

The Romanow New Democrats • 1999 Election

# Platform

**Building A Bright Future Together**  
*The Saskatchewan Way.*



**MORE** Jobs

**LOWER**  
Taxes

**Better**  
EDUCATION

**Better**  
HEALTH CARE

**RURAL**  
*Opportunity*

**Balanced**  
**Budgets,**  
*Less* Debt

**Less** CRIME

# Dear Friend...

People in Saskatchewan share common dreams. We all want the opportunity to build a better future for ourselves, our children and our neighbours. We all want a province that is a community – a place where your neighbour looks out for your children, where everyone pitches in to help when there is a need and where people have the opportunity to achieve their dreams.

Our provincial government plays a key role in determining what kind of community our province will be. It delivers health care, educates our children, builds our highways and administers the justice system. Provincial government policies help determine whether the economy will grow and jobs are created.

It has been four years since you were last asked to choose what political party you wanted to lead our provincial government. The time is upon us once again to choose what direction Saskatchewan will take as we approach our province's 100th birthday.

## The Choice

How does one choose among the parties – between the campaign rhetoric and the sometimes bewildering claims and accusations of politicians?

One way is to look at each party's plans for the future. What kind of province does each want to build? What values does each party hold? And how do the plans add up – are the commitments affordable and do they make sense?

Another key element is the record of a political party. What have they actually done when in government? How consistent and organized have they been in opposition? What does past behavior mean for possible future performance in government?

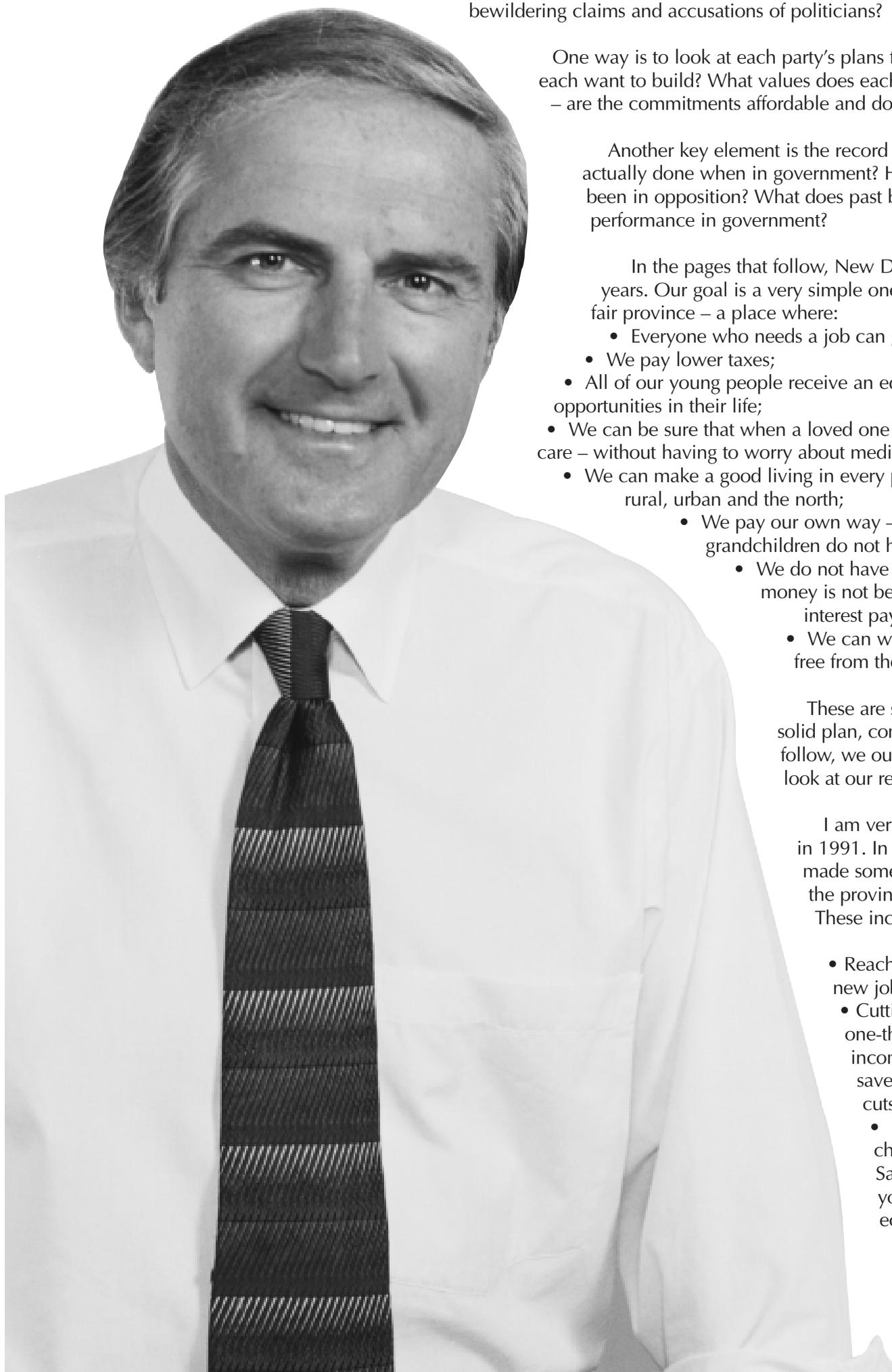
In the pages that follow, New Democrats set out our plan for the next four years. Our goal is a very simple one. We want to help build a prosperous and fair province – a place where:

- Everyone who needs a job can get one;
- We pay lower taxes;
- All of our young people receive an education that prepares them for all the opportunities in their life;
- We can be sure that when a loved one is sick, they will get the very best medical care – without having to worry about medical bills;
- We can make a good living in every part of the province – rural, urban and the north;
  - We pay our own way – so that our children and grandchildren do not have to;
  - We do not have the burden of debt – so that money is not being wasted on interest payments to New York and Toronto; and
  - We can walk on our streets and live in our homes free from the threat of crime.

These are simple goals – but reaching them requires a solid plan, commitment and hard work. In the pages that follow, we outline the New Democrat plan. I ask you to look at our record and judge our ability to deliver.

I am very proud of our record since being elected in 1991. In these eight years, New Democrats have made some mistakes, but, working with everyone in the province, we have had many accomplishments. These include:

- Reaching our target of creating 30,000 new jobs;
- Cutting taxes every year since 1995 – knocking one-third off the sales tax and cutting provincial income taxes by 10 per cent. An average family saves over \$800 per year as a result of these tax cuts;
  - Fixing the schools attended by our children, and launching a made-in-Saskatchewan training strategy to give our young people the skills they need for today's economy;



- Setting our health system on a solid foundation – and improving many health care services ranging from cancer treatment to home care for our seniors;
- Standing up for farmers against harmful policies from Ottawa – and helping to diversify our rural economy;
- Being the first province in Canada in the 1990's to balance its budget – and keeping it balanced;
- Paying down 23 percent of the massive Tory debt – over \$3.5 billion in debt repayment; and
- Launching initiatives like the Serious Crimes Task Force to keep our streets and home safe from crime.

We have made a very good start in making Saskatchewan a better place in which to live, work and raise a family. But there is much more to do. I am asking you to carefully consider our platform for the next four years – and to give us the job of implementing it. Saskatchewan is on the right track. Our platform sets out some exciting new ideas and tasks.

The pages that follow set out our platform in detail, but I would like to share a few highlights with you. **If you give us your support on election day, New Democrats will work for:**

- **More jobs.** Work with businesses, cooperatives and communities to create 30,000 more jobs;
- **Lower taxes.** Allocate one third of government surpluses to cutting taxes – with a specific commitment to cut income tax by \$1,000 for an average family;
- **Better education.** Provide the first year's tuition in a post-secondary institution for graduating high school students and make improvements in elementary and high school education;
- **Better health care.** Improve our health care system with specific service guarantees; hire 500 more health care providers; expand home care and act on ambulance rates starting with eliminating charges for transfers between institutions;
- **Rural opportunities.** Continue to fight for fairness for farmers – and help rural Saskatchewan build and diversify its economy;
- **Balanced budgets.** Balance the budget every year and put one-third of government surpluses to repaying debt – to continue to cut the debt run up by the Tories in order to reduce interest payments; and
- **Less crime.** Take action to fight crime – including hiring 200 more police officers and beefing up special task forces that deal with criminal gangs and repeat young offenders.

Lower taxes. Less debt. Better services. This plan is balanced, realistic and achievable. It makes concrete improvements to help families in our province.

## *The Alternatives*

Let me offer you a few words about the other choice available in this election.

