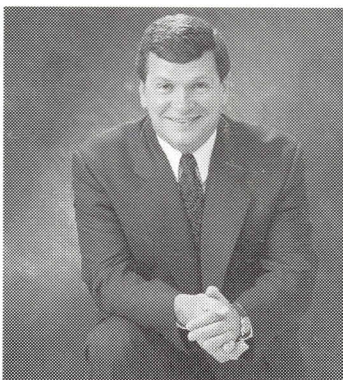
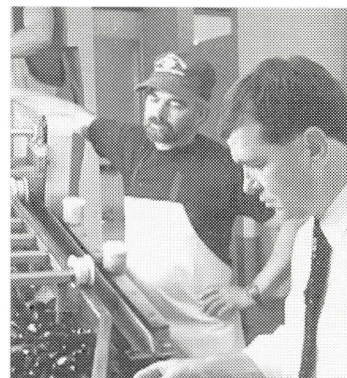


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***TOGETHER.***

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***THE PLATFORM OF THE  
NEW BRUNSWICK LIBERAL PARTY  
FOR THE 1995 PROVINCIAL GENERAL ELECTION***

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# NEW BRUNSWICK FIRST

*A message from the Honourable Frank McKenna*

*Premier and Leader of the New Brunswick Liberal Party*

Eight years ago, the people of New Brunswick gave the Liberal Party a decisive mandate to implement our Agenda for Change. The signs were evident that such a course was necessary. For New Brunswick, and its new government, the key was to begin a march towards greater economic self-sufficiency. We are now well on our way. In recent years, we have made impressive gains on virtually every economic front. New Brunswick has become a leader in economic development and new job creation in Canada. I say "we have made impressive gains" because it is New Brunswickers themselves who have provided the skills, the energy and the commitment that are driving the development of their communities, their regions, their province. Government can be a catalyst. It can set the scene for change, but it cannot promote economic development in isolation. Responsible leadership is about governing with integrity. It is about hard work. It is about being honest with citizens and never losing sight of the simple fact that, above all, politicians are accountable to the people, not just on election day, but at all times. Those principles have guided our actions and, as a result, I truly believe New Brunswickers are more proud of their province and its accomplishments than they were eight years ago. Visitors to our province often remark on the "can-do attitude" of New Brunswickers, our entrepreneurial spirit, our healthy public finances, and our innovative solutions to old problems. They're right. In spite of a difficult recession in the early '90s, New Brunswick has:

- achieved the second-highest average growth in employment of all the provinces, between 1987 and 1994;
- created 20,000 new jobs (seasonally-adjusted) and 28,000 actual new jobs since the last election, September 1991;
- reduced the gap between New Brunswick and Canada's unemployment rates from 5.1% in 1987 to 1.2% in July 1995, a difference of 3.9%;
- put its fiscal house in order. New Brunswick's net public debt is one of the lowest in Canada on a per capita basis and as a percentage of GDP. Net debt as a percentage of GDP is 27.1%, the third lowest in Canada (source: Investment Dealers Association of Canada). New Brunswick also has the third lowest debt per capita. Our credit rating is exceeded only by British Columbia and Alberta (source: Standard & Poor's).

- helped renew and modernize our traditional economic sectors, such as forestry, fisheries, agriculture and mining.
- embraced with enthusiasm and confidence the new economy. Thousands of new jobs have been created in medium and high-tech ventures alone.

We have made impressive gains on the economic front while remaining mindful of those in need. Our government has always been committed to preserving and modernizing our valuable social programs, and remains committed to this day. Yet, we have never been afraid to foster change. We place enormous value on human dignity and the value to our citizens of meaningful work. In addition to providing income assistance and other support measures, we have never hesitated to help people in need move from dependence to long-term self-sufficiency. Though much has been accomplished, challenges remain. This is why the Liberal party is asking New Brunswickers for a new mandate. Creating jobs and building a strong economy remain our first priorities. The following pages outline in detail what we propose to do and how we plan to govern. We have a realistic plan, anchored in the belief that government is, above all, about being honest with people. And we have a record of honest achievements which is there for all to see.

Our platform is ambitious because we believe that New Brunswickers deserve nothing less. Yet, it is also affordable. Eight years ago we concluded that it was essential for New Brunswick to eliminate its annual deficit and then begin to pay down the net debt. It was a revolutionary idea. Back then, no other government in Canada - federal or provincial - subscribed to it fully. Our persistence has paid off for New Brunswickers. The idea is now in fashion nearly everywhere in Canada and many governments are playing catch-up. Taking the lead has helped provide New Brunswick with one of North America's most desirable job creation and investment climates. Many of our objectives involve a re-commitment to what we are doing but with a vision which allows us to deepen our efforts and accomplish our goals.

New Brunswickers have worked hard and sacrificed a great deal in recent years to build a stronger economy. It is time for them to reap the benefits of their efforts. Our plan for a new mandate is responsible and affordable, recog-





*"Our plan for a new  
mandate is responsible  
and affordable."*

nizing that financial resources are limited and that governing in the 1990s is still about making difficult choices. In this mandate, as in the last, our goal will be to create 25,000 net new jobs over the next four years, confirming our policy of "jobs first."

Increasing taxes to support new initiatives will not be an option for a Liberal government. As in our previous mandates, when new initiatives are introduced, they will have to be funded from the existing revenue base. This will be accomplished while securing a fully-funded, modern health care system.

Further, we will also ensure that New Brunswickers have more money in their pockets in the years ahead. Over a four-year period, we are committed to reducing the provincial tax on personal income. We also pledge not to increase Workplace Health, Safety, and Compensation Commission rates for businesses at least for the next two years. In addition, we have recently given notice of a raise in the minimum wage by 50¢ from \$5 to \$5.50 over the next year.

The next four years are vital for New Brunswick and New Brunswickers. If anything, still more emphasis will be placed on economic self-reliance. We believe that by working

together, striking new partnerships, and building on those we have developed to date, we can transform New Brunswick into one of this country's leaders on the economic, social, educational and cultural fronts. With the support of New Brunswickers, we are prepared to commit ourselves to four more years of hard work, honest government and the introduction of new measures to build an even stronger New Brunswick.

This platform is the product of policy meetings and workshops held earlier this year with our party members throughout New Brunswick. The Liberal Party held a highly successful biennial convention last Fall in Campbellton. Many of the resolutions adopted there are included, in various forms, throughout this platform. In addition, we have considered briefs, submissions and views advanced by organizations and individuals across the province. We have aimed to address those issues which New Brunswickers have identified as priorities and to provide constructive solutions to them. Our government, I believe, has worked hard and effectively for the people of our province. We therefore submit this, our election platform for 1995, to New Brunswickers for their consideration.

Sincerely,



Frank McKenna  
Premier and Leader of the  
New Brunswick Liberal Party



# PART I: JOBS FIRST

The Liberal government has maintained an unwavering commitment to creating jobs for New Brunswickers. Its efforts have met with hard-won success and national acclaim. Job creation and economic development go hand in hand. Hard economic data confirm the observations of informed commentators in Canada and abroad to the effect that we have become National leaders in the economic development field.

A newly-elected Liberal Government will employ all available policies to promote job creation and new economic opportunities. Our goal is:

## **1. To create 25,000 net new jobs for New Brunswickers over the next four years.**

Goals are important. They offer benchmarks against which to judge performance. They also focus energy on the task at hand.

We have already accomplished much in job creation and economic development over the past eight years. We want to build on this success and explore all new avenues that show promise for further progress.

We believe that an increase of 25,000 net new jobs over the next four years is a realistic goal. New Brunswick firms and entrepreneurs have launched numerous new ventures and created thousands of new jobs for New Brunswickers. At the same time, Xerox, IBM, Royal Bank, United Parcel Service, Canada Trust, Northern Telecom, Medi-Trust, Purolator, ComDev, and many others have all chosen New Brunswick in recent years as the place for new activities.

Dozens of others are considering an expansion or consolidation into New Brunswick.

Traditional industries, such as agriculture, forestry, mining and the fishery continue to offer many new opportunities for employment and diversification.

We will build on these success stories to promote new activities and new jobs. No opportunity, however small, will go untouched and no potential partner uninvited as we pursue our goal. We will look to our traditional industries and to the new economy, to our entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs, to outside investors, to other governments, and to our educators for cooperation. All government departments will be asked to devote their energies to creating 25,000 new jobs for New Brunswickers between now and the end of 1999.

## **Partnerships and Investments**

The key to economic success lies in strong partnerships among labour, business, higher educa-

tion, and communities throughout the province. Partnerships allow New Brunswickers to set economic and social goals, to work with a common purpose and to pool the province's resources. Your Liberal government remains strongly committed to fostering strong partnerships among all economic sectors in New Brunswick.

Your Liberal government is also prepared to take the lead on several fronts to create jobs and promote economic growth. In a new mandate, we will continue to manage New Brunswick's public finances in a prudent and responsible fashion. Part of the province's success in the economic development field stems from tax levels that are competitive nationally and internationally. The province's business environment is currently among the best in North America and we will make every effort to build on this progress.

In recent years, we have achieved an overall balanced budget and the province is now beginning to reduce its net debt. Indeed, in this fiscal year, New Brunswick will reduce its net debt for the first time since 1979-80. We are proud to lead our nation in doing more - a great deal more - with less.

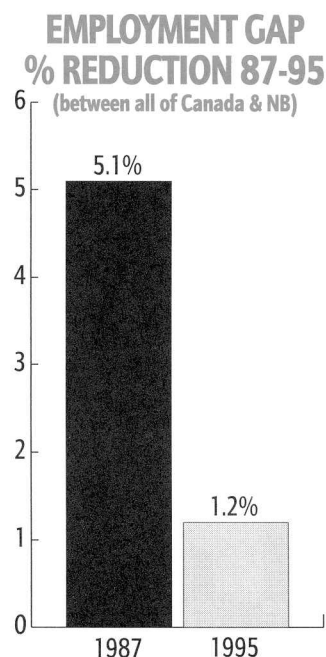
But there is still more to do. Accordingly, in a new mandate, your Liberal government will continue to attach a high priority to fostering a strong business environment.

## **2. A Liberal government will work closely and in partnership with the business community and other levels of government to promote new investments, trade and business development. Past efforts in this area have been highly successful. They will serve as a springboard in the pursuit of new opportunities and thousands of new jobs for New Brunswickers.**

Since the Liberal party came to office in New Brunswick, we have energetically sought out-of-province firms to locate in New Brunswick. We have attracted a number of national and international companies to the province. In the process we have established New Brunswick as an ideal place to locate new business activities. In particular, the province has earned a solid international reputation as the preferred location for telecommunications industries. Over the past eight years, New Brunswick has attracted \$13 billion in capital investments from the private sector alone. Total private and public sector capital expenditures have amounted to over \$20 billion, creating an average of 17,375 construction jobs per year.

*"New Brunswick is one of the few provinces in Canada that expects to see its growth rate improve in 1995."*

The Financial Post,  
10 June 1995



*"I told them [people who asked about New Brunswick workers] ... how quickly they learned, their performance levels, reliability, and motivation ... In other parts of the world, it's not necessarily like that. They said, 'Where do you get people like that?' I said, 'They come from heaven.' I've never seen anything like it in my life. It's a great place."*

Ron Wallace,  
President, UPS Canada

**3. In a new mandate, a Liberal government will accelerate its efforts to promote the province, its workforce and its natural assets to out-of-province businesses. Success breeds success, and there is every reason to believe that national and international firms will continue to locate new activities and jobs in our province.**

Outside investors, however, are only one part of the business investment equation. New Brunswickers recognized long ago that small and medium-sized business is the province's major economic engine for job creation. Small businesses can take root in every region, and in every community in the province. In a new mandate, your Liberal government will attach the highest priority to promoting small business development, introducing new measures to make capital available to entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs. Specifically, we will:

**4. Work with others in the private sector, other governments in Atlantic Canada and the federal government to introduce specific measures to make more venture capital available to entrepreneurs.**

Supporting New Brunswick entrepreneurship is at the very heart of our economic development strategy. We are proud that a survey undertaken by Atlantic Progress magazine (March 1995) confirms that the New Brunswick Government leads Atlantic Canada in providing the most attractive business environment in the region. We are convinced that the best opportunities for job creation exist in the establishment of New Brunswick small businesses and when small businesses identify possibilities for new economic activities relating to the production or delivery of distinctly new products or services. Access to initial capital continues to be identified as a major obstacle to very small and new businesses.

