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Parti Conservateur
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Conservative Party
of Quebec

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CONVENTION OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY OF QUEBEC

QUEBEC CITY

OCTOBER 19 & 20, 2013



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MESSAGE FROM THE LEADER OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY OF QUEBEC

Dear Members,

Six months ago, you honoured me by electing me as the Leader of your Party. In Trois-Rivières, we approved a set of values which we designed to act as the guiding principles for our program and our decisions, and to which our candidates would pledge allegiance. We are now together again, possibly on the eve of another election, this time to approve a comprehensive political program that will make our values actualized, practical, and real!

In Quebec, we are great at diagnosing our problems. Numerous reports highlighting the inadequacies of our health and education systems and our bureaucratic administration have been quickly set aside and left to gather dust. I won't bore you with numbers as you already know the sorry state in which Quebec finds itself after forty years of left-wing fumbling that has impoverished Quebecers

This dramatic situation is the direct result of the “modèle québécois” cherished by both the Liberal Party and the Parti Québécois. Over the years, Pauline Marois and Jean Charest have fostered a tax-and-spend culture as well as a culture of dependence on the government. As a result, families and the middle-class are squeezed by an ever-increasing tax burden while the bureaucracy grows ever bigger, waiting lists get longer and the public debt balloons at an alarming rate. Forty years of mismanagement brought by these two old parties have relegated Quebec to rank dead last (60th out of the 60) in North American jurisdictions in terms of economic freedom. Since economic freedom is a *sine qua non* condition to wealth creation for individuals, nobody should be surprised that Quebecers are losing ground to their North American cousins.

It's time to change course and to begin the Great Catch-Up. In this booklet, the Conservative Party of Quebec proposes a set of concrete measures, based on the best world-practices, so we can build a future for Quebec together. We want to revisit the “modèle québécois” from beginning to end. We truly believe that Quebecers are creative, resourceful, and clever. If the government gets out of the way and fosters individual liberty and responsibility, the proposals that will be brought forward will move Quebec to a culture of performance in our public systems and to the culture of proud winners that characterised us in the middle of the 20th century.

Enjoy the deliberations!

Adrien D. Pouliot
Leader
Conservative Party of Quebec

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY OF QUEBEC

Hello everyone,

As President, I would like to take this moment to welcome you to our convention. In February, we held a leadership race. Together, we elected Mr. Adrien Pouliot to become our spokesperson and the leader of the Conservative Party of Quebec. It was with great courage that he accepted. Because, as we all know, the political climate in Quebec is unforgiving and the word "Conservative" is scary.

Having toured the province with him, I can confirm that even though we were sometimes challenged, Mr. Pouliot was a convincing advocate for the party and his team. This tour allowed me to discover a leader who is willing to fight mightily to defend the future of Quebec, for your children, and for your future grandchildren so that they can live in a prosperous Quebec to which they can contribute. He is very generous with his time and has not hesitated to show his enthusiasm when it comes to promoting the ideas and values of the Conservative Party of Quebec.

We have a policy committee that worked tremendously hard to develop a program that we hope will meet your expectations. The commission went on the road to consult with members of the party. We listened to what you had to say. Messrs. Garcia and Pouliot took the time to listen to the participants and to note their ideas and suggestions which has helped us create the platform we are presenting to you today.

It's now time for you, our members, to speak up and say what you want for your future. Come out and support us, help us, get involved - so that we can say in unison in a few years "Adrien Pouliot, the Premier of Quebec."

Hope to see you there!

Monique Roy-Verville
President
Conservative Party of Quebec

MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-PRESIDENT, CONVENTION ORGANIZER

Welcome!

We had a great time in the past few months crisscrossing Quebec to meet you and people from all over with whom we could discuss our concerns about Quebec!

Through these incredible discussions, people got to know our leader Adrien Pouliot, who, with strong determination, won over many supporters by generously giving of his time and through his conviction to make known his ideas for a better Quebec.

In this same vein, our National Executive, through the work of its directors, has developed and promoted the Conservative Party of Quebec but the job is far from being completed - we need you, people ready to meet challenges and build the Quebec we deserve.

For this marvelous weekend convention, I thank you for your presence, for your involvement, and especially for the time you have given to us, because without it the Conservative Party of Quebec would not be what it is today!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PRESENCE AND HAVE A GOOD 2013 CONVENTION!

Eric Tapps
Vice-President, Convention Organizer
Conservative Party of Quebec

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE POLICY COMMISSION

Members of the Political Commission of the Conservative Party of Quebec have prepared, over the past few months, the political program that we will submit to our members at our Convention to be held in Quebec City on the 19th and 20th of October, 2013. The proposals contained in this booklet are likely to reduce our debt, to make government services more efficient, to make our tax system more competitive and get Quebec back on the road to prosperity.

Quebecers benefit from the most generous social programs in North America. The price of this generosity is high because Quebec taxpayers pay more taxes and support a greater debt than citizens of other Canadian provinces and the United States.

In recent decades, our collective wealth, on which the financing of all these programs is predicated, has increased at a slower rate than that of our major trading partners. The slower rate of productivity improvement of the Quebec economy leads to more moderate growth in government revenues while the rapidly aging population forces the government to spend an ever-greater proportion of its budget on health programs.

The government has increased taxes for all Quebecers for each of the 4 last four years. Despite these cumulative increases which add an additional \$5 billion a year in the coffers of Quebec, the government is heading for a fifth consecutive annual deficit in the current fiscal year. It's clear: whatever government is in power, our political leaders have not had the courage to balance the state's books.

The time has come to change the recipe and to offer Quebecers a political program that will bring prosperity and stimulate economic growth that will be the envy of our neighbors.

The Conservative Party of Quebec has confidence in Quebecers and wants to give them more opportunities to make their own decisions. The directors of our health care and educational establishments will find greater autonomy and benefits under a Conservative government. Municipal councils will have more financial flexibility to fulfill their mandate. This increased decentralization will allow us to reduce the number of ministers and, therefore, the size of the National Assembly.

We believe in a market economy, that is to say, voluntary exchanges between individuals. The government should not replace the private sector or tell him what to produce. The gradual elimination of subsidies to all kinds of businesses will allow us to substantially reduce payroll taxes, a job-killing tax. Instead, government should encourage competition between economic agents, a source of innovation for the benefit of all. The Conservative Party of Quebec will ensure that the beneficiaries of our health care system and our educational system enjoy the benefits of the increased competition we are proposing.

Equally, we want the government to assume its most important mission which is to protect individual rights and freedoms, to administer the civil and criminal justice, to invest in public infrastructure, and to create conditions under which citizens and their talents can flourish.

At the next general election, Quebecers have a real choice. They may elect one or the other of the two parties which led Quebec into a financial dead-end or they can entrust the government to the Conservative Party of Quebec, thus triggering the process that will make Quebec a modern and prosperous society resolutely moving towards financial independence.

I look forward to that date!

Claude Garcia
President
Policy Commission
Conservative Party of Quebec

THE VALUES OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY OF QUEBEC

OUR IDEOLOGICAL COMPASS

Core values are the essential and durable base of our party. An effective set of core values answers the following question: what is really important to the Conservative Party of Quebec? When we tell our children or our friends what the party is all about and why we support it, we tell them about our values.

Values are the glue that holds us together.

Our values are intrinsic and critical to our party and they must be so for every member. They must endure changes to the leadership of the policy commission or of the leader of the party. They survive regardless of what happens to society, at the National Assembly or in the polls.

Our core values distinguish us from other political parties but that is not why we have them. We have them because they define us; they say what we stand for and who we are.

Our values are not for sale. We may lose votes because we have them but we will nevertheless cherish them and passionately defend them because we know, in our heart of hearts, that they are the right thing to do to put Quebec back on the rails.

We should use our values as a benchmark to measure our successes and our failures and how we reward and recognize our volunteers and our candidates and how we celebrate our successes.

PRINCIPLES

We, the members of the Conservative Party of Quebec, form a party where Quebecers of varied backgrounds and cultures can coalesce around certain ideals and values. These True North principles provide the Party with an ideological compass always pointing in a consistent direction to guide its actions and programs, filter its candidates, align its volunteers and rally its members.

