

CA6
PC4
99N21

 **New Vision**
New Brunswick

**Bernard Lord's Plan
To Change Our Future
Together**

1999-2003

TEAM

Bernard

 **LORD**

pcparty@brunnet.net www.pcnb.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

NEW VISION•NEW BRUNSWICK <i>Bernard Lord's Plan To Lead New Brunswick Into A New Century</i>	1
AIMS AND PRINCIPLES <i>The P.C. Party Of New Brunswick</i>	3
OUR PLAN	5
CHANGING THE WAY GOVERNMENT WORKS	7
RENEWING HEALTH CARE	11
BUILDING NEW JOB OPPORTUNITIES	17
MANAGING SMARTER – LOWERING TAXES	25
INVESTING IN EDUCATION	30
ACCOUNTABILITY PLEDGE	34
TWO HUNDRED DAYS OF CHANGE	35

NEW VISION • NEW BRUNSWICK

Bernard Lord's Plan To Change Our Future Together

As we enter a new century, it's time for a new vision for New Brunswick. One that changes how government works for New Brunswickers. A vision which embraces who we are as a province and New Brunswickers, builds on our strengths, and allows New Brunswick to reach its full potential and move forward into the future.

New Vision • New Brunswick is our plan for a stronger better province where we have a thriving economy based on our natural resources combined with new technologies. A place where good, new job opportunities exist, young people want to stay and live, families are healthy and secure, and seniors live in dignity. A province where we invest in ourselves and build New Brunswick with New Brunswickers.

"Bernard Lord's message to ... New Brunswick voters is simple: he's the man with the vision and talent to steer the ship of state"

Editorial - Times & Transcript,
March 17, 1999

We have much to be proud of in New Brunswick. A province filled with diversity where we respect our differences, whatever they are and work together to find common ground. We are hard-working, creative, caring and compassionate people. We belong to close, sharing families and communities. We have a belief in ourselves and respect for each other. We have a strong abiding belief in Canada.

Changing our future together begins with having a new vision to make New Brunswick better. We will do this by focussing on five main priorities: Investing in Education, Building New Job Opportunities, Renewing Health Care, Managing Smarter and Lowering Taxes, and Changing the Way Government Works.

I invite you to join our team and support our candidates throughout the province. **New Vision • New Brunswick** is our plan that will allow all of us to build a better province together.



Bernard Lord
Leader of the PC Party of New Brunswick



New Vision
New Brunswick

AIMS AND PRINCIPLES

The P.C. Party Of New Brunswick

AT A POLICY CONVENTION HELD IN SAINT JOHN, IN APRIL OF 1998, MEMBERS OF THE NEW BRUNSWICK PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE PARTY ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT OF AIMS AND PRINCIPLES:

1. The Will of the People

We believe that government is an extension of the will of the people; therefore, we must answer to the people for the responsibilities which we accept. We will consult with New Brunswickers on public policy matters before implementing solutions.

2. New Brunswick and Canada

We strive to build and preserve a prosperous, united New Brunswick within a prosperous, united Canada.

3. Equality of the Two Linguistic Communities

We believe the diversity of our two linguistic communities is a unique strength of our province. We believe in official bilingualism, and that we must protect and promote our cultures and heritage, while treating each community with fairness and justice.

4. The Individual

We respect the rights of the individual, but are mindful of the responsibilities which those rights demand. It is by accepting their responsibility and acting on their own initiatives that individuals will achieve their full potential.

5. Free Enterprise

The creation of prosperity can best be achieved by a free enterprise economy.

6. Living Within Our Means

As managers of the public accounts, we must fulfill our fiscal and economic objectives: a diversified economy which will maximize employment in all regions, and a fiscal plan which will enhance essential programs while minimizing taxation.

7. Access to Education and Health Care

The strength of our province is derived from our ability to educate our citizens and to encourage a healthy lifestyle so that they may fulfill their potential, and by our ability to provide care for New Brunswickers when they are in need.

8. Social Policies Which Promote Individual Responsibility

Our social programs should ensure dignified and meaningful lives for those who need assistance, but also recognize the importance of providing the support and resources necessary for an environment in which New Brunswickers can work together, be self-reliant and take responsibility for their own lives.

9. Protection of the Environment

We must ensure that economic growth and resource development take place in an environmentally sustainable manner and that decisions taken reflect the shared role of government, business, and individuals as stewards of the environment for the current and future generations.

10. An Open, Accessible Party

We are a Party for all New Brunswickers. We welcome their thoughts, their efforts and their support for the aims and principles of the Progressive Conservative Party of New Brunswick.

OUR PLAN

New Vision • New Brunswick is our plan to take New Brunswick into the new century and a new millennium. It contains our major pledges to the people of New Brunswick for their consideration during this election.

Where We Will Focus

Governing is about choosing – direction and priorities. There are many day-to-day problems requiring government involvement and partnership. We will address these. But as our province enters a new century, New Brunswickers want a new approach to government – an open, responsive government – to chart a new direction and set new priorities to meet their most important needs.

That's why **New Vision • New Brunswick** focuses on **five specific priority areas**.

1. **Changing the Way Government Works**
2. **Renewing Health Care**
3. **Building New Job Opportunities**
4. **Managing Smarter – Lowering Taxes**
5. **Investing in Education**

Up-Front Accountability

Our plan contains three new elements never put forward by a political party.

First, we have established “**Success Targets**” for each of our five priority areas that sets out the goal for each of our actions and commitments. By measuring how well your government is performing on your behalf, it will become more accountable to you.

Second, we have set out a list of specific actions from our plan which we will implement immediately during our first 200 days in office, called “**200 Days of Change**”.

Third, we have taken an “**Accountability Pledge**” which will allow all New Brunswickers to track each of our commitments, as we implement them. We will report publicly on the status of each of our commitments with a new Throne Speech during our first 200 days.

