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May 18, 2022

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COST OF LIVING

Mr. Melanson (Dieppe, Interim Opposition Leader, L): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The more we dig into trying to understand the inaction of this Premier and his government in trying to deal with some of the pain that is being created at the pump, because the price is still very, very high today... It has been four and a half months of inaction on the price at the pump, and we are now seeing more and more that the Premier and this government have total control on how to deal with this.

We know that last year, when the Premier and his government announced their carbon plan and how to address it—and I quote from a press release from March 17, 2021—they said, “the government implemented a made-in-New Brunswick carbon tax plan to replace the federally imposed”—they say—“carbon tax. It is designed to allow the government to decide how best to return that revenue back to New Brunswickers.” That is what they said, and that is what they can do. Why are you not doing that, Premier?

Hon. Mr. Higgs (Quispamsis, Premier, Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, PC): Mr. Speaker, this week, as we have gone around and around on this, we know that the whole purpose in relation to the carbon tax was to raise prices to reduce consumption. We know that we are well beyond the views of the carbon tax and what it was intended to do, and we are well beyond even maybe getting to the scenario of \$170 per tonne. So it is achieving what the federal government wanted to achieve. High prices have made it more difficult and more expensive for everyone—everyone in the province—to actually try to live and thrive and survive. It is achieving exactly what the federal government wanted. Then world events came along and made it even worse. Has there been any evaluation of any of that? None—none.

In this scenario, as the member of the opposition talked about, he made a reference that I could reduce the taxes and do what I want about the carbon tax. We tried that the very first time around. I think that the carbon tax went on at 5¢ and we reduced taxes by 5¢, and guess what? We got a letter from the federal government saying: No more of that.

But yesterday, I listened to the Leader of the Opposition... I will have more to say in a few minutes, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Melanson (Dieppe, Interim Opposition Leader, L): You know, Premier, you designed your own plan. It is the New Brunswick plan for how to deal with this price on pollution. It is your plan. You have given yourself all the tools to be able to give it back to New Brunswickers. Actually, you did it. When you announced your own plan, you did reduce the provincial portion of the fuel tax—you did. You can do it again. You can do it again. It can be temporary if you wish, but you can do it again.

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It has been almost four and a half months—it is getting to five months—of people paying way too much at the pump. Their gas tanks are only half full because they cannot afford to fill them. Their fridges are getting emptier and emptier, and they cannot afford their groceries. Premier, you have given yourself all the tools to be able to address it. Please address it now.

Hon. Mr. Higgs (Quispamsis, Premier, Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, PC): Mr. Speaker, you know, I went through the whole process in relation to the federal government's position on my applying it directly against our provincial taxes and reducing them.

However, given what the Leader of the Opposition is saying—and he is being very clear here that this is what he would recommend we do—I would suggest that we bring a motion forward to say that we will do just that. We will apply the carbon tax against our sales tax, and we will effectively reduce the carbon tax for four months or whatever. I will bring that motion forward so that I have full support from this House, and then I will send it. I mean, that is precisely what the Liberal Opposition Leader is saying, so I am good with that. I will send a letter off to the federal government that this is what I am doing and that I have unanimous support from the House.

We will make it happen, Mr. Speaker. It is great to have full support. I am excited to move forward.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Melanson (Dieppe, Interim Opposition Leader, L): Mr. Speaker, this Premier is the most political one in this position that I have seen in my life. He is playing politics because he has not yet realized—he has not yet realized—that climate change is happening. The planet is warming and this has harmful effects. It is costing more to repair our infrastructure: New Brunswick roads, bridges, and coastlines. Meanwhile, however, because the Premier is playing politics, he is not tackling the real issues. Last year, he gave himself full authority. He is responsible for managing revenue generated by the tax on pollution. He can redistribute it as he pleases. He can give it back to New Brunswickers today. Make the right choice. Do it, Mr. Premier.