Individual Rights and Freedoms

Individual liberty is the fundamental political value of the Conservative Party of Quebec.

We defend the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual against the encroachments of the all powerful State. Since freedom is not so much the right to exercise one's will than to not be subjected to someone else's, government, when it acts, must always question if its action increases or decreases individual liberty. Government should never sacrifice the well-being of the individual for the well-being of the community. We respect the right of individuals to exercise their freedoms so long as they do not encroach on the freedoms of others. The State, by its coercive power, must not prevent individuals from doing things with which it does not agree.

The Responsibility of Each Citizen

Individual rights and freedoms entail individual responsibilities and obligations. Free citizens assume their obligations, the responsibilities of their choices and the consequences of their actions without expecting the State to do so on their behalf.

Market Economy

We want a prosperous economy but we believe that economic activity should be carried out through a market economy, that is, voluntary exchanges among free individuals. The State should not substitute itself for the free market nor tell us where to work, how to save, what to build or produce. Rather, it should create a climate encouraging competition, which is a source of beneficial innovation for consumers. Private property and an independent judiciary are the foundations of a free market.

An Essential but Limited Role for the State

Government has an essential role but we do not believe that statism is the universal answer to all problems.

The essential mission of the State is to protect individual rights and freedoms, to administer the civil, penal and criminal justice system, to invest in public infrastructure, to intervene in case of natural disasters and to foster favorable conditions so that citizens can flourish and exercise their talents. Together with private charity, the State helps those in dire circumstances who are unable to provide for themselves. When it does so, government support must be well targeted and must encourage a gradual return to autonomy if possible. Our civil institutions, such as our families, our charitable organizations (whether religious or secular) and our community and cooperative organizations are in a better position than the State and its bureaucratic rules to help members in our society who are in need.

State regulation may be necessary to establish the rules of the game but they must not be so burdensome as to regulate every aspect of our lives nor derail a strong and flourishing free market. The State should not grant privileges and must not create dependency to individual or corporate welfare. When it does act, the State ensures that the resources and the power are delegated to decision-making authorities that are as close as possible to the citizens.

To fulfill its essential role, the State should be adequately financed by taxes at a level which will not discourage investment and work. The State manages Quebecers' hard-earned tax dollars as a trustee of public goods. It ensures that public finances are well managed, that the budget is balanced and that public sector debt is maintained at an acceptable level when considering the taxpayers' capacity to pay. It respects intergenerational equity.

We support the principle of the rule of law that provides individuals with a safeguard against arbitrary government decisions. The rule of law includes equality of all before the law.

A Government at the Service of Citizens

Elected officials represent their voters and they should serve them in an honest and ethical manner and for the interest of all. Their obligations towards their voters override those of their political party. The government, elected representatives and civil servants are in office first and foremost to serve Quebecers. They must act in an open and transparent manner and are accountable to the citizens.

Our Future and Our Place in Canada and in the World

Although there will always be changes, problems, conflicts and disasters in our society, we confront the future with confidence thanks to free individuals who are better equipped to cope and to achieve their goals in greater harmony. We believe that Quebecers are smart and creative enough to find solutions to the many challenges facing them if we let them free to act in their own interest. With the right incentives in place, the majority of them will address these issues in a dynamic, productive and innovative way.

We believe in the full exercise of the constitutional rights and freedoms of Quebec within Canada. Quebecers have an obligation to contribute to a united and democratic Canada within which they can assert their identity.

Quebec is open to the world and we have confidence that Quebecers have the potential and the genius to let their talent shine worldwide.

AGRICULTURE

AN AGRICULTURAL POLICY TO CREATE WEALTH

The Conservative Party of Quebec recognizes the importance of agriculture in Quebec. It proposes a number of changes to make Quebec's agriculture even more dynamic and productive. This dynamism will stimulate the interest of our youth to start their own farming business or to take over their parents' businesses.

Principles

The following principles will guide our actions.

1. The *Union des producteurs agricoles* (UPA) won the right to exclusively represent all Quebec farmers in a vote held in 1974. We have never since questioned the UPA's union mandate nor its monopoly. The Conservative Party of Quebec believes that the time has come to allow Quebec farmers to freely choose the association of producers that they want to join depending on their interests.
2. Agricultural enterprises have to be profitable. If we agree to provide some help, it is only as an economic lever. We will limit the dependence of agricultural and food enterprises on government aid and ensure that the market price reflects the true cost of the products.

Performance and competitiveness

To meet these principles aimed at making agriculture more efficient and more competitive, a Government of the Conservative Party of Quebec will ensure that our farmers have access:

1. to proper training at the cutting edge of technology, not only based on the production methods but based also on modern marketing techniques. Producers will thus garner most of their income from the market and not from grants;
2. to the results of dynamic research and development to strengthen our agriculture's competitiveness and efficiency;
3. to a smaller bureaucracy in order to maximize the time spent managing the farm. We will take the necessary measures to ensure that MAPAQ and M.D.D.E.P. no longer work in isolation in agriculture but coordinate their activities on the ground;
4. to an agricultural policy that will meet the specific needs of the regions and their climate. For example, canola does not produce good results in southern Quebec, while it does in Abitibi, Lac-Saint-Jean and the Lower St. Lawrence region where the temperature is suitable for this crop.

Promote the marketing of wines, ciders and other locally-produced liqueurs

Quebec is full of local products which deserve to be in the spotlight. It often happens that the mechanisms in place do not promote the wider dissemination of such products. That is precisely the case for Quebec wines and ciders.

For this reason the Conservative Party of Quebec will be guided by what is happening in Ontario, where the government, the LCBO and producers of alcoholic beverages have joined forces to successfully commercialize artisanal spirits produced in the province. This success has contributed to the development of this industry in Ontario.

CULTURE

TARGETED SUPPORT

Artists practically form a society in themselves where the values and the ways of doing things may differ from that of the general population. Everybody will however agree that the arts are an essential part of a flourishing society, of its progress and of improved well-being. How should a federal, provincial or municipal government act facing this reality? And how should artists behave vis-à-vis the government?

Two questions spontaneously come to mind: that of the governmental funding and that of the freedom and responsibility of the artist.

The Conservative Party of Quebec answers these questions by advocating for targeted funding on one hand and full creative artistic freedom of responsible artists on the other hand.

The Conservative Party of Quebec proposes to review funding to better target the promotion of culture. We wish to encourage the emergence of young talent, the creation and experimentation of artistic projects, the dissemination of promising projects, the facilitation of access to culture for the general population and the creation of strong private sponsorship.

The objective of this policy is to increase the quantity and quality of artistic productions, to create opportunities and to shine within and without our borders and to build strong private sponsorship. In this, we envision the emergence of a more dynamic, more diversified, cultural environment which will provide more freedom and be open to the world.

This brings us back to the creative freedom which must be without constraint, without government interference in the creative process and without political compromise on the part of the artist. A population that likes attending the arts and cultural venues is the best guarantee of the freedom, of the creative vitality and of the autonomy of the artist.

EDUCATION

GIVING BACK CONTROL OF OUR SCHOOLS TO PARENTS

The findings abound regarding the failures of our educational system, at our primary level and especially at the secondary level. These include high dropout rates, particularly with boys, low rate of high school graduation, a centralized bureaucratic system that is too often disconnected from reality, and a decrease in the accountability of principals. It's a race to the bottom, with evaluation methods that do not encourage effort or reward individual success and the pursuit of excellence. Teachers are often unmotivated and disempowered, forced to replace proven traditional teaching methods by a bureaucrat-imposed curriculum. As we can see, the list is long...

Nevertheless, our schools are full of good school principals and of worthy teachers who want their students to succeed. But the current system does not recognize the merit of those whose pupils achieve significant progress while rewarding those who blindly follow the bureaucratic rules of the ministry.

To remodel or revitalize our education system, it is necessary to ensure that the needs of students and the constructive action of parents are at the heart of the schools. Parents and their children must be the primary and ultimate focus of managers of primary and secondary schools.