When the Tories got elected under Grant Devine, they did so by promising unaffordable and unsustainable tax cuts. They kept some of these promises – for awhile. They ran deficit budgets every year and saddled our province with a huge \$15 billion debt. Then taxes went up. In their second term, Saskatchewan had a net loss of 8,000 jobs.

The Tories are so proud of their record that they've changed their name to the Saskatchewan Party in order to hide from it.

Unfortunately, the Tories do not appear to have learned anything from the past. The centerpiece of their campaign is a \$1.8 billion tax scheme that does not add up. In order to help pay for it, they have said they will freeze almost all government spending – including health care, education and justice – for five years. Even with this freezing of priority services, their plan still does not add up. The Tory plan will mean a return to budget deficits and increasing debt.

The recent Liberal record in Saskatchewan is not a proud one. In Ottawa, the Liberals cut health care and education funding by \$6 billion per year across Canada. They have introduced rail deregulation that threatens to kill many Saskatchewan communities. And they unilaterally cut support for farmers – while our trade competitors in the United States and Europe continued with their subsidy programs.

Provincially, the Liberal's signature achievement has been bickering and in-fighting – starting with the betrayal of former leader Lynda Haverstock and continuing until this day.

It is a little bit difficult to speak with any real certainty about the Liberal plan. This spring, they released a platform that called on the government to spend every available nickel on itself. It suggested that no tax cuts were necessary and that no debt needed to be repaid. After losing in three by-elections, the Liberals then started saying that they would cut taxes as well. Since they have not withdrawn any spending plans, their plan does not add up either.

## *The Saskatchewan Way*

The government that you next elect will help determine what kind of province Saskatchewan will be when it has its 100th birthday.

When we reach that milestone, our province will be old in years and wisdom. We also need to be young in ideas and energy.

New Democrats have a plan that is built on the fundamental values of our province – the values of caring and sharing, cooperation and compassion. Saskatchewan people have always worked together to do what cannot be done as individuals – providing health care, educating our children and building our transportation system. We are also innovative and enterprising as individuals – creating and building the farms and businesses that underpin our economy.

The Saskatchewan way combines community values and cooperation with individual initiative and enterprise. This combination is what we have built upon for the past eight years to achieve our province's remarkable comeback. Our platform – outlined in the pages that follow – rests on these twin pillars.

I ask that you read our plan and compare it with the alternatives. After you do that, I hope that you will be able to support the New Democratic Party on election day.



# We'll help create 30,000 more jobs.

Economic development and job creation are the key to Saskatchewan's future.  
With balance and common sense, we will keep creating jobs in order to provide opportunity – so that our young people can build a future right here at home.



Our last job creation plan established a target of 30,000 jobs. We've gone from 450,500 people working in 1992 to 499,300 employed this July – the most people employed in the history of our province. We are closing in on having 500,000 people go to work every day.

That's a good beginning – but there is more to do. Our plan to create jobs for the next four years includes:

## Creating 30,000 More Jobs

We will work with business, cooperatives, First Nations and communities to help create an additional 30,000 new jobs within the next five years.

## Keeping Business Taxes Competitive

We will invest one-third of future budget surpluses into lower taxes. As finances permit during the next term of office, we'll continue to reduce the costs of doing business in Saskatchewan. We'll continue to use targeted tax reductions to promote areas of strength in our economy including:

- Promoting continued growth in our oil and gas, mining and forestry industries;
- Building up livestock operations and the meat packing industry in rural Saskatchewan;
- Expanding on our national leadership in agricultural biotechnology;
- Encouraging new generation co-ops to allow producers to participate in value-added processing and marketing;

- Promoting expansion of tourism, eco-tourism and our hospitality industry.

## Quality Public Services

We will invest one-third of future budget surpluses into better public services. A good quality of life and top-notch public services such as health care and education are things that businesses look at when they decide to invest. Public services such as highways and skills training are a fundamental pre-condition for economic growth.

## Lower Public Debt

We will invest one-third of future budget surpluses into lowering public debt. Lower debt results in lower interest charges. The savings will help pay for lower taxes and better services.

## One-stop Shopping for Government Business Services

We'll pool all government business services and contacts into a single agency – Services Saskatchewan – to cut the time businesses and co-operatives have to spend dealing with government. This will let them concentrate on running their businesses and creating jobs.

## A One-stop Centre for Community Economic Development

We'll work with all partners committed to small business development to pool all federal, provincial and municipal business development funds into a single local business development agency in each region of Saskatchewan.

## OUR RECORD:

There is a simple bottom line to our record on jobs. There are 499,300 people working – more than ever before.

Saskatchewan now has more people working than ever before. Employment in manufacturing is up by 38 per cent since 1992.

Our province led Canada in economic growth in 5 of the last 7 years.

Much more is in the works. For example, communities, First Nations and private companies have just announced plans to create another 10,000 jobs in the forestry sector.

Saskatchewan businesses and cooperatives have led the way in job creation. We've helped out by:

- Cutting the sales tax from 9 points to 6 points;
- Introducing targeted, job creating tax cuts to help encourage manufacturing and processing, film production and livestock husbandry;
- Improving the royalty structure for the oil patch and mining;
- Helping to establish 28 Regional Economic Development Authorities;
- Supporting Research and Development with the Synchrotron, the Petroleum Research Technology Centre, and a R&D Tax Credit; and
- Helping 13,700 people receive employment skills training through JobStart/Future Skills.

### Increasing Research and Development

We will work with the Universities, the Saskatchewan Research Council and the private sector to increase the amount of leading edge research and development done in Saskatchewan. Research and development is vital if Saskatchewan is to participate in the economy of the 21st century.

### Help for Families

We'll ensure that every parent has the right to at least five family leave days every year to help families balance their responsibilities at work and at home. We'll increase provincial funds for daycare by at least \$500,000 a year, to help pay for increased spaces and better facilities so that parents can go to work knowing their children are in safe environments. We'll cut personal income taxes for all families – and review tax rules that penalize families with a parent who chooses to stay at home with children.

### Keeping Saskatchewan Green

We will make sure that our environmental protection laws do the job as our economy grows. As part of our forestry development plan, we will make sure that 100 million trees are planted in Saskatchewan over the next four years. We'll build eco-tourism opportunities. We'll continue to improve our provincial and regional park system to

encourage tourism across Saskatchewan. And we'll work to reduce greenhouse gases by increasing co-generation of electricity and improving on our energy conservation.

### Quality Utilities

We'll keep Saskatchewan's basic utilities (SaskTel, SaskPower, SaskEnergy and SGI) publicly-owned. They will invest \$1.5 billion in Saskatchewan over the next four years to ensure that we always have top quality services at rates that are among the lowest in Canada. For example, our plan includes a major expansion of cellular telephone coverage in rural Saskatchewan.

### Improved infrastructure

We will invest over \$1 billion in our highway system in the next four years – and work to improve our roads.

### Building Independence

We'll build on Saskatchewan's fundamental welfare reform, *Building Independence*, which creates incentives and provides training to get people off welfare and into work. Welfare caseloads have dropped from 40,000 to 35,000 in the past four years. We'll reduce caseloads by at least the same amount over the next four years.

### Promoting Saskatchewan

MacLean's magazine calls our province "a blue-ribbon success story." KPMG has said that Saskatchewan cities are amongst the best places to do business in Western Canada and United States. We'll use every opportunity to tell the world about what Saskatchewan has to offer.

