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# LIBERAL PARTY PLATFORM -1974

This is the Platform of the New Brunswick Liberal Party of 1974.

It was outlined by hundreds of New Brunswickers who attended our five regional policy conferences in Moncton, Woodstock, Bathurst, Edmundston and Saint John.

It was determined by 1,000 New Brunswick Liberals at our Policy Conference in Moncton.

It is endorsed by all 58 Liberal candidates in this election.

The Liberal Party committed itself to be positive, relevant, sensible and sensitive. It acknowledged that it had no monopoly on solution, wisdom or integrity.

The participants and Liberal delegates reaffirmed our party attitude of impatience with inequity and unfairness.

An impatience to get on with the job of counter-balancing the scale of strong and weak, of majority and minority.

An attitude which has found expression over the years in the enactment of Family Allowances, Unemployment Insurance, Old Age Pensions, Workmen's Compensation, Mothers' Allowance, Blind and Disabled Benefits, Student Aid to those in need, Social Assistance, Child Welfare, a Hospital School and the Program of Equal Opportunity to name a few.

In this great Province of New Brunswick we must continue to strive to create those conditions where our people may achieve their true and full human potential.

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The specific planks or proposals are intended to be within that context and designed to meet the following priority objectives:

1. AN UNDERSTANDING AND RESPECT FOR THE OPINIONS AND RIGHTS OF EACH NEW BRUNSWICK CITIZEN.
2. THE NEED TO SHARE WITH ONE ANOTHER.
3. AN ECONOMY SUITED TO THE NEEDS OF NEW BRUNSWICK.
4. THE PRESERVATION OF THE TRUST OF OUR ENVIRONMENT.
5. INCREASED SENSITIVITY BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND CITIZEN.

The significance of the hope for understanding between the English-speaking people and the French-speaking people of Canada lies in the priority and perspective in which we hold the elusive goal of National unity. If we did not have such a great Country, with such an unlimited future, and with such an inborn attitude of mutual respect and tolerance, unity would not be so important to us. But these Canadian characteristics are true, and that is why we must stay together as one Canada. That is why we must prove to the World that we mean what we say in urging World peace ... by living it in our home Province.

It is a basic fact that this Province has living in it people who speak French and people who speak English. Although the rights of each are enshrined in law, we must never forget how vitally important it is that our people continue to talk to each other.

No one should wish to force the culture of one on the other, nor has anyone suggested we should dream up some new culture with a little of this and a little bit of that. Each individual should have the right to his own cultural heritage, and yet we must guard against growing apart.

The challenge is to recognize that the two cultures exist and to keep open the lines of communication so that we will achieve our common objectives. There is every indication the vast majority recognizes, accepts and wants to achieve that goal.



Developmentally handicapped children are entitled to full and equal rights to education in order that they may be integrated into the community. They must be guaranteed the opportunity to develop to their full individual human potential.

Equal treatment before the law is a necessary objective in today's complex society. Laws affect people in many ways and equal treatment cannot be achieved while people are denied legal assistance solely by reason of cost. The time has come to extend legal aid to problems other than criminal cases.

A LIBERAL GOVERNMENT WILL:

- \* Provide financial assistance to those municipalities where either the English or French constitute a significant minority and thereby require service in their mother tongue.
- \* Immediately convene a council composed of the mayors of all municipalities to discuss language rights and services at the grassroots level.
- \* Restructure the Department of Education in a way that respects the fundamental rights of the citizens and provides educational services, research, curriculum and distinct programs for the two ethnic groups in New Brunswick, ensuring that administrative services are distributed in conformity with the Official Languages Act.
- \* Provide for courses in the second language in the primary schools so that any parents choosing to do so may have their children strive for second language fluency.
- \* Provide for adult education language courses in strategic locations throughout New Brunswick.

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- \* Strike from the books all legislation which designates as a group apart mentally retarded children, those suffering from cerebral palsy and all other developmentally handicapped school age children.

- \* Assume full financial responsibility for the education to total individual human potential within the school system of developmentally handicapped children including the provision for transportation, developmental programming, residential services, vocational services, counselling and support services.

- \* Implement Civil Legal Aid.

- \* Establish an Advisory Council on the rights and status of women in New Brunswick.

- \* Student aid will be reconstituted in consultation with student representatives to make the loan, bursary and repayment provisions.

- \* more responsive to the needy student and more responsible in application processing.

SHARING

A prime responsibility of Government and a top priority with the Liberal Party is to ensure a balance between strong and weak, rich and poor, majority and minority. Minimum standards of living for all human beings must be an accepted objective. All social programs have this end in view, a redistribution of the fruits of our labours to eliminate inequity and unfairness.