CHANGING THE WAY GOVERNMENT WORKS

The New Vision: an open, responsive government

Success Targets:

- People & communities taking a more active role in decisions affecting their lives
 - Reinforced role for MLAs as true representatives of the people
 - Greater public accountability to voters
 - More equitable services for both rural and urban New Brunswick
-

New Vision • New Brunswick puts people first. Why? Because governing is about listening all the time, not just at election time.

It changes the way government works for New Brunswickers, making it more open and responsive. It emphasizes local values. It empowers communities and the people who live there and know their needs best to make decisions that affect their lives.

It restores the elected representatives and institutions of the people – MLAs and the Legislature – to a central role in those decisions that most affect people's lives.

“Camille Theriault, as Premier, has shown a predilection for practising pork-barrel politics with a brashness perhaps unmatched since the days... of former Prime Minister John Turner... Since taking office, he has generously used taxpayer' money to reward his friends and supporters with patronage appointments.”

Editorial, The Daily Gleaner, May 1, 1999

Setting the Record Straight: The Liberal Power-Grab

After twelve long years in power, the Liberals have forgotten the first rule of government: to listen to people. Power and decision-making have been centralized, taken away from people and communities. Patronage appointments to boards and commissions are now the order of the day. MLAs and the Legislature have been marginalized, making it more difficult to call government to account. The government misuses taxpayers dollars to promote itself at the expense of solving real problems. Rural New Brunswick has been ignored, its unique and special concerns set aside time after time.

It's time to change that once and for all.

Our plan for Changing the Way Government Works includes:

Empowering People & Communities

New Brunswick is a province of communities. Each community, and the people who live there, have unique needs and perspectives. Government should take these into account when making decisions that affect those communities. And the people who live there should be allowed to take a more active role in government decisions affecting their lives, beginning with democratically selecting local government boards and authorities. We will empower people and communities across New Brunswick by:

1. Involving communities in regional and local economic development decisions affecting their future through **new Community Economic Development Agencies**.
2. Creating **publicly, locally-elected Education Councils** and giving them a key role in education decision-making.
3. Creating **Regional Health Boards** with locally-elected and appointed individuals as part of new Regional Health Authorities.
4. Allowing New Brunswickers to determine the future of video lottery terminals in the province by holding a **referendum on VLTs** at the time of the next municipal elections.

Reinforcing the Role of MLAs and the Legislature

MLAs are on the front-lines of democracy. Our Legislature is the "people's house" where debate and dissent coalesce to ensure diverse views are presented and heard. At the same time, MLAs must be fully accountable to the voters and communities who chose them to represent their views. A strong Legislature enhances democracy by helping call government to account. We will reinforce the role of MLAs and the Legislature by:

1. Expanding the mandate of MLAs and Legislative Committees to examine major public policy issues by creating **two new Standing Committees on Health and Education**.
2. "De-politicizing" the appointments process for agencies, boards, and commissions by having an **all-party committee of the Legislature review key appointments** for recommendation to Cabinet.

3. Introducing an **MLA Responsibility Act** setting out the key roles and duties of MLAs, a code of conduct, and requiring that each MLA hold at least two public meetings per year.

Ensuring Responsive, Accountable Government

Government is there to serve people, not itself. To do so, government must strive always to be responsive and accountable to voters and taxpayers. Promoting itself at the expense of solving real problems only breeds cynicism and mistrust. At the same time, we must continue to build a strong, professional civil service able to both tackle and anticipate the problems and solutions of government. Senior officials of the government should spend more time "in the field" meeting with the people who use or need the services offered by their department. We will help ensure a more responsive, accountable government to the people of New Brunswick by:

1. **Halting all politically-motivated government advertising** and setting new rules for advertising to ensure it is legitimate and justifiable as a public service need.
2. **Making public the salaries** of all crown corporation senior management employees including the CEOs of health care corporations under a new "sunshine" policy,
3. Establishing a new, **24-hour Efficient Service Standard** for responding to inquiries by the public for key, designated services.
4. Building a **stronger, professional civil service** by recruiting and promoting new, young managers and ensuring opportunities for training and advancement are in place for all civil servants.
5. Requiring **Deputy-Ministers and senior civil servants to spend a designated period of time each year "in the front lines"** visiting schools, hospitals, and other government funded institutions. This will be time spent meeting with New Brunswick residents, consumers and customers of departmental services, in order to ensure government remains responsive and accessible to people.

Respecting New Brunswick's Diversity

New Brunswick is almost evenly split between both rural and urban communities. Everyone in New Brunswick regardless of where they live, is entitled to equitable levels of service. To achieve this goal, we must make a greater effort to identify service needs and opportunities for growth in rural New Brunswick. We will respect New Brunswick's rural and urban diversity by:

1. Creating a **"Smart Communities" initiative** in cooperation with the federal government and the private sector that ensures rural communities are "wired" to benefit from the information technology revolution. This will link these communities with such government services as health and medicine, education and learning, and social services through today's modern infrastructure of fibre-optic cables and the Internet.
2. Improving **health care for rural New Brunswick** by hiring more doctors and nurses; utilizing new technologies to help deliver services; and creating a new regional health service delivery model of Regional Health Authorities.
3. Adopting a **"total development" concept for our natural resources** that identifies and puts to use every possible source of value-added transformation to create jobs and protect rural communities that rely on natural resources for their livelihood.

RENEWING HEALTH CARE

The New Vision: patient-focused, community-based health care.

Success Targets:

- ☑ Stable, growing, long-term funding for hospitals & health care
 - ☑ Better accessibility through more doctors, nurses, and other health care professionals
 - ☑ Province-wide health standards with greater public accountability
 - ☑ More community involvement in health care decision-making
 - ☑ Improved care for seniors
-

Patient-Focused Health Care

New Vision • New Brunswick puts patients first. It means changing the definition of "success" from simply "treating a patient" to "treating a patient well" within defined time periods, to approved quality standards.

