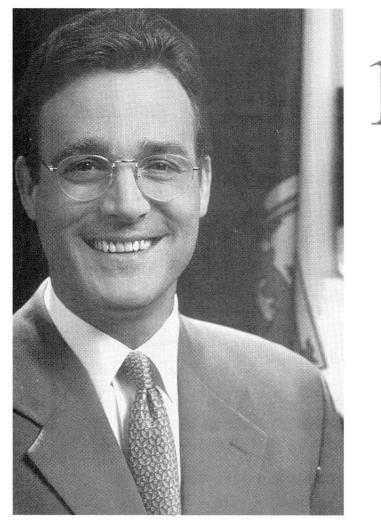


Table of Contents

lťs	time	to tell the truth about the budget	5
lt's	time	to stand up for Nova Scotia Communities	15
11'5	time	for quality health care	25
lťs	time	for equal education opportunity	37
lťs	time	to respect Nova Scotians	47

Campaign '99

NDP It's Time. **PLATFORM**



It's Time. to tell the truth about the budget



Friends,

This election is about making sure that Nova Scotia has a government that can and will do better for average working people and for their families.

It's about choosing a government that will work for you, a government that makes a clean break, a government that is on the side of ordinary Nova Scotians.

Over the course of the campaign, we are detailing NDP plans to achieve five goals for the next government of Nova Scotia:

- Invest in front line health care.
- Tell the truth about the budget.
- Ensure equal education opportunity across Nova Scotia.
- Stand up for Nova Scotia communities.
- Respect Nova Scotians. . . respect their intelligence, respect their hard work, and respect their goals for this province

This document sets out the specifics of the NDP commitment to tell the truth about the province's finances.

It's time to tell the truth

Before the budget can be balanced, there must be a full and detailed accounting of the true deficit that the Liberals ran up this year. There must be a complete and accurate report of the provincial government's debts and obligations. And with the NDP, there will be. It is time to elect a government that will tell the truth about the budget.

Our goal is to have the budget truly balanced within four years, but first, we have to see how big a mess the Liberals have left behind. Then, and only then, working with Nova Scotians out in the open, without a cloak of secrecy will an NDP government be able to develop and implement a plan to balance the budget as soon as humanly possible, and address the need to start paying down that debt within the business cycle. No more lies. No more shell games. No more dubious accounting. No more Liberal fudge. No more rabbits out of a hat instead of a budget people can believe.

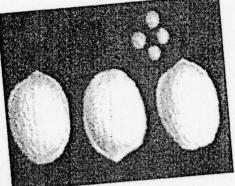
They Call

Robert Chisholm, Leader Nova Scotia New Democratic Party

It's time to tell the truth about the budget

Nova Scotians deserve to know the truth about the budget of their province. Only then will ordinary people know how their money is being spent, and whether the government is acting

in their best interest. Only then will Nova Scotians know what they are paying for, and what public services they are getting in return.



The defeated MacLellan budget is the latest example of Liberal and Tory governments playing shell games with Nova Scotians' hard-earned money. Decades of dishonest accounting have saddled Nova Scotia with an official debt of nearly \$9 billion and a hidden debt that's billions more. New Democrats will tell the truth about the finances of the province. We will ensure that not one more cent than is absolutely necessary goes into the pockets of bankers and bond traders instead of paying for health care, education and other services needed by Nova Scotia families.

On March 31, 1999, Nova Scotia's reported net direct debt stood

at \$9.0 billion, up from \$4.7 billion eight years earlier when Donald Cameron became Premier. The defeated Liberal mortgage would have added another \$1.6 billion¹ to the net direct debt over the next three years, according to the budget documents that described the Liberal mortgage.

In addition, the Liberal government has allowed other liabilities to accumulate off the books. These additional obligations include the nearly \$700-million debt of Nova Scotia Resources Limited, \$500 million worth of 3P school contracts, the \$370 million unfunded liability of the Workers' Compensation Board and approximately \$200 million for Tar Ponds clean up.

By letting debts accumulate off the books, the Liberals followed a script perfected over a 15year period by the Conservatives. They concealed liabilities, and failed to give Nova Scotians a true picture of the Province's finances. Programs were cut and Nova Scotians forced to make sacrifices. But the debt - and the annual cost of servicing it - continued to rise as hidden liabilities were added to the debt column.

Liberals and Tories were too busy helping out their corporate friends and wasting money on their political buddies to protect the interests of hard-working Nova Scotia taxpayers. If a business ran its affairs the way the Liberals and Tories have run the Province, the police would be at the door.

Since the March 1998 election, the NDP Caucus has introduced 7 pieces of legislation that would help ensure government tells the truth about the budget.² The Liberals weren't interested, for obvious reasons. Conservative support was lukewarm, at best. It's time to make sure government tells the truth about the budget.

¹ This figure is calculated from the graph that is the centrepiece of the Health Investment Fund. It shows an increase in health funding of \$400 million in the first year, and a permanent increase of \$600 million in each of the second and third (and subsequent years).

² Bill 27 on contingent liabilities and tax expenditures; Bill 33 on lobbyist registration; Bill 54 on whistleblowers; Bill 66 on appropriations for long-term leases; Bill 76 on economic development grants; Bill 93 on annual reporting; Bill 114 on loan forgiveness.

An NDP government will clean up the mess left by the Liberals and the Conservatives, by taking the following action:

- Appoint a special auditor, to determine and report to Nova Scotians the true state of the province's finances in the wake of the latest phoney budget from the MacLellan Liberals.
- Starting with the preparation of the budget for the current fiscal year, end the doctrine of budget secrecy, except as it applies to taxation changes where advance knowledge could be used to gain a personal benefit.
- Review the budget options with a widely representative annual prebudget conference, starting with a pre-budget conference in September to provide guidance for decisions about the remaining half of fiscal 1999-00 and initial direction for fiscal 2000-01.
- Issue Consolidated Financial Statements of the Province that report to Nova Scotians all of the provincial government's debts, liabilities and financial obligations, starting this Fall.
- During the first year of an NDP government, enact legislation requiring the Province to publicly report in its Estimates and in the Public Accounts any operating costs and capital debts for which the province is ultimately responsible, including any such costs and debts of academic institutions, school boards, hospitals, crown corporations or other public sector agencies.
- Amend the Provincial Finance Act to require reporting of forgivable loans and other contingent liabilities in the Financial Statements and of the Province and in a report accompanying the Estimates.
- Amend the Provincial Finance Act to require that a report of the forgone revenue associated with each tax expenditure be submitted to the House with the Estimates.
- Account for pension obligations in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, on the basis of advice provided by the trustees, advisors and actuaries of the Public Service Superannuation Fund and the Teachers' Pension Fund.
- Conduct an inventory and valuation of the tangible capital assets of the Government of Nova Scotia, to be completed no later than March 31, 2001, and report the results of this inventory in the Public Accounts. Update the inventory and evaulation on a regular basis thereafter.

4

• Report in the Financial Statements of the Government of Nova Scotia the best estimate of potential environmental liabilities, Y2K liabilities and similar contingent liabilities.

• Comply with the letter and the spirit of legislation that requires the approval of the Legislature for over-spending by Departments of government. Ensure that the Expenditure Control Act and any other such legislation is reasonable and enforceable.

• Amend the Government Purchases Act to apply procurement policies to all Provincial bodies and Provincially-funded entities. Amend Sections 10 and 11 of the Government Purchases Act to place on the public record with the Clerk of the House of Assembly the monthly and quarterly reports of purchases that were not tendered or not awarded to the lowest bidder, together with an explanation of each exception made to the procurement policy.

• Include in the Revenue Estimates of the Province an estimate of the prior years' adjustments that can be reasonably expected from the federal government, as recommended by the Auditor General.

• Provide a full and fair statement of the sensitivity of the Revenue Estimates to external factors, as recommended by the Auditor General. Ask the Public Accounts Committee of the Legislature to consult interested Nova Scotians as to the advisability of amending the Section 9B of the Auditor General Act to include this requirement.

• Ask the Public Accounts Committee of the Legislature to consult with interested Nova Scotians and recommend how the Supplement to the Public Accounts can be slimmed down in accordance with the Auditor General's recommendations, without losing accountability.

Most of the commitments to tell the truth about the budget will not require increased spending by the Province. Some items - like the inventory of assets, and the estimation of environmental liabilities - may require outside help for a limited period.

The net cost of implementing these platform commitments will be less \$500,000, an amount easily recovered from the savings that will result.

in .

The result will be the most accurate set of books Nova Scotians have ever seen.

Nova Scotians are faced with the difficult task of digging themselves out of the financial morass created by the Liberals and the Tories.

> Ordinary Nova Scotians deserve a clear understanding of that challenge and an accurate account of how the challenge is being met. As any Nova Scotian family understands, you can't set budget priorities until you know your financial responsibilities and capabilities.

> That is why the New Democratic Party believes it is so important to tell the truth about the budget.

Background: Hidden Deficits

The Liberals and Tories haven't told the truth about the Province's finances for years. This year's budget achieved a new level of deception.

The Liberals claimed that they had produced surpluses in each of their last three budgets. They thought they could get away with making that claim because they were hiding hospital and health board deficits. This year, under pressure from the Auditor General and from the Legislature, those hidden hospital debts and deficits were counted. Three years of false surpluses turned out to have actually been an accumulated deficit of \$226 million.

The Liberals actually tried to claim a budget surplus this year - but their socalled surplus budget and mortgage would have added \$1.6 billion to the Province's debt by the end of the 2001-2002 fiscal year.

Background: Hidden Debts

The Liberals and the Tories before them have been cutting programs like health and education since 1990. Nova Scotians have been forced to make sacrifices, but those sacrifices have not paid off. The debt has just kept climbing.

• Over the last eight years of cuts, the Liberals and Tories were actually increasing the "official" debt of Nova Scotia from \$5.4 billion in 1991-92 to \$9.0 billion in 1998-99. The rejected Liberal Budget would have added another \$1.6 billion over three years.

And if that's not bad enough, the true debt is even higher. For years, the Liberals and Tories have been keeping debts and liabilities off the books. Proper accounting of those liabilities would make a bad debt picture even worse.

Half a billion dollars in off-book liabilities in 3P school contracts should

have been reported as an obligation of the province. The Auditor General said that, in his opinion, the prototype school lease was a capital lease, not an operating lease, and therefore should have been reported as part of the government's spending. But to maintain the fiction that their building spree was not adding to the debt of the Province, the Liberals entered into costly 3P arrangements with for private profit-making ownership of schools.

 The debts of Nova Scotia Resources Limited (NSRL), a Crown Corporation, continue to climb out of control. Thanks to the Liberals and Tories, Nova Scotians are left holding the bag. The Tories allowed NSRL's debt to climb above \$400 million. Under the Liberals it has reached nearly \$700 million and that's expected to double before there's any revenue to start paying it down.

NSRL and the 3P schools are the largest hidden liabilities created by Liberal and Tory mismanagement and irresponsibility. Others include:

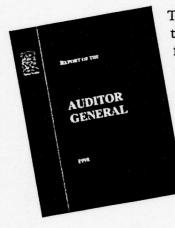
- Unknown but potentially significant off-book liabilities for pensions, fixing the Y2k bug and cleaning up polluted sites like the Sydney Tar Ponds.
- The Workers' Compensation Board has an unfunded liability of \$370 million. That debt isn't on the province's books.

Finally,, in addition to hiding hospital and health board debt, the Liberals have been fudging the government's operating expenses in several ways. For example:

- The Liberals have not properly and fully accounted for forgivable loans, especially those issued by the Economic Development department and its agencies.
- In fiscal 1998-99, the Liberals claimed \$13.8 million cash received from the sale of a school as operational savings.
- The Liberals have failed to report to Nova Scotians the cost of tax loopholes and tax expenditures.
- The Liberals have failed to seek or obtain the legislative authority for over-spending that is required by their own Expenditure Control Act.

·4.

Background: Finding the Truth



-

The first step in cleaning up the books is to find out just how bad they are. To that end an NDP government will order a special audit for an exhaustive review of the public accounts to determine the extent of the Province's obligations and liabilities. The special auditor will be mandated to complete an interim report in time for public consultations on a new budget for 1999-2000. The new open budget process will involve a pre-budget conference with representatives of Nova Scotia business groups, labour, health providers, educators, rural and urban communities and other major groups in our province. Under an NDP government, identification of the real deficit, the real debt and the realistic choices will be done in the open.

