



Notes on the Federal Budget

By Nettie Wiebe

The federal budget delivered by the Harper government on January 27, 2009 gives a clear picture of Conservative priorities and values.

Here are some key points:

Mortgaging the future: The Harper government inherited a \$13 billion surplus. Their budget has a \$34 billion deficit this year - with more red ink to come. Tax cuts and big spending meant that the cupboard was bare going into this economic downturn. Conservatives have a history of record deficits and financial mismanagement. (remember Grant Devine and Brian Mulroney?)

Sticking it to women: The Harper government repealed pay equity provisions. This is a further disadvantage for women – who currently make about \$.72 for every \$1.00 earned by male workers. Their “shovel-ready” jobs are focused on the male work force.

Ignoring the vulnerable: Tens of thousands of Canadians are losing their jobs – but only 43% of them qualify for Employment Insurance benefits. Unemployed workers need real protection, not just a small extension of benefits. Jack Layton asked “What good is an extra 5 weeks to unemployed workers who can’t even get the 1st week?”

Taking care of their rich friends: The budget retains Harper’s corporate tax cuts. It gives \$60 billion in corporate tax cuts while giving \$1.15 billion to unemployed workers. That’s \$60.00 for large corporations for every loonie spent on working people.

Nothing for children: No extra funds or plans for childcare or early learning programs.

Careless about the environment: The urgency of the economic stimulus is used as an excuse to drop the requirements for environmental assessments. The \$3 billion to be handed out in the next 3 months will by-pass normal federal government assessment processes.

“Tory times are tough times”

New Democrats are pushing hard for better policies. Far from using the economic crisis to rush through unjust, environmentally damaging, short-sighted policies, this is a time for greater care and accountability. The economic bad news hits low and middle income households the hardest. Employment Insurance must be fixed. Social spending is fairer, faster and a far more effective economic stimulus than corporate tax cuts.

The children and grandchildren who are inheriting this huge deficit must have priority. Key investments in childcare, early learning, education and training, housing and health care are the basis for their well-being. Investments in children and young people are important investments in the future and in the new economy.

Long term economic and social wealth depends on a liveable environment. Public investments in ‘green jobs’, green technologies and infrastructure are key not only to future prosperity but to any future.



2009 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Saskatoon Rosetown Biggar (SRB) New Democratic Party Federal Riding Association will be held:

Date: April 30th, 2009
Place: Mayfair United Church
902 33rd Street West
 Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
Time: Registration: 6:30 PM
 Call to Order: 7:30 PM

All members in good standing of the New Democratic Party residing within the riding of SRB shall be eligible to attend and vote at the Annual Meeting. Anyone on the active membership list can renew at the door. New memberships will be accepted up until April 15th, 2009.

The business of the meeting will be:

- To receive and pass reports from some of the Executive Officers
- To select members to serve on the Riding Association Executive until our next annual meeting
- To elect two representatives and two alternates to the Saskatchewan Council of Federal Ridings
- To pass resolutions to be forwarded to the August 2009 Convention of the New Democratic Party of Canada
- To elect delegates to represent SRB at that federal convention

Member participation at this meeting and ongoing participation with the riding association executive is key to the success we all wish for, a New Democratic MP representing this riding. Please come out and step forward to help with this task.

A special invitation goes out to those newer members supporting candidates for the Provincial NDP leadership. You are equally welcome to participate in the Federal wing of the NDP. Please join us!

Coffee and refreshments will be served at the end of the evening.



"Building a Green Economy for Canada"

With Nathan Cullen, NDP Energy and Natural Resources Critic in Parliament

&

Peter Prebble, Former NDP MLA and Director of Energy and Water Policy with the Saskatchewan Environmental Society



Come and join us for a discussion on how Canada and Saskatchewan can build a green economy.



Saturday, April 18th at 7:30 pm
St. Mary's Parish Hall
211 Avenue O South
(20th St. Entrance)
Saskatoon

Coffee and dessert served – silver collection to cover expenses.

Federal Convention Rescheduled

In the December 2008 issue of *Our Voice* we announced that the federal convention would be held in Halifax in August of 2009.

It has since been rescheduled from August 28th to 30th to August 14th to 16th. This is two weeks earlier than we previously indicated, but still in Halifax.



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Please e-mail submissions to:
wmanson@imagewireless.ca



Spring is a Time for Renewal

What you can do to renew your commitment to the Saskatoon Rosetown Biggar NDP:

- Attend our AGM on April 30th
- Volunteer to become an executive member – we need you!
- Make a monthly financial commitment by filling out the enclosed form and returning it with a "void" cheque
- Or make a lump-sum contribution by filling in the reverse side of the form

Together we can build a strong riding organization.

We especially need someone to take on the position of treasurer and financial agent for the riding. An interest or ability in accounting would be an asset. Please contact any executive member with any questions or to volunteer. Email: grant.mcmurray@sasktel.net

WARNING

Don't answer those personal questions!

A recent pamphlet from SRB MP Kelly Block offers to send voters a personalized account of what the Conservatives' federal budget will do for each one of us. To get this information, you must answer *personal questions* such as Are you Aboriginal? On social assistance? In social housing? What's your Income? Age? Birth date? Marital status?

The information you give is NOT PROTECTED.

How will your information be used? Could it be mis-used? Who will see it? How long will it be kept?
 NOTE: MPs are not covered by the Privacy Act.



Members of the Saskatoon Rosetown Biggar Executive with MP Libby Davis.