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December 3, 2021

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GOVERNMENT

Mr. Melanson (Dieppe, Interim Opposition Leader, L): Thank you. Mr. Speaker, the Conservative government's ship is starting to take water. The Premier is punching holes all over its ship with all these different messes that he has been creating with the First Nations, the labour disputes, and the federal government. We cannot name them all. There are a few ministers who tried to throw a few life jackets with a health reform document, with a local governance reform, and, yesterday, with a minimum wage increase.

The reality is that all these messes that this Premier has been creating are his fault. If the Premier started listening to experts and to people who are knowledgeable on all these issues—First Nations, negotiations, and dealing with the federal government, for example—these messes would not happen. Premier, when are you going to start listening to experts and to the people who really understand the issues?

Hon. Mr. Higgs (Quispamsis, Premier, Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, PC): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that the Leader of the Opposition is well accustomed to just letting things roll along. It is all a good-news story, and that is great. We want a combination of both. We want good news, and we want results on issues that have been just kicked down the road.

It is not always easy to affect change. That is right, that it is difficult, but at the end of the day, change is necessary. We have talked about that a lot of times here in this House and a lot of times outside this House. Anyone who thinks that we can just keep doing the same thing without changing is really not planning or mapping out the future for this province.

As we talk about the issues in relation to First Nations, it is time to get that resolved so we can grow together as a community and so we can grow together as a province, as a nation, and as several nations. That is the goal here. Yes, we are having some tough discussions, but at the end of the day, we will have a path forward. On other issues, the same thing will apply.

So, yes, you can take a position to just not have a position, and that is your position. But, Mr. Speaker, we believe it is necessary to help and to build a future for our province.

Mr. Speaker (Hon. Mr. Oliver): Time.

Mr. Melanson (Dieppe, Interim Opposition Leader, L): Mr. Speaker, the Premier seems to thrive on having all this conflict, unrest, and bad news. As I said yesterday, New Brunswickers have been going through a very difficult time during this pandemic and they are tired. It is tough on people's mental health, but the Premier is adding fuel to the stress of all New Brunswickers by dividing and conquering and not really listening.

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By having discussions that are monologues, you do not accomplish anything. But when they are dialogues, there is listening and paying attention to what New Brunswickers are asking for and aspiring to, and then we can get some changes, some positive changes. But always being in a conflict and in a confrontation does not work. It does not bring the positive changes that New Brunswickers would embrace.

Premier, there are people who understand these issues. Can you consult them and listen to them?

Mr. Speaker (Hon. Mr. Oliver): Time.

Hon. Mr. Higgs (Quispamsis, Premier, Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, PC): I think, Mr. Speaker, that what the Leader of the Opposition really needs to reflect on is what has been happening since we came into office, going back to 2018 and the green paper and the extensive work that was done around the province to get a handle on what education is to look like. And there is the study that we are waiting for now from the commissioners, on both the *Official Languages Act* and the status of education in our province. There are also the issues that the Minister of Health went through in 49 or so virtual town hall sessions all over this province to develop a health plan that is second to none and that has the future mapped out.

There is the work of the Minister of Local Government that has been done in every part of this province to finally address the report that was done over twenty years ago—or back in 2008—about making better governance models in our province. When was it done before? The fact is that it was not done before because the opposition just really does not want to do anything. It just wants to come here, idle along, spend everybody's tax dollars, and show no results.

Mr. Speaker (Hon. Mr. Oliver): Time.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Melanson (Dieppe, Interim Opposition Leader, L): Mr. Speaker, the Premier keeps coming back to the same refrain and the same old thing: Blame somebody else. He says that we are profligate and so on. It was, though, a Liberal government that had the first budgetary surplus in 10 years—a Liberal government.

Mr. Premier, through the Speaker, the reality is that this government spent its first two years in office trying to manage a pandemic. During that period, the government came up with no new initiatives. Since the last election, with a majority, we see the Premier's true colours and true actions and what he really wants to do. It is just a mess and conflict with different social groups in our province. These are the Premier's true colours. If the Premier were not always busy micromanaging and if he listened to the experts, we would not have these conflicts. Are you going to consult the experts?