Background: Setting Standards

When it comes to financial accountability, there are three key standard-setting documents:

- The Public Sector Accounting Handbook, published by the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants. (CICA)
- The annual reports of Nova Scotia's Auditor General.
- The booklet "Financial Accountability: A Blueprint for Success," which was released at the same time as the 1998-99 Budget.

(1) The CICA Public Sector Accounting Handbook

The Public Sector Accounting Handbook is "the Bible" of public sector accounting. It is written under the auspices of the CICA's Public Sector Accounting Board (PSAB).

The Handbook includes the following statement of principle, which the NDP endorses:

Financial statements should communicate reliable information relevant to the needs of those for whom the statements are prepared, in a manner that maximizes its usefulness. As a minimum, this requires information that is clearly presented, understandable, timely and consistent.

Any government that doesn't comply with the Handbook must have a very good reason. The Liberals failed to comply with the Handbook in at least three key areas. They had no good reason.

(2) The Annual Reports of the Auditor General

The Auditor-General is Nova Scotia's financial watchdog. It is the Auditor's job to review the books and verify that

(A) the accounts are accurate and well-kept;

(B) all public money has been fully accounted for;

(C) expenditures authorized by the Legislature have been carried out with due regard to economy or efficiency;

(D) money has been spent where it was supposed to be spent;

(E) essential records are maintained; and

in.

(F) public property is protected and controlled.

The Auditor General's Annual Reports comment on general accountability issues and the steps that could be taken to improve accountability. These comments can almost always be tied back to specific statements in the PSAB Handbook.

In his most recent report (December 1998), for example, the Auditor-General identifies the following "opportunities for improvement":

- Consolidated financial statements. The province still does not prepare a consolidated financial statement. "Consolidated financial statements should be a primary financial accountability report for government."
- Reporting entity. The province has not clarified which entities are part of "government" for reporting purposes. "The implementation of a financial reporting entity in accordance with current CICA recommendations will result in the Province's financial position and results being presented on a more complete and appropriate basis."
- Accounting for pension costs and obligations. The province's method of calculating pension costs is inappropriate. The accounting is based on contributions, but it should be based on the cost of service.
- Accounting for tangible capital assets. The province does not currently have an inventory or valuation of its tangible capital assets.

In addition, the Auditor General identifies a number of other areas for improvement. For example:

- Legislative requirements are not always met. For example, s. 13 of the Expenditure Control Act (legislative authority for overexpenditures) and s. 23 of the Provincial Finance Act (Cabinet approval for write-offs) were not followed.
- A report on procurement policy exceptions should be provided to the House of Assembly. Otherwise, there is no effective public check on whether the procurement policy is being followed, or why it hasn't been followed in a particular case.
- There is no legislative support for the government's Planning and Accountability Framework. This means that the provision of accountability reports to the House of Assembly is entirely discretionary.

9

- "Prior years' adjustments" from the federal government are understated and could be significant. In the last two years, very significant sums from the federal government have been accounted for at the last minute - in 1998-99, for example, Ottawa paid an "adjustment" of \$84.7 million that was unbudgeted.
- The government should include, in its revenue estimates, a statement of the sensitivity of the estimates to external factors. Some of the estimates can vary quite significantly, depending on external economic influences.
- The Supplement to the Public Accounts, which shows detailed information on staff salaries and expenses, and other government payments, has grown beyond any practical use. It should be revised to reflect the reasonable reporting needs of the public and the House of Assembly.

(3) "Financial Accountability: A Blueprint for Success"

The Blueprint was issued with the 1998 Budget documents. The Blueprint lays out, in a relatively non-partisan way, what a government has to do to comply with generally-accepted accounting principles.

The major accounting deficiencies identified by the Blueprint are:

- The financial statements aren't consolidated.
- Pension accounting isn't in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.
- There's no accounting for tangible capital assets.

Each of these items has also been identified by the Auditor General as an area for improvement.

The Blueprint lays out a timetable for presentations to Cabinet:

- Summer 1998: Nova Scotia's reporting entity
- Summer 1998: Nova Scotia's financial position
- Summer/fall 1998: tangible capital assets
- Fall/winter 1998: consolidated financial statements
- Spring 1999: pensions

· 4.

The Liberals don't appear to be acting on the Blueprint. None of these commitments was honoured by the MacLellan Cabint. There is no reason to believe these presentations were actually made.

The Blueprint says (page 16) that "as decisions are validated by government, similar presentations will be made to the Public Accounts Committee." No such presentations have been made to the Public Accounts Committee. Finally, the Blueprint identifies the main obstacles to achieving PSAB compliance:

- Change takes time. The government needs time to collect baseline data, to implement systems, to report the new information, to education and train government entities.
- PSAB guidelines are a moving target. They evolve, and the government's plan for full compliance has to evolve with them.
- The changes require a level of professional expertise not currently available within government. "Compared to other jurisdictions," says the Blueprint (page 12), "the number of Nova Scotia's professional accounting staff is below average."

À .

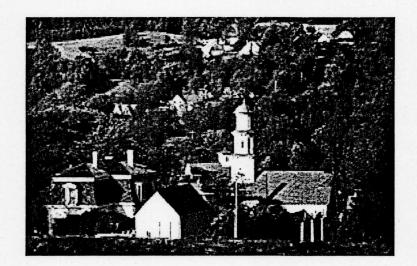
Nova Scotia New Democracy Party

Ner.

802-5675 Spring Garden Road, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 1H1 Phone: (902) 423-9217 or 1 800-753-7696 Fax: (902) 423-9618 nsndp@ns.ndp.ca www.ns.nsp.ca

Authorized by Joe Fraser, Official Agent for the Nova Scotia NDP





It's Time. to stand up for Nova Scotia communities



14

Friends,

This province's strength can be found in our communities...their pride, their solidarity, their hope in the future. Nova Scotians are hometown proud, and rightly so. It's time for a government that stands up for our communities just as much as ordinary Nova Scotians do.

This platform paper sets out the NDP's specific commitments to stand up for Nova Scotia communities. More and more over the past two decades people have been forced to leave their communities to find jobs and pursue opportunities. Liberal and Tory policies have accelerated that shift of population and the growing inequality of opportunity across the province. Money is wasted on hand-outs to large corporations and government friends. Public services, health care and roads are allowed to deteriorate. Nova Scotians don't get the support they need to succeed in their communities.

It's time to make a break with the past. Our goal is to provide ordinary, working Nova Scotians with a government that supports and respects communities, a government that is on the side of Nova Scotia communities. No more pothole politics. No more attacks on health and education. No more handouts to fly-by-night operators while local enterprises get the cold shoulder. It's time for a government that is confident in the future and in the abilities of Nova Scotians.

sheet Call

Robert Chisholm, Leader Nova Scotia New Democratic Party

It's time to stand up for Nova Scotia communities. For many decades, Nova Scotians living in the towns, villages and rural areas of this province have been subjected by Liberal and Tory governments to a series of policies which failed to respect the talents, vision and intelligence of families, businesses and communities. These Nova Scotians worked hard, raised their families, paid their taxes and obeyed the law. In return, Liberals and Tories gave them policies which made their lives harder:

- scarce development dollars were squandered on large corporations and political friends of the government;
- community infrastructure was allowed to deteriorate;
- neglected roads left some communities virtually isolated and turned rural Nova Scotia into pothole paradise;
- basic public services like health care and education were stripped from communities, through the combined effect of cutbacks, forced amalgamations and P3 schools.

Liberal and Tory policies and neglect have kept communities from enjoying the full benefits from our keystone agricultural, mining, forestry and fishing industries. The opportunities presented by our new gas and oil industry are being squandered. We need a new start. It's time for a government that stands up for ordinary Nova Scotians, a government that puts the interests of ordinary Nova Scotians ahead of those of the large corporations and the friends of the Liberals and Tories. During its first year in office a New Democratic Party government will:

- stop the handouts to large corporations and friends of the government;
- invest in roads and other economic lifelines;
- offer communities an economic hand up.

The.

Many Nova Scotia communities are in crisis. Instead of standing with them in their struggle for survival and growth, the policies of a succession of Liberal and Tory governments have made things worse for these communities. With a New Democratic Party government, that will change.

Stopping the Handouts

The Liberals and Tories have wasted tens of millions of dollars on handouts to corporations. Sometimes the money has been given to fly-by-night operations like Dynatek and Mac Timber; other times it has gone to pad the bottom line of hugely-profitable companies like Michelin. In either case, it's money that shouldn't have been spent.

- The Province gave \$1.695 million and an untendered contract to PLI for a two-year Sysco clean-up program, using the labour of unemployed steelworkers. The project, which also had an announced total of \$4.8 million in federal support, ended a year prematurely in September, 1998, amid concerns about workplace safety. The owners of PLI have since alleged they paid \$250,000 to Liberal supporter Louis Friedman to obtain the contract.
- Between them, the Cameron, Savage and MacLellan governments pumped over \$15 million into Dynatek. This Toronto-based company never came close to meeting its job-creation commitments before going under in 1998, leaving Nova Scotians holding the bag for Conservative and Liberal mistakes.
- Mentor Networks received \$5.4 million from the Liberals in 1996, then went into receivership in 1998. The Liberals then threw \$2 million more into the pot to help another company to take it over.
- Mac Timber declared bankruptcy in February 1999, four months after receiving \$540,000 from the Province and ACOA. More than 150 local businesses were left on the hook for over \$1 million when Mac Timber's owner fled back to Alberta.
- Between November 1997 and September 1998 the Liberals wrote off the entire \$48 million value of an interest free loan given to Michelin in 1988 by the Tories, although Michelin only asked for a loan deferral. In addition, Michelin was given \$17 million in training grants.

Nova Scotians can't afford more Liberal and Conservative waste. An NDP government will save \$29 million by ending the hand-outs to large corporations, government friends and fly-by-night companies. To achieve these savings, and NDP government will:

- Place an immediate moratorium on grants and loans to large corporations (those with capitalization in excess of \$10 million). The moratorium will remain until the completion of a policy review and a value-formoney audit of government assistance to business is complete.
- Shut down the Minister of Economic Development's Special Assistance Fund. It spent \$17.5 million last year alone. Special Assistance has been used by Liberals and Tories as nothing more than a slush fund.
- Ensure greater accountability for loans by putting the Nova Scotia Business Development Corporation (NSBDC) on a self-sustaining basis, to stem the flow of red ink that resulted in \$15.5 million in losses last year alone. The government now provides \$1.45 million for operation of the NSBDC.

The Michelin loan write-off raises a different issue. Michelin had been scheduled to start paying off its 1988 loan in 2004. The company asked for a deferral. Rather than accepting the offer that Michelin made as a good corporate citizen, the Liberals decided — with Conservative support — to write off the loan altogether, hitting the taxpayers in return for a vague promise of 80 jobs. Such backroom giveaways are unacceptable.

• An NDP government will amend the Provincial Finance Act to prohibit the forgiving of a loan by the Province without the approval of the House of Assembly.

Investing in Roads and Economic Lifelines

Access to jobs, education and health care for communities is dependent on a safe and reliable transportation network. The deterioration of rail transport has put more pressure on roads. Rather than increasing spending on roads to respond to increased demand, both federal and provincial governments have been cutting back. The last two budgets of the MacLellan Liberals slashed over \$50 million from road construction and improvement. Federal spending on roads in Nova Scotia dropped 80 per cent this year.

The impact of Liberal neglect of roads can be seen almost anywhere in the province, but it's most noticeable on secondary rural roads. Some communities find themselves virtually cut off from health and education services by bad roads, while poor transportation links hamper economic development. At the same time as these communities are looking desperately for improvements to their transportation lifeline, other communities are justifiably urging completion of the twinning of the 100-series highways.

The Liberal and Tory response to these legitimate needs has been to slash spending while letting partisan politics rather than planning guide their actions. Much-needed paving was done on the road going past the Highway Minister's home, but most other urgently needed paving was left undone.