Autonomous Schools

The Conservative Party of Quebec will increase the responsibilities of school boards to transform them into real boards of directors. We will also strengthen the role of principals so that they can fully exercise their leadership in teaching and administration.

The task of hiring and evaluating teachers, professionals and support staff will be given back to the school principals. Principals will negotiate the compensation of such personnel with their respective unions and may, in the context of a fair assessment, dismiss those who do not have the required skills. Schools will rent their premises from the Ministry or from other agencies or they can buy them. They will administer their buildings and the transportation required for their students. We aim to create autonomous schools, close to the population they serve, in a decentralized management context.

School Boards Abolished

School boards will be abolished. Property taxes will be reserved exclusively for municipalities. The abolition will not, however, impact the financial situation of the province.

A More Focused Mandate for the Ministry

The Ministry of Education will continue to establish the general framework (mission, overall goals and objectives and learner profiles) of Quebec's education network. It will also set specifications per cycle that will contain the minimum teaching standards in elementary and

secondary schools. However, the curriculum will be decided by the principals and their teachers. The process of school accountability to the Ministry, which is very cumbersome and bureaucratic, will be streamlined.

An Independent Review Panel

An evaluation committee (reporting to the National Assembly and not the Ministry) will set the standards to be attained at the primary and the secondary levels, and will gradually raise them. It will also be responsible for devising and administering national tests, will be responsible for grading these tests, will publish the results of these tests aggregated by school and will compile and publish individual school performance (quality at entry, retention and graduation rates, and graduate outcomes in the following cycle).

An Understandable Report Card

The Committee will ensure that a uniform, clear and numbered report card will be accessible for parents.

A Competitive Approach in School Funding

The Conservative Party of Quebec advocates a funding method that puts parents at the forefront. This funding method is based on a universal system of school vouchers, as experienced in New Zealand, Denmark and Sweden, among other countries. Through these school vouchers, any parent of a child enrolled in elementary or secondary school may choose a public school in his district, a school in the neighboring district or a private school (profit or non-profit) of his choice. All parents will receive the same amount of money per child enrolled regardless of the chosen school. The value of the voucher will be adjusted according to grade level, geography, learning and adaptation difficulties of students, etc.

The Ministry of Education already uses a similar formula to fund universities and CEGEPs. In fact, post-secondary students choose their programs at their CEGEP or University and these post-secondary establishments receive a subsidy equal to the number of courses taken by those enrolled in the program at a particular time. In exercising these choices, students make universities and CEGEPs compete.

Universal school vouchers will be available to all parents. Parental choice is likely to increase the quality of schools since better schools will receive higher funding. It seems obvious that schools that offer the best training and those best suited to the needs of students will be chosen more often.

Teachers: Independent Professionals

Ministry officials will no longer prescribe teaching methods. It will be up to teachers, in conjunction with school principals, to adopt the methods that they deem the most efficient. This freedom will diversify the supply of educational services to parents.

Teacher training will be reviewed to allow high school principals to hire graduates with a Bachelor degree who have also obtained a one-year certificate in education. The ability to repeat a grade will be reintroduced for every school year.

Technical Training in CEGEP

We will maintain the technical training programs and adult training programs in CEGEPs. However, we will abolish the general program. High school students will now complete a sixth preparatory year in high school and will have an additional year of university for general education.

The managers of CEGEPs will become more autonomous. They will be encouraged to develop innovative programs leading to a college degree, such as was done with the International Baccalaureate.

Quality indicators will be developed and publicized to create competition between CEGEPs and allow students to be better informed when choosing a CEGEP.

Deregulating University Tuition

Tuition fees for universities other than Université du Québec will be deregulated. Universities belonging to the *réseau de l'Université du Québec* will be allowed to gradually increase their fees up to 40% of the costs of each program or university faculty. In return, loan and scholarships programs will be adjusted so that deserving students continue to have access to higher education.

Students Free to Join a Student Association

The Act regarding the accreditation and financing of students' associations will be amended to allow a student to decide not to be a member of an association or be represented by it ; and in such a case, students will no longer be obliged to contribute to these associations.

ENVIRONMENT

ROBUST DEVELOPMENT WHILE MANAGING RISKS

The goal of this policy is to present the main principles underlying the positions to be taken by the Conservative Party of Quebec on development and environment. These statements will guide the actions of the party in these matters and will be a "filter" through which the intentions of the party must pass before being proposed.

1. From the outset, we choose an economic approach as the best means of progress for our society. This progress is possible and desirable, but to get there, we have a duty to explore and exploit our natural resources if we are to meet the needs of a growing population. This quest, however, must be pursued while minimizing the impact on the environment. We endorse responsible practices and new technologies to ensure the sustainability of renewable resources for future generations. Free enterprise is better than bureaucrats to select the best technology to achieve this purpose. Economic exploitation necessarily generates risks that we must manage and minimize with the best available technologies. However, we accept that the absence of risk is incompatible with any economic development activity.
2. We believe that the economic development of Quebec must be achieved by a market economy, that is to say voluntary exchanges between individuals, rather than a nationalized economy or one that is planned by the government. The government should not act as a substitute for private enterprise. Rather, it should provide an environment that promotes competition, a source of innovation beneficial to the well-being of its citizens. Rules are necessary but we need to be aware that each rule generates economic and possibly special costs. They should not be nitpicking or constrain a free and thriving market. Since there is an economic and social expense of postponing material advancement, the environmental assessments will be diligent and they will build on existing best practices here and elsewhere.
3. Environmental policies will be based on science. They will be supported by logic and reason rather than beliefs, dogmas, or the political agendas of interest groups. Often, exaggerations or biases prevent decision making in this field, which adversely affects the well-being of the population. Our party will always favour an objective assessment of the cost and of the socio-economic impacts of development.
4. Science differentiates causes and correlations. A correlation does not imply a cause and effect relationship. A forecast, to be credible, must be based on proven facts. A forecast remains a forecast and is not a certainty.
5. Science does not operate by consensus. The government cannot transform a scientific hypothesis into a fact on the basis of a scientific consensus.

6. We accept that any development activity by humans includes an environmental risk, but also real and measurable benefits. We reject the principle of precaution based on the premise that it is necessary to demonstrate the absence of any doubt that an action cannot cause any harm to be socially acceptable. Rather, we advocate a balanced approach where we compare the risks and the potential benefits of an action with the risks and the benefits of inaction. In order to do this, we evaluate all known factors and we use a probabilistic approach to arrive at a reasonable conclusion.
7. Clearly defined and transferable property rights which can be sanctioned in the courts can offer a more economical and effective solution to resolve environmental conflicts than the complex environmental laws implemented in recent decades. Although they are not the solution to all environmental issues, such property rights can ensure that no one is obliged to accept a deterioration of his environment beyond acceptable community standards.
8. The government does not have the same long-term motivation as a private business owner to protect the environment. The wealth of the owner depends on good management of resources. If he wants to be able to take advantage of the resource as long as possible and produce the greatest benefit when he disposes of it, he has a greater incentive than the government to preserve and improve its value and usefulness. A market economy promotes better use of resources since companies will be looking to maximize their profits by reducing costs and minimizing the amount of resources they consume.
9. A market economy provides for a better use of resources because businesses who try to maximize their profits also endeavor to lower their costs by reducing the quantity of resources they consume.
10. We need to ensure that the largest number of people benefit from Quebec's natural resources. The Quebec government must put in place a regulatory regime that fosters their exploitation by the private sector while respecting the rights of all citizens. Such as:
 - a. Hydro-electricity is a clean, inexpensive and sustainable source of energy. The creation of lakes and reservoirs has an environmental impact, but it also brings benefits to aquatic life and it improves the quality of life for human beings.
 - b. Quebec mines provide needed materials to improve the standard of living and the life expectancy of human beings.
 - c. Quebec forestry (planting and harvesting of wood) is the source of green building material and of abundant renewable energy. Its development has limited environmental impact and reduces the level of harvesting from natural forests.
 - d. Quebec agriculture benefits from genetic science that enables yields to increase while reducing the environmental impact. More abundant and cheaper food increases health and food security for the population. More prolific and resistant plants require less fertilizer, pesticides and irrigation. Higher yields require less farmland, reducing pressure on the natural environment.

