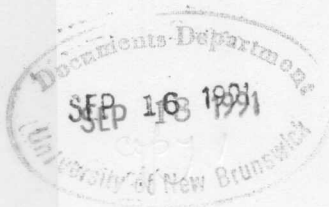


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*Elizabeth Weir and the
New Democrats:
A Strong Voice for New
Brunswick's Future*

Summary of the Policies of the New Brunswick
New Democratic Party

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Elizabeth Weir and the
New Democrats:
A strong voice
for New Brunswick's future



New Democrats are part of the New Politics of the '90's. We believe in reaching out to people, listening to people, and working with people in their homes, workplaces and communities. The policies in this booklet have been decided democratically at open Conventions, not behind closed doors. Together they express the vision that New Democrats share for a better future for all of us in New Brunswick, our families, and our communities. The following pages present a strong voice for New Brunswick's future.

SEP 10 1991

Elizabeth Weir and the
New Democrats:
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A. A Full Opportunity Economy

New Brunswick continues to be a province of high unemployment. Large corporations and the banks dominate most sectors of the economy. While the profits of these companies have generally been good, their record of job creation has not.

New Democrats believe that a new approach is needed. Our objective is to build a full opportunity economy in New Brunswick to meet the needs of ordinary people and their communities.

1. Jobs: Our First Priority

Our first priority as New Democrats is to work toward a full employment economy - an economy in which every person who is willing and able to work can find a socially useful job with decent wages and good working conditions. It makes no sense to us that tens of thousands are unemployed, when there are so many things that need to be done.

2. Less Concentration of Economic Power

New Democrats oppose the concentration of economic power in the hands of a few large corporations. As the process of corporate mergers and takeovers continues, many large corporations use their economic power to take advantage of consumers, workers, and smaller competitors. This problem is particularly serious in New Brunswick, with the concentration of power in the hands of the Irving's, McCain's, and Noranda.

- **Regulation In The Public Interest:** Large corporations are pressing for "deregulation" of the economy, so that they can exercise their economic power without restriction. New Democrats recognize that there continues to be a need to regulate corporate activities in the public interest. While we want to get rid of unnecessary red tape, we oppose deregulation whenever it will lead to increased health and safety risks for consumers and workers, inferior working conditions, lower quality products or higher prices.
- **Fair Trade:** New Democrats are keenly aware of both the opportunities and the dangers of rapidly expanding world trade. We do not stand with the big multinational corporations in their pursuit of "free trade". We do not believe that job opportunities in New Brunswick, our environment, our social programmes, or our cultural identity should be sacrificed on the alter of free market economics. New Democrats believe in "fair trade" based on healthy competition, and common standards for wages and working conditions, environmental protection, and social and cultural programmes. New Democrats are committed to vigorously pursuing our fair trade policy with our sister provinces in the Maritimes, with other parts of Canada, and with other countries.

3. A Balanced Economy

New Democrats believe in a balanced economy with economic power shared more equally than it is today. To this end, we are committed to a mixed economy, with a greater role for co-ops, small business, and public sector involvements.

- **Co-ops, credit unions and small business:** A New Democratic government will encourage economic development through co-operatives, credit unions, locally-owned businesses and family farms. Co-operatives will be promoted in all sector of the economy including the service sector, through a new Minister of Co-operative Development. Co-ops will be assured effective and competitive access to New Brunswick's natural resources, and will be invited to participate actively in economic and social planning.
- **Joint ventures:** A New Democratic government will participate with private companies in joint ventures in cases where this is the best way to create or protect jobs, provided that taxpayers receive a fair return on the investment of public money.
- **Public ownership:** A New Democratic government will undertake public ownership when needed. Public companies will be operated according to the following principles:

- i) their primary purpose is to provide good efficient service;
- ii) the boards of directors are broadly representative of consumers and other groups;
- iii) employees participate in decision-making;
- iv) they are publicly accountable.

4. Creative Approaches to Financing Development

A New Democratic government will use creative approaches to stimulate job creation and economic development in all parts of the province, especially high unemployment areas such as the Acadian Peninsula.

- **Linking grants to jobs:** The Liberals and the Conservatives have the same approach to trying to encourage economic growth: incentive grants, subsidies, tax credits, tax holidays, forgivable loans - the wholesale giveaway of tax dollars, mostly to big companies. It's expensive and it doesn't work. Too often, companies make vague promises about job creation, get millions of dollars from the government, and not long after forget their commitments. For New Democrats the purpose of financial assistance to companies is to protect existing jobs or to create new ones. Financial assistance should be tied to jobs, with each company which receives a grant guaranteeing its job commitment in writing.
- **New Brunswick development fund:** Too often the savings of New Brunswickers are siphoned off by financial institutions for investment in other places. New Democrats believe that our savings should be put to work to build our own economy. A New

Democratic government would create a New Brunswick Development Fund to mobilize savings for this purpose. The Fund would pay a guaranteed rate of return - with any surplus reinvested, and any deficit recovered from the government's ordinary account. Corporations would be encouraged to deposit 15% of their New Brunswick profits in the fund to be used for approved projects.

