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A Fresh Start for Canadians

Blue Book

1996-1997

Principles & Policies of
The Reform Party of Canada

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Preface

The Reform Party's Principles and Policies 1996-97 contains the official principles and policies of the Reform Party of Canada as adopted by Party Assemblies.

The Reform Party is guided by the Statement of Principles which remains largely unchanged since the Party was founded in 1987.

This edition includes changes to policies adopted by resolutions of the Party Assembly in Vancouver, June 6-9, 1996. These changes include amendments, additions and deletions to previous policy statements.

This edition of Principles and Policies is especially important because it forms the basis of the Reform Party's election platform — a Fresh Start for Canadians.

The policy development process leading to each Assembly is a cornerstone of our grassroots party. It begins with Reform Party members at the constituency level creating resolutions. Through a selections process, constituencies then decide which resolutions will finally reach the floor of the Assembly for final debate and voting.

Any questions about this policy development process can be addressed to the national office of the Reform Party of Canada.

To become a member of the Reform Party of Canada, and participate in the development of our principles, policies and platform, please complete the membership application form at the back of this publication.

Democratic politics is not a spectator sport. I invite you to join with us in developing the policies that will give Canada a Fresh Start for the 21st Century.

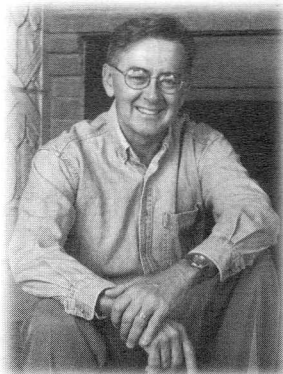


Harry Meyers
Chairman, Reform Party of Canada

Introducing a new vision for Canada

If you're worried about what the future holds for you and your family, you're not alone. I feel the same way you do about high taxes, high unemployment and an uncertain future.

I believe that decades of overspending and mismanagement by previous governments — Liberal and Conservative — are responsible for the crisis we find ourselves in today. I believe it is time to open our eyes to a new vision of what our nation can be.



The old vision held by the Liberals and Tories before them, revolves around big government and the high taxes that go with it. It is a vision which has us working more than half the year just to pay our tax bill. And it is a vision which trivializes our sense of ourselves by implying that we can only hold this country together through government programs, government spending and government propaganda.

The other vision, the one offered by myself and the Reform Party, is of a country defined and built by its citizens, rather than by its government. It is a vision of smaller government and lower taxes. It is a vision which reaches out to the initiative, drive and diversity of Canadians. It calls upon individuals, families and communities to lead the way to growth, progress and unity. It is a vision in which stronger families and communities — not more government programs — are the principle pillars of social security. It is a vision in which unity is based on equality for all citizens and provinces rather than special status for some.

Our vision of a New Canada calls for fundamental change, which is why we've put together a specific plan that will bring new hope to each one of us in these challenging times, and give us the fresh start we need to take charge of our own future.

Reform's plan for a brighter future focuses on six areas:

- ① providing growth, opportunity, and jobs for Canadians through lower taxes, smaller government, and a balanced budget;
- ② presenting "family friendly" policies that support the growth and development of families, including fairer tax provisions for parents;
- ③ reforming the criminal justice system to make communities safer and shift the balance from the rights of criminals to the rights of law abiding citizens and victims;
- ④ improving social security by strengthening health care to provide Canadians with better and speedier access to services; strengthening the pension system to ensure Canadians can save for secure retirement; improving other social services such as Employment Insurance; and ensuring the equality of all Canadians;
- ⑤ strengthening Canadian unity by moving more powers to the level of government best able to manage them; and
- ⑥ providing better representation and accountability in Parliament.

I invite every reader of this Blue Book to join with us by completing a membership form at the back of this publication. Our aim is nothing less than to work together to give you, your family, and Canada a Fresh Start.

Preston Manning
Leader, Reform Party of Canada

A Fresh Start for Canadians

Statement of Principles

1 We affirm our commitment to Canada as one nation, indivisible, and to our vision of Canada as a balanced federation of equal provinces and citizens.

2 We affirm the need to establish a Triple-E Senate in the Parliament of Canada — that is to say, a Senate which is Elected by the people, with Equal representation from each Province, and which is fully Effective in safeguarding regional interests.

3 We affirm that political parties should be guided by stated values and principles which are shared by their members and rooted in the political beliefs of Canadians.

4 We believe in dynamic and constructive change — in a renewal of the “reform tradition” of Canadian politics.

5 We believe that Canada’s identity and vision for the future should be rooted in and inspired by a fresh appreciation of “our land” and the supreme importance to our well-being of exploring, developing, renewing, and conserving our natural resources and physical environment.

6 We believe that the people of Canada are this country’s most valuable resource, and that the nurture and development of human knowledge, skills, and relationships are the keys to full participation in the knowledge-based service economy of the 21st century.

7 We affirm the value and dignity of the individual person and the importance of strengthening and protecting the family unit as essential to the well-being of individuals and society.

8 We believe that every individual, group, province, and region in Canada is entitled to fundamental justice, and that fundamental justice entitles the people of each region to benefit equally, without discrimination, from participation in Confederation and from the programs and expenditures of the Government of Canada.

9 We believe in the value of enterprise and initiative, and that governments have a responsibility to foster and protect an environment in which initiative and enterprise can be exercised by individuals and groups.

10 We believe that the creation of wealth and productive jobs for Canadians is best achieved through the operations of a responsible, broadly-based, free-enterprise economy in which private property, freedom of contract, and the operations of free markets are encouraged and respected.

11
We believe that Canadians have a personal and collective responsibility to care and provide for the basic needs of people who are unable to care and provide for themselves.

12
We believe in freedom of conscience and religion, and the right of Canadians to advocate, without fear of intimidation or suppression, public policies which reflect their most deeply held values.

13
We believe that public policy in democratic societies should reflect the will of the majority of the citizens as determined by free and fair elections, referenda, and the decisions of legally constituted and representative Parliaments and Assemblies elected by the people.

14
We believe that the interest of minorities and the people of the under-populated regions of Canada should be safeguarded by constitutional guarantees and parliamentary institutions which effectively balance representation by population with regional representation.

15
We believe in the common sense of the common people, their right to be consulted on public policy matters before major decisions are made, their right to choose and recall their own representatives and to govern themselves through truly representative and responsible institutions, and their right to directly initiate legislation for which substantial public support is demonstrated.

16
We believe in the accountability of elected representatives to the people who elect them, and that the duty of elected members to their constituents should supersede their obligations to their political parties.

17
We believe that the legitimate role of government is to do for people whatever they need to have done, but cannot do at all — or do as well — for themselves individually or through non-governmental organizations.

18
We believe in public service — that governments, civil servants, politicians, and political parties exist to serve the people, and that they should demonstrate this service commitment at all times.

19
We believe that public money should be regarded by governments as “funds held in trust,” and that governments should practice fiscal responsibility — in particular, the responsibility to balance expenditures and revenues.

20
We affirm our commitment to the rule of the law, and to the concept that governments and law-makers are not above the law.

21
We believe in true equality of Canadian citizens, with equal rights and responsibilities for all.

Reform believes that balanced budgets, tax relief, and other key policies for strengthening the private sector are essential to providing Canadians with more and better **JOB**s. These and other job-creating reforms are presented in the following sections on fiscal and economic reforms.