Taxation is a basic method of achieving such ends. When governmental revenues increase, as a result of inflation, as they have in recent years it is just as important to review the sources of revenue as it is to decide how to spend it. An examination of the public accounts indicates no justification for the Government's failure to provide adequate relief to home owners, since Government revenues are in excess of needs. It is not only socially right but fiscally responsible to review sources of revenue and abolish taxes which are unnecessary to meet governmental spending programs.

A LIBERAL GOVERNMENT WILL:

- \* Commit itself to a major thrust to bring proper and adequate housing within the reach of the average and needy New Brunswicker including commitment to large scale land banking for present and future needs.

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\* Abolish the \$1.50 real property tax on residential property including all living accommodations. The tax will be reduced to \$1.00 in 1975. It will be reduced to 50¢ in 1976 and there will be no tax in 1977 and subsequent years. This program can and will be accomplished without any change in the province's responsibility to provide the basic services of Health, Education, Social Services and the administration of Justice - and without reduction in the effect of existing tax relief measures. Measures will be introduced to ensure that tax reductions will accrue to the benefit of tenants in rented premises.

\* Make co-op and non-profit housing programs major factors in meeting our housing needs.

\* Urge the Federal Government to consider that families be given the option to capitalize their monthly family allowances for the purpose of securing adequate housing.

\* Review the retail sales tax with particular emphasis on commodities which have become taxable solely from inflationary price rises.

\* Implement a pharmacare program to provide prescription drugs and prosthetic appliances for all residents sixty and over.

\* Access the dental needs of the Province with a view to ensuring no one lacks proper dental care because of cost.



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- \* Take steps to enable more qualified residents to obtain medical, dental and pharmaceutical training.
- \* Implement a Province-wide system of day care centers as a means of encouraging initiative and reducing welfare costs.
- \* Immediately assess the feasibility of establishing a Provincial public utility to provide water and sewerage to populated areas.
- \* Provide adequate treatment and rehabilitative centers for alcoholics to be paid out of profits from alcoholic beverages.

ECONOMIC PROPOSALS

Economic development must be a means to providing our people an opportunity to be themselves, and not as an end in itself.

Industrialization at any cost can no longer be accepted as an answer. Job creation efforts must be directed to the skills of unemployed New Brunswickers and in keeping with the type of society we wish to enjoy.

Development strategy must be based on a planned use of the Province's natural resources and directed by our natural geographic location. The Liberal Party is convinced that any other attitude self designates our region as a breeding ground for long range subsidy needs which in turn smothers pride and initiative.

The unemployment rate in the Province is deplorable particularly in the Northeastern sector. Measures must be devised to overcome this waste of human resource.

Agriculture should be developed with reasonable self-sufficiency as a goal in products adapted to New Brunswick's land, location and climate.

Improved transportation is a continuing need and the efficiency of the Province's road network must be a top priority.

A LIBERAL GOVERNMENT WILL:

- \* Establish a board with power to decide the final price of cut wood when and if negotiations fail between companies with crown land cutting rights and wood lot owners.

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\* Undertake a complete review by a cabinet committee headed by the Premier of the present economic development agencies with particular emphasis on coordination, duplication and general effectiveness.

\* Negotiate with Ottawa an agreement providing benefits to areas of high unemployment equivalent to growth center agreements. As well negotiations with the Federal Government will commence immediately to establish an authority in the northern part of the province with powers equivalent to the Canada - New Brunswick Growth Center Committee, or Nova Scotia's Cape Breton Development Corporation.

\* Seek a complete and detailed review of all agreements under negotiation with the Federal Government at the level of the Prime Minister of Canada - and the Premier.

\* Emphasize in tourist programs the development of facilities and activities designed for the enjoyment of New Brunswickers with a strongly publicized invitation directed to tourists who wish to participate in these activities and the way of life of our own citizens.

\* Make provisions for loans and guarantees to the New Brunswick Tourist industry.

\* Urge high schools and universities to put emphasis on kindling the entrepreneurial spirit in New Brunswick students.

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- \* Effectively urge Ottawa to engage seriously in further selective tariff negotiations with the U.S. of particular benefit to this region, in addition to the past and present programs of fairs to display our products and introduce our manufacturers into Northeast U. S. markets, and the continuation of the commendable export marketing seminars.

- \* Provide data banks and computer services to assist small businesses.

- \* Review the emphasis in educational programs to ensure that training is directed to the skills required by the Province's industrial base.

- \* Adopt measures designed to preserve the family farm as a viable economic way of life including the provision of the following programs:

- half cost licence fee for at least two vehicles per farm;

- permit tax exempt gas to be used in such vehicles during planting and harvesting periods in addition to tractors, combines and other equipment;

- provide more realistic requirements for inclusion in security programs available in industry such as Workmen's Compensation to include family members engaged in farming;



more realistic provisions to assist young people in acquiring and maintaining family farms with loan repayments tied to profitability and educational grants forgivable on basis of years engaged in farming.

equipment banking for farms unable to justify ownership of needed equipment.