- **Local preference:** New Democrats are committed to developing our local and regional economy. We support greater economic co-operation with the other Maritime provinces. And, whenever New Brunswick tax dollars are invested in a project, preference should be given to suppliers using New Brunswick goods and services.
- **Economic Council:** New Democrats support the formation of an Economic Council with broad representation to advise the government on practical ideas for developing the economy.

5. Forestry

- **Managing our forests:** New Democrats know that New Brunswick forests are the backbone of our economy. About half of the forest area is Crown Land, owned by the people of the New Brunswick through the provincial government. These Crown Lands are now operated primarily by the pulp and paper companies in their own interests. New Democrats believe that the Crown Lands should be managed by the government in the public interest. A New Democratic government would actively manage our

woodlands to obtain a better yield, preserve the environment, and protect our forests for future generations. We would implement effective management policies and bacterial spray (BT) to eliminate the need for massive chemical spraying against the budworm.

- **A fair price for our resources:** For decades New Brunswick governments have been subsidizing pulp and paper companies and sawmills with stumpage fees on Crown Lands that are below the cost of maintaining these woodlands. This has meant a loss of revenue to the provincial government and unfair competition for private woodlot owners.

A New Democratic government would set fair stumpage rates based on the quality of the stand and its accessibility. Moreover, we would ensure that private woodlot owners get a fair deal by:

- i) enforcing the policy that companies must buy a fair share of private wood before getting access to Crown wood;
- ii) ensuring a fair procedure for negotiating the price of privately produced wood, and
- iii) checking the scaling done by the companies.

- **Selling finished products, not raw materials:** New Democrats know that too many of our natural resources are shipped out of the province as raw materials, not finished products. This costs New Brunswickers thousands of jobs. New Democrats are committed to processing our forest products here in new Brunswick - more paper products, and less pulp;

more furniture and prefab construction, and less raw lumber.

6. *Mining*

- **A fair price for our mineral resources:** New Brunswick's second largest industry is mining - potash, lead, zinc, silver, antimony and other metals. Our mineral resources, like our Crown Land forests, are owned by all the people of New Brunswick through the provincial government. New Democrats believe that when these minerals are sold to mining companies, they should be sold for a fair price. At present, many of our minerals are practically given away. A New Democratic government would renegotiate current royalty and tax arrangements with mining companies in order to get a fair price for our mineral resources.
- **Ensuring jobs for New Brunswickers:** New Democrats support the orderly development of new mineral resources to ensure the maximum number of jobs for New Brunswickers consistent with sound environmental practices. Potash development should include producing fertilizers and other products here in the province. Lead-zinc mining in the Belledune area should be expanded to include a zinc smelter. By doing the processing here in New Brunswick, we create new job opportunities, and through an effective training programme, we can ensure that New Brunswickers get these jobs.

7. Agriculture and Fishing

- **Preserving the family farm:** New Democrats support the family farm as an efficient and socially beneficial way to organize farming. Yet we know that farmers in new Brunswick as in other parts of Canada are facing difficult times because of their high debt load and the continuing low price for most commodities. A New Democratic government would establish a maximum farm size, extend credit to ease the debt load, encourage joint purchases by farmers to reduce costs, and work to stabilize prices. We are also committed to maintaining and developing vigorous rural communities.
- **Stabilizing farm prices:** Unstable prices for potatoes and other commodities make it extremely difficult for family farms to survive in years when prices are low. New Democrats support the use of a marketing board for potatoes - in order to ensure reasonable and stable prices for farm commodities. We also support the idea of a commodity stabilization fund to balance farm incomes between good years and bad.
- **Protecting agricultural land:** New Democrats support a comprehensive land use policy that would, among other things, protect agricultural land and encourage ecologically sound and diversified production systems. In addition, we would place restrictions on the use of land by agribusiness and non-resident owners.
- **Maintaining the fishery:** Fishing is a way of life and an important source of income for many new

Brunswick communities. New Democrats respect the traditional rights of our inshore fishermen, and support full collective bargaining for fishermen as the most effective way to make sure people are paid fairly for their labour.

8. *Manufacturing*

New Democrats are committed to a full opportunity economy in which New Brunswickers have their fair share of manufacturing jobs.

- **Protecting existing jobs:** First, New Democrats stand side by side with workers whose jobs are threatened by recessions or corporate decisions. We support the right of employees to negotiate proposed technological changes in order to protect jobs. But we stand opposed, and will negotiate tough terms with any corporation that tries to use job blackmail for its own gain.
- **Building on our resources:** Second, New Democrats will work to ensure that our province is not exporting raw materials and the jobs that go with them. There are opportunities in all our resources industries - forestry, mining, agriculture, and fishing - for increased processing here in New Brunswick.
- **Serving the local market:** Third, new Democrats support more local production of consumer goods. Every time a person buys something from the United States or another part of Canada that we could produce here for the same price, we're taking away job opportunities from New Brunswickers.

9. *Energy*

For many years the New Brunswick government has been building up NB Power as a large, export-oriented, electrical utility. Our central focus should not be energy for export, but energy for new Brunswickers. Not simply electricity, but a variety of energy sources - wood, coal, natural gas, oil, wind, solar - which taken together can provide stable and secure supplies, reasonable prices, and local production (which of course means more jobs for New Brunswickers). And we believe strongly in conservation measures, so we can improve our standard of living without requiring ever increasing energy supplies.