Fiscal Reform

Tax Reform

- A. The Reform Party supports the elimination of special treatment, credits, write-offs and deductions, especially where the Income Tax Act establishes income or expenditure definitions that do not conform to generally accepted accounting standards.
- B. The Reform Party supports a taxation policy that has as its principal objective the raising of funds to pay for government programs, and opposes the use of tax concessions as an instrument for manipulating investment behaviour and industry.
- C. The Reform Party will work toward a simple, visible and flat system of taxation.
- D. The Reform Party opposes any increases in the rate of the GST, and favours a staged elimination of this tax as part of an overall program of tax reform and spending restraint once the budget is balanced. In any event, the Reform Party will remove the GST when a simple, visible and flat-rate system of taxation is introduced.
- E. The Reform Party supports having the amount of all taxes on any commodity or service clearly identified for the consumer.
- F. The Reform Party supports a revision of the federal income tax regulations to end discrimination against parents who provide child care at home.
- G. The Reform Party supports equitable tax treatment for one-income families with dependent children.
- H. The Reform Party supports a National Tax Increase Alert to use all legal means available to assist Canadians to resist further federal tax increases.
- I. The Reform Party supports an income tax cut within our existing deficit reduction framework.

J. The Reform Party supports user fees for government services only when users are clearly identifiable, the fees are equitable with all other users of similar services and a comparable amount of government tax is eliminated.

K. The Reform Party opposes the collection of fuel taxes, licensing fees and toll levies, and placing them in consolidated revenues. All revenues collected from these taxes should be directed against the actual expenditures of the transport sector where the taxes were collected.

Balanced Budget

- A. A Reform Government will introduce legislation mandating government spending limits and requiring that all future increases in total revenue be exceeded by reductions in overall expenditure until the budget is balanced. Such legislation would also require the Government of Canada to balance the federal budget in each three-year period or to call an election on the issue. The first such period would commence three years from the passage of this legislation.
- B. The Federal Government should not be permitted to run a deficit or to raise tax levels unless authorized by a national referendum.
- C. The Reform Party supports the adoption of standard accounting principles for government financial reporting, based as closely as possible on Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (G.A.A.P.).

Deficit Reduction

- A. The Reform Party supports a general program of expenditure reduction leading to a lower level of taxation, a lower cost of doing business and a lower cost of living, according to the following priorities:
 - 1. the pay, pensions and perks of politicians, political parties and parliamentary institutions;
 - 2. spending on federal administration;
 - 3. federal programs such as official languages, cultural programs, government advertising, advocacy groups and foreign aid;
 - 4. subsidies and grants to business and crown corporations;
 - 5. national defence, by emphasizing increased efficiency and reduced administration, while maintaining Canada's long-term defence objectives; and
 - 6. social spending, by refocusing benefits on those most in need.

B. The Reform Party has advocated across-the-board reductions in federal discretionary spending during high inflationary times to reduce interest rate differentials between Canada and the United States.

C. The Reform Party supports applying both GST revenue and proceeds from the sales of crown assets to a Debt Retirement Fund rather than general revenue.

D. The Reform Party supports the periodic evaluation of all statutory programs to determine if the program is being delivered efficiently, whether the objectives are still relevant, are being achieved, or can be achieved in another way.

Parliamentary Spending

A. The Reform Party supports the re-examination of the appointed positions on boards, agencies and councils with the object of eliminating patronage positions, not just individual appointments.

B. The Reform Party supports the elimination of federal funding to all special interest groups.

C. The Reform Party believes that federal regional development programs are detrimental to a region and should be gradually eliminated.

Spending Effectiveness

A. The Reform Party supports a new federal budgeting system which rewards programs and departments with incentives (financially or otherwise) for operating more efficiently without impacting government service.

B. The Reform Party supports full access by the Auditor General to all federal financial documents, including, but not limited to, all cabinet documents. Reporting on documents may be limited to the extent that the Auditor General finds necessary for reasons of national security or current confidential negotiations.

C. The Reform Party supports requiring the government of the day and all crown corporations to publicly address all issues raised in the Auditor General's Report.

D. The Reform Party supports developing a federal reporting system that clearly shows the proportion of funds spent on program administration compared to dollars that reach the clients of the program.

Equalization

A. The Reform Party supports reductions to equalization payments in a manner which would refocus equalization payments on the poorest recipient provinces.

Government Procurement

A. The Reform Party favours a government procurement policy based on fairness, price, and quality, rather than on lobbying and political motives.

Government Regulations

A. The Reform Party supports the reduction, simplification and improvement of all government regulations

Privatization and Crown Corporations

A. The Reform Party believes governments should not compete with the private sector. We support placing the ownership and control of corporations in the sector that can perform their function most cost-effectively, with greatest accountability to owners, and the least likelihood of incurring public debt. We believe that there is overwhelming evidence that this would be the private sector in the vast majority of cases.

B. The Reform Party supports the complete privatization of Petro-Canada and applying the proceeds towards the national debt.

C. The Reform Party supports private competition in the delivery of mail.

D. The Reform Party supports ensuring that rural and remote areas receive postal services comparable in quality and cost to services in urban areas.

Public Utilities Income Tax Transfer Act (PUITTA)

A. The Reform Party believes citizens of a province who receive services from a private corporation should not be penalized financially by a federal tax policy which treats private corporations differently than crown corporations.

B. The Reform Party believes corporations in the same market should be taxed on an equal basis by the Federal Government.

Economic Reform

Agriculture

- A. The Reform Party supports a self-reliant and economically viable agricultural industry which will use market mechanisms (including the free operation of comparative advantage between regions and commodities, free entry into all sectors of production and marketing, and global free trade) to meet the needs of consumers for safe and secure food supplies.
- B. The Reform Party supports the phased reduction and elimination of all subsidies, support programs, trade restrictions and non-tariff barriers in conjunction with other countries and domestic sectors, and the reform of supply/price controls in domestic and international agriculture. The Reform Party recognizes Canada's multi-lateral trade obligations to replace import quotas with tariffs at levels sufficient to ensure the ongoing viability of the supply-managed sector in the new market-driven environment.
- C. The Reform Party will vigorously use federal safety net programs to support Canadian food producers who are struggling against conditions outside their control, such as foreign subsidies, trade distorting influences, market cycles and natural hazards. To the greatest extent possible, these programs should be production and market neutral, not commodity specific, and available equitably to all sectors.
- D. The Reform Party believes that agricultural policies should be sensitive to health, safety, and environmental concerns. They should facilitate market-responsive trade and production regulations, assure the application of fair business practices, recognize the necessity of ongoing research incentives focused on resource conservation technologies and sustainable production practices, and encourage better human resource management and training.
- E. The Reform Party supports using scientific information to determine if an agricultural or food biotechnology product meets Canadian health and safety requirements. If it does, the acceptability of that product in the marketplace should be determined by consumer choice and not political interference.
- F. The Reform Party will allow producers to make their own marketing decisions and to direct, structure, and voluntarily participate in producer organizations (including marketing boards, commissions, and co-operatives) in the manner they believe best serves their interests.

G. The Reform Party supports creating an efficient and responsive transportation system which moves Canadian agricultural products to market by any expeditious mode and route, and in any form or state of processing, based exclusively on cost effectiveness for producer and consumer.

H. The Reform Party supports amendments to the Canada Labour Code to include the mechanism of Final Offer Selection arbitration pertaining to those sectors related to agriculture product handling and transportation, and allowing agricultural producers and processors to export products through alternate ports and methods of shipping.

