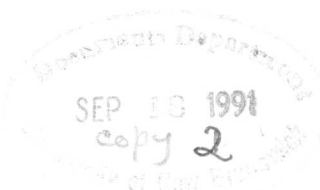


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# CONFEDERATION OF REGIONS

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Confederation of Regions

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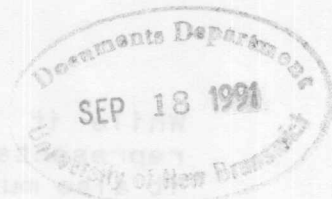
New Brunswick Party

"A Fair Deal for New Brunswickers"

Election Platform

1991

*We The People*



## A FAIR DEAL FOR NEW BRUNSWICKERS

### The C.O.R. - New Brunswick 1991 Election Platform

#### 1. TRUE DEMOCRACY

The C.O.R. Party believes that true democracy can only be achieved through real political power - "People Power." This can be accomplished only through open government, with M.L.A.s responsible to their constituents. This responsibility will be encouraged by requiring all M.L.A.s to make, as part of their Oath of Office, a firm commitment to serve their constituents as well as Her Majesty.

Legislation providing for a recall procedure will be introduced, allowing the electorate to exercise more suasion on its officials. If M.L.A.s were aware that they risk their jobs between elections if they fail to meet the standards set for them by their employers (the public) they would treat public opinion with more concern.

Our program for recall has been developed following considerable research into the systems employed in other democratic jurisdictions. It will provide for the effective representation of the public while, at the same time, protecting elected representatives from frivolous recall actions brought about for purely political gain by an opposing party.

The recall legislation, after considerable public consultation on a draft formula, will be binding on all members of the Legislature.

#### 2. DIRECT DEMOCRACY

A C.O.R. - New Brunswick Government would not affiliate itself with any particular lobby or special group, since we must represent the people directly. Our government will provide the opportunity for the public to voice its concerns to government through the democratic process at the ballot box.

While it is acknowledged that government must lend its ear to representatives of organizations from certain sectors of society, it also must be recognized that government exercises its authority in accordance with the pleasure and the will of the population at large.

We pledge that, under a C.O.R. - New Brunswick administration, no lobby or special interest organization will receive preferential treatment or have a "key to the Premier's door." Instead we would prefer that those wishing to speak to government do so through the properly established process of committees and public hearings.

### 3. LEGISLATIVE REFORM

The Party and Leader should expect the support of elected members on issues which have been addressed by Party policy and platform.

An elected C.O.R. member will be responsible to, in order of precedence, the following: The Electorate, The Party, The Leader.

The Confederation of Regions - New Brunswick Party wants a more open legislature. We will promote the holding of free votes in the House. Party members (from whichever side of the aisle) will be encouraged to vote with the wishes of their constituents at all times. Even government-sponsored bills would be subject to defeat by governing party backbenchers and cabinet members. This procedure is presently discouraged because it is perceived that a government which is defeated on a bill must resign. We feel this is not necessary.

It is our opinion that the government should only be required to resign in the following three circumstances: the defeat of the Speech from the Throne, the defeat of the Budget, and the loss of a vote of confidence in the government.

The elected members of the Confederation of Regions - New Brunswick Party will press for reform of the standing rules and procedures of the House of Assembly to provide for the holding of free votes on all matters.

#### 4. ELECTORAL REFORM

The Confederation of Regions-N.B. Party supports a return to responsible government through the principle of initiative referendum on issues of importance, a fixed four year term for government, and the above-mentioned recall procedure.

Government sponsored referenda will be held on issues such as constitutional amendments, questions of personal liberties and proposals for major new government programs.

Initiative referenda could be mandated for practically any issue of public concern: tax reform, highway routing, and matters of increasing or decreasing the degree of government involvement in service to the public.

C.O.R. - New Brunswick will introduce legislation requiring that elections be held on the first Monday of October in the fourth year following the preceding election.

#### 5. RESTRICTIONS ON OPINION POLLS

A C.O.R. - New Brunswick Government will examine the Elections Act so as to address the effects of the publication of opinion polls during elections.

We in Canada have been witness to many occasions where public opinion polling during elections has so swayed the electorate that it begins to base its voting preference for the party expected to win instead of the party which may have the best policies and platform.

Our party will seek changes to the Election's Act to require certain conditions be met by any media organization wishing to publish a political preference opinion poll during the course of an election.

These changes will allow freedom of the press to be preserved while, at the same time, prevent the results of polls to be adjusted so as to favour one party or candidate over another.



No changes proscribed by the above policy would prevent any media commentator from placing his or her personal interpretation on polling data, so long as the interpretation was noted as a comment or opinion.

## 6. MORALITY IN GOVERNMENT

The C.O.R. Party believes that morality is the cornerstone of democracy, and the acceptance of moral behaviour is the key to a nation's survival. To this end, rules of conduct will be enacted to govern the activities and conduct of all elected members, and anyone holding senior government positions.

We will require that elected members resign from Cabinet upon the commencement of any police investigation into their activities, be they political or private. We will require that elected members resign their seats if convicted of any criminal offence during their term of office. We will require that elected members be circumspect in dress and deportment, and that they be ever mindful of the example which they will be setting for the youth of this Province.

We will also investigate the relationship between the occupations of MLAs and their public duties. We feel that the ideal MLA is one who devotes the entire business day to the public duty.

Unfortunately there is no provision at present for MLAs who leave previous employment to take office with the knowledge that their former jobs will be available to them at the end of their political service.

We will be asking the public to comment on the possibility of enacting legislation which would protect elected representatives from loss of seniority or pension benefits because of a hiatus from their previous occupations. We hope we will be able to arrive at a system which will allow all elected members to be full-time representatives of the people for the time that they are in office.

## 7. POLITICAL FINANCING OF PARTIES

We will review the Political Process Financing Act and we will be asking the people of New Brunswick to give us their opinions on how political parties should raise their money. Specifically, we will be asking if it is appropriate for parties to receive contributions from:

outside the Province;

from businesses;

from organized labour;

from tax dollars.

We also have seen the need to review the rules and limits regarding spending by political parties during non-election periods. The Act must be structured so it does not limit the free speech of New Brunswickers of any political stripe.

## 8. FULL PARTICIPATION BY CIVIL SERVANTS IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS

The recent Supreme Court decision regarding the political participation rights of public servants must be respected in New Brunswick. We will amend Section 27 of the Civil Service Act to permit most civil servants to be more openly involved in partisan politics during non-working hours.

## 9. A FAIR LANGUAGE POLICY

Upon assuming the government the Party will repeal the Official Languages Act of 1969 and "An Act Respecting the Equality of the Two Official Linguistic Communities in New Brunswick," commonly known as Bill 88.

The English language will be used as the official internal communication and filing language of the civil service of the Government of New Brunswick.

Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly would continue to be translated from one language to the other as is the case now.

Because over 99 per cent of Part I civil servants understand the majority language, English will be the official language of record and work within the civil service of the Government of New Brunswick. All written and data communication between or within government departments will be in English, however, no other language shall be prohibited as a language of oral communication.

The government of New Brunswick shall not prohibit any language as a language of communication among its citizens, whether they be private or corporate.

The responsibility of government to keep its citizens informed of its activities has required the printing of literally millions of dollars worth of documents, brochures, pamphlets and reports of all types. The translation of all of this material is expensive and sometimes unnecessary.

The new Government of New Brunswick will evaluate the requirements for future translation in concert with representatives of the users. It is expected that some material will be automatically translated upon production while other material will be translated only upon the need being demonstrated. At all times a current inventory of documents, whether translated or not, will be available for the information of the public.

It shall be henceforth understood that sufficient skills in the English language shall be a requirement for most civil service positions and therefore employment opportunity advertisements will generally no longer state particular minimum language ability.

Bilingual citizens will be encouraged to apply for all open positions, however no weight will be given to other language skills if the position does not specifically require same.

The "Official Languages Policy Implementation" documents released by the government of 1989-90 will be cancelled.

When a civil service vacancy exists which requires the use of the French language every effort will be undertaken by the Government of New Brunswick to ensure that French-speaking New Brunswickers have hiring preference over French speakers from other provinces and countries.



## 10. CONSTITUTION / SENATE REFORM / INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

### (i) Introduction:

There is a lack of unity of opinion in English-speaking Canada as to the direction future constitutional reform should take. Now it is time for fresh ideas promoted by those who can gain (and hold) the confidence of the public. Our premier has had his chance to apply his vision during the Meech Lake debacle. We feel that any government which negotiates the Constitution in the future must first face an election on its Meech Lake record.

We feel that our current premier has already shown that he cannot be trusted to represent the feelings of the majority of New Brunswickers. His reversal and signature on the Meech Lake Accord have called his integrity into question, and it has been found wanting.

Our party will continue to develop a strong position which will preserve and defend New Brunswick, the Atlantic region, and all of Canada.

We must ensure that other provinces' (or territories) constitutional positions are met with an equally strong and innovative position from New Brunswick and the Atlantic Region. We will negotiate as one of the ten provinces and expect all provinces (and perhaps territories) to be at the same table. We will not accept any province negotiating with Ottawa alone.

### (ii) Human Rights

We will support the legitimate rights of the citizens of any province to have access to fair methods of shaping their societies. However we also will accept nothing less than full compliance by all provinces with basic human rights as described in the Charter. The Province of Quebec must amend or repeal Bills 178 and 101 to permit the free use of any language in business and personal matters in so far as the provisions of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms allow. This will be consistent with a C.O.R. government's position that no language should be forbidden by any province's administration.



Quebec's demands for (and receipt of) increased immigration powers is disturbing to the rest of Canada. We feel that no one province or territory should be permitted to have a protected minimum amount of guaranteed immigrants. We favour mobility provisions which give all Canadians and landed immigrants the freedom to relocate anywhere in Canada. Many immigrants presently must stay in Quebec as a condition of their Canadian citizenship qualifications. We feel this is discriminatory.

A New Brunswick government administered by elected members of the Confederation of Regions Party will accept the admission that Quebec is one of at least four regions of Canada and nothing more. No region ought to have more than its share of judges on the Supreme Court or members in the Senate. All members of the Federation must be willing to be equal regions of Canada, if the country is to survive and prosper in an atmosphere of fairness and respect.

We feel the Notwithstanding Clause in the current Constitution must be deleted if basic human rights are to be enjoyed everywhere in the Dominion. No constitutional arrangement agreeable to the elected members of a Confederation of Regions government will be passed by the Legislative Assembly before the issue is put to the people in a referendum.

#### (iii) Senate

The Confederation of Regions party favours the continuation of the institution of the Senate. Some premiers are in favour of abolishing the Senate. They would rather be the spokesman themselves for regional interests. We feel this theory is misguided. Lately federal-provincial meetings among first ministers and cabinet officials have somehow become unofficial institutions of government, much like some kind of cabinet. We think that premiers should be premiers, cabinet ministers should be cabinet ministers, and that senators should be elected to provide the required regional balance within the federal legislative system.

In all of its constitutional endeavours, the Confederation of Regions-New Brunswick Party will press for a Senate which is comprised of the same number of representatives from each region of the country (including Canada's North); that it be elected; and it be given the power to initiate, approve, deny and debate most issues and bills.

In the period leading up to the acceptance of a democratic Senate proposal, our government will pledge to fill all future Senate vacancies using elections as the method of nomination. Alberta has managed to place the first elected member of the senate through this method and, although there is no formal provision for the election of Senators, we feel that a precedent has been established which will allow New Brunswick to do the same.

(iv) Intergovernmental Affairs (Federal-Provincial Relations)

While new constitutional proposals may present New Brunswickers with many different alternatives, it seems clear that any workable reform of Canadian federalism will, to some degree, involve increasing the degree of regional or provincial administration of many of the responsibilities of government. We, as a political party, support a provincialization or regionalization of federal spending in areas of social welfare, economic development and culture.

We are firmly committed to maintaining federal responsibility over the money supply, foreign affairs, defence, and whatever transfer payments will be necessary to maintain national standards in education, health care, transportation and the general welfare of the individual.

(v) The Canadian Currency

The Bank of Canada should continue to have total responsibility for the supply and printing of the dollar. Our currency must not be shared with any sovereign state, now or in the future. Our party does not accept the position that Canada ought to participate in any "economic association" other than through trade agreements. We feel such a policy would compromise the National responsibility for monetary policy.

(vi) Foreign Affairs

We firmly believe that the government of the Dominion of Canada must be the sole representative of the Canadian people in all international relations with sovereign states around the world.

In some cases, such as the existing relationship between the Atlantic premiers and New England governors, we support the province's right to take advantage of opportunities for dialogue with those in similar jurisdictions outside of Canada. We will, however, not support any formal ties with any organization which would ask the people of New Brunswick to enter into international undertakings on their own (with the exception of agreements concluded with respect to the sale of electricity or other commodities, so long as same is permitted by the federal government).

Through the government of Canada, New Brunswick is already represented in the United Nations, the Commonwealth, NATO, the OAS and La Francophonie. Representation by the Government of New Brunswick in these or similar bodies will not be contemplated by a C.O.R.-NB administration. This policy also extends to social, cultural and athletic undertakings. New Brunswickers will be encouraged to participate as Canadians on a Canadian team or delegation and not as representative of a separate political entity.