- **Wood:** New Brunswick has an abundant supply of wood wastes produces as a result of woodland operations. New Democrats support plans to chip this wood and use it for generating electricity and producing methane gas. Both these activities have proven successful elsewhere.
- **Coal:** New Democrats support the conversion of Coleson Cove from an oil-fired to a coal-fired generating station, using the best technology available to control pollution at the new plant. As much as possible the plant should burn New Brunswick coal.
- **Natural Gas:** New Democrats favour the construction of a natural gas pipeline into New Brunswick to increase the competition with existing energy sources. We want the natural gas distributed at the lowest possible price through a non-profit, consumer-owned co-op.

- **Oil And Gas:** Because of lack of competition in the oil industry, New Democrats would regulate oil and gas prices. Gas prices at the pumps would be the same throughout the province, with an adjustment if necessary for areas near the American border. Dealers would be guaranteed a fair margin on their sales.
- **Nuclear:** New Democrats do not support nuclear power development. Both Three Mile Island and Chernobyl have warned us of the enormous risks inherent in nuclear technology. The cost and the debt load involved in building a nuclear plant makes them uneconomical, and there is still no safe way to store the used fuel bundles which are intensely radioactive.
- **Alternative energy sources:** New Democrats support the use of solar energy, wind, and small scale water projects to expand and diversify our energy sources. A New Democratic government would offer power users a two way meter system, so that people producing electricity on a small scale could sell to NB Power when they had a surplus and buy when they had a shortage.
- **Department Of Energy:** To implement our plans for energy development and conservation, a New Democratic government would establish a provincial Department of Energy.

10. Transportation and Communication

- **Transportation, A Vital Link:** Road, rail, air and sea transport are vital to the New Brunswick economy, New Democrats support:
 - i) upgrading the provincial highway system;
 - ii) maintaining and expanding air services in New Brunswick which are threatened by deregulation;
 - iii) revitalizing rail transport in the province;
 - iv) helping cities and towns improve their public transit systems, including free transit passes for seniors.
- **Better Telephone Services:** Our objective is to provide better and less expensive telephone service to New Brunswickers. First, rates would be adjusted to avoid long distance charges between communities in the same area. Second, Local Metered Service (LMS), which American telephone companies have used to increase prices by charging for each minute of each local call, would be prohibited in New Brunswick. In the long run, New Democrats propose to make NB Tel into a non-profit public corporation, and pass on the savings to consumers in the form of lower rates, as several western provinces have done.

B. Fair Taxes, Not High Taxes

The tax system in New Brunswick is unfair. The average taxpayer is paying more and more, while the rich and large corporations are paying less. And the situation has been getting worse, not better. New Democrats are determined to change that. In implementing tax reform, we have four objectives:

- i) to reduce the tax burden on middle and low income New Brunswickers;
- ii) to ensure that corporations operating in the province pay their fair share of taxes;
- iii) to stimulate economic activity and new jobs, and;
- iv) to provide enough revenue for the government to finance an adequate level of public services.

1. Personal Income Tax Reform

Income taxes for the average New Brunswick family have been going up very quickly in recent years. But many wealthy people have been using tax loopholes to pay little or no income tax. That's unfair. A New Democratic government will close tax loopholes and establish a minimum income tax to make sure the wealthy too pay their fair share.

2. Cutting Sales Taxes

With the provincial sales tax and the G.S.T. combined, New Brunswickers pay the second highest tax in Canada. New Democrats believe that middle income families -the people who pay most of the sales taxes - are paying too much. We

are convinced that federal and provincial sales taxes can and should be reduced. In addition, New Democrats want the provincial sales tax on labour and on building materials removed.

3. Property Taxes That Are Fair To Tenants And Seniors

- **Tenants:** One of the real injustices facing tenants in this province is the fact that property taxes on apartments are twice as high as taxes on owner-occupied homes. Tenants, of course, don't see the tax bill; it's sent to the landlord who pays for it by charging higher rents. New Democrats are committed to cutting property taxes on apartments by one-half passing on the savings to tenants in the form of lower rents.
- **Seniors:** New Democrats favour more generous property tax exemptions for seniors with low incomes who want to continue living in their own homes.

4. Higher Taxes on Corporate Profits

While taxes on individuals and families have gone up dramatically in recent years, several times taxes on corporate profits in New Brunswick have actually gone down. The tax loopholes for corporations are getting bigger and bigger. Hundreds of profitable New Brunswick companies are paying no taxes at all on their earnings. New Democrats are

committed to shifting the tax burden so that corporations pay their fair share by:

- i) closing tax loopholes;
- ii) adjusting corporate tax rates;
- iii) expanding the corporate tax base.

Corporations receive large benefits from governments and from the communities in which they operate; it's time they made a financial contribution that is in proportion.

5. A Fair Price For Our Resources

- **Stumpage:** For decades, pulp and paper companies and loggers have had the right to cut on Crown Lands, but the stumpage fees they have paid to the government have not even covered the government's costs in maintaining our forests. New Democrats believe that stumpage rates should be set to cover these costs and to provide a fair return to the public - who are the owners of the resource.
- **Mining Taxes:** Our mineral resources - like our Crown Land forests - are public resources that New Brunswick governments have sold for a fraction of their value. When New Brunswick set up its potash industry in the early 1980, it sold the potash to mining companies for only one-third as much as the people of Saskatchewan were getting for their potash, under a New Democratic government.

