

### *New Democrats' responses to questions on national energy*

**Questions: Do you and your party support creating a national power grid that would allow for interprovincial/territorial trade and transmission of power? When will you deliver a national policy on electricity energy infrastructure?**

New Democrats strongly support Atlantic Canada Green Energy Grid and will:

- Invest \$45 million from the Federal Green Infrastructure Fund to help construct the Third Cable and better transmit electricity between Prince Edward Island and the North American power grid.
- Invest \$375 million in the Maritime Link through the PPP Canada fund and New Democrats' Federal/Provincial Green Infrastructure Program (2011 Platform).
- Provide federal loan guarantees for the Muskrat Falls development on the Lower Churchill.

This project will lower energy costs and will decrease the reliance of Atlantic Canada's economy on non-renewable energy resources.

A New Democrat government would begin immediately to foster development of a national energy grid, working with provinces and territories.

### *New Democrats' responses to questions on fiscal and debt plan*

***Questions: How will your government remove and/or lessen growing structural costs within government? What criteria will your government use to determine which costs get removed and which costs are simply lessened? What specific percentage of your plan to return to balanced budgets is based on economic growth? What specific percentage is based on government cost controls? What percentage is based on elimination of programs, services and employment?***

With respect to Canada's structural federal deficit created under the current Conservative government, New Democrats believe that the most fiscally prudent solutions lie in addressing the revenue side of the problem in addition to the expenditure side.

We are committed to balance the federal budget within the next 4 years as per the projections of the Department of Finance, and we have presented a fully-costed and fiscally prudent platform to achieve this goal. However, we do not believe further cuts to essential public programs are the first choice of Canadians. Rather, reversing unwise cuts to corporate income taxes, and tapping other revenues sources are a better option. For example, the growing hemorrhage of income tax revenues to offshore low-tax jurisdictions must be addressed before average Canadians and small businesses, who pay their taxes in good faith, are asked to make further sacrifices.

Jack Layton and Canada's New Democrats believe firmly in structurally balanced budgets and have long advocated transparent reporting systems. We also support building in greater

openness by making government spending open to an independent review by the Parliamentary Budget Officer.

New Democrats believe debt service costs should be kept under control. We see a federal debt to GDP ratio of 30% as a reasonable target. We prefer to stress economic growth as the means to lower the relative significance of the public debt to focusing on more "belt-tightening" measures that are likely to undermine growth and higher living standards.

However, there may be ways to reduce government spending through efficiencies and shifting priorities. A New Democrat government would necessarily review all federal spending with a view to locating efficiencies and eliminating any waste, without sacrificing the quality or level of critical public services delivered. One glaring example is the Conservatives' "tough on crime" set of legislation that will make Corrections Canada budgets soar in the coming years by billions of dollars according to various estimates. Our 2011 platform re-balances our approach to tackling crime toward more prevention, resulting in an estimated savings of \$500 million over the next four years.

### *New Democrats' responses to questions on fisheries management*

**Questions: How, specifically, will NAFO be reformed to be more effective under your government? What multilateral action will Canada take to more effectively protect the offshore fishery, and what unilateral action would it consider in the absence of international cooperation?**

New Democrats do not believe Canada has pressed its interests adequately in NAFO negotiations and opposed ratification of the NAFO treaty. The result of the Conservative Government's ratification is that further long-term harm has been inflicted on the East Coast fishery. The Harper government has failed to accord diplomacy in this key economic sector the priority it deserves. The current negotiations over a Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement with the European Union, should entail further progress on protecting Atlantic fish stocks, with stronger enforcement provisions and obtaining tariff free access to the European market for Canadian products, but we suspect the Conservatives are not pressing that case.

In the long-run, NAFO must become a stronger force for conservation or Canada must proceed unilaterally to preserve fish stocks. Only a federal government committed to the best interests of Atlantic Canada can achieve that. We believe that government is an NDP government.