



An interview with Brian Mulroney.

In a recent interview with the new leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, we asked seven key questions. His answers to these questions will be of interest to every young Canadian.

Question: *Mr. Mulroney, both in your leadership campaign and in your speeches since last June, you have stressed the need for improved productivity and a serious research and development strategy. What precisely does that mean for Canada's youth?*

Brian Mulroney: The answer can be expressed in three words: jobs, investment, and growth. Jobs because employment opportunities for Canada's 545,000 unemployed youth can only be secured in sectors with a real future. Investment because research and development, that is expenditure in new products, new ideas, new processes, provides the basis of tomorrow's winning sectors. Growth because without it, there is no basis for making our way in the world, for tackling the tragedy of 1.6 million unemployed Canadians.

Question: *Is there anything specific you would do to get jobs for youth?*

Brian Mulroney: We will provide increased incentives to employers to hire and train young people. A Progressive Conservative government will significantly expand wage subsidy programs, such as the career access program. We will also substitute a program of refundable employer tax credits, to credit employers with a portion of their income, or federal payroll taxes, where they agree to hire and train young people for a fixed period. We will greatly improve existing "information exchanges" through which young

people become aware of job opportunities. Clearly, as job displacement centers, the Canada Employment centers are not performing adequately. And we will institute programs specifically designed to address chronic unemployment which tragically plagues certain regions of Canada.

Question: *Is our record in R & D really so bad?*

Brian Mulroney: Just look at the figures. Under 15 years of Liberal rule, we actually reduced our spending on R & D from 1.29 to 1.13 of total GNP. All of our industrial competitors are spending almost double that, while Japan has a goal of spending 3%. Put it this way: there is one company in West Germany spending more on research than all of Canada combined! The Progressive Conservative Party is committed to increasing our R & D commitment to 2.5% of GNP. We've got a lot of ground to make up in the technology race.

Question: *How does R & D relate to our unemployment crisis?*

Brian Mulroney: Someone once told me that while love makes the world go round, research and development makes it go forward. The National Research Council estimates that for every additional one per cent of GNP committed to R & D, 800,000 jobs are created. Look around at the sectors which are growing: pharmaceuticals, computers, electronics, biotechnology, telecommunications. These are all sectors where the R & D component of spending is very high. They are also the sectors creating new jobs.

Question: *Is R & D important only for high tech sectors?*

Brian Mulroney: On the contrary, R & D is important for every sector, including traditional sectors like forestry, mining and agriculture. Look at how our enormous productivity improvement in agriculture has been assisted by our research efforts in disease control, pesticides, weather prediction and animal husbandry. That's why I say the real challenge facing Canada is to apply new technology in old as well as new industries.

Question: *You are almost calling for shock treatment to our economy.*

Brian Mulroney: When 545,000 young people are out of work, when we have a negative balance of trade in high technology goods of more than \$7.5 billion, I recognize a crisis at hand. We must formulate a dramatic, innovative, and long-term tax system to increase investment in technology. We must assure that meaningful jobs exist for our youth.

Question: *You seem to have a personal interest in this subject.*

Brian Mulroney: Anyone interested in the future of this country or the world at large has to take a personal interest. These new technologies - silicon chips, satellite technology, biotechnology and the like - are having a profound effect on our society. They are both a curse and a blessing. But I think that when we can get our government programs relevant again, we can get real growth and jobs for our people.

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