

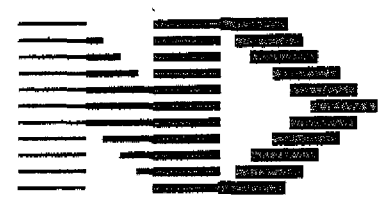
ALBERTA NEW DEMOCRATS 1993
(CAMPAIGN LITERATURE) PAMPHLET

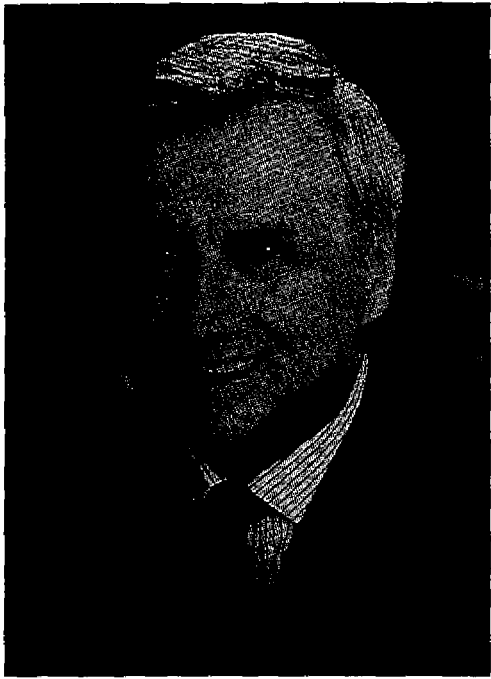
DO NOT CIRCULATE

STRAIGHT TALK.

A NEW STRATEGY TO GET ALBERTA WORKING.

***The New
Democrats***





Dear fellow Albertan,

As a voter you have the right to hear what those running for government would do if elected. This booklet outlines the New Democrat plan for a better future for Alberta.

We are giving you an honest assessment of what can be done to get Alberta working. It's a realistic approach to running the province for the benefit of Albertans. It's a plan that puts the concerns and needs of people like you first.

Please read this plan carefully. It deserves your careful consideration before you decide how you are going to vote. This is a crucial election that will determine the next few years for Alberta. You will decide that future on election day.

Thank you for taking the time to consider our ideas. If you have any questions, or if you would like more information, please take the time to call your New Democrat candidate. They will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Ray Martin,
Leader, the Alberta New Democrats

Straight talk

Over the past six months Alberta New Democrats have laid out a fair and reasonable plan to get Alberta working again while putting the concerns of people like you first. New Democrats have positive proposals on:

- reforming MLA pay, perks and pensions
- creating jobs and dealing with unemployment
- fairness for women
- fair labour laws
- helping rural Alberta
- improving education
- frugal government
- fair taxation
- preserving health care

Taken together, these proposals form a blueprint of hope for difficult times.

It's important to put forward a detailed plan because the Alberta government's lack of direction has cost us dearly. We are outraged that even now the Conservatives refuse to talk about the most important issue facing Albertans - job security.

The government that wasted all our money is even rewarding the MLAs who are retiring. They don't have to worry about jobs. It just isn't fair. And it isn't right.

Many Albertans are laid off or worried about what tomorrow holds. Unemployment has been averaging around ten percent, youth unemployment around 15 percent.

It seems like every day in the news there are announcements of more layoffs, in Edmonton, in Calgary, throughout Alberta, in Canada, around the world.

It makes us mad that there's not much hope around and the government is doing nothing. They make empty promises about jobs that no one believes.

The Liberals offer more of the same as the Conservatives.

Liberals talk about "brutal cuts" to government spending without saying how they will hurt you.

They talk about having a referendum on a sales tax, yet say nothing about making the wealthy and profitable corporations pay their fair share.

They talk about having a fiscal plan and letting the economy take care of itself, yet they present few details. They even say it isn't the government's role to create jobs.

None of the other parties are talking about the issues that matter.

That's why it's time for straight talk in Alberta politics.

Because of Conservative mismanagement of our money, the next government of Alberta will reduce government services and raise your taxes.

Don't let anyone tell you otherwise.