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Mr. Speaker (Hon. Mr. Oliver): Time, member.

Hon. Mr. Higgs (Quispamsis, Premier, Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, PC): Mr. Speaker, I always find it humorous when the Leader of the Opposition, a Liberal, can mention “surplus” in a sentence.

In fact, going back to 2018, since the Leader of the Opposition referenced this, they promised \$1.6 billion in new spending when trying to get elected. But guess what! They did not get elected—or we would be further in the hole now, and there would not be any sign of a surplus. They tried to drag things into the previous year. The games that were played in the past to make things look good rather than be good are very, very different.

Do we want to talk about a government that is showing its colours? Yes, we are showing our colours. We are showing the facts about what can build New Brunswick. Guess what, Mr. Speaker! Even through COVID-19, New Brunswick has been growing at a pace faster than has been seen in generations. What about that? That is the reality. I know it hurts. I know it hurts to sit over there and say: Wow, what is happening to New Brunswick? All these people are coming in, prices are going up, and people want to be here. It is great to be in the government in New Brunswick at this time.

Mr. Melanson (Dieppe, Interim Opposition Leader, L): Do you know what, Mr. Speaker? This government does not even look good, and nothing that it is doing is good. That is the issue here. By the way, when we left office in 2018, you had a surplus. We left you a surplus. Since then, the federal government has kept on bailing you out and giving you money that you are taking and just bringing straight to the bank.

(Interjections.)

Mr. Speaker (Hon. Mr. Oliver): Order.

Mr. Melanson (Dieppe, Interim Opposition Leader, L): As that is happening, Premier, New Brunswickers are suffering and dealing with difficult issues. Then you are fueling these messes with what you think is always best and not listening to New Brunswickers—all New Brunswickers. It does not matter which group. That is the reality today.

Premier, there are people who know how to get things done. You are supposed to be striving to get results. Those people can get results. Step out of the way, get them to deal with the issues, and we will get positive results. Will you do that?

Hon. Mr. Higgs (Quispamsis, Premier, Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, PC): This has been a Liberal tradition. It is all talk, with no real facts to back it up. You know, I like to see newsclips from around the country, and I will quote some that go back to

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the Liberal's time, which said this: Whatever New Brunswick is doing, do not do it. Do the opposite.

Well, do you know what they are saying now? It is this: Suddenly, the have-not province has it all. What about that? That is not coming from us. That is coming from people looking from the outside in. That is coming from people who moved in and are telling the outside: Wow, there is a hidden gem here in the Maritimes, and it is New Brunswick.

Mr. Speaker, we can talk about facts. We can talk about growth. We can talk about the fact that the minister is balancing the budget. We are managing through COVID-19, and we are working with every community. We had great outreach during the height of COVID-19, and we still have it.

It is interesting to see the federal government supporting us because the opposition would say, Oh, the federal government—this government does not work with it. We work with the federal government very closely, Mr. Speaker. It has helped us a lot throughout COVID-19, and it still is.

Mr. Melanson (Dieppe, Interim Opposition Leader, L): Mr. Speaker, the Premier seems to be getting a bit aggressive this morning because he is on the defensive. He is on the defensive, for sure, again this morning.

You know, the reality in this province is that when we talk to New Brunswickers, they want to have their government bring positive changes. They do not want to go through conflicts and confrontations, strikes, legal battles, or strike votes. Helping people is what New Brunswickers are looking for. People aspire for better, not worse, and people do not want to see conflicts. That is human nature, but the Premier... It is a fact. There are conflicts all over—all over—again and again. Then he creates mess and uncertainty, and that is tough on people. Premier, can you talk to people who understand these issues and get them resolved?

Mr. Speaker (Hon. Mr. Oliver): Time, member.

Hon. Mr. Higgs (Quispamsis, Premier, Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, PC): Mr. Speaker, what we do know is that I cannot talk about these issues with the Leader of the Opposition because, most times, he is confused about things such as these and because it is not about getting it done but about rolling over. That is the method of the Leader of the Opposition and what those members stand for: We will just keep on rolling over. We will keep on buying you, buying you, and buying you, but we will not ask for your help to improve things in our province.

