

Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick

Oral Questions



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Mr. Savoie (Saint John East, Leader of the Official Opposition, PC): Good morning to you, Madam Speaker.

[Original]

I'm starting today, Madam Speaker, with some questions for the Minister of Finance on our GDP expectation for the year. New Brunswick is projected to have the slowest GDP growth in Canada for 2025. A report from Deloitte Canada suggests a 0.6% change in GDP, being the lowest in Canada. The projection is significantly lower than the 1.1% projection and lower again than the Liberals' own 1.3% projection they put in their platform. Additionally, the report suggests a downturn in the Canadian economy over the next two consecutive quarters, which could trigger a recession.

So, I would like to ask the Minister of Finance this: What is his current projection for GDP growth for the year? If it was 1.1% and we're hearing about a 0.6% change, what is the current projection? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Hon. Mr. Legacy (Bathurst, Deputy Premier; Minister of Finance and Treasury Board; Minister responsible for Energy; Minister responsible for the *Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, L): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Yes, we did look at the Deloitte report, and it is 0.6%. Our projection is still at 1.1%. Different organizations make projections based on different characteristics. If you go to different banks right now, projections go from 0.4% to 1.6% based on different economic projections. It depends on the factors. When we do our quarterly update, we adjust at that point. We don't do it every time somebody else comes out with a different report. Our staff work diligently, daily, to look at what happens. We do our adjustments when the quarterly report comes out.

Mr. Savoie (Saint John East, Leader of the Official Opposition, PC): Thank you, Madam Speaker. So, I guess what I take that to mean is that, obviously, the quarterly updates have to take place and some adjustment will be created. Normally when something from an organization such as Deloitte comes out, it should cause the government to say, okay, let's take a look and recheck our numbers to make sure. It's not meant to be an exhaustive exercise, but it's meant to be a check. You always have to find out where you are, according to where the indicators are going. With tariffs and everything else that's been going on, we know that that all has an impact.

I'm hoping the Minister of Finance can now give me... If you're still projecting 1.1%... We know about the impact of tariffs and so on and so forth. We know that you're saying, okay, we're not necessarily going to recognize the 0.6% change. However, regarding the actual

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GDP number and the billions in GDP that are generated by this province, are you still saying that that is the same as what they reported when they dropped their budget? Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Legacy (Bathurst, Deputy Premier; Minister of Finance and Treasury Board; Minister responsible for Energy; Minister responsible for the *Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, L): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Again, staff members at the department work, on a daily basis, to look at what is happening and at the projections. They keep us prepared to make decisions. We can't readjust with every report. I'm just looking at a Scotiabank report that reported a potential 1.5%. CIBC reported 1.7%. RBC reported 1.0%. TD Bank reported 0.5%. BMO reported 0.6%. National Bank reported 1.0%, and it goes on and on. We can't readjust every time somebody comes out with a report. We have excellent staff members who do their own projections, looking at all the aspects of what we have to do.

We do our planning.

I think the member opposite has been in government long enough to know that you can't just start switching back and forth. That would cause a lot of havoc, and it would be very expensive to government if we changed our strategy every time one of these reports came in. We look at them quarterly, and then we adjust as we go along.

Mr. Savoie (Saint John East, Leader of the Official Opposition, PC): Well, absolutely, Madam Speaker. Again, I said it clearly. I'm not suggesting that the minister change. What I'm looking for are the hard numbers. What I wanted to see is whether there has been a material change in the couple of months since the Liberals dropped their budget. Are they still seeing the same actual dollar amount in GDP growth or in GDP levels? We know, based on these reports, that there are going to be changes in the GDP.

Because there are a lot of moving factors, I'd like to know from the minister whether anybody has taken a look, based not only on the government's forecasting but also on the other forecasting that he mentioned, and seen any changes in the various sectors. For example, we may see a tourism boost because of the tariffs. Because of the tourism, we may see a drop in manufacturing. Consumer spending is expected to weaken. What is the update on those sectors from the minister?

Hon. Mr. Legacy (Bathurst, Deputy Premier; Minister of Finance and Treasury Board; Minister responsible for Energy; Minister responsible for the *Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, L): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Again, these are complicated analyses. We do not necessarily do updates or make changes based on other people's reports. It depends on the criteria being used. Our staff use the same criteria to do... Right now, they remain unchanged until we do our quarterly update. Then we'll adjust, as has always been done.