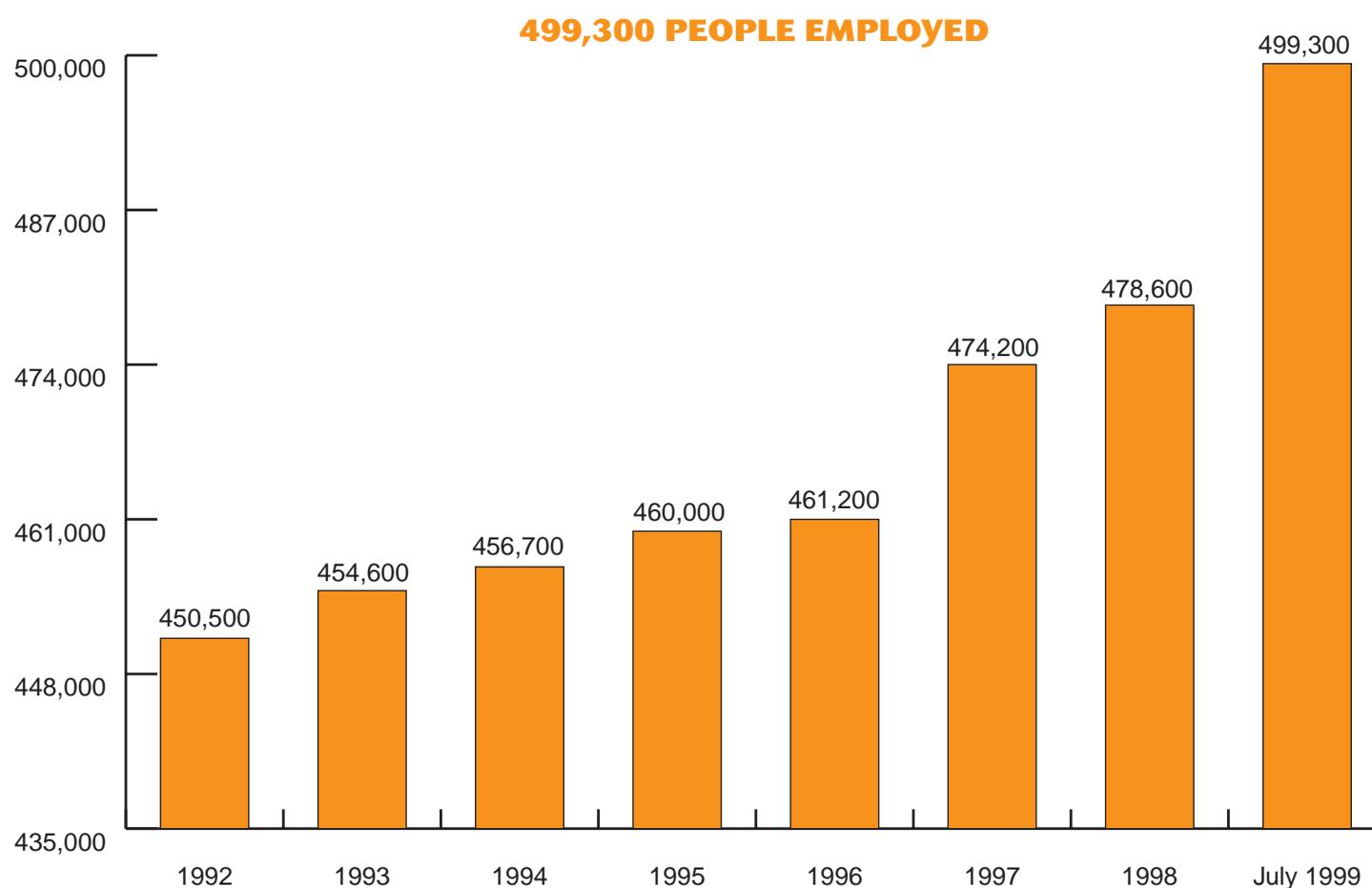
#### THE OPPOSITION RECORD AND PLAN:

During **the Tories'** last term in office, Saskatchewan lost 8,000 jobs.

In fact, the Tory record was so bad that they've changed their name.

The current Tory plan is more of the same. Their own numbers say that their plan will only create 1,900 new jobs over the next four years – at a cost of \$1.8 billion.

**The Liberals** have no job creation or economic development strategy. In fact, their platform promises to fire everyone responsible for trade development, economic planning and diversification in rural Saskatchewan. A *Leader Post* column described their plan as "an operating manual on how to make government stupider."



Since we got to work on our jobs strategy, our economy has created new jobs every year. And Saskatchewan businesses, co-operatives and communities are still hard at work today. More people are at work than ever before in our history. *Source: Statistics Canada.*

# We'll cut your family's taxes by \$1,000.

New Democrats will use one-third of future government budget surpluses to cut taxes.  
Since 1995, we've cut the taxes of an average family by over \$800 per year.  
In the next four years, we'll cut them by another \$1,000 per year.



Since the budget was balanced in 1995, taxes have been cut every year. The sales tax has been cut by a total of 33 percent and provincial income tax has been cut by 10 per cent. An average family saves over \$800 per year because of these tax cuts.

That's a good start. During our next term, we will do even better. We will:

## Lower Income Taxes

Our plan for the next four years includes a tax-cutting plan that will be phased in as finances permit. The first priority will be income tax. We will:

- eliminate provincial income taxes for thousands of lower income seniors and families;
- reduce personal income tax rates for all provincial residents; and
- in total, cut personal income taxes paid by an average Saskatchewan family by \$1,000 per year.

## Make the Tax System Simpler and Fairer

A Tax Review Committee is consulting with Saskatchewan people to come up with ways to make our tax system simpler and fairer. When this Commission reports, we'll implement ideas to overhaul our tax system.

Options being considered: "delinking" our income tax system from federal rates; radically simplifying Saskatchewan's income taxes; and changing the current complex system of taxes and surtaxes into a single, simple, easy-to-understand income tax system.

## Providing Fairness for Families

As part of making the tax system fairer, we'll review tax rules that penalize families with a parent who chooses to stay at home with children.

## OUR RECORD:

Since the budget was balanced in 1995, taxes have been cut every year.

The Sales Tax has been cut by 33 per cent – from 9 points to 6 points.

Provincial income taxes have been cut by 10 per cent for the average family.

The average family is saving over \$800 per year as a result of these tax cuts.

And the most important thing – NDP tax cuts have been affordable and sustainable. Here today, here tomorrow. Tax cuts without returning to deficits. Tax cuts while still investing in health care, education and highways.

## THE OPPOSITION RECORD AND PLAN:

**The Tories** got elected in 1982 promising to eliminate the gas tax, cut the sales tax and reduce income tax.

They kept their promise to eliminate the gas tax. A few years later, they put it back on.

Income taxes were raised in 1985, 1987, 1988 and 1991. The flat tax was imposed.

And the sales tax went up. In 1991, the Tories even started taxing things like restaurant meals, children's clothing and books. This was to be the first step in "harmonizing" our sales tax with the GST. And do you remember the tax on used cars and lottery tickets?

The Tory record on taxes was big promises, big deficits and big tax increases. One reason they changed their name.

Tories want to do it again. Their plan calls for a risky tax scheme that will mean a return to budget deficits and increased debt. And that is not all. To help pay for their vote buying scheme, they are promising to freeze health and education spending for five years.

That's the same old Tory plan. It still does not add up.

**The Liberals** are having trouble agreeing on taxes.

This spring, they released a platform that said taxes should not be cut. Liberals said government should spend every nickel.

Then the Liberals lost three by-elections. After that, Liberals suddenly started saying that some taxes might have to be cut.

That's the same old Liberal plan. Say anything and mean nothing.

# We'll help ensure your children have the best education.

A good education is a cornerstone in building a child's future. That's why we will provide one year's free tuition to every graduating high school student – and make improving our entire school system a key priority.



New Democrats believe in helping out our young people as they build their future. As part of our plan for the next four years, we will:

## Provide One Year's Tuition for Graduating High School Students

We'll provide every graduating high school student in Saskatchewan with a tuition certificate to cover the cost of the first year's tuition at any Saskatchewan University, SIAST or Regional College.

Because we know that many young people take a little time to decide on their future, this certificate can be used at any time in the five years following graduation.

There was a time when a Grade 12 education was enough. But in today's changing economy, more education or training is necessary for a young person to succeed.

We believe that providing graduating students with their first year's tuition shows them that our province values their education and future. It will also give them a real helping hand in getting started with their post-secondary education.

The tuition certificate for graduating students is only one part of our plan to help young people get the education and skills they need to build a future. We will also:

- Create another 500 training spaces for upgrading and for vocation training in institutions like Regional Colleges, SIAST or work-based training programs;
- Make a priority of providing the resources needed to keep tuition fees for everyone as low as possible and to improve the quality of post-secondary education; and

- Improve our student aid programs to give students a hand now without imposing huge debts in the future.

## Improving Basic Education

But just as important as post-secondary education is helping children get a good start to their schooling. During the next four years, we will also make our elementary and high school systems a top priority. As part of our plan for the next four years, we will:

- Renovate and upgrade another 400 schools to give our children a good environment for learning.
- Continue to improve and expand the Education Indicators' Report – so that parents and the public can know what kind of grades our education system is getting.
- Get to work on implementing the recommendations of The Role of the Schools Task Force. It is defining the needs of students in the future and developing solutions.
- Expand Saskatchewan's effective and successful pre-kindergarten and early childhood development programs – to make sure that every child starts school ready to learn.
- Increase classroom resources to help students with special needs.
- Provide the resources needed to make our new world-class curriculum work.
- Work with our educators to improve their working conditions so that they can do an even better job of teaching our children.

## OUR RECORD:

We've been working hard to improve our education system. The results include:

- Increasing the number of apprentices from 2,365 to 3,050.
- Providing 13,700 people with training through JobStart/Future Skills.
- Providing funding so that Universities can get started on badly needed capital projects.
- Major improvements in student assistance including the introduction of bursaries – so that needy students can get help today without being crippled by debt tomorrow.
- Renovating and repairing over 400 schools in the last three years.
- Developed a new, world class curriculum to give teachers the very best tools to teach our children.
- Almost doubled the number of community schools.
- Implemented pre-kindergarten programs in 31 schools.