Within one year an NDP government will act to ensure good roads and safer roads, as part of a larger plan to invest in the economic lifelines to Nova Scotia communities. An NDP government will:

• enact a Road Improvements Act based on one already introduced in the Legislature, to replace the Liberals' secretive and politically-motivated approach to setting highway priorities with an open system that establishes priorities based on legislated criteria, and keeps the priority list on the public record;

The

- establish a Road Improvement Fund that in its first year will have \$21 million to
 - invest \$10 million to upgrade the secondary roads most in need of repaving or paving;
 - in consultation with affected communities, decide which stretch of Highway 101 is most dangerous and twin it next year;
- within the framework of a comprehensive transportation strategy, develop a ten-year plan for highway investment.

An Economic Hand Up for Communities

Over the past two decades, as people have left their communities in search of jobs and opportunities, population growth in Nova Scotia has been concentrated in and around Metro Halifax. This has led to large disparities in economic opportunity between, for example, Halifax and Sydney. Even within relatively prosperous Metro Halifax there are wide gaps between communities.

Liberal and Tory policies have only made the disparity worse. Instead of wisely investing resources to support communities, they've squandered money on their political and corporate friends. The old model of economic development – based largely on luring large companies to Nova Scotia with tax and other incentives – is a failure.

An NDP government will move forward into a new era of economic development.

An NDP government will trust and respect communities enough to make sure that it is the communities themselves who take charge. Communities will have an economic hand up, instead of the business-as-usual hand-outs that so often go bad.

An NDP government will:

Sec.

- shift the focus of the Department of Economic Development from giving corporate handouts to supporting communities;
- ensure that tourism promotion and marketing is co-ordinated with the industry itself, to support community objectives;
- work with regional development authorities to ensure that communities have the resources and support they need to direct and improve their economic futures;
- implement a meaningful targeted program of enterprise zones that challenges communities to develop plans that will attract support from investors;
- ensure the availability of community development professionals to coordinate and support community development projects;
- foster mentoring programs to assist in the development and sharing of managerial skills;
- work with rural communities and the knowledge sector to ensure that information technology is being exploited to its maximum potential throughout the province;
- facilitate formation of community-based venture capital and community-based investment funds.

E

This kind of economic development is fundamentally different from the old Liberal and Tory way. This kind of development:

- Recognizes that the resources for developing a local economy are already there: people with an intimate knowledge of the possibilities and the resources of a community; strength and resilience; natural beauty; stable communities.
- Means that local resources are marshaled by local people.
- · Means education, training, and community capacity-building.
- Recognizes that economic development driven by the community will protect and enhance whatever that community values most, whether it is a clean environment, natural beauty, mutual support, or something else equally valuable.
- Builds a sustainable local economy, with jobs that are good, long-term, sustainable contributions to the individual and community.

The provincial government can support this fresh approach through technical support, trade promotion, and other tools that communities ask for and need.

Regional Development Authorities have gained experience and can back-stop these strategies.

Financing can be arranged through micro-lending, credit circles, and partnership with community lending institutions like credit unions.

The community-led approach will not turn into just another pot of money. It can be achieved with an addition of \$2.5 million to the community development budget, re-allocated from the slush funds that have proven in the past to be such a failure, and a honey pot for anyone who wants to claim they can influence government decisions.

NDP Priorities - Valuing Community Leadership

Ending the handouts to big corporations. A new way of looking at economic development. An end to pothole politics. Our commitments in those areas are essential to forging a fresh start in Nova Scotia communities. So is community control of health and education. Communities cannot build a secure future when faced with the prospect of losing their local school or being without a family doctor. The NDP's commitments for better health care and education are dealt with in separate platform documents. The proposals outlined in those papers for valuing community leadership in health and education will be immediate priorities for an NDP government.

There are other initiatives an NDP government will undertake during its first mandate to stand up for communities and work to improve economic and social conditions. These initiatives can be accomplished through changes in policy and government direction within existing budgets. An NDP government will:

- develop a comprehensive energy policy
- get greater value from our natural resources
- protect our natural resources

5

- protect our forests and lands
- negotiate Mi'kmaq aboriginal rights

Energy Policy

Liberal and Tory energy policies have been a disaster for Nova Scotia. The Tories squandered hundreds of millions on Nova Scotia Resources Ltd. and on roads and bridges to nowhere. Liberals supported an offshore plan that will see much of the initial gas from Sable being shipped to the US and few of the jobs and benefits coming to Nova Scotia. Then they supported a distribution plan that will leave many communities without natural gas. An NDP government will:

- develop a comprehensive energy policy for Nova Scotia involving our oil and gas resources, our coal supplies and alternative energy sources to ensure Nova Scotia has the cheapest possible energy at the lowest environmental risk;
- once the UARB process is complete and a decision is handed down, review the provincial gas distribution plan to assess the economic impact on communities of franchising decisions and ensure distribution throughout Nova Scotia;
- ensure fishers are formally consulted before licences are granted for exploration of sensitive habitat;
- promote energy conservation, job creation and better housing by developing a program to retrofit homes for energy efficiency.

More value from natural resources

Natural resources – fishing, farming, forestry, mining, natural gas – are the powerhouse of the Nova Scotia economy. The forest sector is worth over \$1.3 billion to the Nova Scotia economy. Agriculture and the fishery each contribute about \$1 billion each and mining was worth over \$630 million in 1996. Because of Liberal and Tory policies, Nova Scotia communities have not adequately benefitted from the growth in the resource sector.

The Sable project is just the latest example of Liberal and Tory failure to extract maximum benefits from Nova Scotia's resources. For centuries we have been exporting jobs with our unprocessed natural resources. And we've been doing it at rock-bottom royalty and stumpage rates. Communities which have been dependent on those natural resources for their economic well-being have suffered as a result of those short-sighted policies.

An NDP government will:

- seek more benefits from the offshore by reviewing royalty rates with the industry to ensure a proper balance between the need to maximize revenue and encourage offshore development;
- · add a Nova Scotia content requirement to bids for exploration licences;
- negotiate higher Nova Scotia jobs content in future offshore development.

Protecting Our Resources

An NDP government will

- provide much-needed leadership on fisheries issues, by mobilizing and fostering a unified provincial position on fisheries management that lets communities take control of the resource and therefore their future;
- review royalty rates for mined resources like coal and gypsum to ensure a fair return for our resources;
- negotiate improved commitments of value-added production in Nova Scotia in all new resource leases on Crown land;
- promote development and diversification of value-added products from all segments of the resource sector;
- in consultation with resource users, develop management strategies for intertidal species;
- launch, in close collaboration with farm representatives, a drought relief program that is predictable and sustainable.

Protecting our forests and lands

In addition to getting a better economic return from the development of our resources, we must also protect our renewable resources. Under the Liberals, our forests are going the way of the cod. The Canadian Institute of Forestry says forests are being cut at an unsustainable rate. At the same time, the Liberals have cut funding for silviculture from \$12 million to \$3 million a year, less than a fifth of what's required to offset harvesting levels.

An NDP government will:

- investigate the impact on communities of non-resident ownership of land;
- work with stakeholders to develop sustainable forestry and agricultural practices:
- place stricter limits on clear-cutting after consultation with the industry and communities;
- support and promote management options for small wood lot owners by ensuring fair access and return for primary forest products sold;
- · improve incentives for forest stewardship and conservation;
- work with Nova Scotians to develop a comprehensive system of protected areas with better landscape representation.

Negotiate Mi'kmaq Aboriginal rights

The state

The Liberals and Tories have taken a confrontational approach to native rights. Instead of negotiation, confrontation. Instead of reconciliation, more delays. Failure to address aboriginal title and treaty rights not only dishonours an important community, it creates a danger of instability and disruption for Nova Scotia's resource industries.

An NDP government will take the approach of negotiation and reconciliation with the Mi'kmaq community, and with the industries and communities who have a significant stake in these issues. Companies like Georgia Pacific and Stora Enso have taken a responsible approach in negotiating aboriginal title and shared resource management with Mi'kmaq communities. As the Supreme Court of Canada has pointed out, negotiation and reconciliation is the best approach for dealing with the complex and competing interests that are at stake.

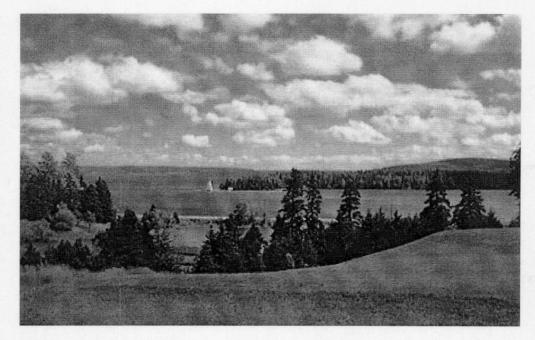
Nova Scotia New Democracy Party

1.5

802-5675 Spring Garden Road, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 1H1 Phone: (902) 423-9217 or 1 800-753-7696 Fax: (902) 423-9618 nsndp@ns.ndp.ca www.robertchisholm.net

Authorized by Joe Fraser, Official Agent for the Nova Scotia NDP

Campaign '99 **EXAMPITS Time. PLATFORM**



It's Time. to stand up for Cape Breton communities



Friends,

Cape Breton's strength can be found in its communities . . . their pride, their solidarity, their hope in the future. Like all Nova Scotians, Cape Bretoners are hometown proud, and rightly so. It's time for a government that stands up for our communities just as much as ordinary Cape Bretoners do.

This platform paper sets out the NDP's specific commitments to stand up for Cape Breton communities. More and more over the past two decades people have been forced to leave their communities to find jobs and pursue opportunities. Liberal and Tory policies have accelerated that shift of population and the growing inequality of opportunity across the province. Money is wasted on hand-outs to large corporations and government friends. Public services, health care and roads are allowed to deteriorate. Cape Bretoners don't get the support they need to succeed in their communities.

It's time to make a break with the past. Our goal is to provide Cape Bretoners with a government that supports and respects communities, a government that is on the side of Cape Breton communities. No more pothole politics. No more attacks on health and education. No more handouts to fly-bynight operators and political cronies. It is time for a government that is confident in the future and in the abilities of Cape Bretoners.

Chili

Robert Chisholm, Leader Nova Scotia New Democratic Party

It's time to stand up for Cape Breton communities. For decades, Cape Bretoners have been subjected by Liberal and Tory governments to a series of policies which failed to respect the talents, vision and intelligence of families, businesses and communities. These Cape Bretoners worked hard, raised their families, paid their taxes and obeyed the law. In return, Liberals and Tories gave them policies which made their lives harder.

- Scarce development dollars were squandered on large corporations and political friends of the government;
- Community infrastructure was allowed to deteriorate;
- Neglected roads left some communities virtually isolated and turned rural Cape Breton into pothole paradise;.
- Basic public services like health care and education were stripped from communities, through the combined effect of cutbacks, forced amalgamations and P3 schools.

Liberal and Tory policies and neglect have kept communities from enjoying the full benefits from our keystone agricultural, mining, forestry and fishing industries. The opportunities presented by our new gas and oil industry are being squandered. We need a new start. It's time for a government that stands up for ordinary Cape Bretoners, a government that puts the interests of ordinary Cape Bretoners ahead of those of the large corporations and the friends of the Liberals and Tories. During its first year in office a New Democratic Party government will:

- offer communities an economic hand up;
- stop the handouts to large corporations and friends of the government;
- invest in roads and other economic lifelines.

Many Cape Breton communities are in crisis. Instead of standing with them in their struggle for survival and growth, the policies of a succession of Liberal and Tory governments have made things worse for these communities. With a New Democratic Party government, that will change.

An Economic Hand Up for Communities

For Cape Bretoners, jobs are the bottom line . Over the past two decades, as people have left their communities in search of jobs and opportunities, population growth in Nova Scotia has been concentrated in and around Metro Halifax. This has led to large disparities in economic opportunity between, for example, Halifax and Sydney. Even within relatively prosperous Metro Halifax there are wide gaps between communities.

Liberal and Tory policies have only made the disparity worse. Instead of wisely investing resources to support communities, they've squandered money on their political and corporate friends. The old model of economic development – based largely on luring large companies with grants and other incentives – is a failure.

An NDP government will move forward into a new era of economic development.

An NDP government will trust and respect communities enough to make sure that it is the communities themselves who take charge. Communities will have an economic hand up, instead of the business-as-usual hand-outs that so often go bad.