[*Original*]

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

Hon. Mr. Higgs (Quispamsis, Premier, Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, PC): Mr. Speaker, let's not lose focus here. Let's just stay focused on the task at hand. The Leader of the Opposition said that he supported a redistribution of the carbon tax to reduce our provincial taxes. He said that, Mr. Speaker, and then he said that in an interview yesterday as well. And he has reiterated it here in the House today.

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All I am saying is: Great. Let's put the money where the mouth is. Let's put a motion forward that says this is exactly what we will do. I can take that to the federal government and say that we are doing this as a measure to alleviate high gas prices for all New Brunswickers, because it is necessary at this point in time, and that I have the full support of all parties in the House. That will carry the weight needed to cause the federal government to say: Okay, how can we help?

Will the Leader of the Opposition agree to that, Mr. Speaker? We can get it done. Thank you very much.

Mr. Melanson (Dieppe, Interim Opposition Leader, L): Mr. Speaker, again, it is political posturing from the Premier.

(Interjections.)

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

Mr. Melanson (Dieppe, Interim Opposition Leader, L): He does not need to have any authority from any other level of government. He has his own made-in-New Brunswick plan.

(Interjections.)

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

Mr. Melanson (Dieppe, Interim Opposition Leader, L): He has his own New Brunswick plan. He administers those revenues.

(Interjections.)

Mr. Speaker (Hon. Mr. Oliver): Order, members. Leader of the Opposition, continue.

Mr. Melanson (Dieppe, Interim Opposition Leader, L): Mr. Speaker, the Premier has full authority with regard to the management and administration of his made-in-New Brunswick plan. It is a New Brunswick plan. His deniers of climate change in other provinces have chosen to follow the federal plan. You, Premier, have chosen to do your own plan, giving yourself all the authority to decide how this is given back to New Brunswickers and how it could be distributed. You could do it now. Forget that motion. Stop political posturing. Decide now to help New Brunswickers.

Hon. Mr. Higgs (Quispamsis, Premier, Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, PC): So, Mr. Speaker, here you have it. Here we are in full agreement. The Leader of the Opposition will not admit that. He will not admit that or stand behind his very own words. That is all that we are saying. We will follow it precisely. I think that is great—a Melanson

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motion. Perfect. We could make this happen. I would say that we are going to put a motion forward and we are going to make it so that all parties recognize the need right now to adjust the carbon tax, apply it to the sales tax, and reduce it by 11¢ per litre for the next four to seven weeks. We could do it immediately.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to ask our folks to put this together so that we can bring it to the Legislature and to do it quickly so that we can alleviate the problem promptly. I want to thank the Leader of the Opposition for coming on board and suggesting a remedy that is going to work for New Brunswickers. This is a sign of the House coming together at a time of need. It is inspiring, Mr. Speaker, inspiring indeed. Thank you very much.

Mr. Melanson (Dieppe, Interim Opposition Leader, L): Mr. Speaker, this Premier is admitting today, it seems, that his own made-in-New Brunswick plan does not work. He is admitting today that his own made-in-New Brunswick plan, the revenues of which he administers...

He does not have to receive any—any—acceptance from Ottawa or any other government. Today, he can decide to give back more to New Brunswickers who are hurting because they have to pay too much at the pump and groceries are way too expensive, Mr. Speaker. He is playing politics, and New Brunswickers know that. Read his plan. Read his plan from March 17, 2021. He is giving himself full authority to administer those revenues, and he can redistribute them as he wishes. Premier, you have authority. Take your responsibility and decide now to give more back to New Brunswickers.

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

Hon. Mr. Higgs (Quispamsis, Premier, Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, PC): I am not sure whether that was an acceptance to do what the Leader of the Opposition wants us to do. We could have an emergency debate on this. We could bring it forward right now, Mr. Speaker, and have an emergency debate, pass it today, and be done with it, with all-party support. I think that it is tremendous. It is tremendous to see this reaction in a time of need.