A New Democratic government would renegotiate royalties on minerals to reflect full market value. The Metallic Minerals Tax Act would be tightened up to

prevent tax avoidance by mining companies. In addition, a tax on mineral holdings would be introduced to encourage exploration and development: rates would be set on a sliding scale to encourage mining activity. And where a mine shuts down, mineral holdings would revert to the government.

6. Land Speculation Tax

In order to discourage speculators, and keep down the price of land near urban areas, New Democrats would introduce a tax on land speculation.

C. Economic Justice

The New Democrats have always been known as the party with a social conscience. In a society such as ours, many people through no fault of their own find themselves in difficult circumstances. New Democrats, believe that all of us, through our government, have a responsibility to offer a helping hand.

1. Youth Guarantee

Young people in New Brunswick often have a hard time getting started in the work force especially in times of high unemployment. The unemployment rate for people under 25 is twice as high as it is for people over 25. New Democrats want to see our young people start out on the right foot toward meaningful and secure employment. A New Democratic government would commit itself to providing guaranteed opportunities for our young people. The Youth Guarantee would ensure that every young person has:

- i) a job opportunity at fair wages, or;
- ii) the opportunity to pursue further education, or;
- iii) the opportunity to participate in a training programme.

To administer the Youth Guarantee and other matters of special concern to young people, the New Democrats would establish a separate Department of Youth. Young New Brunswickers have great potential: we must make sure it isn't wasted.

2. Financial Support

No one in New Brunswick should be expected to live in poverty, whether disabled, unemployed, a single parent or a senior citizen.

- **Social Assistance:** Social assistance payments in New Brunswick are among the lowest in the country - and they are often fixed for a long period of time, despite increases in the cost of living. This places a real hardship on many individuals and families. New Democrats support regular and adequate increases in income maintenance and supplementary allowances for those in need.
- **The Disabled:** A New Democratic government would implement affirmative action programmes for the disabled in employment, housing and education. We would ensure access for the disabled to all public buildings, public transit, etc. and we would provide supplementary allowances to cover extra expenses arising from the disability.
- **Seniors:** New Democrats believe that a national, publicly funded pension plan is the cornerstone to providing financial security for our senior citizens. Our party has led the way in this area for many years. Company pension plans are an important supplement to the basic government pension. Unfortunately, most New Brunswick companies have no pension plan for their employees, and some that do have a woefully inadequate plan. A New Democratic government would enact pension standards legislation with early

vesting of contributions, portability and a 60% survivor benefit. We would also create the New Brunswick Pension Fund, open to New Brunswick companies and their employees: a least half the money placed in the fund would be invested in the province to stimulate economic development.

3. Housing

Our goal as New Democrats is to achieve adequate, affordable housing for all New Brunswickers.

- **Tenants:** A New Democratic government would establish rent controls to make sure tenants are treated fairly. In addition, we would take action to lower rents by making the property tax rate on apartments the same as it is for owner-occupied homes, and pass on the savings to tenants.
- **Senior Citizens:** New Democrats are concerned about the shortage of senior citizens housing in New Brunswick; the construction of more units would be one of our priorities. For seniors who remain in their own homes, New Democrats support a more generous reduction in property taxes. And a New Democratic government would hire house repair crews to help maintain seniors homes, with charges adjusted according to ability-to-pay.
- **Mortgage Assistance:** Whenever interest rates jump dramatically, homeowners face much higher monthly mortgage payments. For many, it means real financial hardship; for some, it means losing their homes. New Democrats believe that governments have an

obligation to step in and help families who are trapped in this situation.

- **Repair Crews:** Many houses in New Brunswick are in need of repairs to bring them up to standard and make them more energy efficient. A New Democratic government would employ repair crews to do the work, with rates geared to income for low income households.
- **New Construction:** A New Democratic government would stimulate the housing industry through the removal of the sales tax on building materials and it would encourage the use of more New Brunswick materials in construction. Our priority would be new co-operative housing and more housing for seniors.

4. Support for Community Groups

Governments often see community groups as a nuisance - as organizations that get in the way of a smooth functioning bureaucracy. New Democrats see things differently. A New Democratic government would provide financial assistance to these groups and work with them to provide services to the community in the most effective way possible.

D. Services for People

1. Health Care

New Democrats believe that proper health care is a priority second to none. We are proud to be the party that pioneered medicare in Canada. At a time when some people want to erode medicare by introducing user fees, extra-billing, and experimenting with privatizing hospitals, New Democrats remain unwavering in their support for the four principles of medicare:

- i) health care that is accessible to all regardless of income;
 - ii) health care that provides patients with a full range of services;
 - iii) access to health care anywhere in the country, and;
 - iv) health care that is offered on a non-profit basis.
- **Community Health Centres:** New Democrats want a health care system that is oriented first and foremost to the needs of individuals and their families. A New Democratic government would establish Community Health Centres to look after people's everyday medical needs as well as providing health education and programmes in preventative medicine. A holistic approach to health care would be encouraged which recognizes the importance of nutrition and diet, and expands health care services beyond the traditional drug-based treatment of illnesses.