With the Devco shut down on the horizon there is increased urgency for the community to take charge of economic development decisions in Cape Breton. An NDP government will:

- support the creation of a long-term, community-based development plan for Cape Breton;
- ensure that the community has the resources and support it needs to draw up such a plan as quickly as possible;
- ensure that the Transition Fund and any other funds that are available to cushion the blow of the Devco shut down be spent in accordance with a community-based plan.
- support the location of new government agencies like the lottery Corporation - in high unemployment areas and where the mandate of existing units makes a move suitable negotiate it with employees and their representatives.

For 30 years the Liberals and Tories have focused most of their attention on the mainland, leaving the major responsibility for the Cape Breton economy with the federal government. The Chretien Liberal government, of which Russell MacLellan was a part, abandoned any long-term commitment to Cape Breton. An NDP government will not turn its back on Cape Breton.

Economic initiatives of an NDP government will touch all Cape Breton and all Nova Scotia communities.

An NDP government will:

- shift the focus of the Department of Economic Development from giving corporate handouts to supporting communities;
- ensure that tourism promotion and marketing is co-ordinated with the industry itself, to support community objectives;
- implement a meaningful targeted program of enterprise zones that challenges communities to develop plans that will attract support from investors;
- ensure the availability of community development professionals to coordinate and support community development projects;
- foster mentoring programs to assist in the development and sharing of managerial skills;
- work with rural communities and the knowledge sector to ensure that information technology is being exploited to its maximum potential throughout the province;
- facilitate formation of community-based venture capital and communitybased investment funds.

This kind of economic development is fundamentally different from the old Liberal and Tory way. This kind of development:

Recognizes that the resources for developing a local economy are already there: people with an intimate knowledge of the possibilities and the resources of a community; strength and resilience; natural beauty; stable communities.

Means that local resources are marshaled by local people.

Means education, training, and community capacity-building.

Recognizes that economic development driven by the community will protect and enhance whatever that community values most, whether it is a clean environment, natural beauty, mutual support, or something else equally valuable.

Builds a sustainable local economy, with jobs that are good, long-term, sustainable contributions to the individual and community.

The provincial government can support this fresh approach through technical support, trade promotion, and other tools that communities ask for and need.

Regional Development Authorities have gained experience and can back-stop these strategies.

Financing can be arranged through micro-lending, credit circles, and partnership with community lending institutions like credit unions.

The community-led approach will not turn into just another pot of money. It can be achieved with an addition of \$2 million to the community development budget, re-allocated from the slush funds that have proven in the past to be such a failure, and a honey pot for anyone who wants to claim they can influence government decisions.

Stopping the Handouts

The Liberals and Tories have wasted tens of millions of dollars on handouts to corporations. Sometimes the money has been given to fly-by-night operations like Dynatek and Mac Timber; other times it has gone to pad the bottom line of hugely-profitable companies like Michelin. In either case, it's money that shouldn't have been spent.

- The Province gave \$1.695 million and an untendered contract to PLI for a two-year Sysco clean up program, using the labour of unemployed steelworkers. The project, which also had an announced total of \$4.8 million in federal support, ended a year prematurely in September, 1998, amid concerns about workplace safety. The owners of PLI have since alleged they paid \$250,000 to Liberal supporter Louis Friedman to obtain the contract.
- Between them, the Cameron, Savage and MacLellan governments pumped over \$15 million into Dynatek. This Toronto-based company never came close to meeting its job-creation commitments before closing its Bedford facility in 1998, leaving Cape Bretoners and other Nova Scotians holding the bag for Conservative and Liberal mistakes.
- Mentor Networks received \$5.4 million from the Liberals to set up in Halifax in 1996, then went into receivership in 1998. The Liberals then threw \$2 million more into the pot to help another company to take it over.
- Mac Timber of Debert declared bankruptcy in February, 1999, four months after receiving \$540,000 from the Province and ACOA. More than 150 local businesses were left on the hook for over \$1 million when Mac Timber's owner fled back to Alberta.
- Between November 1997 and September 1998 the Liberals wrote off the entire \$48 million value of an interest free loan given to Michelin in 1988 by the Tories, although Michelin only asked for a loan deferral. In addition, Michelin was given \$17 million in training grants.

Cape Bretoners can't afford more Liberal and Conservative waste. An NDP government will save \$29 million by ending the hand-outs to large corporations, government friends and fly-by-night companies. To achieve these savings, an NDP government will:

- place an immediate moratorium on grants and loans to large corporations. (Those with capitalization in excess of \$10 million). The moratorium will remain until the completion of a policy review and a value-for-money audit of government assistance to business is complete;
- shut down the Minister of Economic Development's Special Assistance Fund. It spent \$17.5 million last year alone. Special Assistance has been used by Liberals and Tories as nothing more than a slush fund;
- · ensure greater accountability for loans by putting the Nova Scotia

Business Development Corporation (NSBDC) on a self-sustaining basis, to stem the flow of red ink that resulted in \$15.5 million in losses last year alone. The government now provides \$1.45 million for operation of the NSBDC.

The Michelin loan write off raises a different issue. Michelin had been scheduled to start paying off its 1988 loan in 2004. The company asked for a deferral. Rather than accepting the offer that Michelin made as a good corporate citizen, the Liberals decided — with Conservative support — to write off the loan altogether, hitting the taxpayers in return for a vague promise of 80 jobs. Such backroom giveaways are unacceptable.

• An NDP government will amend the Provincial Finance Act to prohibit the forgiving of a loan by the Province without the approval of the House of Assembly.

Investing in Roads and Economic Lifelines

Access to jobs, education and health care for communities is dependent on a safe and reliable transportation network. The deterioration of rail transport has put more pressure on roads. Rather than increasing spending on roads to respond to increased demand, both federal and provincial governments have been cutting back. The last two budgets of the MacLellan Liberals slashed over \$50 million from road construction and improvement. Federal spending on roads in Nova Scotia dropped 80 per cent this year.

The impact of Liberal neglect of roads can be seen almost anywhere in the province, but it's most noticeable on secondary rural roads. Some communities find themselves virtually cut off from health and education services by bad roads, while poor transportation links hamper economic development. At the same time as these communities are looking desperately for improvements to their transportation lifeline, other communities are justifiably urging completion of the twinning of the 100 series highways.

The Liberal and Tory response to these legitimate needs has been to slash spending while letting partisan politics rather than planning guide their actions. Much needed paving was done on the road going past the Highway Minister's home in Shelburne county, but most other urgently needed paving was left undone.

Within one year an NDP government will act to ensure good roads and safer roads, as part of a larger plan to invest in the economic lifelines to Cape Breton communities. An NDP government will:

- enact a Road Improvements Act based on one already introduced in the Legislature, to replace the Liberals' secretive and politically-motivated approach to setting highway priorities with an open system that establishes priorities based on legislated criteria, and keeps the priority list on the public record;
- establish a Road Improvement Fund that in its first year will have \$21 million to:

- invest \$10 million to upgrade the secondary roads most in need of repaving or paving;
- in consultation with affected communities, decide which stretch of Highway 101 is most dangerous and twin it next year;
- within the framework of a comprehensive transportation strategy, develop a ten-year plan for highway investment.

NDP Priorities- Valuing Community Leadership

Ending the handouts to big corporations. A new way of looking at economic development. An end to pothole politics. Our commitments in those areas are essential to forging a fresh start in Cape Breton communities. So is community control of health and education. Communities cannot build a secure future when faced with the prospect of losing their local school or being without a family doctor. The NDP's commitments for better health care and education are dealt with in separate platform documents. The proposals outlined in those papers for valuing community leadership in health and education will be immediate priorities for an NDP government.

There are other initiatives an NDP government will undertake during its first mandate to stand up for communities and work to improve economic and social conditions. These initiatives can be accomplished through changes in policy and government direction within existing budgets. An NDP government will:

develop a comprehensive energy policy fight for a better deal for Cape Breton coal industry get greater value from our natural resources protect our natural resources protect our forests and lands negotiate Mi'kmaq aboriginal rights

Energy Policy:

Liberal and Tory energy policies have been a disaster for Cape Breton. The Tories squandered hundreds of millions on Nova Scotia Resources Ltd. and on roads and bridges to nowhere. Liberals supported an offshore plan that will see much of the initial gas from Sable being shipped right past Cape Breton's door for at least seven years. Even though the gas hurt the Cape Breton coal industry and left Industrial Cape Breton off the pipeline, the arrogant Liberals didn't even bother doing a socio-economic impact study until after the deal was already done. An NDP government will:

 develop a comprehensive Cape Breton-focused energy policy for Nova Scotia involving our oil and gas resources, our coal supplies and alternative energy sources;

- once the UARB process is complete and a decision is handed down, review the provincial gas distribution plan to assess the economic impact on communities of franchising decisions and ensure distribution throughout Nova Scotia, including Cape Breton;
- ensure fishers are formally consulted before licences are granted for exploration of sensitive habitat;
- promote energy conservation, job creation and better housing for Cape Bretoners by developing a program to retrofit homes for energy efficiency.

Better deal for the Cape Breton coal industry

The Federal government's abandonment of the Cape Breton coal industry will take hundreds of millions of dollars out of the the Cape Breton economy and throw thousands of Cape Bretoners out of work. An NDP government will stand up for the coal industry and for Cape Breton. An NDP government will:

- ensure that the Province will approve transfer of coal leases to a private operator only under specific conditions that protect jobs, collective agreements, worker safety and the environment;
- seek agreement from the federal government for long-term federal involvement and funding to improve Cape Breton's position as an energy center;
- work to ensure that remediation projects involve Devco workers and are tendered in a fair, public and transparent manner.
- support the efforts of Devco workers for fairer pension treatment, including their face-to-face bargaining.

More value from natural resources

Natural resources – fishing, farming, forestry, mining, natural gas – are the powerhouse of our economy. The forest sector is worth over \$1.3 billion to the Nova Scotia economy. Agriculture and the fishery each contribute about \$1 billion each and mining was worth over \$630 million in 1996. Because of Liberal and Tory policies, Cape Breton communities have not adequately benefitted from the resource sector.

The Sable project is just the latest example of Liberal and Tory failure to extract maximum benefits from Nova Scotia's resources. For centuries we have been exporting jobs with our unprocessed natural resources. And we've been doing it at rock-bottom royalty and stumpage rates. Communities which have been dependent on those natural resources for their economic well-being have suffered as a result of those short-sighted policies.

An NDP government will:

- seek more benefits from the offshore by reviewing royalty rates with the industry to ensure a proper balance between the need to maximize revenue and encourage offshore development;
- · add a Nova Scotia content requirement to bids for exploration licences;
- negotiate higher Nova Scotia jobs content in future offshore development.

Protecting Our Resources

An NDP government will

- provide much-needed leadership on fisheries issues, by mobilizing and fostering a unified provincial position on fisheries management that lets communities take control of the resource and therefore their future;
- review royalty rates for mined resources like coal and gypsum to ensure a fair return for our resources;
- negotiate improved commitments of value-added production in Nova Scotia in all new resource leases on Crown land;
- promote development and diversification of value-added products from all segments of the resource sector;
- in consultation with resource users, develop management strategies for intertidal species
- launch, in close collaboration with farm representatives, a drought relief program that is predictable and sustainable.

Protecting our forests and lands

In addition to getting a better economic return from the development of our resources, we must also protect our renewable resources. Under the Liberals, our forests are going the way of the cod. The Canadian Institute of Forestry says forests are being cut at an unsustainable rate. At the same time, the Liberals have cut funding for silviculture from \$12 million to \$3 million a year, less than a fifth of what's required to offset harvesting levels.

An NDP government will:

- · investigate the impact on communities of non-resident ownership of land;
- work with stakeholders to develop sustainable forestry and agricultural practices
- place stricter limits on clear-cutting after consultation with the industry and communities;
- support and promote management options for small wood lot owners by

ensuring fair access and return for primary forest products sold;

- improve incentives for forest stewardship and conservation;
- work with Cape Bretoners to develop a comprehensive system of protected areas with better landscape representation.

