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Mercredi 17 novembre 1999

Speaker
Honourable Gary Carr

Président
L'honorable Gary Carr

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 17 November 1999

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 17 novembre 1999

The House met at 1845.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SAFE STREETS ACT, 1999

LOI DE 1999 SUR LA SÉCURITÉ
DANS LES RUES

Resuming the debate adjourned on November 16, 1999, on the motion for second reading of Bill 8, An Act to promote safety in Ontario by prohibiting aggressive solicitation, solicitation of persons in certain places and disposal of dangerous things in certain places, and to amend the Highway Traffic Act to regulate certain activities on roadways / *Projet de loi 8, Loi visant à promouvoir la sécurité en Ontario en interdisant la sollicitation agressive, la sollicitation de personnes dans certains lieux et le rejet de choses dangereuses dans certains lieux, et modifiant le Code de la route afin de réglementer certaines activités sur la chaussée.*

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Bert Johnson): The Chair recognizes the member for Sault Ste Marie.

Mr Tony Martin (Sault Ste Marie): I wasn't quite expecting to be up as soon as this, but nevertheless—

Mr Wayne Wettlaufer (Kitchener Centre): You can do it.

Mr Martin: We can do it. I'll just take flight from where I left off a couple of hours ago.

It's nice to see the Minister of Community and Social Services here, and Mr Tilson, who has been around here for quite some time and knows how this place operates and can present—

Mr Gerry Martiniuk (Cambridge): What riding is he from?

Mr Martin: I don't know. I know you're from Kitchener, and you used to be over here so you could heckle me.

I just want to start off my short time this evening with a bit of a poem, if you don't mind. It sets the tone for the message I want to deliver or the points that I want to put on the table. It's from a little book that I carry around with me and read from time to time just to remind me of where I come from and some of the—

Hon Frank Klees (Minister without Portfolio): Dr Seuss?

Mr Martin: Yes, Dr Seuss. No, that's the Premier. That's what he reads, Dr Seuss. I've graduated to a little bit higher academic level.

It's from a book called *Famine Diary: Journey to a New World*. It's basically stories of people who lived through the potato famine in Ireland, which is my heritage. It's interesting, some of the dynamics that happened there and how it parallels to some degree what's going on here. It actually parallels in many ways how countries have responded over time to economic difficulties and how it's usually the people on the bottom end, the poor, who take the brunt. It's the folks at the top who have power, who have the resources to get out there and grab what they can while they can and are able to read ahead of time what's coming at them who are able to position themselves to ride through some of these storms.

But here's a little bit of a poem from that book. It's by Lady Speranza, and it says:

Weary men, what reap ye?

Golden corn for the stranger.

What sow ye? Human corpses for the avenger.

Fainting forms, hunger stricken,

What see ye in the offing?

Stately ships to bear our food away,

Amid the stranger's scoffing.

There's a proud array of soldiers,

What do they round your door?

They guard our master's granaries,

From the thin hands of the poor.

Why would I start my few thoughts here this evening with this poem? Because it reflects very much the tenor and the tone of what we've seen in this province over the last four years.

We have not been, in Ontario, in a difficult economic time. Corporations have been making historically record high profits for a number of years now. If you read the reports and you believe the reports in the financial pages of the newspapers, there's a lot of money out there, but it's not going to the larger majority of working people or people who would like to work in the province. Most of that profit is being generated on the backs of people who work, who give of their time, their energy, their inspiration and their intelligence, but it accrues in larger amounts to those who are the owners of the operations, who have power, who are privileged to be in a position to be able to invest and take advantage of the good times that are upon us.

For this government, in the middle of such plenty, to decide to target, pick out and attack in such very pointed

and severe ways those who are at the bottom end so that at the end of the day the folks at the top could make even more money in my mind is morally wrong.

It reflects what happened in Ireland back in those times. There was a potato famine, but there wasn't a famine of other cash crops. The landowners, who happened to be for the most part offshore, were growing bags of grain sown by, tended to and harvested by the Irish labourer who was feeding his family on what he could produce on the little garden plot that he was given by the landowner in order to do that, by way of payment. It was that little garden that ran out of nutrient to produce the potato that the ordinary Irish citizen fed his family on, lived on, and from time to time was able to barter with other neighbours for eggs, chickens or whatever, that could not produce potatoes any more.

There was not a lack of resource. There was not a lack of wealth in the land, but that wealth was in the hands of a few people who chose to sell it offshore as opposed to taking it and turning it into bread that they could share with the literally millions of people who were starving to death in those days.

I suggest to you that it's not dissimilar to what's happening in Ontario today. The Irish peasant of that day was blamed by the powers that were around that day—

Hon Mr Klees: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I don't mean to insult the honourable member, but the Irish potato famine and all of these other things, I wonder what relevance it has to the bill before us.

The Deputy Speaker: That is a point of order, because you're supposed to be speaking on the bill. I'm sure the member will bring his remarks within the terms of the bill, or at least I expect he will.

Mr Martin: It doesn't surprise me, because this again is a repeat of what happened just a couple of hours ago. The members across have a difficult time when they are hit between the eyes with the truth, when they know that what's coming from this side of the table is hitting home, so they get up and try to distract and try to intimidate. It's part of the strategy of those in power to keep those who are not in power but who want to contribute in some way, who want to challenge, who want to interject or present another perspective—to shut them up, keep them quiet or throw them off. I'm sorry; it ain't gonna work, it isn't going to work.

Interjections.

Mr Martin: If they'd listen for a second—because they're not good at listening; I know that up my way all kinds of people are coming to the reality more and more that this government does not listen—they might understand how all this connects.

Hon Mr Klees: We've been listening for 20 minutes, Tony.

Mr Martin: It's not always as simple as Dr Seuss, Mr Klees. It's funny that you should interject at this point and in that way, because I was going to share with you another piece of information that was—well, just let me share it with you: "Economic decisions are always moral decisions. Unfortunately, in Ontario, morality has taken a back seat to greed and political posturing." This is from

the Catholic Register, not a left-wing Catholic newspaper by any stretch of the imagination, but certainly in this instance hitting the nail on the head. That brings me back to the analogy I was using, the Irish potato famine. That which drove those who were in power in those days was no less greedy or political in nature and posturing than what we're seeing in Ontario today.

This legislation that we're debating tonight has to be, as far as I'm concerned, that which takes the cake. This is a piece of legislation that just goes completely and totally over the top, the most repulsive, odious and wrong-headed piece of legislation that I have ever laid eyes on, that I've ever seen. Thankfully, though, I'm told by those who know about these things that eventually it will be challenged in court and be found to be unconstitutional. You thank God once in a while that we do have a Constitution in this country that protects people.

If the Irish folks back in the days of the potato famine had had a constitution they could have gone to, they could have said: "Listen, there's a ton of resource here, a lot of food being grown and produced. If the powers that be, the landowners, would only share it in a different way, we could do OK here. We could all get through this difficult time and probably at the end of the day all be better off." In Ontario today, we have a government of a similar ilk that doesn't believe that the values and the principles upon which we built a community and a society that we all live in and appreciate and sometimes, unfortunately, take for granted are about community and co-operating and working together and making sure that everybody has enough, and making sure that if they don't have enough, we find a way to get them what they need.

In Ontario today I thought a good economy would be built on recognizing the contribution that each citizen could make in whatever way they found possible to do that, that we would find ways to make sure they were compensated for that so they could also participate, as we all like to do, in the life of the community: feed their families, pay their rent, get clothes for their children, particularly in the wintertime, and recreate, go to the pool, go to the library, take advantage of the education system; if they're sick, go to the hospital and be made better.

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But alas, that is being ripped apart, torn to shreds, diminished in many serious and significant ways, and no more so than for the poorest in our communities, for those who find themselves in a situation, perhaps in between jobs, perhaps because of some health issue, perhaps because of some relationship that completely fell apart and the person didn't have the strength to rise up and move on in spite of that—all the myriad ways that we get challenged as human beings, that defeat some people, empower other people, but in many ways are a very real part of the world that we live in. So we choose as a community of people, in most instances, certainly up until 1995 in Ontario, to try to find constructive, positive, creative ways to be of assistance to people.

But no, this government has consistently, since it was elected, picked on a few people to blame for everything

that has happened, to demonize so that politically they could take advantage of some of the anger and resentment and fear that they generate out there by targeting these people, and ultimately to take advantage of that so that they themselves can wrest power out of the hands of others who would want to be government.

What did they do that's so wrong, you may ask? Well, the first thing they did was to cut the income of the poorest and most marginalized of our citizens. I don't think they were even in power a month. I remember it, and I've said it so often in this House that those of you who have been around for four years will probably be getting a little sick and tired of hearing it. In July 1995, I woke up one morning to find out that this government's very first act of public policy was to cut 22.6% out of the income of the poorest of our citizens, and they thought nothing of it. No big deal, they were getting too much anyway; a lot of those people were living in the lap of luxury, they thought, and taking advantage of the system. In fact, the reality was that all of them were struggling to make ends meet, struggling to keep their head above water, struggling to put food on the table for their children, struggling to pay the rent, to find a home that was affordable, struggling to participate in community in a way that didn't degrade them or take away from their dignity as people. The first thing this government did was to reduce their income.

The second thing they did, and it wasn't that long after, was that they began to cut the programs that supported them in their efforts to keep body and soul together; supported them in their efforts to take them from here to here; supported them in their efforts to get education for themselves and for their children; supported them as they struggled to deal with some of the social challenges they faced because they were poor and lived in parts of communities that by their very nature presented challenges of perhaps violence and crime where their children were concerned, or whatever. It happens in every neighbourhood, but it too often seems to involve those who are poor and of meagre circumstance. So they cut the programs.

They cut their income, they cut the programs, and then they began to systematically demonize them, compare them to criminals, wrap them up in a package that was the poor and criminals and unions, and continually label them as both losers and people who are causing us all the problems that we're facing: The rich can't get richer in this province because the poor are getting too much money; the poor are getting too many programs to support them and to help them out.

There was no recognition given to the fact that every penny we give to somebody on social assistance goes immediately into the economy of the community in which they live. In Sault Ste Marie, when you took the 22.6% away from the welfare recipients, you took, on average, \$2 million a month out of the coffers of the small businesses that these people bought their groceries in, for example. That's \$24 million a year out of the economy of Sault Ste Marie. I sometimes wonder if you guys think that the poor, when you give them a few

bucks to keep body and soul together, bury it in a hole in the backyard. Is that what you think, that they bury it in a hole in the backyard? Or perhaps they put it into some Swiss bank account. They wish they could. Or maybe they take the old Buick that they're driving around, held together with baling wire, and trade it in on a Cadillac, like Mr Klees drives around in. But they don't do that. They spend every penny they get on groceries, on clothing for their kids, on housing. It goes into the economy of the community they live in. But you don't seem to understand that.

So you've taken their income away. You've taken their programs away. And now, the Minister of Community and Social Services very proudly rose in his place this afternoon and said, "We're against anybody on welfare having a cottage." Good for you. Isn't that wonderful? Drive the poor deeper into poverty. Just because you are in between jobs and need a handout from government, from a pool of money that you paid into in the first place when you were working, you should have to cash in everything you own. You should be absolutely destitute before this government will give you one red cent. That's morally wrong. Not only is it morally wrong, but it's going to create problems for you in other areas in the long run too. I was at a talk by the chief of police of Sault Ste Marie last week. It was interesting. He said one of the most important factors in violence in communities, whether it increases or decreases, is the level of poverty. So you drive people further into poverty, which is what you're doing with this newly found hot button that the Minister of Community and Social Services has found, and you increase the cases of violence in your community.

You've passed legislation that says that if a welfare person gets a food basket from their mother and doesn't report it on the forms they put in at the end of the month, they get cut off for life. Yet we have people in this province who evade paying taxes, and they get rewarded by becoming cabinet ministers in this government. Explain that to me; explain how that works.

