

PUBLIC POLICIES: ISSUES AND STANCES

During the 1993 federal election campaign, then-Prime Minister Kim Campbell was asked about her government's plans to cut social programs. In response, Campbell famously said "this is not the time, I don't think, to get involved in a debate on very, very serious issues."

The opposition parties and the media quickly attacked Campbell for avoiding a conversation about an issue during an election campaign.

Admittedly, her statement may have had some fairness to it. Societal issues are complex, can rarely be explained with a single reason, and usually require thoughtful solutions. Nevertheless, for many people elections are the only time they take an active interest in politics and governance. Thus, elections are a time to debate "very, very serious issues."

Several issues relevant to life in Saskatchewan will emerge during this election campaign. Choose a handful of issues you find interesting and important. For each issue, answer the following questions.

1. Examining the Issue

- a) What is the issue?
- b) Why is it an issue to you? Is it an issue for other people as well?
- c) Which political parties have addressed the issue?
- d) What is the policy/stance of each party on the issue?
- e) If the issue has not been addressed by one or more parties, why do you think that is the case?

2. Deconstructing the Party Stances

- a) Who will benefit the most from each party's solution to the issue?
- b) Who will benefit the least?
- c) What problems are left unresolved by the proposed solution?
- d) What problems could the solution create?



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