Accordingly, in a new mandate, your Liberal government will:

**5. Work with the investment community, working ventures funds, businesses and individuals to introduce a new Small Entrepreneur Capital Assistance Program. The assistance will be available for new business start-ups and for the production or delivery of a distinctly new product or service.**

Workplace Health, Safety, and Compensation Commission (WHSCC) premiums are a significant cost to business. But a well managed workers' compensation program can considerably enhance our job creation efforts. We have already seen a dramatic improvement in our competitive position with an average reduction

of 17 percent in premiums in the past year. We now have the lowest average rate among Canadian Provinces. We have also dramatically reduced the unfunded liability. As a result of good management practices, we are in a position to anticipate no increase in average premiums for at least the next two years, and at the same time, pay off the outstanding unfunded liability. This will permit further rate reductions or modest program enhancements. This, together with our recent reduction in the small business tax rate from 9 to 7 percent, will continue to make New Brunswick an attractive place for job creation and a better place for its own entrepreneurs. Accordingly, in a new mandate, we foresee a :

**6. Minimum two year freeze in the average rates of the Workplace Health, Safety, and Compensation Commission and discharge of its unfunded liability.**

#### **Red Tape**

While we have made great strides in reducing overlap and duplication through initiatives such as one-stop shopping, New Brunswick's entrepreneurs tell us that more can be done to simplify business start-up and development. For example, the array of regulations and procedures involved in obtaining permits and licences, and in accessing programs must be further reduced. A renewed emphasis is needed, throughout our government and with other levels of government to further simplify small business development and job creation. Therefore:

**7. A new Liberal government will introduce new measures to dramatically reduce the regulatory burden for New Brunswick's small businesses.**

#### **Rural Economic Development**

New Brunswick remains largely rural (53 percent of the population resides in rural areas). The quality of life in rural New Brunswick is unsurpassed anywhere in Canada. There is also a long history of entrepreneurship and hard work in rural New Brunswick, where people have learned to make the best use of our natural resources, creating new products and pursuing new economic activities.

**8. In a new mandate, your Liberal government will seek new partnerships to promote rural economic development and vigorously pursue new opportunities for rural New Brunswick. We will build on our "Rural Development Strategy," unveiled in February 1995.**

We have already begun work on this front. For example, in partnership with the private sector, a new trading house, the "New Brunswick Rural





Riches Trading Company," is being established to promote products to wholesale and retail outlets both within and outside the province.

We are convinced that with existing or new economic partners we can promote economic growth and create new jobs in rural New Brunswick. Indeed, no economic initiative will be too modest if it means jobs and new opportunities for New Brunswickers living in our smaller towns and villages.

### Agriculture

Our agriculture sector is witnessing a renewed vitality, as governments and farmers work together to increase incomes and production. However, much remains to be accomplished. We are convinced that new opportunities exist for our potato farmers. We know, for example, that marketing opportunities have been identified for over four million hundredweight of potatoes per year in seed and table stocks. We want to assist producers in New Brunswick to take full advantage of these new opportunities. Accordingly, we will be striking new partnerships to increase land availability to meet new market demand and to promote proper rotation to maintain and improve both quality and yield.

For our part, we will:

**9. Promote a Land Assembly and Agricultural Land Expansion Program. We will also play a lead role in establishing public/private partnerships to clarify roles, responsibilities and the commitment required for success. We will aggressively pursue federal government funding to support potato storage construction and improvement. We will develop an extension program to deal with plant stand improvement and the introduction of new technologies to lower production costs.**

Beef production represents an important untapped potential for New Brunswickers. Beef can be raised profitably in the province on a diet of forage, local grains and cull potatoes. Yet, in-province production meets only 30 percent of New Brunswick's total beef consumption. Beef producers suggest that the largest single factor inhibiting further beef expansion in the province is access to affordable financing. Our Liberal government has been listening to the views of farmers. Accordingly, we will:

**10. Support an innovative financing program to assist beef producers. The program provides an interest buydown of up to 10% over three years.**

More generally, we believe that agriculture holds important potential for job creation in rural New Brunswick. The province is still not

self-sufficient in food production and there are opportunities in our own domestic market which, in time, will also lead to export sales in several commodities. Your Liberal government is currently working on new measures to:

- double the number of Farmers' Markets in the province and assist them to attract local customers and tourists;
- promote tomato growing and processing in Kent county;
- promote cranberry production in the Manguerville and possibly Chipman, Oromocto and Richibucto areas;
- expand apple production in several areas of the province;
- expand hog production in several areas of the province;
- expand blueberry production in the Northeast and in Charlotte county.

Continuing our dramatic increase in production in the agri-food industry depends on our ability to do sophisticated research. New Brunswick already has an impressive list of research institutions, including the Plant Propagation Centre, the Research and Productivity Council and the Food Institute at the Université de Moncton. We will establish a provincial Bio-Technology Centre that will provide increased capacity to our bio-technology support services, while simultaneously linking the research and development efforts of our existing New Brunswick institutions. This will enhance the New Brunswick agri-food community's ability to compete in rapidly expanding world-markets. The existing infrastructure together with modern means of communications can ensure the success of this new centre at a minimum cost to taxpayers. Accordingly, in a new mandate a Liberal government will:

**11. Create a new Bio-Technology Centre for New Brunswick.**

### Fisheries and Aquaculture

The Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture, like agriculture, has a rural focus. Indeed, over 100 rural communities owe at least part of their income and employment to fisheries and aquaculture. The sector currently exports products worth over \$300 million across Canada and to over 55 countries. Aquaculture alone accounts for over \$90 million in sales and it is estimated that the figure will climb to about \$200 million by the year 2000. Your Liberal government will continue to support the orderly development of the salmon aquaculture sector, which at the moment largely accounts for New Brunswick's major success in aquaculture.

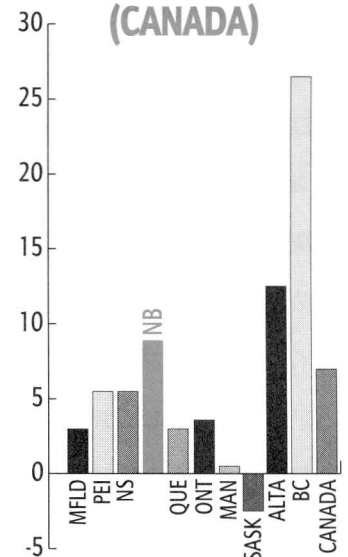
The traditional fishery also holds promise for further growth.

In partnership with the private sector and the

*"Through its aggressive, open-for-business approach, team spirit, and cultural mix, New Brunswick generates enormous energy and a determination to get the job done."*

Val O'Donovan, Chairman and CEO, Com Dev

**EMPLOYMENT •  
% CHANGE 87-94  
(CANADA)**



*"A number of foresters interviewed by Maclean's said that most of Canada's provinces have failed to devise such (coherent management) plans, and that only one - New Brunswick - currently has a system capable of giving planners accurate and detailed information about their forest inventory. The province has a widely admired forest-management system."*

Maclean's Magazine



federal government, we intend to pursue a number of new initiatives. A Liberal government will:

**12. Work in partnership with others to develop new technologies for value-added products and packaging techniques; identify opportunities for import replacement for high-quality fish products; and pursue new niche markets and potential for specialty products abroad.**

**13. Promote the development of underutilized species such as quahog and dogfish.**

**14. Protect and increase our share of the marine resources in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the Bay of Fundy.**

**15. Recognize the role of the inshore fishery in the economy of rural New Brunswick, and introduce measures to ensure its development.**

**16. Develop halibut and haddock as commercially viable marine aquaculture species and promote freshwater aquaculture, focusing on species like Arctic Char and Rainbow Trout.**

**17. Promote research and development of the aquaculture potential of shellfish species such as soft-shell clams, mussels and oysters.**

#### **Forestry**

New Brunswick is a national leader in innovative forest management practices. The province has, over the years, been able to secure existing jobs in the forest sector and create new ones because it has never hesitated to take the lead in Canada in introducing the most modern forest management techniques. Your Liberal government, working in partnership with labour, business and private woodlot owners, will ensure that New Brunswick remains in the vanguard of forest management practices. All indications suggest that the forest industry will continue to play a key role in our province's economic future. It is envisaged that some jobs in the forestry sector will be less seasonal in the future and will provide higher income and better working conditions.

A new Liberal government will work cooperatively to further strengthen our forestry sector with an accent on sustainable development. We will use the newly-enhanced silviculture program on crown land to create more new jobs in rural areas. We will work closely with the industry to promote greater use of forest product residues (e.g., sawdust, shavings and bark), to promote manufacture of more engineered wood products in New Brunswick and to develop private woodlots more effectively.

Private woodlots comprise 30 percent of the forested land in New Brunswick. These lands contribute significantly to employment and economic activity in the forest sector. In fact, the government of New Brunswick has committed \$3 million in 1995 alone to assist woodlot owners in the renewal of their forest land.

**18. Financial and other support to woodlot owners will continue over the next five years as woodlot associations become more self-sufficient in providing services.**

A Liberal government will ensure that all cutover areas on crown land receive appropriate silviculture development. Today's forests will be used and managed to maintain the capacity to meet the needs of tomorrow.

**19. An expanded \$10.7 million silviculture program was initiated in 1995 and will continue in future years. Existing and new programs will guarantee that each and every hectare will be properly managed, and great care will be taken to maintain the overall mix of species.**

Forest companies own large tracts of land that make up 20 percent of the provincial land base. It is in the public interest and in the interest of the forestry sector to ensure that management standards are achieved on these lands. The government of New Brunswick will work with the owners to secure sustainable forests on industrial lands.

We will also be looking to the forestry sector to promote the creation of new jobs for our province in wood processing and manufacturing. Accordingly a new Liberal Government will:

**20. Establish a policy whereby any new allocation of wood on crown lands would only be given to value-added manufacturers.**

#### **Mining**

The mining sector offers solid prospects for growth and your Liberal government is presently pursuing all opportunities for increased mining activity.

We will intensify our effort on several fronts, including initiatives to identify new mineral targets. In 1996, we will be providing the industry with new data derived from an airborne geological survey.

**21. A new Liberal government will promote the Junior Mining Program and will continue our financial commitment to that initiative, aimed at increasing employment and development in the mining sector.**

## Energy

Innovative thinking on the energy front is needed not only to conserve energy and protect our environment, but also to create jobs. Your Liberal government has been working closely with all sectors in the economy to identify new and affordable conservation measures. In order to build on our successes in this area, a Liberal government will implement:

### **22. A Comprehensive Energy Efficiency Retrofit Initiative.**

The initiative will apply to residential, commercial and public sectors. It is designed to produce energy savings for all New Brunswickers, make our businesses even more competitive, create new jobs and reduce emissions from excess energy consumption.

The public sector will lead by example by implementing a program of energy efficiency retrofits for government buildings. The program will be self-financing, funded from energy savings over an extended period. New initiatives will also be launched for the residential and business sectors.

The work associated with the retrofits will create a large number of new jobs throughout the province. By and large, the jobs will be earmarked for the province's trades people.

## Natural gas

The Liberal Government is looking forward to participating in efforts to establish a Maritime natural gas pipeline. We are working on bringing the western gas pipeline into New Brunswick. We will also work collaboratively with the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia in the marketing of the gas reserves off Sable Island. The relatively low cost and low pollution levels of this fuel offer obvious benefit to consumers, businesses and the environment. NB Power customers, for example, would also benefit from lower energy costs. Your Liberal government has been consistent and vocal in its call for extension of the Natural Gas Pipeline into the Maritimes, and its development would positively impact on our economic and social way of life. Therefore:

### **23. A Liberal government will work constructively with other governments and the private sector in developing a pipeline through New Brunswick and in ensuring a secure, long-term supply of natural gas.**

## Tourism

Tourism is now the fastest growing industry in the world. New Brunswick has strenuously pur-

sued new opportunities in recent years and these efforts have paid off. The tourism industry in New Brunswick has enjoyed unprecedented success. Since your Liberal government introduced its new tourism strategy in 1993, the industry has grown by nearly 20 percent. Last year alone, it accounted for a record 24,000 jobs in the province. This industry is of critical importance because, by its very nature, it benefits all New Brunswick's regions.

