

campaign managed to find a \$50 million savings from the defense budget, to place in an election promises fund. A defense department source said 60 per cent of the savings would come from delaying miscellaneous purchases such as tools.

The prestigious British publication *Jane's Fighting Ships* added fuel to the Tories' attack Aug. 22. The editor said Canada's forces are in an "appalling mess." Jane's blamed the Liberal government for "years of neglect."

Defense Minister Jean Jacques Blais announced Aug. 24 his department was considering adding a nuclear powered submarine to Canada's two diesel powered subs.

NDP Leader Ed Broadbent has not been silent on the state of Canada's forces. He pledged to increase the defense budget to enable the effective patrolling of Canada's 200-mile coastal zone. He didn't include a cost estimate.

Both the Liberals and Conservatives have emphasized the importance of keeping Canada's commitment to NATO. The NDP has not drawn attention to its long-standing policy to leave the alliance.

Minimum tax tip of iceberg

The New Democrats have been getting a lot of mileage this election out of their promises of tax reform.

In 1982 there were 239 Canadians with incomes over \$250,000 who were able to take advantage of tax breaks and subsequently paid no tax.

NDP Leader Ed Broadbent started the ball rolling proposing a 20 per cent minimum tax rate for Canadians earning more than \$50,000 per year.

Mulroney followed suit, promising a minimum tax during the first televised leaders' debates. Later Mulroney backed off, stating minimum tax on wealthy individuals is only one option that should be studied in the interest of making the tax system more equitable. Towards the end of the campaign his support firmed-up again, promising that a minimum tax should be a "handsome amount" and that if the PC's are elected this stand will be reflected in their first budget.

Mulroney took some heat in the campaign when it was discovered that he had been involved in investments designed to reduce his own tax load.

Prime Minister Turner was the last on the bandwagon, promising a minimum tax of 13 per cent on those earning over \$60,000 per year.

Major tax reforms were tried twice in the last 20 years and the advocates of those reforms were badly mauled politically. Business and professional associations have provided the opposition in both cases, stifling attempts to close-up key tax breaks for the wealthy and the corporate sector. Over the last decade taxation has shifted away from corporations and rested on mostly middle-income Canadians.

The minimum tax rate only scratches the surface of a Pandora's Box of inequities.

Although politicians have hedged carefully around the thorny issue of universality, a government conscious of the federal deficit will undoubtedly be looking at ending the universality of some programmes and tax schemes. It may be a good thing.

For example, child tax credits designed to help low income parents do quite the opposite. To get the

benefit of tax credits one has to pay in the first place. Low income Canadians receive little or no benefit from the credits, while middle income and wealthy parents benefit fully.

Some tax reformers have batted about the idea of replacing tax credits with a guaranteed annual income supplement. The scheme would basically subsidize incomes of Canadians according to an established criteria of need and abolish tax exemptions.

Peter Pocklington's flat tax rate—which would abolish all tax exemptions and establish an equal across-the-board tax rate for all Canadians—has been dismissed by all, including the Tories who called the former leadership candidate's idea "half-baked."

Promises aimed only at youth

By WENDY COOMBER

Whenever unemployment is mentioned in this election the solutions are invariably directed towards youth, almost to the exclusion of the 24-65 year-old unemployed.

The strategies of the federal parties are simple: the Liberals are emphasizing job training (for those who have never had a career start), while the Progressive Conservatives are stressing job creation. Both of these plans require use of federal funds. The New Democratic Party is covering all sides by advocating both methods but with funds gained from imposing new taxes on large, previously untaxed, corporations.

John Turner and the Liberals are throwing their trust behind a \$100 million youth job training programme called First Chance, saying the programme is meant to "break the vicious cycle of no job without experience and no experience without a job." Turner expects to fund the programme by diverting \$80 million from other programmes and taking another \$20 million from the Unemployment Insurance fund. Although he is expecting First Chance to expand after the first year to a \$1 million project, Turner is not yet sure where those monies will come from.

Brian Mulroney, national Conservative Party Leader, says he will wage a struggle against unemployment by creating at least 200,000 new jobs for youth: his party, however, reports that unemployment will remain above 10 per cent until the year 2000 and that not much can be done about it.

Mulroney's proposed solution is a \$250 million programme giving employers of young workers a special tax credit to help pay their employees' salaries. At the same time Mulroney vows to eliminate the political side of grants and federal financing arrangements, saying, "It is time to halt the unacceptable practice of permitting members in power to distribute federal funds arbitrarily." The Tory Leader also favours granting loans between \$15,000 and \$75,000, taken from the Unemployment Insurance fund, to young people interested in beginning their own businesses.

