

Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick

Oral Questions



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[Original]

FIRST NATIONS

Mr. Melanson (Dieppe, Interim Opposition Leader, L): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We learned this morning of another situation that is adding to the loss of trust and confidence by the First Nations of New Brunswick. Chief Perley, Chief Knockwood, and Regional Chief Augustine announced this morning that they will not participate in the truth and reconciliation working group. This is another concrete example that this Premier has lost the total trust and confidence of the First Nations of our province. At a minimum, if the Premier had called and reached out to them since last Thursday, this potentially could have been avoided. Can the Premier explain to us their decision not to participate in the truth and reconciliation working group?

Hon. Ms. Dunn (Saint John Harbour, Minister responsible for Economic Development and Small Business, Minister responsible for Opportunities NB, Minister responsible for Immigration, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, PC): Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to address this question. In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report was published. I would ask this House: What concrete, tangible actions have been taken for First Nations? I think that I would be appropriate to say, probably none. I can commit today to First Nations that this government is actually going to take concrete, tangible steps. That is a commitment, and we are going to do it. Thank you for the question.

Mr. Melanson (Dieppe, Interim Opposition Leader, L): This is very important. The First Nations communities of New Brunswick have contributed so much to our history, our economic well-being, and their economic well-being, and the Premier cannot even—at a minimum, in respect—get up and explain why this situation occurred.

The truth and reconciliation working group had merits. It had lots of potential to be constructive, but now the chiefs of the First Nations have decided to step away from this working group, because of the Premier's lack of leadership toward First Nations and lack of listening to and engaging with them in a meaningful way. Why is the Premier not showing the leadership that is needed here? This is critical. This is important. This is a big, important moment in our history. Premier, please get up and explain how you are going to address this.

Hon. Ms. Dunn (Saint John Harbour, Minister responsible for Economic Development and Small Business, Minister responsible for Opportunities NB, Minister responsible for Immigration, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, PC): Mr. Speaker, thank you once again for this opportunity to address this issue. I think that actions speak louder than words. This government is committed to making sure that those actions are going to be implemented.

(Interjections.)

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Hon. Ms. Dunn (Saint John Harbour, Minister responsible for Economic Development and Small Business, Minister responsible for Opportunities NB, Minister responsible for Immigration, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, PC): Excuse me, I am speaking. Thank you. I appreciate that.

I think that actions actually speak louder than words. The fact that we have committed to doing something about the recommendations in the TRC report speaks much louder than much of the verbiage that has taken place over the past several years. Once again, I would say this: We are committed. It is unfortunate that the chiefs have stepped away, but I think that they will see that my actions are going to speak louder than words. Thank you.

Mr. Melanson (Dieppe, Interim Opposition Leader, L): Well, Mr. Speaker, the Premier has... I said it yesterday, and I am going to repeat it this morning. He has put his minister in a very, very difficult situation. She wants to take action—seems to. The First Nations chiefs do not want to take part in that, only because they have lost total trust and total confidence in the Premier, in the minister, and, certainly, in this government. They want to have a meaningful dialogue, but they want to be listened to. They do not want to be told what is best for them. They want to have a minister who is going to advocate—advocate—on their behalf and not advocate on behalf of the Premier's ideals and solutions.

Premier, they are waiting for your words this morning. They are waiting for you to stand up so they can listen to what you are going to say. You have the opportunity.

Hon. Ms. Dunn (Saint John Harbour, Minister responsible for Economic Development and Small Business, Minister responsible for Opportunities NB, Minister responsible for Immigration, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, PC): Thank you once again for the opportunity to address this issue. Once again, I must reiterate the fact that our actions will speak louder than words. We have made a commitment, and we are going to follow through on that commitment. It is not a fact of not listening to First Nations. It is actually listening to First Nations, because if you think about truth and reconciliation, the word "reconciliation" itself means that you have the confidence to actually implement actions and to do something about it. I think that if you look at the history of this Legislature, sadly, it shows that has not been done. I would ask, back to the member opposite, if you look at your own history with respect to inaction, I think that begs to differ. The fact that this government is actually going to do something—and we are committed to doing something—means that we are listening to First Nations. Thank you.