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There is a lot happening, and it's not just reports coming out. I think that the member properly identified it. Tariffs were a big issue for a while. Strife and wars across the world, supply and demand—all these impacts are being analyzed on a daily basis, but we adjust once per quarter because making those changes impacts strategy and impacts all of government. We do it on a quarterly basis, and we adjust accordingly when that happens.

BUDGET

Mr. Savoie (Saint John East, Leader of the Official Opposition, PC): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I guess I want to get down to the root of the problem here or the root of where I want to go with these questions. At some point, government is going to see a shift, good or bad, in these numbers. I'm suggesting that a lot of places are thinking that numbers will go down because of the potential of a recession.

We know that there are two things that governments, especially Liberal governments, love to do. There are two ways that the government members could deal with this. We know they have to pay the bills, so they're either going to have to blow past their deficit targets or they're going to have to increase spending.

I want to ask the minister to confirm or deny whether he will hold the line on his deficit spending and not go further into deficit. Will he confirm or deny that he will not raise taxes on the backs of New Brunswickers who are already struggling with affordability issues? I'd like to get him on record confirming or denying either one of those. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Hon. Mr. Legacy (Bathurst, Deputy Premier; Minister of Finance and Treasury Board; Minister responsible for Energy; Minister responsible for the *Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, L): Madam Speaker, I think the member opposite knows that a budget is a plan. We saw it during the last mandate. The PCs never hit their targets in the past six years. It goes up, it goes down, and you adjust.

What we will not do... For the past two weeks, every time we've talked about changing anything, we've heard the members opposite say this: You can't stop spending. How many times today have we heard comments about cutting? We will do what is necessary for New Brunswickers. That's what's important. It's not about what we want to see or how we want to discuss deficits here.

If the opposition leader wants to mention that he feels we are wasting money or we're investing it in the wrong spots, then he can bring that up. But this blanket statement that Liberals spend, and Conservatives don't... Just look at the numbers.

(Interjections.)

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Madam Speaker (Hon. Ms. Landry): Member.

Hon. Mr. Legacy (Bathurst, Deputy Premier; Minister of Finance and Treasury Board; Minister responsible for Energy; Minister responsible for the *Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, L): We have curbed the spending growth on the plan.

(Interjections.)

Madam Speaker (Hon. Ms. Landry): Member.

Hon. Mr. Legacy (Bathurst, Deputy Premier; Minister of Finance and Treasury Board; Minister responsible for Energy; Minister responsible for the *Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, L): We have curbed the spending. It is about revenues that the former government members were never able to properly project over the past six years. It is still very difficult. As far as spending goes, we have lowered the projection that they had going on for the past few years.

Mr. Savoie (Saint John East, Leader of the Official Opposition, PC): Madam Speaker, it is this government that has consistently told New Brunswickers that we are going into headwinds. We have difficult times coming. We have a credible organization in Deloitte Canada saying that we could be heading into a recession if we get two quarters of downturn.

All I asked the Minister of Finance was to confirm or deny that he will either hold to his deficit spending targets or he will not raise taxes.

Instead, we got something completely different.

Madam Speaker, New Brunswickers are suffering with affordability issues. All we are asking for here is the answer to a very simple question about whether the Minister of Finance will hold to a target that he himself has set and give that security to New Brunswickers. Consumer spending is predicated on government behaviour in some respects. So will he commit to not raising taxes on the backs of New Brunswickers, and will he commit to holding to his deficit targets? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Hon. Mr. Legacy (Bathurst, Deputy Premier; Minister of Finance and Treasury Board; Minister responsible for Energy; Minister responsible for the *Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, L): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I find it very funny, based on the previous budgets, that what we're always hearing about in debate right now is how difficult the problems are and what the issues are. What this government has picked up is all the pieces left from the previous government and the chaos caused by what wasn't done.

The member opposite talks about not wanting... People are suffering from affordability issues? We removed the PST from electricity bills. In opposition, we debated two motions on that, and those members refused to do it. It wasn't hidden. They didn't want to help New Brunswickers with that affordability issue. They didn't want to do the rent cap. We got that

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done. They didn't want to do the student food program. We got that done. To stand up to say that we don't want to help with affordability? We've been all about that, and they've been opposing it all along. Now, to come back and say that we're not doing it? I don't believe that.