Now, with this legislation, the only avenue people have left to raise a few bucks for themselves—you're going to take that away from them too. You're going to stop people from panhandling. You've taken welfare away; you've taken their programs away; they can't get anything from their families. They go out on the street and panhandle, they're down on their knees begging for a few shekels so they can buy some bread, and if they do it too aggressively or they have the smell of alcohol on their breath, they're thrown in jail. Or God forbid they go out and wash a few windshields with a squeegee: They become criminals. People who already have a housing problem, a social problem, a problem of poverty, you are now going to give them a criminal problem, a justice problem. Shame on you. It's morally wrong.

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The Deputy Speaker: Questions and comments?

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel-Wellington-Grey): I'd like to comment on the member for Sault Ste Marie's remarks. I always respect him when he rises in this place

and speaks. I disagree with almost every word he says, but I respect him, because I honestly believe that he believes what he's saying, and he tries to put that view forward.

It's interesting that he talks about the Irish potato famine. Many of my ancestors were part of that as well. We may even have come over on the same boat, for all I know, although I expect that my ancestors were Protestant and his ancestors were Catholic, and our ancestors probably fought in the same way that we're fighting today.

Notwithstanding that, I appreciate his talking about the terrible poverty that existed back then. I know the opposition tries to relate this bill to poverty, to lack of education, to a lack of jobs. I understand that. That's not what this bill is about. We're concerned about the poor. We're concerned about getting jobs for people. We're concerned about educating people and giving them a higher standard of living.

There was a survey done quite recently—the member may know of it—where these young people who have been washing windows were interviewed, and I think 80% of them don't want that life. They want to get good jobs; they want to improve their way of life. I'm sure the member for Sault Ste Marie will agree with that. We do too. This bill is to enable people to walk down the street safely without being harassed, to be able to drive along the streets safely without being harassed. It has nothing to do with the issues the member for Sault Ste Marie is talking about.

We on this side are concerned about those issues. We're doing things about those issues. I know the member for Sault Ste Marie does not agree with some of the things we're doing in dealing with the poor. We're trying to educate people, we're trying to get them jobs, workfare, those sorts of things. But the member is wrong as to what the thrust of this legislation is.

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough-Rouge River): The more I listen to the member for Sault Ste Marie—I always admire the way he puts things. It is crisp, clear, precise and very concise too.

My concern is that no matter how well he put it, the Conservatives there just close their eyes to this and they don't understand that. I would try to warn the member for Sault Ste Marie, don't try to convince them, because they are just blind and go the direction they want to go. It is clear that this Conservative Mike Harris bully government wants the poor to just go away. "Since they won't go away, maybe we'll put them somewhere like in jail. Maybe we should have them charged." Right now there are people who want justice in the court, but the backlog is so high. But no: "Let's line up the poor and charge them, so maybe we can get more jobs for lawyers or more jobs for judges to do. Maybe they have nothing to do."

The attack on the poor is just so brutal. They brag about this great economy we have, yet we find that we have more homeless people than ever, Mr Speaker. I know you are concerned about this. I think for many of

those Conservatives over there, their mothers and fathers must be saying: "Let me turn the TV off. I'm not quite sure that this is my son or my daughter, who is speaking about the most desperate in our society, that all they would like to do is put them in jail."

"You know what? If we have visitors coming to our city seeing these people begging, it's bad for us, but where can we put them? I think the best place to put them is in jail, and maybe it helps that part of the economy." You should be ashamed of yourselves, the way you treat the most vulnerable in our society. I think you should go back and talk to Mom and Dad and say, "Give me back those values that you taught me earlier on, to be more compassionate."

Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): I want to commend the member for Sault Ste Marie for his remarks tonight and focus on the point he was making, which is that the government has made it their business in the last four years to press a lot of hot buttons and bring forward legislation that demonizes the poor and makes them the result of any ills that we might have in the province. The government has done that consistently since the day they were elected. They punish social assistance recipients, get rid of employment equity and say that we don't have jobs because someone else's child, who is black or who may be disabled or native, is getting your child's job. And let's make sure that people who are on a lower income level but not quite on social assistance can't even get a drug card any more. So we make it even harder for them to try to keep themselves at work when they have no benefits, especially drug benefits. Or make sure they don't have a car that's worth more than \$5,000, and God forbid, if they live in northern Ontario and they're trying to drive to work because there isn't much public transit, that that car break down in winter.

The point he was making is that this bill is yet another attempt by this government to go after the people who are at the bottom of the scale. The point of the bill is to get off the street the human debris, the people who don't have a home, the people who are suffering from mental illness and don't have a place in an institution. We'll get the police to pick them up and throw them in jail, and then no one else will have to see what's happening in the province, which is that the gap between the rich and the poor is growing. It's growing by leaps and bounds, and this government's tax cut feeds into that.

There's nothing in the bill that talks about youth, squeegee kids wanting to have jobs and how the government's going to do that, because the government has no plan on providing employment for youth. So let's get serious. There's nothing here with respect to how we deal with the homelessness, which is why a lot of these people are on the streets in the first place, and the government made sure that in the throne speech they didn't do anything about that. This bill is all about how to get the human garbage, the human debris, off the streets, get them in jail so no one else has to see the poverty in our province.

Mr Wayne Wettlaufer (Kitchener Centre): I'd like to add a few comments to the speech by the member from Sault Ste Marie. He knows, and I think everyone in this House knows, that I have a very great deep regard for him. I know he is very hard-working and he's very idealistic, but there are some times when idealistic people's thinking is shadowed by the idealism and Utopianism and you forget what is real in life.

He described the bill as punitive and odious. I would like to remind the member that we're talking about the disposal of dangerous objects in parks and playgrounds. We're talking about discarded needles. We're talking about discarded condoms. These are not sewing needles we're talking about; these are needles which bring disease—AIDS. We know about AIDS, do we not? I do not want the children of Kitchener, the children of Toronto, the children of Sault Ste Marie or the children of any other community in this province to pick up a discarded needle or condom and be subjected to AIDS.

I had to laugh a little bit to myself when the member from Scarborough-Rouge River stood up and commented. He's rather idealistic too. He is a very good member. He is running for the presidency of his party right now. I know he is opposed by his party leader, Dalton McGuinty, who would rather have somebody else. I don't know if Mr McGuinty shares his views, but I would like to say that I think you would make a very good president of your party.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Sault Ste Marie has two minutes to respond.

Mr Martin: I want to thank the members from Dufferin-Peel-Wellington-Grey, Scarborough-Rouge River, Nickel Belt, and Kitchener Centre for their comments. It's good that we have this debate and that we hear from everybody their view on these matters, because they're very important matters.

I just might, in my minute and a half, say to the members that the analogy I used with the Irish potato famine and what's happening in Ontario now is very clear. You have a group of people in desperate poverty in a land of plenty. In Ontario, you have a group of people at the bottom end, and that group is growing because the gap between the rich and the poor is growing, going into desperate poverty, being pushed into desperate poverty. We have homelessness on the streets of our larger cities now in numbers that we've never seen before. We hear in conversations that we have with the United Way, for example, about TB. I brought this up with the Minister of Health a couple of years ago and he denied categorically that there was TB happening out there.

You take all of these problems that are going to escalate and become bigger problems and you try to sweep them under the rug, you blame somebody else for them, mostly the victims themselves. You become punitive in the way that you deal with those folks, and you think it's going to go away. Well, it's not. It's going to come back to haunt us. In a civilized society, in a society as educated and intelligent as the one we live in, I would hope there would be a more sophisticated response from government, giving leadership on these issues.

You talk about the needles, syringes and the condoms etc. This isn't going to do it. You're focusing, I would suggest, on the wrong end. What about the swarming? A kid, 15 years old, gets killed here. Where are the police to deal with that? You won't hire those police—

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The Deputy Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Further debate?

Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): It is an honour to rise this evening to take part in the debate on Bill 8, the Safe Streets Act.

As the member for Simcoe North, I am the first to admit that we really don't have a problem with aggressive panhandling or solicitation in beautiful central Ontario. However, the residents of my riding expect it to stay that way. I campaigned on Blueprint. I campaigned on having a safer Ontario, an Ontario safe for everyone to live, work and raise a family. I include my family, who expect and deserve a safer Ontario to live in.

As a new grandparent, the issue of community safety is very important to me. I want my granddaughter—and I'm very, very proud of her; her name is Rachel—to be able to grow up without fear from harm by simply walking down a city street. That is why I am proud to stand here in this House this evening to voice my support for Bill 8, the Safe Streets Act.

As most of you know, my riding is the home of the OPP headquarters in Orillia, so the issue of community safety is at the hearts of many people in the riding of Simcoe North. I often have the opportunity to discuss policing with the employees of the OPP. Our government's leadership in acknowledging the importance of public safety in our communities is unprecedented in the history of government police services activity. The very fact that our Solicitor General stood in this House to honour those officers who have sacrificed their lives in the line of duty for the citizens of this province by announcing a permanent memorial to be constructed here at Queen's Park should tell everyone our commitment to policing and safety in Ontario.

So far as a government, we have responded to the requests of police officers to make Ontario safer by setting tough new standards for parole boards so that fewer criminals are granted early release and by launching the first strict discipline facilities or boot camp for young offenders to emphasize education and responsibility, not entertainment and recreation—which I am proud to say is in my riding of Simcoe North. Operation Turnabout is a resounding success, and I can only hope that the Minister of Correctional Services can expand this program to other areas of the province.

We implemented a Victims' Bill of Rights and an office of victims to ensure that victims and witnesses of crime get the support they need and deserve. We made changes to ensure that our courts are able to deal quickly with the cases before them. Ontario's first registry of sex offenders, to strengthen our protection against these crimes, was also created by our government.

Our government has committed to putting another 1,000 new police officers on our streets by next year. We've said this many times, and over 500 have already been added. We are working with the police to implement a rural crime prevention strategy, and that is part of our \$150-million community safety commitment, which will help keep the citizens of Ontario and of Simcoe North free from the tentacles of crime.

Public safety was an issue when my daughter decided to go off to university. I can remember making a choice between a school in Toronto and the University of Western Ontario in London. The qualities of the universities in Toronto were top-notch; however, I was more afraid for my daughter's safety going to school. I had fears as to what kind of people she would meet while walking home from class at 10 or 11 o'clock in the evening. I know this is a fear many parents have when their son or daughter decides to go away from home to university. In fact, it was the main reason why we did favour Western over a school in Toronto.

During the election, our party promised the voters of Ontario that if we were given the honour of continuing to form a government, we would continue to address the issues of community safety. We also promised in Blueprint that we would give police the power to crack down on aggressive panhandling and squeegee people so that our streets would be safer for everyone. Many municipal officials have been expressing their concerns on squeegee people. Police Chief Terry McLaren was quoted in the Peterborough Examiner on September 4, 1999, "The squeegee kids are a nuisance and a safety hazard." In fact, the Liberal member for St. Paul's said in the Toronto Star as recently as October 2, "Within a civil society, you should be able to walk the streets and not be harassed." I agree with the member's statement, and that is again another reason why I'm supporting the Safe Streets Act.

Our government believes that all Ontarians have the right to drive on the roads, walk down the streets or use public places without being or feeling intimidated. During the last provincial election, I campaigned on giving the police the tools to crack down on squeegeeing and aggressive panhandling. This legislation will fulfill my promise to the people of Simcoe North and our government's promise to the people of Ontario.

As a government, we are responding to requests that something be done about behaviour that jeopardizes the safe use of Ontario's streets. I believe that the proposed tools in this bill are the right ones for the police to get rid of aggressive panhandling on our streets of Ontario. Under this legislation, police will be able to arrest people who are committing the provincial offences of aggressive solicitation, such as threatening the person solicited with physical harm, blocking the path of the person being solicited or soliciting while intoxicated by alcohol or drugs. These are clearly unacceptable gestures in our society. It would be an offence to solicit persons in situations where they cannot easily leave places, such as bus stops, taxi stands, bank machines, parking lots or while getting in or out of a motorized vehicle.