I. The Reform Party will make Canada's agricultural industry more efficient by clarifying funding responsibilities and jurisdictions between the federal and provincial governments, and by eliminating costly interprovincial trade barriers. The Federal Government should accept responsibility for farm support and safety net programs, and the provinces for the development of products for which they have a comparative advantage.

Banking System

- A. The Reform Party supports a more competitive banking system, including the presence of regional banks.
- B. The Reform Party supports federal legislation protecting Canadians from a monopoly of financial services by any one sector. Particularly, banks should not be allowed to enter further into insurance or auto leasing. A moratorium should be placed on any further partial-deregulation until the financial system can be thoroughly reviewed to increase competition. The review must also ensure the stability of the financial system and prudent regulation to protect consumers.

Domestic Trade and Transportation

- A. The Reform Party supports removing interprovincial trade barriers through provincial agreements that include trade dispute settlement mechanisms. If the provinces fail to cooperate in removing interprovincial trade barriers, the Reform Party supports constitutional challenges to such impediments wherever possible.
- B. The Reform Party supports upgrading transportation and increasing port facilities so that Canada may capitalize on burgeoning export trade opportunities.

Energy

- A. The Reform Party supports an energy policy based on market mechanisms with the objective of meeting the demands of consumers for safe, secure supplies of energy at competitive prices.
- B. The Reform Party has supported the elimination of the National Energy Program despite a period of low oil prices, and will oppose any new National Energy Program under any circumstances, by any political party, as a fundamental attack on the economic rights of any province or territory and the political unity of this country.
- C. The Reform Party supports private-sector development of energy mega-projects without Federal Government subsidies, grants, loan guarantees, or special tax treatment. The role of government with respect to mega-projects is to provide the appropriate regulation, including environmental regulation, and to support appropriate infrastructure development.
- D. The Reform Party supports the integration of energy development and environmental conservation by ensuring that the "cost" of energy development includes the cost of environmental protection, and by supporting energy conservation and the development of alternate energy sources for environmental protection. Where possible, we will rely primarily on marketplace mechanisms to achieve these objectives.
- E. The Reform Party supports streamlining administrative and regulatory processes in the energy sector to minimize unnecessary regulatory burden.

Fisheries

- A. The Reform Party supports establishing an economically and environmentally sustainable fisheries industry by:
1. establishing an independent commission to set sustainable quotas;
 2. limiting the Department of Fisheries and Oceans' mandate to research, habitat administration, regulation and enforcement;
 3. securing and enforcing international treaties to conserve the offshore fisheries;
 4. recognizing licence holders' rights and responsibilities to participate in setting objectives of fisheries management.
- B. The Reform Party supports international action to stop "drift-net" fishing until an agreement on the rational harvesting of world oceans can be reached by all parties.
- C. The Reform Party opposes entrenching the right to harvest fish commercially in aboriginal land claim settlements.

- D. The Reform Party supports only one commercial fishery with the same rules, regulations and fees for all. Further, there should be no restriction on the transferability of licences.

Industrial Development and Diversification

- A. The Reform Party supports de-politicizing economic decision-making in Canada by eliminating grants, subsidies, pricing policies, and all federal taxes (direct or indirect) on provincial natural resources, except income tax of general application.
- B. The Reform Party supports removing all measures that insulate industries, businesses, financial institutions, professions, and trade unions from domestic and foreign competition.
- C. The Reform Party supports vigorous measures to ensure the successful operation of the marketplace, such as promoting competition and competitive pricing, and strengthening and vigorously enforcing competition and anti-combines legislation, with severe penalties for collusion or price fixing.
- D. The Reform Party supports orienting Federal Government activities toward the nurturing of human and physical infrastructure.
- E. The Reform Party supports giving greater priority to the development of skills, particularly those that provide future job flexibility (such as literacy and computer education). As well, such training should be made more flexible in terms of the type of institution providing the training. We would encourage cooperative training in industry.
- F. The Reform Party maintains that physical infrastructure spending should be based on economic criteria, rather than on the basis of artificial, temporary job creation. The Reform Party opposes the use of infrastructure funds for projects which could be managed better by the private sector based on market considerations. Infrastructure spending should be based on regional fairness criteria.
- G. The Reform Party supports development through research aimed at particular industry objectives, particularly private sector research in commercial areas where feasible.
- H. The Reform Party will create, through minimizing regulation and providing limited coordination and infrastructure, an environment which will encourage private investment to make use of advanced technology in the commercial development of space-based industry.

Labour-Management Relations

- A. The Reform Party supports the right of workers to organize democratically, to bargain collectively and to strike peacefully.
- B. The Reform Party supports the harmonization of labour-management relations, and rejects the view that labour and management must constitute warring camps.
- C. The Reform Party supports the right of all Canadians, particularly the young, to enter the work force and achieve their potential. Unions and professional bodies may ensure standards, but should not block qualified people from working or from gaining the necessary qualifications.
- D. The Reform Party supports the right of individual employees to refuse to allow any portion of their union dues to be paid for any cause that the employee does not personally support and which is not related to the function of the union.
- E. The Reform Party supports the right of all job applicants to be evaluated solely on the basis of merit.

Monetary Policy and Interest Rates

- A. The Reform Party supports a monetary policy which promotes a slow, non-inflationary and steady growth in the money supply.
- B. The Reform Party opposes the use of national macroeconomic policy to address specific regional microeconomic problems.

Public Service

- A. The Reform Party supports the establishment of public service staffing requirements based on the number of workers required to perform necessary functions of government efficiently. Promotion and remuneration should recognize performance, efficiency and merit.

Research and Development

- A. The Reform Party supports the development of a Canadian science strategy by working with the scientific community to establish stable, long-term funding for basic scientific research and improve the management of scientific resources.
- B. The Reform Party supports developing a Canadian research and development strategy to facilitate the commercialization of basic research and actively encourage grassroots investment in emerging technologies.

Telecommunications

- A. The Reform Party supports a telecommunications policy characterized by an open marketplace which is free from undue government interference and maintains and respects individual privacy and intellectual property rights.
- B. The Reform Party supports a review of the Canadian Radio Television and Telecommunications Commission's mandate, foreign ownership restrictions, and a commercial open bidding process for telecommunications licences, as appropriate.

National Unity

Decentralization and the Equality of Provinces

- A. The Reform Party commits itself to rebuilding our national home through the creation of a new and better Canada built on solid foundations that include equality for all provinces and citizens, renewed democracy in our political system, financial responsibility by governments, affordable social programs, an effective and accountable criminal justice system, conservation of our environment, respect for cultural diversity, and productive relations with other peoples of the world.
- B. The Reform Party supports the renewal of the Canadian confederation as a more balanced federation, in which the arsenal of centralizing powers at the hands of the Federal Government and the over-concentration of power in the hands of the executive and Cabinet are placed under reasonable restraints. Legislative authority should rest with the level of government able to govern most effectively in each area, with a bias towards decentralization in cases of uncertainty.
- C. The Reform Party supports equality for all provinces, special status for none, and a strong continuing role for the Federal Government to maintain a common economic space, eliminate internal trade barriers, and represent Canada effectively in international trade negotiations.
- D. The Reform Party supports the principle that the provinces should have exclusive jurisdiction over apprenticeship programs, culture, education, health, housing, language, manpower training, natural resources, sport fishing, sports & recreation, social assistance and tourism. Canada would field a single team at international sports competitions.

