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November 26, 1996

Conservatives Win Provincial Election

By Julie Clow

"We started knocking on doors and ended up ramming them down," the new Premier of Prince Edward Island shouted to the crowd at the victory party held in the Charlottetown Hotel. On Monday night, November 18, Pat Binns was elected in what is to be the first Tory government on PEI in ten years. Hence, the slogan, 'Time for a Change.'

The Progressive Conservatives swept eighteen seats out of the available twenty-seven, leaving the Liberals with only eight seats and the New Democrats with the remaining one -- gaining their

first seat in Island history.

"Last spring we were confident that we would take the election. However, it was hard to keep momentum up during the summer months. Once the campaign started again this fall, the confidence was regained," said Binns when asked to comment on his opinion of the campaign.

The Conservative campaign held a major focus on post-secondary education, with three main goals in sight for UPEI's university and colleges. First, they intend to go to the private sector to "get back some of what you have given them." This means structuring groups to secure scholarships and bursaries.

This campaign will be centred in Ontario, Quebec and the regional office in Halifax. The intention is to get as much money as possible to help students finance their education. Binns claims there will be no strings attached or special access as the corporation is already benefiting from students. (Think back to the Kraft Dinner statement at the Leadership Debate at Robertson Library).

The second goal of the campaign is to maintain student fees and tuition levels. Binns says he can make no promises as far as this goes, as they have not finished their study of the financial situation of post-secondary schools. No predictions on the economy of the Island can be made until their study is done.

The newest idea that Binns has, is the multi-year funding program. If installed, this program will give students a projection of what they will be paying as far as tuition and fees go for up to four years. This plan will aid in student planning for their post-secondary education.

Binns also made brief comments on the small school issue on PEI. "The problem is they [Island schools] are either under populated to the point of being uneconomical, or overcrowded to the point of being unsafe." Binns also expressed concern as small schools are often the centre of small communities and if lost, could take away from the Island way of life. He plans to

tackle the issue on an individual basis, and then incorporate it into one overall strategy to save them.

The new Premier says that education is a main priority for his government. He feels that it is vital that the Island has a well educated work force for the future. He

is concerned with the future of their families. He says that he plans to work closely with the other ministers to alleviate this concern.

All in all, Binns is very excited by the victory. He had hoped that they would have broken through in the West Prince area, but is pleased with

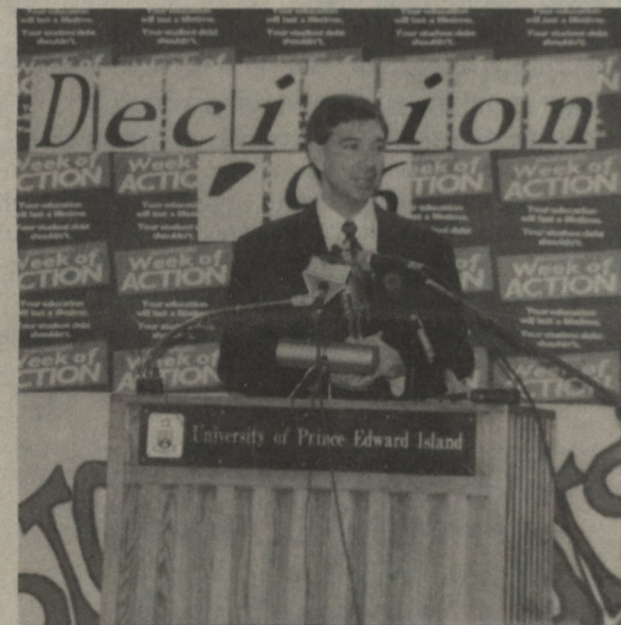
In Memoriam: Joseph A. Ghiz

Joseph A. Ghiz, former Premier and justice of the Supreme Court of PEI passed away Saturday, November 9, 1996.

In a state funeral, the first one held on PEI since 1954, Islanders and prominent federal politicians paid their respects to Ghiz. Active up to the end of his life, Ghiz cast his vote in the general election by advance ballot, from his wheelchair just three days before he died. Leone Bagnall, retired Progressive Conservative MLA summed up the loss of Ghiz in his statement to The Guardian. "He was a strong voice for unity, for Canada, one of the strongest we ever had. I don't hear that kind of voice out there anymore. His was the kind of voice that people listened to...he had that ability."

Ghiz was born in Charlottetown in 1945, attended Prince of Wales College, received his Bachelor of Commerce and law degrees in Halifax, his Masters from Harvard University, and in 1986 became Premier of PEI.

After six years in the Premier's office, 3 1/2 as leader of the Opposition, and a Supreme Court judgeship Joseph A. Ghiz passed away after his battle with colon cancer. He will be sorely missed by friends and foe alike.



Premier Designate Pat Binns

is interested in setting up a program to aid university and college graduates in starting up small businesses on the Island as this would keep youth here and cut down on the necessity to leave PEI to find work.

"Jobs are the big goal," Binns says, adding that with cutbacks in Unemployment Insurance more people are

the three of a possible nine seats that they did get. Many saw the West end of the Island as being under Liberal domination.

"I think people were looking for a government that would stand up for them in Ottawa, and that has a clear vision for the future. We've got that vision and that is what we are going to give them."

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