With a \$3 billion annual deficit and a \$20 billion debt, all Alber-

tans must share in the measures necessary to balance the budget.

The question you must ask in this election is this:

"Who do you trust to be honest and fair with Albertans after the election?"

We believe the only answer to that question is Alberta's New Democrats.

Our Plan to Put People First

New Democrats have the plan to get Alberta working again.

And you know we will put people first.

As Official Opposition for the past eight years, New Democrat MLAs have travelled this province, listening to your concerns.

Albertans want to know exactly where each party will take the province and how they propose to get there.

We have a clear strategy to get this province working again, based on what Albertans have been demanding.

We begin with cuts at the top. MLA pay, perks and pensions will be reformed to show that New Democrats intend to make a difference.

We follow by building the economy with proposals to help Albertans who need work.

For long term prosperity, we emphasize that education for Albertans is an essential priority.

Then we must put the government's financial house in order. We must ensure Albertans have effective government. We will cut waste and unnecessary spending.

We know that the wealthy and privileged have had a free ride for too long. It's time for honesty about taxes in Alberta.

Unless we take positive steps, our financial situation will not sustain the current level of health, education and social services that government provides. That is why we must begin rethinking service delivery.

Our plan ends on the promise of a better Alberta with the knowledge that it's time for a change.



Cuts at the Top

Our plan begins with leadership by example.

The current method of MLA pay, perks, and pensions must be reformed.

Only by shouldering some of the burden can our political leaders expect the public to help reduce Alberta's debt.

The only fair way is to have MLA compensation set by a body that is arm's length from MLAs.

New Democrats will immediately establish an independent commission to review and recommend reform to MLA

compensation.

Reform must come in four basic areas:

- MLAs should be paid a salary that fairly and reasonably reflects the work that they do. This salary should be fully taxable and pensionable.
- MLAs from outside Edmonton should be compensated for the expense of maintain-

ing two residences, where expenses are actually incurred.

- MLAs should be eligible for unemployment insurance rather than the current severance allowance, which should be abolished.
- Benefits from the MLA pension plan must be reduced so that it is in line with other plans, does not allow sitting MLAs to draw pensions and does not allow benefits to be paid until the MLA is 55 years old.

Only by shouldering some of the burden can our political leaders expect the public to help reduce Alberta's debt.

Building the Economy...

Others want to ignore the economy.

We believe the government must take short term action to help Albertans in trouble and make long term plans to assure our future.

No government can ensure every Albertan has a job, but creating jobs so the economy can grow is the first priority for Alberta New Democrats.

We want to create and keep quality Alberta jobs that respect our environment.

New Democrats will take several concrete steps to improve the economy. We plan to finance most of these steps by redirecting existing funds that do not fit with Albertans' priorities. We would:

- rebuild our roads, sewers and waterworks.
- make it easier to start a small business, by ensuring the information needed to compete effectively is readily available.

- create a market for environmentally-friendly products, through government purchasing policy.

- promote recycling and conservation to make Alberta a leader in "green" technology, an international growth industry that is compatible with tough environmental standards and a healthy future for our children.

- back a community bonds program to provide an effective source of capital for small business. It would allow local residents to invest in their own communities.

No government can ensure every Albertan has a job, but creating jobs so the economy can grow is the first priority for Alberta New Democrats.

... economic fairness for women

Others argue that economic equality for women should be put off until the times improve. New Democrats believe the times will never improve until women are treated as full and equal participants in our society.

As 52 percent of the population, women are key to the economic recovery of Alberta.

Yet census figures released by Statistics Canada show that women working full time in Calgary earned an average of \$27,245 compared to \$43,010 for men. In Edmonton, women earned an average of \$25,858 while men made \$38,695.

It is absurd in these times that Alberta women continue to be treated unfairly.

At the heart of our economic plan for women - which has more than 40 proposals to right the balance - are pay equity, reforms to the maintenance enforcement program, and child care reforms.

With these initiatives, all Albertans will benefit from the full range of expertise and skills women can contribute to the Alberta economy.

... keeping the Heritage Fund

New Democrats will keep the Heritage Savings Trust Fund for future generations of Albertans.

The alternative of liquidating the Heritage Fund makes no practical economic sense.