## THE OPPOSITION RECORD AND PLAN:

**The Tories** are promising to freeze education funding for the next five years. For them, education is not a priority.

**The Liberal** platform does not even mention K-12 education for our children – the Liberals weren't able to agree on what to say. In recent weeks, the Liberals have been talking about reducing or abolishing \$600 million in revenues used to pay for our schools – without explaining how they will pay for it.

# We'll improve health care with more staff and service commitments.

Top quality health care that is provided when you need it is one of the most important services that government provides. That's why we will hire 500 more health care providers and provide specific service guarantees.



New Democrats will make protecting and improving our health care services a top priority. Our plan for the next four years will:

## Improve Care and Service

Our health care system is doing a pretty good job, but it can be better. We will:

- **Hire 500 more health care providers.** We'll improve services by hiring another 500 health care providers over the next four years. This will include doctors, registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, specialized professionals (such as physical therapists, occupational therapists and midwives) and support workers.
- **Publicly funded ambulance services.** We'll introduce a single reasonable fee for ambulance services. And we'll begin to reduce ambulance charges throughout the province – starting by eliminating all fees for transfers between health institutions.
- **Improve home care services for seniors and the disabled.** We'll improve home care services by giving a helping hand to those needing assistance with things like shoveling snow, cleaning or preparing food. And we'll improve respite care to give family members a regular break when they are caring for a loved one.

## Key Service Commitments

We'll work with health providers to ensure that key service standards are met for all patients. Three key priorities:

- All patients arriving at emergency rooms will get a preliminary evaluation by a health provider within 15 minutes of arrival;
- Every mother and newborn baby will receive a follow-up visit from a public health nurse within 24 hours of going home from the hospital; and
- Waiting times for key surgical procedures will be cut by at least 30 per cent over the next four years.

## Fair and Improved Access to Health Services

Over the next four years, we'll continue to work to improve services in communities across the province – ensuring that services are available to people as close as possible to where they live. Some of the services that we will be protecting or expanding in all parts of the province include:

- Basic medical and emergency services
- Diagnostic services such as lab testing, x-rays and CT scans
- Asthma programs
- Obstetrics and follow-up care for children
- Women's health services such as breast cancer screening and improved treatment for heart disease and stroke
- Early childhood intervention services
- Diabetes and renal dialysis programs
- Improved mental health services.

## OUR RECORD:

New Democrats invented medicare, and have always made health care a top priority.

We are investing \$1.92 billion on health care this year – the most in the history of Saskatchewan.

New services are being developed, such as:

- New MRI's in Saskatoon and Regina;
- A CT scanner in Prince Albert and a mobile CT scanner for Moose Jaw and Swift Current.
- New services in smaller centres like renal dialysis in Tisdale, Yorkton and Swift Current.
- Keeping our doctors at home – the percentage of graduating family physicians staying in the province has increased from 44% to 74% in the last three years.
- More surgeries – Cataract operations have increased by 306%, hip and knee replacement by 87% in the last decade.
- Drug plan coverage for new drugs.

Our health care system helps a lot of people. Last year:

- 35,000 people per day received health care services;
- Saskatchewan people made 4.6 million visits to family physicians and 925,000 visits to specialists;
- There were 91,000 surgeries and 857,500 days of in-patient hospital care;
- 9,200 people were in nursing homes, and 27,400 people received home care;
- 237,000 X-rays; 112,000 ultrasounds; 46,000 CT scans; 5,309 MRI's; and
- 400,000 children and adults received immunizations.

### Measuring Results and Improving Accountability

To make sure that people can judge how we are doing on delivering health care and meeting our service standards, we'll publish an objective, detailed Health Indicators Report every year. This will tell everyone how the Saskatchewan health care system is doing – and how it stacks up against other provinces.

### Less Administration

We've cut administration costs in our health care system by reducing the number of boards from 400 to 33. That was a good first step. Now we'll work to cut administration costs with measures like shared services, more efficient management and improved communications with health providers. Every cent of savings will be put back directly into improving front line services.

### Improving Working Conditions

Health care providers perform a vital service. They deserve to be treated fairly – and to have working conditions that allow them to provide the best possible care. We'll improve working conditions: steadily increasing the proportion of providers employed in secure full-time jobs; ending excessive reliance on mandatory overtime; ensuring adequate staffing levels; providing "locums" to allow health providers to take scheduled holidays and promoting a more collaborative and effective working environment.

### THE OPPOSITION RECORD AND PLAN:

**The Tories** will freeze the health budget for five years. This means no money for more doctors and nurses, no money to pay for new drugs to treat diseases like cancer, MS and Alzheimers and no money to improve services – or even to keep existing services when costs increase.

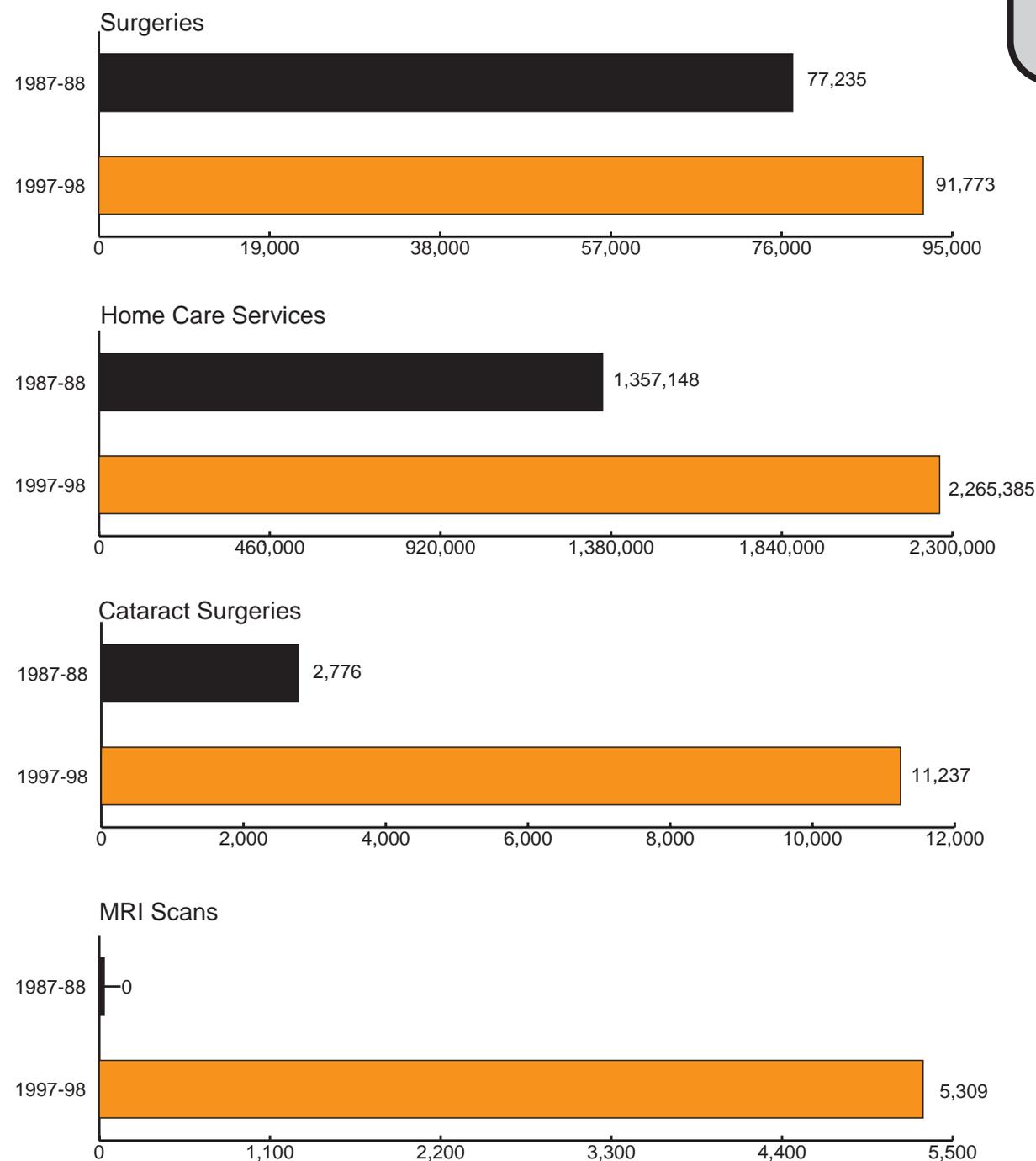
Tory leader Elwin Hermanson is on record as wanting to abolish the Canada Health Act, which ensures that all Canadians have access to medicare.