- e. Quebec aquaculture can be an important source of healthy food and can ease the pressure on wild fish stocks.
11. A decision to allow a product for use should not be based on whether it has been produced by “nature” or by man but rather should be based on a rigorous scientific approach.
 12. Poverty can create the worst environmental problems. Poorly fed and poorly housed people do not care about the long-term preservation of their environment because they have only one concern, i.e. to meet their basic needs. The economic development of poor countries must be a priority to improve the quality of the environment on our planet. Quebec can do its part to help developing countries reduce their environmental problems by helping them grow their economies through international trade. By fostering science and economic development, Quebec can also help reduce disease and malnutrition worldwide.

FAMILY

ENCOURAGING INDIVIDUAL RESPONSABILITY

Daycares

The Conservative Party of Quebec wishes to give to all parents of pre-schoolers free choice in child care. It will provide, by the end of its first mandate, an allocation of \$100 per week per eligible child for child care. . This allowance will be paid to either parent of the child to the extent both parents work full-time. The allowance will be reduced in case the parent works part-time. Parents can then choose for their child the type of care that best suits them: CPE, private child care services or family daycare. It goes without saying that parents who choose private subsidized daycare or CPE will see the daily amount of \$7.00 that they spend per child in care gradually increase as the weekly allowance also increases. Of course, the subsidy amount paid to subsidized daycares and the CPE will be increased accordingly. When this allocation will reach \$100.00 per week, the daily rate will be deregulated and daycares may determine the price they charge for their services.

Any qualified person may open a daycare in accordance with government standards if they are able to finance it. Waiting lists will quickly disappear while competition among day care centers will allow parents to have more choice in the operating hours and on the nature of the services offered.

The Ministry of Family, freed from the obligation of monitoring compliance with the pricing policy of \$7.00 per day, will be able to devote more effort to inspect daycares to ensure suitable environment for children who attend them.

Caregivers

People with disabilities, regardless of their age, and the elderly can often rely on caregivers to avoid institutionalized accommodation. The amount paid to caregivers is much lower than the costs incurred when the disabled or elderly choose to live in an institution. The Conservative Party of Quebec will review the financial assistance to caregivers to facilitate this choice whenever possible.

PUBLIC FINANCES

NEEDED: URGENT TURN-AROUND

Policy objectives

The political objectives of the Conservative Party of Quebec regarding Public Finance and Taxation will respect the values of the party, such as: individual rights and freedoms, individual responsibility, market economy, limited government, confidence in Quebecers and a place for Quebec within Canada and throughout the world.

A Government of the Conservative Party of Quebec will implement the following policies with respect to public finances.

A Balanced Budget and Debt Reduction

When we combine the taxes paid to all levels of government, Quebec is the Canadian province with the highest tax burden. In addition, the Quebec government has amongst the highest net debt in North America in terms of the percentage of its GDP.

In its first term, a Government of the Conservative Party of Quebec will present a budget that is at least balanced (no deficit) and that will reduce the overall tax burden of Quebec taxpayers. In addition, these budgets will not provide for an increase in total expenditures and will even aim at reductions in these costs as long as the net debt (accumulated debt) of the Government of Quebec has not been reduced as a percentage of gross domestic product at a level making it one in the lowest quartile in North America.

Spending Cuts of the Quebec Government

We must balance the provincial budget but we must ultimately pave the way to begin to repay this huge debt that is weighting on the shoulders of future generations.

A Government of the Conservative Party of Quebec will lead a cost reduction exercise by focusing on three areas: first, the province will abandon certain activities that are not core to its mandate and restrict capital expenditures to its essential missions. It will then delegate more of its activities to the private sector to the extent that it can accomplish the same tasks for less. Finally, departments will review their processes and use their resources to do the same with less.

Subsidies and Corporate Welfare

Quebec provides billions of dollars per year in direct subsidies to businesses through loans, grants and tax breaks which are accessible to only certain businesses. This encourages dependence of these pampered few. By some calculations, the level of assistance, measured per capita, is more than four times the Ontario level. These grants and business subsidies create an unfair competitive advantage for the government's favoured businesses, in addition to causing distortions in the effective functioning of the economy.

A Government of the Conservative Party of Quebec will refrain from picking the winners among those who wish to provide goods and services in a healthy competitive market. Such a government will abolish, over time, subsidies and aid to businesses. However, as all Quebec taxpayers, businesses will benefit from a lighter overall tax burden.

State Intervention in the Economy and Crown Corporations

The size of the Quebec government and its public and quasi-public services is amongst the largest in North America. State intervention in most sectors of the Quebec economy has had the effect of creating an artificial economy which is not viable in the long-term and which offers less and less real opportunities to our youth. In addition, the economic implication of government intervention has generally resulted in the granting of monopolies by the province in various facets of the economy.

A Government of the Conservative Party of Quebec will review, in its first mandate, the role and purpose of each Crown Corporation and public and quasi-public agency involved in the economy including the existence of a monopoly in the provision and sale of goods and services by the latter. This review will be pursued to establish a list of those who should first and foremost:

- face competition by private interests in their field of activities;
- be privatized and subjected to competition in the provision and sale of their goods and services; or
- be abolished to allow their customers to meet their needs through the normal functioning of the market.

Payroll Taxes

Quebec has the highest payroll taxes in Canada. For many, this is the main factor which restricts the growth of our small and medium businesses since this tax is levied on human capital, thus impeding job creation for all Quebecers who want to work. A Government of the Conservative Party of Quebec, in its first term, will begin a gradual reduction in the level of payroll taxes, with the objective of bringing them among the most competitive in Canada, within a reasonable delay.

The Concept of User Fees

When society decides to allow the government to provide certain goods and services which are considered public, it is good practice to ask the primary beneficiaries of these services to bear a reasonable portion of the costs. Such an approach reduces the waste engendered by the consumption of goods and services offered for free. It also respects the equity between individuals and between generations.

A Government of the Conservative Party of Quebec will, from its first mandate, deploy a realistic application of this concept to most of the goods and services provided by the Government, without however increasing the overall tax burden of Quebec taxpayers.

The Overall Compensation of the Public Sector

When goods and services are offered to the population through the public sector, employees must be adequately compensated to achieve the quality of service expected by the public.

However, their compensation, when considered as a whole (i.e. including salary, bonus, vacation, sick leave, job security, pension benefits), should not be greater than it would be in the private sector under similar circumstances.

A Government of the Conservative Party of Quebec will ensure that the total compensation of government employees will be comparable to that offered to employees in the private sector in similar circumstances.

Tax Simplification

Quebec suffers from an income tax system which is too complex. It reflects a form of the social engineering that has characterized the actions of the government of the day. This blend of deductions, tax credits, exemptions and other measures is detrimental to Quebec entrepreneurs and represents a major source of inconvenience for many individuals.

A Government of the Conservative Party of Quebec will gradually adopt a simplified tax system and will reduce the number of brackets in the income tax regime. This will reduce the compliance costs imposed on society as a whole by the current tax system which mainly benefits tax specialists and the wealthy individuals who can afford their services.

Labour -Sponsored Funds

Labour-sponsored funds (Fond de solidarité FTQ and Fondation) and Desjardins Capital Régional have cost the Quebec treasury \$221 million in 2012. Only 21 % of their assets are invested in small and medium-sized businesses in Quebec. The yield obtained on their assets is so poor that, without the generous tax advantage extended to them by the federal and the provincial governments, they would experience great difficulty in raising new contributions. Their administration costs are very high. For example, the Fond de solidarité FTQ spent \$130 million in 2013 on such costs.

The governance of these funds is very poor and suffers from a democratic deficit. First, the unions, and not investors, appoint the members of the Board of the funds even if the unions do not invest any money in the funds. Second, a unit holder cannot withdraw his units before retirement even if he is not satisfied with the performance of the fund. Finally, in the last few months, there have been rumors of alleged links between some players surrounding the Fond de solidarité FTQ and members of organized crime.

