



ATLANTIC POLICY CONGRESS
OF FIRST NATION CHIEFS SECRETARIAT INC.
www.apcfn.ca

NDP Response to APC 2009 NS Candidate Questionnaire

1. Would you be willing to work with Nova Scotia First Nations to support a more collaborative, pro-active approach in dealing with the federal government?

Yes. There is a natural partnership between the Province and the Mi'kmaq First Nations leaders, in dealing with the federal government. A united position when possible, and collaboration on our approaches in any event, will benefit the Mi'kmaq First Nations and Nova Scotia. As a smaller province Nova Scotia needs to effectively represent and defend its interests in dealing with the federal government, as well as with other provinces. A collaborative, pro-active approach on First Nations issues will be part of the improved representation the NDP plans to undertake.

2. APC's *Aboriginal Economy Building Strategy* is key to the success of First Nations communities in Nova Scotia. If elected, would you be willing to meet with leaders in our community to identify opportunities for economic partnerships?

Yes, absolutely. The NDP recognizes the economic leadership that has been demonstrated by Mi'kmaq First Nations leaders in Nova Scotia, building stronger First Nations communities and a stronger Nova Scotia. The Atlantic Policy Congress, Atlantic Aboriginal Economic Development Integrated Research Program [AAEDIRP.] partnership of universities, the Mi'kmaq, Maliseet, & Innu Nations and governments is just one example of the economic initiatives led by the First Nations of Atlantic Canada which can inform on-going cooperation to create the secure jobs that communities and the economy need.

3. Are you willing to work with First Nations leaders in Nova Scotia to continue to support the Tripartite Forum and the KMK negotiation efforts and outcomes?

Yes. The NDP will continue the support of the Tripartite Forum, and the KMK negotiation efforts and outcomes, building on the good work and relationship of trust established by Minister Baker. The work of the committees of the Tripartite Forum, such as the Culture & Heritage Committee, the Health Committee have already produced real benefits for the Mi'kmaq First Nations in Nova Scotia. The Kwilmu'kw Mawklusuaqn Negotiation Office has lived up to meeting its English translation of "we are seeking consensus."

4. Would you be willing to improve health care services to our communities by working with First Nations leaders and your federal counterparts to develop meaningful delivery of services and innovative solutions?

Yes. All Nova Scotians deserve a health system which meets their needs. This NDP will work with the Mi'kmaq First Nations leaders and the federal government to identify and take advantage of opportunities to improve health care services in First Nations communities that result from cooperation and good planning of health services and health prevention.

5. Would you be willing to work with the Office of Aboriginal Affairs and other government department officials to develop strategies to ensure that our people have access to better training and job opportunities.

Yes. The APC "Life Long Learning From Youth to Elder" Conference in March 2009 illustrated not only what has been done, but what can be done when First Nations and the Province work collaboratively. Darrell Dexter has emphasized the goal of making Nova Scotia become Canada's Learning Province. The Mi'kmaq First Nations can and should be part of the agenda to achieve that goal. Specific steps in the NDP plan, Better Deal 2009, such as the Graduate Retention Rebate and Prior Learning Assessment, will be of value to First Nations through strategies to ensure that First Nations people have access to training and job opportunities.

6. Would you be willing to continue to support long term gaming agreements and other agreements with First Nations to support stronger economically sustainable First Nations communities and citizens?

Yes. The NDP will support those agreements, in the context of the cooperation to ensure a sustainable economy for the Mi'kmaq First Nations in Nova Scotia.