Ensuring patient-focused, community-based health care is at the heart of this vision to renew health care for New Brunswickers. This begins with changing the formal mission of the Department of Health and Community Services to adopt a new "patient-focused" approach to health care. All health services and priorities must be and will be evaluated from this perspective.

"Health care is not a problem of government."

Camille Theriault, Telegraph-Journal, November 14, 1998

"Health guarantee offers cold comfort: New law would have provided less money"

Headline, Telegraph Journal, November 30, 1998

Setting the Record Straight: The Liberal Health Care Betrayal

After years of neglect and creating the very problems that now exist, the Liberal government has resorted to funding gimmicks like the *Health Care Funding Guarantee Act* to pretend to spend more on health care. In fact, the opposite would be the case. If the Liberals had put this Act in place when they first came to power, New Brunswickers would have received **\$311 million less for health care.**

The Liberal health care record has been the worst in Atlantic Canada over the past four years and among the worst in all of Canada. Under the Liberals, there have been service cutbacks, hospital deficits, longer waiting lists, and a failure to plan properly.

New Brunswickers want a plan to renew health care. They want an end to the "boom and bust" health care cycle of the Liberal government. They want seniors to live in dignity with improved health care and services.

A Liberal Fact:

N.B. had the lowest spending rate on health in all of Atlantic Canada.

NB	.75%
NS	2.2%
PEI	4.1%
NF	2.4%

(avg. increase 95-98, Source: CIHI, 1999)

Our plan for Renewing Health Care includes:

Secure, Growing Health Funding

It is time to bring certainty, stability, and security to health care funding. A growing, aging population means more demands, not less, for health care. Health providers and professionals need to better plan and deliver the health care New Brunswickers need. These needs can only be met by having secure, growing health funding. We will do so by:

1. **Increasing health funding each and every year** of our mandate.
2. Establishing **multi-year "health budget envelopes"** for health care to guarantee increased funding levels for priority patient services and allow for better planning and delivery of services.

More Doctors; More Nurses

Doctors and nurses are on the front-lines of health care. Unfortunately, a shortage of both of these critical health professionals exists; a shortage that cannot be made up overnight. Although 329 new doctors are needed to bring us up to the national average, for example, we need to make an immediate start on filling the 40 Medicare-funded, but currently vacant physician positions. Improving accessibility to services begins with hiring more nurses and doctors immediately and developing longer-term hiring plans to ensure health care for families. We will do so by:

1. Creating 300 **new permanent nursing positions** (staff nurses, nursing manager, nursing home nurses, public and community health nurses) in the first 200 days of our mandate to address immediate nursing care shortages across the province.

2. Working closely with the nursing profession to develop a **comprehensive long-term nursing resource and professionalization plan** to ensure sufficient nurses are available in the future to meet growing health needs.
3. Making New Brunswick "Physician Friendly" by undertaking a comprehensive **Physician Recruitment Initiative** to attract new family physicians to practice in under-served and rural areas of New Brunswick as quickly as possible. This initiative should include such measures as offering to pay tuition to medical students, covering interest payments on student loans, cash signing bonuses, assistance with lease payments, and administrative support for doctors' offices, so long as they agree to practice in designated under-served areas for a period of at least four years. The goal is to first, fill the 40 current funded physician vacancies within one year and second, attract more physicians to fill the other gaps in services. We will examine, with the medical profession, how to remove other disincentives, including rural residency and community support issues, that impact upon relocation decisions by doctors.
4. Re-establish the practice of purchasing seats in the Faculty of Medicine at Memorial University.

New Regional Health Authorities & Boards

Patient-focused health care is where responsibility for service delivery is closer to the patient. It means more integrated health care with services and initiatives, from hospitals to nursing homes to prevention, brought together in seamless care that follows the patient, not the other way around. This will help ensure that services and care are managed and delivered better to the people in each region, with greater local community involvement and increased financial and public accountability. We will do so by:

"It is time our health care policy took a u-turn."

Editorial, Saint John Telegraph Journal, December 3, 1998

1. Implementing a new model of health service delivery of **Regional Health Authorities and Regional Health Boards**.
2. **Restoring the cost-effective Extra Mural Hospital to its proper provincial role** to ensure its more effective use. Its services will be integrated under the new Regional Health Authority model.

Provincial Health Standards and Accountable Health Care

New Brunswickers want to be assured that the services they receive are of excellent standard and quality, and are performed in the most efficient and effective manner. Consumers want more information on the health care they are receiving and want to participate more in decisions affecting their health. To achieve these goals, we need to build more accountability into health care with clear, agreed provincial health standards of quality and accessibility. We will do so through the following initiatives:

1. Developing a new **Patient Charter of Rights and Responsibilities** to ensure that health care focuses on treating the patient based on clear expectations and understanding. We will make certain that the patient always knows what level and quality of service to expect and what their own responsibilities are to help ensure accountable, cost-effective health care. Specific rights and responsibilities could include:
 - the right to be treated with respect, courtesy, sensitivity and compassion
 - the right to dignity and independence
 - the right to the least intrusive intervention
 - the right to be fully informed, to understand health information, and to give informed consent
 - the right to complain and to be informed about the outcome of the complaint
 - the responsibility to provide full, accurate information on health needs
 - the responsibility to use health care resources appropriately

2. Establishing a new provincial **Health Care Report Card** that sets out specific health standards, measuring performance in meeting those standards and reporting results publicly to ensure both excellent quality health care, and that each health dollar spent achieves the best results. These standards could include ER access time, ambulance response times, and waiting times for needed treatments and surgeries. Areas for improvement will be identified and reported on publicly for all to see and compare. Performance will be considered as a factor in providing funding for high performing institutions. The Health Care Report Card will be developed in close collaboration with health care stakeholders.

3. Creating a **Premier's Health Quality Council** of consumers and health care professionals and front-line providers to develop specific health quality standards to ensure we are on track in our efforts to improve health care and to assist in our move to more integrated, regionally-based health care.