Your Liberal government will continue to attach a high priority to tourism development in a new mandate. We will be working towards balanced development throughout the province and further measures to increase traffic in the winter season, as well as in the spring and fall shoulder seasons.

Accordingly, your Liberal government will:

### **24. Implement, in close consultation with the industry and other levels of government, a four-year plan to further strengthen the tourism industry.**

Drawing on our province's natural attractions and strengths, this plan will explore all potential opportunities. For example:

- new measures to promote snowmobiling products. We will intensify our efforts to significantly build on the excellent trail system which now exists;
- continue our dynamic marketing campaigns, particularly in the USA and Quebec;
- implement a New Brunswick Day Adventure Strategy. The strategy has already proven to be tremendously successful at pilot sites in St. George and St. Andrews. Its main element involves the establishment of 10 to 15 Day Adventure destinations throughout the province. Discussions are well advanced to establish many more of these centres over the course of a new mandate;
- the launch of a new world-class tourism product: "The Tides of Fundy." This product will bring together several separate initiatives at various locations along the Fundy Coast;
- development of the New Brunswick portion of the Appalachian Trail and a trail network throughout the Province;
- continued enhancement of our beaches, particularly on the northern and eastern coasts, is key to our tourism potential and to our natural heritage. Our rivers also have tremendous tourism potential. We will work with local sponsors to create a fully integrated system of river pumping sites. Over the next 5 years, we will spend an additional \$9 million on preserving our beaches and rivers.

*"While overall regional career prospects are poor, New Brunswick is a distinct exception. New Brunswick has done a particularly good job of economic diversification, continuously attracting a number of telecom and computer service industries. The province's bilingual workforce, somewhat lower wage rate (but attractive quality of life), and advanced telecommunications infrastructure have attracted many businesses. Correspondingly, by far the best career prospects in Atlantic Canada are in New Brunswick."*

Canada's Best Careers Guide, Frank Feather, 1995





# PART II - DEVELOPMENT IS ABOUT PEOPLE

*"New Brunswick students deserve the best education for a technological society. It would appear the province is determined to let them have it."*

Editorial, Daily Gleaner,  
July 7, 1995

New Brunswickers have told us repeatedly that above all else, they need access to knowledge and skills in order to compete in the market place and participate actively in the economy. In response, we set out to achieve excellence in our formal education system and to provide a learning continuum for New Brunswickers from childhood to senior adulthood, and from formal education to special measures for special circumstances. We committed \$61 million in new and re-invested funding to this effort, including re-investment of savings realized from reducing the number of school districts. We invited New Brunswickers to join us in rethinking human resource development. Their initiatives have placed New Brunswick at the cutting edge of innovative programming for human resource development for several years. The province is now a leader in Canada in reducing the school drop-out rate, setting measurable targets for school retention rates, and establishing basic literacy and numeracy requirements for graduation. The new economy requires the ability to rapidly develop new skills and upgrade existing ones. The pace of change in technology and the emergence of global markets dictate that learning be a lifelong process. New Brunswick became a leader in the new economy through innovative human resources development initiatives and because of important assets New Brunswickers themselves bring to the marketplace. These two factors will remain the cornerstone of a Liberal government's human resources development plan.

## Youth

We are particularly concerned about employment opportunities for our youth. There are world-wide record levels of unemployment among young people. We are determined to break that pattern in New Brunswick with a dynamic series of initiatives.

### **25. A Liberal government will introduce a NB First Start program for youth.**

Our young people are caught in a dilemma. Employers tell them they are looking for experienced staff and this prevents them from getting their first job to gain work experience. We will introduce measures in a new mandate to help our young people gain work experience and stay and work in New Brunswick. The New Brunswick First Start Program will target 1,000 young New Brunswickers a year to benefit from a combination of internship and

wage subsidy. Graduates of a minimum one-year program at recognized post-secondary institutions will be eligible for the 40-week program.

### **26. A Liberal Government will assist New Brunswickers in improving their computer and technology skills**

We have already begun work on this front. Starting in 1996, computer literacy will be a requirement for high school graduation. Also by 1996, we will be the first province in the country to have connected every school in the province to the Information Highway. We will also work closely with the federal government to extend New Brunswick's successful Community/Access Information Centres project to more New Brunswick schools, particularly in rural areas. This will allow students in small communities to explore the world electronically. We will also open up schools, after hours, to members of the community, providing rural residents with access to the latest technology.

The New Brunswick Community College will establish an Extramural Campus, as part of its Virtual College initiative, to deliver courses from its nine campuses to rural communities.

### **"Hands-on" learning**

One of the best ways for our young people to learn is to combine classroom and on-the-job training and experience. Not only do students learn more and learn better, they also make an easier transition from school to work.

### **27. A new Liberal government will dramatically expand our successful pilot program for Youth Apprenticeship in all school districts over the next four years. We will set a target of one million hours of paid work experience and on-the-job training.**

This means 1,200 students (four times the present number) will gain important hands-on work experience and training, giving them an easier transition to employment. We will strike new partnerships with the private sector, with other levels of government, and with volunteer organizations to provide opportunities to our youth to gain hands-on work experience.

The integration of a student's academic studies in Universities and Community Colleges with relevant work experience is an important component in ensuring good earning potential and success in the labour force. In a co-operative working environment students learn more



about the expectations and needs of employers. They also gain a realistic career outlook, and an opportunity to mature and develop independence. Co-operative work placements offer a double benefit, giving students the opportunity to gain valuable work experience while sharing in the cost of their education and related expenses.

**28. A Liberal Government will work diligently with employers, universities, community colleges, and other education and training providers to increase access to the number of co-operative education opportunities within the province. Our target will be to double the current number of co-operative education opportunities.**

#### **Primary and Secondary Education**

Your Liberal government made "excellence in education" its objective, and many landmark improvements to our school system have been implemented, and lauded by experts and commentators from across Canada.

The government's Excellence in Education program saw an additional \$61 million invested to improve our education system.

Approximately half the Excellence funding was earmarked for remedial, enrichment, and stay-in-school programs, and for initiatives to ensure our schools are orderly places of learning. Another one quarter of this amount was targeted for early intervention, to make sure our young children arrive at kindergarten ready and able to learn. The remainder was directed at setting up a provincial testing program, strengthening the curriculum, providing school-to-work transition, and putting state-of-the-art technology in every school.

**29. In a new mandate, a Liberal government will continue to adhere to the principles of excellence in education, and to ensure that our children are well-prepared for a new world.**

A new Liberal government will continue to provide a balanced and appropriate curriculum, and we will set high standards and expectations. We will continue to support our teachers, and we will proceed with implementation of our technology program to give every child essential computer skills, in rural and urban areas alike. And we will put the "public" back in the public education system, by offering new ways to involve parents and other stakeholders, and to keep them better informed of students' progress.

Technology in our schools is rapidly becoming a way of life, as all facilities in the province are electronically linked together, through the School Net, and to the world on the Internet.

Computer literacy has become a prerequisite for graduation. Summer camps, known as "Education Plus", offer further in-depth instruction in technology and other key subjects. We are determined to maintain New Brunswick's advantage as a province where our students are trained in the latest technologies. Therefore:

**30. A new Liberal government will continue to introduce new technologies throughout the school system.**

In the past, many students have been left behind for a variety of reasons, and have chosen to end their formal education by "dropping out". Your Liberal government has made substantial progress on this front, increasing the school graduation rate to 83%, compared to 69% nationally. However, we feel that even one school dropout is too many, and that we cannot afford to leave any of our children behind.

**31. A new Liberal government will recommit to its efforts to increase the student retention rates in our schools throughout the province.**

Following a successful conference on orderly schools last year, all the partners in education - teachers, trustees, superintendents, home and school associations and government - agreed that "literacy in a safe environment" must be the number one priority of the school system. Our education partners agreed that literacy is the foundation on which all other skills and knowledge are built. But a safe environment - where teachers can teach and students can learn - must be in place so that students and teachers can work together to develop these skills.

**32. Numerous initiatives are underway and will be maintained to ensure "literacy in a safe environment". These include training for teachers, parents, students and bus drivers; peer mediation; conflict management and resolution; and non-violent crisis intervention techniques.**

Your government values the contributions of its employee stakeholders in the education system. Specifically, teachers have a profound commitment to achieving excellence in education, and their contributions are too often overshadowed by a threat of work disruption during the process of collective bargaining. The government and teachers' representatives experimented with binding arbitration on final offers during the most recent round of negotiations. This process has brought stability to our school system and enhanced teacher morale. Therefore:

*"I would tell people if they want to get something out of life, get into the many CASP programs in New Brunswick. They can improve their math, English, reading, and science. Then they can go on to senior upgrading or G.E.D. After that, they have a choice of taking a course at a community college, getting a job in a field of their choice, or starting up their own business. They will feel better about themselves and find they have the courage to speak up for themselves and to keep trying new things."*

Grace Dean, Saint John Learning Exchange



*"If you don't try to turn things around in your life, you'll go down, way down. Then it's even harder trying to come back up. This project will help me get back into the work force, and the computer training will be good to have when I go back into business for myself - that's my goal."*

Peter Williamson,  
Tele Education participant

**33. A new Liberal government will recommit to a process of expedited negotiations as a feature of collective bargaining with its teachers.**

#### **Universities**

Several new measures are foreseen in the University sector. We will launch a review of the role of the Maritime Higher Education Commission and the provincial government in funding university education. The purpose of the review is to ensure that both are responsive to the needs of New Brunswickers. We want to identify opportunities for greater cooperation between our universities, between the universities and community colleges, and between these institutions and other sectors of our economy.

**34. A new Liberal government will identify new measures to strengthen the linkages and cooperative mechanisms between our institutions of higher learning.**

#### **Community Colleges**

Community colleges are increasingly being called upon to play a pivotal role in the economic future of our province. Community colleges provide the skills, and build the confidence for New Brunswickers to be full participants in our economy. Over the past eight years, we have accomplished much to ensure that qualified New Brunswickers may attend NBCC. We will continue these efforts:

**35. A new Liberal government will implement new measures to expand access to our Community College system.**

#### **Student Loans and Grants**

As we move closer to the twenty-first century, post-secondary education is more important than ever before. The new economy demands knowledge and skills which require further education. At the same time, the economic realities of many students prevent them from pursuing their education. The objective of the Canada/New Brunswick Student Loan Program is to make higher education possible for all students. However, as many students have told us, the system needs to be reviewed and updated to reflect the changing realities of student life. In future discussions regarding changes to the student loan program, we will continue to consult with student and community leaders and ensure that accessibility to post-secondary studies is a number one priority.

**36. A new Liberal government will undertake negotiations with the Federal Government to establish a program for graduates with low income and high debt.**

**37. A program of student aid will be available, to students receiving their education and training from private sector providers.**

#### **Quality of Training**

New Brunswickers invest a great deal of money every year in education and training. They have every right to expect that those being trained will have the knowledge and skills to participate in the workforce. Accordingly, we will ask community colleges and other training facilities in New Brunswick to stand behind their students. A unique new guarantee will assist us in our job creation efforts and help transform our institutions of higher learning into quality-driven organizations.

**38. A Liberal government will guarantee the quality of training offered in New Brunswick, including increased efforts in private sector certification.**

#### **Innovative Social Programming**

New Brunswick has, in recent years, played a lead role in Canada, taking full advantage of education and training to assist the unemployed, those receiving income assistance and the working poor. Our central purpose is to find ways to help those who can work to become more self-reliant and to escape dependence on government income assistance programs. We intend to redouble our efforts to improve opportunities for education and training and actual work experience for those on income assistance. In so doing, we will seek new partnerships with the private sector and other levels of government and make full use of new technology to deliver learning opportunities to all areas of New Brunswick.

We decided to overhaul the policies and operations of the Department of Human Resources Development in 1991. We concluded that passive income support did not provide development opportunities for a better future to recipients of social assistance and their families. We held numerous public consultations and workshops to chart a new course. Together, we formulated an approach that creates opportunities for people to develop the skills they need for greater independence, while ensuring that those truly in need continue to receive financial assistance. The new approach is designed to assist those who can work to make the transition to work, to support our young people, and to provide help to people with disabilities. In a new mandate, we will continue to modernize social assistance programs. We have already received national acclaim for NB Works and NB Job Corps. Along with training and work experiences, we will concentrate increasingly on providing NB Works-type





counselling as part of the range of services provided to first-time clients.