The Highway Traffic Act would be amended to make it an offence to enter a roadway to stop, attempt to stop or approach a motor vehicle to offer, sell or provide any product or service to the driver or anyone else in the vehicle. Of course, emergency and towing vehicles would be exempted from this act, and police discretion will be used for local charitable fundraising.

I am not alone in agreeing with the tools outlined in this bill. Toronto Police Inspector Randal Munroe sees what the Attorney General is doing with this legislation. The police inspector said, "What the minister has attempted to do, and I think he's addressed the issue, is to give us something that will deal with the repetitive harassing type of behaviour that most of us find problematic in our public spaces."

Some people have said that legislation banning squeegee people will not work. However, in the province of Manitoba the city of Winnipeg passed a bylaw which bans squeegee people from working in that city. I'd like to read to the House the first few lines of a Winnipeg Sun article: "'Charging squeegee kids and sending them to court has solved the city's problem,' says a foot officer. 'Since May (when the bylaw took place), about seven kids have been charged under the bylaw banning people from washing car windows on roadways,' said Constable Bruce Day."

Further, here are some comments from another Winnipeg Sun article on the issue: "'Police have had great success keeping the kids off the roadways since the bylaw was put in place in May,' Deputy Police Chief Terry McGregor said." And the deputy police chief of Winnipeg went on to be quoted as saying, "People should be able to use the streets uninterrupted and it was a public safety issue."

This sounds like what the Bill 8 legislation is trying to do for Ontario. I commend the Attorney General for bringing forth this legislation in an expedient manner.

As I said earlier, I have to admit that the squeegee problem or aggressive panhandling is certainly not a problem in Simcoe North as it is in larger cities, such as Ottawa, Toronto and Hamilton, but it is growing to smaller cities like Kingston, Niagara Falls and Kitchener where intersections have become infested with squeegee people. Without Bill 8, I wonder how long it would be before this phenomenon would spread to small towns and cities like Orillia, Midland, Penetanguishene and even to towns in northern Ontario.

I was talking to my chief government whip the other day, my colleague the member for Oak Ridges, and he was telling me about pulling into a gas station north of Toronto and when he went to clear off his windshield at the self-serve, by the way, the squeegee was not there. We wondered at which intersection in the city the squeegee is at right now.

During this debate, our government has been accused by some of not addressing the root causes. I think we should take a look at that. To me, the best social policy in the world is a real job. No welfare cheque or panhandling can replace the feeling of coming home after a hard day and getting a well-earned paycheck. I certainly know

this from my 25 years' experience in the workforce before I entered provincial politics.

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My parents built a successful construction business, raised six children and never asked for or received any government assistance in their lives. They believed, and they still believe, that hard work and common sense will reward you with the lifestyle that you expect. I too strongly believe in this idea.

Perhaps some of our panhandling people could get employment at a car wash and use it as a stepping stone to a better job with self-esteem and with dignity.

Since 1995, our government has been putting in place the right economic conditions to create more jobs for Ontarians. We have scrapped the land transfer tax for first-time buyers of new homes, which helps to create more jobs in the construction industry. Our construction industry is doing very well at this time. We're at an all-time high, of course.

We have eliminated the job-killing EHT payroll tax on the first \$400,000 of payroll, a direct boost to hiring and expansion. Again, more jobs.

We have scrapped unfair hiring quotas and unbalanced labour legislation, again creating more jobs.

We have ended the \$50 corporate filing fee.

We have removed 140,000 low-income people from Ontario tax rolls.

And yes, we have created a nearly 20% cut in the average worker's compensation payroll taxes, which reduced the cost of keeping and expanding the number of employees in Ontario corporations.

Most importantly, we cut average personal income taxes by over 30%, which now gives the average consumers more money in their pockets so they can go out and buy more goods and services, which again translates into more jobs.

All of these items have helped to create a stronger Ontario with more job creation. Since the throne speech in September 1995, employment in Ontario has increased by 615,000 net new jobs, which is the largest increase in our country's history. We are driving the Canadian economy, and every day we are putting more people off the welfare rolls and into good jobs.

When I drive around my riding, I can't help but notice those wonderful signs in the windows that read "Help Wanted." So the notion that there are no jobs out there for these people is wrong. But I understand that for some of these people it is difficult to find these jobs, and that is why we have allocated \$265 million to employment programs for young people and adults. We fund summer job programs. We fund apprenticeship training. We fund courses on basic literacy, resumé writing and job preparation. We do this to help people who are unemployed get the skills for jobs with a real future. Does any reasonable person believe that panhandling gives a person a chance for a better future?

As most of you in this House know, my riding of Simcoe North has a strong tourism industry. We are home to beautiful resorts, golf courses—16 golf courses,

by the way—some beautiful ski resorts, and of course we have Casino Rama as well as many beautiful restaurants among our lakefront businesses. We are part of Ontario's natural playground on the shores of Georgian Bay, Lake Simcoe and Lake Couchiching. Our tourism community employs thousands of people, thousands of young people. Being from that kind of community, I understand that the tourism industry is important for our economy locally but also provincially.

When people come from outside of this province to visit places like Toronto and Ottawa, they want to be able to walk the streets of our cities and towns without the intimidation of aggressive panhandling. They want to drive on our roads without facing squeegee people. These squeegee people and panhandlers not only threaten our public safety but also threaten our tourism industry, and that means hundreds of thousands of jobs for the citizens of our province.

This legislation goes further than what we promised in our election campaign document, *Blueprint*. It also includes a ban on the disposal of syringes, broken glass and other dangerous objects in our parks or other outdoor places normally used by the public. The disposal of these dangerous objects in parks and in playgrounds I think is despicable. I believe we have to have legislation in place to make people responsible for their actions, especially for the sake of younger people from the cores of some of the major cities, where they don't have acres and acres of land to play on, where they don't have places to go to have family picnics and where they don't have the financial resources to get away on family vacations.

How would anyone in this Legislature feel if their young son or daughter was playing in a sandbox at one of the many parks and recreational areas throughout this province and they cut their hand on some broken glass or, even worse, on a used syringe? I feel this bill will do a lot more to curb the dangerous practice.

In turn, I'm very proud to stand here today to lend my support to this legislation. Once again, it will fulfill another election promise that we made to the people of this province on June 3.

I thank you for the opportunity of addressing this House tonight.

The Deputy Speaker: Comments and questions?

Mrs Marie Bountrogianni (Hamilton Mountain): I listened with great interest, and I respect the last few minutes from the member opposite, my fellow rookie, as we're called. All of us here who have children or grandchildren care about their safety; there's no doubt.

I believe, though, that the member opposite may be overly worried about his daughter's safety in Toronto. Squeegee kids are not the big fear to our children. In fact, I was at Ryerson last Monday with my colleague from Don Valley East. The students held an event highlighting the housing crisis for students. I learned there that some of the squeegee kids on downtown corners are actually Ryerson University students. They are there because of the high tuition fees, the crisis with housing, the fact that student loans are inadequate. I don't feel the member

opposite had to fear for his daughter's safety with respect to these particular students. I certainly would not fear them.

A very recent study, in fact released this week, showed that squeegee kids are significantly less likely to be on drugs than other homeless people.

Interjection.

Mrs Bountrogianni: The University of Guelph. I can give you the author later.

Let's look at preventing the need for squeegee kids. Let's look at programs that look at the importance of proper early childhood education, that look at counselling kids when they're young, before it becomes too late, that look at truly effective employment programs—not Ontario Works, where only 5% of the people on welfare are on Ontario Works. I do believe that if we look at the roots of the problem, the squeegee kids will not be an issue because there won't be any need to squeegee.

Mr Martin: I think this speaker pretty much summed it up when he talked about the tourism industry and how we need to make our streets clear and clean and attractive, and get rid of, as my colleague from Nickel Belt said, the human debris.

For all intents and purposes, this is a nuisance law. Anything that is identified or considered a nuisance by this government will fall under the umbrella of this law, and they'll all go to jail. They will think, in their wisdom, that they've solved the problem, when in fact they haven't. This government is notorious for picking victims, for picking winners and losers. For example, they set up a welfare snitch line; they set up a WCB snitch line. But in the auditor's report of yesterday, we found out that for 1996 there was \$2 billion worth of PST outstanding. This is tax owed by business people in this community, their friends and benefactors for the most part, although I think you'll find that as they begin to realize what's going on, a lot of those small business people will wake up and smell the coffee and understand where we're coming from on a lot of this. But there's no snitch line out there for tax evasion, is there? Isn't that interesting? So you will pick who will be the nuisance.

Why don't we expand this? I sometimes think that what we should be doing here is introducing amendments, putting on the table all those things that annoy us. I drove into a parking lot on the weekend to pick up some groceries. The person before me in that spot brought their cart out, unloaded their groceries and left the cart right there. I mean, gee, call the cops. Put them in jail. That was a nuisance. I know some people who don't like to be awakened on Saturday morning by the Boy Scout selling apples. Are we going to arrest him too? Is that part of the plan? I don't know. I wonder.

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Mr Bart Maves (Niagara Falls): I want to congratulate the member from Simcoe on his comments. He brings an interesting perspective. The members opposite want you to believe this is a bill strictly about squeegeeing. In my comments I'm going to get to why that is intimidating and harassment and should be dealt with.

The member highlights that it is a bigger bill than that, a more expansive bill than that.

One of the things he talked about is something that means quite a bit to me. He talked about his kids being able to play in their park. Right now, if little Zach and Jesse and Lauren in St Catharines want to go to their local park and there are needles discarded recklessly throughout the park and broken glass everywhere, this takes away from those kids' ability to enjoy what they should be able to enjoy. As the member from Simcoe points out, little Zach and Jesse and Lauren deserve a cleaner park.

There should be fines for people who go to our public parks, and without any regard for anybody else, just throw away these dangerous items. As Mr Wettlaufer pointed out, hypodermic needles are extremely dangerous. We live in an era where we're all very concerned about the AIDS virus. How would we feel if a little kid picked one of those up and was hurt by that needle and something terrible then happened to that person?

This is a way with fines—not everyone goes to jail; there's a \$500 fine. A police officer sees someone breaking glass in a park, in a sandbox and burying it—some kid could get hurt—or throwing away a needle in a park recklessly. Now the police can do something about that person and we can stop that so our kids—

The Deputy Speaker: The member's time has expired. Comments and questions?

Mr David Caplan (Don Valley East): The member for Simcoe North had a very illuminating speech.

To the member for Niagara Falls, you should be aware that there currently are fines. It is a matter of enforcement of existing laws, which has been hampered because, you see, since 1995 we've had a reduction in the number of police. Isn't that amazing? We have fewer people to enforce these laws than we did in 1995.

The question really is, what is the priority of this government? Is it some sleight of hand? It's kind of like the Wizard of Oz. You have this big face on the screen of the wizard, but it's a small man in the back manipulating a picture, trying to deceive you, trying to deceive people about what the true intent is and the true nature. It is simply a shell game, simply for show.

I say to the member for Scarborough North, in your comments you really should have said: "Are there no jails? Are there no poorhouses?" You sound like a modern-day Ebenezer Scrooge, you seriously do. That's very sad. It is very sad today to see the patterns of history repeat themselves.

Instead of having that sense of joy, that sense of brotherhood, that spirit of generosity, that sense of compassion, we have a punitive measure. Frankly, we have a measure which isn't going to work. Instead of directing these energies into constructive activities, we're going to begin to incarcerate, we're going to begin to criminalize.

I say to the member, because I know he cares about the nature of this province, 200 people are going to scare away 100,000 jobs? Please. I seriously will vote against the bill. That is a bit of rhetoric which really has no place in this House.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Simcoe North has two minutes to respond.

Mr Dunlop: I thank all the members for their comments on my moment of debate.