Negotiate Mi'kmaq Aboriginal rights

The Liberals and Tories have taken a confrontational approach to native rights. Instead of negotiation, confrontation. Instead of reconciliation, more delays. Failure to address aboriginal title and treaty rights not only dishonours an important community, it creates a danger of instability and disruption for Nova Scotia's resource industries.

An NDP government will take the approach of negotiation and reconciliation with the Mi'kmaq community, and with the industries and communities who have a significant stake in these issues. Companies like Georgia Pacific and Stora Enso have taken a responsible approach in negotiating aboriginal title and shared resource management with Mi'kmaq communities. As the Supreme Court of Canada has pointed out, negotiation and reconciliation is the best approach for dealing with the complex and competing interests that are at stake.

Nova Scotia New Democracy Party 802-5675 Spring Garden Road, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 1H1 Phone: (902) 423-9217 or 1 800-753-7696 Fax: (902) 423-9618 nsndp@ns.ndp.ca www.robertchisholm.net

Authorized by Joe Fraser, Official Agent for the Nova Scotia NDP

Campaign '99 SADDIt's Time. PLATFORM



It's Time. to invest in front line health care,



Friends,

It's time to take positive action so Nova Scotians have health care when they need it.

The Liberals had a golden opportunity when they took charge of Nova Scotia's health care system after years of Conservative neglect. Yet the Liberal performance was so dismal, they wanted to gamble with a \$600 million mortgage on the future of health care.

The Tory and Liberal devastation is most evident on the front line, when you can't find a family doctor, when a nurse is too overworked to use her patient care skills, when a personal care worker has to rush from room to room just doing the most urgent tasks and letting others wait. Family members are compelled to provide care for their loved ones – care that they often feel is beyond their capacity.

It's time to move health care forward in this Province.

The NDP's commitment is to invest in frontline health care. We will shift resources to patient care, instead of focusing on job cuts, paper work and reports that are shelved without action. The way to restore confidence in the health care system is improvement of the services that matter most to ordinary Nova Scotians. It's Time to Invest in Front-line Health Care.

CALL

Robert Chisholm, Leader Nova Scotia New Democratic Party

It's Time to Invest in Front-line Health Care

New Democrats have always stood for universal, accessible health care. The Liberal and Tory record on health care in Nova Scotia has been nothing short of disastrous. When they were in office the Tories refused to make the reforms needed to transform health care from a system based on illness, bricks and mortar into a community-based system focused on primary care and wellness. Instead, they opened new hospitals and laid off nurses to pay the bills. They allowed debt to spiral out of control, while the overall health of Nova Scotians continued to fall far below the national average.

The Liberals made a bad situation much worse. They cut and slashed – 2000 hospital beds closed, \$20 million set aside to get rid of 2000 nurses, severe restrictions on the number of doctors, and the end of any community leadership in health care. They imposed Pharmacare premiums and other health care user fees, cut back the children's dental program, restricted MSI coverage and moved us closer to a two-tiered American-style health care system where there is preferred service for those who can pay. The Liberals inflicted such serious damage that Nova Scotians and the government itself still don't know the full extent of it. The Liberals also cancelled the collection of basic information about the health system!

Recently the Liberals have been frantically pumping funds back into the wounded system, but without fixing the holes they made. Health care remains in critical condition – too few nurses to provide proper patient care, limited access or no access to family doctors, neglect of long term care and home care.

Nova Scotians have been paying more for health care and getting less. Now with their fraudulent \$600 million health care mortgage, the Liberals want Nova Scotians to pay an even higher price – with no plan and no proof that anything will get better.

The Liberals are out of touch with Nova Scotians on health care.

The NDP has been listening, and responding. From November 1998 to February 1999 the NDP held a series of Community Forums on Health Care across Nova Scotia.

Nova Scotians told us they want secure, affordable front-line services. They want control over health care decisions in their community. They want stable, adequate support for community-based preventive care and support services. They want a health care system that preserves the values of the *Canada Health Act* – publicly managed, universal, accessible, portable and comprehensive. They also want a system that is financially sustainable. All they've been getting from the Liberals is chaos, confusion, top-heavy administration and consultants' reports.

An NDP government will invest in front-line health care and begin the process of rebuilding our health care system from the ground up.

An NDP government will:

- Ensure every Nova Scotian can have a family doctor
- Add 600 more nurses
- Emphasize patient care, not paper work, for all health care workers

The net cost of our commitments is \$17.3 million. They will be paid for primarily through reallocation within the health budget, and improved financial controls.

Action on these commitments will begin immediately, and will be well under way during the first year of an NDP government.

Starting in the first year and continuing as other funds are identified and reallocated, an NDP government will also:

- Modernize standards and coordination of long-term care
- Expand home care
- Improve and extend Pharmacare
- Support development of community health clinics

The record of past governments proves that front-line health care suffers from a scatter-gun approach and the lack of clear, planned choices. To move Nova Scotia's health care system forward means focusing first on the greatest needs and setting out realistic priorities for improved care. That is why our goal for the first term of an NDP government is to invest in front-line health care.

More nurses

High on the list of the biggest bungles committed by the Liberals is the shortsighted creation of a nursing shortage. In 1995, the Liberals set aside \$20 million with the objective of eliminating 2000 nursing positions. They didn't succeed – quite. Between 1995 and 1999 Nova Scotia lost 917 registered nurses. Since 1993, the loss has been 1195. Not only has the overall work force dropped, the number of part-time and casual nurses has increased so that they now account for more than half of the nursing work force. A survey by the Registered Nurses Association of Nova Scotia (RNANS) found that 68 per cent of nurses who graduated in 1997 could find only casual work, compared to just 34 per cent in 1996. Unions and other organizations representing nurses, as well as the public, have been speaking out loud and clear on the nursing shortage.

The shortage of nurses adds to the strain on the health care system. With fewer nurses caring for aging and sicker patients, workloads have increased leaving nurses with less time to attend to each patient. Too few nurses means more work for doctors, which adds to the problems of recruiting and retaining physicians. The problem is urgent and must be addressed.

 An NDP government will create 600 new full-time nursing positions over the next three years. It will be a mix of Registered Nurses and Licensed Practical Nurses/Certified Nursing Assistants in a variety of settings – acute care and continuing care. The first-year commitment of 200 nurses will cost \$10 million.

Creating stable full-time jobs in the nursing profession will lead to improved patient care and will help restore confidence in the health care system. It is also the key to creating a plan for retaining nurses and attracting new ones. Since 1989 Liberal and Tory governments have studied the problem but have ignored the best advice of professionals and failed to bring forward a human resources plan.

• An NDP government will work with professional groups, major hospitals (NDOs), and Regional and Community Health Boards to create a comprehensive health Human Resource Strategy to ensure that health care providers are recruited and retained in those areas where they are needed the most. Our plan acknowledges that health professionals work as a team, and that people need to access the right health team member for their particular health care concern. Our strategy will guide the deployment and mix of the 600 new nursing positions to be added during the first three years of an NDP mandate.

The majority of Nova Scotia nurses would prefer to stay in the province after graduation. Improved employment prospects under the NDP plan, combined with an increased number of graduates from Nova Scotia universities, would mean less need for recruiting outside the province to meet nursing needs. Nurses who are already in the profession need access to specialist and continuing education. In addition, work needs to be done to persuade nurses who have left to come back, and to interest young people in entering nursing.

- An NDP government will implement the recommendation of nursing organizations to expand by five seats the enrollment in Dalhousie's extension program in Yarmouth and to provide additional opportunities for continuing education. This will be on top of the recent addition of 75 seats to Dalhousie, St. Francis Xavier, and a satellite program through the University College of Cape Breton. The additional seats for Yarmouth would be in place as soon as possible, as determined through consultation with Dalhousie. First year cost: \$525,000.
- An NDP government will establish a nursing recruitment program, including the position of nursing recruiter. Cost: \$150,000.

Research conducted over the past 25 years shows that employment of Nurse Practitioners reduces the use of hospital, emergency room and laboratory services. Nurse Practitioners focus on health promotion, spending more time with individual patients than doctors do, and demonstrate and advise patients on better self-care, illness prevention, and healthy living. Four Canadian provinces currently have legislation allowing Nurse Practitioners to practice.

• An NDP government will pass legislation in accordance with the comprehensive health Human Resources Strategy, so that Nurse Practitioners can work in collaboration with doctors in community health centers, doctors' offices, emergency and long-term care, ambulatory care and women's centers. Nurse practitioners would not be physician replacements. Patients would have a choice of who they would see for a health concern. First year cost for 20 Nurse Practitioners: \$360,000.

Ensure everyone can have a family doctor

Thousands of Nova Scotians do not have a family doctor, or they see a different doctor every time they have a health concern. The inability to have a family doctor is unacceptable. Nova Scotians have a right to expect health care to be there when they need it. Not having a family doctor also adds to health care costs. People who have to wait a long time for an appointment are sicker by the time they do see a doctor. People without a family doctor will use the emergency room for routine care, adding to financial burdens on hospitals.

A recent list of family doctors from the Medical Society of Nova Scotia shows that on average, at any one time, only 20 family doctors across the entire province are accepting new patients. In Amherst, hundreds of people have to go to New Brunswick to see a family doctor. In New Ross, people have to drive half an hour to see a family doctor. Some Nova Scotians who find it difficult to travel outside their community have given up the search for a doctor and therefore put their health at risk.

Residents of some urban communities, like Dartmouth, have had difficulty getting a family doctor – Dartmouth has lost more than 30 doctors in the past three years. But the problem is most acute in rural Nova Scotia. Only about 15 per cent of Nova Scotia's family physicians practice in rural areas, even though the majority of our population is outside the two metropolitan areas.

The result is that some rural family doctors have caseloads approaching 5000 – more than four times the acceptable ratio. In many cases they try to serve that patient load in an isolated location far from hospitals, emergency services and other health professionals. There are also social and lifestyle factors brought on by isolation. It is not surprising that there is a high turnover of doctors in rural communities. Doctors recruited to rural areas by government incentive programs often leave after a short time because of stressful working and lifestyle conditions.

The Liberal approach to the problem has been to deny it exists, or to present misleading statistics that don't take into account that the major problem is the distribution of physicians. According to the government, except for the Town of Springhill, neither Cumberland County (where more than 6000 people don't have a doctor) nor Yarmouth (where 5000 are without a physician) is even an under serviced area.

The Liberals won't admit that their approach — a centralized, one-size-fits all provincial recruitment program — hasn't worked. They trumpet their minor successes in recruitment while overlooking the failure of their program to retain doctors. The evidence of that failure is clear: between 1994 and 1998 we lost 39 rural family doctors, or about 15 per cent of the total. It is time for a fresh approach to the problem so that every Nova Scotian can have a family doctor.

 An NDP government will work with communities to recruit and retain family doctors. With the support of an NDP government, communities will identify what they have to offer to family doctors, and the obstacles that have contributed to a loss of doctors. An NDP government will work with communities to remove the obstacles and to develop strategies to retain family doctors.

In many rural communities, the fee-forservice system of payments acts as a serious deterrent to retaining a family doctor. The population may not be large enough to financially support two doctors, but too large to be adequately served by just one without risking physician burn out. Different methods of paying doctors –

such as salaries – will be used where appropriate to help retain family doctors. This will make it possible for such areas to support group practices of doctors, so that family physicians will be able to experience a more balanced lifestyle.

• In consultation with the Medical Society, Community Health Boards and other stakeholders, an NDP government will implement pilot projects to test alternative payment methods for 40 doctors practicing in rural areas. This will be in addition to projects currently being considered by Health Canada. Cost: \$5.8 million.

The doctors in these new rural practices will not be driven by the need to generate fee-for-service revenue. They will be better able to focus on improving the health care of their patients and their community, without the early burn-out that too often marks the careers of young doctors.

Dalhousie Medical School graduated only 38 family doctors this year, less than half the number that graduated in 1991. Less than ten of those graduates normally stay in Nova Scotia to practice, and rural Nova Scotia may get only one or two of those. We need to supplement our community-based recruitment policy and alternative payment initiatives with other measures to increase the number of family doctors graduating from Dalhousie who choose to set up practice in rural Nova Scotia.

- An NDP government will work with Dalhousie to actively recruit students from rural communities into the family medicine program.
- To encourage more family medicine students to set up practice in rural Nova Scotia an NDP government would forgive a portion of student loan debt for doctors who practice in chronically underserviced areas like Yarmouth. Cost: \$440,000.