(vii) Ensuring National Standards

While the regions may indeed be required to assume more responsibility for the administration (and perhaps funding) of many programs, national standards must be protected and pursued. All Canadians must have equal access to health and social services, transportation and education. C.O.R.-NB will support retaining a guarantee of this access in any future Constitution amendments. The regions and Ottawa must be jointly responsible, under the Constitution, for the protection of national standards.

(viii) Inter-Provincial Labour Mobility - Public Service Hiring

In all cases, where qualifications can be equally met by finalists for any position, residents of New Brunswick will be given priority over residents of other provinces or countries.

Residents of provinces which do not permit New Brunswickers access to jobs in their public services will not be eligible for employment by the Government of New Brunswick. (Residents of New Brunswick for any period in their lives exceeding six consecutive months <with the exception of those in Province for the purposes of post-secondary education> shall be considered residents of New Brunswick for the purposes of the above paragraphs).



(ix) Atlantic Canada Cooperation

C.O.R.- NB supports the integration of the economies of the Atlantic Provinces, but only through formal, signed agreements. Because the rights of New Brunswick citizens must be protected, we will not unilaterally remove any trade restrictions until the other provinces in the Atlantic Region agree to make necessary corresponding modifications to their economic, trade and public purchasing practices. The harmonization of trade among the Atlantic provinces will be vigorously pursued by our administration.

We will undertake to standardized trade and professional certification. We feel that all professional people - such as doctors, mechanics, plumbers, surveyors, scalers and truck drivers

- should be encouraged to qualify to regional standards. Licenses can then be issued which permit them to pursue their careers without regard to provincial boundaries within Atlantic Canada and, if possible, within all of Canada.

The political future of the Atlantic Region must also be examined. Maritime political union has been an issue since before Confederation. C.O.R.-NB will explore ways to make public administration a regional responsibility, while seeking ways to retain the distinctiveness of the component parts of the Atlantic Region. We feel it is in the best interest of New Brunswickers to look at expanding their Atlantic "family ties". We must also note that this position will likely be opposed by provincial politicians who fear a loss of power and influence. The Liberal premier of New Brunswick has said he feels the people of New Brunswick are not ready to go the route of Atlantic Canadian political integration. However, we feel the Premier's perception of our wants and abilities is lagging behind our true desires and potential.

(x) Conclusion

In all cases of significant political reform - be it federal or regional - the C.O.R.-NB party will first put the question to the people directly in a referendum. We are not so arrogant as to pretend we, as a party, ought to have the ultimate judgement on crucial questions such as these.

THE PEOPLE MUST SPEAK TO THE QUESTIONS THEMSELVES AND THE POLITICIANS MUST BE WILLING TO STEP BACK AND ALLOW THE PEOPLE TO BE HEARD.



## 11. FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY PLAN

The C.O.R. - New Brunswick Party has identified and emphasises four main problems facing the province's budget:

### A. "high taxes"

We believe that taxes paid by households are too high. We believe that high taxes lower economic welfare of the average, working New Brunswicker. High taxes discourage small business formation and discourage tourism. Clearly this problem has been compounded by the recent imposition of the Goods and Services (GST) tax.

### B. "a high provincial debt"

The provincial public debt burden facing New Brunswickers is too high. The total public debt is estimated to be roughly \$3.7 billion, or roughly \$5100.00 per individual New Brunswicker. Expenditures to service the provincial debt (interest costs) are estimated to reach \$493.5 million in the 91/92 fiscal year. This represents a pre-year tax burden of \$680.00 per individual, or about \$2,175.00 per family. Most interest payments flow to non-residents outside our province.

### C. "an unfair corporate tax share"

The share of corporate taxes paid by corporations operating in New Brunswick, as a percentage of total taxes paid is at too low a level. By contrast, New Brunswick working people and small businesses pay too high a share.

### D. "a large, unwieldy provincial government"

The size, organization, and overall administration of the provincial public sector is far too large and complicated for a province with only 726,000 residents.

C.O.R. - New Brunswick believes that each of these four problems are part of one big problem, that of an unresponsive government. All four problems mutually reinforce each other, so each problem must be given equal importance for any meaningful reform to take place. Therefore we list each policy, problem and platform recommendation separately for sake of clarity. We can think of our four policies as "lower taxes," "a lower provincial debt," "a fairer corporate share" and a "smaller and more responsive government". Each policy will be discussed in turn.

#### A. "lower taxes for New Brunswickers"

Our Party upon forming the next government, will, in presenting our first budget, introduce legislation to:

(i) reduce the retail sales tax rate from 11 percent to 9 percent;

(ii) levy the 9 percent retail sales tax rate on the original retail sales price net of the GST;

(iii) reduce the retail sales tax rate on restaurant meals from the present 11 percent to 6 percent;

(iv) reduce the provincial sales tax rate on hotel rooms, motel rooms, and other tourist lodging (to which the provincial tax rate is applicable), from the present 11 percent to 6 percent. This lower tax rate -- as will be the case for all lower tax rates in (i), (ii), and (iii) above -- will of course apply to New Brunswickers and out-of-province visitors alike.

(v) begin to regularly publish all tax rates and user fees, in historical format, in both annual Department of Finance publications The New Brunswick Economy and Main Estimates. The historical tables will be published in separate sections of each of the publications.

After our first Budget is tabled, our government will then publish a Working paper outlining our plans to cut further tax rates, as they apply to New Brunswick households, over the next three years of our mandate. Emphasis will be placed on cutting the sales tax rate on building materials, on reducing the general retail sales tax rate below 9 percent, and to start reducing the personal income tax rate below the current 60 percent rate. C.O.R. - New Brunswick will consult tax experts, municipalities and the public concerning a complete review of how the property tax system is implemented.

#### B. "a Lower Provincial Government Debt"

A C.O.R. - New Brunswick government will undertake a four- year plan of deficit reduction which will:

(i) introduce legislation that requires that each provincial budget, over the four-year government mandate, have a current account surplus, or at least exactly have a current account balance;

(ii) introduce, in the first year, a balance budget. We will also introduce, to be applicable for the following three years, a Provincial Government Debt Reduction Plan that will reduce the present \$3.7 billion debt by at least \$300 million. This reduction in debt will be achieved by means of cost reductions through our proposed savings in public spending;

(iii) introduce a Privatisation Plan, to begin to sell to the private sector some of New Brunswick's Crown Corporations. A C.O.R. - New Brunswick government would first sell the New Brunswick Liquor Control Board to the private sector. Our government would then ask the New Brunswick public to consider, (through a referendum) selling up to 49 percent of New Brunswick Power to private interests. We would set, through legislation, a strict limit on the number of shares any one individual or business interest could own. The revenues from privatisation will be used to help retire the debt, and to help reduce taxes.

(iv) publish historical public deficit and debt statistics in the Main Estimates and The New Brunswick Economy.