If we were to use the Fund to pay down our accumulated debt, we would simply be giving our resource heritage to financial institutions, many of them outside the province.

New Democrats believe the fund should be invested in our province's greatest resource, its people.

By building the skills and knowledge of Albertans, we can lay the foundation for a strong economy in the years ahead.

Instead of mismanaging the Heritage Fund as the government has done, or recklessly liquidating it as others propose, New Democrats will keep it generating investment income for Alberta. That will reduce the need to bring in a sales tax.



... fair labour laws

Key to revitalizing the Alberta economy will be co-operation and consultation among the major participants - business, labour and government. More effective consultation and cooperation will only be achieved if fair rules are instituted under Alberta's labour relations system.

New Democrats will repeal unfair labour laws that unreasonably restrict the right of Alberta workers to bargain collectively and to strike.

The protection of the rights of Alberta workers is the goal of the employment standards system in Alberta. However, a variety of omissions, exemptions, and lax enforcement have reduced the protection of Alberta workers.

... helping rural Alberta

Our uncertain economy hurts rural as well as urban Alberta. We want to keep rural Alberta farm families in business.

New Democrats will help rural Alberta with support programs until farmers are paid fairly for what they produce.

However, these programs will have per farm limits to ensure that we support family farms, not corporate farms.

We will negotiate improvements to the Gross Revenue Insurance Program and others, aiming to replace them with support based on real costs of production.

New Democrats will ensure equal treatment for farm women from lending institutions and gov-

New Democrats will protect the rights of Alberta workers through an effective government employment standards system.

We know there is a link between economic prosperity and close co-operation between business, labour and government. New Democrats will foster an open dialogue between these partners in the economy.



ernment agencies administering support programs.

We support farmers' efforts to maintain their supply management systems and marketing boards.

New Democrats also support the current method of payment of the Crow Benefit.

We will help rural Alberta to use advantages of location and local amenities to promote tourism, including festivals, fairs, wilderness experiences, and recreational pursuits.

New Democrats will help rural Alberta with support programs until farmers are paid fairly for what they produce.

Education

Education is our passport to the world economy. If we don't educate and retrain Albertans to keep up with changing times, we are courting disaster.

All Alberta students must have the basics in reading, writing, mathematics, computers and citizenship.

Despite these obvious needs, the government is slowly strangling our education system.

We are courting disaster unless we reform our education system. Our future depends on it.

That means your children are in larger classes and schools are laying off teachers. At a time when we need quality education the most, the government is cutting back.

Funding is a fundamental issue of our education system.

Forcing local governments to share a greater portion of costs and funding increases at less than the rate of inflation have taken their toll on our education system.



New Democrats will establish a task force to conduct a total review of funding and taxation for education at the elementary, secondary and post secondary levels.

In an open and comprehensive way, this review would address issues that currently plague our system like inequitable funding on a per student basis, non-operating school boards, board amalgamation, stu-

dent fees and financial assistance, and emerging education needs.

New Democrats will find ways to streamline the delivery and administration of education programs.

While economic concerns and the needs of the workplace can never dominate education policy, they are important.

New Democrats will introduce work experience programs right down to the high school level so that students can prepare for the workplace.

Government, educators, parents, students, labour, industry, and other affected parties must be involved and take responsibility for implementing education reforms.

We are courting disaster unless we reform our education system. Our future depends on it.

Effective Government...

... frugal government

Job creation is only part of the solution for Alberta's difficulties. The economic times are forcing you to be more frugal at home. Government has to be more frugal too.

New Democrats have made our priorities clear. Now we must examine what can be done to achieve them.

We will make cabinet as lean as possible. We will cut the top management layers of government through attrition and reorganization.

We have to review the function and mandate of all Alberta boards and commissions, eliminate duplication and save money where possible.

We will do a better job of collecting existing taxes and levies like royalties to ensure that everyone is paying their fair share under the current system

Alberta currently has five overseas offices that are staffed with political appointees.

These offices need a complete review and overhaul. New Democrats will reduce the number of foreign offices to three from five and base appointments to these offices on merit, not political connections.

... accountable government

Lack of accountability has led to poor decision making by the Alberta government.