E. The Reform Party supports legally entrenched measures that would forbid the Federal Government from using its "spending power" to interfere in areas of provincial jurisdiction.

F. The Reform Party maintains that the role of the Federal Government in provincially run social programs such as education, health and social assistance should be to develop national standards through cooperative agreements rather than to impose standards unilaterally and withhold transfer payments when these standards are not met.

G. The Reform Party supports the establishment of an agreement to replace federal cash grants to the provinces with unconditional transfers of the tax base of each province, adjusted for differential provincial economic development so that the provincial tax revenues collected in each province will grow in parallel with the growth in the province's economy and population. This will allow the content and particulars of provincial policy to be set by provincial governments clearly accountable to the electorate of that province.

H. The Reform Party supports the strengthening of the role of municipal governments in the delivery of essential services, as a decentralization measure.

I. The Reform Party supports legal measures prohibiting the Federal Government from funding private court challenges of provincial laws.

J. The Reform Party supports the abolition of the federal power to strike down provincial laws ("disallowance" and "reservation") and to legislate under the professed "declaratory power", in areas of provincial jurisdiction.

K. The Reform Party supports the adoption of a process whereby appointments to the Board of Directors of the Bank of Canada would be made by the provincial legislatures rather than by the Prime Minister.

L. The Reform Party supports the adoption of a process whereby the Lieutenant Governor of each province would be selected by the provincial legislature rather than by the Prime Minister.

Secession Contingency Plans

A. The Reform Party maintains that in the event that a province secedes, the Canadian Government should be guided in any negotiations by three principles: democratic legitimacy, the rule of law and the primacy of the interests of Canada.

B. The Reform Party maintains that in the event that a province secedes, any secession negotiations should take into account the interests of Canada's remaining provinces.

C. The Reform Party maintains that in the event that a province secedes, the Canadian Government should insist upon the right of citizens within that province, including Aboriginal peoples, to remain part of Canada and to petition Parliament for that purpose. Boundary changes would be based on local referendum results.

D. The Reform Party maintains that in the event that a province secedes, unless a negotiated settlement satisfactory to Canada were achieved, if applicable, all current marine resources should remain Canadian.

E. The Reform Party maintains that in the event that a province secedes, the Canadian citizenship and Canadian passports of the people of that province choosing to leave Canada should be revoked.

F. The Reform Party maintains that in the event that a province secedes, that that province should pay a share of the federal debt equivalent to its share of Canada's population.

G. The Reform Party maintains that in the event that a province secedes, to ensure creditor confidence, any disputes over payment of the debt should be resolved by international arbitration.

H. The Reform Party maintains that in the event that a province secedes, all moveable federal assets located in that province should remain the property of Canada. The Canadian Government should seek to maximize its return from any disposal of moveable or fixed assets.

I. The Reform Party maintains that in the event that a province secedes, that province could use the Canadian dollar but should have no say in Canadian monetary policy.

J. The Reform Party maintains that in the event that a province secedes, foreign governments should not be permitted to recognize the independence of that province prior to the Federal Government having done so.

K. The Reform Party maintains that in the event that a province secedes, the Canadian Government would retain its veto over that province's participation in international trade agreements and should exercise this veto in the event of a unilateral declaration of independence.

L. The Reform Party maintains that in the event that a province secedes, Canada should not participate in the development of any bilateral trade deals with that province unless they are in Canada's interest.

M. The Reform Party maintains that in the event that a province secedes, if applicable, the Canadian Government should insist on full, unhindered rights of transportation and transmission across the territory of that province joining Canadians from coast to coast.

N. The Reform Party maintains that in the event that a province secedes, the Canadian Government should require that the province enter into no international agreements which compromise Canadian security or Canada's current defence treaty obligations.

O. The Reform Party maintains that in the event that a province secedes, all fixed military assets in that province should be disposed of by Canada on terms acceptable to Canada. All movable assets would remain Canadian property and would be removed from that province at the convenience of Canada.

P. The Reform Party maintains that in the event that a province secedes, the final terms and conditions of secession should be ratified by all Canadians in a referendum.

Q. The Reform Party maintains that in the event that a province secedes, the Canadian Government should affirm that this province would have no prospect of reentry into Confederation, except on terms and conditions wholly satisfactory to Canada.

Constitutional Reform

Triple-E Senate

A. The Reform Party fully endorses the Triple-E Senate concept as outlined in the Draft Constitutional Amendment prepared by legal experts and ratified by Party members in May, 1988.

Equality

A. The Reform Party affirms the equality of every individual before and under the law and the right to equal protection and benefit of the law. We believe all federal legislation should reflect this principle of equality, which is negated by granting group rights.

B. The Reform Party supports the judicial interpretation of the equality guarantee in Section 15(1) of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* as mandating equality of opportunity rather than equality of outcome.

Charter of Rights and Freedoms

A. The Reform Party proposes that all amendments to the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* must be approved in a national referendum. Among the changes that should be considered are those recommended in the Reform Party's Charter of Rights and Freedoms Task Force report, dated April 1, 1996 and ratified by Party members in June 1996.

B. The Reform Party supports amending the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* to recognize the right of every person to own, use and enjoy property (including real, intellectual and personal property) and to contract freely. The Charter should state that no person shall be deprived of the ownership, use or enjoyment of property or contract without full, just and timely compensation and the due process of law.

C. The Reform Party supports the inclusion, in this amendment to the Charter, of an additional provision stating that in matters of property, contract and commerce, individuals shall be assured of all the procedural protections guaranteed by Sections 7 to 14 of the Charter.

D. As a first step towards the formal entrenchment of property rights in the Charter, a Reform Government would use the unilateral amending formula under Section 44 of the Constitution Act, 1982 to limit the Federal Government's ability to restrict property rights. This limitation would be binding only on the Federal Government.

Constitutional Amendments

A. The Reform Party maintains that Canada should remain a single united country and that unity can only be maintained by a clear commitment to Canada as one nation, in which the demands and aspirations of all regions are entitled to equal status in constitutional negotiations and political debate.

B. The Reform Party supports a bottom-up process of public consultation in any constitutional negotiations, including electing delegates to Constitutional Conventions at provincial or regional levels.

C. A Reform Government will introduce a motion in the House of Commons stating that in the future, Parliament shall not vote on any constitutional amendment affecting all of Canada, including any changes to the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, unless that amendment has been approved in a national referendum.

D. The Reform Party supports the replacement of the various existing formulae for amending different parts of the Constitution with amending formulae that replace the ratification power of Parliament and the provincial legislatures with that of the people, as expressed in binding referenda.

Regional Fairness Tests

A. The Reform Party supports public analysis of the regional distribution of all federal funds as a routine legislative process. Distribution would be analyzed on an east-west and north-south basis.

B. In calculating federal-provincial transfer payments, the Reform Party supports including economic rents from hydroelectric activities as provincial revenue.

Status of The Territories

A. The Reform Party supports the right of the Territories to achieve full provincial status.

Aboriginal Affairs

A. The Reform Party supports beginning a new relationship with aboriginal peoples of Canada with a Constitutional Convention of aboriginal representatives from across Canada to discuss the application of Reform Party policy.

B. The Reform Party's ultimate goal in aboriginal matters is that all aboriginal people be full and equal participants in Canadian citizenship, indistinguishable in law and treatment from other Canadians.

C. The Reform Party supports fully honouring treaties according to their original intent and Court decisions. Property owners forced to defend their property rights as a result of Aboriginal land claims will be compensated for defence of the claim.