Mr. Savoie (Saint John East, Leader of the Official Opposition, PC): That is a weak answer from a weak minister. Absolutely, that is weak. At the end of the day, the Liberals are saying: Well, we're spending all kinds of money. But what results are New Brunswickers getting, Madam Speaker? I asked the Minister of Finance straight questions. What are you going to do with regard to holding the tax rate? What are you going to do with regard to holding to your deficit targets? And he will not answer. All he does is give...

We all know that these affordability issues are caused by policies created by the federal government. We are where we are. The government members said they had the answers. They said that they could do this. We are asking: What is your fiscal responsibility to New Brunswickers? Will you hold the line on taxes? Will you give them that certainty? Will you commit to keeping to your deficit targets? Yes or no?

Hon. Mr. Legacy (Bathurst, Deputy Premier; Minister of Finance and Treasury Board; Minister responsible for Energy; Minister responsible for the *Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, L): Madam Speaker, here's what I know. This opposition, during the campaign, promised to reduce the HST by 2% at a cost of \$450 million. Just recently, the Leader of the Opposition said this: We would have broken the one promise we made. That's 100% of the promises.

This is what I can guarantee to the opposition and the people of New Brunswick. When there is a need for the government to act on their behalf, the people on this side will get it done, just like we've been doing since the beginning. We're doing it now, and we will continue to do it in the future. That's what I will guarantee.

Mr. Savoie (Saint John East, Leader of the Official Opposition, PC): The message there, Madam Speaker, is more deficit, more debt, more spending, and fewer results. It's more taxes, more cuts, and more reckless spending. But here's something that maybe I can get a more solid answer on. Considering all these budgetary pressures, most of which were created by the government's own reckless political promises, there is one source of revenue that I am curious about. I have a \$64-million question: Where is the money that you promised you would get back from the HST holiday that the federal government instituted? Where is that \$64 million? You said you'd get it back. Where is it?

Hon. Mr. Legacy (Bathurst, Deputy Premier; Minister of Finance and Treasury Board; Minister responsible for Energy; Minister responsible for the *Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, L): Again, we're going to answer that question. We're negotiating getting the \$64 million back from a different angle. We did not sign the waiver. We will get that money back in the normal course, if we don't negotiate another deal on the side.

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When it comes to the other aspect of the question, the suggestion that it was our government promises that caused the problems, it's government pressures from the decisions of the previous government that are really causing the problems. We, as a government, decided—

Madam Speaker (Hon. Ms. Landry): Members, we heard the question. Can we hear the answer, please? Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Legacy (Bathurst, Deputy Premier; Minister of Finance and Treasury Board; Minister responsible for Energy; Minister responsible for the *Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, L): Government pressures from previous government decisions are what really caused the issues right now. We make decisions, and it takes multiple years. We could have decided to cancel some of the previous government decisions, but we know what happens when you do that.

We have a beautiful courthouse here that costs, really, a lot of money because governments have made political decisions that cost New Brunswickers dollars. We decided to continue to do that project and do it right, and that's—

NB LIQUOR

Ms. Bockus (Saint Croix, PC): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to thank, through you, the Minister responsible for NB Liquor for helping us understand why sales were up but profits fell from \$35.8 million to \$30.4 million. The minister advised the House that expenses to implement Project Galileo are leading to the reduction of overall gross profit. Between the \$4 million in U.S. liquor in storage and Project Galileo, we can more than account for the \$5.4 million. Yesterday, the minister framed Project Galileo as a huge investment. I understand its completion date is to be 2027. Can the minister advise the House of the expected total cost of this project? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Hon. Mr. Randall (Fredericton North, Minister responsible for Opportunities NB; Minister responsible for Economic Development and Small Business; Minister responsible for NB Liquor and Cannabis NB, L): I thank the member opposite for the question. I truly appreciate talking about ANBL and the strong work that it has done, especially in the face of a national unity crisis and tariffs. ANBL was one of the first organizations to respond to this national threat, and it has brought New Brunswickers together.