In late April of this year, we, the Mike Harris government, brought forth Blueprint. Part of this Blueprint called for a safer Ontario. We promised the people of Ontario a safer Ontario. Everyone in Ontario has the right to be safe from crime. We should be able to walk in our neighbourhoods, use public transit, live in our homes and send our children to school free from the fear of criminals.

Too many Ontario families don't have that peace of mind. Some politicians will try to convince you that crime is not a major problem. What's 200 squeegee kids? They will blame anyone but the criminals. Just try telling that to victims of crime and their families.

We made it very clear where we stand. We are putting more police on the streets and increasing support for victims of crime while cracking down on criminals. We repeated our campaign promise on October 21 in the throne speech. It's time, ladies and gentlemen, to keep another promise.

I come from a constituency where we have little, if any, vagrancy, begging or aggressive panhandling. As I said earlier, when my daughter completed secondary school in 1993, we, as parents, would not allow her to attend university here in Toronto because, as parents, we saw Toronto growing as an unsafe community. This was unfair to her. How many other parents and tourists from outside of Toronto or Ontario feel the same way about these streets?

The citizens of Ontario expect this legislation and I support the implementation of Bill 8.

The Deputy Speaker: Further debate?

Mr Dave Levac (Brant): Tonight I'm going to do something a little different. I'm going to talk directly about the bill. I want the members from the other side to follow with me and make sure I stay on task with this bill. Then I'm going to show you some other things that are happening outside the bill to see whether or not they apply. So pay attention. Here we go. Are you ready? This is it.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The member for Brant has the floor. I want to be able to hear him. If you feel it necessary to interject or anything, step outside and then it won't bother the proceedings of the House.

Mr Levac: I think I've got your attention.

Bill 8, An Act to promote safety in Ontario by prohibiting aggressive solicitation, solicitation of persons in certain places and disposal of dangerous things in certain places, and to amend the Highway Traffic Act to regulate certain activities on roadways.

Page 1: Are you ready? Let's define "solicit." It says, "... means to request, in person, the immediate provision of money or another thing of value, regardless of whether consideration is offered or provided in return, using the

spoken, written or printed word, a gesture or other means."

Comment: There's a problem here, and the problem is this. It's been pointed out that it's at the discretion of the police to decide whether or not charities performing the same solicitation can be charged under the law. In discussions with the police—in the last couple of days they've been here and I've asked them—their comment to me was: "You know what? It's very rare that we'd ever implement that interpretation." So I asked the deeper question. "Would you or could you?" "Well, we probably wouldn't, but it can be done."

So I challenge the government to ensure that they put in an amendment that says the charities are exempt from that type of activity.

"Aggressive manner" means a manner that is likely to cause a reasonable person to be concerned for his or her safety or security." I have a problem with the fact of interpreting. We have to get to the police and say, "I thought they were going to hurt me and therefore I get the charge." Do I resent the fact that somebody may accost me in a way that I fear for myself? Absolutely. I don't admire or respect anyone who would do anything in an action that would cause us any harm or pain psychologically or physically.

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There are a couple of items in the bill that I want to refer to that may cause some problems. There's been mention of the disposing of used condoms and a new or used hypodermic needle or syringe and broken glass. Indeed, these problems have existed and are absolutely unacceptable in our society and in our streets today.

I want to ask a question, though. Do you ask the police officers, who have been reduced in the province: "How are you going to find these things? If you find these things, how are you going to identify who did it?" Broken glass in a park—when does that take place? How do we turn that into a crime? We pass a law that's pretty well unenforceable.

The member from St Paul made it very clear in an earlier statement about the bill. He said, "It's like the rooster taking credit for the sun rising." The reverse is true. The sun rises and we need the people to show us the way. The way we show that is by putting more police officers on the street.

I want you to ask this question of the other side. Explain to me the 1,000 new police officers. I asked the police officers themselves, and I'm sure you heard it in private but you don't want to publicly announce it. The 1,000 is not translated into 1,000. I tried to optimistically say that's going to be 600 people. They said, "You're way off, pal; it's more like 250 to 300 officers." I want 1,000 police officers audited. Will the government audit that to ensure that it's 1,000 new officers?

Let's talk about safety, safe streets. You're asking about safe streets. Let's find out if the safe streets are going to be accomplished with fewer officers on the street than there were before the NDP. They're not there.

“Every person who contravenes section 2, 3 and 4 is guilty of an offence and is liable,

“(a) on a first conviction, to a fine of not more than \$500.”

We already found out that people are doing this, squeegeeing and panhandling, because they don’t have any money, so we’re going to take blood from a stone.

“(b) on each subsequent conviction, to a fine of not more than \$1,000 or imprisonment for a term of not more than six months, or to both.”

Again, to try to show the public that we’re going to take care of those 200 kids on the street, we’re going to put them in jail. If we can’t put them in jail, we’ll put them on probation, a very stressed area at minimum.

“A police officer who believes on reasonable and probable grounds that a person has contravened subsection 177(2) may arrest the person without warrant if,

“(a) before the alleged contravention of subsections 177(2), the police officer directed the person not to engage in the activity that contravenes the subsection.”

So now we have to have the police officer catching the person in the act of the crime and telling them, “Don’t do that.” More use for an officer to be doing that to say: “Please don’t break that glass and put it down in that sandbox. Please don’t use that syringe because if you discard it, it’s against the law. Please don’t use that condom and throw it away because it might contravene the law.” We’ve got police officers now making sure that doesn’t happen, because—we’ve got fewer officers on the street to do that than we had before.

We also are going to say that the 1,000 translates into new officers when you know as well as I do that there are going to be fewer officers on the street to be able to perform that duty.

Mr Wettlaufer: More means more and fewer means fewer.

Mr Levac: Will you do the audit? Will the government do the audit? I think it’s important to find out if the government will do the audit to ensure that it’s 1,000 new officers. Translate that into 1,000 new officers. The police associations in this province will look to you and say, “The 1,000 officers, are they new?”

Interjections.

Mr Levac: Yes, I can imagine that they did, because they said to me that the 1,000 actually translates into around 250. So let’s make it 1,500 to get it to the 1,000. We want a 1,000? Translate it properly.

The government’s priorities seem to be a little bit backwards. We’ve got 200 squeegee kids having laws made up in order to get them off the street. It has already been pointed out several times, and even before the auditor’s report, that the Family Responsibility Office is a mess and we’ve got 200,000 children who are not getting the monies that are needed for them from deadbeat dads.

Interjection.

Mr Levac: The member wants to explain now. Let me hear some more rhetoric about how you’re going to do a good job, you have plans, you’re going to make things happen. But 200,000 children are not getting what’s

needed for them to survive in our society, and you’re saying that’s OK. The Family Responsibility Office is in a mess, and we’ve got people now passing a bill right away. Right now we’ve got to get this bill passed in order to get those 200 kids off the street, but we can’t correct 200,000 children not getting the money that’s necessary for their survival. We have not improved that collection at all. They’re currently in arrears for a total of \$1.2 billion. Being in arrears for \$1.2 billion is a disgrace for any of the moms and children involved in this program.

Now, that’s universal; let’s talk about individuals. I’ve had to take calls in my office for people who are in arrears for \$25,000, on an individual case. When I make the phone call, first of all, I take about two hours to get through to try to find out what’s going on with this \$25,000. You know what happens? I’ve got the “deadbeat dads” who are giving the money, and it’s getting lost in the system, and the moms and dads are still not getting the money. That’s 200,000 children not getting the money that’s necessary for their survival, and we’ve got to pass a bill to make it illegal to put glass on the ground. It’s already against bylaws in cities. You can charge people with littering to do that.

Ontario mothers and children are getting busy signals from the government, literally. The auditor tried testing the FRO, and half of his calls didn’t even get through for busy signals.

Hon John R. Baird (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs): You promised you would talk about the bill.

Interjections.

Mr Levac: Oh, I explained to you very clearly that I was going to explain the bill, and I did. Then I said that the things around the bill are what’s going to make you understand that this government’s priorities are a little bit wrong.

The member over there wants to heckle and get me off course and simply say, “Talk about the bill.” The bill is there. I told you what’s going wrong with the bill. You don’t want to hear the fact that 200,000 children are going without any money. Would you like to explain to your constituents in your office? I would love to hear the member’s response to the telephone calls that he must be getting in his office about the deadbeat dads not paying their money for those kids. I’m sure that you go out and explain to them: “I’ve got better priorities. I’m sorry. The money that you should get, the \$17,000 or \$18,000 that you are in arrears—you can’t afford your rent, you can’t pay for food—is less important than getting those squeegee kids off the street.” That’s really silly.

That’s a priority you should be taking now. You put a bill on the floor today, and I’ll rise and say, “Yes, Mr Speaker, I vote for getting 200,000 children their money.” I’d vote for it now. Put it on the floor and it’s yours. I’ll buy that argument, and I won’t even give you an argument. I’ll sit back and say to you, sir, that I would love to support a bill that gives 200,000 children money and information that they need to survive.

So those 200 squeegee kids that you seem to be saying speak about the bill, if you come back to us after that and show me you're taking care of them, I'll even buy your bill.

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To continue this and to keep upsetting the members on the other side with the truth, let's turn to the homeless; let's relate the homeless; let's say to the members on the other side that if they don't think there is a relationship between being homeless and being a squeegee kid, then we have another problem. First, we've got 200,000 kids who aren't getting their money, but that's not related to the bill. We've got homeless people in this province, but that's not related to the squeegee kids and panhandlers at all.

We had a problem with this government from their first mandate, which basically said, "We've got to end rent controls; we've got to cancel 17,000 new affordable housing units immediately; we're going to eliminate all provincial support to new social housing; we're going to cut welfare to the poorest and the neediest; we're going to close psychiatric hospitals, and we're going to reduce those services."

In my riding, the wonderful restructuring plan had us transferring all psychiatric patients to Hamilton. Now if we have parents, relatives or friends of any of those people in need, they're getting transferred to Hamilton and now we've got to send them out of town.

But of course there's no relationship between squeegee kids and being homeless, because none of these problems the government has caused have anything to do with the squeegee kids. We've got indications that there are squeegee kids who are homeless; we've got indications that squeegee kids can't afford to live in some places because there's no affordable housing; we've got evidence that squeegee kids, in some cases, have mental health needs that need to be addressed.

Let's talk about some other priorities, and then I'll wrap up and talk about the bill in a final way.

Interjections.

Mr Levac: I know I have their attention. It seems that everyone likes to talk about it. But I'll say something to wake somebody up somewhere.

Let's talk about policing. We have fewer—

Interjection.

Mr Levac: Statistics Canada, of course, and if it doesn't fit, you won't use it.

The number of police officers has declined by 1,522 officers between 1993 and 1997. The ratio of police officers to population rose from 1 to 453 in 1993 to 1 to 535 in 1997. So in 1997 we've got fewer police officers and a higher ratio of police officers to citizens. The 1998 budget announced \$150 million over five years to pay for 1,000 new officers. Again I repeat, because it's worth repeating, that Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday we had several meetings with officers, front-line officers, executives to the front-line officers, telling us the 1,000 officers will not be new.

I will also suggest to you very strongly that I suggested to them that it probably translates to somewhere around 500 to 600 officers, and they said: "You're being optimistically high. It's somewhere around 250."

I want to know whether or not this government is intent on improving the situation for our province by putting more front-line officers on the street, providing for them the training that is necessary, providing for them the opportunity for each of the municipalities to be able to afford that, because along with that comes the responsibility of ensuring that the municipalities are using those front-line officers to perform the duties that they're there to perform and not to chase somebody and say, "I think you might be breaking that glass, but if you pick it up and put it in the garbage, I won't charge you under this new law."

One of the other things that another member has made very clear is that if we don't take care of the root problem inside of why squeegee kids are doing what they're doing and take care of the drug addicts and some of the people who are supposedly breaking these laws by putting a piece of glass on the sidewalk or in a park—maybe what we should be doing is saying, "Let's spend a little bit of time on finding out what the root problem is."