- \* Provide financial assistance to promote the growing of more feed grains locally.
- \* Promote better coordination between research efforts and the fishing industry.
- \* Promote measures to encourage the establishment of fish farming particularly oysters and lobsters. Continue to urge Ottawa to press for the 200 mile fishing limit.
- \* Provide increased encouragement to the development of the Province's energy resources in keeping with changing economic consideration.
- \* Conduct a responsible road-building program consistent with economic needs and people needs throughout New Brunswick coupled with effective negotiations with Ottawa, with Route 11 receiving the work and attention it deserves.
- \* Reassess highway weight restrictions.

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### ENVIRONMENT

Next to our people our greatest assets are our way of life and our environment. Our environment consists of our land, our air and our water. It is what we see, what we hear and what we breathe. The quality of our environment affects our health and it affects our way of life. Not only must we protect it but we must constantly strive to improve it.

There are those who say that we should not over-react to our environmental problems; that most other areas are in a far more serious state, that it might discourage some industries, that we cannot afford the cost of solving the problem.

Such arguments become less comforting and satisfactory with each passing year.

....13 In any event, we have the unique opportunity of recognizing these values which have been lost through ignorance and inadvertance in other areas. Now that these values are recognized, we can profit from the mistakes of others as well as ourselves and hopefully develop our future with adequate and reasonable safeguards against the loss of an invaluable and priceless asset.

It is so easy to talk of striking an ecological balance with due consideration for industry, recreation, etc. more and more we seem forced to choose between new jobs, with increased pollution in the environment or fewer jobs, with a  
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cleaner environment. That is a question we must deal with in an honest straightforward way. It is a question which will come to be the exception rather than the rule as we put modern technology to greater use and greater advantage in pollution abatement programs and the planning of new developments.

A LIBERAL GOVERNMENT WILL:

- \* Establish a board with decision-making authority to examine into and approve industrial development in designated cases involving natural resources and large-scale land use changes.
- \* Require public hearings in all cases where natural resource industrial development and large scale land use changes are involved, so that people will know what is going on and have a chance to express their views and participate in the decision-making process.
- \* Provide at Government expense qualified intervenors at such hearings to represent local interests and to ensure the effective presentation of environmentally significant points of view.
- \* Encourage school curricula programs to include leadership training in outdoor education so that children may develop a love and respect for the ecological well being of the total environment through a regular program of outdoor education.



## GOVERNMENT AND THE INDIVIDUAL

Many government procedures are no longer relevant to the people of the 1970's. The Liberal Party has concentrated on listening to the needs of the individual - learning of his hopes and frustrations. It is no longer satisfactory to accept traditional approaches to new or even long-standing problems. The responsibilities of Government are well defined, but there is much room for improvement in the methods of accomplishing its objectives.

### A LIBERAL GOVERNMENT WILL:

- \* Enact legislation calling for the principle of public tenders publicly opened. Such legislation will contain those specific matters which would be excluded in the interest of efficiency and Atlantic Canada development only. Such legislation would be placed before the Law Amendments Committee so that the public may at first hand scrutinize in detail the reasons for excluding any classification of expenditure from public tender.
- \* Ensure that the Provincial Ombudsman has the necessary staff and facilities to be as effective as possible in dealing with Government, its bureaucracy and its politicians.
- \* Assume the cost of toll-free telephone calls to government departments from all points in New Brunswick.
- \* Provide for the election of the chairman of the Public Accounts Committee from among the Opposition members of such committees.



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- \* Ensure that the Public Accounts Committee responds to the repeated and reasonable requests of the Auditor General to prevent repetition of the same problems year after year.
- \* Hold cabinet meetings in various parts of the Province on a regular basis - to ensure opportunities for smaller groups to make their views known directly to their Government.
- \* Reorganize the Executive Council to ensure proper representation in the Cabinet for the problems of the aged, housing and the co-operative movement.
- \* Promote measures to increase portability of pensions with particular emphasis on intergovernmental transfer of public employees and increasing the mobility of persons in labour and management positions willing to make a contribution within government.
- \* Reassess hospital staff field training, in particular the feasibility of re-establishing hospital based nursing education.
- \* Establish a New Brunswick Council of Arts to stimulate and promote the study, enjoyment and production of works in the arts and crafts with the same enthusiasm shown to organized athletics.
- \* Encourage the further inclusion in the basic educational program of basic economics, family budgeting and personal financial planning.

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- \* Implement legislation requiring reasonable notice of major layoffs of labour in industry.
- \* Implement legislation to provide for compulsory no-fault automobile insurance up to standard limits.
- \* Establish a Royal Commission to enquire fully into the basic causes for the unacceptable record of highway fatalities and to recommend clear and compulsory measures.
- \* Quality of education and education facilities in fast growth areas will be given priority.