Our ministers are going around this province and asking what we can do better. In the forestry sector, the minister is going to and dealing with the woodlot owners, dealing directly with the people who are fueling the economy in this province. That is, in fact, what

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the ministers are doing in every sector. They are talking to people about how we can be better—not about how we can stay the same and not about how we can just throw out words of empty thoughts but about how we can get better. What I am proud to say is that every New Brunswicker wants to see this province be better, stronger, and last longer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Melanson (Dieppe, Interim Opposition Leader, L): How is it making it better when you have a strike with 22 000 people—New Brunswick workers, professional individuals working for the government? How does that make it better? How does that make it better when nurses are now going through a strike vote? How does that make it better? How does it make it better when school bus drivers and janitors still do not have a contract? And we are short on school bus drivers in this province. How is that making it better? How is it making it better when this Premier strives for legal battles? He wants to have people pushed against the wall—pushed against the wall—and then they have to make some very tough decisions on such things as strikes and going to court. How is that making it better, Premier?

There may be people around you right now who know better and who understand these issues. Maybe you should step out of the way and let them take over. Maybe it will get better. I am not convinced, but maybe. I am hopeful. Can you step out of the way, Premier?

Hon. Mr. Higgs (Quispamsis, Premier, Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, PC): Mr. Speaker, the only roadblock this province has is the man I am staring at right now. Sorry, I digressed there for a moment.

Mr. Speaker, I think that what we are seeing here, if we want to talk about the current situation with the nurses, is that we have made two offers with the nurses. We have had two tentative agreements with the nurses—two tentative agreements with the nurses—and they were turned down.

(Interjections.)

Mr. Speaker (Hon. Mr. Oliver): Order. Order, please.

Hon. Mr. Higgs (Quispamsis, Premier, Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, PC): No, I never said three. We had two. We had two—two tentative agreements. Can you count or not?

(Interjections.)

Mr. Speaker (Hon. Mr. Oliver): Order, members. Premier, please sit down. Official Opposition House Leader. Please, this is not a debate back and forth. Speak through the chair.

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Hon. Mr. Higgs (Quispamsis, Premier, Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, PC): Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, we have had two tentative agreements. We had one that was early on, back several months ago. We had one that was on October 6, and it was a revision of the first one. Both tentative agreements were turned down. Then, from that point, we said: Well, give us a revised offer. Tell us what it is that you think you want so that we can know.

That is how you work with these things.

Mr. Speaker (Hon. Mr. Oliver): Time, Premier.

[*Translation*]

HEALTH CARE

Mr. D'Amours (Edmundston-Madawaska Centre, L): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health loves press conferences, but she never delivers the goods. She had announced that every New Brunswicker would have a family doctor within six months. She had also announced reform for the spring, then the fall, then the winter. She finally came up with a document that was a few pages long. It is just a few weeks until the holidays, and the minister has done nothing to flatten the curve and control the COVID-19 outbreaks.

The Minister of Health and the Premier get mixed up in everything, and the results are catastrophic. When are they going to let the experts do their job? When is the minister going to let the Chief Medical Officer of Health retake control of the situation?

[*Original*]

Hon. Mrs. Shephard (Saint John Lancaster, Minister of Health, PC): Well, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member opposite asking questions. You know, he can point and he can direct, but the Leader of the Opposition had been part of the COVID-19 Cabinet committee right up until very recently, November. All our decisions were made together, and they had all the information that they needed to understand the directions we took.

Mr. Speaker, it is difficult. The COVID-19 pandemic has been very, very difficult—not an easy time for anybody—and certainly, the people of our province have stepped up to do what they can to ensure that we can control the spread of COVID-19.

The people at Public Health have been with us all the way, giving us recommendations and helping us to understand what we need to do. They have also been with us at every press conference, and they have been delivering news to the people of New Brunswick and talking about why restrictions are put in place and why we are doing what we are doing. We will always have Public Health helping us to make decisions in this province, Mr. Speaker.

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Mr. Speaker (Hon. Mr. Oliver): Time, minister.