We will strengthen our social assistance program by implementing recommendations formulated through various recent public consultation exercises. The recommendations stressed the following as priorities:

- those who are striving to become more self-reliant;
- families with children;
- youth;
- disabled persons; and
- children of working parents.

Therefore:

**39. A Liberal government will provide training, education and work experience to people on income assistance, in order to lessen their dependence on government.**

### **Housing**

While promoting greater self-reliance on the part of New Brunswickers, your government maintains a strong commitment to programs which assist citizens-in-need to obtain affordable housing.

Increasingly, the government has worked in partnership with local community groups to provide affordable housing opportunities while knowing full well that for every dollar spent on housing construction, nearly half this amount is spent on New Brunswick products.

**40. Your government will continue efforts to combat overlap and duplication through a "one-stop shopping" approach to the delivery of housing programs with the federal government.**

### **Day Care**

While women have sought their rightful place in the workforce, affordable day care has become a necessity for families and in particular, for single care-givers. Your Liberal government identified this need several years ago and developed its program of regulated day care spaces for low-income families. We recognize that the current number of spaces in this program does not fulfill the need which exists, and we are working to expand this program while exploring different kinds of child care. If we are to reduce the barriers to the participation of women in the labour force, we must develop programs which include non-traditional care, such as seasonal care, evening and night care, and spaces for infants and school-aged children.

Parents have also expressed the concern that while they do not qualify for subsidized spots, their income is still too low to afford day care. To assist these families, our government pledges to work with the private sector to provide low cost daycare services through job creation initiatives.

**41. A new Liberal government will renew its commitment to improving accessibility to day care for New Brunswick families.**

*"Presently involved in this initiative, I would like to express my sincere thanks to Premier Frank McKenna for offering me an opportunity to pursue my formal education and hence embark on the road to self-sufficiency."*

NB Works Participant,  
Letter to the Editor,  
Moncton Times-Transcript

# PART III - SECURING HEALTH CARE

## OVERVIEW

New Brunswick is a leader among Canada's provinces in seeking to maintain a relevant, publicly-funded health system. We were among the first, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, to recognize the need for new and innovative ways to provide quality health care services in a climate of fiscal restraint. Indeed, we have carefully managed our health care dollars, and the rate of growth in health spending has been stabilized. Many concepts tested and implemented here are being adopted in other jurisdictions as others now seek solutions to control spiraling health care costs.

Even as our health system is being reformed, spending on health and community services in New Brunswick has continued to grow, concentrating resources in areas of greatest need. The budget for the Department of Health and Community Services has increased yearly since 1987. In 1987/88, the department's budget was \$849 million. In 1995/96, the current year, it is \$1.195 billion. That's an increase of almost \$350 million, or almost 30 per cent. By way of comparison, Alberta is cutting its health budget by more than \$700 million (18 per cent) over the next two years; Saskatchewan closed 52 hospitals; Quebec has frozen health spending and announced plans to close seven hospitals; Nova Scotia cut \$62 million from its health budget in 1994/95; and the recently-elected Conservative government in Ontario has just announced initial cuts of over \$100 million in health care funding.

We recognize that change in the health care system can be unsettling. Yet research indicates that more than four-fifths of all New Brunswickers are satisfied with the quality and level of health services they personally received in the previous year.

**42. A new Liberal government will remain firmly committed to sustaining a planned, relevant and compassionate health care system that meets the needs of all New Brunswickers, regardless of socioeconomic status or place of residence. We will continue to support the principles of the Canada Health Act, which state that health services must be portable, comprehensive, universal, accessible and publicly-administered.**

Our health and community services system has undergone significant changes in recent years. The government has made tough decisions to protect that system, now and for the future. The hospital system has been consolidated into

eight regional corporations. A new funding distribution formula for hospitals is almost completed. The successful Extra-mural Hospital program has been expanded province-wide, and serves thousands of New Brunswickers in their own homes, reducing previously lengthy hospital stays.

A new cardiac care centre has opened in Saint John. New technologies, including a mobile magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) machine, have been introduced. Breast cancer screening services for at-risk women are in place across the province. At-risk mothers and children are receiving services under our Early Childhood Initiatives Program. And our Long-Term Care strategy is coordinating services and assessment needs for people with functional limitations, such as the elderly, and disabled persons of all ages.

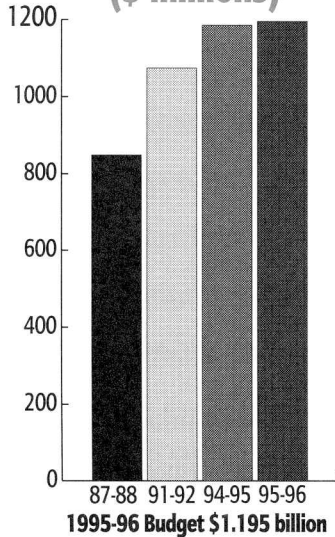
New and expanded roles for health professionals are being identified. For example, nurses and other health care providers are playing a greater role in delivery of primary care. The Community Health Centre concept is being tested in McAdam and at St. Joseph's Hospital in Saint John. Plans are in place to help New Brunswick make the best use of doctors, nurses and rehabilitation personnel. Since 1991, the number of doctors practising in New Brunswick has increased by about 100. The government's program of "rattrapage" has helped ensure that basic, quality services are as accessible to residents of northern New Brunswick as they are to others throughout the Province.

## Waiting List Reduction Strategy

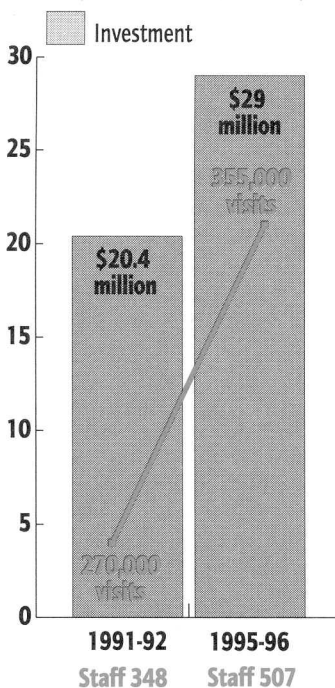
The government already requires regional hospital corporations to submit regular reports on surgical waiting lists. This information allows government to work with the corporations to identify and deal with factors that contribute to delays. In the past year, waiting lists in New Brunswick have been significantly reduced. In fact, New Brunswickers wait a shorter time for key services than the national average in several areas, including heart and cancer surgery. This trend was evident even before the government allocated \$2 million in March 1995, which was specifically earmarked to reduce surgical waiting lists in our largest hospitals. Reducing surgical waiting lists and waiting times for surgery is a Liberal government priority.

**43. In a new mandate, our objective is for New Brunswick to meet or exceed national norms for surgical waiting lists.**

## HEALTH CARE EXPENDITURES (\$ millions)



## EXTRA-MURAL HOSPITAL (Investment in \$millions)



## Capital Construction

In 1987, the Liberal party committed itself to the completion of New Brunswick's network of regional hospitals, which had been under construction for more than a decade. With the opening of the new Miramichi regional hospital next year, that major achievement will be completed. Since 1991, the government has also systematically improved ambulatory (walk-in) and emergency services. Hospital facilities will continue to be renovated or modified to reflect the shift from in-patient to out-patient care. Since the Liberal government took office in 1987, approximately \$450 million has been spent to improve hospital facilities across the province.

Highlights include major renovation and additions to the Georges L.-Dumont and City hospitals in Moncton, including construction of a radiotherapy unit. We have completed new facilities in Minto, Blackville, Sackville and Tracadie, and a cardiac care unit in Saint John. St. Joseph's Hospital in Saint John recently opened its upgraded facilities, including 24 hour emergency services, breast screening services, radiology, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, respiratory therapy, and speech therapy services.

There have also been major additions and/or renovations in Grand Falls, Bathurst, Caraquet, Sussex, St. Stephen and Woodstock. In addition, a major addition and renovation project for the Dr. Everett Chalmers Hospital in Fredericton is underway in 1995, with planning for a new emergency department and ambulance bay. A major renovation project in Perth-Andover started in July of this year. Other projects improved, upgraded, or expanded facilities in Albert, Bath, Black's Harbour, Chatham, Chipman, Dalhousie, Doaktown, Fredericton, Centracare in Saint John, Hampton, Harvey, Lameque, McAdam, Newcastle, Oromocto, Perth, Plaster Rock, Restigouche Centre in Campbellton, Rexton, Ste-Anne-de-Kent and St. Quentin.

**44. A Liberal government will continue to make capital investments as required, at provincial hospital facilities, to further enable facilities to deliver more modern, quality health care.**

## Meeting the Standards

To improve quality of health care, your Liberal government is committed to establishing measures of effectiveness, to help both government and the public determine the quality of services and programs. These benchmarks will compare New Brunswick to national norms in key areas.

**45. A Liberal government will ensure that New Brunswick matches or surpasses national**

**performance in key areas of health/health care notably the number of hospital beds and physicians.**

## TeleMedicine

TeleMedicine involves the use of technology to deliver services, particularly diagnostic services, or health preventative services at a distance. This concept is being used increasingly around the world. Using distance technology, a specialist in Moncton can provide a diagnosis for a colleague who has examined a patient in Bathurst, without the patient having to travel. It could also be a nurse in Saint John providing advice and guidance on women's health issues in Grand Manan. The ability to make maximum use of this concept is made easier by New Brunswick's state-of-the-art telecommunications network.

**46. A Liberal government will place a priority on implementing TeleMedicine opportunities province-wide.**

## TeleCare

Under TeleCare, experienced emergency nurses provide advice over the telephone to help people decide whether or not they need to go to the Emergency department. The intent is to reduce unnecessary visits to Emergency. A pilot project has been underway in Health Region 1 (southeastern New Brunswick) since January 1995. The number of non-urgent patients has dropped since TeleCare began. The number of people using TeleCare has been increasing steadily and user satisfaction is extremely high.

**47. The government will expand TeleCare to the entire province.**

## Role of Health Care Professionals

New Brunswick's health professionals are among the best and hardest-working in the country. We are working collaboratively with them in exploring alternative methods of health care service delivery throughout the system. Community health centres, TeleMedicine and many other initiatives are making the best possible use of the skills of doctors, nurses, therapists and others. A new requirement for a Baccalaureate in Nursing will provide the foundation for increased participation by nurses in the health care system.

**48. A new Liberal government will work cooperatively with health professionals and their representatives to further evolve the role of all our employee stakeholders, with a view to maximizing the high quality work of our doctors, nurses, therapists and other health professionals.**

*"Once new ways of delivering health care have been fully implemented in New Brunswick, it will become evident that nurses can play a substantial role in the reform process by reducing the reliance on costly curative services. Nurses can deliver high quality care at reasonable cost — that's what several projects being proposed in the Throne Speech will show."*

Lucille Auffrey, Executive Director, Nurses Association of New Brunswick





*"We are the first in  
Canada to bring in their  
[Health and Sciences  
Television] network.  
Even in times when  
money is tight,  
there are creative and  
innovative ways for  
people to keep up...  
I think, in  
New Brunswick,  
we're doing that more  
than in other provinces."*

Valerie Hagerman,  
Director of Education and  
Consultation Services,  
New Brunswick Health  
Care Association

### **Prevention and Wellness**

Investments in prevention and wellness are the cornerstones of our approach to health. Major enhancements have already been introduced, including nutrition programs, early intervention, senior fitness programs, breast screening and public education.

Prevention and wellness account for an ever increasing proportion of health care budgets. Research has shown that relatively minimal expenditures in public awareness, nutrition, early intervention, vaccination, screening, workplace safety, fitness, addiction counselling, healthy active living and other initiatives can avoid much larger expenditures in the future. In addition, nurses, doctors and others have urged the government to ensure that all its policies are formulated bearing in mind their impact on public health. We share this concern and therefore:

**49. A Liberal government will invest further in prevention programs. Particular attention will also be paid to ensure that "healthy public policy" contributes to improving the health of New Brunswickers.**

### **Hospital Corporation Accountability**

As increasingly difficult choices are made in the administration of health care worldwide, the public becomes more and more interested in being involved in these choices. The Legislature's Standing Committees on Public Accounts and Crown Corporations recommended, in early 1995, that individual health corporations appear before legislators to permit closer scrutiny of hospital care expenditures. The recent Throne Speech com-

mitted the government to a public process of examining the accountability and governance of regional hospital corporations. A major step was recently taken by expanding the Right to Information Act to include hospital corporations. However, public input is required to determine a new system of hospital corporation accountability and governance. A discussion paper has been issued and public hearings will be held. Therefore:

**50. A Liberal government will ask a Legislative Committee to hold extensive public consultations on the accountability and governance of Hospital Corporations. This will include weighing the benefits of elected versus appointed Hospital Corporation Boards.**

### **Health is a Fundamental Responsibility**

The Liberal party of New Brunswick has managed the modernization of our vast health care system. It has shown that it can meet the essential requirements of our citizens. We are proud of our record and our vision in health care that have been lauded across the nation. The development of a modern health care system is not only a budgetary priority of a Liberal government, but truly a fundamental responsibility.