So would you invest in the social programs that are necessary for those front-line officers to be able to do the jobs they are supposed to be doing? High-speed chases were spoken of, I think it was last week. In support of that I would say we need more than just one law that says the fines are going to increase. We need to put training in place. That's another thing the police officers talked about.

This is a multi-layered problem, and it needs to be looked at in terms of equipment, training and materials. The government made no commitment in terms of training. They made no commitment in terms of understanding that it was a multi-layered problem. Making the fines higher and telling people they are going to go to jail is a good idea—if they flee they're in trouble. But they didn't do the other things that were necessary. So the police officers are asking us, "Where's the pressure?"

Finally, if you're talking about safe streets, the one that I think is very important to the safety of our province is privatization of the police force. Checking Hansard, the Solicitor General did not commit that he would do anything in legislation to prevent privatization of police forces. I ask now: Make sure that that happens so we don't have somebody who is making \$6.80 an hour putting their life on the line, because they're not going to do it.

Finally, the bill itself: If you take the squeegees out of the squeegee kids' hands, they'll end up with a crowbar.

Ms Martel: I want to follow up on a point the member for Prince Edward-Hastings made with respect to enforcement.

The government would have you believe that people need to support this bill by the mere fact that because they're making it an offence to dispose of a condom or a piece of glass or a syringe in a public place, somehow

that's going to solve all the problems with respect to all those articles and all safety hazards that come about.

Does anyone honestly think that someone breaks a beer bottle in a sandbox in a public park and then waits around for the police to come and arrest him? Of course not. That's not what happens. In any event, if the police could catch that person now, under law they could charge him with mischief and a host of other charges, which could get at the problem.

The government would have people believe that this bill is all about how we're going to protect the public because we're putting some fines in place and we're going to dissuade people from carrying on with this kind of activity.

If you have someone who is using a syringe, who is shooting up, the federal offence they could be charged with would send them to jail. Does this group honestly think a \$500 fine for putting that syringe in a public place is going to dissuade someone from shooting up, when they could go to jail for that same offence? Of course not. So it's just a lot of hot air from the government side about how putting a fine in place for putting a syringe or a condom or a piece of glass in a public place is somehow going to improve or promote or guarantee public safety or the safety of our kids. That's ridiculous.

The police could do the job now if there were enough police. These folks don't wait around to get caught after they break bottles and glass.

The only thing that's going to do it is enforcement, and we've already heard that there are fewer police in place now than there were in 1995. So I don't know who is going to be dealing with enforcement, and that's another reason this bill isn't going to work.

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): It's a pleasure to respond to the member for Brant. I want to pay a little respect to the member, because I take it from his remarks that it was his maiden speech, and we should all be patient and tolerant as they go through the paces of addressing the legislative issue before us. He did commit to speak to Bill 8, which Minister Flaherty introduced here on November 2 and, interestingly, he did read into the preamble. But I think it's important for those listening tonight, and for the member himself, to make clear the statement, "Are you for or against safety in our communities?" Where exactly, member for Brant, are we going to start that challenge of taking back our communities?

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I can only speak with some confidence about my riding of Durham. It's a rapidly growing riding and a very mixed riding, with respect to a lot of new urban areas and young families. Indeed, issues of parks and safety in our park places, which have been mentioned here, are an important issue of community safety.

I think Minister Flaherty has listened very carefully to the common concerns, not just in Toronto but indeed in all of Ontario. I think the member for Brant should also pay close attention to the long experience of the member for Eglinton-Lawrence. Mr Colle has clearly listened to

the people in the city of Toronto and is clearly at odds with your position on this bill. Once again I see a kind of moving around—we refer to it as flip-flopping, which is maybe a little overworked but nonetheless true. You're here, but if you listen to this and listen to your constituents, I think you'll find overwhelming evidence that people want their communities back and that they want them safe. Where do you draw the line? On the squeegee kids—

The Acting Speaker (Mr Tony Martin): Further comments and questions?

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I would be interested to know whether the member for Brant believes that the situation with ophthalmologists in St Catharines should take precedence over this bill? We have to compare the priorities of the government. Should the government be moving forward with this bill at this time, or should we this evening be addressing the lack of time for ophthalmologists to see all their patients in the Niagara region?

The members would know, for instance—and you may know this yourself, Mr Speaker, because I raised it in the House the other day—that we have only 13 ophthalmologists to serve the whole Niagara region, and not all of them are full time.

What the government has done—

Interjections.

Mr Bradley: This has everything to do with this bill, because we're talking about priorities.

What the government has done is lumped us in with Hamilton. That would be like lumping you in Sault Ste Marie with Thunder Bay. They've lumped us in with Hamilton and said, "Well, there are 20 in Hamilton." Of course, the people in the Hamilton area know that they're already very busy. In fact, not all of those 20 are full-time ophthalmologists. I know the members in the Hamilton and Burlington areas would be very concerned to learn that people from St Catharines and the rest of the Niagara Peninsula will now be coming down to use up the time of ophthalmologists in Hamilton.

It is a very difficult drive from St Catharines to Hamilton. We have, on a per capita basis, the oldest population in the province. Many seniors will be adversely impacted by this. I think there is a solution: Remove the cap for ophthalmologists in the Niagara region, because we're underserved, so they can see far more people in the province. I want to know if the member thinks this is a priority.

Mr Toni Skarica (Wentworth-Burlington): It's not surprising that the member for St Catharines talked about ophthalmologists and not about the bill, because the Liberals basically have no policy on crime. That was obvious in their campaign document, which devoted five paragraphs to crime, as opposed to our document, which devoted five pages to crime.

If you look at our campaign document, this legislation comes right out of the Blueprint, on page 31. Basically, we came back as a government for one reason: When we said we were going to do something, we did it. There it is

in our campaign document, and here we are doing it. To me, an Attorney General is a man or woman to be respected and whose word is his bond. In life, your word is who you are, and our word was that if elected we were going to implement this type of legislation. We were elected and now we have this legislation here.

It's not surprising that the Liberals have to talk about ophthalmologists instead of crime, because they really are soft on crime and have no policy on crime.

It's also important to realize where the five pages came from. They came from the Crime Control Commission going all over the province: to St Catharines, to northern Ontario, to the Sault, all over Ontario. And who was on the Crime Control Commission? The Attorney General himself. What he did was listen, along with his parliamentary assistant, Gerry Martiniuk from Cambridge. He listened to what people all over Ontario were concerned about, and they were concerned about this type of behaviour. So it's not surprising today that the Canadian Automobile Association, from Ontario, representing almost two million members endorses this legislation. It's not surprising because they're telling us what Ontario has told us: They want this legislation.

The Acting Speaker: Response?

Mr Levac: I want to speak to a comment from the member for Durham. Thank you for your patience and understanding. I appreciate the fact that not everyone standing and rising has the ability to articulate everything at one time. But watch out, I'm coming at you.

The member across, in his two-minute rebuttal, made it clear that he wanted to bring up the Crime Control Commission, those three Tory backbenchers charged with finding solutions to the crime problems. Originally the group consisted of Jim Brown, Scarborough West; Jim Flaherty, Durham Centre; and Bob Wood, London South. Gerry Martiniuk, Cambridge, replaced Mr Flaherty on his appointment as Minister of Labour. Jim Brown was forced to resign after a public comment that the Toronto Santa Clause parade was a boom day for local prostitutes. Brown claimed that fathers dropped their families off at the parade and then went back to search for a prostitute.

One of the things that I'd be concerned about was having members on that side making sure that everybody on this side is painted with a brush that says we're soft on crime and that we don't have the best interests of the public in mind. I would suggest to the members opposite that the people of Ontario recognize the skin that needs to get peeled away, and that as we slowly peel away that skin, we recognize that the 1,000 officers are not going to be 1,000 officers, they're going to be 100. This government is refusing to pass legislation that says to everybody: "We do not believe in privatizing, but we said that we're going to say it. Listen, we're not going to do this. We will talk to your associations privately and say, 'Don't worry about privatization,' but we're not going to pass legislation that says so." So put it up.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr Maves: I also will attempt to deal with this bill today, a bill to address crime, a bill to attempt to make our streets safer for those in our community. When the members opposite talk about this bill they say, "Oh, it's a hot-button issue." It is. A hot-button issue is a hot-button issue because the people are telling us that it matters to them, that it's a hot-button issue. What matters to the people should matter to all of us in here. I don't understand why the members opposite have a problem with that, that the concerns of the public should be the concerns of the government.

Let me give you some examples. In 1995 there were a lot of people in this province who were very concerned about welfare. They thought the system was being abused. They thought there was something wrong with a system where even during positive and good economic times there was growth in the number of people going on the welfare system. They didn't like the fact that people were continually trapped for years and years on welfare, and they wanted the system changed. So we ran and said: "Yes, we're going to change the welfare system. We're going to help people get off the welfare system." Was it a hot-button issue? Sure it was, because everybody told us that it was an important issue and we had to deal with it. And the public was right. Oftentimes they're ahead of legislators. It was proven in 1995 that they were, and Mike Harris was right there alongside the public. He knew the things that mattered to them and he addressed them, and so did we as a government.

What's been the success on welfare? We've had 450,000 people leave welfare since 1995, the vast majority into jobs; others, their spouses have jobs.

Interjection.

2020

Mr Maves: "Some already might have had jobs," the member behind me says. But it's a great record on welfare reform.

Another hot-button issue back in 1995 and a hot-button issue today: Taxes are too high. They raised taxes 65 times between the two of them in 10 years, and the public said to us: "Taxes are too high. Do something about it."

I remember working five summers at General Motors in St Catharines, and the number one complaint of every one of the people that I worked with was on payday when they opened up their paycheques and they looked at the amount of tax coming off their cheques. They were furious. They worked all week, they worked hard, they were trying to raise families, they had a good wage, but at the end of the day, at payday, their net was decimated by high taxation. Of course it was a hot-button issue and of course Mike Harris and this government said, "We're going to do something about it." We promised to lower their income taxes and we've done that. Taxes are still important to a lot of folks.

Workers' compensation: It's out of control. We had a study in the Niagara region talking about work. Of the top three problems that businesses had, workers' compensation was I think number two on that list. High taxes

was number one. We fixed the workers' compensation system. Rates now on average are down about 25% since 1995. So we've listened, and that's why we're back here.

The members also like to say: "You're dealing with this. That must mean you're not dealing with any other problems. You don't care about any other problems." How ridiculous. How utterly ridiculous.

The family support plan: We passed a bill in the last Legislature to give us more authority to deal with people who weren't paying their fair share under the family support plan. We spend more money right now than ever before on child care. We've added more money into mental health. We're spending \$100 million to deal with the homeless. We're going to continue to do more, but this is a bill about our safe streets. Of course we're dealing with other issues; it's nonsense to say we're not.

We'll get right into the bill here. Is this a hot-button issue? Yes. Why is it a hot-button issue? Because people told us it was. People called our offices and said: "Do something about this problem. I can't walk down my street without being accosted. Do something." Mel Lastman called us, begged us, "Do something." The Liberal members—Mike Colle, the member for Eglinton-Lawrence, here's his quote to the Toronto Star, "A lot of people are fed up with these punks." He said that he was going to propose legislation himself to give the police the right to seize squeegee equipment. He said it was a problem. The opposition justice critic, Michael Bryant, said in the media, "We cannot condone the effect within a civil society.... You should be able to walk the streets and not be harassed." That's why it's a hot-button issue, because it matters to the people, and that's why we're doing something about it. I'm not going to apologize for listening to the people of this province.

The police, the front-line police officers, a Metro Toronto police officer telling me: "Don't listen to those guys across the aisle who say it's not a problem. It is a problem. We need help. We need you guys to give us the ability to deal with it. I can tell you horror story after horror story about intimidation, harassment, damaging people's vehicles, physical assaults. Do something because with what we have right now we can't do anything about it." So is it a hot-button issue? Yes, and we're going to do something about it. This bill does that.