Mr. Melanson (Dieppe, Interim Opposition Leader, L): Here is a chance again for the Premier to stand up. We have learned through the press release that the minister has written to the federal minister wanting the federal government to postpone the adoption of the UN declaration. Why are you imposing your own agenda on First Nations? Why are you not sitting down with our First Nations—with the First Nations communities of New Brunswick, the leadership and the chiefs—and having a meaningful conversation and not

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try to advocate on behalf of the Premier but advocate to the Premier on behalf of First Nations? That is the responsibility of the minister responsible for this file.

I get it. She is in a very difficult position now, and she is speaking because we are asking questions. Have you reached out to First Nations chiefs since Thursday, minister?

Hon. Ms. Dunn (Saint John Harbour, Minister responsible for Economic Development and Small Business, Minister responsible for Opportunities NB, Minister responsible for Immigration, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, PC): Thank you once again for the opportunity to address this question. Actually, no, I have not, but I hope that I am going to see them on Monday during the meeting.

I would say that with respect to the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* and the UNDRIP legislation, unfortunately, there have been many, many incidents where lots of commitments and promises have been made. A number of the individuals who have done that know that a lot of these things cannot actually be implemented, and that is a concern with respect to UNDRIP. We have a private consultation document that is looking into this issue because we have real concerns about how we actually take that legislation and implement it in New Brunswick. I do not want to give First Nations the understanding that everything in the UNDRIP legislation can be implemented because there are real concerns there, sir, and I think that we need to address those concerns before we make any promises to First Nations. Thank you.

CANNABIS NB

Mr. McKee (Moncton Centre, L): Mr. Speaker, as soon as the Premier took office, he began attacking the Cannabis NB sales model. He and the Minister of Finance repeatedly called the business model terrible because it did not generate immediate profits. We said over and over again that it takes time for a new business to become profitable. Look at it now. Last quarter, it had \$20 million in sales. That was an 87% increase over the same period last year.

They used the initial financial loss as a reason to privatize the sale of cannabis, but Mr. Speaker, that was premature, before the expansion of product selection and edible products, which, no doubt, increased profits. We always believed in the merit of keeping cannabis sales under provincial jurisdiction. Do you know what? We told you so. Will the minister admit that his decision was short-sighted and that he was wrong about selling Cannabis NB?

Hon. Mr. Steeves (Moncton Northwest, Minister of Finance and Treasury Board, PC): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, first of all, we have not yet sold Cannabis NB. Second, the last Finance Minister from that side of the House, from the Liberal side of the House, said that this was a model that was never designed to make money. You guys do not remember that? The last Finance Minister said that it was never designed to make money.

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Do you know what? I will tell you what made us money. It was COVID-19. COVID-19 made us money because people are staying home and have the CERB.

In the meantime, it has not been decided yet. We are looking at the RFP, and we are making the decision that will be right for New Brunswickers. Safety and profit—all those things are combined. We will ultimately do what is right for New Brunswick, not what is right for the followers of any particular party, as may have been done the last time.

[*Translation*]

Mr. McKee (Moncton Centre, L): Mr. Speaker, the Premier and the minister seem to want to focus their attention on selling an asset to improve their short-term results. However, at the same time, they would be abandoning an operation that could, in the future, generate much-needed revenue to support programs and services. The financial statements now show that Cannabis NB made the greatest profits per capita compared to all other provincial cannabis entities. Still, the minister does not seem to want to admit his mistake.

We have always believed that we should be patient, and we have said so many times, Mr. Speaker. Therefore, it would be irresponsible now to hand over control of Cannabis NB to a private monopoly.

Mr. Speaker, the minister does not want to admit his mistake, but why is he showing a lack of transparency in his communications about this whole process? Can the minister admit now that he has made a mistake about Cannabis NB?

[*Original*]

Hon. Mr. Steeves (Moncton Northwest, Minister of Finance and Treasury Board, PC): You know, it is never a mistake to do your due diligence. It is never a mistake to find out whether the business model you have on the go right now is going to continue to make you money. It is never a mistake to look for the best investment for New Brunswickers.