The Tories like to point out problems. When asked what the Tory solutions are, Mr. Hermanson said "We've been able to identify some of the problems, but we haven't been able to identify the solutions." (Moosomin World Spectator, November 23, 1998)

**The Liberals** in Ottawa cut health care spending across Canada by \$6 billion per year.

Liberal Leader Jim Melenchuk has said that he wants American style, for-profit, clinics in Saskatchewan.

### KEY MEDICAL SERVICES PROVIDED



Our health system faces many challenges and there is much left to do to protect and improve it. It is also true that our health system is doing many things better, and providing many more services than ever before. We'll keep at it. *Source: Saskatchewan Health*

# We'll work to build Rural Saskatchewan.

We'll make sure Ottawa gets the message that farmers need a level playing field with the Europeans and Americans – and we'll diversify and create opportunity in Rural Saskatchewan.



Rural Saskatchewan is facing huge challenges. Many of these are caused by the policies of the Liberal government in Ottawa. During the next four years, we will make sure that Ottawa gets the message. We will:

## Support Our Farm Producers

Saskatchewan grain producers are amongst the world's most efficient, competitive, trade-savvy farmers in the world. They want to grow products people want to buy, for fair, market-driven prices. That is extremely hard to do in today's distorted trading environment. Here's what has to change:

- (a) It's time for American and European governments to cut their subsidies to their farmers – or for the Government of Canada to match them for our farmers – now.

In the past four years Canada has "unilaterally disarmed." European wheat farmers now receive a 56 per cent subsidy. US farmers get a 38 per cent subsidy. Canadian farmers get a 9 per cent subsidy. That has to change – now.

In the last decade, Ottawa has cut \$657 million in support for farmers by:

- Eliminating the two-priced system for wheat;
- Eliminating the Crow Benefit;
- Giving productivity gains to the railways – costing our producers through higher freight rates; and
- Cutting federal safety net programs.

When Ottawa cut this support, it promised that our competitors would

also eliminate subsidies. This has not happened.

Ottawa must restore the \$657 million per year in support for our producers until it can get our competitors to level the playing field.

With fewer than 500,000 taxpayers and \$12 billion in Tory debt, our provincial government in Saskatchewan cannot compete in a subsidies war with the Government of the United States and the European Union. Ottawa must stand behind our farmers. We'll keep fighting until Ottawa gets the message.

- (b) AIDA has to be fixed – now.

The Saskatchewan NDP led the fight against AIDA. The program is inadequate and unfairly financed. Unfortunately, with the support of Elwin Hermanson of Saskatchewan's Tory party and Jim Melenchuk of Saskatchewan's Liberal party, the Liberals in Ottawa forced Saskatchewan's producers to pay themselves for an emergency aid program – that still fails to help producers facing long-term income loss.

The terms of the program need to take account of long-term income loss. Producers shouldn't be asked to pay for their own emergency aid. We'll keep fighting until Ottawa gets the message.

- (c) It's time for a national transportation policy – now.

Last year, the Government of the United States introduced a \$200 billion, five-year national highways and

transportation plan to ensure their producers can get their products to market. North Dakota will receive \$170 million this year for its roads under this program. Texas (a state the same area as Saskatchewan) will receive \$1.9 billion this year. Canada's national highways plan: worse than nothing. The railways are being dismantled while our national government contributes nothing to roads. We'll keep fighting until Ottawa joins every other national government in the western world by implementing a national highways program.

## OUR RECORD:

Our initiatives to help rural Saskatchewan have included:

- Standing up for producers in Ottawa and the United States;
- Cutting crop insurance premiums by 40 per cent – while improving coverage;
- Contributing \$140 million to the AIDA program in order to ensure that Saskatchewan producers get some benefit – while still fighting for improvements to the program;
- Helping diversify the rural economy by assisting producers to expand into livestock and specialty crops – and promoting value-added processing and rural manufacturing ranging from implements to clothing;
- Increasing the highways budget by 40 per cent over the last 4 years.

- (d) We'll defend a modern, responsive Canadian Wheat Board.

Unlike the Tories and Liberals, we don't believe it makes sense for Saskatchewan farm producers to compete against each other in a global grain market dominated by a few multinational grain companies.

We'll fight to protect and improve a strong, modern, responsive and accountable Canadian Wheat Board – with a continued legislated monopoly, and a mandate to make sure producers get the best possible price for their product.

While we fight for a fair deal for farmers, we will also be working hard on our own plan – ideas to create new opportunities in rural and northern Saskatchewan. The key features of our plan include:

### Building on Strength

In the next four years, we will help Saskatchewan producers, businesses, cooperatives and communities build on our province's strengths to create economic growth and jobs in rural and northern Saskatchewan. This includes:

- (a) Promoting a major, self-sustaining, commercial expansion of our province's livestock, feedlot and meat processing industries;
- (b) Building on Saskatchewan's program to double our forestry industry;
- (c) Maintaining growth-friendly business conditions and costs for our oil and gas and mining industries;

- (d) Working with private-sector partners and rural communities to build on our province's excellent tourism and hospitality opportunities;

- (e) Improving growth-friendly business conditions and costs for our farm implement industry;

- (f) Investing in the future of Saskatchewan's agricultural industry, with continued strong support for agricultural biotechnology; and

- (g) Encouraging new generation co-ops to allow producers to participate in value-added processing and marketing.

### Improving Telecommunications in Rural Saskatchewan

As part of our plan, SaskTel will expand our cellular phone coverage throughout rural Saskatchewan. We'll also keep investing to ensure that all Saskatchewan residents continue to have access to the most modern telephone and internet services possible.

### Building a Strong, Integrated Rural Transportation System

While we fight for a national transportation policy, we are committed to continuing to maintain and renew Saskatchewan's rural and northern transportation system within our province's financial means. We will:

- Invest over \$1 billion over the next four years to maintain and renew our highways – and work to renew our rural road network.
- Work with transport partners on stronger north-south links.

- Promote short-line railroads, producer car loading and other initiatives by producers to deal with Ottawa's rail policies. We'll also stand up for producers in the Estey and Kroeger processes.

### THE OPPOSITION RECORD AND PLAN:

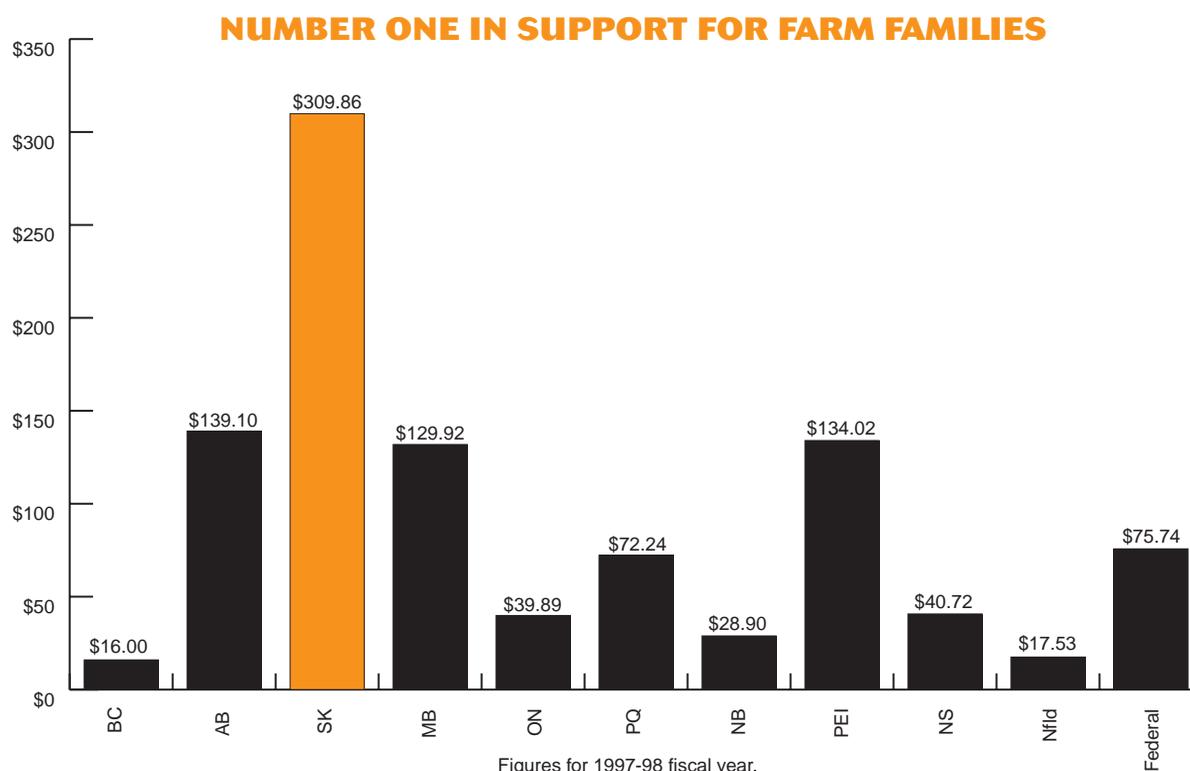
The last time **the Tories** were in power, people left rural Saskatchewan at record rates.