A Government of the Conservative Party of Quebec will review all the rules applying to labour-sponsored funds. This review will include:

- a ceiling on the amount of capital which can be subscribed;
- a redeployment of their capital and a new mandate so that the funds will provide capital to Quebec small and medium-sized businesses;
- a review of the government strategy to encourage investment in risk capital by favoring a model where angel and private investors provide most of the capital.

GOVERNANCE

A STRONG AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT

Quebec is over-governed. Quebec citizens elect 78 federal MPs, 125 provincial MNAs, municipal councillors, school trustees and hundreds of board members of health institutions.

In spite of all these democratic structures, Quebec's state apparatus is extremely centralized and leaves little manoeuvring room to various local governments. In addition to fixing the maximum school tax rate, the Ministry of Education, Recreation and Sports also controls educational programs, leaving school boards little autonomy. The Ministry of Health and Social Services manages its own network of establishments in a very centralized manner, also leaving little leeway for institutions and their boards. Whether in the field of health or education, the working conditions of the staff, doctors, nurses, teachers or clerks are negotiated on a provincial level with little consideration for regional needs.

Municipalities have a little more autonomy since they have their own taxing powers. However, their own revenue source represents only half of their income. They rely on the federal and provincial governments to balance the budget. The province's role has greatly increased in Quebec during the last half century since the Quebec Government has used the weakness in municipalities' tax base to take over municipal programs.

The Conservative Party of Quebec wishes to draw on the experience of countries such as Sweden and Germany. These countries have reformed their health and educational systems by adopting new forms of funding that promote better use of available resources and greater autonomy of local government while increasing the accessibility and quality of services offered.

Strong Local Administrations

We wish to support strong and well-funded local governments to deliver better services to Quebecers. We therefore propose a major reform in Quebec's public administration, which revolves around these following pillars:

- property taxes will be reserved to municipalities;
- revenue raised through vehicle registration will be transferred to municipalities which will in turn determine the cost of vehicle registration;
- grants to municipal programs will be reduced;
- the provincial government will support municipal governments in their effort to better control the costs of their compensation policy;
- the provincial government will take the necessary measures to ensure that the transfer of services will be completed without increasing costs to municipalities; and
- the boards of health and education institutions will be exclusively composed of people who are not employees of the institution.

Competition in Public Transportation

Municipalities wishing to offer additional public transportation services must deal with very high costs. The salaries paid to employees of municipalities with a population of 25,000 people or more is 18.6 % above the level offered to employees of the provincial public sector. When benefits are factored in, their total compensation reaches a level which is 33.6 % above that of the provincial public sector. The employees of municipal transportation Authorities enjoy compensation levels which are roughly comparable to their municipal colleagues.

The current costs of public transportation are an obstacle to its development. In certain areas, if we require public transportation commissions to increase the frequency or the number of runs, additional losses would be incurred as a result of the high compensation offered to their employees.

In addition, the monopoly enjoyed by public transportation Authorities forestalls the development of complementary or competitive services. Such private transportation services could meet particular needs, increase the services in areas less well served or enhance the number and frequency of services. Such competition could convince public transportation commissions to better manage their costs or to suspend services which are no longer required.

A Government of the Conservative Party of Quebec will favor the development of private transportation services if they are profitable, complementary or competitive. The second paragraph of section 80 of the «Loi sur les sociétés de transport en commun» will be abolished.

New Source of Revenue for Municipalities

In 2008, Quebec municipalities spent \$4.3 billion for transportation and communication which represents \$1.9 billion more than the expenditures of the provincial government in 2011-2012 for the same purpose. The provincial government has collected from motorists \$460 million more than what was spent on Quebec road maintenance in that year. Municipalities, which are spending more than the provincial government in this area, receive only a fraction of the taxes paid by motorists. The time has come to restore the balance somewhat.

The Conservative Party of Quebec proposes to transfer to municipalities all fees collected from vehicle registration which amounted to \$684 million in 2011-2012. In return, municipalities will take full responsibility for the construction and the maintenance of secondary roads

Better Performance in the Management of Municipal Services

Ten years ago, the United Kingdom adopted a mechanism called "value maximization". The aim is to optimize the delivery of municipal services by using the most efficient suppliers. Maximizing value is a flexible approach that does not presume that municipal services must necessarily be provided by the local government if other more effective mechanisms exist. While not mandatory, competition thus remains an important management tool.

British municipal governments have the obligation to review the effectiveness of their delivery of services every five years and must : (1) consider the option of competition for services for which they are responsible ; (2) compare their performance to national indicators, (3) question

their service delivery methods; and (4) consult with taxpayers about their quality standards and delivery methods.

A Government of the Conservative Party of Quebec will arrange for Quebec municipalities to adopt, with full transparency, this method of management which is likely to improve quality and cost-effectiveness of municipal services in Quebec.

Creating the Position of Parliamentary Director of Public Finance

Experience teaches us that successive governments have not always been rigorous in preparing budgets submitted to the National Assembly. It has often been the norm to underestimate the costs generated by a Bill submitted to the National Assembly for adoption. In order to improve the quality of democratic debates in Quebec, the Conservative Party of Quebec will propose the appointment of a Parliamentary Director of Public Finance. This person will be appointed for a five-year term by a two-thirds majority of the National Assembly.

The Parliamentary Director of Finance will have the mandate to present to Parliament an independent analysis of the financial condition of Quebec and of the Budget as well as a forecast of the Quebec economy. The Director will also prepare an analysis of the financial impact of any Bill submitted to Quebec's National Assembly. The publication of this analysis should precede the Bill's second reading before the National Assembly.

Reducing the Number of Members of the National Assembly

Once the proposed reforms for health and educational networks are well-established and once Quebec municipalities have recuperated more autonomy, we will not need as many Members in the National Assembly. In an effort to further reduce unnecessary costs, we propose to adopt the federal electoral map for provincial elections. Taxpayers will be saving the expense associated with maintaining a separate electoral map in addition to saving the much larger sums required to fund the services of 47 members of the National Assembly and their staff, whose services will no longer be required.

Pension Plan of Members of the National Assembly

Members of the National Assembly receive generous pensions in comparison to the average Quebec worker and taxpayers pay dearly for this pension.

The pension plan for Members of the National Assembly has several advantages: the Member of the National Assembly can retire at 60 years of age although the normal retirement age is 65. He can also receive his pension even if he has not reached 60 years of age. This generosity is even more tangible in regard to pension credits, which amount to 4% per year, while the most generous private plans are limited to 2%. Therefore, after 25 years of service, the Member's pension may reach 100% of his salary.

Taxpayers fund most of these generous benefits since MNA's pay less than one-quarter of the cost of the plan.

The Conservative Party of Quebec will reform the system by delaying the normal retirement age to 67 years of age, limiting the pension credit to 2% per annum. The pension will not exceed 70% of the salary and Members of the National Assembly will be required to pay half the cost of their plan.

A Limit of 20 Ministers

There are currently 24 Members in the Council of Ministers, which represents 40% of all MNA's of the party that forms the government. This is not a record since at one time the number of Ministers reached 36. We are proposing elsewhere in this Program to reduce the number of Members to 78 once we have introduced reforms that will strengthen governance and accountability of local governments.

A Government of the Conservative Party of Quebec will limit the number of Members of the Council of Ministers to 20.

Resigning Members and Defectors

A Member who voluntarily resigns should not be entitled to a severance package or a transition bonus. The Conservative Party of Quebec will abolish these payments upon a voluntary resignation.

When an elector votes in an election, he chooses as a representative not only one of his co-citizens, but also a political party. This is why many believe that there is a moral contract between the elected representative and the constituents who gave him a mandate based on a specific political agenda.

In order to restore the people's confidence in their representatives, the Conservative Party of Quebec proposes to modify the Elections Act. The amendment will require an official elected under the banner of a given political party to resign should he decide to change political affiliation before the end of his mandate.