On a more specific level, Mulroney is quoted as saying he will create programmes to help Quebec textile workers adapt to technological change.

Ed Broadbent and his New Democratic Party have announced a Youth Initiative Fund of \$1.5 billion for young entrepreneurs, financed by an as yet unspecified



levy on medium and large corporations and a 20 per cent tax on incomes over \$50,000, saying the government could raise over \$150 million this way.

Besides the Youth Initiative Fund, Broadbent has also asked Turner to postpone a \$1.1 billion increase in the federal sales tax planned for this fall, saying the delay would save 50,000 jobs. He further suggested eliminating the federal sales tax altogether, thereby "putting an extra \$150 into the hands of the average Canadian family" (per year).

In a move to alleviate unemployment in general areas, Broadbent announced a \$100-million-a-year programme to encourage the development of alternative employment in one-industry towns. The NDP Leader said 700 such communities whose basic mineral or wood products are facing declining markets can be helped. This Single Industry Community Diversification Fund will seek matching funds from provincial levels and be available to new companies wishing to establish themselves in appropriate areas. The party hopes the cost of the programme will eventually be offset by increased stability

in employment and reduced need for social benefits.

Broadbent also plans to eliminate taxes for farm fuels, arrange a moratorium on farm debts, return to the cheap Crownsnest Pass freight rate, and impose tougher Canadian content requirements on companies engaged in offshore oil exploration before they can qualify for Petroleum Incentive Programme subsidies. He said construction of one modern drilling rig would provide 1500 Canadian jobs for 18 weeks.

John Turner will be concentrating on the older unemployed group in the West by seeking markets for western coal and prairie grain. Brian Mulroney's election promises include providing low-interest loans to farmers, and setting up a \$25,000 fund for young entrepreneurs.

Looking for sincerity in pledges

By CATHY McDONALD

Addressing women's inequality in society is of major concern to voters in 1984, judging by the actions of Canada's three major party leaders.

The leaders have given "women's issues" an unprecedented amount of attention, speaking to a wide range of concerns.

And their actions have been closely scrutinized for signs of insincerity.

The parties are being compared by the number of women they nominated for election, on the party leaders' personal behaviour (the notorious bum-patting affair), and finally in a full review of platforms debated by all three leaders on national television, Aug. 15.

Female versus male voting preferences—the so-called gender gap—has changed dramatically over the course of the campaign. Women favoured the Liberals over Progressive Conservatives by 12 per cent last April. By August there was a five per cent gap the other way, according to the most recent poll commissioned by the *Globe and Mail*.

It's hard to tell what issues or impressions caused that change, but Liberal Leader John Turner and PC Leader Brian Mulroney have said women's issues are a top campaign priority.

NDP Leader Ed Broadbent accused his opponents of following a fad, without any deeper sympathy for the cause. His party won the campaign's first sincerity test, nominating more women than the other

two parties combined.

Turner summed up his view by saying, "The fundamental issue is economic for women."

On the question of equal pay for work of equal value, Turner said he would enforce existing equal pay legislation on Crown corporations, but he would not apply the policy to companies regulated by the federal government, like railways and telephone companies. Turner preferred, instead, a "persuasive guideline posture."

Existing legislation says where two different jobs hold the same degree of difficulty, for example cashiers and store clerks, the employees should be paid equally. The law applies to companies within the federal jurisdiction, and is enforced by the Canadian Human Rights Commission when a complaint is made.

Business interests have opposed equal pay for work of equal value, saying market forces should determine job value, not government. However, Brian Mulroney has also come out in favour of the policy, and would extend it outside Crown corporations, to companies within the federal jurisdiction.

Both Turner and Mulroney said they will ask any company seeking a federal contract to provide a list showing what percentage of employees were women.

Broadbent goes further than the realm of government contacts in promoting equality in the workplace. The NDP wants to make affirmative action programmes mandatory in the private sector, where a company has more than 50 employees. In a situation where a female and male applicant have equal job qualifications, affirmative action means the woman is hired.

Along the theme of economic inequality, Mulroney read some grim statistics during the television debate. He said 47 per cent of families with women as their chief support live below the poverty line. Also, the majority of women pensioners, about 345,000, are poor.

As for solutions to these problems, all three leaders said pensions, access to jobs and job training should be improved.

Broadbent said an NDP government would put \$300 million into making day care universal. Turner said he would bring day care and other women's concerns to federal-provincial talks for discussion.

Broadbent said the Canada Pension Plan and Quebec Pension Plan should be doubled, and wid-

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Bar will open at 3:00 p.m.

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