**51. A Liberal government is committed to a fully-funded, quality health care system that meets or exceeds key national indicators. Commitments made in this document will be met during a new Liberal government's mandate. The important tax reductions contemplated in this platform will be undertaken only after ensuring that our health care responsibilities and commitments are met.**



# PART IV - MANAGING WISELY

Eight years ago your Liberal government recognized the urgency of restoring order to the province's finances. At that time, we were virtually alone in Canada, not only in calling for a balanced budget, but also in introducing measures to achieve it. Today, virtually all jurisdictions have embarked on a similar course.

Managing the province's public finances in a responsible fashion makes sense for a number of reasons. Above all, it tells taxpayers that their money will be spent wisely and that their government will not have to impose new taxes or raise existing ones. It also encourages our business community to invest in new activities, confident that their investments will be made in a stable and productive economic environment. The Liberal government has been assisted in its financial management efforts by a professional, hard-working and imaginative civil service. We asked public servants to rise to the challenge and identify ways to manage financial resources and programs better, and they did. We will continue to turn to them for support to continue making New Brunswick a leader in managing programs and introducing creative public policies.

In addition, the government has engaged in innovative pre-budget consultations, involving stakeholder groups, the general public, MLAs and various "ad hoc" committees. Your Liberal government is committed to continuing these consultations with New Brunswickers. Although the financial situation continues to be very solid, we recognize that federal transfers to the provinces will probably be significantly reduced over the next few years. Our strategic financial planning will take these federal transfer reductions into consideration, and will require that we continue diligently controlling government spending.

The funding for the new initiatives, and the program improvements or expansions provided for in this platform will be accomplished within our fiscal framework.

New Brunswickers can take great pride in the attainment of an overall budgetary surplus this year, allowing the Province to actually begin reducing its public debt.

The time has come for New Brunswickers and their government to make sound financial management a permanent achievement. In a new mandate, your Liberal government will:

**52. Meet our commitment to balance the provincial budget, as required by the Balanced Budget legislation, and continue to reduce the province's net debt.**

## Rewards for Restraint

The past several years have been characterized by governments grappling with high inherited deficits and the private sector meeting increased global competition by cutting costs. Even though New Brunswickers have the third-lowest overall tax burden in all of Canada, we recognize that after years of restraint our hard-working citizens need more money in their pockets. Indeed, we have been well aware of this for some time which is why we have already introduced modest tax reductions. Over the last several years, we have reduced the tax for small business, provided tax relief to low income senior citizens who own their own home and reduced the tax on tobacco. It should also be noted that, unlike other provinces, we have no health care premiums or payroll taxes, and that we have the second lowest gasoline tax in all of Canada.

We strongly believe, nonetheless, that we should renew efforts to leave more disposable income in the pockets of our citizens, however, we must do so in a responsible fashion. We would like to continue the progress that we have made in the last several years by initiating an orderly reduction of personal income taxes. Consequently, in a new mandate, your Liberal Government will:

**53. Begin an orderly reduction in personal income taxes after ensuring that its health care commitments are met. We are committed to a phased-in reduction of 10% in the Provincial Personal Income Tax rate. When fully implemented, this would give New Brunswick its lowest personal income tax rate since 1982 and would give us the third lowest overall provincial personal income tax in Canada.**

## Property tax

We further recognize the hardship imposed on some of our citizens when property taxes fluctuate in a seemingly inordinate fashion. Therefore, a Liberal government will:

*"There is no comparison between New Brunswick and the other Atlantic Provinces. They (the Liberal government) have a funny word in their budget this year. It's called a 'surplus'. I think it's a remarkable achievement. I think for any government in the mid-1990s to get to the point where it can balance the budget, as it promised to do, without increasing taxes, is quite a significant achievement."*

Peter O'Brien,  
Atlantic Spokesperson for  
the Canadian Federation of  
Independent Business



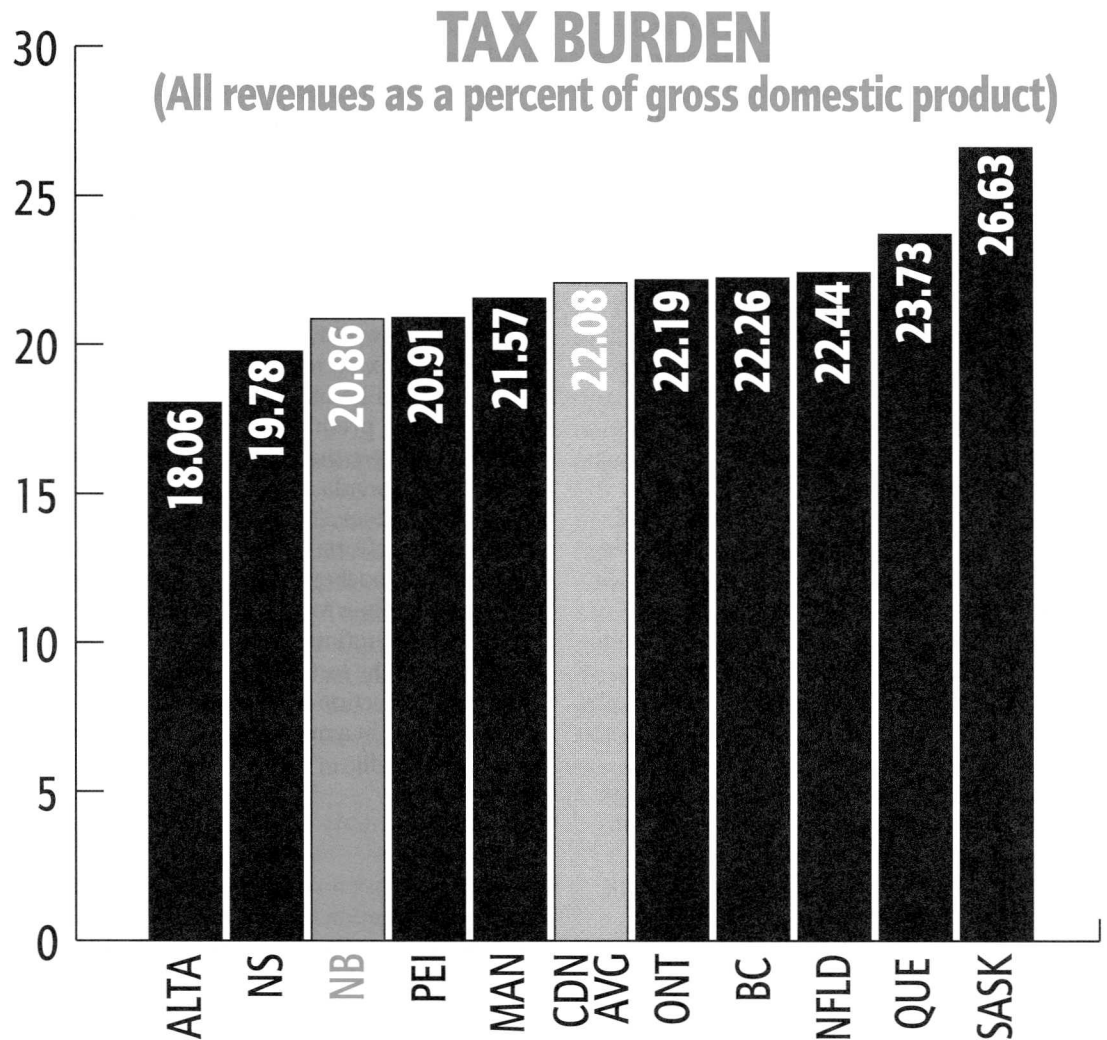
**54. Consider measures to stabilize property assessment and review the assessment of farm land for local services' charges.**

**Minimum wage**

The Liberal government recognizes the need for offering greater financial reward for our hard-working citizens. As a part of our efforts

to improve working conditions and rewards for work, an orderly increase in the minimum wage is necessary. Therefore,

**55. A Liberal government will proceed with an increase in the minimum wage to \$5.50 an hour, to be fully implemented by July 1, 1996.**





# PART V - A BETTER WAY OF LIFE

New Brunswick does indeed offer a better way of life, possessing many distinct advantages and attributes. Its resources include the Atlantic ocean, with all its economic and recreational potential, numerous great rivers and lakes, rich forests and arable land, vibrant rural communities and flourishing urban areas. New Brunswick is also home to proud native peoples and members of two strong and dynamic linguistic communities.

New Brunswickers have a long history of sharing, of neighbour helping neighbour, of hard work and strong family values. New Brunswick is also a tolerant and peaceful society. Our communities remain among the safest in North America. Arts and cultural activities make an important contribution to the province's quality of life. They also add to our economic well-being.

New Brunswickers, raised close to the beauty and bounty of land and sea, have traditionally attached a great deal of importance to protecting the environment.

When all of these factors are brought together, we enjoy a quality of life which few regions, if any, can equal. Your Liberal government recognized this eight years ago and decided to govern by building on the province's natural and historic strengths.

## The Environment

The Liberal Government decided eight years ago to give high priority to protecting the environment. We have made substantial progress on many fronts. We have:

- introduced a Clean Water Act in 1990, which is widely recognized as one of Canada's most progressive pieces of environmental legislation;
- introduced innovative Beverage Container legislation;
- constructed an ultra-modern environmental analytical laboratory which undertakes rigorous testing of water supplies;
- contributed substantially to the construction of new, expanded or upgraded municipal water systems;
- launched an ambitious initiative to clean up the Miramichi and Restigouche rivers;
- installed the first scrubbers in Canada on power plants in Dalhousie and Belledune;
- established an Environmental Trust Fund which has sponsored numerous initiatives to promote roadside beautification initiatives, forest renewal, clean-up of rivers, lakes and streams, various conservation and environmental education measures and community-based projects;
- enforced environmental legislation; and

- became one of the first jurisdictions in North America to test the voluntary return of milk containers for recycling.

Your Liberal government will, in cooperation with the federal government and local groups, intensify its efforts to promote air quality throughout New Brunswick. We will work closely with the five local Air Resource Management Area committees to monitor and enforce air quality standards and develop a long-term regional air quality management plan. We will also develop various government-industry partnerships to promote energy conservation and community-based public education programs on air quality management. Our goal is to pass a new, comprehensive Clean Air Act for the province. Accordingly, we will:

**56. Develop, in close cooperation with other levels of governments, local groups and industry, a comprehensive air quality strategy for New Brunswick and introduce new legislation to enshrine the strategy into law. The Clean Air Act will be sent out for public hearings prior to passage. We will also implement the specific measures that we announced to deal with Saint John's air quality.**

We will strike new partnerships to prepare and implement a comprehensive program to clean up Saint John Harbour, one of our most pressing environmental challenges. We will need to be innovative on many fronts - working closely with other levels of government, striking new public/private partnerships, securing capital grants and introducing new technologies. Accordingly, we will:

**57. Work closely with all interested parties to support the implementation of a comprehensive clean-up plan for Saint John Harbour.**

In recent years, New Brunswick has led the way on waste reduction. We are determined to maintain that lead. We will do so by working with industry, other levels of government and the Regional Solid Waste Commissions. We will encourage the use of waste and under-used by-products of New Brunswick resource industries, and develop more recycling initiatives. Accordingly, we will:

**58. Introduce measures to reduce waste by 50% by the year 2000.**

Environmental protection measures also make solid economic sense. New firms are born

*"Just take a look at New Brunswick and what one man — Frank McKenna — has done. We call him 'Mr. New Economy'. He single-handedly turned a whole province around. His motto is 'Just do it.' It doesn't take months and years of city fathers wondering what the next paradigm will be when this one is staring us in the face."*

Nuala Beck,  
Economist and Author



*"I salute also your pioneering decision to establish a Ministry of State for the Family, which we stand ready to support in any way possible. This is indeed a fitting and durable legacy of the international Year of the Family in 1994."*

Henryk J. Sokalski,  
Coordinator,  
Secretariat for the  
International Year  
of the Family

every day in Canada in the environmental industry. In New Brunswick, we have a number of dynamic firms in the environment sector which are carving out a strong presence locally, nationally and internationally. We want to help these firms to expand and find new markets, and to encourage aspiring entrepreneurs to look to the growing environment sector to launch new economic activities. Accordingly, we will:

**59. Prepare an economic development strategy to promote new business activities in the environment sector to capture emerging economic opportunities at the regional, national and international levels.**

For the past several years, your Liberal government has sought to achieve greater protection of the environment and the rural way of life through the development of better planning policies and greater control by rural residents of the evolution of their own communities. This effort will continue as a new Liberal government will:

**60. Complete a series of land use policies and continue to develop the Rural Community concept, with its fully elected rural representatives, to decide local land-use issues.**

#### **Fish, Wildlife and Recreation**

A new fish and wildlife policy will be established. It will provide for:

- The establishment of a N.B. Wildlife Council to represent the interests of all those who use and enjoy these resources.
- New mechanisms to secure funding for wildlife conservation, including the establishment of a foundation for dedicating license revenue.
- Joint ventures with various conservation groups and other private sector stakeholders to enhance our fish and wildlife resources.

