

**P.E.I. POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT -**  
**VERTICAL FILE** "N"

P.E.I. COLLECTION  
LIBRARY OF U.P.E.I.

LIBRARY USE ONLY

A T I M E F O R C H A N G E

New Democratic Party Program

## A TIME FOR CHANGE

This is a time for change. We are faced with new problems and we need new solutions. The New Democratic Party seeks to be a vital part of this process. We are New Democrats because we believe that a more just and equitable social order can and must be achieved. The tyranny of the old two-party system must be broken down.

What is presented here are the policies of the P.E.I. New Democratic Party. Policy in our Party is made by democratic means in open conventions. The membership of the Party is the final arbitrator in matters of policy. We do not construct our "platform" on the eve of an election in order to convince the electorate that we will deliver more give-aways than our opponents. That is the very abuse which we seek to end.

Our policies are realistic, achievable and necessary. They mean a New Deal for the people of Prince Edward Island.

11 STEPS TOWARD A NEW DEAL FOR PEOPLE

1. Integrity in Government
2. Agriculture
3. Land Use and Ownership
4. Health
5. Education
6. Housing
7. Labour
8. Fisheries
9. Utilities
10. Consumers and Cost of Living
11. Senior Citizens

## Integrity in Government

No society can exist without government. The building of a free and creative society requires government in which the citizens can take pride and take part. So that it may carry out its leading role, government must be fully representative, honest, efficient, concerned and responsive. The day has long past when government could be merely a supreme magistrate supervising the negative concerns of the community.

### Code of Ethics

The P.E.I. New Democratic Party believes that the community can insist on high standards of conduct from all elected representatives. It will enact a code of ethics relating to the public activity of members of the Legislature and municipal representatives. Readily enforceable penalties will be established for violations; particular attention will be given to defining precisely what constitutes conflict of interest. The code will serve as a guide for all elected representatives. The penalties will help to deter the few whose standards are not in accord with our tradition of public service and will provide a means of removing them from office when circumstances dictate.

### Elimination of Patronage

Contracts for government work will be awarded according to a strict system of tenders. The law prohibiting political contributions by government contractors will be enforced. Appointments and promotions in government service will be taken out of politics through an effective independent Civil Service Commission, on which the civil servants themselves will have representation.

Integrity in Government (continued)

Patronage on crown corporations and other government agencies will also be eliminated.

An NDP-PEI government will recognize and enter into written collective agreements with representative organizations of all public employees.

## AGRICULTURE

Agriculture has been and continues to be the backbone of the Island economy. Changes in the fortunes of farmers affect virtually every aspect of Island life. The NDP recognizes the need to ensure stability and growth in this sector. To that end, the NDP proposes the following policies:

1. We recognize the very real threat of corporate farming and vertical integration to bona fide Island producers. We would, therefore, completely prohibit all corporate farming with the exception of farm corporations whose members are all actively engaged primarily in agriculture.

2. To assure proper use of agricultural land, the Land Development Corporation would be given the option of first purchase on all agricultural land sales.

3. To encourage more young people to enter agriculture, we would provide capital assistance to beginning farmers as well as loans free of interest for ten years, that will be payable over thirty years.

4. We would establish a farm products agency composed of elected farmers representatives. This agency would be empowered to regulate and promote marketing, production standards, disease control and other matters deemed important to the industry.

5. The NDP would assist in the establishment of co-operative machinery depots which would reduce costs of farm machinery as well as parts and service.

6. We would establish a provincial crown corporation to regulate the supply and distribution of fertilizers and

AGRICULTURE (continued)

chemicals to food producers of P.E.I.

7. To encourage more young people to become active in agriculture we would insure that agricultural courses be taught in Island schools and a certificate course be available for those entering or already engaged in the industry.

8. Present crop insurance programs would be broadened to cover all crops. Compensation would be based on the average yield and price on the years crop.

## LAND USE AND OWNERSHIP

Land is our most precious resource. It is fundamental to our way of life, and to the economic base of the province. We must do everything in our power to safeguard this most vitally important part of our heritage. We have a duty not only to our generation, but to those yet to come. With this in mind, the NDP will:

1. completely prohibit all corporate farming, with the exception of farm corporations whose members are all actively engaged primarily in agriculture;
2. prohibit land sales to aliens (non-Canadians) with exceptions such as former Islanders returning home to retire;
3. introduce substantially higher property taxes on land owned by non-residents. Tax rates will increase the larger the number of acres owned;
4. give the LDC option of first purchase on all agricultural land sales;
5. coordinate activities of LDC and Housing Authority to develop a comprehensive land assembly program for residential and recreational land as well as agricultural land;
6. introduce minimum maintenance legislation for all land;
7. provide for community decision-making by community groups.



## HEALTH

Easily accessible and inexpensive health care should be a basic right of every citizen. An NDP government would:

1. Decentralize health care facilities. Community health care units, employing specially trained nursing and paramedical staff, would be created. The emphasis would be on preventative medicine. This would end the over-emphasis on large and expensive facilities in central locations and would mean better health care at lower cost.

2. Greatly improve accident and emergency services, including the training and licencing of ambulance personnel.

3. Provide hearing aids, eye glasses and other appliances at greatly reduced cost through a system of bulk purchasing by government. Existing distribution facilities could be used to service such a plan.

