

MAKE THE ECONOMY WORK FOR PEOPLE

NEW POLICIES TO PROVIDE JOBS WITH A FUTURE, AND PEACE

Dear Focus reader,

This pre-election letter is an effort to compel the candidates running for election to declare themselves in support of programmes which will satisfy the economic and social needs of all the people who work for wages.

Economic security has become an urgent problem, particularly for young working people and students. The problem can be solved if the newly elected government can be compelled to adopt policies which guarantee everyone the right to a job at decent rates of pay, to decent and affordable housing, education, medical and recreational facilities.

A backlog of urgent problems has accumulated. The steady decline in wages and welfare and the crisis in living standards has seriously reduced the standard of living of the working people--while executives, managers and owners have steadily improved their annual incomes.

Despite the efforts of the government to paint a glowing picture of their achievements, large numbers of Canadians live below the poverty line. A million children live in poverty and another million live in near poverty. Tens of thousands of people are homeless. Most old people and Native People live a life of poverty. Rent has become an intolerable burden in some cities. Landlords and real estate developers are making a killing from exorbitant rents.

Not only have wages and living standards been cut, but also the average family has been hit with a whacking tenfold tax increase. Taxes have risen more than the consumer price index--or any other economic index. Hidden taxes now grab 64% of the average family's tax payments, almost twice as much as Revenue Canada grabs each April.

If you pay \$5,000 a year in taxes to Revenue Canada, you pay \$10,000 a year in hidden taxes.

That's the way working people are forced to pay for such costly luxuries as atomic-powered submarines.

All Tory governments rob the poor to give to the rich.

The Tories constantly deplore big unemployment insurance pay outs, and indignantly accuse people of "taking advantage" of the welfare system. Even a simpleton knows that these financial pay outs could be cut to a minimum at once if everyone had the opportunity to work at a job paying a decent rate of pay.

All levels of government claim they don't have enough money to provide the things people need. Outright deceit! The economy can't work for people at the same time that huge sums of tax money are spent on a constantly growing

arms budget which consumes the billions of dollars needed for people's needs each year.

A modest 10% cut in the arms budget would provide the government in Ottawa with a sum of \$5-billion (during its term of office) seed money to ease the burden of taxes and to provide decent, affordable homes -- and other needs of the people.

Government undertakings of this sort would contribute to the health and growth of the Canadian economy, and would create a large number of jobs.

Disarmament is the only realistic way to accelerate Canadian development, a process which involves the urgent problems of water, improved transportation, cheap and abundant power, development in the less-developed areas, an East-west power grid, and upgrading and modernizing the infrastructure.

The worsening living conditions of people, the growth of social problems, the failure to deal with the serious problems of pollution, the attacks on people's rights and working conditions, the attacks on people's organizations--all these are part of the same policy which leads to huge arms spending and the continuation of crisis in international relations.

There can be no economic progress or social justice without world peace.

Canada's security can be guaranteed at much lower levels of government spending on military hardware and through the elimination of all nuclear weapons.

CUT THE ARMS BUDGET BY 10%

To bring pressure on the politicians in Ottawa to cut the arms budget makes good common sense because, as everyone knows, not one politician opposes the waste caused by arms spending at a time when cities and municipalities are cutting services to the bone.

It is a contradiction because ending the arms race is the only way to ensure the normal functioning of the world's economy.

The seriousness of the economic crisis in the world's economy underlines the need for international cooperation--not confrontation, to coordinate the efforts of all countries to solve the big problems of enough food, overcoming disease and pollution.

Moreover, politicians know--or ought to--that a world war today would result in the destruction of civilisation, a compelling argument for new policies to be adopted.

Rarely in our history has there been so much concern about the growth of public debt and the need for money to provide for development. But there seems to be no shortage of money for the munitions makers.

Some jobs will be created if projected Tory spending on arms goes ahead. But more jobs would be created if the money was spent on people's needs.