Let's talk about this, let's get right into the bill. What are some of the things? "Solicitation in aggressive manner prohibited." The member for Brant talked about how "aggressive manner" means a manner that is likely to cause a reasonable person to be concerned for his or her safety or security." It goes on, though. Let's talk about this. This is what the people on the other side of the aisle are opposed to. They think this is OK. This is something we don't think is OK. Let me read this, "Threatening the person solicited with physical harm, by word, gesture or other means, during the solicitation or after the person solicited responds or fails to respond to the solicitation." I think most people in Ontario would agree that should be an offence, that that should be something the police should be able to arrest someone over.

What's the next one? While I'm walking down the street, "obstructing the path of the person solicited during the solicitation or after the person solicited responds or fails to respond to the solicitation."

So someone asks me for something, or asks my mother who may be visiting in Toronto, 60 years old, walking down the street—sorry, mom, didn't mean to give away your age. Someone asks her for change. She says, "No, I don't have change; I don't want to give you change." She continues to walk down the street. You think it's OK that that person should now block the path of my mother? I think you're wrong. I think most Ontarians think you're wrong. That's why it's in here.

"Using abusive language during the solicitation or after the person solicited responds or fails to respond to the solicitation."

I guess that's OK. "No, I don't want to give you anything." Curse, swear, curse, swear. That's threatening; that's intimidating. It shouldn't be allowed. The police can't do anything about it right now. With the passage of the bill, they can.

How about this one? "Proceeding behind, alongside or ahead of the person solicited during the solicitation"

Is that OK? Do the people opposite think that's fine? If some person walking alone at night in Toronto refuses a solicitation, you think it's OK if that person should follow behind them and continue to solicit? You think it's OK that they should harass them by walking along beside them, continually asking for money? I don't, and I don't think the rest of the people in Ontario think it is.

"Soliciting while intoxicated by alcohol or drugs."

"Fine," the Liberals say. That's OK with them. It's not OK with people on this side of the aisle. I guess that's the difference.

There's another section in here:

"Solicitation of captive audience prohibited"

"No person shall ... solicit a person who is using, waiting to use, or departing from an automated teller machine."

Picture an 18-year-old here in Toronto going out to meet their friends on a school night or on a Friday night. They stop at an automatic teller by themselves, maybe a block away from their friend's house, and they turn around and there are three or four—or two or three; I don't care how many—people who just corner them and start to solicit them. Now this 18-year-old girl has just taken money out of the machine, she has some money to go out with her friends that night, and they start to solicit her for money. She can't say, "I don't have any money." They know she does. But you folks on that side of the aisle think it's OK that those people corner her and solicit her for money? I don't think it's OK. I don't think most Ontarians think it's OK. This bill will give the police the authority to do something about that.

Similarly, it's no longer going to be OK to solicit a person who is using or waiting to use a pay phone—same situation—or solicit a person who is in or on a public transit vehicle. Again, someone going home at night on public transit—they maybe worked late; maybe it's one

of our own night cleaners here in the building. They're done their shift late at night. They get on the subway. They go home. Someone continually harasses them, asking them for money or something else. That's OK? I don't think it is OK.

This bill says to the police, "You can now arrest that person if they are doing that." I think, folks, when you go through this bill, some of these things are hot-button issues, as I said, because the public has this common sense. The public already says: "This type of thing shouldn't be happening. The police should already be able to protect us on this." Police say: "We can't. We need some authority. We need an act from your Legislature." The Attorney General has responded.

Now we get to the point in the act where we talk about squeegeeing, which is a part of the act. It says, "No person shall ... while on a roadway, solicit a person who is in or on a stopped, standing or parked vehicle." No squeegeeing.

What happens today with squeegee kids? You leave Toronto—I go down University Avenue at nighttime when I'm going home after a 9:30 session. I've got to get on the Gardiner and then Queen Elizabeth Way to go back to Niagara Falls. If I go down University Avenue and get ready to get on the ramp to go up just past the Air Canada Centre, there are all kinds of squeegee kids there. You're captive. You're in your car. You're at a red light, cars all around you. All of a sudden they come up, and you see it all the time: "Squeegee your window?" "No, no, no." They just start squeegeeing your window. They do it on one side. You keep saying, "No, no, no." They go on the other side. When they're done: tap, tap, tap. "I want my money." "I told you, no." Scratch down the side of the car.

2030

Interjections.

Mr Maves: Sure it happens. If anyone thinks that doesn't happen, wake up. Talk to police officers.

I watched a guy the other day—I was heading out this time, because it's awful busy a lot of times going down by the Air Canada Centre, down University. I turned right down Front Street. Long lineup to get back on the Gardiner anyway. Corner of Front and Spadina: trapped again. Cars all around. Red light. Can't go anywhere. Squeegee kids come out: "Squeegee your window?" "No, no, no." This wasn't me; it was a guy right beside me, a young man, 30 years old maybe. "Squeegee your window?" "No, no, no." Gives him the finger. Nods his head. Makes a motion that he's going to kick the car. Why is that fair? Why is that OK? Why should we allow that to continue in Ontario? We shouldn't.

I know the members across the aisle agree that kind of thing shouldn't be allowed any more, but the police have said to us, and front-line officers have said to me, "Give us something so we can stop that kind of thing from happening." That's what this bill does.

I'm going to support this bill. The members opposite have often—one of them recently said they were going to talk about the bill in detail. They started to at the begin-

ning and then went off topic a little bit. I talked about the bill. I've read you actual sections right out of the bill. I think anyone listening at home is going to agree. I think most people at home are going to agree with that.

I know Mel Lastman is going to agree with this bill. I know Mike Colle at one point believed in this bill—sorry, the member for Eglinton-Lawrence. I would imagine that Michael Bryant, the opposition critic, at one point believed in it. We know the police agree with this bill. Let's talk about this for one second, Speaker, if I may.

During question period last week, on a day when there were police officers in the whole place, the member from Essex got up and posed a question to the Premier about how under this bill charities wouldn't be allowed to solicit, people wouldn't be able to be on the sidewalk with a sign saying, "Car wash for kids." The Premier got up and he said, and I quote, "What I read into this question is a disgraceful lack of confidence in the police to use common sense in understanding the difference between aggressive panhandling, that which is interfering and causing safety concerns, and the case you raised."

He continued, "Anybody who would raise that kind of a question, particularly on this day, when a number of police officers are here, has a disgraceful lack of respect for a profession that has a far higher standard than you have."

In Hansard, Speaker, after that, it says, "Interruption." For people at home, just to let you know, "Interruption" meant that the police officers in the gallery began to applaud, and they continued to applaud until, of course, the Speaker asked them to stop. That, I think, speaks volumes that our police officers support this. The police officers support the Premier. The police officers supported this Premier in the election, I might add.

So we're answering a call, we're answering a request from all kinds of people. We're answering a request from people who call our constituency offices, largely in Toronto, about a lot of this stuff, but it's in other cities: in Ottawa, in Kingston and many others. We're answering their requests with this.

One of our members slipped me a note with a quote from Barry Farber. It says, "Crime expands according to our willingness to put up with it." Pretty interesting quote. If we're going to continue to sit back and just allow intimidation, allow harassment, allow people to follow people along the street, allow them to obstruct their path, if we're just going to sit back and say, "That's OK, you can go do that," crime expands according to our willingness to put up with it.

We on this side of the House agree with the police officers in this province, and on this issue, anyway, we agree with Mel Lastman, and on this issue we agree with Mike Colle on the Liberal side that something has to be done about this. Crime will expand according to our willingness to put up with it. We're not willing to put up with this any more.

That's why our Attorney General has brought in Bill 8, An Act to promote safety in Ontario by prohibiting

aggressive solicitation, solicitation of persons in certain places and disposal of dangerous things in certain places, and to amend the Highway Traffic Act to regulate certain activities on roadways.

So now that 60-year-old can walk down that street and feel a lot safer. As we bring in the 1,000 extra police officers that we're bringing in over the next few years, that feeling of safety will increase even more. As many people have said before, as I think our own Attorney General has said, you not only have the right to be safe, you should have the right to feel safe. People don't feel safe right now. This act is going to help those people, maybe just a little bit, but it's going to help them to feel a little bit safer. It's going to help them to be a little bit safer. Again, as we get those 1,000 officers on the street, it'll help them to be a little safer.

When we look at the quote, "Crime expands according to our willingness to put up with it," we on this side will say we're not willing to put up with it any more, we're not willing to put up with this. That's why we've introduced Bill 8 and that's why I and I'm sure most of my colleagues, if not all of my colleagues, on this side of the aisle are supporting the Attorney General and we're supporting Bill 8.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and comments?

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Thunder Bay-Atikokan): I found it a little challenging to listen to the member for Niagara Falls talk about the way in which his government listens to the people and then simply responds to what they hear from the people.

I refer back to the government's throne speech when they made it very clear that the people this government wants to listen to are what they term to be the real people. The hard-working, taxpaying families are the ones who count as real people. They're the ones this government is inclined to listen to. Anybody else gets dismissed. We've seen that for four solid years. Anybody who doesn't fit within this government's neat little agenda is dismissed and not listened to at all. In fact, worse than that, they are made scapegoats for this government's political purposes.

The member says there was a concern among people about welfare fraud in the 1995 election. Was there a concern about welfare? Was there a concern about whether there might be some welfare abuse? Probably there was. I can tell you, there was not nearly the degree of concern that existed until this government, running as an opposition party at that point in time, decided to scapegoat people who were on welfare.

If people's memories are short, I would love to rerun some of the ads. Actually, I wouldn't love to rerun them because it's still painful to think about them. You know the SkyDome full of welfare bums that Mike Harris was going to get rid of? That's been the theme of this government. Find the people who don't count and figure out a way to get rid of them in order to fit your own political agenda. What did they do with the SkyDome full of welfare bums? They didn't get rid of them. They just cut their benefits and didn't give them a program that actu-

ally works in terms of training or job opportunities. That's not happening. They just forced more and more families, of whom 50% affected by that were children, into what are essentially poverty levels.

The scapegoats continued on for four years. Prior to the last election, it was teachers and trustees. Now the scapegoats are squeegee kids, because that fits this government's decision that they are going to hit a political hot spot by talking about their strength against crime, and of course we have references to the Crime Control Commission tonight. The Crime Control Commission didn't hear about squeegee kids when it came to Thunder Bay. That isn't exactly a big crime issue there. The government decided to make it a hot spot.

Some day the people who are real people, whom this government has made scapegoats out of, are going to rise up and force this government to listen to them.

2040

Ms Martel: I found the member for Niagara Falls' defence of Bill 8 as phony as the bill itself. The member would try to have the public who are watching out there tonight believe that just with the passing of this bill people who are at ATM machines will never have to be accosted again, young women who are waiting to use a pay phone should never fear that someone will come and bother them for money again, people who are walking down the street, maybe they've just come out of the Shoppers Drug Mart on Bay Street, will never have to see that panhandler there again—merely with the passing of this bill.

That is so phony, just like the bill is, because the only way this bill is going to work is if there is a police officer there on the spot, at the scene, who can witness it and who can make a charge.

What the Tories don't want to address, which is at the heart of this bill, the heart of the issue tonight, is that there aren't going to be any more police officers out on the street in our communities watching for these events as a result of the passage of this bill. If they were really listening to the police, then they would do something about the fact that there are fewer police in our communities in Ontario now than there were under the NDP government in 1995. That is a fact. There are fewer police officers under your watch now, four years later, than there were when the NDP was in government. You don't want to address that fact.

But the bill isn't going to work just because you pass it, because it requires that police be in place to lay the charges and there aren't going to be any more police in place when this bill is passed. There aren't going to be any more a year from now because the rate of attrition is so much higher than the 1,000 new officers who might come on board, if they're new officers. I suspect they're just replacing people who are going to retire. That's why the bill is so phony.