I'm happy to talk about Project Galileo. I will have to get you the exact numbers. I do believe we are talking about a total project cost of around \$28 million. I will have to confirm that for the member opposite. That project was started under the previous administration. However, it is one that will bring solid technical supports to ANBL and set ANBL up for a bright future of delivering better products, services, and support for the people of New

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Brunswick and stronger profits for years to come. Thank you to the member opposite for your question.

Ms. Bockus (Saint Croix, PC): Thank you to the minister, through you, Madam Speaker. I guess I'm a little confused. Why don't we just sell the U.S. liquor? Why is it still sitting on the shelves? Why can't we sell it?

(Interjections.)

Ms. Bockus (Saint Croix, PC): Liquor ages, some of it for the better. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Hon. Mr. Randall (Fredericton North, Minister responsible for Opportunities NB; Minister responsible for Economic Development and Small Business; Minister responsible for NB Liquor and Cannabis NB, L): I thank the member opposite for the question. You know what? I do want to acknowledge that U.S. liquor will, in fact, be on our channel partners' shelves. Some of it is already there. I want to highlight how important this ANBL decision to stop purchasing U.S. liquor was and continues to be.

I know the member opposite may be missing her Jack Daniel's. But I want to mention that there are all kinds of Canadian products on those shelves that New Brunswickers want to consume and want to use, to support local and to support Canada. If you've been in an ANBL store recently, then you will notice Canadian flags and you will notice New Brunswick flags. We have seen an increase of 6% for New Brunswick's producers. This is something that we should be celebrating. I don't want to hear the clamouring to bring U.S. liquor back when we're still under the threat of tariffs. We've taken a strong leadership position to support New Brunswick and to support our nation. Thank you for the question.

ECONOMY

Mr. Monahan (Arcadia-Butternut Valley-Maple Hills, PC): New Brunswickers are already grappling with soaring inflation, rising interest rates, and a cost of living that's spinning out of control. Families are cutting back and businesses are putting investments on hold. Now, we're told our province is projected to have the slowest economic growth in the entire country. While people are living with uncertainty every single day, this government is offering vague promises and hypothetical projects, not the concrete action families and businesses so urgently need. Talk won't put food on the table. Optimism alone won't keep a roof over someone's head. It's time for leadership that delivers real, measurable results, not headlines. So, I ask the Minister of Finance: What is this government's concrete plan to protect New Brunswick families and businesses in the face of a looming recession?

Hon. Mr. Legacy (Bathurst, Deputy Premier; Minister of Finance and Treasury Board; Minister responsible for Energy; Minister responsible for the *Right to Information and*

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Protection of Privacy Act, L): Thank you, Madam Speaker, to the member opposite. Scotiabank is projecting 1.5%, CIBC is projecting 1.7%, RBC is projecting 1%, TD Bank is projecting 0.5%, BMO is projecting 0.6%, and National Bank is projecting 1%. The opposition members looked at one report, and now they are already calling it a recession. We have not changed our projections. Our plan is in place.

What we're doing for families... Again, I will ask the member opposite: Would the opposition have been against us taking the PST off the electricity bills? Are they still against it? That was to help families.

When we gave \$10 000 to the nurses last year, the opposition members clamoured about how our promises were ruining the province. Why is the member not supporting it now? They want us to give more now, but then they talk about budget deficits. That's the problem. It's back and forth. That's why the last government, for six years, was consistently in gridlock—

[*Translation*]

Mr. Monahan (Arcadia-Butternut Valley-Maple Hills, PC): Thank you, Madam Speaker. The minister didn't really answer the question. We got more of a history of banks, but it doesn't matter.

Again, we see that the government's optimistic estimates often show a disconnect from the realities described by experts. A slowdown of this magnitude results in less tax revenue, less investment in our communities, and fewer opportunities for people in the province. Yet, despite the bleak estimates, the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board remains complacent and doesn't recognize the potential consequences of an economic slowdown. My question is very simple: What's this government's plan to deal with the economic slowdown and to ensure that New Brunswick isn't left behind?

Hon. Mr. Legacy (Bathurst, Deputy Premier; Minister of Finance and Treasury Board; Minister responsible for Energy; Minister responsible for the *Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, L*): Madam Speaker, again, the official opposition is demonstrating that its assessment of success and the advancement of New Brunswick is summed up in one sentence: Is there a deficit or not?

