

Priority programs for people



PROGRESSIVE
CONSERVATIVE
ASSOCIATION
OF ALBERTA



YOUR
PROGRESSIVE
CONSERVATIVE
TEAM

Our priority is people. Since 1971 your Progressive Conservative team has worked hard to improve the quality of life for our citizens and the disadvantaged in particular. You may be surprised to read the following substantial list of accomplishments.

Housing

Alberta's investment in housing is greater than all other provinces in Canada combined and is greater than all federal housing programs. Over one-quarter of the entire Heritage Savings Trust Fund is working to provide affordable accommodation for Albertans in communities large and small.

- over 100,000 housing units have been built with government support since 1971. This includes family-owned homes, rental units and housing units for senior citizens.
- 50% of Alberta's housing construction in 1982 will be financed through the Heritage Fund.
- \$140 million has been provided in 1981 and 1982 in mortgage subsidies for owned and rental housing.
- The Alberta Family Home Purchase Plan, started in 1979, provides interest-shielded mortgages to low income families. Some families are eligible for rates less than 10%. This gives renters a better chance to own their own homes.
- And on September 7, we announced a mortgage interest reduction plan—to substantially help many young Alberta families keep their own homes during this current period of abnormally high interest rates.

Education

Quality is our priority for Alberta's schools. New initiatives in the past four years have reaffirmed the importance of thorough, basic education for our children.

- The provincial education budget for basic education will top \$1 billion in 1982.
- Province-wide exams will test basic skills in grades 3, 6, 9 and 12.
- Emphasis on Alberta and Canadian history and geography in a new social studies curriculum.
- Important new Canadian teaching material for all grades in natural and social sciences as well as literature, through the Heritage Learning Resources Project.
- Alberta has become a leader in multi-language education in Canada; curricula have also encouraged more awareness of our ethnic diversity.

- Instead of closing local schools, new programs will tackle the special problems of some urban and rural areas. These include the small jurisdiction grant, the small school grant, declining enrollment grant, and the supplementary requisition equalization fund.
- Education for the mentally and physically disabled has received greater attention since 1979.
- New initiatives to train students in using computers.

Post-secondary education

More opportunities have been provided for students in all areas of the province to attend post-secondary institutions.

- 23,000 students helped in 1982 with loans, grants and remissions. These have doubled since 1979.
- Tuition fees at Alberta universities are among the lowest in Canada.
- A commitment of almost \$800 million for post-secondary education in 1982, including capital expansion, to ensure Alberta's high standards are maintained.
- Educational Opportunity Equalization Grants help mostly rural students pay their expenses during post-secondary education.
- Thousands of students will receive awards in 1982 from the Alberta Heritage Scholarship Fund, set up with \$100 million endowment to give recognition and encouragement to Albertans from all walks of life.
- The Heritage Savings Trust Fund has provided libraries in our universities and colleges with \$9 million in books and materials.
- Local volunteers are working with educational institutions to provide opportunities for adult education in rural areas. Centres have been opened in Brooks, Drayton Valley, Drumheller, the Crowsnest Pass and Pincher Creek, the MacKenzie North, Peace River and Yellowhead regions.
- \$200 million budget for regional expansion of post-secondary opportunities.

Health Services

- Since 1979, hospitals in 22 communities have been built, expanded or renovated. A further 80 projects in 60 communities are in the planning or construction stages.
- Funds committed to operating our health care system have more than doubled since 1979.
- A commitment of almost \$600 million in total for health care facilities and research from the Heritage Savings Trust Fund.

- Close to 1,000 research projects, funded by the Heritage Foundation for Medical Research, have already begun. The \$300 million endowment from the Heritage Savings Trust Fund will support research to benefit all Albertans and other Canadians.
- Special Heritage Fund support has been placed into cancer and heart disease research, in addition to the Medical Research Foundation.
- Major health facilities supported by the Heritage Fund, include the Alberta Children's Provincial General Hospital, the Walter C. MacKenzie Sciences Centre, and the Southern Alberta Cancer Centre.
- Two new schools of nursing set up in Fort McMurray and Grande Prairie and additional money to existing schools to help reduce the serious shortage of nurses.
- Nursing Research Fund established in 1981 to advance the quality of nursing care in Alberta.

Services for senior citizens

- The most extensive health care coverage in Canada, supplying eyeglasses, dentures, health aids, surgical aids and medical equipment at minimal cost or free.
- No hospital admission charges; no health care or Blue Cross premiums.
- The Pioneer Repair Program has helped 40,000 people with grants of up to \$2,000 for home maintenance and repairs for seniors wanting to stay in their own homes.
- Highest provincial income supplement in Canada, provided through the Alberta Assured Income Plan.
- Over 300 drop-in centres for seniors are helped financially by the Alberta Government and run by local volunteers.
- In 1980, we celebrated Alberta's 75th Anniversary and recognized our pioneers. Communities across the province built special recreation and cultural facilities as well as housing for senior citizens.
- 10,755 new beds in nursing homes and auxiliary hospitals.
- Since 1971, our progress in building close to 12,000 housing units for seniors in 90 communities is unparalleled in Canada.
- Over 35,000 people have benefited from the Renter's Assistance Grant of up to \$1,000 in private accommodation and up to \$500 in seniors' apartment or lodge units.
- Because of provincial government funding, it has been possible for some of the larger centres in Alberta to provide free transit passes to seniors. Special transportation services for the disabled have been introduced.