The Premier's Health Quality Council will have a 2-year mandate to:

- develop an action plan to move to a health governance system of Regional Health Authorities and Regional Health Boards;
 - oversee the development and implementation of the Health Care Report Card, health quality standards, and performance measures such as specified waiting times for priority services;
 - assist in the development of the Patient Charter of Rights and Responsibilities;
 - provide advice on implementing the recommendations of the Health Services Review Report.
4. Patient-focused health care needs advocates at its centre – directly within the Department of Health and Community Services itself. **We will establish a senior-level Patient Advocate position** with a mandate to cut through red tape and help bridge the gap between patient needs and services.

Wellness Strategy

A healthy province is more than just having dependable health care. It results from having fit, healthy people who practice good health habits in their daily lives. Preventing disease and promoting good health in the first place is the surest way to have a healthy population. Investing in wellness now not only saves money, but helps people live more enriching lives. We will do so by:

1. Developing a comprehensive **Wellness Strategy** that helps New Brunswickers stay healthy longer.
2. Establishing a **Combating Disease Initiative** that specifically targets heart and cardiac disease, breast cancer, asthma, and others through the development of integrated treatment and care strategies for each.

Improved Care for Seniors

Seniors in New Brunswick have earned the right to quality health. We will bring dignity and fairness back to the lives of seniors by improving their health care. We will do so by:

1. **Restoring the daily funding rate for Level II Special Care residents to \$68 dollars per day** pending a full review of the Level of Care policy in consultation with the Special Care Association of New Brunswick and the New Brunswick Senior Citizens' Federation.
2. **Making it easier for couples assessed at different levels of care to live together** in the same long term care home.
3. **Strengthening the Prescription Drug Program** to ensure seniors and other beneficiaries have greater access to the drugs they need.

BUILDING NEW JOB OPPORTUNITIES

The New Vision: a made-in-New Brunswick solution

Success Targets:

- ☑ Lowest unemployment rate in Atlantic Canada
 - ☑ Highest participation rate in Atlantic Canada
 - ☑ Reduction in youth unemployment
 - ☑ Reduction in wage gap with rest of Canada
 - ☑ Lowest small business corporate tax rate in Atlantic Canada
-

New Vision • New Brunswick is a new way to create jobs – a “made in New Brunswick solution”.

The old ways of job creation – putting all our money into call centres and expensive, high-risk ventures – have not reduced our unemployment problem. **Government should reward job creation results, not gamble on job creation promises.**

A new approach is needed that keeps what's working well, but re-orient's our efforts to a “made in New Brunswick” solution. This “made in New Brunswick” solution will build upon the real engines of stable, long-term job growth in our province: small business; natural resources; new technologies and the new economy; and the local, entrepreneurial strengths of the people, communities, and regions of our province. We will lower taxes – personal income taxes and small business taxes – to boost consumer spending and encourage small businesses to expand and hire, particularly young New Brunswickers.

“With the exception of New Brunswick, expectations for employment growth are significantly higher in the Atlantic provinces than they were a year ago.”

CFIB 1999 – Small Business Outlook

Setting the Record Straight: The Liberals Aren't Working

More New Brunswickers are unemployed today than when the Liberals took power. After 11 full years of Liberal government, New Brunswick's unemployment rate was higher in 1998 than it was in 1988. The yearly unemployment rate increased since the last election from 11.5% in 1995 to 12.1% in 1998. Five of nine industry groups recorded job losses in 1998. Northeastern New Brunswick had the highest unemployment rate increase in the province. Now, while unemployment has dropped in neighbouring Nova Scotia, it has remained "frozen" in New Brunswick.

The Liberal government has put cooperation with our neighbouring provinces on the backburner by adopting confrontational policies such as toll roads or squabbling over Atlantic Lotto. And, it has turned its back on needed personal income tax reductions that would help create jobs and stimulate investment.

Our province has stopped making progress. Things aren't improving the way they should. Now, the Liberal government has admitted that its policies will create **only one-third as many jobs** over the next four years as it promised to create in the previous four years. The Liberals have stopped working.

Our Plan to Build New Job Opportunities includes:

Recharging the Small Business Job Generator

Small business is the number one job creator in our province. It is the best guarantor of long-term, stable economic growth as a "made in New Brunswick" job solution.

It's time to renew the job-creating confidence of small businesses in New Brunswick. Reducing taxes and cutting "job strangling" red tape and regulations that hinder investment and growth are cited by small business as the key actions government can take to help them create jobs.

Today, the federal Liberal government is standing in the way of creating these jobs in New Brunswick through an unconscionably-high E.I. surplus and exorbitant E.I. premiums that act as a disincentive to job creation. Our provincial government can, and should, take a strong stand in favour of small businesses in New Brunswick while convincing Ottawa to reduce these "taxes on jobs" to a more sustainable level.

Our made-in-New Brunswick solution will recharge New Brunswick's small business job generator by:

1. **Cutting the small business corporate tax rate from 6% to 4.5%** over the course of our mandate beginning with our first budget, giving us the lowest rate in Atlantic Canada.
2. Providing a **three-year Small Business 'Tax Holiday'** for startup small and medium-size businesses to remain competitive with Nova Scotia and Newfoundland.
3. **Reducing red tape and other job creation barriers through a 6-month "Red Tape Reduction Review"** of all regulations, fees, policies and practices affecting job creation and business growth by a special panel of private and public sector experts reporting directly to the Premier.

"Taxation is clearly the greatest obstacle for growing businesses to hire more employees, as well as for shrinking businesses to stop laying off employees."

CFIB - 1999 Small Business Outlook

Jobs for Youth

Young people are leaving our province because there aren't enough jobs. They believe their future lies elsewhere. We need to work with the business community and the education system to find the best means of creating opportunity for our youth right here at home.