- **Improved Services For Seniors:** New Democrats are concerned about the long waiting list for places in New Brunswick nursing homes. A New Democratic government would move quickly to increase the number of non-profit nursing homes in the province and to expand their range of services. We would also extend health care benefits to cover eyeglasses, hearing aids, and dentures for seniors. And we would expand the services of the intramural hospital.
- **Pharmacare:** In the long run, New Democrats support the introduction of a universal pharmacare plan. Under the plan, prescription drugs would be provided to New Brunswickers without charge, as an extension of the medicare programme, and cost would be kept down through the use of generic drugs.
- **Dental Care for Children:** A New Democratic government would initiate a public dental care programme for children and adopt a preventative approach by, for example, establishing a motorized unit with staff trained to provide dental treatment and dental hygiene education.
- **Air Ambulance:** We support the development of an emergency helicopter or air ambulance service to reach remote areas of the province.
- **Meeting the Needs of the North:** Recognizing the shortage of professional health care workers in the northern part of the province, an N.D.P. government would intensify recruiting efforts, provide bursaries to students who are committed to locating in a area of

shortage, and negotiate the Quebec-New Brunswick accord on the training of French speaking health care professionals.

- **Assisting the Disabled:** A New Democratic government would place an increased priority on helping those with physical and mental disabilities, by increasing the number of professionals and support staff in local communities.
- **Mental Health Services:** The New Democrat's approach is to provide an integrated system of mental health services throughout the province, organized on a regional basis. The services would be organized around community-based clinics and school based health services. Whenever possible, physical and mental health services would be integrated. Sufficient funds would be allocated to train and hire qualified professionals, to encourage reintegration of patients by providing support for families and community groups, and to support research into alternative forms of intervention. The use of electroshocks, megadosages of medication and seclusion rooms would be restricted, and the personal freedoms of patients would be enhanced.
- **Financing:** The cost of health care is rising rapidly but governments are imposing cutbacks. The result is that Medicare is threatened. In order to restore funding, New Democrats favour scrapping the present federal-provincial arrangements for financing health care services, and returning to the previous arrangements with 50% federal financing for programmes that meet national standards. This should

be supplemented by higher equalization grants for provinces who otherwise could not afford to meet the national standards.

- **Public Participation:** A New Democratic government would ensure that hospital boards are broadly representative of the community. And we would encourage the formation of self-help groups and health associations in each region of the province.

2. Education

New Democrats recognize the importance of our education system to the personal development of our children, the growth of our economy, and the strength of our democracy. The challenge is to organize educational programmes, teachers, support services, and facilities so that they all contribute effectively to these diverse goals.

- **Teaching the Basics:** Our young people must develop a good background in the basics - reading, writing and mathematics. But students are not alike. New Democrats support efforts to teach basic material using a variety of teaching methods appropriate to the needs and abilities of individual students.
- **Extending Optional Programmes:** New Democrats believe that children should be exposed to a wide variety of subjects including trades, commercial, physical education, music and art, and should be able to specialize in one of these programmes if they wish.
- **Unbiased Materials:** Too often, our educational system neglects the role of ordinary Canadians in our

society. New Democrats support a review of all course materials to ensure a recognition and respect for working people, the trade union movement, minorities, and women.

- **Second Language Training:** New Democrats support expanded second language programmes so that every student in New Brunswick may have the opportunity to become bilingual.
- **Special Needs Children:** New Democrats are committed to providing quality care for children with special needs. A New Democratic government would provide specialized programmes, support services and properly trained personnel to assist special needs children, parents and teachers through Educare Clinics located in each school district.
- **Kindergarten:** New Democrats believe that our children deserve more than a bargain basement kindergarten programme. A New Democratic government would introduce a properly funded, educationally sound kindergarten programme similar to that in other parts of Canada, with sufficient staff and fair wages, regular classroom facilities, and adequate school bus service.
- **Adult Education:** Literacy is essential for participating fully in our modern society. Yet a surprising number of New Brunswickers lack this basic skill. A New Democratic government would undertake a major adult literacy campaign, and expand training courses for adults.

and other school resources more available for use by members of the community.

- **Local School Boards:** Education needs are not the same in every part of the province. Local school boards must have enough autonomy to tailor education programmes to the local community.
- **University Education:** Our universities are a vital part of our educational system in New Brunswick. New Democrats believe that a university education should be accessible to all those who can benefit from it, without financial barriers. A New Democratic government would immediately freeze tuition fees, then gradually phase them out with compensating grants to the universities. In addition, we would work toward an expanded bursary programme, and new federal-provincial arrangements for financing higher education based on higher equalization grants and a return to 50% federal cost-sharing.

3. Child Care

The number of licensed spaces in daycare centres is inadequate to meet the needs of New Brunswick families. A New Democratic government would respond quickly to the need for more high quality day care facilities. We would provide funds to help non-profit and co-operative day care centres to expand. And we would start up a number of government-operated centres throughout the province. A few centres would be open nights to accommodate parents on shiftwork. Day care standards would be upgraded and new staff training programmes would be started. Our ultimate goal is to provide quality child care for everyone who needs

it without imposing a financial hardship on parents with young children.