#### C. "a Fair Corporate Tax Share"

A C.O.R. - New Brunswick government, will, upon presenting our first Budget, introduce legislation to:

(i) introduce a general capital tax rate of .3 percent to be levied on non-financial corporations with paid up capital of between \$1 million and \$10 million, and a general capital tax rate of .5 percent to be levied on non-financial corporations with paid up capital of over \$10 million;

(ii) raise the current tax rate on gross insurance premium income to 3 percent on life, sickness, and accident insurance, and to 4 percent on all other types of insurance.

#### D. "a Smaller, More Responsive Provincial Government"

A C.O.R. government, will, upon presenting our first Budget, introduce legislation to incorporate, in our Fiscal Responsibility Plan, proposals which will include:

- (1) reducing the number of government departments,
- (2) restricting ordinary account spending for the next four years,
- (3) reducing administrative costs within each provincial department;



(4) producing a plan to reduce administrative costs in the health, education, welfare, and any other public organization receiving provincial funding but not part of the provincial government.

Specifically, our government will:

(i) Our government will introduce legislation in the four years of our mandate, to reduce the number of provincial departments, commissions, secretariats, offices, and directorates. At the present time, our province has twenty-four cabinet ministers. We propose, to reduce that number to twelve. We further propose to merge the separate French/English sub-departments within the Department of Education;

(ii) restrain total ordinary account public spending over the term of our government's four-year mandate;

(iii) reduce the sessional indemnity for all MLAs by 10 per cent; reduce the annual salary for cabinet ministers by 20 per cent; and remove the automobile purchase subsidy now granted cabinet ministers.

(iv) down-size certain branches of each of our government departments, to take into account efficiency and cost considerations. Some public service jobs will be eliminated through attrition. We will, however, emphasize reducing the administration part of each department, and not that part of the department that services the public directly. We emphasize reducing waste, not public service;

(v) eliminate waste and duplication that results from New Brunswick's Official Languages Act. Savings will be made by eliminating employee positions used to police the act, and by eliminating the duplication in publishing all government documents in two languages.

(vi) table a Policy Paper, in the first year of our mandate, outlining plans on how administrative cost reductions can be made in the health and education areas. While these areas are not part of the provincial government proper, we feel that, since our health and education institutions do receive monies from the New Brunswick government, they owe it to the taxpayer to ensure that such tax revenues are spent efficiently. However, it will be the explicit policy of our government not to cut back on needed health and education services to the public.



## 12. CROSS BORDER SHOPPING

### The Problem

This year an increasing number of New Brunswickers have travelled to Maine to undertake retail shopping. The evidence as to the extent of this practice is overwhelming: the line-ups of cars waiting to declare goods at Canadian Customs have been long; the advertisements in newspapers inviting New Brunswickers to spend Canadian dollars in Maine (offering special deals on hotel rooms and prices of goods); the recent poll which indicated that at least 18 percent of Atlantic Canadians had taken at least one shopping trip to the United States (for New Brunswick residents, the percentage must be higher).

Cross-border shopping is a problem for two reasons:

- 1) New Brunswick consumers are taking the unusual (and expensive) step of travelling considerable distances beyond their normal shopping areas in order to buy cheaper goods in Maine. The extra expense involves additional gas usage, the time invested in making the long trip, and often, the cost of an overnight stay in a hotel in Maine. Also shoppers must endure a long wait in a line-up at customs in order to pay duties. That New Brunswickers take such extraordinary steps to obtain a better deal points to a serious problem: consumers in this province are overburdened with high sales taxes on expensive goods.

- 2) New Brunswick retailers and restaurant and travel accommodation operators are also suffering. As New Brunswickers increase their shopping in Maine, they spend fewer dollars in their local areas. Many local businesses have gone bankrupt and many more are in jeopardy of going under. Should cross-border shopping increase to a higher level of activity and should this practice become ingrained as a routine method of shopping, we will then see fewer retail (and restaurant and travel accommodation establishments) in the province. We will witness permanent job losses in this key commercial sector.

Permanent cross - border shopping will weaken an already fragile provincial economy. But we should mention what we see as not being a problem. We do not perceive, as does the present provincial government, lost provincial tax revenues as being the most important problem coming from cross-border shopping.

The finance minister has repeatedly spoken in public about the provincial government losing revenues as retail sales in the province have stagnated. Indeed, recently he and federal revenue minister have reached an understanding whereby the federal government will provide information to the provincial government to enable the province (using customs duty receipts) to locate cross border shoppers in order to force them to pay the provincial sales tax.

That the province was so quick off the mark to take this step to remedy the problem of "lost provincial revenues", speaks volumes of this government's misplaced priorities. Our provincial government cares more about its own tax revenues, and less about the economic welfare of the public.

The cross-border problem reflects the fact that consumer prices in New Brunswick are too high. But such high consumer prices are the result of a much more deep-seated problem: irresponsible government economic policies. The policies originate from two levels of government:

1) the federal government

Our federal government has:

- kept interest rates too high, and as a result the price of the Canadian dollar is too high. So with our overvalued dollar, the cost of buying goods in Maine declines;
- introduced the notorious GST in January of this year. This tax, as recent economic reports state, has artificially raised the price of New Brunswick goods still further, and induced still even more of our residents to shop across the border.

2) the provincial government

Our provincial government has:

- kept the provincial retail sales tax rate at an intolerably high 11 per cent rate. Our provincial government has even levied the tax on top of the GST for each item to force an extra 3/4 percent from our over-burdened consumers. For any retail customer, or for anyone having a restaurant meal or staying at an overnight lodging, that customer must pay an unbelievable 18 3/4 percent as sales tax.

- levied onerous property taxes on retail, lodging, restaurant, and other commercial businesses. The president of the St. Andrews Chamber of Commerce, for example, has complained that some property owners have suffered property tax increases of 300 to 400 percent over the last four years. For that tourist-sensitive area, many business are going bankrupt.

In short, our governments have been too ready to raise taxes at a moment's notice, but have been too hesitant to address the needs of the individual consumer and the small businessman.

C.O.R.- N.B.'s Program - lower taxes

Our party believes that the cross-border shopping problem is both a short-term and a long-term problem. In the short run, the problem has become very serious, in terms of numbers of people shopping and the value of goods purchased in Maine. Consequently, a C.O.R. - New Brunswick government, in addressing this issue, would undertake the following short and long-term policies.

1) Short-term policies:

- as stated in our "Fiscal Responsibility Plan" we will, upon forming the next provincial government, reduce permanently the provincial retail sales tax, across the board, from 11 percent to 9 percent. This would narrow the difference in sales tax rates between our province and Maine;

- also in our "Fiscal Responsibility Plan" we have stated that a C.O.R. - New Brunswick government would reduce permanently the provincial sales tax rate on restaurant meals and all forms of lodging from 11 percent to 6 percent. This measure would help to narrow the price differentials between tourist establishments in Maine and New Brunswick, and would help to stimulate tourism in our province;

- also, as stated, the policy of a C.O.R. - New Brunswick government would be to eliminate the provincial sales taxation of the GST tax. The elimination of the "tax upon a tax" would reduce the effective tax by a further 3/4 percent.