[*Translation*]

Mr. D'Amours (Edmundston-Madawaska Centre, L): Mr. Speaker, it is not the decision made by Cabinet or the government that we want to know about, but rather the decision made by Public Health. That is what the people of this province want to know about. It is straightforward, but the minister and this government absolutely do not get it.

[*Original*]

Since the beginning of the pandemic, New Brunswickers have made great sacrifices. They have gotten vaccinated, they have worn masks, and they have respected the barrier measures. They have completely changed their habits, and they have found day-to-day solutions to keep everything going—their parents, their kids, their work, and their businesses.

But since the Premier's chicken dance this past summer, the situation has been getting worse and worse. The minister will not let the Chief Medical Officer of Health take control of the situation. The minister says that she has a plan. Can she give us an outline of that plan? Minister, it is time to report to this House and to make sure that you are accountable to us and to New Brunswickers.

Hon. Mrs. Shephard (Saint John Lancaster, Minister of Health, PC): Mr. Speaker, we did not walk away from the table—they did.

The people at Public Health have been consummate professionals. They have been at every single meeting. They have been working day and night—tirelessly, I may add—with 14-hour or 16-hour days almost every day through this pandemic, and they deserve our respect and our thanks. Public Health is how we did so well.

And we know that our public has been with us and is still with us in helping to contain the spread of COVID-19. We need the public's help because the fourth wave has been tough, and it has been not unlike what many other provinces have experienced.

So, Mr. Speaker, we are all in this together. Public Health is with us and leading us. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker (Hon. Mr. Oliver): Time.

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[*Translation*]

TOURISM

Ms. Thériault (Caraquet, L): Mr. Speaker, tourism is one of our most important industries, and it requires a coordinated approach. With its reform of local governance, the government wants to transfer responsibility for tourism to the 12 regional service commissions. Does that mean that, in a small province like ours, 12 RSCs will have 12 different tourism strategies and that they will have to compete with each other? Without adequate funding, the wealthiest regions will have an advantage, and the others will lose out. So, how will it be possible to ensure, in this restructuring, that all regions have an equal opportunity and that the province has an effective overall strategy? I would like to know if the Minister of Tourism, Heritage and Culture has approved this part of the local governance reform.

Hon. Mr. Allain (Moncton East, Minister of Local Government and Local Governance Reform, PC): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This is indeed a good question. During the consultations, we quickly realized that people out in the regions take on the responsibility for tourism. Many municipalities, for instance, take on the responsibility for economic development, tourism, and regional transportation. So, we want better coordination of staff on these files.

We have seen that RSCs are able to deliver certain services or work on strategies. This is why, Mr. Speaker, we are going to ask the RSCs to come up with strategic plans on some of these files we have just mentioned, in order to improve coordination. Communication and cooperation are essential. That is the objective of the white paper. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. Thériault (Caraquet, L): Mr. Speaker, I would like the minister to rise and tell us whether she has approved this plan. This is because, according to what the Minister of Local Government and Local Governance Reform tells us, everything will be downloaded to the RSCs. So, what will happen, for instance, to the Tourism Industry Association of New Brunswick? How can it remain relevant and viable if the strategy and vision of our province are so fragmented? Should we expect reductions in the budget for the Department of Tourism, Heritage and Culture and, in turn, an increase in local property taxes to fund tourism initiatives that will become a regional responsibility? I would like the Minister of Tourism, Heritage and Culture to answer the question, please.

[*Original*]

Hon. Ms. Scott-Wallace (Sussex-Fundy-St. Martins, Minister of Tourism, Heritage and Culture, Minister responsible for Women's Equality, PC): Mr. Speaker, I am absolutely thrilled to answer this question. I absolutely support this plan going forward.



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We have been in consultation with communities across this province. What we do know is that no one can direct the future of tourism in their regions better than the people in the regions themselves. The Tourism Department is not going anywhere. We are there, and we are communicating with these communities. I am going around visiting all of them. They like this plan. This is very important. I should not be dictating, from Fredericton, to these regions as to what they have to offer to the people who visit them. I will say to the member opposite that I am absolutely thrilled that tourism is a part of this municipal reform. Thank you.