4. Public Auto Insurance

In provinces where the New Democrats have been in power, we have introduced public non-profit auto insurance. The results are clear: people in these provinces pay less for auto insurance than others. A New Democratic government would introduce public non-profit auto insurance in New Brunswick. While the government would operate the plan, individual policies would still be handled by regular insurance agents.

5. Legal Aid

A New Democratic government would expand the legal aid system by hiring salaried lawyers to provide services to legal aid clients.

E. Women's Rights

1. Department of Women's Rights

A New Democratic government would establish a Department of Women's Rights to ensure that the needs and concerns of women are reflected in all aspects of government policy.

2. Pay Equity

In recent years thousands of New Brunswick women entering the work force have discovered that they are usually paid a lot less for their work than men. A woman working full-time in this province makes only about \$6.00 for every \$10.00 earned by a man. New Democrats believe that work requiring the same degree of training, effort and responsibility should receive the same pay - whether it is done by a woman or a man. This is what we mean by "pay equity". A New Democratic government would introduce pay equity legislation not only in the civil service but also in other parts of the public sector and the private sector, to ensure that women receive fair pay for the work that they do anywhere in the province. The legislation would be proactive, would include targets and timetables, and would establish mechanisms to ensure implementation.

3. Job Opportunities For Women

Most women are still working in traditional "women's jobs" - nursing, teaching, secretarial and sales. Often these jobs are low paying and offer little opportunity for advancement.

New Democrats believe that action must be taken to open up new opportunities for women.

- **Education in Non-Traditional Areas:** New Democrats support efforts in our schools, community colleges and universities to expand education and training for women in non-traditional areas.
- **Affirmative Action:** New Democrats support the use of affirmative action programmes in the government and in private sector firms doing business with the government, to increase job opportunities for women, especially in non-traditional areas.
- **No Discrimination:** A New Democratic government would take strong action to prevent discrimination against women by private companies or the government itself in hiring and promotion .

4. Working Conditions

- **Part-time Workers:** Most part-time workers in New Brunswick are women, and usually they are not eligible for the benefits that full-time workers receive. New Democrats believe that part-time should receive their fair share of benefits, (such as sick leave, health insurance and pension benefits) in proportion to their hours of work.
- **Parental Leave:** New Democrats recognize the family responsibilities of most workers, and would help people to meet those important responsibilities. We would make maternity or parental leave for the birth or adoption of a child at full pay, with no loss of

seniority or benefits. And we would provide a special sick day allowance for working parents who must sometimes be absent from work to look after a sick child.

5. Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is unacceptable on the job or elsewhere and New Democrats support strong action to deal with it.

6. Family Violence

Family violence occurs all too frequently in New Brunswick, and the usual victims are women and children. New Democrats are committed to establishing emergency shelters in all parts of the province, where women can obtain protection and counselling.

7. Single Parent Families

The traditional family with mother, father - both married only once - and their children is now a minority. Many new types of families have emerged, and our society has been slow to adjust to their needs. Perhaps the most important are single parent families. Usually headed by women, and often with young children, these families have special needs. A high proportion of single parent families live in poverty. Through pay equity legislation a New Democratic government would ensure that working women receive a fair wage. And for single parents who are not in the labour force, we would increase the level of social assistance benefits. In addition, we would provide more child care and other social services which single parent families need.

8. Child Care Services

A New Democratic government would greatly expand services by operating new centres itself and by providing major financial support for expanding non-profit and co-operative day care centres throughout the province.

9. Seniors

Many older women - especially those over seventy live in poverty. New Democrats are committed to working for better government pensions, more generous survivor benefits, and the extension of company pension plans to cover more workers.

For seniors living in their own homes, New Democrats support financial assistance to help with property taxes and maintenance. For others, we support the construction of more senior citizens housing and more nursing homes offering a high standard of care.

F. Fairness in the Workplace

1. Fair Wages and Benefits

- **An Adequate Minimum Wage:** New Democrats are concerned about the thousands of New Brunswick workers - most of them women who receive the minimum wage in this province. Quite simply, the minimum wage is less than a living wage - especially for those with families to support.

As a first step a New Democratic government would increase the minimum wage to 50% of the average hourly wage of New Brunswick workers. The minimum wage would then increase regularly as average wages went up. In the long run, further steps would be taken to raise the minimum wage to 60% of the average wage in the province. Financial assistance would be made available to firms to protect jobs in marginal industries where a higher minimum wage might otherwise cause plant shutdowns.

- **Pay Equity:** New Democrats believe that women and men doing work requiring the same degree of skill, effort and responsibility should receive the same pay. The present situation, in which women are generally paid less, is clearly unfair. A New Democratic government would move swiftly to introduce pay equity in both the public and private sectors.
- **Decent Employee Benefits:** New Democrats are committed to making sure that all workers in New

Brunswick, whether unionized or not, receive a decent level of employee benefits. We support measures to strengthen the Employment Standards Act, and pension standards legislation to ensure that employees with company pension plans are properly protected.

Those most often denied decent benefits are part-time workers. A New Democratic government would make part-time workers eligible for the same kind of benefits as full-time workers, with benefit levels pro rated.