We are going to put a motion forward, and we will look at the procedures here to get it done quickly, to get it in front of the Legislature, and to get a vote on it so that we can move in the direction that the honourable Leader of the Opposition wants to move. He knows that federally, they will not be on side with this. But he also knows that collectively, as the Legislature of New Brunswick, if we are all on side with it, we can get it done and the federal government will support it. Great news. Thank you very much for your support, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Melanson (Dieppe, Interim Opposition Leader, L): Mr. Speaker, the Premier has a new skill set. He is good at improvising stuff to be more political every single day. Now, an emergency debate. He is improvising stuff.

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Do you know what, Premier? As you are improvising and not taking your responsibilities, New Brunswickers are hurting right now. How much more and how many more times do I need to say it? It is difficult. These are hard times because the price at the pump is way too much. The rumours are that it is going to go up again tomorrow, Mr. Speaker. Look, you are using delay tactics and playing politics with them. Help New Brunswickers. You have the full authority of your New Brunswick-made administration of the price on pollution. You have said it before. You can do it now. Do it. Help New Brunswickers.

Hon. Mr. Higgs (Quispamsis, Premier, Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, PC): So, Mr. Speaker, the House Leader has just informed me that we can bring this in first thing tomorrow morning. We will expect, as was stated here, to get full support from the Leader of the Opposition. I know that the Leader of the Green Party has been silent through all of this, so I am not sure where he will stand. Well, I probably am sure where he will stand. Mr. Speaker, this will help us to move forward in a constructive, expedited fashion and to get some federal support for doing it so that we can actually address something quickly. Again, we will bring this forward tomorrow morning, bring a motion to the House, have a debate, and then move on this file. I am expecting the full support of the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Speaker.

[Translation]

Mr. Melanson (Dieppe, Interim Opposition Leader, L): Mr. Speaker, it is extremely difficult to listen to this Premier. It is not because he is playing politics—we know that he does. It is because we still see New Brunswickers every day who can no longer afford groceries or put food in the fridge for their family. They no longer can go to the pump and fill up their cars, because it costs too much.

What we are hearing from the Premier is petty politics. He is blaming others and is trying to introduce motions that have no value when it comes to dealing with the current situation. He gave himself, with his made-in-New Brunswick plan to manage the price of pollution... The person who thinks he knows everything is the Premier. He says he is the smartest person in the country. He created his own plan, giving himself full authority to give revenue back to New Brunswickers. He chose not to. Please, deal with this situation.

[Original]

Hon. Mr. Flemming, Q.C. (Rothesay, Minister of Justice, Attorney General, PC): Mr. Speaker, I have been a student of politics since I was a child. I have noticed something wonderful today. It is good, and we should have more of it. The Leader of the Opposition stood up in the Legislature yesterday and made a bold plan to take the carbon tax and apply it to the relief of New Brunswickers. He then went out and did a scrum, and he said the same thing. The government said: That is a pretty good idea. I think we can do that. It is great.

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So I want to thank him for that. I look forward to putting his suggestion in the form of a motion and having that motion brought to the House. I can say with pride that I will be looking over to the Leader of the Opposition to second the motion tomorrow.

Mr. Melanson (Dieppe, Interim Opposition Leader, L): Mr. Speaker, this government can play with all the words that it wishes. At the end of the day, you have created a made-in-New Brunswick plan on how to manage these revenues, which are being generated in order to reduce emissions in the climate. The planet is warming up, and it has to be addressed. When you brought that plan forward, you reduced the provincial portion of the tax on gasoline. You can do that again temporarily if you wish, or you can redistribute to New Brunswickers some of the revenue being generated through the price on pollution. You can do that. Other provinces—Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta—and the deniers of climate change accepted the federal plan, and they are getting some of this rebate and credit. They are getting it. New Brunswickers are being denied it because of this Premier's choosing not to accept it.

Premier, you have the authority. Are you going to give back to New Brunswickers?

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

Hon. Mr. Holland (Albert, Minister of Natural Resources and Energy Development, PC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to get up and have the ability to contribute to this conversation. What we have witnessed here over the last couple of days is collaboration, bipartisanship, and putting aside politics and actually doing something that puts money back into the pockets of New Brunswickers.