Investing in our youth means preparing young people for job opportunities. Part of that preparation starts with giving them a chance to learn and earn in their first job. A "JobStart" program for youth that encourages hiring young people can have an immediate impact in reducing youth unemployment and giving them a stronger chance to stay and work in New Brunswick.

Our made-in-New Brunswick solution to creating jobs for young people includes:

1. A "JobStart" program that reduces payroll taxes for small and large businesses by rebating the WHSCC payroll tax for each new young person hired, ages 18-24, for a period of two years. For New Brunswick small business this is an added incentive to hire as it combines with the recent federal government "New Hires" program which eliminates the employers' portion of the E.I. payroll tax for each new young person hired.

Regional and Community Economic Development

A “made in New Brunswick” solution begins with listening to and understanding the specific needs of the communities and regions that make up our province. The Acadian Peninsula with its chronically-high unemployment rates, for example, has unique development needs that cannot be met with either a “quick fix” or a “one size fits all” development strategy.

Regional and community economic development is at the heart of our approach. We must empower local communities who know best their own needs. We must decentralize job creation decision-making to regions and local communities. This requires a comprehensive new approach that gives regions and communities the tools they need – money and authority - to create jobs where they live.

Our made-in-New Brunswick solution will create new jobs through regional and community economic development by:

1. Creating **new Community Economic Development Agencies (CEDA) in each region** of the province with the mandate to develop and implement specific economic development plans for their regions and communities. Each CEDA will develop and submit a “rolling” 3-year business plan to the new Department of Regional Economic Development, Tourism and Culture identifying growth sectors and opportunities; job creation barriers; and program needs. Specific budgets will be assigned to each CEDA along with the legislative authority to help fund and assist development opportunities in their regions. Current economic development commissions and the Regional Development Corporation will be “folded” into the new CEDAs to eliminate overlap in decision-making and ensure maximum dollars are directed as results, not administration. CEDAs will be publicly accountable to the Legislative Assembly.
2. Providing each CEDA with **a regional board for local decision-making** consisting of private and public sector representatives and experts, labour, as well as municipal representatives.
3. Addressing the unique and urgent economic development needs of the Acadian Peninsula by striking a provincial task force, reporting directly to the Premier, to set out priorities to invest the 5-year, **\$25 million Acadian Peninsula Community Investment Fund**. The Fund will invest in training, diversification, research and development, and infrastructure.

“Total Development”

“Total Development” of our natural resources is a new concept that will revitalize how we grow our forestry, fisheries & aquaculture, agriculture, mining and tourism sectors.

New Brunswick continues to have a higher reliance on natural resources as a percentage of GDP than almost every other province. We need to re-think our approach to ensure we get every possible value from our natural resources through secondary and value-added transformation. This is value that creates jobs and growth for people and secures the future of our resource-reliant communities.

A Liberal Fact:

- For the second consecutive year, New Brunswick’s commercial fishing industry experienced a decline.
- Logging and forestry’s contribution to GDP was less in 1997 than it was in 1994.
- The mining sector was worth \$19.3 million less in 1997 than it was in 1994.

Source: The New Brunswick Economy, A Report to the Legislative Assembly, 1998, pgs. 21;8

This new approach is called “Total Development”. This comprehensive strategy begins with a “Resource Index” that establishes an inventory with the growth needs and potential of each sector – for harvesting as well as for replenishing. It identifies the tools needed to secure and grow each sector and matches government policy and programs in support. This includes: technology development and innovation assistance; infrastructure, trade, and market development support to help reach new national and international markets as efficiently and effectively as possible; reliable and competitively-priced sources of energy; training development to ensure a world-class skilled workforce; reducing government barriers to piloting new ways of managing our resources.

“Total Development” works with the environment, not against it, by respecting both the heritage and the value of these resources. New Brunswick’s private resource companies have often pioneered new developments in resource extraction, harvesting, and transformation from forestry to fisheries to mining. They have also put much back into the resources and the environment, such as with silviculture and aquaculture. They are valuable partners with the government to develop and apply the “total development” concept to realize the full potential of this sector.

Our made-in-New Brunswick, "Total Development" approach to natural resources will create jobs by:

1. Developing **sector-specific "Total Development" strategies for forestry, fisheries & aquaculture, mining, agriculture, tourism, within one year** that identify opportunities and barriers to ensure the full potential of our natural resources are realized.
2. Undertaking initiatives from each strategy aimed at getting all possible value from secondary and value-added transformation of our resource sectors.

Technology and the New Economy

The "new economy" of information and knowledge demands new skills and new approaches to ensure New Brunswick is not left behind. We need to build on the progress made on this front in recent years and many of the initiatives underway. In particular, we need to support further the technology leaders in our province with a focus on "technology and marketing".

Innovation and technology development cannot occur in a vacuum. It must be linked through networks that bring government, educational institutions, and the public sector together as true technology partners. We need to create a "Technology Triangle" that connects each of these partners to combine strengths and leverage results. A key focus will be to link technology more effectively with our "Total Development" approach to natural resources revitalization.

Our made-in-New Brunswick approach to new technology and the new economy will create jobs by:

1. Launching a **Technology Trade Initiative** to help New Brunswick's knowledge industry reach key markets in North America and around the globe, by assisting them to attend trade shows and information technology conferences where they can showcase their expertise and connect with buyers of New Brunswick products.
2. Initiating New Brunswick's first-ever "**Technology Marketing Diploma**" through the Community College system.

3. Strengthening the Research and Productivity Council's mandate to build **stronger public/private linkages** with New Brunswick's emerging new technology sector.

Fair Wages

Under the Liberals, New Brunswick has had one of the worst job wage records in Canada. The average weekly earnings of New Brunswick workers increased by less than 8 cents per week from 1995 to 1998. There is a need to increase the minimum wage to begin to address this shortfall and help put more money back into the pockets of New Brunswick workers and families.

Our made-in New Brunswick approach to fair wages will:

1. **Increase the minimum wage by 50 cents per hour from \$5.50 to \$6.00.** This will be accomplished in two phases, with a raise of 25 cents in the first 200 days of our mandate.