LOBBYISTS

Mr. Coon (Fredericton South, Leader, G): Mr. Speaker, when Jim Irving appeared before the Standing Committee on Climate Change and Environmental Stewardship, I asked him how often his company lobbied government. He replied: We will have as many meetings as required to get things done.

Well, it appears that J.D. Irving is getting things done. Two years ago, the Minister of Natural Resources announced that he was going to bring fairness to woodlot owners, but he was unable to act. Two years ago, he announced that he was going to create 480 000 ha of protected areas, but he has been unable to protect a single hectare. The minister is clearly having trouble getting his things done. Can the Minister of Natural Resources tell the House how often over the past six months that he or his department has been lobbied by J.D. Irving, as it tries to get its things done?

Hon. Mr. Holland (Albert, Minister of Natural Resources and Energy Development, PC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise here to close out the week in the Legislature and to highlight the fact that it is obvious that the member opposite has never spent a day running any department, has never spent a day sitting on the government side, and has no concept or understanding of the work that it takes to get to the point of making historic change.

He need only look to the conservation stakeholder groups, which he would refer to on a regular basis to talk about the ongoing work as it relates to protecting and preserving the land mass in New Brunswick. The New Brunswick Federation of Woodlot Owners and all seven different boards have been in the Cabinet room several times to talk about how we are going to make things better.

We are very excited about the fact that we have not stopped since before getting elected, since putting it in our platform, and we are going to deliver results that will show that the natural resource landscape in the province of New Brunswick will have promise and will have a future like never before.

Mr. Coon (Fredericton South, Leader, G): Mr. Speaker, all that New Brunswickers have to force the lobbyists out of the shadows is the *Lobbyists' Registration Act*, which names them but shields their work. Citizens cannot find out who is lobbying whom, when the lobbying

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occurred, and what the subject matter was. There will always be lobbyists, but they used to do their work in the lobby, where everyone could see what they were up to. Allowing them to hide in the shadows corrodes the democratic process.

Canada has a *Lobbying Act*. British Columbia has a *Lobbyists Transparency Act*. Will the Premier commit to tabling a bill to create effective lobbyist transparency legislation in New Brunswick so that his ministers, like the Minister of Natural Resources, can get the people's work done? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Mr. Higgs (Quispamsis, Premier, Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, PC): Thank you for the question. I think that it is important for us to realize what exposure we have there and what is necessary. I would like to learn more from the Leader of the Green Party to understand what shortcomings we have and then go from there. It is something that deserves our paying more attention to, so maybe we can plan a discussion and learn more. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

COURTS

Mrs. Conroy (Miramichi, PA): Mr. Speaker, I have received multiple complaints in the past regarding a concern that there is no current full-time clerk at the Miramichi courthouse. It is putting a strain on our system. People feel that the turnaround time is too slow, and it is affecting family files and probate files. If you do not have a clerk to move things along, it is going to cause a lot of frustration and a lot of loss of money as well.

We reached out to the minister's office and were told that they do strive to provide a high level of service, but they did not comment on the loss of the clerk. Our clerk at the Miramichi courthouse has been removed and replaced with a casual employee and lawyer who is there only part-time. Without a clerk in a very hectic environment, we are not achieving a high level of service. The number of cases is going up, and the work is piling up quickly. Can the Minister of Justice please tell me what is happening with the clerk position in Miramichi and when the position will be filled?

Hon. Mr. Flemming (Rothesay, Minister of Justice and Public Safety, Attorney General, PC): Mr. Speaker, the administration of justice is done through the public service. It is done in cooperation with the judiciary. It is not done on the floor of Legislature for political posturing. These positions are based upon caseload. They are based upon volume. They are based upon the speed at which things move.

I will look into it for the member. I do not mind doing that, but I want her to know that it is not the position of the Minister of Justice to run around and tell the public service, the judiciary, how they should staff their particular offices at any particular time. Maybe other people do that, but that is not what this government does. This government operates on efficiency, value for service, and getting things done.



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Mr. Speaker (Hon. Mr. Oliver): Thank you.