Legislation will be developed to support the establishment of conservation areas on public and private lands. Conservation areas may include unique ecological sites, wetlands, wildlife management areas, and specific locations of high scenic value. Conservation easements and other measures will be developed to encourage private stewardship initiatives.

Opportunities for outdoor recreation and adventure tourism on public lands, such as a new trail system and cooperative projects with recreation and conservation groups will also be developed.

**61. A new Liberal government will develop a Fish and Wildlife Policy, which will establish a N.B. Wildlife Council to secure funding for conservation and establish private sector partnerships for enhancing our resources.**

#### **Family and Community Values**

New Brunswick's economic strengths, its tolerance and its willingness to lend a helping hand are rooted in our family and community values. These values go a long way in explaining why our streets and communities are safe, why our crime rate (especially crimes of violence) is low and why New Brunswick has a particularly fine quality of life. We want to strengthen family and community values and recognize some of the new challenges facing families.

Your Liberal government established a Ministry of State for the Family and a Family Policy Secretariat on October 14, 1994. The secretariat was given a one-year mandate to develop initiatives in support of the family. A 26-member ministerial advisory committee was also established. The secretariat recently released a proposed framework for policies to strengthen the family. The Secretariat is also looking to numerous partners in all sectors, from the medical profession to private firms, to support this proposed policy framework. The Advisory Council on the Status of Women and the Youth Council will be asked to play key roles in launching this initiative. We believe that it is very important to understand the interwoven influences of the family at home, in the workplace, in schools and in the community. Following public input on the proposed framework, we will:

**62. Implement a policy framework for the family. This measure will be comprehensive and will address a number of issues from the special challenges of single parenthood to child health care. The framework will draw extensively on the expertise and support of a wide variety of partners, and on extensive public consultations.**

Family violence and violence against women have no place in a civilized society. Our government recognizes family violence as one of the fastest growing social ills in our province. We have already begun to develop community-based programs, such as The Community Partnerships Program, which aims to raise public awareness of family violence, while advising communities on ways they can take action to prevent further violence. This program will be expanded province-wide, and we will ensure ongoing training of professionals and lay workers who come into contact with victims of family violence. Other initiatives which our government has undertaken to reduce this problem include funding for Transition Houses, Intervention Services for Victims of Family Violence and Treatment Intervention Services for perpetrators of family violence. We believe that these initiatives, coupled with a focus in early childhood development on respect,



anger-management, and self-control, can break the cycle that exists so often in family violence. Taken together, our commitment is to:

**63. Introduce a broad range of new initiatives to prevent domestic violence.**

With the guidance of the Family Policy Framework, we will continue to develop a province-wide, community-based program, based on the New Brunswick Medical Society Adolescent Health Promotion Strategy, to reduce teenage pregnancy. This program will also address smoking, alcohol and drug use, and school dropouts. Projects are now underway in Saint John, St. Stephen, Edmundston, Fredericton and many other areas of the province. Therefore:

**64. Working with communities across the province, a Liberal Government will work to educate adolescents and reduce the incidence of teenage pregnancy.**

**New Brunswick's Language Advantage**

The Liberal Party firmly believes that New Brunswick's linguistic diversity is one of our province's most important assets. We are committed to the principles of equality of the two linguistic communities and have entrenched these principles in the Constitution of Canada. Historically, our party has encouraged mutual respect between the two linguistic groups, preferring that our people develop and grow together rather than apart. Your Liberal government will remain loyal to this principle. It is increasingly obvious that New Brunswick's two linguistic groups, working hand in hand, are becoming a formidable economic force in the emerging global economy. Modern means of communications and transportation are bringing nations closer and integrating regional economies. New Brunswick's capacity to strike business deals anywhere in Europe, in North America and in Africa has become the envy of many other regions. Our bilingual capacity continues to attract national and international firms to locate operations in our province. Your Liberal government will continue to market New Brunswick's distinct linguistic assets nationally and internationally. To this end:

**65. A new Liberal government will pursue with vigour and determination the opportunity to host Le Sommet de la Francophonie in 1999.**

Liberal governments were the first to introduce a comprehensive language policy at the national level and in the New Brunswick Public Service. The Liberal Party is very proud of this fact. We have made substantial progress

in recent years in providing public service in the official language of choice and in promoting equitable employment opportunities. We recognize that there is always room for improvement in the application of a comprehensive language policy. We believe that a policy as important as the language policy is to New Brunswick and its future should be examined from time to time to ensure ongoing effectiveness. Therefore, we will in a new mandate:

**66. Examine the effectiveness of the province's language policy to ensure that its objectives are being met. In doing so, we will also reaffirm our strong commitment to the principles of the Official Languages Act.**

**Culture and Sports**

There are a number of cultural and sports initiatives that not only serve to strengthen New Brunswickers and their sense of community, but also make good economic sense. In a new mandate, your Liberal government will identify and aggressively pursue such initiatives. New Brunswickers are making increasingly impressive contributions to the development of new films. For example, between 1990-94, over \$4 million was invested in the film industry for films, commercials, and television production in New Brunswick. The Canadian film industry has established that every production dollar spent in a province generates some \$2.80 in economic spinoffs. In light of recent developments and the economic prospects for the film industry, a Liberal government will:

**67. Establish a New Brunswick Film Commission to promote New Brunswick as a "film friendly" location and to promote and support the production of films by New Brunswickers in the province.**

Your Liberal government will also explore other possibilities in culture and sports. A series of new initiatives was outlined at the recent Arts Forum, held in Moncton, and will lead to the development of a new cultural policy for the province. A Liberal Government will take an active role in the process leading to New Brunswick's hosting of the Canada Winter Games in 2003. A decision on the host community will be made by the Federal Government in the fall of 1998. We will also explore the feasibility of reinstating the New Brunswick Games. We will do so in full partnership with potential sponsors, sport organizations, and municipal governments.

**Seniors**

Our senior citizens and retired persons represent a valuable community resource.

*"The Province of New Brunswick and you personally, have been designated as recipients of the IYF Testimonial, in recognition of your demonstrated commitment and important contributions toward the well-being of families expressing, in action, the principles and objectives of the International Year of the Family."*

Henryk J. Sokalski,  
Coordinator,  
Secretariat for the  
International Year  
of the Family





*"The plan is realistic and offers hope to people with disabilities to participate fully in society and in the economy."*

Increasingly, the government has been encouraging intergenerational programs to promote the full participation of seniors in all aspects of community life. At the same time, the Single Entry Point Program and the Extra-Mural Hospital have enabled seniors to spend more years in the home environment close to family and friends. The New Brunswick Seniors Citizens' Federation and other groups have formed important lines of communication between their members and government to ensure that seniors' aspirations for a fulfilling and healthy life are met.

**68. A new Liberal government will strengthen the Office of Seniors to ensure that the voice of seniors is heard in planning health care, community programs and family policy.**

#### **Aboriginals**

In a new mandate, we will work closely with the province's Micmac and Maliseet people to promote the economic and social interests of their communities. We want to work closely with the First Nations to develop a strategy to improve the educational performance of aboriginal students. We also want to promote economic development and job creation in native communities.

Accordingly, your Liberal government will:

**69. Work with native communities and the federal government to develop new initiatives to strengthen the performance of aboriginal stu-**

**dents, to offer better economic development opportunities to aboriginals.**

#### **The Disabled**

New Brunswickers with disabilities have overcome their own personal challenges to make important contributions to the development of their province. They have done so in a society which all too often regards people with disabilities as ill and in need of care and protection. Your Liberal government wants to work with people with disabilities to strengthen their presence in our society and in the economy. People with disabilities have told us "give us the tools and we will do the job." We are convinced that they can and we want to respond. Several provincial organizations representing people with disabilities recently submitted a plan "Positive Futures for People With Disabilities in New Brunswick." The plan is realistic and offers hope to people with disabilities to participate fully in society and in the economy. It also outlines measures to improve public understanding and support of New Brunswickers with disabilities.

Accordingly, in a new mandate, your Liberal government will:

**70. Work with the provincial organizations representing people with disabilities to implement a plan to facilitate the participation of people with disabilities as full participants in New Brunswick society and in the economy.**



# PART VI - BUILDING NEW BRUNSWICK

Your Liberal government has vigorously pursued two rebuilding objectives since it was first elected to ensure that New Brunswick is at the forefront of new developments in the information field, and that the province has first-class physical infrastructure to enable its various economic sectors to compete in the marketplace. We have already accomplished a great deal on both fronts, but we are committed to doing even more.

## Highways

If there is one thing which has remained constant in our economic development approach, it is that our province needs first-class physical infrastructure to compete and to grow. Eight years ago the Liberal party identified transportation as an important instrument of economic development and committed itself to major highway upgrading. At that time, it pointed to the Trans Canada Highway and our major arterial highways as requiring special attention. Since 1987, record sums, totalling well over \$1 billion, have been spent on highway construction throughout the province. In eight years, your Liberal government never lost sight of this commitment. By the end of 1994, we had:

- built 100 km of new four-lane highway and we will open 24 more km in 1995 alone;
- built 143 km of new arterial and collector highway;
- placed new chipseal on 732 km of gravel roads in rural New Brunswick;
- constructed 114 new bridges and 36 interchanges in various areas of the province.

We want to continue this work diligently in a new mandate and we have already laid the foundation to do so. We are establishing the New Brunswick Highway Corporation to finance, design, build and own key sections of the National Highway System in the province. We have also negotiated a new agreement with the Federal Liberal government to fund work on the Trans-Canada highway and other arterial highways. Some \$340 million is being committed by both levels of government to new construction over the next three years. This financial commitment, together with some innovative approaches to financing highway construction will enable the province to complete the upgrading of the Trans-Canada Highway and other arterial highways. Because highway safety and economic development cannot wait, your Liberal government will vigorously promote highway construction in its new mandate. Accordingly,;

**71. We will continue to invest at record levels in the upgrading of New Brunswick highways, with a view to completing a four-lane Trans-Canada Highway, and to providing consistent upgrading of our other arterial, secondary and collector highways.**

## Information Highway

We have established an Information Highway Secretariat as we pursued with determination all new developments in the transition to an information society. Our efforts have paid off, and have brought national and international recognition to our province. In New Brunswick, we are witnessing a growing number of call centres and multi media businesses relying on the information highway. New developments are certain to occur in the near future and we will be promoting all areas of the province as logical areas to locate new economic activities. We have also seen the positive application of information technology in sectors such as the New Brunswick Library System, for example, where a full automation program is well underway and will result in a user friendly approach for library patrons.

