

Premier,

I'm not sure where to begin. I am very grateful for the opportunity you have given me.

I don't know if you realize the culture you have promoted, not only in our party, but throughout our government members, cabinet and senior leadership of gov.

It's not good.

We are at a very pivotal point for our government and, putting aside the respect and loyalty I feel for you, I have a responsibility to try to convey the difficulty I feel you are facing. It will be a reflection of you, as a person, a leader and a Premier. I hope you understand I come to this from a position of friendship and as a colleague.

From the moment we had a conversation about your vision for this province I knew one thing. That Blaine Higgs didn't want to be leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of New Brunswick; he just wanted to be "leader". There is a reason you won the leadership and it truly was by bringing in new followers. Most of whom who had never supported the PCNB or had any connection to anyone in the party. Most of whom are no where to be found now.

But those who are used to the party way, and lost their candidate's bid for leadership, picked up in the aftermath and got behind their leader, including me. I do believe that one of the things you like about me is that I say what's on my mind. No guessing. That is what I am doing today.

There is so much you can accomplish but you are the largest impediment to getting it done. I have absolutely no idea who you trust. It is obvious: you do not trust any of your Ministers - me included. You do not trust your staff in the Premier's Office. You do not trust the civil service. You micro manage to such a degree that you paralyze initiatives from getting across the finish line. You take away the ability to "bring the public along" by constantly missing or launching tidbits out to the media long before there is a proper process or place to engage thoughtful conversation.

Let me go back a bit. Your team bought into the vision for a stronger New Brunswick. I believe we understood what you want to accomplish. However, I have watch Minister after Minister struggle with bringing you what you want or have asked for, only to be sent away to go back to the drawing board.

Premier, you have spoken about how you want to make New Brunswick better, more stable and sustainable and a province of choice for people to live. It is my impression (I believe others too but will only speak for myself) that you do not have any interest in the engagement process or trust building process that can lead to success. You seemed convinced that once people see what you have done, they will understand and be happy.

Those who understand relationship building and trust building, know that it is time well invested.

In everything we have attempted so far with our government, Premier, it's about the "how", never the "what" that has caused disention and public backlash. We have never tried to bring people along but rather, have expected they would accept our rationale.

A surgeon does not do surgery alone. They need a team to be successful. The same is for leaders. But if a leader does not trust and rely on their team, their success can only go so far.

It is my impression that you have tried to run the government of New Brunswick like a corporation. You have the belief you and the CIO can make the decisions and "it will be so".

What, even after all this time, you fail to recognize is that there is an elected body from every part of the province that has a responsibility to represent their constituency, no matter how inconvenient it is, or how trivial you think the motives of any individual.

Premier, our days are short. In fact, I believe our time in government is only months long now. You do not have a team and it is your team doing.

You do not listen to your Ministers; rather you latch on to individuals, separate and apart from your cabinet to Council you. You allow agenda-driven individuals to support your thought process and expect your Ministers to fall in line.

You avoid and circumvent process because you think it is a waste of time. Yet there are example after example where process has saved embarrassment and the making of bad decisions.

I cannot tell you how often you have told me you "heard" something and then when I investigate and prove it wrong, you come back a week later and we go through the same thing all over again, simply because someone "out there" tells you their version and you believe them.

You do not trust the people who serve you. You do not value the insight they bring to your table. You have built a system where no one takes things to the Ministers anymore, they simply go to you — and you allow it.

Premier, this ship is sinking because you have alienated everyone who could bail it out for you. Whether it is with your elected colleagues, your senior management team or the public, your reckless and arbitrary conduct has destroyed a team that could make your success.

For every opportunity you have given me, I feel I owe you to be as straight with you as I can be.

There is but a very short window of time for you to choose to change this path.

You can swipe your hands and say "I tried", or you can recognize that a team approach can save you and this government from failing. If you decide the later, I will do everything I can to help.

No one can save you from yourself, except you. And I hope you can see that my incentive is not an agenda of mutiny — it is one of an intervention.

May I respectfully suggest there is a strong path forward and one that supports you and the accomplishments you want to achieve.

I realize in writing this letter, I cannot unshoot the gun. But I believe your true reality is beyond the perspective of the Premier and office. There's a way to fix this.

If I have not severed our friendship, I would be happy to discuss and offer suggestions.

I believe the strong path forward could be to call of an in-person cabinet meeting for Sunday. Tell everyone they will need to be there all day if need be. And be willing to really listen.

When you do that, there may be a path forward that we develop together.

Dorothy