D. The Reform Party supports keeping the administration of Indian and Inuit affairs with the Federal Government. Non-status Indians and Metis will remain under provincial jurisdiction.

E. The Reform Party maintains that any form of Indian self-government will be a delegated form of government and all lands within the borders of Canada will remain part of Canada. The laws of Canada (and the Provinces and Territories) including the Canadian Constitution and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms will apply to Indian governments. Any laws enacted by Indian governments must conform with the laws of Canada.

F. The Chief Electoral Officer of Elections Canada will have authority over Indian government elections.

G. The settlement of land claims will be negotiated publicly and all settlements will outline specific terms, be final, and conclude within a specific time frame. Final settlements will be affordable to Canada and the provinces.

H. The Reform Party advocates the public disclosure of the value and extent of all current land claims as a first step in addressing Indian land claims.

I. Over time, Indian governments will be obligated to fund their operations from within their own communities. Individuals and communities should be free to choose whether they wish to support Indian political organizations.

J. The Reform Party supports giving the Auditor General of Canada full authority to review the management of federal funds by Indian governments.

K. The Reform Party supports the right of individuals living on reserves and eligible for government benefits to choose to receive those benefits either directly from the Federal Government or through Indian government.

L. The Reform Party supports the right of individuals entitled to reside on settlement lands to choose to hold their entitlement privately or in common.

M. The Reform Party supports eliminating the taxation exemption under the Indian Act of Canada as aboriginal economic conditions improve.

N. The Reform Party supports viewing new land settlements or self-government agreements in the context of "One Canada" - equality for and among all persons. Therefore, the Indian Act of Canada will be repealed and replaced by legislation respecting the above principles.

Justice Reform

Family Violence

A. The Reform Party recognizes that child abuse and family violence attack the very foundations of organized society. The Party supports enacting, communicating, and enforcing laws that protect family members against such acts. Effective programs aimed at prevention of family violence will be a priority.

Young Offenders

A. The Reform Party supports repealing the Young Offenders Act and establishing a definition of juvenile offender within the Criminal Code. Until such time, the Reform Party supports amending the Young Offenders Act so that it will:

1. include only young offenders aged 10 to 15. Serious offenders aged 14 and 15 and offenders 16 and over should be tried as adults;
2. permit public access to court proceedings in cases involving 14 and 15 year-old offenders, and in cases where the public's right to know supersedes the need to protect the youth's identity;
3. maintain separate young offenders' facilities which emphasize education, skills training, discipline, and community service. The records of young offenders should be treated similarly to the criminal records of adults;
4. hold parents of young offenders financially responsible to victims where lack of reasonable parental control has proven to be a factor contributing to the offence.

Justice

- A. The Reform Party supports a judicial system which places the punishment of crime and the protection of law-abiding citizens and their property ahead of all other objectives.
- B. The Reform Party maintains that the right of citizens to use all reasonable means to protect themselves and their property against criminal acts should have priority over the rights of the offender.
- C. The Reform Party supports granting victims of crime official standing in court and parole hearings, and requiring courts and parole boards to review victim impact statements before sentencing. To the greatest extent possible, victims should be compensated by offenders for financial loss resulting from criminal acts.
- D. The Reform Party supports a national Victims' Bill of Rights, which would restore a balance within the criminal justice system by placing the rights of victims above the rights of the criminal.
- E. The Reform Party supports greater certainty in sentencing by introducing a sentencing guideline grid in the Criminal Code. Some low risk offenders should have access to reduced sentences by successfully completing a regimented life-enhancement program.
- F. The Reform Party supports adding a new definition to the Criminal Code which deems any person who commits on two or more separate occasions an offence causing serious personal injury a dangerous offender and subject to an indeterminate period of imprisonment.
- G. The Reform Party opposes granting voting privileges to convicted prisoners.

H. The Reform Party supports amending the Criminal Code to allow police with probable cause to demand DNA samples from crime suspects.

I. The Reform Party supports reviewing the right of judges to place publicity bans on trials.

J. The Reform Party supports repealing section 745 of the Criminal Code. All persons convicted of first degree murder should be imprisoned for life, with no chance of parole or conditional release in any form for twenty-five years.

K. The Reform Party supports legislation that prevents criminals from collecting damages from private citizens for injuries sustained during a criminal act, including injuries resulting from a victim's attempt at self-defence. Self-defence includes any justified use of force.

L. The Reform Party would support legislation that would allow the publication of the names of all convicted offenders, including young offenders.

M. The Reform Party supports eliminating the immigration appeal process for non-citizens convicted of an indictable offence. Offenders should be deported once convicted or after serving their sentence, as determined by the court.

N. The Reform Party believes that any adult convicted of helping a young offender commit a crime should pay the same penalty as if the adult committed the crime personally. Adults contributing to the delinquency of a minor should also be charged.

O. The Reform Party supports legislation requiring criminals to serve sentences for multiple convictions consecutively, not concurrently.

Firearms

- A. A Reform Government will introduce legislation to severely punish the criminal misuse of firearms and protect the right of law-abiding citizens to own and use firearms.
- B. The Reform Party recognizes the need for broad public consultation in formulating firearm legislation, including opinions of law enforcement officers, informed firearms owners, and other Canadians.
- C. The Reform Party supports repealing Bill C-68 and replacing it with a workable and practical alternative which will include severe automatic penalties for those who use firearms in criminal acts. Plea bargaining on firearms offences will not be allowed.
- D. The Reform Party supports mandatory training and testing for first time owners prior to obtaining a firearm.

E. The Reform Party opposes measures which permit the government to confiscate legally obtained firearms from law-abiding citizens. The Reform Party opposes changes to firearms legislation through Order-in-Council.

Parole

A. The Reform Party supports requiring violent offenders to serve their full sentences. Once released, some violent offenders and all repeat offenders should be under parole supervision for the rest of their lives.

B. The Reform Party supports permitting low risk inmates to participate in civic or business projects which enhance their skills and prepare them for productive life after release. Day parole should only be granted to non-violent offenders attending projects within the community. A portion of the money earned from such work should be directed towards victim compensation. Early release and parole should be directly related to successful participation in work projects.

C. The Reform Party supports amending the Criminal Code to adopt a specific sexual predator law that ensures continued monitoring, even after such convicts are released from custody. Prior to release, sexual predators should be examined by a panel of experts to certify that the offender does not pose a threat to society.

D. The Reform Party opposes the selection of parole board members on the basis of patronage. Parole board members should be chosen based on merit, and should be properly trained in the justice process.

Federal Court System

A. The Reform Party supports replacing the current system of appointing federal judges with a democratic and accountable method.

B. The provincial legislatures, rather than the Prime Minister, should make appointments to the Supreme Court and all courts where judges are currently appointed by the Federal Government. Appointments would be ratified by a Triple-E Senate, and would be considered acceptable only if they have been made by a vote of the legislature, rather than by means of selection by the premier or provincial government.

C. The Reform Party supports adequate regional representation on the Supreme Court.

D. The Reform Party supports appointing Supreme Court justices for fixed, non-renewable terms of ten years.

Royal Canadian Mounted Police

A. The Reform Party supports the traditional role of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police as a police force representative of and responsive to the populations it serves in Canada's regions.

Social Reform

Alternatives to the Welfare State

A. The Reform Party opposes the view that universal social programs run by bureaucrats are the best and only way to care for the poor, the sick, the old and the young.