Having said that, I said all along that if it is not a compelling offer, then cannabis will stay with Cannabis NB. The process is not done yet, lest anybody is listening and thinking that the process is done, unless you guys have made up your mind on what you would do if you were in power. Well, you are not. While we are in power, we will decide how it goes from here. It will be based on a return on investment.

Mr. McKee (Moncton Centre, L): Mr. Speaker, the mistake was for this government to jump to conclusions. It politicized the issue of Cannabis NB, questioning the province's ability to sell cannabis, and the government should admit that it was wrong. Like with many other issues, when the government members were campaigning, how many times did we hear them say that they would eliminate something in the first six months of forming government, only to then review it and backtrack on their initial position?

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Mr. Speaker, the Premier and the Minister of Finance have failed to show patience on this file, a failure that they are now regretting. I am sure of it. They should be much more transparent in their communications about this whole process. In fact, today, I was getting ready to go debate with them on the CBC political panel, only to find out that the government minister pulled out because the government does not want to talk publicly about Cannabis NB. This just shows how secretive this government really is, Mr. Speaker. My question for the minister is very simple. What do they have to hide?

Hon. Mr. Higgs (Quispamsis, Premier, Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, PC): Mr. Speaker, I echo the comments of the Minister of Finance about being not afraid to look. That is the point. During this whole analysis, which we will get briefed on in the coming days, it was about how good this can be and whether it is a factor of COVID-19. What we have seen all around the province and particularly on our border between northern New Brunswick and Quebec is a huge change in sales activities. I am talking big changes. Does that mean that there is a lot of movement back and forth across the border that is legal or illegal? Boy, it means something is changing.

You look at the cannabis file and say: Okay, we have one of the most expensive models that exists for retail. Is it sustainable? Is the current path sustainable, or is it related to COVID-19? Once the border opens up, does that change it dramatically? Do we see this as a model that is going forward? I think the other part is that, during any analysis, you do a whole net present value of it and say: Okay, over time, we are going to ensure that New Brunswickers are protected, both in safety and in profitability.

PROPERTY TAX

Mr. K. Chiasson (Tracadie-Sheila, L): Mr. Speaker, a word of caution to all—the tax man is on the loose in New Brunswick, and his name is the Premier. This government has announced that it will eliminate the Permanent Assessment Gap exemption that has provided protection for homeowners who have seen significant increases in property tax assessments. We question the timing of this decision because we are in the midst of a global pandemic. Mr. Speaker, how does the Premier justify such a blatant tax grab?

Hon. Mr. Higgs (Quispamsis, Premier, Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, PC): You know, Mr. Speaker, half-story MLAs—that is what we have seen. Let's talk about the full picture by going back to a price freeze or a tax freeze that happened back in the 2010-12 range. It basically locked in taxes because of spiking. There was a tax protection put on a cap. There are 106 000 homes that have benefitted from a tax freeze for the last eight years. They are paying less tax than their neighbour who has the same, identical house. Is that fair?

When we want to talk about the facts, let's recognize where this revenue goes, because that is another one that does not get said often. Out of a \$9-million change, \$8 million of it goes to municipalities around this province. They need the money, and they deserve fair

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taxation. Not one neighbour is going to complain about paying the same tax as the neighbour next door. Let's be fair, let's be reasonable, and let's be honest about the facts.

Mr. K. Chiasson (Tracadie-Sheila, L): Mr. Speaker, the Premier has indicated on numerous occasions that he does not plan to raise taxes, but this is clearly a backdoor approach to doing things. Almost 15% of the population will see an increase in their tax bills come March, and the kicker is that 75% of those that are going to get dinged are middle- and lower-income households. Just as a couple of examples, Saint John is 8 810 households; Edmundston, 2 919; Tracadie, 2 001; Miramichi, 2 418; and Riverview, 2 094. Mr. Speaker, with so many of our citizens struggling financially, will the Premier change his mind and kick the elimination of the P-Gap exemption down the road?

Hon. Mr. Higgs (Quispamsis, Premier, Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, PC): Mr. Speaker, there is no kicker at all. These homes have enjoyed a tax break for eight years that their neighbours have not—eight years. No government would deal with it. They just let it pass, let it pass; oh, we cannot touch that.

