



We came in out of the blue and asked the candidates...

# Questions about education

## Liberal

*Universities in Canada have been seriously underfunded for many years. In 1977, the Liberals backed away from equal cost-sharing with the provinces on health and post-secondary education (PSE) and introduced "block funding". The federal say in how education funds were to be used was also surrendered. In 1983, the Liberal government capped transfer payments for PSE in its '6 and 5' program, slashing \$390 million over two years. In its 1985 budget, the Conservatives reduced PSE transfer*

If your party achieved a majority government, would it restore all or a part of these disastrous cuts?

Would your party commit itself to restoring the 50:50 ratio of federal/provincial funding?

We are going to look very closely at the whole funding formula. Here in Atlantic Canada, we have been particularly hurt. My personal commitment is to do everything I can to restore all of these cuts. The party is committed to an overhaul.

Would your party require accountability on the part of the provinces to spend PSE funds in that sector?

Yes.

Will your party insist on a financing structure that will actually deliver more money overall the the universities? Or are you content simply to blame the other level of government?

We want a structure that will deliver the maximum amount of money available.

## Funding

*Canada's spending on research and development has been estimated at 1.36 per cent of our GNP and has been ranked seventh among other western industrialized nations by the OCED. The Prime Ministers National Advisory Board on Science and Technology has recommended*

*— that the base budgets of the three granting councils (the Medical Research*

Does your party support these recommendations?

We are absolutely committed to an increase in R and D. Whether we will go with these recommendations remains to be seen.

What do you think of the present policy of providing tax incentives to the corporate sector? Is it a sufficient measure to redress the funding cuts the federal research councils have suffered?

No. You can't walk away from the kind of government funding (that is necessary). The corporate sector is a profit-based machine. Government is supposed to have a broader view.

## NDP

*payments to the provinces by \$1.6 billion over five years. In 1988, they announced increases in university research funding and scholarships of \$540 million over five years. This resulted in an overall cut of \$1 billion.*

*The federal government's share of PSE and health financing has declined from 50 per cent in 1977 to less than 40 per cent in 1988. The situation is particularly devastating for the "have-not" provinces such as Nova Scotia, as they are less able to compensate for federal cuts.*

If your party achieved a majority government, would it restore all or a part of these disastrous cuts?

Yes, we would restore the cuts.

Would your party commit itself to restoring the 50:50 ratio of federal/provincial funding?

Yes. That ratio is shorthand, though. The situation is a little more complex. In 1977, the federal/provincial funding ratio was 86:14. In 1988, the federal share was 100 per cent. The province didn't pay a bit.

Would your party require accountability on the part of the provinces to spend PSE funds in that sector?

Yes. We would insist on tied funding, so they can't take the money and repave every road in the province or spend it on new cars for Cabinet ministers.

Will your party insist on a financing structure that will actually deliver more money overall the the universities? Or are you content simply to blame the other level of government?

Yes. The N.S. government isn't contributing. We are a poorer province and they haven't given it (education) a priority. We would raise funding back up in a way that's tied to the performance of the provinces.

## Conservative

If your party achieved a majority government, would it restore all or a part of these disastrous cuts?

Would your party commit itself to restoring the 50:50 ratio of federal/provincial funding?

Would your party require accountability on the part of the provinces to spend PSE funds in that sector?

Will your party insist on a financing structure that will actually deliver more money overall the the universities? Or are you content simply to blame the other level of government?

We've increased our spending by some five billion dollars via transfer payments. I don't think it's suitable to start from 1977. We should start from 1984, when we got in power. We've increased funding more than five per cent annually, substantially ahead of inflation. We're not going to dictate to the provinces how those funds should be spent, that's provincial jurisdiction. PSE is extremely critical for Nova Scotia. We have more universities and more students per capita than any other province. The provinces are supposed to be more knowledgeable of the local priorities, such as health and welfare, transportation and education. They know what the priorities are, and if they don't, the electorate will tell them.

*Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council, and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council) be doubled over three years;*

*— that the base funds of the councils be indexed at 1.5 times the growth in GNP thereafter;*

*— that matching grants for private sector contributions be accorded to the councils only over and above such an increase.*

Does your party support these recommendations?

Yes, our party does support all these recommendations. Myself, I think money for R and D is very important. established researchers can get grants renewed, but younger ones have a difficult time. It's critical at Dal. I know good young researchers and there just isn't the money.

What do you think of the present policy of providing tax incentives to the corporate sector? Is it a sufficient measure to redress the funding cuts the federal research councils have suffered?

I think this is very short-sighted. The corporate sector puts money in what will make them look good or what will make money. You have to target R and D money. A grant-based system with accountability would be better than tax incentives. If I were in the humanities or social sciences, I would gie up. You're just noe going to get the grants (under this policy).

Does your party support these recommendations?

We've increased our funding to the granting councils every year since 1984. I think that this (National Advisory Board) has been extremely important and effective, and we have mainly followed their objectives, except the first one. (However) we have given something like \$250 million for scholarships and tuition grants, \$250 million for 'centres of excellence' and we've put aside \$380 million for research and incentives for the private sector.

What do you think of the present policy of providing tax incentives to the corporate sector? Is it a sufficient measure to redress the funding cuts the federal research councils have suffered?

It's been very effective, because the private sector has oversubscribed, and (as a result) we've put over \$800 million into the program. That particular initiative has been very successful.