B. The Reform Party supports greater compassion in the delivery mechanisms for social policy. We would actively encourage families, communities, non-governmental organizations and the private sector to resume their duties and responsibilities in social service areas.

C. The Reform Party supports focusing social benefits on those who need the help (in a rational and compassionate manner).

D. The Reform Party supports greater financial sustainability in social policy and this requires a commitment to sound financial management. No citizen should be denied services because of financial status or inability to pay, but this does not necessitate the full subsidization of those able to pay all or part of the costs themselves.

E. The Reform Party supports a more simplified and comprehensive social policy. We believe a simplified income-tax system would reveal data enabling governments to determine eligibility for social policies intended to raise the purchasing power of low-income individuals, without complex means or needs tests.

F. The Reform Party supports the idea of requiring those recipients of employment insurance and welfare/social assistance, who are capable of doing so, to perform community service or job training or to undertake a form of education while receiving benefits.

Income Security / Support

A. The Reform Party supports the development of a family or household-oriented comprehensive social security system administered through the income-tax system. This could replace many forms of social policy, such as the Spousal Exemption, Child Tax Credit, federal contributions to social assistance payments, retirement plans, federal social housing programs, day-care deductions, and minimum wage laws. We will explore existing options such as the guaranteed annual income, security investment fund, and negative income tax.

Canada Pension Plan

A. The Reform Party believes in ensuring a secure retirement income for all Canadians. We would protect benefits for current seniors and all CPP contributors and would provide individuals with the means to control and direct their retirement savings through mandatory contributions into self-directed Super-RRSPs.

Unemployment Insurance

A. The Reform Party supports the return of Unemployment Insurance (UI) to its original function — an employer-employee funded and administered program to provide temporary income in the event of unexpected job loss.

B. The Reform Party supports the immediate elimination of discriminatory UI elements, such as regional entrance requirements and regionally-extended benefit phases, in ways that do not increase the costs of the program.

C. The Reform Party supports investigating the feasibility of replacing the compulsory, government operated, privately funded, taxpayer subsidized UI program with a voluntary, personally financed, privately administered, government-regulated Registered Unemployment Savings Plan (RUSP).

Training and Education

A. The Reform Party believes that the Federal Government should:

1. transfer the funding of post-secondary education to the provinces as outlined in the "Taxpayers' Budget";
2. promote and stimulate research and educational excellence in the national interest through public and private research grants; and
3. institute a federally funded income-contingent loan plan that is as near to being interest free to students as possible.

B. The Reform Party supports national standards in all levels of education and apprenticeships. Through cooperative inter-provincial agreements, the Federal Government should foster:

1. the development of national standards in education and vocational training;
2. stronger partnerships among higher education institutions, professional associations and public authorities, business and other organizations that have a stake in the quality of higher education and research; and
3. internationalization in post-secondary education.

Family

A. The Reform Party believes a family should be defined as individuals related by blood, marriage or adoption. Marriage is the union of a man and a woman as recognized by the state and this definition will be used in the provision of spousal benefits for any program funded or administered by the Federal Government.

B. The Reform Party affirms the duty of parents to raise their children responsibly according to their own conscience and beliefs, and further affirms that no person, government, or agency has a right to interfere in the exercise of that duty, as long as the actions of parents do not constitute abuse or neglect.

Child Care

A. The Reform Party supports child-care programs that subsidize financial need, not the method of child care chosen, and that subsidize children and parents, not institutions and professionals.

B. The Reform Party opposes any expenditure-increasing child-care initiative in light of the current fiscal situation of the Government of Canada.

C. The Reform Party supports government regulation of day-care standards.

D. The Reform Party opposes state-run day-care.

Health Care

A. The Reform Party supports the value of Medicare in providing essential, comprehensive national health services, publicly funded, portable across Canada and universally accessible to all Canadians regardless of financial status.

B. The Reform Party supports defining Medicare's essential services in consultation with users, health care professionals, the provinces and the Federal Government. Non-essential services would not be reimbursed by Medicare.

C. The Reform Party supports Canadians' freedom to access essential and non-essential health care services, beyond Medicare, if they so choose.

D. The Reform Party supports converting federal cash transfers to the provinces for health into additional "tax points", which would provide a stable and growing revenue source for longer term provincial funding of Medicare.

E. The Reform Party supports the complete rearrangement of the concept of health care insurance, such as: basic deductibles; medisave accounts; choice of insurance coverage; and complete coverage for catastrophic illness.

F. The Reform Party supports adding HIV to the list of infectious, reportable diseases.

Culture and Official Languages

A. The Reform Party supports the freedom of Canadian cultural communities to grow and develop without needless protection and government regulation, encouraging a cultural free market which offers choice, while lowering costs to consumers as services are provided by those sectors which are able to do so most cost-effectively.

B. The Reform Party supports a language policy based on freedom of speech. We reject comprehensive language legislation, whether in the nature of enforced bilingualism or unilingualism, regardless of the level of government. The Reform Party supports personal bilingualism.

C. The Reform Party opposes the concept of Canada as "a meeting of two founding races, cultures, and languages" as an inappropriate description of the reality of the regions outside Central Canada, unfair to the vast majority of unilingual Canadians, and completely inconsistent in its own application.

D. The Reform Party supports the replacement of the Official Languages Act with a new language law that reflects the demographic reality of Canada and the provinces. The Reform Party supports "asking the people", through a referendum, to approve this new law.

E. The Reform Party supports official bilingualism in key federal institutions, such as Parliament and the Supreme Court, and in critical federal services in parts of the country where need is sufficient to warrant services on a cost-effective basis.

F. The Reform Party supports a recognition of French in Quebec and English elsewhere as the predominant language of work and society.

G. The Reform Party supports protection of minority education rights, possibly by interprovincial agreement.

H. The Reform Party supports removal of bilingual bonuses to federal public servants as a cost-reduction measure.

Multiculturalism

A. The Reform Party stands for the acceptance and integration of immigrants into the mainstream of Canadian life. The Reform Party would focus Federal Government activities on enhancing the citizenship of all Canadians regardless of race, language or culture.

B. The Reform Party of Canada opposes the current concept of multiculturalism and hyphenated Canadianism pursued by the Government of Canada. We would end funding of the multiculturalism program and support the abolition of the Department of Multiculturalism.

C. The Reform Party supports and shall uphold the principle that individuals or groups are free to preserve their cultural heritage using their own resources.

Immigration

A. The Reform Party supports an immigration policy that focuses on Canada's economic needs and welcomes genuine refugees. We remain convinced that immigration has been, and can be again, a positive source of economic growth, cultural diversity, and social renewal. Immigrants should possess the human capital necessary to adjust quickly and independently to the needs of Canadian society and the job market.

B. The Reform Party opposes any immigration policy based on race or creed.

C. The Reform Party supports restricting sponsorship privileges to immediate family members (spouses, minor dependent children, and aged dependent parents). All others should apply for entry through the normal selective process.

D. The Reform Party supports accepting genuine refugees who find their way to Canada. A genuine refugee has a well-founded fear of persecution and qualifies under the strict requirements of the United Nations Convention.

E. The Reform Party supports immediate deportation of bogus refugees and other illegal entrants; persons who promote such activities should be subject to severe penalties without exception. The Constitution may have to be amended to ensure that Parliament ultimately controls entry into Canada; in the interim, the Charter's "notwithstanding" provision should be used to ensure this is the case.