We emphasize that these short-term measures are urgently needed to send a signal to New Brunswickers that real tangible measures will be in place to reduce the fundamental cost disparity between Maine and New Brunswick. These short-term policies, we feel, will help to stem the upsurge in cross-border shopping.



2) long-term policies - C.O.R.- N.B. will:

- undertake an appeal to the federal Conservative government, through the public relations, federal-provincial meetings and other avenues, to:

- (i) eliminate the notorious GST tax; and

- (ii) undertake policies to lower the value of the Canadian dollar;

- initiate a permanent, ongoing "Shop New Brunswick" campaign. This program could include, after consultation with interested parties, public service ads, stick-on decals, posters to be handed out to businesses, and the publication and distribution of a catalogue of made-in-New Brunswick goods,

- we must maintain our dedication to capitalism and free markets. While the supply management (marketing board) system generally works well for farmers, we must seek ways in which those farmers willing to take increased market risks are allowed to function within that system.

- the tabling, after consultation with interested parties, of a five-year fiscal plan that will include further reductions in the provincial sales tax rate.

We emphasize that long-term measures like the above are also needed. Although cross-border shopping has become more commonplace this year, it is a problem that has existed for a long time. We feel that these approaches, if they are implemented together, will go a long way toward eliminating the disparity in retailing and tourist services between New Brunswick and Maine.

### 13. TOURIST PROMOTION

THE PROBLEM: New Brunswick is well-known for having a poor, underdeveloped tourist industry. Our province is known as the "drive through" province, whereby tourists from central Canada and the United States "drive by" without stopping to vacation in Nova Scotia or Prince Edward Island.



Our province has too few provincial parks, and in some cases the parksites are in poor condition. Our provincial roads are poor. Our provincial sales taxes are too high, and this non-competitive "price" factor in and of itself is sufficient to discourage long stays by visitors. With the addition of the GST, tourists have to pay a staggering 18.3/4 per cent on every restaurant meal and lodging expense.

In fact, this year tourism has fallen off dramatically, due to the recession, a high Canadian dollar, and the imposition of the notorious GST. These unwelcome events -- occurring outside the control of the provincial government -- added to the burden of our already weak tourism sector.

Our government has consistently ignored the problem of high sales taxes, and has yet to present to the public a plan to expand the basic tourism infrastructure. The "Action Plan" (or more appropriately, the Inaction Plan) of the Tourism Strategy Toward the Year 2000 is very inadequate in this regard. (see pages 11-12 of that document).

#### THE PLATFORM;

A COR-NB government, when elected, would:

(i) reduce the overall provincial sales tax rate from 11 to 9 per cent, and reduce the sales tax rate on all restaurant meals and lodging expenses (hotels, motels, and other forms of tourist lodging), from 11 to 6 per cent, as explained elsewhere in this platform. Our sales tax rate reductions apply to New Brunswickers and out-of-province tourists alike (in-province New Brunswickers are an important part of the tourist clientele for the industry).

Our sales tax rate reduction plan represents the cornerstone of our tourist promotion industry, and we would use the low rates heavily in our tourist advertising. It would give us the lowest "tourist tax rate" east of Alberta;

(ii) we would begin a program to convert abandoned rail lines and the associated right-of -ways into hiking and non-motorized bike trails;

(iii) our government would protect and develop still further our natural and historical sites. We would undertake a specific Master Plan to develop, over time, provincial parks at different key areas. Finally, we would undertake to develop more beaches and improve roadside rest stops.

In conclusion, our party believes that to develop a viable tourist industry, sales taxes must be reduced and the basic tourist infrastructure must be improved.

#### 14. QUALITY OF LIFE

In the short term, social service programmes must be maintained to provide New Brunswickers with an acceptable minimum standard of living. Our party strongly feels that, in the long term, the only way to combat poverty is through opportunity.

Education must be the cornerstone on which prosperity is built. Our reforms to the education system will go a long way toward providing the necessary tools to our youth to allow them to take advantage of increased opportunities.

Our taxation reduction programme will assist those in lower income brackets, providing them with more purchasing power - the equivalent of an increase in social service benefits.

Further tax reductions over the course of our mandate will further add to the level of disposable income for those at or below the poverty line.

Hand-in-hand with our programme for reducing expenses of government, our platform also re-affirms our support for the "single entry point" concept of social service delivery. This programme assists the clients, and provides the government with the ability to more carefully audit claims to ensure that those who are beneficiaries of taxpayer-supported social services are receiving sufficient assistance.

#### 15. EDUCATION

The technological advances of this century have had a dramatic impact on the world in which we live. The coming century promises as many changes as the last. In this increasingly complex environment, quality education often decides who progresses and who does not. In fact, a top-flight education has become nearly as essential as food and shelter. Our future well-being depends upon the investment we make today.

C.O.R. - New Brunswick views education as a life-long pursuit and believes that all members of a civilized society have an interest in the quest for knowledge. The only limit to mankind's ability to learn is mankind's willingness and commitment to do so. A C.O.R. Government will ensure that education is not an area where compromise is acceptable.

Our party wants New Brunswick students to become some of the best educated in the world. A C.O.R. government will undertake the following steps during our first term in office:

We will vigorously pursue the establishment of national standards in education, with a view to complementing the mobility provisions of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Naturally we will lobby the federal government, and other provincial governments to make our national standards second to none in the world.

An extensive system of public matriculation exams will be established to facilitate the assessment of New Brunswick's education system. Public matriculation examinations will also provide a useful tool for our institutions of higher learning. Higher education institutions in New Brunswick will be required to use the matriculation exam results as part of the criteria used to judge the entry qualifications of applicants.

Students entering higher education institutions in New Brunswick who have not successfully completed the New Brunswick matriculation exams will be required to write standard scholastic aptitude tests (SATs) as part of their entry requirements.

A C.O.R. government supports, in concept, a publicly-funded kindergarten programme, however funding must be in place to provide a secure education-based experience reflecting a shorter day than is planned now by the old government.

Integration will be continued, however a value-related review of the placement of severely handicapped children in the classroom will be conducted. An investigation of the feasibility of an extra-mural education program for students unable to participate in normal classroom settings will be undertaken.



The emphasis placed on challenged learners will enable children in this category to achieve their maximum potential. Under a C.O.R. government, the gifted learner will receive as much emphasis as the challenged learner. All children deserve the opportunity to develop to their fullest potential - and society must afford them every chance to do so.

In principle, we agree with the concept of lengthening the school year in anticipation of additional learning hours that may be required in order to implement changes designed to bring our education system up to "state-of-the-art" level.

A consultative process will be established to ensure that all interested parties will have input into the implementation of these proposals.