We can look at today, we can look at yesterday, and we can also look back to 2018. If everyone remembers, we campaigned on what the carbon tax would do. We said back then that it would cost people more when it came to—what?—filling up their tanks. We said it would cost New Brunswickers more when it came to—what?—putting groceries in their carts. We hear the Leader of the Opposition talk about the cost of groceries and fuel going up, while we have been saying that. We were the originators of concerns and criticisms of the tax from day one. We recognized that. Not only did we recognize it, but also the Premier stood here today and said that a good idea is a good idea no matter where it comes from, so let's do it. The Leader of the Opposition should stand up and join us as we fight this.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. G. Arseneault (Campbellton-Dalhousie, L): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The region that I represent has been especially hard hit by this government's inability to recruit and retain health care professionals. With various closures and reductions of services, the residents of Restigouche County are now facing additional stress in trying to access health care, because they must travel to many of these services and the price of gas is becoming prohibitive for many.

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This region counts as having the oldest population in the province, and it suffers from the highest poverty rates in New Brunswick. The increase in the cost of living may well be the last straw for many seniors and for others who are living on fixed incomes. With each passing day of inaction on the part of this government to provide relief, the situation becomes worse for those in need. The Premier and his government have the resources and the authority to use the revenues from the carbon tax to help reduce the cost of traveling to access health services. When will he provide the relief?

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

Hon. Mrs. Shephard (Saint John Lancaster, Minister of Health, PC): I was not quite sure where the member was going with his question, but I am going to try to address this. We certainly understand what the hardships can be around transportation to health care, but we have put in as robust a system as we can for those who are in the system. We know that there is still more work to do, but let me just say that with regard to the recruiting and retention of our health care professionals and trying to bolster our health care system, we have not sat back on our laurels since we actually came into government. The work that has been done by the Department of Health, by the Minister of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour, and by the regional health authorities, Vitalité and Horizon, along with the support of Extra-Mural/Ambulance New Brunswick, has been, I believe, unprecedented. We have been moving the needle, and we have been making every single effort to do that.

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

Mr. G. Arseneault (Campbellton-Dalhousie, L): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of a commitment from the Premier to act immediately to help New Brunswickers, can, at a minimum, the Minister of Health provide assurances to the people of Restigouche County that no more services will be cut from the region and that every effort will be made to restore services such as obstetrics and ophthalmology? Thank you.

Hon. Mrs. Shephard (Saint John Lancaster, Minister of Health, PC): Well, Mr. Speaker, we have been working diligently with Vitalité and with the people of the Restigouche Region to ensure that their health services are provided there. We know that human health resources have been a struggle not just for us in New Brunswick, not just for the Restigouche area, but for all of Canada—all of North America, in fact. This morning, I met with the Consul General of the United States, and we talked about the human resource challenges in our health care sectors. It is global. We are all working on that.

Services are dependent on having those human resources to deliver the programs. We are working diligently and doing everything that we can. I said this during our consultation process and when we tabled the health plan for the province of New Brunswick: We will have a network of excellence. It is achievable. With the help of the members opposite, with the help of all our colleagues, and with the help of partners, that can happen.

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[*Translation*]

Mr. G. Arseneault (Campbellton-Dalhousie, L): Mr. Speaker, the obstetrics and ophthalmology departments at the Campbellton Regional Hospital are currently closed. The Vitalité Health Network told us it was a temporary closure. That was three years ago. This is unbelievable and unacceptable. In the name of justice and equity, I am asking the Minister of Health to inform the House that she will make sure these services are permanently restored. I am also asking her to provide us with a timeline for resolving this urgent situation. Thank you.

[*Original*]

Hon. Mrs. Shephard (Saint John Lancaster, Minister of Health, PC): Mr. Speaker, I realize that the member is lobbying for his area, and I understand that. We all have an interest in the places that serve us, and the Restigouche area is very important. It is important to our network, and it is important that we provide services to the people of Restigouche.