We're introducing programs and projects every week to help New Brunswickers, in order to progress and move the province forward. However, the official opposition is focusing on one thing. It has been the same situation for six years. The previous government thought that the success of the bottom line reflected the province's success. We realize now that this is not the case—not at all. We're working to correct the situation of the past six years. It isn't an easy job, but we're working on it and doing it well.

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New Brunswickers decided last fall to trust our team to get the job done. I think they see that they were actually right.

[Original]

NURSES

Mr. Hogan (Woodstock-Hartland, PC): Thank you, Madam Speaker. As the Holt government continues to reannounce clinics and build upon the work that was undertaken by the previous government, I wish the members success, because, when they succeed, people get a doctor and better access to health care. I wish for success for the people of our province. The addition of 10 doctors to our system under the international program started by our government was announced by the Holt government back in March. There has not been much since then. We need more doctors and nurses—a lot more—and we need them now.

The headline from three days ago was “B.C. fast-tracks process for U.S. nurses to get registered in province: ‘President Trump’s loss is British Columbia’s gain,’ Eby says”. British Columbia reduced the process to get certified to days instead of months. What’s the holdup that this government has in getting American nurses to work here in New Brunswick?

Hon. Mr. Dornan (Saint John Portland-Simonds, Minister of Health, L): Madam Speaker, to the member opposite, thank you very much. You know, the previous government did start some programs. This government brings them to fruition. We have already started a number of collaborative clinics. In fact, Premier Holt and I, or the member from the Fredericton area and I, are going to Woodstock, or Florenceville, later today to open up another collaborative care clinic.

We are welcoming nurses and physicians from the United States. We have a very robust talent recruitment team that is searching the world for people to come to New Brunswick, and they are coming to New Brunswick. Daily, we are increasing the number of attached patients in this province. I am very proud that you’ve drawn this to the attention of this Legislature. Thank you.

Mr. Hogan (Woodstock-Hartland, PC): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Yes, when you build a good foundation, it’s easy to build upon it. That’s what our government did for you to continue with. I’ll be the first to admit that, if I were an American nurse watching what’s going on here with the Premier and the Minister of Health, I wouldn’t strike out for New Brunswick. However, we have great nurses, and I say three cheers for our nurses for speaking out. Thank you very much.

However, we need to soldier on in our recruiting efforts. If the government understood the meaning of “crisis”, it would understand that now is the time for action—not for talk, not for study, and certainly not for delay.

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Premier Eby told media that the number of applications from U.S.-trained nurses is up 127%, with 117 applications coming after the change in the recruitment rules for U.S.-based nurses. Again, I'll ask the minister this: Why are New Brunswickers not seeing results on recruiting American nurses?

[Translation]

Hon. Mr. D'Amours (Edmundston—Vallée-des-Rivières, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs; Acting Minister of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour; Minister responsible for Immigration; Minister responsible for Military Affairs, L): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I want to thank my colleague opposite for his question.

Madam Speaker, we must look at the concrete action our government has taken over the past few weeks to improve labour mobility in New Brunswick. The work that has been done elsewhere in the country must also be recognized.

I am extremely pleased that our government tabled Bill 14 to improve labour mobility. We certainly want to improve labour mobility in the health care sector, but, Madam Speaker, we also want to do so in all areas in which we can recruit qualified people from elsewhere in Canada.

We will certainly continue to work along the same lines, because, yes, we need workers here in New Brunswick. Our government is effective and is making efforts so that more professionals in health care and other fields come to work here to help the people of our province in the future.

Mr. Hogan (Woodstock-Hartland, PC): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I agree that planning really must be done today to help the people of our province in the future.

[Original]

I'd like to share this data point with the Minister of Health.

[Translation]

I might also share this information with the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs.

[Original]

In May 2024, the news was shared with the people of our province that, since 2019, the previous government had selected nearly 1 400 internationally trained nursing professionals for immigration, with half of those selected between October 2022 and May 2024. Our government recruited many nurses, and I hope they are loving life here in New Brunswick, the current business with the Premier and the Health Minister notwithstanding.

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The opportunity to hire American nurses is a limited-time opportunity, as people from other provinces that need nurses are also looking to recruit them. When he can, will the minister please provide the House with any campaign or literature, print or digital, showing the government is getting results in recruiting American nurses?