A C.O.R. government will review the relationship between the School Boards and the Department of Education with a view to granting as much autonomy to the local School Boards as possible. This will be done subject to two conditions: first, academic standards will be set by the province; second, the School Board's annual financial statement shall be included in the Public Accounts of the Province (the Blue Book) with the goal of making each school board's actions accountable to the New Brunswick public.

We will study, in consultation with all interested parties, increasing the minimum course requirements in mathematics, history, languages, science and technology needed for a high school diploma. We would also strengthen the required English courses to stress writing skills for all students. We will proceed to reintegrate the two administrative branches (English and French) of the Department of Education to the fullest extent as the Charter of Rights and Freedoms of Canada will allow. This measure would put the province in the best position to: first, implement provincial curriculum standards and; second, eliminate waste due to duplication in administration.

## 16. THE ENVIRONMENT

Our existing published policy on the environment is comprehensive and wide-ranging. We will look at several alternatives available to government to assess, rectify, reclaim, and remove environmental damage.

We agree with the recommendation from the Fraser Institute that the entrenchment of private property rights into the Constitution of Canada would provide a basis for environmental litigation and improve safety, especially in industry. We, as a government, will vigorously press for a "Right to Property" clause in any future amendment of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Existing legislation regarding environmental protection is generally comprehensive enough to allow government to take firm steps to effectively deter environmental damage, and receive fair compensation for cleanup and recovery when offences do occur.

The recovery of costs associated with industrial pollution, both long-term and accidental, has been insufficient on the part of the present and past governments. We will revise fines and sentences in order to make convicted polluters pay the proper price for environmental offences.

We will establish a "Green Team", comprised of senior civil servants from all ministries of government. These people will be charged with creating New Brunswick's own green plan which will be designed to complement that of the federal government, as well as see that the recommendations of the round tables on the environment and the economy are implemented.

## 17. ENERGY

Our party recognizes that every energy source has its benefits and drawbacks. Fossil fuel causes pollution; wood-fired power plants consume material that might better be left in our forests to enrich the soil; nuclear fuel plagues us with its safe disposal problems; tidal power would impair drainage from our waterways; and hydroelectric power causes considerable terraforming, along with wildlife and social upheaval.

The public must be fully aware of the real price of the methods we choose in the future - the cost to the environment and to the taxpayers. We support a system of calculation of these costs and a real determination being made before any new major capital projects are contemplated. Also, we will allow organizations such as the Conservation Council to make their point, that a 400 Megawatt reduction in consumption is preferable to a 400 Megawatt increase in generating capacity.

While we may indeed be able to "find" extra generating capacity through conservation, we must also recognize that, as we approach the next century, we must constantly plan ahead for future power needs. It would be regrettable if even one government, in its four-year term, reduced its vigil in addressing the future energy needs of New Brunswickers. We cannot so hamstring our generating capacity that we would be required to turn away energy-consuming enterprises for lack of that precious resource in twenty years' time.

Construction at Belledune, Millbank and other facilities is already well under way. As presently configured, these fossil fuel facilities will have to burn material from off of New Brunswick's shores. This is unacceptable in the long term. Our ability to extract Minto and Kent County coal - and Albert County oil shale - must be married with our desire to use "made in New Brunswick" solutions to our future energy needs. The present Liberal government would prefer to buy coal and oil from Venezuela. C.O.R. - N.B. will search for affordable techniques to gasify or otherwise convert our own fossil fuel resources, so they may be used in New Brunswick generating facilities.

No political party has the magic solution to the problems which our search for energy will present us with in the coming decades. All we, as a government can do, is present the public with as much information as possible, and then let them decide the future fate of energy production in New Brunswick by getting involved in the policy-making process.

#### 18. YOUTH

We believe that a broad sweep of provincial government policies should be designed to make the Province a better place for our young people and future generations to prosper. As it stands now, too many young New Brunswickers must leave the Province to find work.

We would undertake the following policies to improve the future for New Brunswick youth:

- The quality of high school education and higher education has to be improved. In our high schools there are too many "unnecessary" courses being offered and too few important courses (mathematics, writing skills, history) being taught. As for higher education, there has to be closer cooperation between universities and business, as to the content of the curriculum, so that students will have the job skills they need.



- Access to jobs is important for both instilling a work ethic in young people and for their economic well-being. We would ensure that each young person - irrespective of race, gender or mother tongue - would have an equal opportunity to apply for available jobs and openings in job-creation programs upon entering the labour market;

- As stated elsewhere in our platform, our party would take activist measures to protect our environment, for the benefit of our young people and future generations;

- As also stated elsewhere in our platform, a C.O.R. - N.B. government would undertake firm steps to reduce the provincial net debt. Our high debt, if left unchecked, would result in our children being left with a higher tax burden.

## 19. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

C.O.R. - N.B. believes that having a fully informed public lies at the heart of our principles of direct democracy. One crucial part of the public's right to know is access to government information (both published and unpublished). The provincial government's business must be open to unfettered scrutiny.

We believe that the provincial Liberal government has been anything but open with our citizenry. Our public accounts disguise important spending information. The New Brunswick Commission on Canadian Federalism has held only secret hearings. Crown corporations are not forthcoming in disclosing hiring and other statistical data. Even many published government documents are not distributed to the Legislative Library or to the five major regional depository libraries.

The lack of forthrightness by the Liberal government has led to a serious shortage of normal give-and-take discussions across a series of crucial policy matters. The government currently controls all 58 elected seats in the Legislative Assembly, yet the three opposition parties, the media and the interested public are routinely denied access to government information by a secretive and overly-complex bureaucracy.

To rectify the obvious asymmetry-in-information, C.O.R. - N.B. believes that the current Right to Information Act should be amended:

1. to cover public hospital boards, school boards, universities and all agencies of the Crown including N.B. Power, not already covered by the Act;

2. to define rigorously all rules pertaining "to confidentiality" to ensure that the provincial government does not over-use confidentiality claims during the adjudication process covering the right-to-information procedures;

3. to establish shorter time periods for ministers to deny or grant requests for information, thereby shortening the referral time to the Ombudsman or the courts;

4. to require that the provincial government provide updated records of all right-to-information requests and publish updated guides to unpublished information.

Furthermore, C.O.R. - N.B. believes that the Legislative Library Act should be amended to require that:

1. the provincial government disseminate all published information to the Provincial Legislative Library and thence to the five major regional depository libraries; and

2. the provincial government publish a monthly index of all New Brunswick documents, to be circulated to the Legislative Library and the five regional depositories.

## 20. REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY/EMPLOYMENT STIMULATION

In 1991, New Brunswick, like the other Atlantic provinces, stands in an economically precarious position. Our province has always had high unemployment and low incomes, but our problems have been compounded by Federal government irresponsibility. The Federal government has added to our traditional economic hardships by cutting regional development funding, while at the same time earmarking more funding for bailing out corporations in central Canada. The government, moreover, has raised taxes (and introduced the notorious GST) while failing to reduce the federal debt.