IMMIGRATION

PRIORITY TO JOBS

The Conservative Party of Quebec supports the arrival of new immigrants in Quebec. Immigrants can partly offset our demographic shrinkage and can enrich the pool of our workforce.

Beyond these utilitarian considerations, the party wants Quebec to be a haven where the integration of newcomers is accomplished in the most harmonious way possible. Thus, we will have an influx of future citizens ready to love and adopt our customs freely and through interaction. The selection of immigrants will be based on a balance between economic, cultural and demographic needs.

The means chosen by the Conservative Party to achieve these objectives are threefold:

- an enlightened selection of immigrants, with particular emphasis on the economic integration of immigrants in Quebec (according to the needs of the workforce or entrepreneurial skills);
- a welcoming policy where learning our language, our history and our traditions are especially essential; and
- an effective policy on integration in the workplace at their skill levels, including recognition of skills acquired abroad.

The issue of accommodation vis-à-vis immigrants is an issue that draws our attention. We will approach it as follows: a clear definition of the problem (including distinguishing between the public and private sphere), usage of existing tools and appropriate and minimalist solutions based on the reasonableness of the accommodation requested and not on the reason for which it is requested.

A successful integration into the labour market is part of the solution. Immigrants, like any other citizen, must meet their own basic needs and those of their families. Free citizens will assume their obligations, the responsibility for their choices and the consequences of their actions without waiting for the government to do it for them. In addition, integration does not mean assimilation. To integrate is to take part in the economic life (working, investing or starting a business) and to take to heart the immediate environment, the city, the community. Integration will not occur if, on the one hand, the labour market is too rigid or closed and, on the other hand, if social programs are too generous.

The Charter of Rights and Freedoms contains principles that must guide our practices. Individual freedoms and a secular state will be respected. During the selection process, would-be immigrants will be informed of this reality. Common sense and the desire to live together will guide us in the application of these laws and regulations and to resolve individual cases. Our core values will be respected and the problems will not be magnified for political or ideological reasons. We recognize that integration is not a one-way street but requires an effort by all. Patience, education, empathy and respect are watchwords for the reception and integration of

new Quebecers. However, there is no reason for us to encourage radical integrists and we will therefore ensure that those who hold those views are not subsidized nor are they asked to be involved in the integration of new immigrants.

JUSTICE

A HUMANE YET FIRM JUSTICE SYSTEM

One of the most fundamental missions of a government is the administration of justice, both civil and criminal, as well as the protection of our institutions, our way of life and the security of our citizens. In the framework of the Canadian Federal system, justice is a jurisdiction that is shared between the federal government and the provinces and territories. The criminal code falls under federal jurisdiction while the administration of justice comes under provincial and territorial jurisdiction, including the civil and criminal courts within its territory.

The federal government manages the penitentiaries that accommodate people serving a sentence of two years or more. It has also created Parole Boards, who have the exclusive authority to grant, deny, cancel or revoke day parole or full parole to inmates in federal prisons. The board can also order inmates to serve their full sentence.

The provinces, for their part, are responsible for those who have a sentence of less than two years. Quebec and Ontario are the only two provinces that have boards with the power to grant parole to offenders serving a sentence of less than two years.

A More Expedient Administration of Justice

Quebec has a very important role in administering justice. This mission, which is essential for the government, has experienced throughout the years its share of budgetary restrictions by Quebec governments, who have chosen to administer justice according to the impulse of their budgetary allocations. In playing this dangerous game, these governments have failed on all levels. The results are obvious to all. Our investigators are not up to the task. The lawyers who work for the Attorney General, who represents the public interest, are crushed by the workload. Several crimes are not considered serious enough for us to prosecute those who have perpetrated them. Accused are released because it takes too much time to prosecute them.

The Conservative Party of Quebec adheres to the principle of equality of individuals, meaning the equality of all before the law, and the responsibility of individuals. Laws exist for all, and all must comply and benefit, or suffer the consequences. The Conservative Party of Quebec believes in everyone's fundamental right to personal security and security of personal property; and to ensure this we must be firmer in the administration of justice and of public safety. We will allocate to the Justice department the resources necessary to fulfill its mandate. Justice must be dissuasive. A Government of the Conservative Party of Quebec will accelerate the administration of justice.

Economic Crimes

In Quebec, most of the investigations on economic crimes led by the Sûreté du Québec originate from requests from the government or from government organizations. This leaves little room for complaints coming from the private sector. It does not have to be like this since the Minister of Justice has the power to direct the Director of Public Prosecutions to allow, in the public interest,

private criminal prosecutions (entirely supported by the plaintiff) to proceed in parallel with public prosecutions. A Government of the Conservative Party of Quebec will instruct the Director of Public Prosecutions to allow private sector criminal prosecutions for suspected economic crimes.

The Hunting Rifle Registry

The Conservative Party of Quebec is against the Quebec Hunting Rifle Registry enabled under Bill 20. The legislative requirements of the federal government in terms of acquisition and possession of hunting weapons and of the provincial government relating to the transport and preservation of hunting weapons are already quite severe. This restrictive bill will have no effect on the number of homicides by hunting rifles.

LANGUAGE

ECONOMIC PROSPERITY AND LANGUAGE PROSPERITY GO HAND IN HAND

Language issues are among those that generate the most turbulent debates in Quebec. The Conservative Party of Quebec presents itself as the one who will develop the most innovative and rational solutions to emerging issues. This will be done in an ethical way by respecting everybody.

A Strong Economy Supports a Strong Language

It is a 'beautiful language' and it represents Quebecers most powerful cultural symbol. Our party is committed to be its ardent defender in Quebec and in Canada, so that it can, through a ripple effect, also shine outside the country's borders. This undertaking is therefore one of the cornerstones of our platform.

The promotion of the French language will be at the forefront of our relations with the Federal government as well as with the other provinces and territories. The promotion of the French language in all public institutions, and the promotion of French immersion and student exchange programs will be one of our measurable targets. They will be implemented with tact and in a constructive manner without arrogance. Thus, with determination, the Conservative Party of Quebec promises to protect and promote the French language in the country. We look forward to a more bilingual and more harmonious Canada where Quebec takes its rightful place.

To the extent of its possibilities and of its responsibilities, a Government of the Conservative Party of Quebec will promote the vitality of the French language at the international level, particularly through artistic activities and exchange programs. We will seek to bring the different linguistic communities closer together by building bridges between them rather than erect barriers.

A Government of the Conservative Party of Quebec will promote the development of the French language by focusing on the attraction of the French language within the context of Bill 101.

Moreover, our love of the French language does not translate into fear of other languages. To be able to develop and prosper across the world, Quebecers, and especially our youth, need to learn other languages, notably English. A Government of the Conservative Party of Quebec will improve the quality of its French language instruction in Quebec secondary schools and will require a working knowledge of the English language as a minimum standard for all Quebec students to obtain a high school diploma.

We will adopt, as a government, economic and fiscal policies which will end the relative decline that Quebec has come to know in the last 50 years. A strong economy will contribute to the development of French and increase its attraction. We will put an end to the exodus of our citizens and attract newcomers who will be happy to come and willing to work in French.

Minority language communities will be guided and encouraged to adopt our language as a means of mutual enrichment. We will end the perception of linguistic xenophobia on the part of the government.

THE PLACE OF QUEBEC IN CANADA AND THE WORLD

Actively Participate in the Federation

Who said: “Quebec is the anvil on which Canada was formed?” Regardless, this sentence is not false.

Canada is historically a young country. It was formed with Quebec as a cornerstone. Many events have however changed the face of this country since the early French explorers. Since Confederation, Canada has grown ever more westward, including provinces and territories and several ethnic groups such as the first nations, and a vast territory rich in natural and human resources.

The Conservative Party of Quebec values this great country and intends to take on the role of actively representing Quebec within the Confederation and ensure it assumes its role as a founding nation while preserving its characteristic distinctiveness within Canada.