Patient Care, Not Paper Work

The Liberals have created a bureaucratic Frankenstein's monster out of the health care system. The advent of Regional Health Boards, combined with the amalgamation of hospitals, have created a top-heavy duplication of administration. To feed the administrative monster, already overworked, front-line health care providers are forced to spend their time generating information, filling in forms in duplicate and triplicate, and creating paper trails that do little for patient care.

The Liberals set up four remote and unaccountable Regional Health Boards across the province, and their only new idea is to adjust the regional boundaries. The Tories want to abolish the Regional Health Boards and turn back the clock to the 1980s when the Health Department made all of the decisions. This will leave 50 small Community Health Boards competing for resources with no decentralized regional planning for health care. That would be a mistake. The past years of chaos, confusion and cuts have shown clearly what happens when decision makers are out of touch with communities and front-line health workers.

The Royal Commission on Health Care in 1989 and the Blueprint Committee in 1994 both recommended that top-heavy, top-down management must be replaced with community-based decision making by Community Health Boards. Community Health Boards ensure that health planning at all levels – including human resource planning, community development, evaluation of services – proceeds in partnership with communities.

An NDP government will:

- pass a Community Health Boards Act to empower and support Community Health Boards as the driving force in health care decisions, to take effect on January 1st, 2001;
- proceed with planned devolution of power from RHBs to CHBs in a staged process that does not cause further chaos or distraction from patient care.

NDP Health Priorities

A key element in controlling future health care costs is improving the health of Nova Scotians by placing greater emphasis on illness prevention, health promotion, and better long term care and home care. The Liberals – just like the Cameron Conservatives – cut acute care services, without adequately developing these alternatives.

The Liberals pretended that their \$600 million mortgage would fund innovative programs and result in future cost savings. They have no plan or evidence for this. Their only plan was a public relations plan. Most of the funding is earmarked for short term expenditures like dealing with the Y2K problem and covering the operating deficits of hospitals and regional health boards. If there are any far sighted initiatives that will make the health care system more fiscally sustainable in the future, the Liberals have hidden them well.

Community/Preventive Care Resources

Every Nova Scotian should have the opportunity to live up to his or her full potential. Preventive care and support for personal wellness are a crucial part of living a full life in strong, healthy communities. The Liberals followed the Conservative policies they inherited, by slashing acute care services without realizing any savings. Their approach meant there was no money to invest in communitybased health care services that focus on illness prevention and health promotion. They have cut funding to some agencies and reduced public health services, resulting in fewer services in some communities, or agencies trying to do the same amount of work with far fewer resources. Community-based, preventive health care costs far less than treating acute problems such as STDs, unintended pregnancy, violent relationships and suicide attempts.

 An NDP government will provide stable funding for mental health programs, addictions services, and programs for women and youth, especially in rural areas.

Community Health Clinics

Community health clinics have been operating successfully in both urban and rural Nova Scotia for years. Clinics will improve the overall health of a community by offering a range of professional services from doctors, nurses, midwives, social workers and other health care professionals. In some rural communities, the existence of a community health clinic has been the key to resolving doctor shortages.

• An NDP government will encourage and support Community Health Boards to establish community health clinics wherever they can to improve health care and make more efficient use of health care dollars in their community.

Home Care

The Tories dragged their feet for years on the creation of a comprehensive home care plan. The Liberals expanded home care, but only after the cutting of hospitals and the freeze on long term care beds was underway. The result was waste and chaos. Better, more accessible home care is key to helping Nova Scotians live independently in their own homes as long as possible. An NDP Government will:

- ensure that the Home Care program is decentralized and co-ordinated through the Regional Health Board and the NDOs;
- improve and promote information about Home Care so that patients and their families understand what services are available to assist them in continuing to live independently;
- recognize the contributions of family members who care for loved ones at home by supporting efforts to develop a province-wide information and support network for care givers.

Long term care

The *Homes for Special Care Act* has not been updated for over 20 years. It was meant to regulate traditional retirement homes and its guidelines for appropriate nurse/patient ratios are outdated in light of the care needs and number of residents

in today's long term care facilities. Under current legislation there is nothing to prevent one nurse being responsible for over 100 patients. The aging population will place greater demands on the long term sector in coming years. The creation of 600 additional nursing positions over the next three years will relieve some of this pressure, but there is also a need for legislative changes.

 An NDP government will involve staff and administrators of long term care facilities in the development a new *Long Term Care Act* to better describe the roles of specific workers, core services offered at long term care facilities, the most appropriate and consistent staff-patient ratio, and alternatives to institutionalized care, including day programs, respite care, and small options. This new law will go into effect January 1st, 2001.

The Liberals put a freeze on new long term care beds at the same time they were cutting almost 2000 hospital beds. During the last election campaign the Liberals promised 170 new long term care beds, but have only delivered 41. Long term Liberal neglect of the long term care sector has put severe pressure on workers and patients in long term care facilities because it meant that those entering the facilities needed a greater level of care.

• An NDP government will not break the contracts recently signed by long term care workers, or any other collective agreements, to pretend that a wage freeze or rollback offers some solution to health care problems. The Conservatives and Liberals proved that does not work.

Seniors' Pharmacare

Seniors' Pharmacare premiums represent unfair user fees levied on seniors. An NDP government will:

- ask the Seniors' Secretariat to conduct immediate consultations with seniors and report on options for Seniors' Pharmacare by January 15, 2000;
- allocate \$3 million in our first year for staged elimination of Seniors' Pharmacare premiums or broader coverage if that is the preferred option of seniors;
- enter into a partnership with pharmacists, doctors and seniors to develop an educational campaign to reduce the level of over-prescription in Nova Scotia. An average of 24 prescriptions are written for Nova Scotia seniors, compared to a national average of 16.

Well-defined and well-known needs have been ignored or underfunded by past governments. It is impossible to know, before a complete public audit is completed, how big a financial mess the Liberals added to the Tory debt burden. Within the province's ability to pay, an NDP government's health priorities will include these health prevention and promotion measures:

- restore the Children's Dental Program to include the age groups cut by the Liberals, so that young Nova Scotians enter their adult years with good dental, health;
- · implement attendant care and technical aids for people with disabilities.

Good government is about listening, learning and leading. It is about setting goals and priorities consistent with the needs of people and their communities, without ever forgetting that every decision, every policy, has an effect on people's lives. Ordinary Nova Scotians want a government that will make the best use of the individual strengths of all our communities. Nova Scotians want a future with strong healthy communities.

It's time to set and achieve clear health goals for Nova Scotians.

It's time to invest in front-line health care.

Nova Scotia New Democratic Party 802-5675 Spring Garden Road, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 1H1

,

B3J 1H1 Phone: (902) 423-9217 or 1 800-753-7696 Fax: (902) 423-9618 nsndp@ns.ndp.ca www.robertchisholm.net

Authorized by Joe Fraser, Official Agent for the Nova Scotia NDP

Campaign '99 XNDP It's Time. PLATFORM

4



It's Time. for equal education opportunity



Friends,

Education is the way we prepare the next generation of Nova Scotians to meet the future. Ordinary Nova Scotians want students, no matter where they live, to have an equal opportunity to obtain a good education. That is the goal of this NDP platform.

Over the past decade, Liberal and Tory governments attacked the quality of learning and the equality of education opportunity. They cut classroom education, got rid of teachers, wiped out local school boards and shut down community schools.

Tuition fees and student debts climbed as university grants were also cut. The Community College was hit hard too.

It's time to emphasize learning, not bureaucracy, bricks and mortar.

New Democrats are committed to ensuring that all Nova Scotia students have a good learning environment, and tools for success, and fair access to higher education. It's time to focus on the classroom interaction between teachers and students. It's time for equal education opportunity in Nova Scotia.

sheer Call

Robert Chisholm, Leader Nova Scotia New Democratic Party

Equal Education Opportunity

P3 schools are the most visible symbol of the way the Liberals abandoned their promise of a child-centred approach and created inequality of educational opportunity in Nova Scotia. The politically-inspired, patronage-ridden P3 program will slap a mortgage of at least \$644 million on the province's education system. The mortgage will pay for fifty-five privately-owned, relatively enriched schools. Payments on the mortgage and the surcharge for P3 financing will drain off funds needed to repair and maintain 400 other schools across the province, many of which are in bad shape following years of neglected maintenance under Tory and Liberal governments. Payments on the mortgage will compromise our ability to provide the 120,000 students in those 400 other schools with an equal opportunity to learn in a safe and healthy environment. Payments on the mortgage will hurt all students by diverting funds from the classroom into the pockets of bond holders.

While the Liberals were opening up the vault to shower P3 benefits on their political friends, they were cutting everyone else: \$100 million slashed from grants to universities over five years, 1400 teaching jobs lost and \$135 million cut from school boards over four years. When the Liberals finally stopped the cutting they did not restore enough to maintain programmes and services.

The Education Funding Review Work Group requested \$90 million more for 1999-2000. The Liberals gave them only \$58 million. But when one of their supporters asked for triple the government's appraised value for the land Horton High School is built on, the Liberals paid the bill. Most of the \$58 million proposed in the defeated Liberal budget was already committed to pay for salary increases, early retirements and school leases. The actual new investment in education was just \$681,000 - about what the Liberals paid for the Horton High site.

The Liberals and Tories have consistently underfunded education in this province. That has affected classroom learning and equality of educational opportunity throughout Nova Scotia. The per capita method of funding means inadequate resources for delivering core programs in communities outside of Metro. In Metro, the ill-considered and unmanageable school board amalgamation is driving up costs for many parents, and creating pressure for more classroom cuts.

The government underfunds services for students with special needs, denying them and their classmates full educational opportunity. The lack of a maximum class size means that children in overcrowded classes are not getting an equal opportunity to learn in appropriate surroundings.

Cuts to university grants have also contributed to inequality of educational opportunity. Nova Scotia's universities have the highest tuition fees in the country. Rising tuition fees, combined with increasingly tight summer and part-time job markets, have led to debt loads which averaged \$25,000 per graduating student in 1998, versus \$12,000 in 1990. A post-secondary education at a university or community college is essential. Yet many ordinary Nova Scotians or their families are missing out because the cost is simply too high.

An NDP government will be committed to equality of opportunity throughout the education system. An NDP government will:

Build and renovate needed schools;

Invest now in quality education;

Freeze tuition fees.

These commitments will be launched in the first year of an NDP mandate. In addition an NDP government will:

Review amalgamation of school boards;

Address child poverty ;

Ensure technology aids the learning process;

Promote peaceful schools;

Support community schools;

Support expansion of community colleges;

Avoid a teacher shortage.

Build and renovate needed schools

Nova Scotia students must have equal opportunity to learn in a safe, healthy environment.

Needed schools will continue to be built under an NDP government, but the P3 method of financing will be discontinued. P3 financing is wasteful. It is not a cost-effective way to build schools. The 55 P3 schools announced so far by the Liberals will cost the education system about \$36 million more than if those schools were publicly owned.

As the Auditor General has pointed out, a thorough analysis of costs, benefits and future economic and educational impact is required before proceeding with P3. The Liberals did no such analysis. The only justification the Liberals had for using P3 financing was to keep the cost of new schools off the books. Nova Scotians know that an obligation is an obligation and a debt is a debt. An NDP government will sign no more P3 deals. We will build needed schools and do needed renovations. We will ensure that available funds are used for equal educational opportunity for students all across Nova Scotia.

• An NDP government will work with school boards, the other partners in education and with municipalities to establish clear public criteria and a common funding base for school construction and renovation, to ensure that all students have the same opportunity to have an acceptable

4

learning environment. This new system for school construction and renovation will take effect at the beginning of the 2000-01 fiscal year.

- Improved community involvement in the planning of schools and accelerated construction schedules have been useful attributes of P3 and will be continued.
- We will continue to draw on the expertise and best practices of the private sector in planning, designing and building schools.
- We will seek alternative arrangements with the owners of existing P3 schools to reduce costs and increase public accountability.
- The ownership of schools now being built but not yet the subject of a lease arrangement will be reviewed with the private partners. If there are no significant penalties involved, those schools will be publicly owned.
- In view of the widespread questions and concerns that have been raised, all schools not yet being built will be reviewed with school boards and local communities to determine support for those schools in the community.
- We will review all proposed renovation projects, including any renovation projects that have been delayed or cancelled.
- Schools for which there is public support but no partner chosen yet will be owned and operated by the public sector.
- Clear conflict of interest guidelines will be drawn up governing the role of private sector partners in matters such as site selection.

