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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Chamber wants parties to show some frugality

With 11 days left in the provincial election campaign Nova Scotia's largest chamber of commerce raising concerns about the "freewheeling" spending announcements by the three major parties and warning members to be wary of the promises.

While all the party leaders are still committing to balanced budgets, they are also pledging new spending with little detail about what it will cost us and for how long, says the Halifax Commerce in a news release Thursday.

"The pressure on candidates during a campaign to outspend and out-promise one another leaves logic and common sense behind," says Valerie Payn, chamber president. "What we after the bidding war is either promises they can't keep or a fiscal threat to our economy. Much suffering to make our economy as strong as it is today, the business community will to have this work squandered."

The chamber insists that now is the time for the province to be paying down its \$12 billion

"While this is not the stuff that opens doors for candidates beating paths down our streets ensure the long-term economic sustainability of the programs we all hold near and dear. If the debt will ensure we have a competitive tax climate to attract industry and keep our brain talent here," the news release states.

The chamber believes voters should ask political leaders about these issues before the June election.

"So while more money on health and education are worthy causes, we're not working with a pool of money. Perhaps when a candidate knocks on your door you should ask, "How do you make smarter spending choices?" and "What are your plans so that your grandchildren are not saddled with a debt load that will limit their choices for the future?" " the release states.

The Liberal platform totals about \$1.5 billion over four years, and the Tories have unveiled a platform that exceeds \$1 billion. The NDP has only released estimated costs for the current fiscal year 2007-08. The total is \$162 million.

Using the parties' numbers, the platform promises are up 533 per cent compared to 2003 last election was held.

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" People from a planet without flowers would think we must be

mad with joy the
whole time to
have such things
about us. "

Iris Murdoch

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