More active participation in the Federation will liberate economic and social forces that will improve the well-being of Quebecers and of all our fellow Canadians. Our efforts will focus on the promotion of free trade within Canada. In collaboration with our Ontario partner, we will seek to extend the scope of the Ontario-Quebec trade agreement and to push it eastward. We will seek a similar agreement to the New West Partnership Trade Agreement, binding on British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan. A Government of the Conservative Party of Quebec will ensure such agreements benefit Quebec’s economy.

Our Influence Abroad

We will want to ensure that Canada's influence abroad grows. We shall contribute to it in our own way. Already through our involvement in the *Organisation internationale de la Francophonie*, our participation in UNESCO and the strong bilateral relations that we have with some countries such as France, we play a specific role of external representation.

Looking for Synergies

Our party wants to go further by improving synergies with our partners, this time within the country, especially with neighboring provinces and Francophone communities of Canada.

Montreal and the World

One aspect that the Conservative Party of Quebec intends to focus on is to open Montreal, our economic center, to the world even more. The issues addressed in this chapter and in the language and immigration chapters will find in Montreal a fertile and stimulating ground to achieve our goals if we achieve an economic and socially exemplary growth.

SOCIAL PROGRAMS

WELFARE REFORM

“The best way to kill a man is to pay him to do nothing.” We agree with these lyrics by Felix Leclerc. We will reform welfare to allow the greatest possible number of Quebecers to work. If a person is incapable of entering the labour market due to lack of training, we will offer him the opportunity to improve his skills (i.e. literacy courses for high school dropouts, or English and French language classes for allophones, etc.). We will also facilitate returning to school on a full-time basis if the necessary prerequisites are met.

A 35-hour volunteer position for a non-profit organization will be offered to whoever cannot find a job within a reasonable time after his training period. We will also restrict the period to which a person able to work can receive welfare to a maximum of 5 cumulative years in total.

HEALTHCARE

MAKING QUEBEC A LEADER IN ACCESSIBILITY TO HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Distinguishing Between Funding and Delivery of Services

The difference between the funding and the delivery of services must be kept in mind in any discussion regarding the healthcare system.

- **Funding:** Doctors fees, hospital fees and other services can be paid either by the public system or by the patient (or his insurer). In Canada, governments pay for approximately 70 % of healthcare services. The other 30% is paid by group benefits or by the patient who pays out of his own pocket (for example, prescriptions, dental care, vision care, orthopaedics and cosmetic surgery).
- **Delivery:** The nature of the public or private sector that delivers these services has nothing to do with the one paying for the services. It rather depends on the ownership and governance of the organization and the employment status of professionals who deliver these services, regardless of who pays for them. In Quebec, there are more than 3,000 private health institutions and organizations across the province (medical clinics – whether covered by the RAMQ or not –, dental, optometric, rehabilitation, physiotherapy, chiropractic and podiatric clinics, dietary services, audiology, denturology, optical, private medical laboratories, orthotics and prosthetics, and homecare, etc...).

Pay Hospitals on an Activity-Based Funding Model to Foster Competition

Most hospitals in Quebec and in Canada receive funding through overall budgets which are primarily determined by historical reasons. In an ever expanding system, this form of funding leads to rationing, and hospitals have no choice but to restrict admissions. There is no incentive for hospital managers to reform the system in order to reduce costs and to improve access and wait times.

Instead, hospitals should be paid per treatment, on an activity-based funding model as it is currently done in Scandinavian countries and in England. The amount paid to a hospital should be the equivalent of the average cost to perform the treatment in question in Quebec. This amount should be adjusted by taking into account a range of factors that are proper to each institution and patient, such as the geographical location, the individual characteristics of each patient, etc. Regular audits of at least 5% of all transactions will be performed to ensure that hospitals do not overcharge the province. Since the money will follow the patient, hospitals will be encouraged to expand their services to increase revenue. This formula also encourages hospitals whose costs are higher than average to improve their performance by adopting better practices. The growth in activity resulting from such an approach also means that patients will be treated more quickly, access to healthcare services will be improved and waiting lists decreased.

Does activity-based funding lead to cutbacks on the quality of services by healthcare institutions

in order to reduce costs? Quite the contrary, insofar as revenues depend on the number of patients they attract, it is imperative for them to offer quality services and maintain a good reputation. In addition, any hospital which readmits a patient for the same condition within 30 days of his last hospital visit must do so free of charge. In due course, we will look to extend activity-based funding to other activities, such as primary care and homecare.

Establish a Ranking System of Quebec Hospitals

In a competitive environment, for consumers to make an informed decision about their hospital, they need to have access to the proper information. Hospital ratings will be compiled and made public annually. They will include performance indicators based on clinical outcomes and the quality of care and hospital services. This rating will create emulation and competition between hospitals.

Encourage New Forms of Management and Hospital Ownership

We will encourage the emergence of new ways to manage and own hospitals. These may include public hospitals whose management will be delegated following a public tender or new hospitals belonging to non-profit cooperatives and community organizations or for-profit businesses.

Change the Remuneration of the Doctors in Hospitals

Hospitals will be funded on an activity-basis and doctors who practice in hospitals will be remunerated by those hospitals. Hospitals will sign service agreements with doctors, in which both the doctor's fees and his working conditions will be established. Such a system will encourage greater flexibility and competitiveness in the medical field.

Liberalize Medical Practices

It will be possible for doctors to work in the private sector without being obliged to disaffiliate from the RAMQ and the public system. This liberalization will occur only if certain conditions are met to ensure that the public system is not stripped of its current resources.

Contrary to common belief, there are available unused resources which can serve the private sector without affecting the public sector. For example, in 2008 it was estimated that more than half (51%) of Quebec specialists were willing to work an additional 4 hours weekly in the private sector. These same specialists agreed to be under an obligation to provide a minimum of a 35-hour work week in the public sector before being allowed to work in the private sector.

Allow Private Insurance

A 'duplicative' insurance is an insurance which covers medical care for people who continue to have access to the public system (and who are forced to contribute to it with their tax dollars) but also wish to have complementary treatment in the private sector. This type of insurance is currently illegal in Quebec and should be allowed so as to permit middle-class patients, who would not otherwise have the means, to have access to private treatment. This will represent

additional funding for the healthcare system without being a tax or a mandatory ‘fee’ levied on taxpayers!

A New Mandate for the CLSC

There are currently 97 *centres locaux de services communautaires* (CLSC) that provide first line health and social services. Furthermore, as a result of one of the main recommendations of the Clair commission report, the ministry of Health and Social Services has encouraged the implementation of family medical groups (“groupe de médecine familiale” or GMF)).

Unfortunately, in November 2012 there were only 250 accredited GMFs. The creation of a GMF is very cumbersome from an administrative point of view, which discourages any doctor, who wants to treat patients and not handle paperwork, from participating!

There is room therefore to accelerate the creation of GMFs and to use the CLSC platform to do just that. CLSCs that transform into a GMF would become more efficient because GMFs are, in fact, a small business regrouping doctors and nurses equipped with computer tools and clinical platforms.

Long-Term Care

In Quebec, unlike the situation in the rest of Canada and the world, most nursing homes are owned by the public sector. This situation forces the government to maintain expensive real estate. In other Canadian provinces, private, community and municipal players all have a major role in nursing homes.

We will implement the following principle: healthcare should be provided through the public healthcare system while housing should be left to licensed community players, non-profit organizations, cooperatives, private companies and municipalities. In short, the role of the public healthcare system is to treat and not to house.

Before proceeding with such a change, the ministry must first adopt strict accreditation rules and procedures to ensure the safety of persons and the quality of services.

Our priorities will therefore be the following:

- To prioritize homecare;
- To ensure universal coverage of medical, nursing and housing services by the public system and, optionally, by a complementary private plan. Other homecare services for assistance in daily activities and domestic help will continue to be the subject of graduated coverage depending on the degree of dependency and of the nature of the service, and the ability to pay (in all cases, the poorest should be protected);
- To allow a patient to receive either a cash payment or a tax-credit so he can choose the provider of his choice;
- To review the sums paid or the amount of tax credits offered to recipients of home care so that they can cover a larger portion of the fees charged by intermediate resources and contracted private CHSLDs;

- To provide an expansion and diversification of accommodation and housing to intermediate or family-type resources;
- To entrust by licensing or franchising to for-profit or to non-profit organizations the management of CHSLDs within five years;
- To adjust the contributions required by persons currently accommodated according to their ability to pay in order to better reflect the real cost of food and lodging. Such an adjustment would restore fairness compared with persons who reside in their homes at their expense; and
- To allow a patient, who is not housed in a public CHSLD within a period of 72 hours after being discharged from hospital by his physician, to require a government performance guarantee to find him a place in another home other than a CHSLD, at the expense of the government.

