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Advance
Press Release

New Brunswick Liberal Party Election Platform
Given by Mr. Louis J. Robichaud, Liberal
Leader at Moncton, N.B.

Moncton, N. B., May 26 -- No further collections of the Hospital Care plan premium will be made, if a Liberal government is elected on June 27, Liberal Leader Louis J. Robichaud pledged at a provincial rally here tonight. This was the main plank in an 11 point platform which formally opened the Liberal Party's campaign for election in New Brunswick.

In a broad program of social and economic reform which contained several major innovations, the fighting young leader broke modern Canadian tradition by asking for exploration of a common market of Atlantic provinces and Eastern United States. This, he said, was a direct application of the Liberal tradition of free trade and would, if achieved, be of tremendous economic benefit to the Atlantic provinces. The plank asks for study of tariff arrangements that would permit reciprocal trade on specific items between the Canadian east coast provinces and the New England States.

Adoption of a new liquor policy for the province, after investigation and recommendations of a non-partisan committee chaired by a judge, was another of the major planks.

A new department of Youth and Welfare is promised by the Liberals. A probe into the high cost of medical drugs to achieve lower prices is another leading feature of the Liberal platform.

Here are some other highlights:

An immediate start on rebuilding of secondary and branch roads.

A million-dollar industrial fund to assist in establishing new industries. A drive for industry with special concessions and incentives.

An Equal Pay Act for women.

New child welfare legislation

Establishment of a deputy minister of fisheries
A Federal-Provincial plan to build the Chignecto Canal, provide a new transportation policy for access to central Canadian markets, relaxation of tight money, a capital projects development fund and several other points.

A greater share of federal tax monies to municipalities to relieve the property taxpayer.

New law enforcement policy

Increased no-interest education loans

Revision of Workmen's Compensation Act

The platform also calls for a new Mining Act, a new and broadened agricultural policy, Low Rental housing for older people on fixed incomes, new child welfare measures.

In the platform, too, is an undertaking to let main highways be used all year around without weight restrictions. This is on a trial basis.

An open season on moose will be declared.

Full use of Crown forest lands is another plank which includes a pledge to "give special attention to small woods operators."

Entitlement of farm labourers to unemployment insurance is also asked.

"New Brunswick," said the Liberal Leader, can't wait any longer for reforms that would give this province full partnership in Canadian prosperity. "Something must be done," he said, "something new and dynamic and different." He called his party's platform "a plan for action" and added:

"We ask the people to join the Liberals in a Crusade to soar into the sixties as a full partner in Canadian prosperity."

Adopting the theme of youth, vigor and fight for "a brighter tomorrow," Mr. Robichaud said the Liberal Party's slogan would be that "New Brunswick Can't Wait" and that the Liberals should be given the mandate to form a government to bring about essential reforms "before it's too late."

Before detailing the planks of the platform, the 34-year-old Liberal chieftain said that: "With fertile farmlands, vast forest and mineral resources, fine fisheries and the rich heritage of our people, we should today be sharing in Canada's prosperity. Instead, "he went on, "New Brunswick staggers under high taxation, unemployment, dwindling industries and dormant resources." His party, he said, had the "remedy for economic ailments" and would "cure the disabilities suffered with a Conservative government."

Promising a fighting campaign for New Brunswick's rights, he said the Liberal Party will proceed in a responsible way to lay its platform before the people.

"Things have not been right in New Brunswick," the Liberal Leader added. "We want the opportunity to put them right and to restore prosperity and good, responsible government to New Brunswick. It will be necessary to point out the weaknesses of the Conservative government in the last eight years and its failure to live up to its promises in many respects. However, we will do it without insult or inuendo".

Mr. Robichaud said he acknowledged the people's "grave concern" with the handling of the liquor problem in recent years. In this, he said, the "government has been delinquent in failing either to enforce or improve the existing law." To correct this, he said the Liberals would call a special session of the legislature immediately upon election. There they will establish a non-partisan committee, of which a judge would be chairman, empowered to call experts on law, control, alcoholism and highway

safety. The committee would also hear representatives of the clergy, organized labor "and other informed and interested organizations and citizens" to make a thorough investigation of the liquor problem. It would have the power to recommend improvements in the whole field of liquor control and enforcement "considered necessary and valid."

A Liberal government, he said, would act upon those recommendations.

In announcing his plans to "get rid of the Hospital Premium tax at once," Mr. Robichaud said this could be financed out of the general revenue fund as in Nova Scotia and some other provinces.

The present provincial department of Health and Social Services will be divided by a Liberal government and a department of Youth and Welfare will be established, the leader explained. He said an "energetic program of assistance to encourage our young people to remain in and help build New Brunswick will be instituted."

"Roads at Once" was the way Mr. Robichaud said the Public Works plank should be designated. He said the Liberals, when elected, would begin at once to rebuild the province's secondary and branch roads system in rural areas. "Neglect of them," he said, "is retarding development."