It contains no plan to diversify the economy of rural Saskatchewan – and contains no commitment to fight for aid for farmers. The Tory platform promises to lobby for the destruction of the Canadian Wheat Board.

The Tory platform does not commit to investing one dime into agriculture or rural development – it doesn't even provide for Saskatchewan's current AIDA contribution.

**The Liberals** in Ottawa have caused many of the problems in rural Saskatchewan with the unilateral elimination of long-term support programs, badly designed interim programs and terrible transportation policies.

The provincial Liberals have exactly one idea in their platform to help the economy of rural Saskatchewan. They want to give community groups grants to study whether to buy grain elevators after the federal Liberals have allowed the rail line to be abandoned. Otherwise, the Liberals were unable to agree on what to say about rural Saskatchewan's future.



The Government of Saskatchewan invests more per capita to support farm families than any other province in Canada. Competing with the US and the European Union is a job for Canada as a whole – and we'll fight until the Liberals in Ottawa get the message. *Source: Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and Statistics Canada*

# We'll keep the budget balanced and pay down the debt.

Your family has to pay its bills. So does your government. With a solid fiscal plan, hard work and sacrifice, Saskatchewan people balanced the budget – showing the rest of Canada that it could be done. We'll keep the budget balanced and keep paying down the Tory debt.

Deficit budgets mean debt, interest charges and, ultimately, increased taxes and service cuts. We are still paying over \$700 million per year on the debt rung up by the Tories during the 1980's.

Since the Romanow New Democrats were elected to office, Saskatchewan tax payers have had to pay over \$6 billion just to cover the interest payments on the Tory debt. Think about what Saskatchewan could have done with \$6 billion over the past eight years!

We have to keep chipping away at the debt in order to cut these interest charges. Our plan includes:

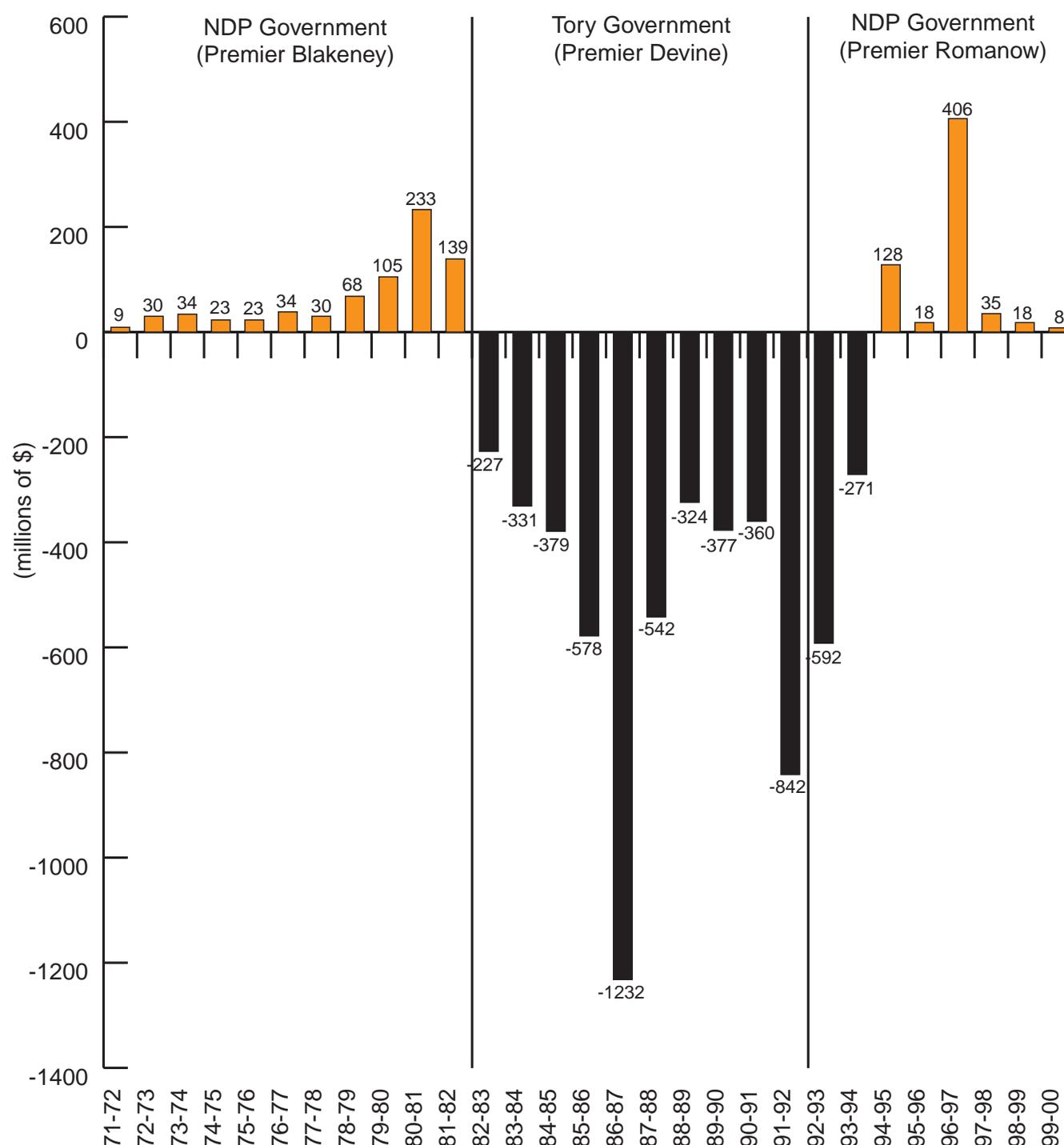
## Balanced Budgets Every Year

We'll keep the budget balanced for the next four years.

## Lower Debt

We'll keep chipping away at the huge Tory debt, by investing one-third of all government surpluses into debt repayment. It is one part of our balanced approach. In addition, one-third will be used to cut taxes and one-third will be used to improve services such as health, education, highways and fighting crime.

## BALANCED BUDGETS UNDER THE NDP

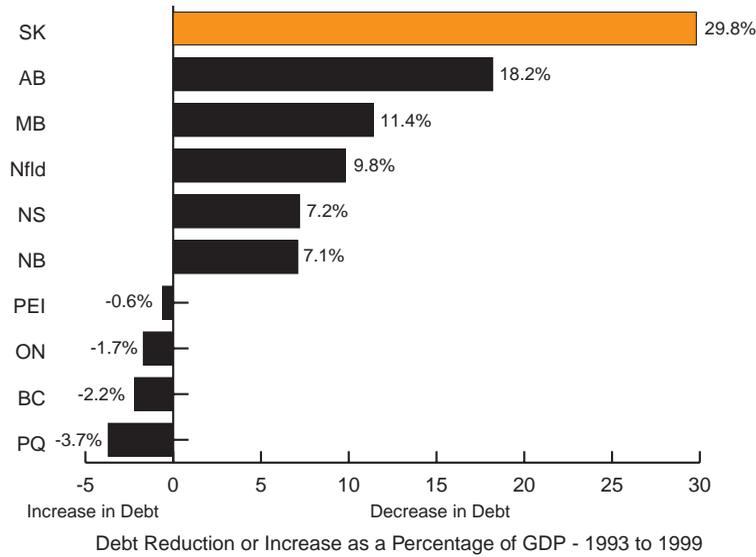


Budget Surpluses or Deficits, 1971-72 to 1999-2000

NDP governments keep the budget balanced – and our province out of bankruptcy.