On top of failures by the federal government, the province of Quebec is at present threatening to leave Confederation. Sovereignty-association, or complete separation, will isolate New Brunswick and the other Atlantic provinces from the rest of Canada. This will seriously impair east-west trading relations and New Brunswick, given its geographic location, could bear the brunt of a fractured Confederation.

Given these difficulties, it is important for the government of New Brunswick to continue to develop and improve the economic base of the province and continue to build upon the strengths of our jurisdiction.

A C.O.R. - New Brunswick government would:

- attract business to either locate or expand in New Brunswick, by indicating that we are an active participant in Canada's economy. Our government would only undertake incentives if it can be shown that the economic benefits outweigh the costs of doing so;

- propose using our economic resources to the fullest extent by promoting "finished goods" processing. Too much of our forestry and mining resources leave the province as unprocessed materials, with the processing taking place in other provinces and countries;

- endeavour to ensure, where there is opportunity for employment, that our education system satisfies our job-market needs. To do this, we will begin to stress job-related fundamentals (such as mathematics, reading and writing skills) in high schools and in community colleges and introduce greater cooperation between business and education;

- require that tendered provincial government contracts have a majority of New Brunswick workers with allowances made for a qualified workforce. Exceptions would be made within the Atlantic region. Our government would not allow resident workers from any provinces which forbids New Brunswickers from working in their jurisdictions;

- as part of our intention of simplifying the complex government bureaucracy (see our remarks elsewhere in the platform) we propose to amalgamate the office of Economic Development, the Regional Development Corporation and the Department of Commerce and Technology. Savings from eliminating administrative duplication will go to tax reduction, debt reduction and improved regional development program delivery.



## 21. NATURAL RESOURCES

The Confederation of Regions - New Brunswick Party wants to re-establish the fact that Crown Lands are the joint property of the citizens of New Brunswick, administered in trust by the Government of New Brunswick. As the government we will administer this trust in a manner which will enhance the monetary value of the harvesting of this great natural resource. At the same time we will provide maximum public use of its recreational potential for sport fishing, hunting and camping.

C.O.R. - N.B. supports the following measures to deliver fairness and justice back to the wood harvesting system:

1. Stumpage rates should be established to track with those negotiated with private woodlot owners and collectives.
2. Wood products should be scaled by government employed scalers.
3. Selective cutting should replace clear-cutting as the normal method of harvesting with exceptions only in special biological, safety or silvicultural circumstances.
4. Where clear-cutting is allowed, undergrowth and small trees must be left to mature and act as cover for wildlife.
5. Thinning of forested lands should be done mechanically - without the use of chemicals which have proven to be a hazard to our wildlife and a destructive element to the natural food chain.
6. Better management of our Crown Land resources and stricter enforcement of harvesting practices will provide additional revenue and employment while enhancing the value of this natural resource.
7. The practice of planting monoculture will be reviewed to determine if the benefits to the planter exceed the costs incurred by the artificial imbalance caused to nature.

Public access to Crown Lands must be provided with the requirement that those persons having access obey the laws applicable to Crown Lands and act in a responsible manner. The greatest possible access must be given to lakes, rivers, streams and hunting and camping areas.

Camp lease rates which saw terrible increases under the Liberal government must be re-examined. Also, the policy of creating "camp subdivisions" has been met with resistance from camp lessees. C.O.R. - N.B. believes that the Crown Lands camp leasing policy of the present government must be reviewed with an eye toward restoring more enjoyment, peace and privacy to lessees.

Game refuges and areas where work is in progress will be strictly enforced as "no hunting" areas. A C.O.R. - N.B. government will promote tougher legislation designed to protect wildlife from harassment. Penalties will be reviewed to ensure they are strong enough to provide effective deterrents. Effective legislative reforms will be considered to prevent the driving of game animals into killing areas.

The coyote population is a rapidly increasing and is destroying much of our wildlife stock. These destructive animals could be controlled by the use of gun, trap and snare. Since an increased number of persons will be necessary to supervise the use of Crown Lands it would make sense to employ this larger work force in the off-season to control this pest, especially in deer yards.

A review of the system of leasing Crown Lands will be undertaken to clarify the mistaken idea held by some lessees that only they have the final say on who will have access to leased Crown Lands. We will insist that every resident has a right to apply to cut up to 100 cd. of wood per year, subject to confirmation. This responsibility must rest with government through provisions contained in leasing agreement.

The long-term leasing of publicly-owned waters to any group, to the exclusion of others, shall be reviewed. This practice has encouraged the exclusion of residents of our province from the use of many of our natural resources. We will assess this problem with the goal of making leased waters more accessible to the public at large, while preserving the valuable employment and conservation attributes which many long-term leases bring to New Brunswick.

## 22. HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

C.O.R. - New Brunswick believes that the health needs of the individual should remain at the centre of policy, subject to the constraints of the overall budget and cost effective considerations.

But several problems have emerged which may threaten adequate and efficient health care delivery:

- the current (arbitrary) freeze on physicians fees could disrupt efficient doctor care in New Brunswick. Our Province will have trouble attracting the right numbers and types of doctors into its jurisdiction;
- the current (arbitrary) wage freeze for nurses, nurses assistants and other health personnel could also, in time, disrupt service;
- given the wage and salary freeze, current relations between the government and some of the main health care provider groups are poor. Presently, input from the health care provider groups tends to be fragmented and combative.
- rising health costs, as a percentage of the total budget, are an important problem. But arbitrarily freezing fees and wages without proper consultation could result in reductions and misallocation of health care.

Also, other problems have emerged over the longer term that need to be addressed;

- political considerations (and not human needs) have been at the forefront of health decision making. For example, there has been too much "regional pork-barrelling" through the building of too many hospitals and through the neglect of non-institutional health care funding. The result has been an excess of bed space in some hospitals and too few beds in other (mostly urban) hospitals. Generally, non-institutionalized patient care is underfunded in all parts of the province;

- too much funding has been allocated to the Prescription Drug Program, due to the fact that -

- (1) too many drugs are being given out to patients who may not need them; and that

- (2) per unit costs for drugs are too high. Current government programs have taken steps to address this problem, but much more work has to be done;

- finally, there is still an over emphasis on acute-care and other institutional health care resources and an under emphasis on community health care. The bench mark structure for the separate branches of Health and Community Services needs to be streamlined and simplified in order to facilitate "single point" entry for the elderly and others involved.



To address these problems, a C.O.R. - New Brunswick government would:

- establish a Provincial Health Advisory Committee to set specific goals for New Brunswick health care that can be achieved in a cost-effective manner, to develop new approaches to health care which emphasize personal responsibility for health and provide medicine and to report periodically to the provincial government.