The facts do not get all told. I am talking about the facts. It is a fair taxation system. You do not see any reason... The municipalities are certainly not complaining about it, and the neighbours are not complaining about it, because they know that it is the right thing to do. Some things are difficult. Some things are controversial. Some things have to be done. But they are the right things to do, and our government is all about doing the right thing.

Mr. K. Chiasson (Tracadie-Sheila, L): Mr. Speaker, the Premier is trying to sell this tax grab as a way to help municipalities across the province.

[Translation]

However, as the saying goes in English: My foot it is!

[Original]

The truth is that by eliminating the P-Gap, more than \$2 million will be added to the provincial coffers. Now the Premier just got up and said that \$8 million is going to the municipalities, but when we were in committee, I asked that exact question and heard that only \$6.2 million was going to municipalities and over \$2 million was going to the province. Which is it, Mr. Premier? Are you grabbing taxes from our middle- and low-income households to help municipalities or to inflate your operation budget?

Hon. Mary Wilson (Oromocto-Lincoln-Fredericton, Minister of Service New Brunswick, Minister responsible for Military Affairs, PC): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for the question. Obviously, my colleague was not paying attention in committee the other day—at all—because it is a five-year rollout to eliminate the P-Gap.

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(Interjections.)

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

Hon. Mary Wilson (Oromocto-Lincoln-Fredericton, Minister of Service New Brunswick, Minister responsible for Military Affairs, PC): In Year 1, approximately 86% of these homes will have their P-Gap eliminated, so in Year 1, \$6.3 million will be going to the municipalities and the local service districts. Once fully implemented, after five years, then we are at the \$8.3-million mark. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Translation]

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mrs. Landry (Madawaska Les Lacs-Edmundston, L): Mr. Speaker, during the 2018 election campaign, the Progressive Conservative Party promised to refund the proceeds from the provincial carbon tax to New Brunswickers. The plan was approved by Ottawa in December 2019 and put into effect on April 1, 2020. This represents 2¢ per litre of gas sold in New Brunswick.

These proceeds were supposed to go into a climate change fund in order to put in place measures to mitigate and fight climate change. How much money is there currently in the fund, and how many projects to combat climate change have been funded through this fund?

[Original]

Hon. Mr. Crossman (Hampton, Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Minister responsible for the Regional Development Corporation, PC): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the member across for the question. As you know from the committee last night, the money that came back is not in the Climate Change Fund alone. It is in General Revenue, and it will be tracked there. Going forward, we will identify retrofit projects or other projects. We are one government, and all departments work together to invest that money where it needs to go for energy efficiency and climate change projects on a go-forward basis. We will keep you informed, and our doors are always open, as you know. You can come and ask questions at any time, and we will find the answers for you. Thank you.

[Translation]

Mrs. Landry (Madawaska Les Lacs-Edmundston, L): Now that the federal government has announced its carbon pricing plan effective until 2030, what effect will this new pricing have on New Brunswick consumers? Will the price of gas go up?

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[Original]

Hon. Mr. Crossman (Hampton, Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Minister responsible for the Regional Development Corporation, PC): Thank you to the member across for the question. The announcement last Friday has a lot more details to come. We do not know the breakdown just yet. We do understand that with the federal government's announcement last week, it is looking to commit to beating its current national greenhouse gas emissions target by 2030. New Brunswick is already there. We are doing our part, and we are leading the way. We have one of the most comprehensive climate change action plans in the country and an aggressive target for 2030, as you mentioned.

We are leading the country in greenhouse gas emission reductions, and we have reduced our emissions by 34% below the 2005 levels. We do not believe that we need to increase the price of gasoline by 37¢ in order to continue to be a climate leader. Regarding the breakdown from Friday, our plan is to move ahead by 1% per year. The federal government is looking to send back money through investments for energy efficiency, and we are doing the same thing.

I mentioned one government. There is \$36 million in the climate change...