Removing Barriers to Work

Most people want to work and earn a decent living. They should be given every opportunity to do so. But sometimes, in its attempt to help people, government can create financial barriers and disincentives that actually discourage people from working.

We believe the option of earning a living through work should always be more beneficial than receiving social assistance benefits. Social assistance programs should be designed to encourage and assist able individuals to enter the workforce not discourage them. At the same time, we want to make sure the working poor and families in need are not disadvantaged by taking away assistance. We will remove barriers and disincentives to work by:

1. **Reviewing all social assistance and related programs** to remove those barriers and disincentives that discourage people from finding full and part-time work that will help bring greater dignity and satisfaction to their lives.

Atlantic Cooperation and Leadership

We can be a strong regional voice – in Ottawa on E.I. and shipbuilding, and the U.S. on trade – if the four Atlantic provinces work more closely together. The new economy is “shrinking the world”, bringing markets and competition right to our doorstep. Sharing and cooperating for information technology, research and development, and a value added resource sector can make us all stronger. We should be building information highways, not fighting over toll highways. We should be eliminating trade barriers between us that hurt jobs. New Brunswick needs to take a strong Atlantic leadership role in matters of regional and national interest like shipbuilding.

Our made-in-New Brunswick approach to Atlantic Cooperation and Leadership will protect and create jobs by:

1. Taking the lead with our Atlantic neighbours in developing a **regional shipbuilding policy** that will protect the future of Saint John Shipbuilding Ltd. and its jobs by ensuring we remain internationally competitive in designing and building ships for the world.
2. Developing a joint regional plan to **eliminate or lower those outstanding inter-provincial trade barriers** that hamper job creation and business growth in New Brunswick and Atlantic Canada within a defined time period.
3. Partnering with our Atlantic neighbours in identifying and exploiting **export opportunities** for New Brunswick and Atlantic firms particularly with the United States and Mexico.
4. Forging a “common front” with all Atlantic provinces to convince the federal government to **reduce the job-killing E.I. payroll taxes** to a more sustainable level.

MANAGING SMARTER - LOWERING TAXES

The New Vision: greater value for taxpayers

Success Targets:

- Lowest personal income taxes in Atlantic Canada
- Higher take-home pay for New Brunswickers
- Enhanced health and education services
- Balanced budgets and reduced debt-to-GDP
- Reduced waste in government

New Vision•New Brunswick believes that government can and should be managed smarter. In doing so, waste, duplication and overlap can be eliminated and taxpayers and families can be rewarded through lower taxes. Lower income taxes serve as a work incentive. Tax cuts will help create new jobs for New Brunswickers. At the same time, a more efficient, better managed government can afford to spend more on key health and education services.

Setting the Record Straight: The Broken Liberal Tax Promise & Financial Mismanagement

New Brunswickers pay too much in taxes. We have the second-highest tax burden in all of Canada. The Liberal government's record on taxes and financial management is the second-worst in all of Canada and the worst in Atlantic Canada. We have become increasingly uncompetitive compared to our competitors — other provinces and the US. That costs us jobs and economic growth.

The 1998 Auditor General's report found that the true provincial financial picture was completely different from what the government was saying. The real picture is that the government actually ran a **deficit of \$267.3 million** in the fiscal year 1997/98, not a surplus of \$61.7 million. This deliberate financial mismanagement resulted in the provincial net debt increasing by \$329 million.

Failing the Fiscal Performance Index

Rank	Province	Score
1	Alberta	82
2	Ontario	63
3	Saskatchewan	56
4	Quebec	55
5	Nova Scotia	54
6	PEI	54
7	Manitoba	53
8	Nfld.	51
9	New Brunswick	44
10	British Columbia	33

A score less than 50 means a failing grade.

The Fraser Institute, 1999

Under the Liberals there will be no more tax relief. They promised personal income tax cuts in the last election – then broke that promise. They brought in the HST which raised taxes for everyone trying to buy the daily necessities of life, particularly low-income families. The Liberal government has mismanaged the province's finances, "cooking the books" to hide the fiscal reality. The Liberals can't be trusted on lower taxes.

New Brunswick needs a new government committed to managing smarter and lowering taxes.

Our plan for Managing Smarter and Lowering Taxes includes:

Managing Smarter

Taxpayers know that government can and should be managed smarter; eliminating waste, duplication, and overlap in programs and operations. Saving tax dollars should always be central to what government does and how it does it. The Auditor General has pointed out example after example of waste and bad financial management on the part of the Liberal government.

A fresh look and new approach is required. That approach starts at the top by making government more efficient and cost-effective through a smaller Cabinet, eliminating redundant regulations, shutting down agencies, boards, and commissions that have served their purpose and are no longer relevant, and reducing waste, duplication, and overlap in government operations. Our plan to manage smarter includes:

1. **Reducing the size of Cabinet by at least 30%** and restructuring its responsibilities saving taxpayers \$1 million plus each year in salary, staff, expense accounts, and support thereby ensuring a more cost-effective government for New Brunswickers.
2. Conducting an "ABC" review of all government agencies, boards, and commissions (ABCs) to determine their ongoing relevance and contribution to public policy and the needs of taxpayers. This review will be completed within six months.

A Liberal Fact:

New Brunswick has the third-largest Cabinet in Canada despite having the third-smallest population base. The Liberals have 7 more Ministers than Nova Scotia; 5 more than Newfoundland; and 11 more than PEI.

3. **Reducing by at least half the number of communications officers and “spin doctors”,** saving more than \$1 million each year.
4. Creating a special **Waste Reduction Cabinet Task Force** to identify and reduce areas of waste, duplication, and overlap in government operations.

A Liberal Fact:

New Brunswick has 22 more communications officers in the government than Nova Scotia despite having a population that is almost 250,000 less.