Specifically, the Committee should:

- (i) assess the number and distribution of hospital beds in the province;

- (ii) determine the appropriate number and mix of Registered Nurses (RNs) and Registered Nursing Assistants (RNAs) needed and to broaden the scope of nurses' duties in the health care system;

- (iii) determine a cost-effective approach to introducing health technology in hospitals;

- (iv) determine a cost-effective approach for the use of medical laboratory services and specialized physicians' services;

- (v) institute a stronger preventive medicine program through education and health promotion.

- increase resources towards community-based health care and away from institutionalized nursing homes and long-term hospital care. (For the latter, limit hospitals to acute care and elevated secondary services only);

- extend community-based health care to "off hour" health clinics. Extra space now made available at hospitals could be converted to non-emergency "off hour" health clinics;

- expand the two pilot Community Health Centre projects to the rest of New Brunswick. Convert the present Health Service Centres into full-fledged community health centres. Staffing would be mainly primary-care nurses with accelerated communication links to physicians at emergency centres.

- shift resources for people who need long-term care from acute care to community-based care, with the latter receiving support from the Community Social Services Division;

- the above proposal posits a "single point" entry system for the elderly. To make this service more efficient we propose:

- (i) amalgamating the number of Health Regions from 7 to 5;

(ii) the reduction in the number of Family and Community Social Regions from twelve (12) to five (5), such that each of these regions coincides with the five Health Regions.

- continue the current provincial government's policy to reduce the operating budget for the Prescription Drug Program.

- a C.O.R. government will also continue to expand services provided by the Extra Mural Hospital and fully endorse this program as a means of: (a) providing an alternative to hospital admissions, (b) facilitating early discharge from medical care institutions, (c) providing health care at home for terminally ill patients where appropriate;

A C.O.R. government will promote a program designed to ensure the most effective expenditure of public funds and at the same time ensure the best possible patient care. This program will place financial accountability within the jurisdiction of the Hospital Boards, who will be permitted to retain any surplus that may occur between budget allocations and actual expenditures. Normally Boards will be accountable for budget deficits.

All transactions involving the expenditure of public funds in health care facilities shall be made public through audited financial statements included in the Public Accounts of New Brunswick. This is in keeping with C.O.R. principles of cost-effectiveness in all areas of government.

We will reform Hospital Boards so they are comprised of mostly elected officials similar to the election of school board members.

We will also pass legislation to ensure that two medical representatives must be voting members of each Board, one of whom must be a medical doctor, and one of whom must be a registered nurse. In this way, we the people can be directly involved in the delivery of health care in our local areas.

The cost of many of the tests and procedures performed in our hospitals today is often unknown to both health care deliverers and the general public. Family physicians and patients will be provided with an accounting statement of the costs of these procedures so that they may be aware of the high expense involved in delivering quality health care.

Our party will begin to increase financial auditing of medicare claims to an ultimate goal of 6 percent of all claims. At present, only one out of every thousand claims is verified by the Health Department.

Prevention is the least expensive method of maintaining a healthy population. C.O.R. - N.B. has said in the past, that if annual comprehensive check-ups were made available to the public and funded by the taxpayer, the costs incurred by government in a "free" annual check-up programme would be money well-spent. We will extend the present "free" annual checkup for some to include all citizens.

### 23. TRANSPORTATION

#### A. Safety - Our party favours:

- the improvement of transportation safety regulation. We favour the rigorous enforcement of speed and weight limits for large tractor-trailer trucks. We favour raising the penalties for dangerous driving and ensuring that our judicial system strictly enforces drunk driving laws;

- equal treatment in (weight) scaling, between small independent truckers and corporately-run truck operators.

- the eventual completion of the four-lane highway through our province for both safety and efficiency reasons. However, we feel that the current road construction plan of widening the road in scattered spots along the highway should be changed to widening the roadway at one end, and progressing along in one direction until the whole route is completed. It is unsafe for road users to travel along a highway that has four lanes only in "spots."

#### B. Economic efficiency - Our party believes:

- in efficient economic regulation of transportation modes. We believe that the provincial government should only intervene and regulate if there is a meaningful rationale to do so. Specifically, we would:

- (i) disallow municipalities the right to arbitrarily set fares (or restrict the number of cabs) in the taxi industry;

- (ii) abolish industry exit/entry controls on trucking and bus service;



(iii) examine the usefulness of subsidizing private enterprise activities in the transportation sector;

- that those who make use of a road service should also be primarily responsible for the funding of that service. Also, proceeds from taxes imposed on transportation (including all fuel taxes) should be paid into a transportation trust fund and not general revenue;

- that the provincial government should appeal strongly to the federal government to raise its too-small financial contribution to the four-lane Trans-Canada highway project. If the federal government refuses our appeal, we propose re-naming the highway "The New Brunswick Highway" to signify that the project is a provincial initiative;

The Liberal government's present plans for the Trans-Canada are coming under increasing fire from municipalities and individuals all over New Brunswick, yet they have turned a deaf ear to better ideas for this major highway. The Conservatives federally and Liberals provincially are into a partisan fight over upgrading the highway and who will get credit for it. New Brunswickers deserve better than that.

- we believe that the provincial government should increase its effort to upgrade secondary roads through towns and cities not affected by the proposed Trans-Canada highway;

- we would also petition the federal government to improve passenger and freight railroad service and to re-open abandoned rail lines;

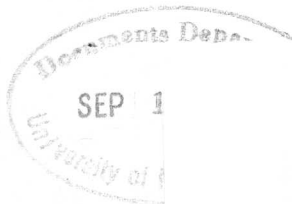
- for those rail lines which will not be re-opened, our government would purchase the abandoned right-of-way and convert those to hiking and non-motorized biking trails. These new trails would be integrated onto those trails that now exist (like the Fundy Trail) to form the New Brunswick Trail System. This new system would comprise an attractive magnet for our-of-province tourists.

- the use of proper tendering for all road maintenance work. We would pass legislation forbidding political contributions to provincial parties by road construction companies (or any companies or labour unions affiliated with provincially-funded organizations) to prevent non-arms-length transactions from occurring.

## 24. LABOUR AND BUSINESS

C.O.R. will endeavour to improve upon existing labour-management practices to maintain a healthy workforce in New Brunswick's civil service. While future negotiations between public servants and government might be tough, C.O.R. affirms its commitment to honouring contracts which are signed with unions. When elected, we will thaw the present wage freeze (which, we feel, is immoral if not illegal) - and we will use future negotiations as a starting point for cost savings when the present contracts come up for renewal.

The free collective bargaining process is one of the cornerstones of our present western society. The Liberal government of New Brunswick, in acting in the name of all citizens, has brought our good name into serious question. A man's word is his bond. A government which would renege on a signed undertaking cannot be trusted with any other duty of public administration.



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REMOVE CARD  
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POCKET**