Services for disabled persons

- Alberta Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped provides the most income support for the disabled in Canada. 8,000 people benefit from the assured income, which has increased 55% since its introduction in 1979.
- Aids to Daily Living Program, established in 1979, eliminates the burden of health costs on the disabled.
- Over 4,000 disabled Albertans receive medical services at home, releasing them from prolonged hospital visits through the Home Care program.
- Over 2,200 employment opportunities have been provided by Vocational Services to the Handicapped.
- Every month 2,600 children receive home services, treatment, transportation and counselling through the Handicapped Children Services Program.
- In 1981, Premier Lougheed opened William Watson Lodge, in Kananaskis Country—a unique recreational facility for the disabled and their families.
- Since 1979, education has been a priority. 12,000 children with learning problems are receiving special attention in Alberta schools.
- Special curricula have been developed to help teachers for the disabled.
- Assistance for the training of disabled persons and their teachers has been greatly increased in a five-year program.
- Since 1972, accommodation in group homes has increased 600%.
- Almost \$500,000 has been provided through the Home Adaptation Program to assist homeowners or tenants in adapting their homes for wheelchairs.
- 1981 was the International Year of the Disabled Persons. Positive attitudes towards disabled persons were strengthened. Private donations and provincial grants provided funds for projects initiated by the disabled in education, health needs, improved accessibility, technical aids and equipment, public awareness, culture, employment, transportation and housing.
- Alberta has provided support to increase recreational opportunities and funds to municipalities and to provide transportation services to the disabled and the elderly.

Services for the family

- Alberta has the highest number of subsidized daycare spaces for children under 5 in Canada, in proportion to population.

- In 1980, Alberta had one daycare space for every 13 children under 5; public funding of daycare is well above the average per child level in other provinces; services are being brought to all parts of Alberta.
- Improved daycare standards are among the best in Canada.
- The Child Abuse Registry has expanded to a 24-hour hotline and significantly increased its efforts in public education and awareness, since 1979.
- Children receiving child welfare services have received increased support and better services since 1979.
- More than 2600 women and their children were helped at 7 women's emergency shelters, during the first nine months of operation in 1981.
- Practical help and education to reduce alcohol and drug abuse, including a special campaign directed at teenagers, continue through AADAC.
- Increased funds to research suicide and for suicide prevention.

Services for Native Albertans

The Progressive Conservative party is committed to the full protection of existing treaty rights. We believe the new Canada Constitution does protect and guarantee those rights.

- Continued funding of the Native Outreach employment program after the federal government refused support in 1981.
- \$10 million program for new and improved roads to native communities in northern Alberta.
- A major review of land tenure requirements for highways passing through Indian Reserves is being carried out.
- Support for the construction of two lodges to house elders on the Kehewin and Blackfoot Reserves.
- Financial assistance to the Awasis program in Edmonton and the Plains Indian Cultural Survival School in Calgary to help native children maintain their cultural identity within our larger urban centres.
- A native venture capital fund to help native businesses.

Alberta's parks

- Eight new provincial parks since 1979. There are now 61 throughout the province.
- Five new urban parks, in addition to Capital City Park in Edmonton and Fish Creek Park in Calgary, planned for Grande Prairie, Lethbridge, Lloydminster, Medicine Hat and Red Deer. A commitment of \$130 million from the Heritage Savings Trust Fund for these parks.

- Continued expansion of facilities in Kananaskis Country — Alberta's first mountain recreation area—4 more major campgrounds, 81 miles of new hiking trails, 30 day use areas, a special facility for the handicapped.
- Continued commitment to the preservation of wilderness areas.

Recreation and culture

The Progressive Conservative Party is committed to broadening the opportunities for all Albertans to take part in recreation and cultural events across our province. New and expanded programs and money from the Heritage Savings Trust Fund are making that commitment a reality.

- Since 1979, 1,400 recreational or cultural facilities have been supported in almost every municipality in Alberta.
- 50 communities now celebrate Heritage Day—recognizing the cultural diversity which gives richness to living in Alberta.
- Almost 7,500 students of all ages study after school and on weekends in 100 heritage schools teaching 30 languages. The schools are operated by churches and community groups.
- Competitions and financial support give increased encouragement to authors and the publishing industry.
- Support is provided directly to Alberta's ethnic communities to support language education, festivals, arts instructors, conferences and workshops.
- The opening of the Ukrainian Heritage Village in 1980 was an important contribution to preserving our cultural heritage.
- Through the 75th Anniversary, many communities built new recreation facilities, endowed scholarships, wrote local histories and improved community parks.
- Also during the 75th Anniversary 28,000 people in over 200 communities enjoyed the Festival of the Arts, reflecting the province's artistic communities.
- Support for library development increased.
- Matching grants help to encourage the performing arts throughout the province.
- Major support for World Student Games in 1983 in Edmonton and the Winter Olympics in Calgary in 1988.
- Support for the Alberta Senior Games, first held in 1980. A first in Canada.

Many of these projects, programs and facilities were developed or initiated, and are now being operated at least in part by volunteers! As Progressive Conservatives our philosophy is to encourage the volunteer and for government, as much as possible, to perform a supportive role.