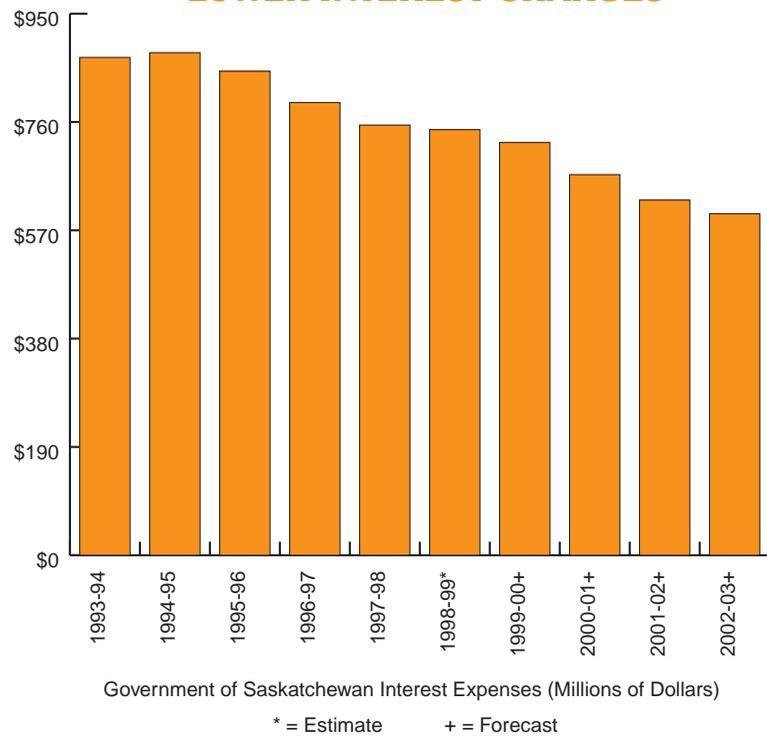
Source: Department of Finance.

**NUMBER 1 IN DEBT REDUCTION**



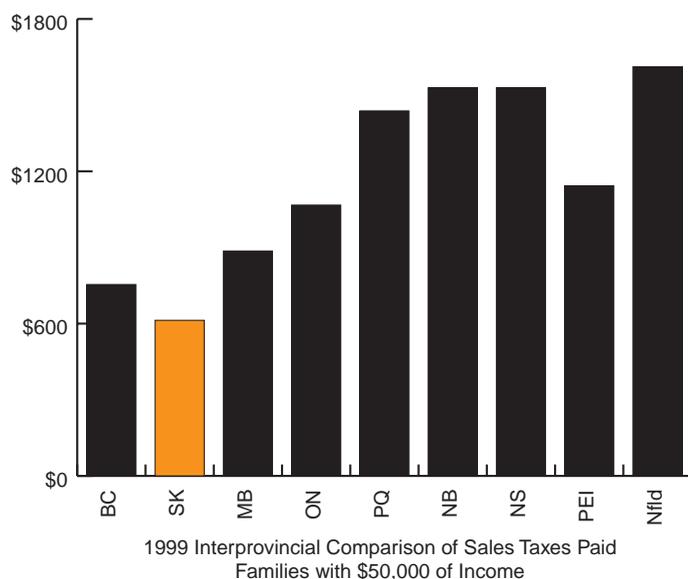
Saskatchewan has led the country in freeing our children from the burden of government debt.  
 Source: Dominion Bond Rating Services and Statistics Canada

**LOWER INTEREST CHARGES**



Reducing the debt, a step at a time is freeing up funds for tax cuts and services like health and education.  
 Source: Saskatchewan Finance Budget Papers

**SECOND LOWEST SALES TAX**



Returning to balance and common sense is paying off. An average family in Saskatchewan pays less sales tax than in any province except Alberta.  
 Source: Saskatchewan Finance Budget Papers

**OUR RECORD:**

When New Democrats took office in 1991, we discovered \$15 billion in debt and an annual deficit of over \$800 million. Our province was verging on bankruptcy.

In order to deal with this crisis, New Democrats opened the books.

We then developed a plan to eliminate the deficit. Thanks to the hard work and sacrifice of everyone in the province, the budget was balanced ahead of schedule in 1995.

We then adopted a balanced approach to finances – one-third of surpluses were put towards cutting taxes, one third to improving priority services and one third towards paying down debt. Since the budget was balanced:

- We've cut the sales tax by a third – from 9 points to 6 points. Provincial income taxes have been cut by 10 percent. In total, the average family is saving over \$800 per year;
- We've increased our investments in priority services such as health care and education; and
- We've paid down \$3.5 billion in debt – 23 per cent of our total debt has been repaid. We've cut the province's debt as a proportion of the GDP from over 70 per cent to 40 per cent. This has meant that interest charges have dropped by \$150 million – enough to pay for this year's cut in the sales tax, the salaries of 200 nurses, and resurfacing 100 kilometres of highways.
- Our credit rating has been steadily upgraded – saving still more in interest charges.

**THE OPPOSITION RECORD AND PLAN:**

The Tories' record on financial management is so bad that they've changed their name to hide from it.

In 1982, the Tories made irresponsible tax cut promises in order to get elected. It didn't add up – and the result was deficits every year. \$15 billion in debt. Over \$800 million per year in interest charges. And – tax increases.

The Tories increased income taxes in 1985, 1987, 1988 and 1991. They did abolish the gas tax in 1982 – but put it back on in 1987. They increased the sales tax in 1987 – and tried to start taxing restaurant meals, books, children's clothing and much more in 1991. And remember the tax on used cars and lottery tickets?

Today, the Tory plan is simple. Do it again.

The Tory platform is built on a vote-buying tax and spend scheme costing \$1.8 billion. It doesn't add up. Even with a freeze in health care, education and justice spending for five years, the Tory plan will mean budget deficits and increased taxes.

It is a little hard to know where the Liberals stand.

In the spring, the Liberals released a platform that called for the government to spend every nickel it had. No tax cuts. No debt repayment.

Then the Liberals lost three by-elections. Suddenly, they started talking about cutting taxes – on top of their wild spending plans. The Liberals are having a very hard time agreeing on what to say on this issue.

# We'll work to ensure your family is safe from crime.

Saskatchewan does not have the same kind of crime problems as some other parts of North America. We will keep it that way – and make our streets and homes even safer.



We're committed to a tough crackdown on crime and to addressing the causes of crime. Over the next four years we will:

## Put 200 More Police on the Streets

An increase in the number of police has played a big role in cutting the crime rate in many communities across North America. We'll provide the resources to add another 200 RCMP and municipal police officers to help keep our streets safe.

## Crack Down on Criminal Gangs

We've already established a special Anti-Gang Task Force. We'll double its funding and ensure that prosecutors and police work together to identify, track, arrest and prosecute members of criminal gangs.

## Crack Down on Violent and Repeat Young Offenders

We've helped police establish a task force to effectively deal with violent and repeat young offenders. During our next term, we'll double the resources for this program.

## Fight for a Tougher Young Offenders' Act

We'll work to ensure that Ottawa actually passes its promised changes to the Young Offenders' Act – and we'll keep fighting to force changes that will allow tougher sentencing for repeat offenders.

## Seize the Vehicles of People Involved in High Speed Chases

We'll pass a law to allow for the confiscation of vehicles when their owners use them to flee from the police.

## Fight the Causes of Crime

More jobs, less poverty, better education and more opportunity are key parts of any effective crime reduction strategy. We'll continue with a balanced approach so that we can offer young people hope and opportunity – before they have the chance to get started down the road of a life of crime.

## OUR RECORD:

We've made progress in keeping our streets and homes safe from crime. Our initiatives have included:

- Helping police intensively monitor repeat young offenders – to make sure that they are abiding by curfews and other parole conditions.
- Establishing an Anti-Gang Task Force to help police and prosecutors across the province work together to get tough with organized crime and criminal gangs.
- Helping lead the fight to force the Liberals in Ottawa to change the *Young Offenders' Act*. We've got some promises out of them – and we'll keep at it.
- Launching programs like the award-winning Children's Action Plan – a way to go after some of the root causes of crime with such things as initiatives to reduce Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.
- Passed legislation to get tough on johns who sexually abuse children involved in prostitution.

## THE OPPOSITION RECORD AND PLAN:

**The Tories** talk tough on crime, but they do not “walk the talk.” For example, their platform calls for:

- A five-year freeze in the resources available to fight crime. That means no additional police and no new initiatives like the serious crimes task force. In fact, as costs increase, police and justice services would have to be cut under the Tory plan.
- The main Tory platform plank is to establish “Citizen Neighborhood Patrols.” In other words – do it yourself, you are on your own.

**The Liberals** were not able to agree on what to say about crime in their platform.

# Other Important Commitments

## Government Accountability

Citizens need access to accurate, timely reporting on the government's activities so that they can hold their government accountable for its actions.

