

Toward Prosperity

Telecommunications Applications Research Alliance (TARA) Consultation

June 28th, 2000

Notes:

Education:

- There is a problem of disconnection with education in Nova Scotia. We cannot grow our economy and our youth by slashing education.

Tax Burden:

- There is a heavy tax burden on small companies in Nova Scotia compared to other jurisdictions like Ontario. This is going to hurt our ability to compete. Ex: a small company with four workers would have to pay source deductions around \$100,000. This is much too high for this company to be competitive. This company wants to expand and grow but taxes could hold it back.

Role of Government:

- Government must create a business climate that will level the playing field with other jurisdictions.
- We have the icing in Nova Scotia, but we lack the cake. Nova Scotia is a great place to live, but our business climate holds us back. It is very difficult to attract employees to Nova Scotia with the tax burden.
- Companies do not have “options” for their employees. It is hard to attract talent without this.
- The province must lobby the federal government on taxation issues.

Youth:

- Need to support youth entrepreneurship enterprises. 25% of students of Information Technology (IT) want to start their own business, but find it extremely difficult.

Principles:

- They seem to recognize hot growth areas, but they also try to be all things to all people. We cannot be all things to all people, we must make choices.

IT Industry:

- We need a big IT anchor company here in Nova Scotia. Government needs to attract one by offering incentives. Clusters form around anchor companies. Ex: Boston.
- We must educate people about venture capital.
- Money must be invested in Halifax.
- The IT industry needs to have some input into Community Colleges. The industry can get software designers from universities. It must have a voice on the set up of college programs.
- There needs to be a sense of unity in the IT industry in Nova Scotia.

Airports:

- We need to improve air access to Nova Scotia. Install a United States customs centre at the Halifax International Airport. We must be more accessible to the US.

Models for Nova Scotia:

- South Wales was dead 30 years ago. The mines had closed and it turned into a ghost town. They changed things around and now they are a booming area. They did this by eliminating property taxes for ten years.