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

[Translation]

Mrs. Landry (Madawaska Les Lacs-Edmundston, L): Mr. Speaker, the minister spoke about an aggressive action plan for New Brunswick. Yes, indeed, this plan was adopted in 2016. Could the Minister of Environment and Climate Change table a report on the steps in New Brunswick's Climate Change Action Plan and report specifically on the progress being made and the implementation of measures set out in this action plan?

[Original]

Hon. Mr. Crossman (Hampton, Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Minister responsible for the Regional Development Corporation, PC): Yes, it is in the works. The member for Memramcook-Tantramar asked the same question last week. Our department is working on that, and it should come out shortly—certainly early in the new year at the latest. Thank you.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Mr. K. Arseneau (Kent North, G): Mr. Speaker, each year, the Commissioner of Official Languages of New Brunswick submits to the Legislative Assembly a report concerning the activities of the office of the commissioner. Usually, this report makes important recommendations with regard to compliance with the *Official Languages Act*. The



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commissioner will be releasing her annual report today; however, it is disappointing that this report is not being tabled in the Legislative Assembly to the Standing Committee on Procedure, Privileges and Legislative Officers, as it should be, or, better yet, to the new standing committee on official languages that we should have.

That being said, my first question is directed to the Premier. Yesterday, during the throne speech debate, he mentioned “fundamental equality”. I am a little confused as to what the Premier meant by this new concept. Can the Premier explain what he meant by “fundamental equality”?

Hon. Mr. Higgs (Quispamsis, Premier, Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, PC): Thank you for the question. Yes, I can explain what I meant by that. I think that we need to ask a lot of the tough questions throughout the province. I think that this review of the *Official Languages Act* needs to include how we are going to ensure that our education system actually meets the challenges and that we actually are, across this province, graduating students speaking both official languages.

So far, the statistics on the English system have been very poor. We graduate very few—maybe 50% of the graduating students. Where do they go? They leave the province to find work because they are not able to speak both official languages. We have people not coming back because they cannot speak both official languages. We have people who cannot be promoted because they cannot speak both official languages.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to have a full debate and discussion on where we in New Brunswick go so that we truly become a bilingual province, proud to be bilingual, as we all are, but proud to be treated equal, as we all do and making sure that no child graduates and has to leave our province.

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

[*Translation*]

Mr. K. Arseneau (Kent North, G): Hold on to your hats, because this year will not be easy.

Since we are on the subject of official languages, I would point out that the review of the provincial *Official Languages Act* is due to take place in 2021. However, considering how slowly things are moving in the House, I would humbly submit that it is one minute to midnight. This review must be based on the premise of substantive equality. I would remind the Premier that substantive equality is achieved when you take into account, where necessary, the differences in characteristics and circumstances of minority communities and you provide services with distinct content or using a different delivery methods to ensure that the minority receives services of the same quality as the majority.

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My question is for the Premier, and it is very simple: Will the *Official Languages Act* review process be announced by Friday, as promised?

[Original]

Hon. Mr. Higgs (Quispamsis, Premier, Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, PC): I think, Mr. Speaker, that the member opposite and I are in violent agreement. We believe in fundamental equality in this province, and we believe that we must find a way to ensure that it applies to every citizen in this province. That is what a review requires. It requires not only to meet the *Official Languages Act*, but it also needs to go beyond that and ask the tough questions so that we are all addressing the challenges that our kids are facing in not being able to stay here or not being able to be promoted here or not being able to come back here.

I have said from the very beginning that I am prepared to talk about all the issues, because I believe that people across this province want to find ways to work together. We did it during COVID-19, Mr. Speaker. We did it effectively, and we are still doing it. We can go beyond COVID-19. We can be the number one province in this country, we can continue to thrive and survive, and we can be the only bilingual province, but that means that we are all treated fairly and equally.

FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL AGREEMENTS

Mr. Austin (Fredericton-Grand Lake, Leader, PA): Mr. Speaker, the Integrated Bilateral Agreement leverages federal dollars with provincial money to ensure that much-needed projects are completed for municipalities. These necessary projects are critical to ensuring that cities, towns, and villages all have resources needed to see timely repairs. The *Capital Estimates* has allotted \$15 million of provincial money for this agreement. My question is for the Minister Responsible for the Regional Development Corporation. Can the minister tell us when the Integrated Bilateral Agreement will reopen and when municipalities can apply under this program?