During the 1980's, the Tories ran up huge debts. The true state of Saskatchewan's finances was hidden. In 1991, New Democrats promised to open the books. That promise was kept. The books were opened, and they have been kept open. Our actions to improve accountability have included:

- A Financial Review Commission to determine Saskatchewan's true financial position.
- Publishing Summary Financial Statements and a mid-year financial statement so that people can have regular, comprehensive reports on our financial position;
- Dramatically increased disclosure of the activities of our Crown corporations - including semi-annual financial statements, public accountability meetings and public tabling of the financial

statements of subsidiaries;

- Tough legislation setting out legal timelines for release of information;
- Implementing Freedom-of-Information legislation; and
- Legislation specifying that by-elections must be called within six months of a seat becoming vacant.

These changes ensure that Saskatchewan citizens can know more about their government than at any time in our province's history. We are amongst the most open and accountable governments in Canada. It is a good first step. In the next four years, we will increase the accountability of government by:

- Passing legislation requiring government departments to publish annual plans with performance objectives; monitor the results, and publicly report on how they did;
- Require members of the legislature who change political parties to seek the approval of their constituents in a by-election.

## Keeping our Communities Vibrant

We have worked hard to keep our communities vibrant and growing. Our work has included:

- Helping to bring the Synchrotron to Saskatoon;
- Supporting the Temple Gardens Spa and the revitalization of the train station in Moose Jaw;
- Launching a Research and Development Park in Regina;
- Paying Grants-in-Lieu to municipalities to help them keep property taxes down;
- Implementing a \$10 million municipal infrastructure program; and
- Helping with a new court house and performing arts centre in Prince Albert.

- Assisting with special needs housing in communities ranging from Buffalo Narrows to Bruno.
- Helping to improve water supplies in communities like Pierceland and Humboldt.

Our plan for the next four years includes:

- Continuing and improving our municipal infrastructure program – and fighting to get Ottawa to help out; and
- Creating a municipal revitalization fund to help communities with key projects that will improve the quality of life in our cities, towns and villages.

## First Nations and Métis

We've been working with First Nations and Métis people to help create jobs and economic opportunity. Our objective is to ensure that everyone in the province can fully participate in a prosperous economy. So far we've:

- Ensured that First Nations and Métis people fully participate in a doubling of Saskatchewan's forestry industry.
- Launched the Northern Round Table process to make sure that northern people can participate in development;
- Implemented comprehensive job training and employment

initiatives in partnership with First Nations and Métis people and major employers; and

Over the next four years, we will continue to work to help First Nations and Métis people:

- Build towards practical models of self-government; and
- Resolve outstanding taxation, revenue sharing and other issues in a manner that leads to fairness for all people in Saskatchewan.

## Arts and Culture

Our cultural sector has a \$450 million impact on the province and creates more than 18,000 jobs. It gives Saskatchewan a voice around the world, and makes our province more attractive to businesses looking for a reason to invest here.

We have worked with Saskatchewan's cultural sector to keep it vibrant and growing. Our actions have included:

- Introducing the Film Employment Tax Credit that doubled the value of film production to \$58 million;
- Reduced the lottery license fee to provide \$4.5 million to culture, sport and recreation;

- Renewed the Saskatchewan Arts Board as a single arts agency; and
- Maintained support for SCN.

Over the next four years, we will continue to work with the arts and cultural sector to help it prosper and grow. Our plan includes:

- Continued use of targeted tax credits to support arts and culture.
- Improving the lottery licensing agreement to better support sport, culture and recreation.



# Which Party has the best plan?

	The NDP	The Tories	The Liberals
<b>Jobs:</b>	<p>499,300 people were working this July – well ahead of our target. More people are working than at any time in Saskatchewan's history.</p> <p>We have a comprehensive plan to create another 30,000 new jobs over the next four years.</p>	<p>During the Tories last term in office, Saskatchewan lost 8,000 jobs. They changed their name to hide from their record.</p> <p>The Tory plan – by their own numbers – will only create 1,900 new jobs at a cost of \$1.8 billion. They predict the unemployment rate would go up.</p>	<p>The Liberal platform does not have an economic development strategy. Their platform promises to fire everyone responsible for trade development, economic planning and diversification in rural Saskatchewan – a proposal described by the Leader Post as “an operating manual on how to make government stupider.</p>
<b>Rural Saskatchewan:</b>	<p>New Democrats have led the fight to force Ottawa to treat farmers fairly. We are demanding that Ottawa get Europe and the United States to eliminate their subsidies – or match them. Now.</p> <p>We will continue fighting until Ottawa gets the message. And we'll continue to diversify and create jobs in rural Saskatchewan.</p>	<p>The last time the Tories were in power, people left rural Saskatchewan in record numbers.</p> <p>The Tory platform contains no plan to diversify rural Saskatchewan. It does not mention asking Ottawa to help our farm families, nor does it provide for any provincial agricultural assistance.</p>	<p>In Ottawa, Liberals have cut farm support programs while allowing Europe and the United States to continue their export subsidy programs. Liberal transportation policies are jacking up shipping costs to producers.</p> <p>The Liberal platform's only mention of rural Saskatchewan is to promise a grant to communities to study whether to buy abandoned elevators – after the railroad is gone.</p>
<b>Balancing the Budget:</b>	<p>New Democrats balanced the budget every year since 1995, and paid down 23 per cent of the Tory debt.</p> <p>We will keep balancing the budget every year – and put one-third of all surpluses into paying down the debt.</p>	<p>The Tories never balanced a budget. They ran up a \$15 billion debt – and then changed their name.</p> <p>The Tory plan still does not add up – a \$1.8 billion tax and spend scheme will mean a return to deficits and more debt.</p>	<p>The Liberals platform called for spending every nickel that the government has. Since losing three by-elections, they've started talking about cutting taxes as well. They are having trouble agreeing on what to do.</p>
<b>Cutting Taxes:</b>	<p>Since balancing the budget in 1995, New Democrats have cut taxes every year. The sales tax has gone from 9 points to 6. Provincial income tax has been cut by 10 per cent. An average family is saving over \$800 per year.</p> <p>We will keep cutting taxes with a priority on income tax. An average family's taxes will be cut by \$1,000 over the next term.</p>	<p>In 1982, the Tories got elected promising to cut taxes. They took off the gas tax – until 1987. They <b>increased</b> income taxes in 1985, 1987, 1988 and 1991. The flat tax was imposed. The sales tax also went up – and in 1991, the Tories put it on restaurant meals, children's clothing and books. No wonder they changed their name.</p> <p>The Tory plan still does not add up. Once again, Tories want to buy your vote with an unaffordable tax scheme.</p>	<p>The Liberal platform said that taxes should stay where they are. Since losing three by-elections, the Liberals started talking about taxes – but are having trouble agreeing on what to do.</p>
<b>Education:</b>	<p>New Democrats started training programs like JobStart/Future Skills and are helping with major construction at the universities. We have made major improvements in student aid. 400 schools have been renovated or repaired. Pre-kindergarten programs have been started in 31 schools.</p> <p>We will provide one year's tuition to all graduating high school students. And we will make major improvements in K-12 education.</p>	<p>The Tories ignored education during the 1980's. It is one more reason they changed their name.</p> <p>The Tory plan promises to freeze education funding for 5 years.</p>	<p>The Liberals in Ottawa cut funding across Canada for post-secondary education. The Liberal platform does not even mention K-12 education for our children.</p>
<b>Health Care:</b>	<p>New Democrats have invested \$1.92 billion in health care this year – the most ever. New services such as MRI's in Saskatoon and Regina and CT scanners in Prince Albert, Swift Current and Moose Jaw are being implemented.</p> <p>We will hire another 500 health care providers and implement specific service guarantees such as ensuring that everyone going to an emergency ward is evaluated within 15 minutes of arrival.</p>	<p>The last time the Tories were in power, they mis-managed the health care system. It is one reason they changed their name.</p> <p>The Tories are promising to freeze health care funding for five years.</p>	<p>Liberals in Ottawa cut \$6 billion from health care across Canada.</p> <p>Liberal Leader Jim Melenchuk supports two-tier, fee-charging health care. The Liberals say that the Y2K problem should not be fixed in health care equipment – something to think about as the New Year draws closer.</p>
<b>Justice:</b>	<p>New Democrats helped fight to toughen the federal <i>Young Offenders' Act</i> and introduced programs to get tough on criminal gangs and repeat young offenders.</p> <p>We will hire another 200 police and double our support for action against criminal gangs and repeat young offenders. We will also seize the vehicles of people in high speed chases.</p>	<p>The Tory record on crime is one reason they changed their name.</p> <p>The Tory platform promises a five year freeze in the Justice budget and citizen's patrols so that you can take over crime fighting yourself.</p>	<p>Liberals in Ottawa introduced gun registration instead of working on the <i>Young Offenders' Act</i>.</p> <p>The Liberals have had trouble agreeing on what to do about crime so their March platform does not mention the issue.</p>



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