those arrived at freely by the native peoples themselves, not those prescribed by an alien society "for their own good"..

An NDP government would recognize the right of self-determination by native peoples, and would provide the funds which would allow native organizations to take the lead in meeting the needs of their own people.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS - Provincial enforcement of recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women:

It is in the interest of all Albertans to involve every citizen more fully in the life of the community. Women have a wealth of knowledge and experience to contribute, and only as they take their rightful place in helping make decisions can this contribution be unlocked.

In her job as homemaker the woman is degraded by commercial culture and advertising which insults her intelligence. She is ignored in decision making and exploited in the work force.

The New Democratic Party is proud of its effort to involve women. We are fielding a record number of female candidates in this election.

An NDP government would implement the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women as they apply to Alberta.

OMBUDESMAN - Implement the report of the Provincial Ombudesman.

The office of Ombudesman now established must be respected. It should be listened to and allowed to fulfill its function.

We see the Legislature's treatment of the office as less than adequate.

Unlike the two conservative parties the New Democratic Party has upheld the office of Ombudseman.

EDUCATION - Provide high-quality public day care; remove tuitions at all levels; increase grants to students; expand community college system; more Canadianization of education.

Education should be a "great equalizer" and a source of social justice. A New Democratic government would implement a number of policies which would give reality to the concept of equality of opportunity.

We support public kindergartens and high-quality day care centres. We would remove tuitions at all levels, increase grants to students and expand the community college system. Education must be considered the right of all, rather than the privilege of a few.

RECREATION - A comprehensive plan for development of program and facilities for recreation which will provide adequately for Alberta people of all ages and both sexes, and will include ample opportunity for family group participation, in all seasons.

A department of recreation and cultural enrichment would correlate planning and programs with the school systems colleges and universities, and provide greatly increased stimulation and assistance to municipal recreation and cultural enrichment programs. Dual purpose education, community centre and recreation facilities would be encouraged by availability of planning advisers and correlation of grants and low interest loans.

The plan would assure greatly increased allocation of: family recreation and camping areas, accessible to particularly the larger urban communities; increased access to plentiful public beaches (expropriation where necessary) youth, and senior citizens holiday hostels.

Wilderness areas, and parks dedication would be immediately increased to safeguard and serve our population increase needs, respectively. Pollution control and prevention of all natural developed resources would be "teeth-in-it" assured.

The choice among the other parties is one of who, not what. The New Democratic Party offers alternative policies. We invite you to work with us towards a better future for all.

V O T E

N E W D E M O C R A T I C P A R T Y