F. The Reform Party opposes the use of immigration policy to solve the crisis of the welfare state through forced-growth population policy. The problem of the pension costs of an aging population is neither caused nor cured by immigration policy.

G. The Reform Party supports submitting all major changes to immigration, including sponsorship requirements and amnesties, to referendum.

H. The Reform Party supports amending the Immigration Act so that a sponsored immigrant must become a Canadian citizen to qualify for social services or health care.

I. The Reform Party supports an immigration policy that requires children born in Canada to take the citizenship of their parents. Children born in Canada to landed immigrants would assume Canadian citizenship.

J. The Reform Party maintains that immigration levels should be established at a maximum of 150,000 per year in any year where the unemployment rate exceeds 10%, with increases in immigration as the unemployment rate falls below 10%.

Environmental Reform

Sustainable Development

A. The Reform Party supports ensuring that all Canadians dwell in a clean and healthy environment. The Party supports sustainable development because, without economic development and the income generated therefrom, the environment will not be protected or enjoyed.

B. The Reform Party believes environmental considerations must carry equal weight with economic, social, and technical considerations in the development of a project.

C. The Reform Party supports integrating environmental and economic objectives in management philosophy, structure, procedures and planning in which the Federal Government has constitutional jurisdiction.

D. The Reform Party supports the initiation of a public education program of environmentally conscious purchasing. The Federal Government should be environmentally conscious in its purchasing and encourage the private sector to do the same.

E. The Reform Party supports the Federal Government participating in international commissions to regulate clear cutting of forests, ocean transportation of environmentally hazardous materials and the fishing of international waters.

Coordinated Action

A. The Reform Party supports the establishment of clear federal-provincial jurisdiction over environmental matters

through negotiations with the provinces. The Reform Party also supports the development and application of environmental criteria through a joint federal-provincial process where appropriate so as to reduce duplication, confusion and unnecessary regulation.

B. The Reform Party supports federal leadership and commitment to sustainable development. This includes developing partnerships with provincial governments, private industry, educational institutions, and the public in order to promote meaningful progress in the area of environmental protection.

C. The Reform Party supports the Multipartite Round Table approach to environment and economy, as a means of finding common ground and building consensus in the development of measures to deal with environmental issues.

D. The Reform Party supports regional development to alleviate concentrated areas of industrial activity and population.

E. The Reform Party supports the development of acceptable environmental regulations through consultation and cooperation between industry and the public. The government should be directed to enforce these regulations firmly, fairly and equally.

Pollution Control

A. The Reform Party supports setting a specified time frame to ensure that water discharged from industrial plants will be of equal or better quality than water taken into the plant for use, and that gaseous emissions will not contain any harmful ingredients.

B. The Reform Party supports a country-wide program to improve municipal sewage treatment involving tertiary treatment facilities wherever possible.

C. The Reform Party supports immediate long-term restoration programs for areas of the environment damaged due to inadequate or improperly enforced regulations.

D. The Reform Party supports the principle that the polluter shall pay for its pollution controls, that this be stringently enforced in an unbiased manner, and that penalties be severe enough that polluters will not consider them a "licence fee" to pollute.

E. The Reform Party supports fines and jail sentences for officers and executives of companies violating environmental laws.

Environmentally-Sensitive Zoning

A. The Reform Party supports the concept of "environmentally-sensitive zoning."

External Relations

International Trade

- A. The Reform Party supports free trade in principle.
- B. The Reform Party supports making free trade work to Canada's greater advantage by removing interprovincial trade barriers, lowering the tax burden, and shifting emphasis from welfare to retraining and technological development.
- C. The Reform Party supports amending the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement and the North American Free Trade Agreement to maintain exclusive and unrestricted Canadian control of Canadian water in all forms.
- D. The Reform Party supports a comprehensive effort to realign Canada's economic policies to be consistent with our international trade requirements. This realignment must include industrial development policies, science and research policies, regulatory policies, taxation policies, transportation policies, education policies, and fiscal and monetary policies.
- E. The Reform Party supports forming interprovincial trade groups to promote external trade relations, beginning with Pacific Rim countries.

Defence

- A. The Reform Party supports the maintenance of a professional, well-equipped, and sufficiently strong Army, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard to:
 - 1. assert Canada's political, economic, and environmental sovereignty over its entire territory;
 - 2. continue our participation in NATO and NORAD, or any similar organization which is likely to be created in the near future;
 - 3. participate in international peacekeeping missions when and where the need arises;
 - 4. provide fast, efficient and readily available search and rescue capability, where needed; and
 - 5. provide a fast response to national or international conflicts, where required, and assistance to civil authorities during natural or manmade disasters.

- B. The Reform Party supports the development of defence policies based on:

- 1. greater reliance on Reserves;
- 2. adaptable and general-purpose equipment;
- 3. reduced overhead for bases and headquarters;
- 4. careful and specified commitments to alliances, including UN peace-keeping efforts; and
- 5. lower costs.

- C. The Reform Party supports the maintenance of Reserves equal to the number of regular troops in the military force. Legislation should be passed to guarantee Reservists their jobs upon returning from training and/or active duty.

Foreign Affairs

- A. The Reform Party supports foreign policy guided by the values and principles of Canadians — political democracy, economic freedom, and human rights. The Reform Party will strive for greater integrity and consistency in the application of Canadian policy abroad and at home.
- B. The Reform Party supports a review of Canada's participation in international organizations and would remain in organizations that are efficient, accountable and useful in promoting Canada's international interests.
- C. The Reform Party supports restructuring the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) to provide it with a legislative mandate and make it smaller and more accountable. To ensure that CIDA supports the priorities of grassroots Canadians, contribution to Canadian non-governmental organizations should match, but not exceed, the privately raised funds of those organizations.

Foreign Aid

- A. The Reform Party supports a reduction in foreign aid, particularly in government-to-government grants and low interest loans, until the federal deficit and debt are under control. Canada's foreign aid policy should encourage individuals and private organizations to fund and administer foreign aid and should emphasize the provision of Canadian goods and services rather than direct financial aid.
- B. The Reform Party opposes Federal Government foreign aid to governments which suppress basic human rights.

Years of traditional party government — characterized by broken promises and unfulfilled commitments — have destroyed the faith of Canadians in political promises and platforms. How can that faith be restored? By political reform designed to give the people themselves the democratic tools to hold their politicians accountable and force governments to keep their commitments. These political reforms, designed to establish political accountability, are inserted in the following section.

Political Reform

Representation in Parliament

A. When a Reform M.P. votes in the Parliament of Canada, he or she represents:

1. the principles, policies and platform of the Reform Party of Canada on which the M.P. was elected;
2. the views and interests of constituents in the M.P.'s riding, in particular the consensus among constituents, if such a consensus can be determined; and
3. the M.P.'s own knowledge, judgement and conscience regarding the issues at hand.

For Reform M.P.s, where (1), (2), and (3) are in conflict, it is (2) — the consensus of the will of a majority of the constituents — which takes precedence.

B. The Reform Party pledges that, having had a full opportunity to express their views and vote freely in Caucus, Reform M.P.s shall vote according to the agreed-upon Caucus position in the House of Commons except under the following conditions:

1. when a Member can demonstrate that a majority of his or her constituents have instructed him or her to vote otherwise;

2. when the issue has been designated by the Reform Party Assembly to be an "Issue of Personal Conscience"; or
3. when the Caucus explicitly decides that the issue should be decided by a free vote.