Hon. Mr. Crossman (Hampton, Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Minister responsible for the Regional Development Corporation, PC): Thank you, member opposite, and thanks for the email last week. The deadline was missed back in August or September because it stopped. I believe that it is starting up soon. I will get the exact date from my department for you. It is certainly a great fund to have to work together to provide projects across the province. Your project is very important to us, and we will continue working with that. Thank you.

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[*Translation*]

HEALTH CARE

Mr. D'Amours (Edmundston-Madawaska Centre, L): Mr. Speaker, during the fiasco of his first health care reform, the Premier got off the hook by promising to be more transparent, to discuss, and to hold public meetings by last June. Community leaders, people around the province, and health care professionals were supposed to be publicly consulted.

Can the Minister of Health confirm to us today that public consultations will be held where everyone will be able to express their worries and concerns? Or is the minister only going to invite people who are in favour of her preplanned reform in the health sector? Is the minister willing to invite people who are not in favour of her ready-made reform? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[*Original*]

Hon. Mrs. Shephard (Saint John Lancaster, Minister of Health, PC): Mr. Speaker, I really appreciate the question. Health review is extremely important. I have made it very clear that this will be a very open and transparent discussion. I am looking forward to having conversations in communities.

We know that this is a time of COVID-19, but the fact of the matter is that if we can, we are planning to ensure that we will be in communities to have proper socially distanced conversations and to communicate with communities on how they see their health care system looking. It is really important that we understand that, beginning in January, these conversations are going to take place.

I am interested in understanding the people of New Brunswick and how they see their health care system. I want to see what their needs are, and more importantly, I want to understand what their fears are. I believe that we can address them as we proceed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. D'Amours (Edmundston-Madawaska Centre, L): Mr. Speaker, in recent months, the Conservative government has told us that health care reform is already well underway, whether it is the centralization of laboratory services, whether it is the elimination of what the Premier calls the duplication of health care services, or whether it is the centralization of hip and knee surgeries. Can the Minister of Health guarantee that her plan for health reform will be unveiled before the public meetings so that the people can really give their opinions? Otherwise, we will be entitled to a public relations campaign and not a consultation.

Hon. Mrs. Shephard (Saint John Lancaster, Minister of Health, PC): Mr. Speaker, it is really important as we proceed with the health review that we do not anticipate the outcome.

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Work is always being done within the Department of Health and the RHAs on improving efficiencies and understanding how things need to be done differently because of some of the challenges that we are facing. I will be releasing a white paper on this so that the discussion can be properly primed and we can have these good, open, and transparent discussions. However, there is no anticipated outcome here.

We are going to have a conversation with the people of New Brunswick. We are going to present the challenges. We are going to ask for their input. We are going to ask for how they view the needs in their communities. All of this will hopefully come out with outcomes that give us healthier communities. I am looking forward to those discussions, Mr. Speaker.

FIRST NATIONS

Mr. Melanson (Dieppe, Interim Opposition Leader, L): Mr. Speaker, this morning, I asked questions of the Premier regarding the First Nations communities, and the Premier did not get up to answer the questions that I asked. But think about it—think about it. The Premier got up today and answered a question on cannabis and never answered the questions in regard to First Nations. I would say that is insulting. That is not respectful.

I am going to ask the Premier, because it is the last question of the day... The First Nations communities have decided not to participate in the Working Group on Truth and Reconciliation. They are waiting for the Premier to show some leadership and explain to them what he is going to do to try to repair this damage that was created by his government and his minister. Premier, they are waiting. They do not want to talk about cannabis first. They want to talk about the respect for their needs. Can you answer the question that I just asked you?

Hon. Ms. Dunn (Saint John Harbour, Minister responsible for Economic Development and Small Business, Minister responsible for Opportunities NB, Minister responsible for Immigration, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, PC): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member opposite for the question. We do respect First Nations, and our respect is going to be equated into actions—actions that are relevant and long overdue. That is what we are going to do, and that is what we are committed to. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker (Hon. Mr. Oliver): The time for question period is over.