2. Technological Change

Rapid technological change is hitting factories and offices alike. These changes bring great benefits in the form of higher productivity, but also great costs in the form of dislocation and layoffs. Too often, the benefits and the costs of technological change are being unfairly divided: the owners are collecting the benefits in the form of higher profits, while the workers affected are bearing the costs in the form of layoffs, lost income, and the negative social effects of that on individuals and their families.

New Democrats believe that government has a responsibility to make sure that the benefits of technological change are shared fairly and that the costs are minimized. We know that this can only be done if workers participate in planning technological changes through joint committees of workers and managers and - for unionized workers through the collective bargaining process.

A New Democratic government would introduce legislation governing technological change, which would require an

employer to give the joint committee and the unions involved six months notice of planned changes in equipment, work methods and processes. During the six month period plans would be put in place to assist the workers affected through transfers within the company, retraining programmes, mobility allowances, and early retirement. These adjustments would be financed by the employer, the industry and the government.

3. Job Security

- **Plant Closures:** A New Democratic government would carefully monitor all plant closures in the province. A company wishing to close down an operation would have to provide reasonable notice and full financial information to the government. Where a plant closure is not warranted, we would make every effort to continue the operation with the same employer, or under new management. Where a plant closure is necessary, we would ensure that workers receive all back wages and accrued pension benefits, severance pay, and training and assistance in finding new employment.
- **Government Grants:** Government employment grants are intended to increase employment, not to replace regular employees with lower paid workers on government grants. A New Democratic government would make sure that no regular employee could lose his job for this reason.
- **Contacting Out:** New Democrats oppose the widespread government practice of contracting out work normally done by those in the public service.

Such practices are vulnerable to patronage and result in those doing the work receiving inferior wages and working conditions.

4. A Safe, Healthy Workplace

Each year in New Brunswick, thousands of workers are injured on the job and several lose their lives. New Democrats believe that strong action must be taken to reduce industrial accidents in the province. A New Democratic government would strengthen the Occupational Health and Safety Act, and clearly give employees the right to refuse work that they consider unsafe. Quite simply, no worker should be expected to work in any situation that endangers his or her personal safety.

5. Free Collective Bargaining

New Democrats believe that the right of employees to join together and bargain collectively is an essential right in a democratic society. At present, many unfair obstacles stand in the way of workers joining the union of their choice. A New Democratic government would extend collective bargaining rights to woodworkers, casual workers in the public service and others, and streamline the process of certification. Where the employer and the union have reached an impasse in negotiating a first collective agreement, we would authorize the labour board to determine a fair and binding settlement.

A New Democratic government would take action to encourage the peaceful resolution of industrial disputes by:

- i) prohibiting the use of industrial strikebreakers;
- ii) extending peaceful picketing;
- iii) allowing workers to refuse to cross a legal picket line without penalty.

In addition, we would take steps to speed up the arbitration process, keep arbitration costs down, and ensure that arbitration is always open to union and management - even between collective agreements.

G. Protecting Our Environment

As New Brunswickers, we take pride in our natural environment, but we know that today this environment is threatened as never before. Acid rain. Contaminated drinking water. Toxic wastes. Aerial sprays. New Democrats believe that effective action must be taken now, before the situation gets worse.

1. Getting Tough with Polluters

New Democrats support the principle that the polluter pays. An NDP government would pass legislation providing for substantial fines to be levied against companies and individuals, equivalent to the cost of corrective measures, with mandatory jail terms for company owners, executive officers and other responsible individuals for each subsequent violation or act of environmental degradation.

2. Environmental Bill Of Rights

A New Democratic government would pass an Environmental Bill of Rights that would permit to sue governments that failed to protect our natural resources from pollution, impairment or destruction. It would also facilitate class action suits to assist individuals in collecting damages from polluters.

3. Safe Drinking Water

Nothing is more important to New Brunswickers than clean, safe drinking water. We used to take it for granted, but not

any more. Scarcely a week goes by without another report of groundwater contamination somewhere in the province. Groundwater, which provides two-thirds of the drinking water in New Brunswick, is being contaminated by gasoline leaking from underground storage tanks, chemicals, and toxic wastes. A New Democratic government would introduce a Safe Drinking Water Act to regulate the quality of drinking water, to ensure prompt, corrective action when water is contaminated and to require the polluter to pay for the damage done.

4. Acid Rain

Acid rain is destroying our lakes and retarding the growth of our forests. It is threatening our natural environment and weakening our economic base. Much of the acid rain that falls on New Brunswick is carried by the wind from the Northeastern States and Central Canada. But smokestacks here in the province produce more than their share of acid rain. A New Democratic government would require NB Power to reduce its sulphur emissions dramatically. And it would set tough new standards for the private sector.

5. Hazardous Materials

New Democrats support the construction of a hazardous waste disposal unit to serve the three Maritime provinces. We favour tough regulations to protect the public when hazardous materials are transported on New Brunswick roads. And we would ban the spraying of all dangerous chemicals.

6. Spills Bill

A New Democratic government would introduce a Spills Bill, so that whenever there is a gas leak, a chemical spill, or some other pollutant is dumped into the environment, the damage would be cleaned up as quickly as possible with the company responsible paying the bill.

7. Budworm Spraying

A New Democratic government would replace the chemical spray programme against the budworm - which involves the wholesale dumping of chemicals over most of the province - with a much safer bacterial spray programme, and an active forest management policy to make our woodlands more budworm resistant.