C. The Reform Party supports changing Parliamentary rules to allow free votes in the House of Commons. We believe that the defeat of a government measure in the House of Commons should not automatically mean the defeat of the government. Defeat of a government motion should be followed by a formal motion of non-confidence, the passage of which would require either the resignation of the government or dissolution of the House for a general election.

D. The Reform Party supports that the Reform Caucus make public its voting record on government legislation at the end of the yearly legislative reporting period.

Recall

A. The Reform Party supports allowing constituents to initiate a recall procedure against their M.P. if they believe he or she has violated his/her oath of office.

B. The recall petition must contain the names, addresses and signatures of electors ordinarily resident in the member's electoral district. The number required for a successful petition should be low enough to permit recall to be a genuine incentive to act in a representative manner, but high enough to prevent its misuse.

C. In order to avoid misuse, no recall application shall be accepted until at least twelve months after the most recent election, unless a Member has misrepresented material facts about himself or herself during that election.

D. Only one submission for the recall of any one Member shall be accepted during the term of a Parliament.

Referendum and Citizens' Initiative

A. The Reform Party supports a law guaranteeing the right of the people to initiate binding referenda on new legislation and constitutional amendments, and on the repeal of any existing law or constitutional amendment.

B. The Reform Party supports a direct democratic process without partisanship or suppression of opinion on the following:

1. Issues Which Change Canada's Basic Social Fabric. The Reform Party has identified immigration, language and measurement as falling into this category.
2. Issues of Personal Conscience. The Reform Party identifies abortion and capital punishment as falling within this category.

C. The Reform Party shall work toward enabling legislation for a binding national referendum on each of capital punishment and abortion.

D. The following process will be employed by Reform Members of Parliament on issues designated by the Reform Party Assembly to be "Issues of Personal Conscience" — that is, on issues where there exists among Canadians a sharp divergence of intensely-held, value-based personal convictions — the following process will be employed by Reform Members of Parliament to decide public policy:

1. Reform M.P.s will state clearly and publicly their personal views and beliefs on the subject;
2. they will ask their constituents to develop, to express, and to debate their own views on the matter;
3. following such a process, M.P.s will seek the consensus of the constituency on the issue; and
4. on related government legislation in the House of Commons Reform M.P.s will vote in accordance with the expressed will of their constituents.

E. The Reform Party believes the number of signatures needed to initiate a referendum should not represent an insurmountable barrier, but should be high enough to prevent frivolous referendum questions from being placed on the ballot. Based on the experience of other jurisdictions, a petition signed by a number of voters representing not less than three percent of the total votes cast in the most recent federal election is reasonable.

F. The Reform Party believes that, if possible, referendum issues should be placed on the ballot concurrently with a general federal election. However, since some issues are too urgent to be delayed until election-time, all referenda initiated by petition should be held within two years of the petition being submitted.

G. The Reform Party supports legislation that ensures referenda are conducted in the fairest and most non-partisan manner possible. In particular, the Federal Government should be forbidden from placing "counter-initiatives" on the same ballot as an initiative question.

H. The Reform Party supports restricting the Federal Government's ability to invoke section 33 of the Constitution Act, 1982 (the "Notwithstanding" Clause) so that Supreme Court rulings striking down federal laws can only be overridden by the federal government if authorized by a majority of Canadians in a national referendum.

Electoral Reform

A. The Reform Party supports holding elections every four years at a predetermined time of year. If a government were defeated in the House of Commons, an election would be called immediately. The subsequent election would be four years from the same predetermined time of the year.

B. The Reform Party supports requiring by-elections be held within six months of a seat becoming vacant.

C. The Reform Party opposes any assistance to political parties and political lobbies from public funds, including any refund of candidate or party expenses, government advertising during the electoral period, the "renting" of Parliamentary staff for reimbursement, tax credits for contributions to federal political parties, and the transfer of tax credits to leadership or nomination campaigns, or to provincial or municipal parties.

D. The Reform Party supports amendments to the Canada Elections Act to ensure that only eligible voters are enumerated, cast only one ballot, and provide proof of identification before voting. The power to challenge eligibility would also be returned to electoral officers and scrutineers at polling stations.

Parliamentary Reform

A. The Reform Party supports repealing sections of the Canada Elections Act which make M.P.s beholden to their national party executive or leader rather than their constituents (such as the provisions for the signing of nomination papers).

B. The Reform Party supports amending the M.P.s' oath of office such that they swear or affirm allegiance to their Queen, their constituents and to Canada.

C. The Reform Party supports restrictions on the number and types of Orders-in-Council permitted by a government during its term of office. In the interim, Reform Party M.P.s will strive to make Parliamentary committees effective in reviewing any regulations before implementation.

D. The Reform Party will insist that all laws applying to individuals and the private sector apply equally to the Government of Canada, its personnel, its agencies and Parliament.

M.P. Pensions and Benefit Packages

A. The Reform Party opposes the current pension schemes for Members of Parliament. We would end full indexation of these pensions. We would postpone eligibility for benefits until at least age 60, and further postpone eligibility by the amount of time in which the person has already been paid prior to age 60. We would subject the M.P. pension to a tax-back according to a formula identical to that of the Old Age Security.

B. The Reform Party supports the provision of pensions for M.P.s only if those pensions are no more generous than private sector norms and meet all requirements for a registered plan under the Income Tax Act. Reformers also support using an independent body to make binding recommendations to Parliament with regard to M.P. pensions, and that these recommendations be applied to the future benefits paid to both retired and currently sitting Members.

C. The Reform Party supports a re-examination of M.P.s' and Senators' expense allowances, free services, staff privileges and limousines in light of private sector standards and the failure of M.P.s to reform the House of Commons. Until a balanced budget is achieved, the salaries and expenses of government M.P.s and their offices should be frozen.

D. The Reform Party opposes paying multiple salaries to M.P.s who are also cabinet ministers or committee chairmen, or who hold other Parliamentary positions.

NOTES

- The Reform Party will implement the policies related to political parties, parliamentary spending, and candidates in this publication when we form the government, so that no one political party or candidate will be put at a financial or competitive disadvantage.
- Provinces and/or Territories are considered interchangeable terms where applicable.
- The Reform Party initiates various task forces to study issues and recommend policy proposals to the Party membership. At present, task forces are studying Canada's Constitutional Amending Formula, Electoral Reform, the Environment, National Defence, and National Fisheries.

Membership / Contribution Form

- ☐ I wish to receive a copy of Reform's "Fresh Start" election platform.
- ☐ Please sign me up as a member of The Reform Party of Canada.
- ☐ 5 yr (\$50)
- ☐ 3 yr (\$30)
- ☐ 1 yr (\$10)
- ☐ Please accept my financial contribution to The Reform Party of Canada.
- ☐ I am interested in working for Reform in the next federal election.

The Reform Party of Canada is a registered political party and your total contributions in any one year will entitle you to the following tax credits:

<u>Your Contribution</u>	<u>Tax Credit</u>	<u>Actual Cost</u>
\$ 25.00	\$ 18.75	\$ 6.25
\$ 50.00	\$ 37.50	\$ 12.50
\$ 75.00	\$ 56.25	\$ 18.75
\$ 100.00	\$ 75.00	\$ 25.00
\$ 1,150.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 650.00

**YES, I WANT
TO HELP GIVE
CANADIANS
A FRESH START**

Please complete and mail to:



#600, 833 - 4 Avenue S.W., Calgary, Alberta T2P OK5 or fax (403) 269-4077.

Name _____

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