Hon. Mr. Dornan (Saint John Portland-Simonds, Minister of Health, L): Madam Speaker, to the member opposite, I can assure you that we are not limited to the American market. We meet with ambassadors, and we meet with people. Our teams travel the world over. We recruit internationally educated nurses from other parts of the world, including Europe and the Philippines, and we continue to do that.

Nurses from the United States approach us. We hire them, as we hire health care workers from other professions. It's one thing to build a good foundation, but it's another thing to not let your bees back inside to store the honey.

We are expanding our role. We are bringing people in. We are offering them contracts. We are evaluating them before they get to our doorstep. When they get here, they are ready to work. They want to come to New Brunswick. It is one of the most attractive places in the country, and when they come here, they stay. Thank you very much for drawing this to our attention.

[Translation]

EDUCATION

Mr. Savoie (Saint John East, Leader of the Official Opposition, PC): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Now let's talk about education. We see that a union doesn't want to sign an agreement with this government because it is worried about cuts.

[Original]

We have CUPE 2745, which represents about 6 400 workers. These are admins, EAs, library workers—key people who work within our systems. This morning, we have seen how government members go through their talking points and say: We are doing great things. We are changing this. We are fixing that. However, the reality is that people on the ground are experiencing something very, very different. They are not seeing the same narrative this government is trying to put out. They are feeling something completely different.

I don't know who exactly wants to respond to this. Perhaps it is the Minister of Finance. Perhaps it is the Minister of Education. We have people who do not want to sign a contract because of the cuts that are happening in the classroom.

What is this government going to do to get these workers back on track?

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[Translation]

Hon. Mr. Legacy (Bathurst, Deputy Premier; Minister of Finance and Treasury Board; Minister responsible for Energy; Minister responsible for the *Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, L): Thank you, Madam Speaker. In fact, the Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 2745... I imagine that the Leader of the Official Opposition based his question on what was said publicly yesterday about the negotiations.

The Leader of the Official Opposition knows that, when we are actively bargaining, we don't talk about it in the Legislative Assembly. We continue to let the teams representing the two parties bargain at the table. The process worked the same way when the previous government was in office.

I do want to take the opportunity to point out, a bit like the Leader of the Official Opposition did, that all these 6 400 employees are very important to our system.

I think our government has shown, in recently finalizing agreements with various unions, that it is making progress on its files. However, in the last few years, nothing went forward and no agreement was signed with the unions. We will continue to do the work. Discussions will take place at the bargaining table.

Mr. Savoie (Saint John East, Leader of the Official Opposition, PC): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. The government is hiding behind the process, Madam Speaker.

[Original]

We see very clearly that this government is hiding behind these words: Well, we're in negotiations. We don't want to talk about that.

This is proof that New Brunswickers are seeing and feeling the negative impact of the cuts and decisions this government is making—\$43 million—and that this government is transferring responsibility and blame for that to the school districts.

[Translation]

Francophone sud school district has to make \$7.1 million in cuts. We know now that the district will cut positions.

[Original]

They are going to get rid of people, Madam Speaker. This is going to impact the classroom. I'm going to ask the Minister of Education again to please get up and defend these cuts that are clearly coming to the classroom. People are seeing that they are going to negatively impact the education of our children. Will the Minister of Education get up and defend these cuts?

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[Translation]

Hon. Mr. Gauvin (Shediac Bay-Dieppe, Minister of Public Safety; Minister responsible for La Francophonie, L): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank my colleague opposite for the very important question about education. I will follow the advice that was given before question period. We will attract more friends with honey than with vinegar. So, I will do the same thing.

I can understand why the opposition is asking questions, for the simple and good reason that, for the first time, at least since I've been watching what is happening in the political world, there is a team that is looking for answers on the ground, Madam Speaker. People aren't used to that. I will give you an uncomplicated explanation: For the first time in a long time, we have a team that represents all of New Brunswick. We have members from Saint John, the Acadian Peninsula, Restigouche, Fredericton, Moncton, Dieppe, and Memramcook. This sort of situation hasn't happened here in government for a long time.

So, you will keep being surprised, because we are looking for answers on the ground. For 25 years, whenever I went somewhere, I never saw a minister. Prepare yourself, because you will see us, and there will be action. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker (Hon. Ms. Landry): Question period is over.