Several steps can be taken to improve the accountability of the government to you, the taxpayer.

The first is a freedom of information law. It will force the discipline of accountability onto government.

The Auditor General can help tighten our financial control of government through "value for money" auditing of programs.

New Democrats will also promote an aggressive cost avoidance strategy among provincial employees.

As all Albertans know, the government currently tolerates wasteful spending.

It is obvious in the big losses like the half a billion dollars on NovAtel, but it is also evident in the way the public service is managed.

One provincial employee introduced wide ranging audits on for-profit daycare operators subsidized by the government. The audits recovered 50 cents on each tax dollar being spent. Instead of being rewarded for good work, she was punished for embarrassing the government. No wonder this government wastes our money.

Intolerant of wasteful spending

Public employees must be intolerant of wasteful spending and have incentives to improve the delivery of programs.

Questionable spending on capital projects like hospitals has led to charges of government favouritism and pork barrelling.

To ensure that such decisions are made on the basis of need rather than connections, New Democrats will develop a five year public capital priorities plan similar to that currently used by many municipalities. New facilities and economic infrastructure would be built where the need is greatest and where there is the best oppor-

tunity for economic expansion and job creation.

Finally, Albertans need an independent audit of the government books so that we know the true extent of our problems. The government had a panel of auditors look at the books, but they didn't do an audit! In fact, the commissioners even said they couldn't comment on whether the government figures were true.

... taming the deficit

The government must get its financial affairs in order, sensibly balancing its income with its spending.

A New Democrat government will work towards a balanced budget over the course of its mandate. The key is to reduce the annual deficit to a manageable level and then find ways, in consultation with Albertans, to eliminate it.

It is clear that government must spend smarter in the future than it has in the past.

We must ensure all Albertans have the opportunity to be productive, taxpaying citizens.



Being Honest About Taxes...

Unfortunately, smarter spending will not be enough.

Others won't say what they will do to raise government revenues. They whisper about a sales tax in private, but refuse to admit they will introduce one in public. Only

the New Democrat Opposition has been straight forward about the alternatives, which includes making everyone pay their fair share of taxes.

... fair taxation

Many wealthy Albertans pay no income taxes at all. And neither do many profitable corporations located in Alberta that make millions of dollars in profit a year.

We must collect taxes from these people and corporations.

New Democrats will create a fair tax system based on everyone paying their fair share.

Corporate taxes used to make up 37 percent of Alberta tax revenues, today they make up less than ten percent.

With the following measures, Alberta's corporate tax regime will remain competitive with other provinces, while restoring the balance between corporate and personal income tax revenues.

Alberta is the only province outside of the Maritimes without a general tax on paid up corporate capital. Our capital tax on financial institutions is the lowest of the western provinces.

New Democrats will look at raising the capital tax rate levied on financial institutions to three percent from two percent, and consider a general capital tax of 0.3 percent on all corporations with

paid up capital of \$1 million or more.

This could raise an additional \$200 million per year.

New Democrats will reduce the cap on the royalty tax credit to

\$500,000 from the existing \$2.5 million per company, so that benefits go to smaller oil and gas companies.

This measure could save an estimated \$150 million per year. The changes required would be made after the current program expires at the end of 1994.

Because Alberta's basic personal income tax rate is the lowest in Canada, it is fair and reasonable to ask wealthier Albertans to pay a greater share of provincial taxes through high income surcharges.

Corporate taxes used to make up 37 percent of Alberta tax revenues, today they make up less than ten percent.

This measure will generate an additional \$100 million per year.

New Democrats regret the need for new tax measures to deal with our fiscal problems. Finding new

sources of revenue only postpones difficult decisions that must be made about current spending. New taxes would be introduced only after measures to achieve savings have been put in place.

Of course, the wealthy and the corporations will squawk and call the measures unfair. That's why the other parties won't even consider such action. They'd rather tax you.

... no sales tax

Alberta New Democrats oppose a sales tax. Wealthy Albertans and profitable corporations must pay their fair share of taxes to reduce the deficit. Our economy will improve as a result.

...user-pay measures for corporations

Some corporate executives say the government should cut spending on people services and charge user fees to ordinary people who use our health care system.