Lowering Taxes

Many families, particularly the working poor, are finding it increasingly difficult to make ends meet. New Brunswickers are working harder and harder but can't seem to stay ahead. It's about choices – what kind of government we want and how we want our province to grow. We believe that each and every New Brunswicker should have the choice about how to spend their money. The money taxpayers send to government is their money, not the government's.

Lower income taxes serve as a crucial work incentive. People work harder and spend more when they know they can take home more of their hard-earned dollars. Tax cuts help create new jobs and economic growth. This, in turn, generates more revenue for social programs.

At the same time, lower taxes can lead to more, not less, revenue as more people work and the economy grows. Here are real examples: When Ontario's former NDP government raised income taxes, personal income tax receipts dropped 12%. When Ontario's PC government cut income taxes, overall provincial income tax revenues continued to grow each and every year. Here in New Brunswick, previous personal income tax reductions saw an increase, not a decrease, in PIT revenue over two fiscal years beyond the original projections.

Our plan to lower taxes includes:

1. **Reducing the provincial personal income tax rate by at least 10%** over the course of our mandate on a phased-in basis beginning with our first budget, with the goal of having the lowest personal income taxes in eastern Canada. The first tax cut will be to reinstate the 2.5% reduction promised by the Liberals in their last budget.

2. **Stopping the collection of tolls –another form of tax– on the Moncton-Fredericton highway.** Stopping the tolls will save money for all taxpayers, motorists, and truckers, by eliminating the extremely expensive toll collection system.
3. **Reviewing the taxation system in our province,** including nuisance taxes, consumption taxes (HST) and income taxes. The goal of this review will be to achieve simplicity, transparency, fairness, competitiveness, efficiency and the reduction of the overall tax burden for all New Brunswickers. As a first step, we will **eliminate fees for marriage licenses and initial birth certificates.**
4. Introducing a **Taxpayer's Protection Act** that would require provincial voter approval prior to certain tax increases or the creation of new taxes. Lowering taxes to reward families and individuals is one thing; ensuring taxes do not go back up is another.

"It's time to lower taxes"

**Editorial Headline,
Telegraph-Journal,
April 12, 1999**

Enhancing Social Programs

Sensible tax relief will not come at the expense of our most important social programs of health and education. In fact, our plan calls for more spending in both of these areas.

Lower taxes must be sustainable, based on a sensible, prudent, and responsible financial plan. Managing smarter with more efficient government, together with economic growth and revenues generated from more people working, can help ensure key social priorities are met.

Balancing the Books Honestly

An important part of having an open and accountable government is providing the people with information that is honest and true. New Brunswickers deserve an impartial, independent picture of the financial health of their province. They need to know that there is a sensible, long-term plan to manage that financial health which is based upon honest accounting figures.

Our plan for balancing the books honestly includes:

1. Opening the government books by initiating a **full, independent audit and review**, and then report publicly on the true financial situation of the province.
2. Using the figures approved by the **Office of the Auditor General** in determining whether the books have been balanced honestly for any given year and report that information in a timely and open fashion to all New Brunswickers.
3. Developing a viable, realistic, and prudent **long-term plan for managing the provincial debt**.

“Time to face fiscal facts”

“The (Auditor General’s) report takes dead aim at the issue of transparency and hits a bulls-eye. Mr. Wilson correctly points out that through accounting sleight of hand the province is actually running a deficit rather than achieving a ‘balanced budget’ as it claims and as its own legislation requires.”

Editorial, Moncton Times & Transcript, December 16, 1998

INVESTING IN EDUCATION

The New Vision: New Brunswickers ready to compete with the world

Success Targets:

- Stable, growing funding for education
- Safer, healthy schools
- Greater parent, teacher, community involvement in education decision-making
- Increased community use of schools

New Vision • New Brunswick sees young people as our future. Investing in education is the surest way to reduce the current exodus of young people leaving our province and give our children the skills they need to compete – for jobs and opportunity.

Education is the cornerstone of our society. It is the key to understanding our past, who we are and who we will become. It is an investment in the social and economic development of New Brunswick. The goal must be to provide the tools and skills for our children to develop as good citizens, thinkers, and workers. It is by fostering the creativity of our youth that New Brunswick will be ready to meet the challenges of the future.

Setting the Record Straight: Halting the Liberal Education Chaos

The Liberal government has experimented with our education system for too long. New programs have been introduced without proper planning and consultation. Parents are uncertain whether their children are getting the education they need to develop as good thinkers, workers and citizens. Teachers have been ignored in the development and implementation of major curriculum changes. Communities have been shut-out of education decision-making.

“Neither teachers nor students have ever been prepared for outcome based education and the components required to teach outcome based education properly.”

NBTA resolution, April, 1998

Classrooms, where the learning takes place, are shortchanged when it comes to funding and programs forcing students and parents to solicit door-to-door to raise funds. It's time to halt this chaos of change after change with a clear, solid A•B•C education strategy.

The Foundation Program is "disorganized, under-funded, unfocused, and lacking leadership at the provincial level"

NBTA, April, 1998

An A•B•C Education Strategy

Our **New Vision • New Brunswick** education strategy has three components:

- A. **Active community involvement** that restores parents and other community members to the centre of education decision-making through publicly and locally elected, responsible and accountable Education Councils, within the context of provincial standards.
- B. **Building a new partnership with teachers** through a "Partnership Pledge" by listening to teachers as experts, respecting their contribution and advice, involving them in solutions, and ensuring that no major program or structural changes occur to our education system without teachers' input.
- C. **Classroom-centred education** that reorients funding and focus to ensure that students in the classroom get the support they need to learn through the provision of qualified teaching assistants, smaller classroom sizes, and an adequate amount of teaching tools such as textbooks, computers and paper.

Our plan for Investing in Education includes:

Active Community Involvement

1. Restoring the cooperative, community approach to education decision-making by creating **publicly and locally elected Education Councils** with real responsibility and accountability within the context of provincial standards.
2. Strengthening the role of schools within the community by developing a coherent **school multi-use policy** through the Education Councils to ensure these facilities are available to the community-at-large.