The problem is that, while arms spending is good for the profits of a few munitions makers, the arms race has created a potential which threatens to destroy everyone. While the world's five billion people cannot be fed there is a sockpile of nuclear weapons in existence capable of killing 156-billion people. That's the lunacy of the arms race.

By ruthlessly pursuing a nuclear arms race a handful of billionaires at the head of the military-industrial-financial complexes have brought the world to the brink of a nuclear catastrophe.

If there isn't an end to the arms race soon it could escape control and lead to a collapse of the world economy--even to a people-consuming holocaust.

A PROGRAMME TO MEET PEOPLE'S NEEDS

FOR A BETTER LIFE IN A MORE JUST SOCIETY

The following proposals by no means cover every question such as free trade, the Meech Lake Accord, pollution--and

the pressing, difficult problems faced by farmers.

However, some of the following proposals cover the most basic needs of Canadian working-people which no politician running for public office should be allowed to dodge when seeking votes.

- commence a vast project to construct 100,000 publicly-owned, low-cost, decent homes.

That would produce a lot of jobs!

- Expand hospital, educational and recreational facilities. Clean up pollution.

That would provide a lot of jobs!

- A genuine war on poverty. Give every Canadian a decent standard of living by introducing a Guaranteed Annual Income and by raising the minimum wage to a level that meets today's requirements.

- Curb monopoly profiteering.

A 32 hour work week with no reduction in take-home pay.

That would produce a lot of jobs!

- Democratic tax reform--lower taxes on wage earners--higher taxes on corporate wealth.

That would produce a lot of jobs!

- New farm policies which prevent the further destruction of Canada's farms. A new approach to agricultural problems which guarantee every farmer a decent annual income, which protect him from the robbery of the big monopolies, which helps to expand the production base for agricultural products of all kinds.

- New trade and development policies.

World-wide cooperation with all countries based on mutual benefit which would guarantee Canada's economic and social progress, and which would ensure the same possibilities to the countries

with whom Canada deals, is needed much more than the free trade deal which further subordinates Canada to the American-based transnational corporations.

Canada's economy is extremely vulnerable to external factors and could and is constantly being damaged by the economic policies adopted by other countries, particularly the U.S.A.

Opening up and expanding trade with the communist countries is an important must for Canada. East-west trade has created nearly two-million jobs in West Germany, 120,000 jobs in Finland, and accounts for one in every ten jobs in machine-building in France. Expanding trade contributes to the creation of stable economic relations.

WHAT ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS IN CANADA?

The politicians in Ottawa just love to talk about human rights. They try to leave the impression that Canadians do not have to fight for their rights--rights which guarantee all Canadians work at a decent wage--which abolish all forms of discrimination based on sex, age and race--which would reform the educational system to ensure that all young people are adequately educated--which would end discrimination against women by guaranteeing equal pay for equal work and equal job opportunities, which would provide day care and maternity rights.

An election provides an opportunity for all Canadians to speak up for Canadian independence, to demand an integrated public transportation system, an all-Canada power grid, a machine-tool industry, the all-Canadian development of energy resources, a four-lane highway from coast to coast, improved and efficient transportation, housing for those who need it, for upgrading the water and sewage systems, and much more.

Now that would provide a lot of jobs for a very long time.

We enclose a letter addressed to Prime Minister Brian Mulroney. It requires no postage.

Perhaps you can persuade others to sign this letter, or to write one of their own. Why not take it up in your organization?

We can provide more of these form letters at the cost of postage and printing.

We appreciate any financial help you can provide us with in this campaign.

Please make cheques/or money orders payable to **Focus Newsletter**, 217-1808 Smith St., Regina, Sask., S4T 2N3.

**MAKE YOUR VOICE AND VOTE COUNT IN THIS
ELECTION**

The honourable Brian Mulroney,
Prime Minister of Canada,
House of Commons,
Ottawa, Ontario

Dear Mr. Mulroney,

I urge you to cut Canada's defence spending by ten percent and to use that sum as seed money to provide for the daily needs of all Canadians--the need for jobs, housing, medicare and a guaranteed annual income.

(Name)

(address)