H. Equality Of English and French

New Brunswick officially recognizes two official languages, English and French. New Democrats believe it is important to the quality of life in our province that both linguistic and cultural communities be protected and promoted.

1. Equal Opportunities Commission

To try to achieve fair treatment for all, a New Democratic government would establish an Equal Opportunities Commission with the power to investigate, supervise and promote the opportunities available to French and English-speaking New Brunswickers.

2. Entrench Bill 88

The New Democratic Party reaffirms its support for the language provisions of the Canadian Constitution and the laws of New Brunswick. A New Democratic government would entrench Bill 88 in the Constitution without delay. We would work toward the broader goal of language equality with a specific plan of action covering a five year period.

3. The Right to Services

New Democrats believe that government services should be provided in each community in the language of that community, and that both linguistic groups are entitled to services of equal quality. A New Democratic government would decentralize the delivery of services to the local level, and ensure that civil servants providing those services can

communicate effectively with people in that community. We would also work to promote rights for citizens of both official languages in Crown corporations, municipalities, hospitals, public utilities, telecommunication services, unions and professional organizations.

4. The Right to Jobs

New Democrats believe that both English and French-speaking New Brunswickers should have an equal opportunity to get government jobs. A New Democratic government would make every effort to hire a fair proportion of both English-speaking and French-speaking employees. Our goal is to enable employees of the Legislature and the government to use the official language that is more familiar to him or her. And we would work to establish a Capital Commission on the federal model to make the provincial capital a comfortable working and living environment for both English and French speaking New Brunswickers.

5. Second Language Education

A New Democratic government would toward the goal of providing each child in the New Brunswick school system with the opportunity to receive sufficient language instruction to allow him or her to work in both official languages.

6. Preserving and Promoting Cultural Identity

A New Democratic government would establish a Department of Culture and Heritage. The Department would encourage the development of the different cultural communities that make up New Brunswick society. Modern communications are vital for transmitting and developing cultural identity; special programmes would be established to take advantage of them. Programmes within the Department would be developed and administered in the official language of the respective communities.

7. Simultaneous Translation

New Democrats support the extension of simultaneous translation services to more groups in the province, including recognized political parties.

I. Strengthening the Political Process

1. Government Services at the Local Level

Too often government services seem to be run in the interests of the bureaucracy rather than in the interests of the people who are supposed to benefit from these services. A New Democratic government would bring services directly to the local community. We would establish government service centres to provide a wide range of government services at one location - "one-stop" service without a lot of runaround. Each service centre would have input from the local community so that the delivery of services can be tailored to meet the needs of each particular area.

2. Local Service Districts

An NDP government would introduce legislation to broaden the mandate of the Local Service Committees, and provide for the election of their members in some manner as any municipal election.

3. Broader Representation on Government Boards

Too often government boards and commissions are packed with political cronies who represent one narrow set of interests. A New Democratic government would broaden the representation on these boards to include representatives from workers and consumer groups and community organizations.

4. Political Rights For Civil Servants

At present, civil servants in New Brunswick are not allowed to participate openly in the political process. New Democrats believe that this sweeping denial of political rights to over ten thousand people is undemocratic and unfair. Most civil servants have jobs as office workers, labourers, tradesmen, or community college teachers. A New Democratic government would guarantee full political rights for these people and others like them. Only civil servants who advise the government directly on policy issues would be subject to restrictions on their political activity.

5. No Discrimination

A New Democratic government would amend the Human Rights Code to protect individuals from discrimination on the basis of political affiliation or sexual orientation.

6. Conflict of Interest

No one should be in a position where he or she can use a portion of public trust for private gain. Accordingly, New Democrats would amend the Conflict of Interest Act to try to prevent this from happening.

7. Fair Elections

A New Democratic government would tighten up the Elections Act to reduce instances of voter fraud, and extend the franchise by reducing residency requirements. In addition sitting MLA wishing to change political allegiance would be

required to resign his or her seat first thus allowing for a by-election.

8. Financing Political Parties

Both the Conservative and Liberal parties are financed primarily by corporate contributions. Most of the money comes from a small number of corporations who give thousands of dollars each, usually to both parties. Typically, these large contributions come from corporations located outside New Brunswick.

New Democrats are concerned that corporations making large contributions may be looking for special favours. This in return undermine the integrity of the political process. We are concerned as well that contributions from outside corporations may erode the autonomy of New Brunswick political parties. A New Democratic government would therefore:

- i) reduce the maximum for corporate contributions;
- ii) prevent contributions from corporations that are not majority owned by New Brunswickers, and;
- iii) prohibit political contributions from banks and other financial institutions.

In contrast to the other parties we New Democrats receive most of our money from individual contributions. The trade union movement is also a generous contributor to our party. Under New Brunswick law all union contributions come from members in the province: none comes from outside.

9. Democracy and Social Justice

New Democrats believe that our efforts to extend democracy and social justice here in New Brunswick do not end at our borders. We have taken a stand on issues as wide-ranging as the nuclear arms race and apartheid in South Africa. New Democrats understand that our efforts in New Brunswick are part of a worldwide struggle for peace, freedom, and justice for all.