We will continue working to make the emerging information economy a life-long learning experience and economic development tool for all New Brunswickers. In a new mandate, we will also be working closely with all interested parties to pursue new economic opportunities for New Brunswick in the information field. More specifically, we will develop:

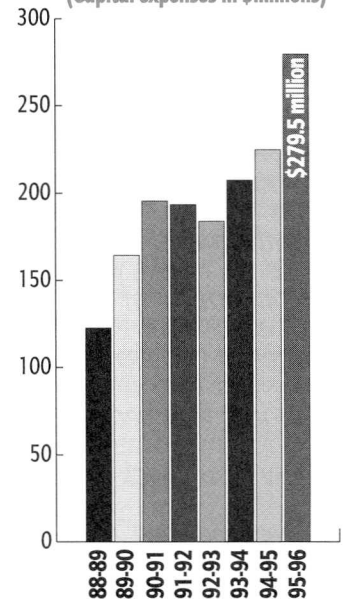
**72. A network linking the universities and community colleges to allow high-speed transmission and sharing of ideas.**

**73. An investment strategy for the province to capture investment potential flowing out of a broadband infrastructure project being put in place by NBTel and Fundy Cable.**

In developing New Brunswick as a world-class business centre for information technology, priority areas will include:

- advanced training/learning technologies;
- application software;
- digital network technologies;
- electronic information (on-line);
- French-language content and applications for the information highway;
- information technology; and
- consulting services.

**HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION**  
(Capital expenses in \$millions)



*"The most visible evidence of New Brunswick's grasp of the new information and knowledge-based economies of the 90s and beyond is the proliferation of call centres in the province. In just four years, New Brunswick has become the Call Centre Capital of North America."*

Peter Delottinville, author,  
Shifting to the  
New Economy

**74. A Liberal Government will work to develop new centres of excellence in our universities and community colleges.**

This effort need not be costly, since a solid base already exists. Discussions have been held toward establishing Multimedia Centres at Mount Allison and UNB, as well as the Miramichi, the Centre international pour le développement de l'inforoute francophone at the Centre Universitaire Saint-Louis-Maillet and other initiatives at l'Université de Moncton. The New Brunswick Community College - Miramichi already houses the Miramichi Learning Technology Centre. In some instances, we could turn to the Information Highway to unite and strengthen existing research facilities. A case in point is food technology. We know how important agriculture and food processing are to the New Brunswick economy and that the province already possesses excellent research facilities in Shippagan, Moncton and Fredericton for the preparation, conservation and processing of food products. Linking these research facilities through modern information technology would strengthen their capacity to carry out research and also ensure better services to our small businesses. We will emphasize development of French-language applications on the Information Highway and will work with the Université de Moncton's three campuses in developing a centre which will work to this end.

**Public Buildings and Municipalities**

Capital investments in our schools, health care facilities and other public buildings have formed an important part of our annual capital budget. Future emphasis will be placed on maintaining and enhancing existing facilities, and building new ones where a demonstrable

need exists. Municipal infrastructure, such as solid waste facilities and sewer and water systems have also been greatly enhanced by capital investments and collaboration with the Federal government in its tri-level infrastructure program. Most notably, dumps throughout New Brunswick are being closed to make way for state-of-the-art, multi-million dollar regional sanitary landfills. These investments also form a vital part of rebuilding our province to meet the challenges of a new century.

**75. A Liberal government will maintain its historic commitment to capital investment in public buildings and in municipal infrastructure. Particular emphasis will be placed on completing the network of regional sanitary landfills.**

**Public-Private Partnerships**

Your Liberal Government has been studying new ways to marry the ingenuity of the private sector and the role of government in providing vital services. We do not believe in outright privatization in all cases. Rather, we will continue to rely on the advice of our public service and private sector partners in determining whether new approaches to delivering services are feasible. The new, enhanced 911 emergency system being developed by the province, in cooperation with several major companies, is a prime example of such partnerships, as are the new Moncton North School and a young offender facility in Miramichi.

**76. A Liberal government will continue to pursue public-private partnerships, where it can be determined that the best interest of service recipients, taxpayers and the public service can be protected or improved by privatization or outsourcing.**





# PART VII: GOVERNING COOPERATIVELY

The erosion of confidence in public institutions is a worldwide phenomenon. This is why your Liberal government has made integrity a fundamental tenet of its approach to governing and will continue to do so in a new mandate. People are much better informed about public policy issues today than they were even ten or fifteen years ago. The information revolution has far-reaching implications for government. The breathtaking speed of modern communications serves to inform citizens quickly, visually and with considerable impact.

The result is that people now have a great deal of knowledge about public policy, government and government operations. They want to participate - to voice their views and be heard. People no longer accept poor services and are increasingly annoyed with duplication of services between government programs, notably between the federal and provincial governments. Your Liberal government is well aware of the new challenges of governing in an information society. We believe, however, that these challenges should be met head on by:

- consulting with the public on all major initiatives;
- making every effort to employ modern means of communications to empower citizens in their dealings with government and to further the democratization of government institutions;
- never losing sight of such fundamental governing values as integrity and honesty in dealing with people; and
- ensuring that government operates as efficiently as possible, reducing red tape, streamlining government operations and eliminating overlap and duplication with other levels of government.

## Consultation

Innovative and open public consultations have been a hallmark of your Liberal government. Fully 85 commissions, papers, reports, consultations and policies have been launched, all having public input as a common trait. From housing to health care to highways, we have listened, and then we have acted. We have also recognized that irreconcilable views are sometimes inevitable, and that governments have a responsibility to provide leadership. But the public has a right to have input into public policies. Therefore, we recommit to holding public

consultations on major government initiatives, including many of those indicated in this platform. Legislative committees, particularly, work to enhance the role of MLAs while offering an appropriate forum for receiving public input. Therefore:

### **77. A new Liberal government will continue to make public consultation a prerequisite before launching major government initiatives.**

Your Liberal government will make full use of new information technologies to inform and empower New Brunswickers in their dealings with their government. Such new technology can make reduction of red tape and "one stop" shopping in government possible by locating first points of contact for various government programs under one roof.

We will also explore new ways to solicit and hear the views of New Brunswickers on the appropriateness of government programs and on the quality of services being provided. We will engage New Brunswickers in our consideration of the impact of demographic change, and its implications for the future delivery of services in New Brunswick. To this end, we will submit for public review and debate a report on demographic change in New Brunswick. New information technologies can also simplify dealings between government and business. For example, we will take steps to streamline the revenue management system with the business community. Accordingly, our Liberal government will, in a new mandate:

### **78. Turn to new technologies to strengthen relations between New Brunswickers and their government and to make government operations more accessible throughout New Brunswick.**

## Privacy

With the province at the forefront of emerging technologies and the electronic highway, your government has also become a strong promoter and user of these technologies. Accordingly, government departments and agencies have turned to these technologies to provide better and more efficient services. The management of these technologies and new data bases requires that information about our citizens be treated in a careful and confidential manner.

*"The information revolution has far-reaching implications for government. The breathtaking speed of modern communications serves to inform citizens quickly, visually and with considerable impact."*



*"We will continue to set high standards, and require all those who seek to serve New Brunswickers through the Liberal party to respect them."*

Accordingly, in a new mandate, a Liberal Government would:

**79. Prepare a new Privacy Act to ensure the protection and confidentiality of personal information in the possession of the government of New Brunswick. In drafting the bill, public hearings will be held to secure the views of New Brunswickers.**

#### **Municipalities**

The Liberal government is strongly committed to empowering our municipalities to carry on their business with greater local authority. We intend to work with municipal governments to outline a revised role during a new mandate. To this end, the government will:

**80. Rewrite the Municipalities Act to reflect the needs and responsibilities of municipal government and empower local government for the new century.**

#### **Integrity and Accountability**

New information technologies are vitally important for governance in the future, but they can never replace old-fashioned integrity and honesty in government. Your Liberal government moved early in its first mandate to establish very high ethical standards for ministers and senior officials. MLA pensions were curtailed, and their salaries have been cut back in recent years. We will continue to set high standards, and require all those who seek to serve New Brunswickers through the Liberal party to respect them. Accordingly:

**81. High standards of integrity and accountability will remain the cornerstones of your Liberal government in all its dealings with New Brunswickers.**

#### **Benchmarks**

Eight years ago, we decided to streamline government operations and, to the extent possible, eliminate programs or activities which no longer enjoy a priority status with New Brunswickers. We have accomplished a great deal on this front:

- we eliminated 2,450 government positions with few layoffs;
- we reduced the number of school boards from 42 to 18;

- we eliminated 55 separate health care administrations and formed eight Regional Hospital Corporations;
- we eliminated a considerable number of low priority programs and government activities, producing substantial savings for taxpayers.

We want to continue our work in this area while improving the level of government services. We also want to continue to ensure that New Brunswickers get maximum value for their tax dollars. This requires a strong emphasis on the quality of government services and a motivated, quality-driven public service. Accordingly, in a new mandate we will:

**82. Ask all departments and agencies to establish public benchmarks and other measurements to assess the performance and impact of the programs they administer. These will be tabled in the Legislative Assembly each spring, establishing clear accountability for the success and quality of our service delivery.**

#### **Service New Brunswick**

In the fall of 1991, we undertook a public consultation process to seek the views of New Brunswickers on ways of better managing government resources and in making government operations more "user-friendly." New Brunswickers responded with various innovative ideas.

In January 1992, we established two pilot government service centres - in Woodstock and in Caraquet. The goal was to test the delivery of better government services with the same or fewer resources, by bringing a variety of government services under one roof and behind a single counter. This approach represents a fundamental change in the way government deals with citizens, in how it structures itself, and in how public servants see themselves in their role as service providers. Evaluations of the two pilot projects reveal that the approach improves public access and customer satisfaction, and reduces the cost of providing government services.

Accordingly, a new Liberal government will:

**83. Establish new Service New Brunswick Centres and franchise outlets throughout New Brunswick to strengthen the quality and availability of government services and to reduce the cost of government operations.**



# PART VIII - CONCLUSION: LOOKING FORWARD

The record is there for all to see. In the past eight years, your Liberal government has worked with New Brunswickers to put our province on the road to self-sufficiency, economic growth, and human development, without sacrificing fiscal responsibility. Ahead of most Canadian jurisdictions, we are well advanced in our preparations to meet the new millennium.

However, the task of democratic leadership never ends. In a dynamic society, change is the rule and the ability to adapt constructively to change is the mark of success. In the foregoing pages, your Liberal government has outlined its program, a clear-sighted program, designed to guide New Brunswick and New Brunswickers confidently through the next four or five years of challenge and opportunity.

At the centre of our strategy is a single theme: "Jobs First."

Jobs enable people to feed and furnish themselves with the necessities, and a few of the luxuries, of life. Jobs also stimulate the economy by putting more money into circulation. Jobs generate revenues to pay for public services without increasing taxes. Jobs endow people with dignity and self-esteem.

In the past four years, your Liberal government has brought about a net increase of 20,000 new jobs for New Brunswickers. Over the next four years, through policies aimed at stimulating traditional and leading-edge sectors of the economy, we will add 25,000 more. We will encourage investment and entrepreneurship across New Brunswick. Rural economic development will play a major role in our jobs strategy. We will promote agri-food production and processing, and work to keep our forests and fisheries at the forefront of their respective industries. We will build on New Brunswick's exciting reputation as a world-class tourist destination. And we will ensure that New Brunswick workers receive fair wages for their labour.

In the economy of the future, a working population will be a learning population. The pace of technological change will require people to upgrade existing skills and acquire new ones. Your Liberal government is committed to providing opportunities for education, training, and work experience for all ages and stages. In this regard, we intend to put special emphasis on meeting the needs of youth and of people who are having difficulty returning to the work force. Among the many services that make New Brunswick a humane and compassionate place to live, none is more important than quality health care. A new Liberal government will

pledge to maintain and improve the quality of health services throughout the province, while working innovatively to get the best value out of every tax dollar spent in this vital area. We will look increasingly to options such as the Extramural Hospital, TeleMedicine, TeleCare and preventive medicine as complementary alternatives to the traditional hospital-centred health care system. Yet, we will not sacrifice the quality of health care to any other priority. Responsible public administration by your Liberal government has brought New Brunswick to an era of balanced budgets and diminishing debt. Our fiscal house is in good order. In a renewed mandate, we will ensure that New Brunswickers begin to reap the dividends of the years of belt-tightening. We pledge that in a new mandate we will reduce provincial personal income taxes.

One measure of success in any society is the quality of life it affords its members. A bountiful natural environment and rich cultural traditions provide ample opportunities for New Brunswickers to live fulfilling and meaningful lives. Your Liberal government will do its utmost to promote our common heritage. We will promote linguistic equality; protect environmental values; encourage family and community cohesiveness, and foster the growth of cultural and sporting endeavours. We will devote special attention to ensuring that disabled persons, seniors and our aboriginal community can be full participants in all aspects of the New Brunswick community.