Our construction plan will not delay the completion of any school that is currently being built. It will restore fairness and prudence to the process of school construction and renovation in Nova Scotia. Our plan will ensure equal opportunity to students across Nova Scotia to learn in an appropriate environment. And it will return the focus to the child in the classroom.

Quality Education

According to the Education Funding Review Work Group's report for 1999-2000, education spending proposed in the defeated Liberal budget will mean a deficiency of at least \$52 million by 2000-2001 in the money required to maintain necessary programs and services in Nova Scotia classrooms. An NDP government will begin immediately to deal with that education deficiency. The areas that require the most immediate attention which will be addressed during the first year of an NDP government are:

- 1. Ensure that students have enough text books, the basic tool for success, by accepting the recommendation of the partners in education for an additional \$1.9 million for text books and learning materials.
- 2. Ensure that Special Education is better supported, in line with the recommendations of the Funding Review Work Group, to provide equal educational opportunity for students with special needs, and therefore for their classmates, by providing an additional \$4 million.
- 3. Set a maximum size of 30 for elementary school classes, for an additional \$2.3 million.

This investment in quality education will be paid for with the money that is saved by reducing and ending the P3 surcharge, and with money that will become available from ending the corporate handouts, as outlined earlier in the NDP platform paper "It's Time to Stand Up for Nova Scotia Communities."

The costs and savings noted above are for the first year of an NDP government. An NDP government will arrange with school boards how much of these additional allocations can be used in the school year that begins shortly, and how much is best used in the next school year.

Freezing tuition fees:

University tuition fees averaged \$3,769 for undergraduates in 1998-99. That represents a 117 per cent increase since 1990. This is the result of a process of downloading that started with the Mulroney Tories. Federal Conservative and Liberal governments downloaded financial responsibility for post-secondary education onto the Province. The Province downloaded onto the universities. The universities passed their financial burden to students in the form of much higher tuition fees.

While there also have been tuition fee increases at the Nova Scotia Community College, they have been less frequent and less severe. The College is not increasing its fees this year. The NDP welcomes this policy of wide access to the Community College.

In 1993, every \$1 in tuition was matched with \$2.50 from the Province. In 1997, \$1 from students was matched with just \$1.50 from the Province. Most students had to increase borrowing to pay the higher fees, resulting in the average debt load for a four year degree almost doubling during the 1990s. The MacLellan Liberals promised a tuition freeze, then broke that promise.

It's time to put a halt to the upward spiral of tuition fees and debt, which threaten to deny ordinary Nova Scotians the opportunity to obtain a post-secondary education.

An NDP government will freeze tuition fees for universities and community colleges beginning in the 2000-2001 academic year.

Universities have already drawn up their budgets for the next academic year, based on the grants provided in the current budget and on the Liberal government's ongoing acceptance of higher tuition fees. It would be disruptive to impose a freeze this late in the year. An NDP government will review with the partners in education the impact of the freeze on universities and community colleges, in the context of the three-year increase in university grants that is now underway.

The tuition freeze will be a signal that access to higher education is a priority for Nova Scotians. It will slow the upward spiral of student debt. The present government delayed action on severe problems with its privatized student loan plan until July 1999. It is on their plate, and a new government will inherit whatever decision they make, since students need answers now about assistance in the academic year that starts next month.

In preparation for the tuition freeze, an NDP government will during its first year:

1. Develop a strategy to increase access to higher education, working with students, faculty institutions and the public school system, the strategy to be launched at the start of the 2000-01 academic year.

2. Ask the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission and Nova Scotia Council on Higher Education to implement a requirement for annual public reports by universities, to include their financial statements and their measures to increase accessibility.

NDP Priority - Child Centred Education

Review School Board Amalgamation

The Liberals' decision to make 22 local school boards into seven was a mistake. Time and effort that should have been spent on children in the classroom was wasted on costly and disruptive reorganization. The amalgamated school boards that resulted are too large and unwieldy, remote from communities and schools. They are not meeting the needs of tomorrow.

An NDP government will review school board amalgamation, with public participation, to bring decision-making closer to the communities affected.

Address child poverty

A child-centred approach to education must consider the whole child. A child will have difficulty learning if she/he comes to school malnourished. This problem has become more prevalent under the Liberals as Nova Scotia has sunk to the status of having the secondworst rate of child poverty in the country. Rather than letting families use the National Child Benefit to feed their children, the Liberals clawed it back to fund a jumble of illconsidered programs that have produced no known results.

During its first year an NDP government will eliminate the clawback of the National Child Benefit so that all poor children receive the benefit, rather than proceeding with the halfbaked jumble of programs that was announced to take this money from poor families.

Ensure technology aids the learning process

Equality of opportunity to benefit from the use of technology in schools will be enhanced by the NDP's commitment to scrap P3 school financing. While all children should have the benefit of technology in education, the role of technology will be reviewed. The Liberals have shown a bias for technology. The defeated Liberal budget fully funded the \$4.5 million recommended for new technology by the Education Funding Review Work Group. But whereas the Work Group recommended \$3.9 million more for textbooks, the Liberals proposed spending only \$2 million more.

An NDP government will work with school boards, teachers, parents and the IT industry to ensure that the focus is on what is being taught children, not the tools that are used to teach.

Peaceful schools

Parents, children and teachers want a secure learning environment. The NDP supports important initiatives such as the Nova Scotia Teachers' Union's Shenoroil Foundation and the League for Peaceful Schools and their mandate of serving schools in an effort to end violence. However while parents and school staff may work hard to instill respect in students for each other, our schools and our school boards have inadequate resources to deal with today's problems.

In some cases, schools are struggling to help students with extreme behavioural problems. They are trying to pick up the slack caused by the closure of institutions such as the MacKay Unit at the Nova Scotia Hospital. In some areas of the province it can take up to 1.5 years for a youth to get a referral to see a counselor.

Parents and schools have been let down by repeatedly broken Liberal promises to have a secure treatment facility up and running by early 1998. When the promise was first made, the government spent \$1 million a year on out-of-province placement. That wasteful spending has increased, yet the Liberal government still has not said how or when it would have delivered on the promise to open that facility in Truro.

An NDP government will set July 1, 2000 as the target for opening the secure treatment centre, which will be funded from the money now used for out of province placement of youth who require secure treatment.

An NDP government will ask the Parent-Teacher Federation, school boards and the NSTU to report by December 31, 1999 on the adequacy of the considerable effort already underway in many schools to eliminate violence and ensure peaceful schools, and on the necessary steps to advance these goals. An NDP government will act on the recommendations for new, effective measures to promote peaceful schools.

Avoid a teacher shortage

The average age of teachers in Nova Scotia indicates there will be up to 600 eligible to retire over the next two to five years. A shortage is likely since we are training fewer teachers, and education cuts forced many recent graduates to seek employment outside the province.

An NDP government will work with the Nova Scotia Teachers' Union, school boards and the Schools of Education to identify by December 31, 1999, the extent and nature of the impending teacher shortage, and to recommend a strategy to retain and recruit needed teachers which can be launched before September 2001.

Community schools

There is no practical way to guarantee that every school in Nova Scotia will remain open or that every community which now has a school will continue to have a school. Nova Scotians know that some change is welcome, and inevitable.

Decisions about which schools to keep open and which to close are the responsibility of school boards, working with local communities and acting within reasonable guidelines. However, the Liberal government loaded the dice against smaller schools and community schools.

The Liberals' per capita funding formula has forced school boards to consider consolidation in order to maintain an acceptable core curriculum and an adequate range of high school options. The P3 process adopted by the Liberals biased the process towards closing local schools by favouring new centralized privately-owned schools over maintenance and repair of local schools. It's all the same money from the same taxpayer. The NDP platform paper "It's Time to Tell the Truth about the Budget" outlines steps to ensure Nova Scotians have a true report of these obligations.

An NDP government will restore the small schools grant, as part of the 2000-01 education funding formula, to ensure that school boards are not under severe financial pressure to ignore community participation and shut down smaller community schools that can provide quality education.

Community colleges

Only 17 per cent of the post-secondary students in Nova Scotia - approximately 6700 people - attend community college on a full time basis. The national average is much higher - 43 per cent.

Community college is an underused option relative to other provinces. That can be blamed at least partly on chronic underfunding by both the Tories and Liberals.

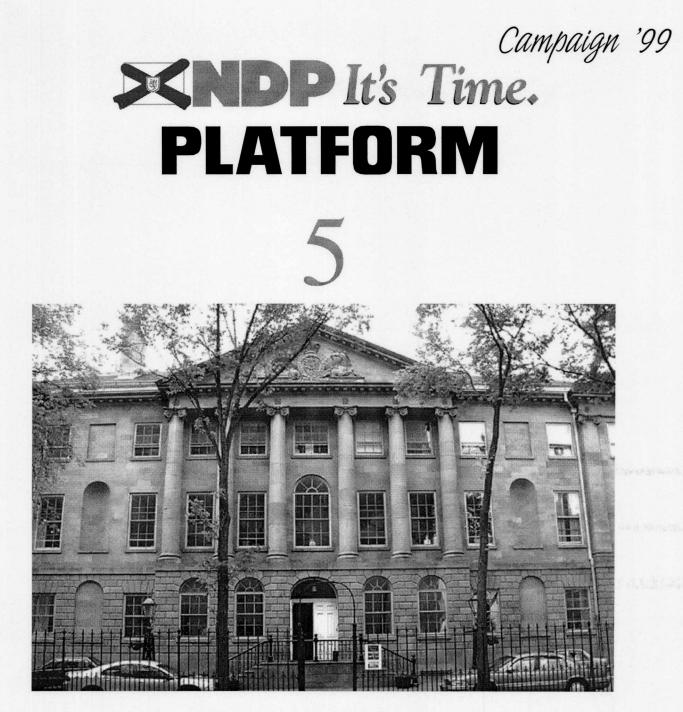
Per capita spending on the Nova Scotia Community College is only \$75 a year, less than half the national average for community college budgets. Between 1993 and 1998, provincial funding for the Community College dropped from \$67 million to \$47 million. The Nova Scotia Community College deserves a greater role in preparing our young people for a productive and rewarding future.

- 1. An NDP government will honour the commitment in the June 1 budget to increase funding to community colleges by \$5.5 million and will support NSCC's long-term strategic plan.
- 2. An NDP government will undertake with the Community College and other education partners a plan to expand enrolment, increase high school to community college bridging programs, and increase the range and number of transition-to-work programs.

It's time to value again the teachers, students and schools that serve all Nova Scotians. It's time to make classroom learning the centre of education policy. It's time for equal education opportunity.

Nova Scotia New Democratic Party 802-5675 Spring Garden Road, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 1H1 Phone: (902) 423-9217 or 1 800-753-7696 Fax: (902) 423-9618 nsndp@ns.ndp.ca www.robertchisholm.net

Authorized by Joe Fraser, Official Agent for the Nova Scotia NDP



It's Time. to respect Nova Scotians



Friends:

This NDP campaign is about respecting Nova Scotians...respecting their intelligence, respecting their hard work, respecting their goals for their communities and for this Province. That has been a theme from day one.

Each of our four previous Platform papers has dealt with some aspect of that theme. Respecting the intelligence of Nova Scotians by telling the truth about the budget. Respecting the drive and talents of Nova Scotians by supporting local economic initiative. Respecting local leadership in building healthy communities. Respecting the right of all Nova Scotians to equal opportunity in education.

This fifth and final Platform Paper is about respecting the right of Nova Scotians to government that is fair, open and accountable, a government that respects Nova Scotians enough to entrust them with decisions about the future of our Province. It is time to respect ordinary people so that Nova Scotians can build the future together.

her Calle

Robert Chisholm, Leader Nova Scotia New Democratic Party

It's Time to Respect Nova Scotians

The Liberals and Tories pay too much attention to their political friends and large corporations, and not enough to the concerns of ordinary Nova Scotians. They bend over backwards to please the likes of Dynatek, PLI or Mentor Networks. But they show little or no respect for injured workers, nursing home employees or their own Crown prosecutors.