He said the Liberals would "fight vigorously" for federal participation in cost of trunk highways which "are national or interprovincial highways, being the only road links between the other Atlantic provinces and the rest of Canada."

Public Works expenditures will "be brought under the strictest control," one section reads, "to ensure full value to the taxpayer."

To lower medical drug costs, the Liberals plan to go beyond any province so far in probing the "high cost of many drugs". The plank calls for "an investigation into prices at the provincial level" and will urge the federal government to institute a national probe.

Important advances in education are promised by the Liberals, if they are elected. "No capable student, "Mr. Robichaud read from the platform, "should be prevented for economic reasons from obtaining advanced education at the university level, or in teachers' college in nursing training and technical and trades schools. A major feature of the Education plank is to "take immediate steps to raise educational standards and to encourage and assist competent young people to enter and remain in the teaching profession.

There will, the Liberals pledged, be increased financial assistance through interest-free loans on long term basis to worthy students. The Liberal Leader explained this would cost the province nothing save the loss in interest and administration charges. Rather, he said, it would be one of the greatest investments in the future both in social welfare and economic prosperity.

There would be, also, study and revision of the Teachers Pension Act, "to improve existing conditions."

Disturbed by what he termed "laxity and discrimination in law enforcement," Mr. Robichaud said the Liberals were determined to ^{strengthen} respect for law and order. We will insist upon enforcement of the law. Favoritism and discrimination will be eliminated. We will act vigorously to remove the menace of reckless driving from our highways."

An echo of legislature battles this spring, when Liberals complained that Conservative Government "arrogance and dictatorship" prevented private Members from exercising their rightful prerogatives, was contained in a plank entitled: "Democratic Rights." It said that "we will restore democratic rights of your representatives in the Legislature."

To relieve the tax burden on property owners, the Liberal platform promised to pay a larger share of federal tax subsidies to municipalities "to relieve the crushing load on property owners. Likewise, the province "will assume the cost of criminal prosecutions" now covered by municipalities.

In the field of Labor Legislation, other than the undertaking to pass An Equal Pay Act , the Liberals undertake to "promote good labor relations through necessary reforms of the law." The Workmen's Compensation Act will be revised.

Under the Labor Relations section, the party proposes "strong representations to bring farm laborers within provisions of the Unemployment Insurance Act.

Under the Tourism plank, the Liberals will undertake to establish a Fish and Wildlife Commission. It will also permit an open moose season on a trial basis. Likewise, as part of the tourist plank in the platform, the party says it will give cities, towns and municipalities assistance in developing fairs, regattas, cultural, scenic and other attractions to bring increased numbers of visitors to the province.

The welfare section of the platform has a preamble that offers constant attention to measures for improvement of the general health and welfare of the people, with particular emphasis on children and older citizens. Ottawa will be urged to extend family allowance payments to students to age 18. "Special attention will be given to overcome the causes of malnutrition in children and to the needs of mentally retarded and cerebral palsied children.

Older people on fixed incomes are the aid target of the section on low-rental housing accommodation. Likewise, the Liberals are offering to establish a cooperative housing program to reduce construction costs generally.

To give assistance to the valuable fishing industry, the Liberal leader said a full-time deputy minister of fisheries will be appointed. In addition, further cold storage and processing facilities would be established. "Both inshore and deep sea fishermen will be assisted to obtain adequate vessels and equipment."

One of the major features of the drive for industry, was announced as a proposal to set up a Provincial Research Council to "join the efforts of government and industry in finding new uses and markets for the resources of the province.

There would also be established Marketing and Industrial Promotion Agencies in the West Indies, U.S. Atlantic States and Central Canada.

Other aids to industrial expansion would come with cooperation of the federal government, and in this respect Mr. Robichaud named several specific demands that would be made at the federal-provincial conference.

Apart from the plan to urge inclusion of farm laborers under unemployment insurance protection, the platform said food processing and cold storage plants "are urgently needed and will be promoted." There would also be expansion of provincial credit facilities to farmers.

Mr. Robichaud said a Liberal Government will make a full-scale study of the causes of ^{low} farm income in consultation with the N. B. Federation of Agriculture. Farmers will be encouraged and assisted in production, preparation and marketing of agricultural products, and cooperative marketing will be promoted.

Provincial farm credit facilities will be expanded, the leader said. There will also be active promotion of 4-H clubs and similar youth organizations to strengthen the family farm ideal.

Full scale use of forest Crown lands will be promoted with special attention given to smaller woods operators, the Liberal leader explained.

The Liberal Mining plank calls for legislative action "to provide for the development of our mineral resources in the interests of New Brunswickers. "The plank also says that "every assistance will be given our coal mining industry to ensure continuity of employment."