Your Liberal government has invested unprecedented sums in building the infrastructure of the province. Nearly 1000 kilometres of highways and byways have been built or upgraded, making our roads safer and our businesses more competitive. In a new mandate, we will continue to pursue an extensive road-building program. At the same time, we are committed to making New Brunswick an important destination on the information highway, and a booming marketplace for the electronic exchange of ideas.

During eight years in office, our government's leadership has enhanced the reputation of New Brunswick both nationally and internationally. Members of the Liberal team have acknowledged New Brunswickers' deeply-rooted pride and traditions of mutual help, demonstrating that there is a better alternative than dependence on government. Today, our province stands proud and strong in the Canadian family. Let's keep it that way. Let's work together to keep New Brunswick moving ahead!

*"We, at Performx, believe that the Province of New Brunswick, led by Premier McKenna understands (these) opportunities and have demonstrated the foresight to build an economy for the new generation. New Brunswick has created a model business environment from which to develop leading edge opportunities."*

Seymour Epstein,  
CEO, Seymour Epstein  
Enterprises Ltd.



# APPENDIX: LIST OF COMMITMENTS

1. To create 25,000 net new jobs for New Brunswickers over the next four years.
2. A Liberal government will work closely and in partnership with the business community and other levels of government to promote new investments, trade and business development. Past efforts in this area have been highly successful. They will serve as a springboard in the pursuit of new opportunities and thousands of new jobs for New Brunswickers.
3. In a new mandate, a Liberal government will accelerate its efforts to promote the province, its workforce and its natural assets to out-of-province businesses. Success breeds success, and there is every reason to believe that national and international firms will continue to locate new activities and jobs in our province.
4. Work with others in the private sector, other governments in Atlantic Canada and the federal government to introduce specific measures to make more venture capital available to entrepreneurs.
5. Work with the investment community, working ventures funds, businesses and individuals to introduce a new Small Entrepreneur Capital Assistance Program. The assistance will be available for new business start-ups and for the production or delivery of a distinctly new product or service.
6. Minimum two year freeze in the average rates of the Workplace Health, Safety, and Compensation Commission and discharge of its unfunded liability.
7. A new Liberal government will introduce new measures to dramatically reduce the regulatory burden for New Brunswick's small businesses.
8. In a new mandate, your Liberal government will seek new partnerships to promote rural economic development and vigorously pursue new opportunities for rural New Brunswick. We will build on our "Rural Development Strategy," unveiled in February 1995.
9. Promote a Land Assembly and Agricultural Land Expansion Program. We will also play a lead role in establishing public/private partnerships to clarify roles, responsibilities and the commitment required for success. We will aggressively pursue federal government funding to support potato storage construction and improvement. We will develop an extension program to deal with plant stand improvement and the introduction of new technologies to lower production costs.
10. Support an innovative financing program to assist beef producers. The program provides an interest buydown of up to 10% over three years.
11. Create a new Bio-Technology Centre for New Brunswick.
12. Work in partnership with others to develop new technologies for value-added products and packaging techniques; identify opportunities for import replacement for high-quality fish products; and pursue new niche markets and potential for specialty products abroad.
13. Promote the development of underutilized species such as quahog and dogfish.
14. Protect and increase our share of the marine resources in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the Bay of Fundy.
15. Recognize the role of the inshore fishery in the economy of rural New Brunswick, and introduce measures to ensure its development.
16. Develop halibut and haddock as commercially viable marine aquaculture species and promote freshwater aquaculture, focusing on species like Arctic Char and Rainbow Trout.





17. Promote research and development of the aquaculture potential of shellfish species such as soft-shell clams, mussels and oysters.
18. Financial and other support to woodlot owners will continue over the next five years as woodlot associations become more self-sufficient in providing services.
19. An expanded \$10.7 million silviculture program was initiated in 1995 and will continue in future years. Existing and new programs will guarantee that each and every hectare will be properly managed, and great care will be taken to maintain the overall mix of species.
20. Establish a policy whereby any new allocation of wood on crown lands would only be given to value-added manufacturers.
21. A new Liberal government will promote the Junior Mining Program and will continue our financial commitment to that initiative, aimed at increasing employment and development in the mining sector.
22. A Comprehensive Energy Efficiency Retrofit Initiative.
23. A Liberal government will work constructively with other governments and the private sector in developing a pipeline through New Brunswick and in ensuring a secure, long-term supply of natural gas.
24. Implement, in close consultation with the industry and other levels of government, a four-year plan to further strengthen the tourism industry.
25. A Liberal government will introduce a NB First Start program for youth.
26. A Liberal Government will assist New Brunswickers in improving their computer and technology skills
27. A new Liberal government will dramatically expand our successful pilot program for Youth Apprenticeship in all school districts over the next four years. We will set a target of one million hours of paid work experience and on-the-job training.
28. A Liberal Government will work diligently with employers, universities, community colleges, and other education and training providers to increase access to the number of co-operative education opportunities within the province. Our target will be to double the current number of co-operative education opportunities.
29. In a new mandate, a Liberal government will continue to adhere to the principles of excellence in education, and to ensure that our children are well-prepared for a new world.
30. A new Liberal government will continue to introduce new technologies throughout the school system.
31. A new Liberal government will recommit to its efforts to increase the student retention rates in our schools throughout the province.
32. Numerous initiatives are underway and will be maintained to ensure "literacy in a safe environment". These include training for teachers, parents, students and bus drivers; peer mediation; conflict management and resolution; and non-violent crisis intervention techniques.
33. A new Liberal government will recommit to a process of expedited negotiations as a feature of collective bargaining with its teachers.
34. A new Liberal government will identify new measures to strengthen the linkages and cooperative mechanisms between our institutions of higher learning.

35. A new Liberal government will implement new measures to expand access to our Community College system.
36. A new Liberal government will undertake negotiations with the Federal Government to establish a program for graduates with low income and high debt.
37. A program of student aid will be available, to students receiving their education and training from private sector providers.
38. A Liberal government will guarantee the quality of training offered in New Brunswick, including increased efforts in private sector certification.
39. A Liberal government will provide training, education and work experience to people on income assistance, in order to lessen their dependence on government.
40. Your government will continue efforts to combat overlap and duplication through a "one-stop shopping" approach to the delivery of housing programs with the federal government.
41. A new Liberal government will renew its commitment to improving accessibility to day care for New Brunswick families.
42. A new Liberal government will remain firmly committed to sustaining a planned, relevant and compassionate health care system that meets the needs of all New Brunswickers, regardless of socioeconomic status or place of residence. We will continue to support the principles of the Canada Health Act, which state that health services must be portable, comprehensive, universal, accessible and publicly-administered.
43. In a new mandate, our objective is for New Brunswick to meet or exceed national norms for surgical waiting lists.
44. A Liberal government will continue to make capital investments as required, at provincial hospital facilities, to further enable facilities to deliver more modern, quality health care.
45. A Liberal government will ensure that New Brunswick matches or surpasses national performance in key areas of health/health care notably the number of hospital beds and physicians.
46. A Liberal government will place a priority on implementing TeleMedicine opportunities province-wide.
47. The government will expand TeleCare to the entire province.
48. A new Liberal government will work cooperatively with health professionals and their representatives to further evolve the role of all our employee stakeholders, with a view to maximizing the high quality work of our doctors, nurses, therapists and other health professionals.
49. A Liberal government will invest further in prevention programs. Particular attention will also be paid to ensure that "healthy public policy" contributes to improving the health of New Brunswickers.
50. A Liberal government will ask a Legislative Committee to hold extensive public consultations on the accountability and governance of Hospital Corporations. This will include weighing the benefits of elected versus appointed Hospital Corporation Boards.
51. A Liberal government is committed to a fully-funded, quality health care system that meets or exceeds key national indicators. Commitments made in this document will be met during a new Liberal government's mandate. The important tax reductions contemplated in this platform will be undertaken only after ensuring that our health care responsibilities and commitments are met.
52. Meet our commitment to balance the provincial budget, as required by the Balanced Budget legislation, and continue to reduce the province's net debt.



53. Begin an orderly reduction in personal income taxes after ensuring that its health care commitments are met. We are committed to a phased-in reduction of 10% in the Provincial Personal Income Tax rate. When fully implemented, this would give New Brunswick its lowest personal income tax rate since 1982 and would give us the third lowest overall provincial personal income tax in Canada.
54. Consider measures to stabilize property assessment and review the assessment of farm land for local services' charges.
55. A Liberal government will proceed with an increase in the minimum wage to \$5.50 an hour, to be fully implemented by July 1, 1996.
56. Develop, in close cooperation with other levels of governments, local groups and industry, a comprehensive air quality strategy for New Brunswick and introduce new legislation to enshrine the strategy into law. The Clean Air Act will be sent out for public hearings prior to passage. We will also implement the specific measures that we announced to deal with Saint John's air quality.
57. Work closely with all interested parties to support the implementation of a comprehensive clean-up plan for Saint John Harbour.
58. Introduce measures to reduce waste by 50% by the year 2000.
59. Prepare an economic development strategy to promote new business activities in the environment sector to capture emerging economic opportunities at the regional, national and international levels.
60. Complete a series of land use policies and continue to develop the Rural Community concept, with its fully elected rural representatives, to decide local land-use issues.
61. A new Liberal government will develop a Fish and Wildlife Policy, which will establish a N.B. Wildlife Council to secure funding for conservation and establish private sector partnerships for enhancing our resources.
62. Implement a policy framework for the family. This measure will be comprehensive and will address a number of issues from the special challenges of single parenthood to child health care. The framework will draw extensively on the expertise and support of a wide variety of partners, and on extensive public consultations.
63. Introduce a broad range of new initiatives to prevent domestic violence.
64. Working with communities across the province, a Liberal Government will work to educate adolescents and reduce the incidence of teenage pregnancy.
65. A new Liberal government will pursue with vigour and determination the opportunity to host Le Sommet de la Francophonie in 1999.
66. Examine the effectiveness of the province's language policy to ensure that its objectives are being met. In doing so, we will also reaffirm our strong commitment to the principles of the Official Languages Act.
67. Establish a New Brunswick Film Commission to promote New Brunswick as a "film friendly" location and to promote and support the production of films by New Brunswickers in the province.
68. A new Liberal government will strengthen the Office of Seniors to ensure that the voice of seniors is heard in planning health care, community programs and family policy.
69. Work with native communities and the federal government to develop new initiatives to strengthen the performance of aboriginal students, to offer better economic development opportunities to aboriginals.

70. Work with the provincial organizations representing people with disabilities to implement a plan to facilitate the participation of people with disabilities as full participants in New Brunswick society and in the economy.
71. We will continue to invest at record levels in the upgrading of New Brunswick highways, with a view to complete a four-lane Trans-Canada Highway, and to provide consistent upgrading of our other arterial, secondary and collector highways.
72. A network linking the universities and community colleges to allow high-speed transmission and sharing of ideas.
73. An investment strategy for the province to capture investment potential flowing out of a broadband infrastructure project being put in place by NBTel and Fundy Cable.
74. A Liberal Government will work to develop new centres of excellence in our universities and community colleges.
75. A Liberal government will maintain its historic commitment to capital investment in public buildings and in municipal infrastructure. Particular emphasis will be placed on completing the network of regional sanitary landfills.
76. A Liberal government will continue to pursue public-private partnerships, where it can be determined that the best interest of service recipients, taxpayers and the public service can be protected or improved by privatization or outsourcing.
77. A new Liberal government will continue to make public consultation a prerequisite before launching major government initiatives.
78. Turn to new technologies to strengthen relations between New Brunswickers and their government and to make government operations more accessible throughout New Brunswick.
79. Prepare a new Privacy Act to ensure the protection and confidentiality of personal information in the possession of the government of New Brunswick. In drafting the bill, public hearings will be held to secure the views of New Brunswickers.
80. Rewrite the Municipalities Act to reflect the needs and responsibilities of municipal government and empower local government for the new century.
81. High standards of integrity and accountability will remain the cornerstones of your Liberal government in all its dealings with New Brunswickers.
82. Ask all departments and agencies to establish public benchmarks and other measurements to assess the performance and impact of the programs they administer. These will be tabled in the Legislative Assembly each spring, establishing clear accountability for the success and quality of our service delivery.
83. Establish new Service New Brunswick Centres and franchise outlets throughout New Brunswick to strengthen the quality and availability of government services and to reduce the cost of government operations.