[Translation]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Mr. LeBlanc (Shediac—Beaubassin—Cap-Pelé, L): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Minister of Local Government and Local Governance Reform tabled one of the most significant pieces of legislation that has been tabled in the House over the last few decades. I am talking about the bill entitled *An Act Respecting Local Governance Reform*. Imagine our collective surprise, Mr. Speaker, during second reading of the bill yesterday, when not a single member of the government caucus rose to support the bill. This may be an indication that government members are hearing about the same concerns as we are. I am sure the people who elected them know their position on the details of the reform.

My question is for the Premier: Why has no government member risen to support this bill at second reading? Is support for the bill lacking? Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Allain (Moncton East, Minister of Local Government and Local Governance Reform, PC): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Accountability is essential in the parliamentary system. To see opposition members playing petty politics on second reading... People are watching us on television, and they want to see us debate this bill. They want to see questions being asked. Why are we not going into the Standing Committee on Economic Policy to take this bill apart? That is what matters. That is where people will get their answers.

It is easy to play petty politics. That is what the member for Shediac—Cap-Pelé is doing. People do not want to hear what we have to say; they want to hear what the bill says. They want to know what is in the bill. Please, give us some more support—please. This is the first I have heard about the Liberal Party having concerns. I have not received a single brief, file, or email about the bill I tabled.

Mr. LeBlanc (Shediac—Beaubassin—Cap-Pelé, L): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I am the member for Shediac—Beaubassin—Cap-Pelé.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard a lot of concerns raised in communities throughout the province. Now, New Brunswickers are beginning to feel what the repercussions of municipal reform will be. People have gained a better understanding of the short- and long-term consequences of this major initiative. The government is seeking to reshape 50 years of history in a few months and to literally adopt drastic Acts in a few days, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister of Local Government and Local Governance Reform specify which measures will be taken to respond to the countless concerns of people in this province? Thank you.



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Hon. Mr. Allain (Moncton East, Minister of Local Government and Local Governance Reform, PC): Mr. Speaker, there is uncertainty, there is fear of the unknown, and there is misinformation. So that is why. I am just a rookie MLA here. The member opposite has been here a lot longer than I have, and he knows that when you bring in a bill, we will debate it. We will have discussions. We will have a transition period, which will be a consultation at the same time—all in 2022. That is why we are moving forward with a white paper within a process which, as I have elaborated, is really good.

I wish I could do an RTI request on the opposition members. Why? Because I would like to know how many emails they have sent to me. I know the answer—not one, Mr. Speaker. Not one. Not one.

I can tell you right now that we are going to be working with New Brunswickers for the next year, and we are going to give them local government because we have been talking about it for 25 years.

(Interjections.)

Mr. Speaker (Hon. Mr. Oliver): Order.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Mr. Melanson (Dieppe, Interim Opposition Leader, L): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Nurses are proceeding with a vote on whether or not to strike. I saw some coming into the hotel to vote early this morning, probably before their shift work. It is expected that by Monday, we will have the results of that strike vote. From what we hear, there is probably going to be a strong mandate to strike, but we will wait and see.

The Premier has the weekend in front of him. He is probably happy that it is TGIF. But he has the weekend in front of him. Is he already working on an offer that will be put forward to the nurses next week? Unfortunately, the nurses have to go through a strike vote—but, again, next week? Are you working on an offer that will resolve this issue once and for all and that will provide some respect for nurses so that we will be able to retain and recruit them and provide them with fair wages and better working conditions? Are you working on that right now? If not, will you be doing so over the weekend, Premier?

Hon. Mr. Higgs (Quispamsis, Premier, Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, PC): Mr. Speaker, I think the Leader of the Opposition continues to be confused about the process. We have issued two offers in the past. They were both rejected. So we have asked for the position of the nurses. They are meeting. The meetings are scheduled for next week. We have asked them to come back to the table with their position so that we will know what they are looking for. That is how the process works. I have explained that a few times.



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I am optimistic that it will be resolved this week because we will be working closely with them in order to understand their real concerns and to make sure that we can address those, Mr. Speaker, as we must. I will continue to be optimistic that we will find a solution. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker (Hon. Mr. Oliver): The time for question period has expired.