What I can say is that I cannot make any promises here today. It is all dependent on human health resources. We will speak with Vitalité. We will do everything in our power to ensure that we have partners that are working toward resolving the issues in the communities and working to help find what is important to those communities as we go forward. I fully believe that we can create that network of excellence. The Restigouche area needs to be a part of that, so I welcome the member's input at any time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[*Translation*]

MINIMUM WAGE

Mr. Coon (Fredericton South, Leader, G): Mr. Speaker, it is true that all costs are increasing, but the consequences are not equally shared—well, no. People living on a modest or low income had to make difficult choices before inflation started to kick in. Rising rent, food, and fuel prices are making a significant number of people rethink their priorities. However, for people on modest incomes, the consequences are serious.

The Premier does not seem to have a concrete plan to help the people most affected by the rising cost of living. He has scheduled an increase in the minimum wage for October. Will the Premier move this increase forward to June 1 for the people who need it now?

[*Original*]

Hon. Mr. Holder (Portland-Simonds, Minister of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour, PC): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We are very proud of the fact that we have the single-largest increase to the minimum wage in over 40 years. The first increase took place on April 1, and the next one is going to take place in October.

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It is about balance. We have to make sure that we fight for those who cannot fight for themselves. We are talking about people who are not represented by a union in this province, and we have taken leadership on this side of the House. But at the end of the day, we also have to balance that with the economic realities of our province. We have to allow small business owners, who are doing everything they can each and every day, to stay afloat as well. I believe that we have struck that balance here, Mr. Speaker, but I think that we should celebrate the fact that this is the single-largest increase to the minimum wage in over 40 years.

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Mr. Coon (Fredericton South, Leader, G): Well, Mr. Speaker, minimum-wage earners need that increase now, not later.

Another group of New Brunswickers who are not holding up well under the growing cost of living are the individuals and families who depend on income assistance to try to meet their needs. We know that by any measure, income assistance rates were horribly inadequate to cover the cost of the bare necessities of life before the cost of living took off. Today, individuals and families are staring into the abyss of deep poverty as never before. Will the Premier implement a six-month adjustment to the cost of living and raise income assistance rates overall by \$100 per month?

Hon. Mr. Fitch (Riverview, Minister of Social Development, PC): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We do have a plan to help those in need, and we are implementing that plan. I was in the House the other day giving a list of the things we have done to help the people who are receiving social assistance. One of those issues was an increase in the cost of living. That was never done before, and we are doing it. This government is progressing.

I did not get to a number of the other issues when I was going over my list because it was such an extensive list, but one of the things that we have reviewed is the Household Income Policy. I know that members opposite have an issue with that. That is going to help over 2 000 people here in the province, and that is an investment of over \$4 million. We have increased the contribution that this government makes to increase affordable housing. If private developers or co-ops or nonprofits want to build housing, we have increased the capital contribution from \$40 000 to \$70 000, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Coon (Fredericton South, Leader, G): Mr. Speaker, I have made two concrete suggestions on how the Premier can immediately, in the short term, provide some relief to those feeling the greatest impact from the rising cost of living—the cost of everything. Instead, the Premier is using the carbon tax as a wedge issue. He is embroiled in a ridiculous debate with the Leader of the Official Opposition, when he is already giving almost all the collected carbon tax directly back to New Brunswickers. It is how he is



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funding his income tax cuts. It is how he is subsidizing natural gas users. It is how he reduced the gas tax. He is already giving the money back. It is a red herring debate.

Mr. Speaker, let me make a third concrete suggestion for the short term.

(Interjections.)

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

(Interjections.)

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

Mr. Coon (Fredericton South, Leader, G): It could help people who are really hurting here.

(Interjections.)

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

Mr. Coon (Fredericton South, Leader, G): Prince Edward Island has already implemented this. The HST is the only tax that generates more revenue as the prices of goods and services rise higher. Will the Premier use the windfall HST revenue to increase the provincial portion of the HST rebate for low-income New Brunswickers in order to help them out during these difficult times?

Hon. Mr. Higgs (Quispamsis, Premier, Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, PC): Mr. Speaker, it was nice to hear the Leader of the Green Party talk about the fact that we are already redistributing all the carbon tax back to the people of this province. Maybe the Leader of the Liberal Party could acknowledge that so that we would have agreement on that front.