Mr Wettlaufer: I'd like to compliment the member from Niagara. It was a very good speech. He commented on the feelings of the people in his riding, the feelings of the police who were in to see him yesterday. I heard the

same message from the police who were in to see me. They're very concerned about squeegeeing and the problems it poses for the people, the older people particularly, the senior citizens, women, young mothers with children in their cars. They were very concerned about that.

But they were also expressing a strong concern about something the Liberals do not want to talk about and that was the disease possibility, young children picking up disease from exposure to needles and syringes and used condoms in the parks. We have five- and six-year-old kids in the parks, in sandboxes, playing on swings. These articles are disposed of by sick people and you people think that's all right. You have a problem. You are not listening to the mothers in your ridings. I listen to the mothers in my riding. Do you not have mothers who are concerned about their children like I do? Don't tell me you don't. I can't believe it. And you don't listen to the police, that's for darn sure.

Interjections.

Mr Wettlaufer: Isn't that lovely? Here we are. You think it's all right for this mother with a child in her car who has declined having her windshield cleaned to be intimidated. Listen to the heckling here, Mr Speaker. Just listen. I've touched a nerve. They don't like this.

Mr George Smitherman (Toronto Centre-Rosedale): I'm happy to stand up and speak at the end of the remarks by the member for Niagara Falls. I found it rather interesting that he tells a story about all the travails of downtown Toronto, about his problems of driving down University Avenue, without regard for the fact that it actually becomes York Street, the boundary of my riding. He tells a story and he leads us to believe in that story that his car was damaged and scratched. It's only by inquiry from this side of the House that in fact we find he's ingratiating the story.

The member from Cambridge, I believe it is, tells a story and suggests that he's the one, only him and the members on that side have any compassion for kids that play in the sandboxes. I know those sandboxes. I skate in north Regent Park, in an area where we have a problem with the disposal of needles, and nothing will be done. Any clear-minded person knows that there will be no positive impact from a bill. The false security that the member from Niagara Falls spoke about that is supposed to come from having a piece of legislation that all of a sudden will make people feel better when they draw that money out of a bank machine is the most ridiculous thing I've heard.

You talk about addictions and you talk about needles and you talk about people who need help, but you offer none. You Bill 8, simply put, is a bill that is written by your pollster. It's great politics. The people, having encountered gridlock, who come from Brampton and other communities, at the end of an hour-long ride that ought to take 25 minutes because you're allowing our city to grind to a halt, get off at that exit at York Street or at Jarvis Street and are confronted with a symbol that frustrates them. But the real frustration of the people is that in this greater Toronto area you can no longer move

in an easy way from point A to point B. That's the shame. This bill simply covers up all the problems that you've contributed to.

The Acting Speaker: Response?

Mr Maves: Member from Thunder Bay, let me just read you a couple of comments about social assistance: "... 450,000 people off social assistance since we took office," said David Hughes, director of Grey County Social Services. "I can tell you that we've got more individuals leaving the system for employment than we have had in a long, long while. We've had more individuals going into education and training programs."

There's another quote. Bob McNorgan, London administrator for Ontario Works said: "The existing London program in the non-profit sector has helped individuals get very real, hands-on experience and has boosted their chance of getting a job. Those I've spoken to are very pleased they had the opportunity, and they felt they acquired some tangible benefits. Numbers are increasing; client experience appears to be positive with the workfare system." Those are people in the field telling us that and that's why people are getting off social assistance.

I toured with Janet Ecker my own social assistance office about a year ago, and one of my workers said: "Twenty-eight of 30 of my caseload left this month, 28 of them that I know of. I can tell you exactly where they got their jobs." So they are getting jobs.

Member from Sudbury, Mr Smitherman, of course the problem doesn't get solved with the passage of a legislation. I never said that, never intimated that. I said if it makes people feel that much better, if it does make people that much safer, that's a step in the right direction. It's the police that said if you don't do something like this, crime will expand. You guys want to do nothing. You want to sit back and do nothing, let the aggression continue, let the intimidation continue. You don't care.

Crime expands according to our willingness to put up with it. We're not willing to put up with it any more. Why don't you stand up for the people of this province and vote for this bill?

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr Smitherman: It's a great pleasure for me to join this debate if the minister from Ottawa would just pipe down and let me. It's interesting that we have yet another Tory bill so inappropriately titled. I've decided that the proper name for this bill is an act to exacerbate the lack of police resources in downtown Toronto.

This is a bill about mistaken priorities. Members opposite have trotted out the speeches prepared no doubt by the Attorney General, who is here with us tonight, and talked about the thousand new police officers. But I'd like to know, given that this problem is so much focused in Toronto, why you don't trot out the count of the new police officers in the city of Toronto. The numbers are troubling. That is covered over by the government.

What we've got before us is an example of a government that is unable, or perhaps just unwilling, to distinguish between nuisance behaviour and criminal

activity. I must say that I find it particularly offensive that the Attorney General would go and visit the corner of Seaton and Dundas to try and highlight the problems with respect to safe streets, to try and highlight the problems with respect to squeegee kids.

Isn't it ironic that the minister made this announcement within just a few blocks of where in the time since the election four drug-related murders have taken place, in the same neighbourhood where the member from Wentworth-Burlington and the Crime Control Commission had one of their hearings at Central Neighbourhood House in my riding on Ontario Street, where the issue of squeegee kids did not come up.

2050

This is an issue where the government's priorities are mistaken. Danny Kevin Cousins died November 10, Exekile Stewart died November 4, Ernie Soueidan died October 12, Douglas Wyton died September 23, but where is the government's commitment to dealing with the problems of drugs and guns in our neighbourhoods? It's clear that wasn't at the top of the polling. It's clear that this initiative stems simply from the Tories' public opinion polling. Otherwise, how would we think about introducing a bill to deal with squeegee kids and highlighting that in the same densely populated neighbourhoods gripped by the fear of death by gunfire? Apparently the right to live in safe communities is limited to those who vote Conservative.

The member from Niagara Falls said, "Crime expands according to our willingness to put up with it." Apparently, the absence of concentrated effort by your government to deal with the problems of death by guns, that are drug-related, is an example that in communities that have less voice because of their impoverished needs you're willing to put up with that and tolerate it.

I say to the government, shame on you. Where are your government's initiatives to help local police forces deal with the challenges of real street-level crime like trafficking in crack cocaine? Where are the government's initiatives to help local police forces deal with the challenge of too many guns on our city streets? All we see from this government, the only thing that it speaks up about with respect to guns, is that we should oppose the federal government's gun control registration.

What this legislation signals more than anything else is that the government is content to allow some people to murder one another within feet of where children play, sleep and go to school; it's that they have surrendered neighbourhoods in my riding to drug dealers and thugs, real criminals. Instead of arresting people for selling drugs to our children, we have a government that will be arresting kids for cleaning car windows.

Let's take a look at what this legislation does. Thornbury, a community on Georgian Bay near where my mother lives, in the riding I believe of the Minister of Energy, Science and Technology, will no longer be allowed to walk that beautiful bridge over the Beaver River and collect funds for local charities. Watch out;

lemonade stands may be next on the Attorney General's list.

Look at the penalty for this first offence: \$500, the dirty water offence; for the second offence the penalty is the same as for theft under \$5,000, for assault, for disturbance of religious worship and for destruction of property under \$5,000.

Contrast this with the kinds of initiatives that we see from the federal government. One says that all we see is a need for more laws, more jail sentences to make our communities safe. I've been to California and to Texas and to Florida, and if the rates of incarceration were reflective of a safe society, then surely the United States would be the safest place in the world, but it is not.

We know how much Michael Murphy and Christine Todd Whitman and probably even Pat Buchanan influence the government opposite, and it is demonstrated in this kind of torted-up bill that is before us. The government would do well to reject a made-in-America approach to justice.

We need to work with local communities to get them involved in safety in their own communities, to support initiatives on a case-by-case basis, on a neighbourhood-by-neighbourhood basis, on a street-by-street basis, to make them safe. That's what will make them safe: initiatives to try and make sure that women can't be pulled into dark corners, by eliminating those dark corners, by cutting back hedges, by increasing lighting, by those sorts of practical things, not by a bill which by its very design and nature is intended only to pay lip service to the real problems.

Let's look at the state of our city and let's be very clear about it: Squeegee kids are not a healthy sign of the state of our city. Too many people are struggling to get by in a place where the cost of living is too high. All those members who sit in this Legislature and are here tonight who come from outside the greater Toronto area know this and they've seen this in a very direct way because of the impact of the shortage of housing on their Toronto accommodation costs.

Think about what it must be like then for poorly skilled young people who have found themselves so disconnected from society. I'm not suggesting that we should accept a burgeoning underclass, but I'm afraid this bill says that you are. My opinion is that we need to work in a contrary fashion, and I believe it is in the name of these very people that government has a responsibility to step up to the plate and be part of the solution.

I think a defining characteristic of Canada has always been the extra efforts we make to ensure that the gap between the richest and the least fortunate does not grow. But this bill offers nothing: nothing that acknowledges a pattern of abuse in their lives, nothing that acknowledges a poor education. The rhetoric of members opposite screams out, "Why don't you just get a job?" Based on the opportunities available to this group of people with the skills they have, they did.

Let's be very clear here. Your crackdown may have the net effect of driving kids underground, from intima-

tion to destruction, from nuisance to crime. The options with the skill set that is available to these kids are limited: smash-and-grab crimes, drug dealing, prostitution. These are not good options, and they are worse options than those they are pursuing at the moment. Look at the choices your policies are forcing on already marginalized kids.

I would ask a question of members opposite who talk so knowingly, so knowledgeable, about these squeegee kids on the streets of Toronto: Have you ever stopped and talked to one—not through the windscreen of your car as you're saying no to their attempts to offer you a service, but have you ever talked to them and gotten to know them?

The SHOUT Clinic, an organization in my riding that works with street-affected youth, tells us that the average squeegee kid is 21 years of age, male, 60% from Ontario. They come from a variety of economic classes, and more than half of them were thrown from their homes. Kids with problems or hardened criminals? We have a choice to make about the future of their lives, to help them. Sending them off, incarcerating them, making them even better criminals is the choice that you as a government have focused upon. This government chooses to do the cheap-hit piece first. There's nothing here that acknowledges the need to work with street youth on addiction issues, on basic literacy, on job skills. All the government offers is a great big stick to whack these intimidating kids upside the head.

I make an offer to the government. I'd be willing to work with you to design a program that meaningfully deals with the problem that confronts us on our city streets. It's real, but you make no such demonstration of interest. Like so many other things, the stick is all you know: the rhetoric associated with the introduction of a bill that offers everything in its title and nothing in reality.

Until we see a real interest in doing the hard work, I have no choice but to vote against this bill. It's shallow, it's cheap and it won't work. It's a betrayal of the legacy of our fine province and our country.

The Acting Speaker: Questions or comments?

Ms Martel: I appreciated the comments that have been made by the member from Toronto Centre-Rosedale, and I want to follow up in this way: I have been trying to sort out why it is the government wants to use this bill to make squeegee kids criminals. I just cannot for the life of me figure out why this is a priority for this government at this time.

You're talking about a group of young people which is primarily centred in Toronto. I think there's one squeegee person in Sudbury, who has been doing it for years and who no one complains about. We have a group of young people in Toronto who, probably because they can't work anywhere else because we haven't seen much from the government's youth job strategy, whatever it is, are trying to do at least something that has nothing to do with getting onto social assistance. They're trying to make their way in the world.

That's something this government's usually one to preach about as they're booting people off the social assistance system. You would think that this was something the government would encourage, because they would certainly rather people have a job than be on the public purse, as they so nicely describe it.

We've got a group of young people who by and large have been trying to do that, support themselves, just get by, and the government's decided now that they're public enemy number one. I can't figure out why. What is it that you so dislike about these kids? What is it that you so dislike about them trying to earn a living and not being on social assistance? What is it that you so dislike about them? Is it that some of them have long hair? Maybe some of them have earrings in their ear and their nose. Maybe you don't like their appearance. Maybe you think they should have a bath. Is that what it is?