LABOUR

GIVING BACK CONTROL OF UNIONS TO EMPLOYEES

Because we care so much about liberty, we favour the possibility for employees to form an employee association. Being represented by a union is very legitimate to the extent it is the result of a voluntary contractual relationship between employees.

Over the years, the individual right of employees to form an association has become a collective right that now restricts individual rights. The right not to associate is no longer recognized. In addition, unions have lost sight of their core mission which is to represent their members in the negotiation of the work conditions. Unionized employees have lost control of their unions and it is time to give it back to them.

The Right to Work

“Closed Shop” provisions force employers to hire employees who are members of a union at the time of hiring. It thereby undermines the freedom of those who do not wish to be part of a union. We will amend the Labour Code to make this clause illegal.

Union Transparency and Financial Disclosure

A Government of the Conservative Party of Quebec will protect the freedoms of unionized employees and their right of association by imposing the obligation of annual financial disclosure on Quebec unions. This measure of transparency and public accountability will also restore confidence in Quebec’s union apparatus in favour of unionized Quebec employees.

We will also demand that all union members or all people solicited to become union members have simple and anonymous access (i.e. Ministry of Labour’s website) to the documents filed in connection with the application for certification by both the union and the employer, to the certification certificate and to the union’s constitution and by-laws, as well as those of the union federation to which it is affiliated. This will allow members and prospective members to know what their financial obligations are (or will be), what rules members are expected to follow and what the political and organizational goals of the union are.

Free Choice in the Use of Union Dues

The Rand formula forces employees to pay dues. This fact is justified because all unionized employees, union members or not, benefit from the union’s negotiation of the collective agreement.

Unionized workers forced to pay union dues, however, should have the right to demand that their dues not be used to finance activities other than direct representation related to union negotiations and the administration of their collective agreement. It is interesting to note that the CNTU has already taken a step in this direction by instituting in its charter that union dues cannot be used to support a political party.

A Government of the Conservative Party of Quebec will protect the rights and freedoms of unionized members by limiting their obligation to pay union dues to that portion only that is used exclusively for the negotiation and the administration of labour conditions. Thus, union campaigns based on political or ideological grounds will now be funded by voluntary contributions from union members rather than being covered by the Rand formula.

A Secret Ballot for Union Certification and to Maintain It

A union may file an application for certification with the *Commission des relations du travail* without holding a secret ballot if more than 50% of employees have signed a membership card. Since Saskatchewan adopted the systematic use of secret ballots in 2007, Quebec remains one in a minority of provinces to still allow this practice.

We are naturally in favour of the right of association. This fundamental right is protected under the Canadian Constitution and the Quebec Charter of Rights and Freedoms. However, only a secret ballot, administered by an independent ballot, will allow employees to freely and democratically express their fundamental right to associate with a union, or not.

Moreover, the provisions of the Labour Code dealing with the right granted to unionized employees, during the so-called period of « raiding », to decertify are not well understood. If union members were informed of this right at the appropriate time, they would be given the freedom to exercise their choice. If a significant number so desired, a vote on decertification would be required.

In short, a Government of the Conservative Party of Quebec will protect the rights and freedoms of workers by amending the Labour Code:

- To require a secret ballot for any application for certification, even when the number of signed cards exceeds half of the membership;
- To require a secret ballot on whether or not to maintain the certification, within each of the periods provided in the accreditation certificate.

Strike Votes and Ratification Votes

The Labour Code is silent on the obligation to hold a strike vote or a vote on the ratification of the collective agreement.

We will add a provision in the Labour Code for a secret ballot fifteen days prior to the beginning of a strike and for a secret ballot to ratify a collective agreement. All employees included in the bargaining unit will have a right to vote. The strike vote will need to be renewed every thirty (30) days.

Reducing Construction Costs

The construction sector represents about 15% of Quebec's GDP. Not less than twenty-six construction trades (with mandatory certification and unionization) are described, accredited and regulated by the *Commission de la construction du Québec*.

The number and categories of trades and the regulations that oversee their activities have the effect of increasing the labour shortage of skilled workers (since most tradesmen have only one trade) and impeding productivity. Tradesmen must hold many work certificates to be able to accomplish relatively simple or similar tasks to those they have already been trained for (a plumber that cannot plug an electric cord, an electrician cannot move a ladder or a piece of furniture, a carpenter cannot pour a small quantity of cement, etc.).

This lack of flexibility forces general contractors to hire a multitude of specialised trade workers who exercise only one trade and/or many sub-contractors companies who will be limited to working only on a small portion of a specific construction project. Construction projects or sites become much more cumbersome and difficult to manage for employers.

A government of the Conservative Party of Quebec will end this segregation between Quebec tradesmen in the construction industry. The number of trades with mandatory certification recognized by law will be reduced and others will be regrouped to allow for greater trade flexibility and versatility. We will align Quebec rules with the standards in Ontario (which has six trades). This reform will increase the productivity of the construction by \$600 million a year for the benefit of the Quebec economy.

Hiring Replacement Workers

Quebec and British Columbia are the only two jurisdictions in North America that do not allow the hiring of replacement workers. To prevent a citizen access to employment when he is willing to accept the wage and working conditions offered by an employer undermines his right and his individual freedom to work. We will amend the Labour Code accordingly.

Government Services are Essential Services

The Conservative Party of Quebec will declare that government services, when they are provided exclusively by the public sector, are essential services for the population. The right to strike of public employees who provide these services will be removed. Why? A strike in the public sector monopoly has negative consequences for the entire population. Not only does it deprive citizens of its essential services, but it is the whole population who, through additional taxation, will pay for the eventual outcome. For their part, the strikers are unlikely to put their employer in any financial difficulties since their strike reduces its spending. This will also apply to the part of the public sector that provides commercial services such as the production of electricity or the sale of alcohol, if the province has a monopoly of this service.

In contrast, in the private sector, the shareholders and the strikers take significant risks. The first, by having their company's competitiveness weakened through the strike and the latter because

the strike endangers their long-term job security. These two opposing forces are thus brought together to quickly force an acceptable compromise. This balance of power is not available in the public sector.

Strikes in the public sector often have adverse effects on the poor, since they cannot afford the existing available alternatives in the private sector. For example, the harm of transit strike is felt more greatly by the poor who rely on public transportation to commute than wealthier citizens who own their own cars. A minimum wage worker can lose half a day's salary if he needs to take a taxi during a transit strike. This same worker may lose his entire days wage if he cannot find someone to watch their children if there is a CPE strike.

Tax Deductions of Union Dues Used for Political Purposes

Quebec's tax legislation does not provide tax credits or tax deductions to any taxpayer who contributes to a political party. These donations are limited to \$100 annually. There is no reason why unions who devote enormous resources to political activities would collect these resources with the support of the Quebec Ministry of Revenue. A Government of the Conservative Party of Quebec will abolish the tax deduction for the portion of dues used for purposes other than union representation.

The Abolition of the Act respecting collective agreement decrees

The Act respecting collective agreement decrees forces workers to form and join unions, and removes the option to de-unionize. We believe that the time has come to end this anachronism.

The Abolition of the Tax Dedicated to Training the Workforce

The Quebec government is paternalistic towards business by levying a 1% of a company's payroll if it cannot prove that it has spent at least that amount towards training its workforce. In a market economy such as Quebec, employers should determine the resources allocated towards training their staff, as they do for all their other production costs. If their workforce is not sufficiently trained, they will suffer the consequences through a loss of customers or by not remaining competitive. The government does not need to intervene. The Conservative Party of Quebec will abolish this tax upon forming a government.