Mr. Speaker, now we get back to what we can do immediately, because the Leader of the Green Party also suggested that now is the time to do something concrete to help, right now, people who are experiencing high costs. It then flows into the costs of commodities, goods, groceries, and everything. So that brings us back to the pumps.

The conversation that is on the floor and the motion that will be introduced tomorrow are related to my having full support to go back to the federal government and say: I am going to redirect this carbon tax. I am going to be able to reduce taxes, and I am going to use it for a four-month window in order to reduce prices at the pump. That would be immediate relief for everybody in this province who is experiencing the high cost of goods.

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So, Mr. Speaker, my question would be to the Leader of the Green Party. Would he also support a motion, for full support from all members of this House, to reduce it and to make it happen?

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

Mr. Melanson (Dieppe, Interim Opposition Leader, L): You know, here we go again with the Premier trying to deflect and to not deal with the real issues. This motion is worth nothing, Mr. Premier—nothing.

What really matters is that you have, again... I keep repeating it, and you will not listen to us and to others. You have the full authority to redistribute the revenues that are being generated, or you can reduce the provincial portion of the gasoline tax. You can do that. You do not have to have any motion or any political posturing on the floor of this Legislature. You have given yourself the authority by making a made-in-New Brunswick plan. So you can do that, or you can choose to reduce the provincial portion. You decide. Just do it, and stop talking about it. Do it, and I will stop asking you questions on behalf of New Brunswickers, because we will see real action.

(Interjections.)

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

Mr. Melanson (Dieppe, Interim Opposition Leader, L): Premier, stop doing Politics 101 and deal with the issue.

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

Hon. Mr. Higgs (Quispamsis, Premier, Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, PC): Exactly, Mr. Speaker. That is what we are proposing—to deal with the issue in a way that the federal government will say: Well, we have to support this because all parties in the New Brunswick Legislature have agreed. We are agreeing with the Leader of the Opposition. We are not opposing. We are saying that this could be good to go. Let's make this work. Let's make it official. Let's make it binding so that the federal government will say that it is going to let this pass because these are extreme circumstances, Mr. Speaker. This is not normal. We have not seen inflation like this for many generations. We have not seen gas prices like these—ever. We are seeing an economy that is certainly challenged by its growth, just by its nature, with what we are seeing in terms of the amount of interest in the province.

So, can we react? Yes. Can we in this House agree? Well, that is debatable. Even when you say that you agree with the Leader of the Opposition, he stands up and argues with you. Mr. Speaker, I am not sure which side he is on. Maybe if he came over here, he would act



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differently. I doubt it, but it would not matter. He just wants to disagree for the sake of disagreeing. I am trying to find alignment here, and I think that we got it. I can quote him...

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

[*Translation*]

Mr. Melanson (Dieppe, Interim Opposition Leader, L): Mr. Speaker, the Premier does not need anyone's permission. He does not even need permission from the Legislative Assembly to act on this file. He should have done it in January, February, or March. Over the last two years, he has been seeking billions of dollars in surpluses.

There is a 28¢ portion that New Brunswickers pay each time they spend \$2 to fill up their gas tanks. That 28¢ portion can change. The Premier can also take action with respect to the whole carbon tax issue. He can do it. He does not need a motion. He does not need us to ask him any more questions. He has full authority to act, since he gave it to himself.

So why is the Premier not taking action? Ladies and gentlemen, I am going to tell you why he is not taking action: He is playing politics. He does not want to do anything. He only wants to discuss the issue and talk endlessly about it. Meanwhile, people are suffering far too much at the pump. They are certainly suffering as well when they open the fridge and see that there is nothing to eat. Solve the problem, Mr. Premier.

[*Original*]

Hon. Mr. Higgs (Quispamsis, Premier, Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, PC): Mr. Speaker, talk, talk, talk. There is nothing more that I can add to this. The Leader of the Opposition is just arguing with himself now. We have a plan, and I am excited about it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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