

A PRE-ELECTION "REALITY CHECK" FROM THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST CHILD POVERTY.



**YOU CAN SPEND THE NATIONAL SURPLUS
TO BUILD THE TRULY CIVIL SOCIETY, OR YOU CAN
SPEND IT ON TAX CUTS THAT BUILD NOTHING.**

**YOU CAN'T HAVE IT
BOTH WAYS.**

For years, governments have told us that they couldn't afford to end the disgrace of child poverty, or build affordable housing, or shorten surgical wait lists or fund better schools. That, in short, there were simply no funds to rebuild the social infrastructure that our parents and grandparents sacrificed to create. Not enough money to make adequate transfer payments to the provinces, no dollars to invest in the programs that Canadians need and deserve.

Not enough, for example, to raise the Canada Child Tax Benefit to the level needed to significantly help the **1.2 million Canadian children who are living in poverty**. The money, we were told over and over again, just wasn't there.

Well, it's sure there now – **national parties are promising massive government spending: billions and billions of dollars to pay for personal, corporate or sales-tax cuts** over the next few years.

Money that comes from surpluses of \$63 billion since 1998 and projected surpluses through 2011 of an additional \$97 billion.

Money that most Canadians have made clear they want spent on their children and their families, on a national child care program, on Aboriginal Canadians and new Canadians, on health and housing and schools, on good jobs, and on clean air and water.

And all the national parties are playing the tax-cut game.

So when candidates come calling, ask them how their parties plan to spend our national wealth – if any of them tells you that major long-term investments in social programs are too expensive, **ask why tax cuts are affordable when social spending is not**.

And if they answer that the country has to attract business, explain that business comes to Canada because of our social infrastructure. And that Canadian corporate profits have never been higher.

And you can also tell them that **Canada is already one of the lowest tax jurisdictions in the industrialized world**.

And that the future economic health of the country depends on the social

investments we make today.

And if any of them says that the country can pay for both lower taxes and social programs, make clear that this approach has left an entire generation behind while dramatically increasing the disparity between rich and poor.

And if candidates tell you that they will target the tax-cuts to the most needy, tell them that **the most needy are best served by implementing universally accessible social programs**.

Ask the candidates from all the parties to examine their priorities – and demand that **there should be no spending on tax-cuts, until after the necessary social investments are made**.

And to your friends who tell you that they want a tax-cut, ask them what portion of the national good they are prepared to sacrifice for the few extra dollars a tax-cut would provide.

Because the math makes no sense.

Neither, we firmly believe, does the present fiscal immorality.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST CHILD POVERTY

I t ' s a m a t t e r o f c o n s c i e n c e

For more information, contact the Campaign Against Child Poverty at 416-595-9230, extension 222, or check www.childpoverty.com