The Liberals and Tories say one thing during an election campaign, then they do the opposite afterward - and think they can get away with it. They force bad decisions on people, then deny them the right to change those decisions. They think they can get away with that, too.

It's time for a government that respects the democratic rights of all its citizens; a government that's open and accountable; a government that respects Nova Scotians enough to let them make decisions about their communities. An NDP government will be that kind of government.

An NDP government will:

- Set a fair minimum wage
- Make decisions in your community, not in back rooms
- End barriers to voting

Ending barriers to voting

Improved Elections Act

It is important that government respects Nova Scotians' right to vote and removes any impediments to the exercise of that right. On the basis of an all-party consensus, a bill making it easier for Nova Scotians to cast their votes was introduced in November, 1998. Unfortunately, the Liberals who controlled the agenda of the House of Assembly failed to bring the changes forward. The opportunity to conduct this election under improved rules was lost. An NDP government will bring forward amendments to the Elections Act to improve the voting process in Nova Scotia. **An NDP government will:**

- give voters who live in apartment buildings and condominiums the opportunity to make a well-informed decision by preventing the obstruction of campaigning candidates during reasonable hours of the day;
- make all polling areas readily accessible to persons with disabilities;
- establish a mail-in voting system for voters who will be absent on election day;
- expand the opportunities to vote in advance and special polls.

Accountability for Political Parties

Recognized political parties are major recipients of public funds. Their operating expenses are under-written by tax-deductible contributions. During elections, recognized parties receive rebates for a portion of their election expenses. While public support of political parties is necessary and desirable in a democracy, parties must respect Nova Scotians' right for more accountability for their use of those funds. New Democrats routinely make public their annual reports. However, Nova Scotia is one of the few jurisdictions in Canada that has no legislated requirement for public financial reporting by registered political parties.

• An NDP government will amend the Elections Act to require the publication by all recognized political parties of annual reports and audited financial statements for both central party organizations and constituency associations. Financial statements must include balance sheets and all sources of income, including trust fund income.

Open door for all economic partners

Better balance

Balanced government means a government whose door is open to all the major economic partners in Nova Scotia, rather than a government which treats some as friends and others as enemies. Corporations, smaller businesses, labour and community-based enterprises are among the economic partners who should have the opportunity to participate. To that end, **an NDP government will:**

 ensure that representatives of business and labour on agencies, boards and commissions are chosen by and with the assistance of the organizations that represent those economic partners; this applies to agencies like the Occupational Health and Safety Advisory Council, the Workers' Compensation Board, and the Labour Relations Board.

A balanced government listens to the voices of all Nova Scotians, not just the most powerful or the most organized interests. New Brunswick's new Premier, Bernard Lord, demonstrated balanced leadership when in the recent election campaign he said it was time to "help put more money back into the pockets of workers and families" by setting a fair minimum wage.

A leader of the Nova Scotia tourism industry has reported that the tourism and hospitality industry needs to pay higher wages for the skilled and experienced staff needed in a competitive international market. Similarly, information technology and other knowledge-based industries need an economic environment where they can compete for young, skilled workers whose talents and energy are in demand. Most major industries already pay far more than the minimum wage, which has been falling behind other jurisdictions. However, Nova Scotia can not afford to become a low-wage ghetto as the rest of North America competes for human resources. In order to keep Nova Scotia competitive in the labour market, **an NDP government will:**

- increase the minimum wage in Nova Scotia from its current level of \$5.50 an hour to \$6.00 an hour by the year 2001, in stages with adequate advance notice;
- establish a means of maintaining Nova Scotia's minimum wage at the national average, in close collaboration with the industries most affected by minimum wage policies, and with the other interested social and economic partners.

There will be a minimum three months advance notice of any increase in the minimum wage, and an opportunity for public comment before future increases are finalized.

There were 22,000 minimum wage earners, out of a total of 342,000 employees, in Nova Scotia in 1998. Most were under age 25, while 8,000 were older. Most work full-time. Seven thousand of Nova Scotia's minimum wage earners are head of their family, according to Statistics Canada.

Open Government

Open budget-making

An NDP government will respect Nova Scotians' right to a better and more open way to make the key budget decisions, starting with the new budget for this fiscal year. The Liberals and Tories have hidden behind a cloak of secrecy, consulting only with their friends and hand-picked advisors on the make-up of the budget. There must be more balance brought to the pre-budget process. The voices of business, labour, communities and ordinary people must be heard - not just the voice of large corporations. **An NDP government will:**

- draw up its budgets by working with Nova Scotians from all walks of life, especially those most directly affected by the budget;
- hold a pre-budget conference with representatives of Nova Scotia business groups, labour, health providers, educators, rural and urban communities and other major groups in our province.

Lobbyist registration

The NDP will respect Nova Scotians' right to know who is trying to influence government decisions by shedding light on the activities of paid lobbyists. Lobbyists are secret competitors with public priorities like health and education. Lobbyists persuaded the Liberal government to meddle in negotiations between the Sheraton Casino and the Nova Scotia Gaming Corporation, resulting in concessions that cost ordinary Nova Scotians millions of dollars in lost revenue. A Tory insider was paid \$30,000 to lobby the government of John Buchanan to lease a building in downtown Halifax. Nova Scotians have a right to know who is lobbying government and on whose behalf.

• An NDP government will introduce a Lobbyist Registration Act. The act will require registration of anyone who is paid to make representation to government on behalf of someone else, as well as identifying the lobbyist's client and the issue being dealt with.

Expand freedom of information

The NDP will respect Nova Scotians' right to know. The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act became law on July 1, 1994, granting a right of access to a variety of provincial government records, and setting up a review process to mediate complaints from citizens denied access to records. A review committee recommended in March, 1996 that the Act be extended to municipal governments, school boards, hospital and regional health boards, self-governing professional bodies and trade associations. The committee also recommended measures to enforce better compliance by government departments.

The Liberals left the report on the shelf, moving only on the recommendation to extend the Act's provisions to municipalities. That is not good enough. As the Review Committee noted: "openness and accountability are the hallmarks of good government."

• An NDP government will introduce legislation substantially implementing the recommendations of the 1996 Review Committee Report.

Whistle-blower legislation

Nova Scotians are paying for a professional public service. Those public servants want to be treated with respect and as partners in a joint effort to provide better administration of Nova Scotia's affairs. They deserve to be protected from reprisals for blowing the whistle on government wrong-doing, if such disclosure is based on a reasonable belief. Such legislation has been in place in several jurisdictions for decades. Its introduction in Nova Scotia would represent a show of respect both for hard-working public servants and ordinary Nova Scotians who expect honest government.

 An NDP government will enact legislation to protect civil servants who disclose government wrong-doing. Government employees could safely reveal information about law-breaking, mismanagement, gross waste of funds, danger to health and safety and other matters. The Ombudsman would be empowered to release such information on behalf of civil servants and to order an investigation into the alleged wrong-doing.

Directives from Cabinet

The Liberals' handling of the Sheraton Casino construction showed no respect for Nova Scotians or for the public servants who worked for the Nova Scotia Gaming Corporation. The incident demonstrated the need for whistle blower legislation and for clear rules governing communication between government and the Gaming Corporation. The lobbying and behind-the-scenes pressure that occurred demonstrated a clear need to maintain an arm's length relationship between politicians and the Gaming Corporation.

• An NDP Government will amend the Gaming Control Act to require that all directions and guidelines given by the government to the Nova Scotia Gaming Corporation be in writing and published in the Royal Gazette.

To ensure the Minister Responsible for the Gaming Corporation is insulated from the day-to-day concerns of the Corporation and its casino partners, Section 7 of the Gaming Control Act giving the Minister the power of general supervision and management should be repealed and the Minister's role limited to reporting to Cabinet on behalf of the Corporation and providing policy direction from Cabinet to the Corporation. This will be implemented, subject to the recommendations arising from a review of gaming policy.

Decision-making in the hands of your community

Municipal Amalgamation

An NDP Government will respect the people of Halifax and Cape Breton regional municipalities by letting them decide the future of amalgamation. The Liberals and Tories forced amalgamation on Nova Scotians, saying it would save money. It hasn't. Poorer municipal services, higher taxes, soaring debt, lost jobs and the erosion of local identity have all resulted from amalgamation. As we begin a new century, residents of Halifax and Cape Breton regional municipalities should have the right to decide whether they want to stay with the failed amalgamation experiment, or move to something new.

• An NDP government will ask the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board to conduct public hearings on amalgamation and develop options for municipal organization in Halifax and Cape Breton. The effect on taxes and services of each option will be spelled out and the options will be voted at the October, 2000 municipal elections.

VLT Plebiscite

Under the Liberals, the provincial government has become increasingly dependent on revenues from VLT gambling. The number of machines has grown from 1,388 in 1993 to more than 3,600 today. Some communities voted to remove VLTs from their community, but the MacLellan government ignored their wishes and the Conservatives let the issue drop. The NDP will respect the right of communities to decide whether they want video lottery terminals.

• An NDP government will introduce legislation requiring the Alcohol and Gaming Commission to conduct a plebiscite on VLTs by resolution of a municipal council or following a petition signed by at least 20 per cent of the electors in a community. Bill 36, introduced by the NDP Caucus in October 1998, gives communities this power.

Building Schools

In their P3 building binge the Liberals have failed to respect the right of communities to decide on their school construction and renovation priorities. The Liberals' top-down approach has divided communities and made it more difficult to achieve community consensus.

• An NDP government will ensure that the process of public hearings and public consultation already in place for school closures will apply to plans for school construction, school consolidation and major school renovations.

Supporting Community Based Initiatives

Crime is rising. According to Statistics Canada, Nova Scotians are four times as likely to be victims of crime today than they were a generation ago.

The Liberals have not effectively fought crime or its causes. By allowing poverty to increase and failing to provide adequate community supports, the Liberals have made the problem worse. Getting tough on crime without attacking the causes of crime doesn't work.

Unlike the Tories, who look only at punishment, New Democrats know that government must deal with the causes of crime. People with jobs and a decent education are far less likely to commit crimes. According to the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics a \$5,000 investment in early childhood education yielded a \$28,000 return in terms of reduced crime, better success at school and employment opportunities. Crime is also highly correlated to drug abuse. One study estimates that every one dollar invested in residential drug treatment programs yielded seven dollars in savings from reduced crime losses, corrections costs, property damage, health care and loss of production.

A key to fighting crime is support for programs like residential drug treatment and early childhood education. Such programs will be stabilized, and receive priority for increased support in future years.

In addition, an NDP government will support and encourage community-based crime prevention. This includes more and better information for Nova Scotians on how they can protect themselves from home invasions.

The NDP platform paper "It's Time for Equal Education Opportunities" outlines support for programs to reduce violence in schools.

Many Nova Scotia police forces and individual police officers have been pioneers in effective community-based policing, and in crime prevention. An NDP government will support these efforts, and work with the Atlantic Police Academy and the Nova Scotia Chiefs of Police to ensure that Nova Scotians take the lead in learning and applying effective crime prevention tactics.

Nova Scotia New Democratic Party 802-5675 Spring Garden Road, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 1H1 Phone: (902) 423-9217 or 1-800-753-7696 Fax: (902) 423-9618 nsndp@ns.ndp.ca www.robertchisholm.net

Authorized by Joe Fraser, Official Agent for the Nova Scotia NDP

No tax hikes. No increase in the deficit.

NDP Spending Commitments:

(first year costs)

Total	\$ 52,500,000
Eliminate Seniors' Pharmacare premiums	3,000,000
(textbooks, special education, maximum class sizes)	
Quality education	8,200,000
600 more nurses	11,100,000
More family doctors	6,200,000
Economic Hand Up	2,500,000
Road Improvement Fund	21,000,000
Telling the truth about the budget	\$ 500,000

Paid for with these NDP Savings Commitments: (first year savings)

Ending corporate handouts	\$ 29,000,000
Less paperwork, 1% more efficiency in health	17,300,000
Annual savings from eliminating P3 surcharge	3,000,000
Savings from strict financial management	
and open budgets	500,000
Reduce level of over-prescribing for seniors	3,000,000

Total

\$ 52,800,000