4. Develop over a transitional period a dental care plan similar to the existing medical care insurance plan.

## Education

Based on the belief that every parent should be as close as possible to the decisions that affect their children's education as outlined in the Human Rights Charter of the United Nations (section 26), the Island New Democratic Party would:

1. review the present foundation programme and make the necessary changes so that all parents will have a voice in the planning of the system of education for their children;
2. support the concept of fully elected school boards. In addition to this, areas which do not feel that the present school boards truly represent them, will be given the opportunity to form new boards;
3. be committed to eliminating any duplication of services which now exists between the Department of Education, Board Offices, and Schools;
4. change the method of establishing the teacher-pupil ratio according to the needs of areas and communities in such a way as to guarantee a sufficient number of teachers to carry on programmes efficiently;
5. give local school boards more autonomy over curriculum in their areas, particularly in the areas of vocational education. This area of education must be decentralized and extended so that students in all areas of P.E.I. will have a chance for equal opportunity in trade and vocational development;

Education (continued)

6. will establish an advisory committee to the Minister of Education which will be representative of organized groups which are involved in the educational process in the province. This would include such groups as the P.E.I. Teachers' Federation, the Trustees Association interested parent groups and representatives of organizations which have been formed to help with the problem of special needs or learning disabilities;
7. establish an advisory committee to the Minister of Education, which will represent the university students and professors and the students and teachers of Holland College. This committee will bring to the attention of the Minister their concerns about programme, their financial and academic needs;
8. assist in the establishment of a complete system of kindergarten education for the five year olds of P.E.I., due to the fact that our school population is declining and facilities and personnel are available;
9. assist, wherever necessary, in the establishment of day-care centres, properly equipped and staffed, to provide for the needs of the pre-school child.

## HOUSING

Adequate housing at reasonable cost is an essential element of a socially just society. An NDP government will:

1. Develop a land assembly program for residential land. This will stop exploitative land speculation, reduce ribbon development along our highways, and provide low cost serviced land to potential home purchasers.
2. Where possible, those receiving government assistance for rental payments, will be given the opportunity to attain equity in the units they occupy.
3. Provide greater assistance to lower and middle income families seeking to own their own homes, whether individually or in co-operatives.
4. Establish a counselling and information service for prospective home purchasers.
5. Require strict licensing and regulation of the real estate industry.
6. Adopt and enforce the National Building Code in P.E.I..
7. Enact a new landlord and tenant act to end unfair rental practices and clarify the rights of tenants.
8. Establish a rent review board to protect consumers from unwarranted rent increases.
9. Remove the 8% sales tax on building materials.
10. Subsidize interest rates.
11. Pressure the federal government to remove the 11% federal sales tax on building materials.

## LABOUR

All working people must be guaranteed the right to organize for collective bargaining without fear of intimidation. Specifically, the NDP will:

1. Immediately raise the minimum wage for men and women in the work force to \$2.25 per hour.
2. Enact maternity leave provisions for female employees.
3. Legislate against sexual discrimination in hiring.
4. Expedite procedures of Labour Relations Board to allow the working poor to effectively organize.
5. Overhaul Workmen's Compensation procedures.
6. Give the Labour Relations Board greater power to enforce its decisions on unfair labour practices.
7. Abolish the Garnishee Act.

## FISHERIES

The NDP is convinced that our fishermen are not receiving their fair share of returns for their labour. Specifically an NDP government will:

1. assist fishermans' cooperatives for marketing and processing;
2. undertake a study of the most effective ways of using and developing our fishing and fishing-related industries;
3. seek to assist the primary producers (the fishermen) rather than the corporations to whom these fishermen are tied;
4. completely re-evaluate the port designation program;
5. help to establish a collective voice for fishermen by assisting fishermen's groups;
6. provide subsidies for boats smaller than 45 feet.

## PUBLIC UTILITIES

The NDP does not consider that private companies should be allowed to make large profits from basic utilities such as electrical power and telephones. An NDP government would:

1. commit itself to public ownership of the Island telephone system;
2. accept the goal of public ownership of the production and distribution of electricity;
3. use revenues generated by publically owned utilities to finance socially useful programs.

## CONSUMER AFFAIRS

One of the most pressing problems for consumers is the high cost of living, especially in a province with either the lowest or second lowest level of income in Canada. Although no provincial government can halt inflation, it can reduce its impact on consumers. To this end, the NDP will:

1. To reduce the regressive nature of our tax system, we would selectively remove sales taxes from items which low income families spend large portions of their income on. For example, removal of sales tax on building materials.

2. Make significant net reductions in property taxes for Island residents which will not be taken away with higher assessments. To partially offset revenue reductions, substantially higher rates will be charged to non-resident property owners.

3. A rent review board would ensure that any increases in rents would be justifiable.

4. Higher costs to our farmers is as crucial a problem as higher costs to Island consumers. To reduce the cost-price squeeze in which producers find themselves caught, we have proposed the development of a provincial crown corporation to regulate supply and distribution of fertilizer and chemicals, among other things.



## SENIOR CITIZENS

An NDP government considers that society has a responsibility to ensure that senior citizens are afforded the opportunity of a secure and meaningful life. An NDP government would:

1. Begin a program of housing and nursing care units spread throughout the province, in order that those Senior Citizens requiring such facilities need not be separated from their communities.
2. Accept the principle of a minimum income plan, with cost of living escalator clauses, to ensure adequate and decent lives for senior citizens.
3. Include extended nursing care as an insured service under the present medical insurance scheme.
4. Provide prescription drugs at greatly reduced prices.