New Democrats believe the government should cut spending on corporations and charge user fees on corporations that use our environment.

Every year, Alberta Environment spends millions of dollars doing environmental assessments, issuing clean air and water permits, and issuing construction and operating licenses.

While Albertans pay to fish, to hunt, and to drive, corporations

pay nothing when they pollute our air with emissions and pollute our waters with effluent.

New Democrats will promote non-polluting industries and will introduce legislation to end the polluting activities of industry.

We will ensure that corporations pay fair rates for harvesting our timber, and require companies to pay for environmental assessments and the cost of licences and permits.

An additional \$100 million could be generated annually by such measures.

... a first step

Taken together, all these measures could raise about \$450 million. This is not the solution to the deficit, but it is a significant first step.

Of course, the wealthy and the corporations will squawk and call the measures unfair. That's why the other parties won't even consider such action. They'd rather tax you.

Rethinking Service Delivery

Fair taxation is only one part of our overall plan. Unless government can get control of frivolous and wasteful spending, our standard of education and health care will decline.

Without our measures, you could be asked to pay more when you send your children to school. Or you might have to pay every time you visit the doctor.

Health and education are New Democrat priorities.

We know we must reorganize the way government provides these services so that we can continue to afford them.

Nowhere is this more critical than in the area of health care which accounts for almost a third of government spending.

It is a fundamental goal of New Democrats to ensure Albertans continue to have access to quality health care services.

At the same time, we know that government spending on health care cannot continue to rise unchecked. More efficient ways of delivering the services must be found.

Our population is aging and our financial resources are diminishing. That means we cannot simply maintain the status quo. Our health care system must serve the needs of our children in future as well as it has served our needs in the past. Our goal is to shift the emphasis of our health system from the treatment of illness in hospitals to the pursuit of health in the community. This would im-

prove the quality of life and reduce reliance on expensive institutional care.

Community health centres offer the potential for the lower cost and improved service that is needed.

At one location, centres can offer a wide variety of health related services like physician and nursing care, laboratory work, radiology, minor surgery, counselling, optometry, and health promotion.

We believe there is a much greater role for nurses and other professionals like midwives and nurse practitioners. They can often deliver more appropriate services at a lower cost than doctors.

The centres are directed by non-profit community boards which involve members of the community so that delivery of health services meets local needs.

Such centres encourage health education, promotion and disease prevention.

We know we must reorganize the way government provides these services so that we can continue to afford them.

... caring for seniors

As our population ages we must pay special attention to the needs of seniors when we redesign our health care.

Our system is bursting at the seams. More and more, there are waiting lists and inadequate resources. Unless measures are taken, this situation will get much worse.

A shortage of long term care spaces is forcing Alberta to move toward a community-based system, by virtue of limited spaces in long term care facilities. However, the support system is far from complete and funding levels are grossly inadequate.

New Democrats would:

- reduce unnecessary admissions and/or lengthy stays in

acute care hospitals and long term care facilities.

- provide training of personnel who understand, develop and work with the growing seniors population.
- develop a comprehensive system of community supports for seniors so they can remain in their homes for as long as possible.

Health care provides only one example of where we must reconsider how services are delivered by government. All areas must be reviewed and innovative ways found to deliver the same level of service at a lower cost.

A time for change

Alberta is poised for great political change.

We offer a clear alternative in this election.

The New Democrat Official Opposition has worked hard over the years to keep this government honest by pointing out its shortcomings. As this plan shows, we have also worked hard to put forward positive alternatives.

Now Albertans deserve a government that uses honesty to steer towards a destination of hope.

We can continue with the same kind of political leaders who help their friends while forcing those who can least afford it to pay for the mismanagement of the past

through brutal cuts and unfair taxes.

Or we can elect a government that gets Alberta working by putting the needs of people first.

The choice is yours.

More information with detailed proposals in each of the areas mentioned in this booklet are available through New Democrat campaign offices. Please contact your local New Democrat candidate for more information.

Let's get  **Alberta working**



STRAIGHT TALK: A New Strategy to Get Alberta Working

Published and authorized by Alberta's New Democrats 5339-112th Ave. Edmonton, Alberta T5 W 0N6