

Setting the Record Straight

A recent NDP commercial has been touting the party's record in government. It's slick and it's hopeful. Unfortunately, it's also misleading.

The ad claims they've cut the projected deficit by a billion dollars. Trouble is, they "projected" that deficit from fictional numbers. They inflated potential department spending every year, and then underspent. It's just that simple. What they have done, though, is add hundreds of millions of dollars to our province's debt – and that's money we, our children and their children will be paying for years to come.

In contrast to their ad claims (and their election promise), ER closures continue under this government. The wait times for knee surgery or cataract surgery are among the highest in the country. For foot and ankle surgery, waits can mean a decade.

The commercial claims they're investing in students. The problem is – they've cut \$65 million from school budgets, which led to the loss of over 700 teaching jobs and overcrowded classrooms. Now the NDP has been forced to backtrack – sort of. The education minister has informed us the province is going to hire 170 new teachers this coming year. Unfortunately, 330 teachers are going to retire – so that's still a drop of 160 teachers for 2013/14.

The NDP claims they've taken the HST off home heating bills. What they don't tell you is that they instituted an "efficiency fee" on every electric bill in the province that costs us millions more than we ever paid in HST on our power bills. And they're not telling you that Nova Scotians pay the among the highest power rates in the country – because this government won't stand up to Nova Scotia Power.

The caption on the commercial claims "Thousands of Jobs Here". Unfortunately, that's what we've lost under the NDP. Just this past year, 3,300 women lost their jobs across the province – that's an increase of nearly 30 percent. And the youth unemployment rate has climbed to a whopping 20 percent; no wonder our young people are leaving the province. The NDP has made bad decisions – giving money to companies without forcing them to provide job guarantees, cutting the Yarmouth Ferry, and giving money to out of province companies so they can come here to compete with our local companies who aren't getting those same subsidies.

All you have to do is drive down Bedford Highway or take a walk through one of our local malls to see what's happening. Every day we open the paper to hear about yet another local business that's gone under.

What we do know – according to pollster Don Mills – is that virtually every single Nova Scotia family is worse off today than they were in 2008. And that is the legacy of the Nova Scotia NDP in government.

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