Building a New Partnership with Teachers

1. **Involving teachers fully in education decision-making** by committing to consult with them and other education professionals, and not implement major program or structural changes to our education system without their full input and sufficient piloting and review of curriculum and program changes.

Classroom-Centred Education

1. Creating **100 qualified new Teaching Assistant** this school year to assist teachers in the classroom as part of a clear, classroom-centred education orientation.
2. Ensuring our students have access to the school supplies they need to learn by establishing a special **Student Supplies Top-Up Fund of \$1 million for the 1999 school year** to be drawn down by schools requiring additional paper and other essential teaching tools for students.

“Whole-Child” Education

“Whole-Child” education sees the child as needing the enrichment of music, art, and physical education, along with the 3Rs, as part of a broad-based education. It is founded in a belief that our education system must foster creativity and strength in our children at all levels. It is also founded in the knowledge that the art, music, and sport industries provide meaningful employment and business opportunities for many New Brunswickers, and that our children should continue to have the opportunity to participate in these sectors. Accordingly, we will adopt a “whole-child” education approach by:

1. Encouraging the **addition of music, art, and physical education** as key courses.

Healthy Minds

Hungry children can't learn. Education should be about giving everyone an equal start. But children coming from less-advantaged families often don't have the same advantages. Poverty can mean going to school hungry because there isn't enough money to buy groceries. Whatever the reason, the result is the same: hungry children don't learn as well as others. Currently, the voluntary sector tries to fill this need. Government can and should help by dedicating resources to work jointly with the voluntary and private sectors in providing nutritional programs for children in need.

Accordingly, we will help reduce the number of children going to school hungry by:

1. Implementing a **“Healthy Minds” school nutritional program during the 1999 school year for Grades 1-3 on a pilot basis** in cooperation with the private and voluntary sectors. Expand province-wide based on results, needs and resources.

Funding Life-long Learning

Our education system requires secure, growing investment if it is to continue to give New Brunswickers the skills and knowledge they need to compete in tomorrow's world. Post-secondary institutions and community colleges, in particular, have been hamstrung in their planning and delivery of quality education services by arbitrary funding freezes and changes. We will invest in a policy of “Funding Security not Funding Freezes” by:

1. **Increasing the education budget each and every year** of our mandate.
2. Moving to a **multi-year funding formula for post-secondary education institutions** with a 3-year financing projection for post-secondary education at the university and community college levels.

Safe, Healthy Schools

Continued investment in the physical plant and infrastructure of our schools is necessary to keep them safe and healthy for both students and educators. Safe, healthy schools also applies to students. Having access to a trained nurse, as required, would both help students who are sick and bring peace of mind to parents. We will invest in a policy of Safe, Healthy Schools by:

1. Directing a portion of the education budget each year to **school infrastructure upgrades and renovation**.
2. Establishing a special **Student Supplies Top-Up Fund of \$1 million**.
3. Increasing **on-site access to key professionals**, such as nurses and psychiatrists, in New Brunswick Schools.

Over our first two hundred days of government, and over the full course of our mandate, we pledge to be accountable to New Brunswickers. This **"Accountability Pledge"** will allow every voter to track each of our commitments with us, as we implement them. Furthermore, we will report publicly on the status of each of our commitments for the first 200 Days of Change during our Speech from the Throne, which will also be held during our first 200 days of government.

I, Bernard Lord, do solemnly pledge to be accountable to the people of New Brunswick, to respect their needs and opinions, and to act in their best interests at all times."

200 DAYS OF CHANGE

Change takes commitment. Change takes a plan. We believe that by working together with all New Brunswickers, we can make immediate gains for our province.

More importantly, we believe that we can and must take immediate actions – **within the first 200 days of our mandate** – if we are to succeed in changing our future together.

Immediate Actions

Listed on the next page are the immediate actions we will undertake in each of our five priority areas within our first 200 days.

This isn't the last word on what we will do; it's just the first. Other new measures in each of our five priority areas will be introduced throughout our mandate as set out in our **New Vision • New Brunswick** plan.

"The key thing that former premier Frank McKenna and PC leader Bernard Lord have in common is a strong, positive vision for New Brunswick combined with a readiness to energetically extol our virtues."

Times & Transcript,
March 17, 1999



TWO HUNDRED DAYS OF CHANGE

200 Day Action List:

- Conduct independent audit and review of government's books.
- Halt all politically-motivated advertising.
- Create an all-party committee of the Legislative Assembly to review public appointments.
- Join provinces of Alberta, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, the Yukon and the NWT in their court challenge against the federal Bill C-68
- Create 300 permanent nursing positions.
- Begin implementation of Physician Recruitment Initiative.
- Establish policy of not separating couples into different nursing homes.
- Establish Premier's Health Quality Council.
- Establish a "Red Tape Reduction Review" commission to identify and reduce barriers to jobs creation.
- Establish the Premier's Action Task Force for the Acadian Peninsula.
- Increase the minimum wage by 25 cents per hour.
- Address the future of Saint John Shipbuilding Ltd. with Atlantic Premiers as a first step to developing a coordinated Atlantic Shipbuilding Policy with the federal government.
- Reduce the size of Cabinet by at least 30% and restructure its responsibilities saving taxpayers \$1 million plus annually.
- Cut the number of communications officers and "spin doctors" by at least half.
- Commence "ABC" review of all government agencies, boards, and commissions.
- Stop the collection of tolls on the Fredericton-Moncton highway.
- Hire 100 qualified new Teaching Assistants
- Implement a "Healthy Minds" school nutritional program on a pilot basis.
- Establish Student Supplies Top-Up Fund of \$1 million for 1999 school year.
- Report on the status of the 200 Day Action List in a new Speech from the Throne in the Legislative Assembly.