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What are you doing spending legislative time to put forward this bill, which reflects your priority, which is to make criminals out of these young people? Give them a break. There are surely more serious criminal issues that the government should spend its time dealing with, as the member for Toronto Centre-Rosedale so appropriately pointed out. If you want to deal with crimes, deal with serious crimes. Leave this stuff alone, because it's all smoke and mirrors.

Mr Bradley: I recognize, when the member speaks about the amount of time that police officers have to deal with matters of great importance, that the number of police officers who are available in communities across the province is a very significant factor. It has been said on many occasions in this House that despite all of the bravado and bragging, in fact, today, the number of officers on the streets of various communities—trained people officers, people who serve our communities so well—is actually fewer than it was four years ago, and perhaps even five years ago when the New Democratic Party was in power.

Numbers do mean something, interestingly enough. If you talk to the individual officers who were here the other day, or talk to them in your region, your own part of the province, you'll find that one of the real concerns they have is their ability to respond to the many obligations they have as officers today. There are some excellent new programs that various governments have brought in, including this government, which have officers doing things that are not as traditional as they used to be, such as a lot of the community policing initiatives that are taking place. When they move into that field or when they have a liaison with a secondary school, that takes officers from one area and places them in another. In order to do the job appropriately, what they require are more individuals on the front lines to be able to serve the people of a community.

What I have a concern about is that when we pass legislation to deal with a number of matters, we have to ensure we have the appropriate staffing levels, whether it's in government itself or certainly with police, to be

able to handle it. I do not see on the horizon that kind of net increase in the number of police officers to handle the new initiatives.

Mr O'Toole: Member for Toronto Centre-Rosedale, I must compliment you. You really did address some of the issues you have some discomfort with on the legislation, which is an appropriate part of debate.

I think the fundamental difference here is that I don't see anywhere in the 20/20 Plan, which I have a copy of and which was part of their platform—there's virtually nothing here, and if you look at the record of the Liberal Party generally, federally, the Young Offenders Act has probably defined some of the problems we're in with our youth today, realizing that hard work and effort is really the right road to be on.

Furthermore, the NDP position I think is clearly on your side. They had several commitments, and one of those commitments of course was to cut the Harris tax cut. They wanted to spend more money. They wanted to stay on a spending spree, restore the worker protection laws, sort of making sure the labour legislation was re-balanced, and get tough on polluters. It's kind of a common theme agenda.

But I want to move back to the member's comments. I think there are a number of initiatives here. I am sure the honourable member would agree that you would like to find your streets safe for a whole variety of reasons. You would like, I am sure, to send the right signal that it's not appropriate to aggressively panhandle or solicit. Maybe it's a language problem here. If, on the other side of that, his argument is that he agrees with disorder, then clearly he can't vote for this bill, and I can understand that. But I think the people of Ontario, not just the people in Durham but the people I know right here in this city, many of whom are retired, have felt the threat, and Mel Lastman himself is speaking out for those people, and we're supporting this bill.

Mr Caplan: I want to congratulate the member from Toronto Centre-Rosedale. I think he really put the debate in a very good perspective. This is about priorities. Police officers have been cut back. In 1995, there were considerably more police than there are today. We have a smaller resource and we're asking them to take on a responsibility here when they should be investigating, pursuing criminals, making our streets safer, dealing with traffic. Traffic and gridlock is one of the major problems that this city is facing, not some young person who cleans a windshield.

That's what this debate is all about, it's about priorities, where we are going to put the resources of this province to the greatest amount of use for the greatest benefit of people. It's ironic that we have this debate on a day when we learn that this government is going to cut \$800 million from elementary, secondary and post-secondary education. It is disgraceful. The Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, our cut minister, has said that it is in fact a leaked document from this government, that it is their intention to make those kinds of

reductions. That's what people in my riding are talking about.

They want access to special education classes; they want transportation to schools; they want the ability to afford post-secondary education; they want training opportunities; they want a brighter future for children—for all children. They don't want children to end up on the streets having to eke out a meagre existence cleaning windshields.

The priorities of this government are defined in symbolic gestures, in stretching resources and putting them in places where they're not being appropriately used, by taking monies out of much-needed educational opportunities. This government has the wrong priorities and has the arrogance to suggest that they listen to the people of Ontario.

Mr Smitherman: I'd like to thank all members for their very thoughtful heckling and responses to my remarks.

Firstly, I'd like to make an apology to the member from Kitchener Centre for mistakenly saying Cambridge. I'm not sure, I haven't been following the subject that closely, but I understand the Toronto Star, that rag that you just referred to—don't they own a paper in your home town now?

I wanted to really direct my comments a little bit at the member from Durham. I note he says that not supporting this piece of legislation is the same as acknowledging that we want to have chaos on our streets. I paraphrase, but I think I've got the thrust right. Perhaps he didn't listen to my speech. My speech is really saying and calling out to the government, "Look at your priorities and work with me to deal with real problems."

The issues of police officers have been dealt with. I made a speech which talked about five murders in my riding, four in a very small and concentrated part of the city of Toronto, drug-related and mostly by guns. But I didn't see the Attorney General wanting to hop to his feet and suggest how he could be helpful, and I didn't see anyone saying that they ought to refer this to the Solicitor General and see what he would be prepared to do on behalf of that great law-and-order government to deal with a real, pressing problem, which is that I've got gunplay going on in places where kids go to school, in places where kids play and in places where they sleep.

The government doesn't respond because they have no response to that because these are people who don't matter to them because they're low-income people, because they're concentrated in that area. This bill speaks to the reality of your government, which is that you're prepared to allow our city to be divided up into areas, some where it is safe to go and others where it's not, and I say shame on the government for this. I say shame on the Attorney General for not paying any attention to my remarks which have been directed at him and for not standing up and saying what that government will do to deal with the problem of guns and murder in our city.

Ms Martel: I am pleased to join in the debate tonight and I want to begin by saying that the government

pretends that this bill is about public safety. I have heard a number of their speakers make that allegation here this evening. I use the word "pretend" very particularly, very specifically, because the fact of the matter is, except for some minor exceptions, many of the acts that the government is now going to deem to be provincial offences are already acts which could be enforced under existing law.

For example, the bill talks about hitchhiking and makes that an offence, when in fact under the Highway Traffic Act now hitchhiking is already an offence and can be dealt with.

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There are other provisions under the Highway Traffic Act as well that could deal, if they had to, with the matter of squeegee kids blocking exits, blocking pedestrian crossways. For example, under subsection 140(4) of the Highway Traffic Act it says that no pedestrian shall leave the curb so as to make it impracticable for the driver of a vehicle to yield the right of way to a pedestrian; or subsection 144(22), with respect to pedestrian crossing, which says, "Where portions of a roadway are marked for pedestrian use, no pedestrian shall cross the roadway except within a portion so marked." Thirdly, soliciting rides prohibited under section 177 of the Highway Traffic Act, which says that no person shall "stop or attempt to stop a motor vehicle for the purpose of selling or offering to sell any commodity or service to the driver or any other person in the motor vehicle." So, any of those things that the government would now try to call offences could technically be dealt with under the Highway Traffic Act.

If you look at serious threats from aggressive pan-handlers, and that's right in the title of the bill, it is a fact that unlawful behaviour can now be addressed under federal law as it already stands. So the suggestion we've heard repeatedly here tonight, that somehow this law is going to promote safety, that there are new and specific and very important changes that are going to promote safety, is completely false.

The second thing that has to be addressed is the suggestion that now that we've put in place a fine for the offence of disposing of a syringe or a needle or a glass or a condom in a public place, if we put that into law and have a fine, it's somehow going to stop people from undertaking that activity. It's completely ridiculous. Think about it.

I've heard the member from Waterloo Centre ask people if we care about kids. Well, I have two of my own, and yes, I do care about kids. But I'm not silly enough to think that someone who goes and breaks glass in a sandbox is going to sit there and wait for the police to show up so that he or she can be charged.

The only way the bill works to promote and protect public safety is if there is a police officer there witnessing the event at the scene of the crime, so to speak. The allegation that because we passed this law and put in place a fine, somehow people who are involved in dump-

ing syringes in public places are going to stop because they're going to get a fine is ridiculous.

Someone who is using a needle is not going to be stopped by the mere threat of a \$500 fine if they dispose of that needle in a public place. They could go to jail under federal law for using a needle in the first place, never mind where they dump it, just for the act itself.

Why are you trying to pretend with the public here this evening that somehow we're going to deal with a problem, which is a serious problem with respect to needles and condoms and glass in public places, somehow we're going to resolve this problem, do away with this problem, get rid of it by passing a law that will now fine people for doing that? It's just ridiculous.

Nothing works in this bill without police enforcement. If there's not an officer there who witnesses that happening, nothing is going to be done, nothing is going to change, and those people who are undertaking that kind of activity aren't going to be stupid enough to wait for the police to appear to be charged.

So let's get real when we talk about if we care about glass, if we care about needles. Of course we care, and there's nothing in this bill that's going to change that problem.

It's also worth pointing out that the reason nothing is going to change is because the real issue that needs to be dealt with, which isn't dealt with in this bill, is police enforcement. How many police do we have in the community to deal with the new provisions in this bill, to deal with other crimes? The fact of the matter is—and I know the government doesn't like to hear this, because they would like to portray to the police that they have been doing so much for police—that StatsCan, which is not a political outfit, has no political axe to grind, doesn't support any political party, Statistics Canada has made it very clear that in 1994 there were 20,737 police officers in Ontario. The latest figure shows that there are now only 20,454 police officers in Ontario. There are 283 fewer police in Ontario now than in 1995, and that figure doesn't even take into account the increase in population.

Let's go a little bit further. I know people don't like to hear what StatsCan has to say. I know the government doesn't like to hear what StatsCan has to say, because it flies in the face of everything they've been trying to tell police officers. The fact is that on average, if you look at the number of police officers who can retire, 5,730 will be eligible to retire between now and the year 2001. We have a situation in this province where in a year and a half we are going to have almost 6,000 police officers retire, and the government is doing nothing about it. The government has no plan to deal with that. It's not even clear whether the thousand police officers they talk about who might find employment are new police officers or whether they're just going to be filling the positions of those who are retiring.

If the government really wanted to do something about public safety, if they really were here to address public safety—and we know people are concerned about public

safety—then they would really be here tonight talking about what they're going to do about violent crime.

What's the government going to do to respond to swarming and that horrible, tragic incident that occurred Sunday in this very city? What's the government doing when it comes to hate crimes and those who foster hate about people in our community based on religion, based on sexual orientation, based on race and on language etc? What are we doing when it comes to domestic violence and the many women in our community who are suffering from that? What are we doing about home invasions and the hundreds of people, many seniors, who are becoming more concerned about that in their communities?

I heard one of the members earlier talk about his daughter and how he was worried about what would happen to her if she came to Toronto to go to university. I appreciated that. He was worried about her being aggressively—I don't want to use the word "attacked," but having an aggressive panhandler come at her. I have to say to the member, think about this: I'll bet there are more women in Ontario now who are at risk of domestic violence in their own homes than will ever be at risk from an aggressive panhandler.

If you look at the statistics on domestic violence, on sexual assault, those numbers are growing; they are not lessening. There are more women in this city and in this province who daily have more to fear from violence in their own homes than any kind of unsafe feeling they may ever feel from someone who is an aggressive panhandler. We need to recognize that, because that's a real, serious issue around violence that we should be dealing with.

I'll bet there are more women in Scarborough right now who are more fearful of home invasions than they were ever fearful, or will ever be fearful, about squeegee kids. I'll bet that's a reality in Scarborough these days, and it certainly has been in the last number of months.

This bill is all about how to get squeegee kids and panhandlers off the street, and the government threw in some stuff on glass and needles and syringes in order to broaden the scope to make it appear to the public that they were doing a little bit more.

But I think the member for Simcoe North hit the nail right on the head in his remarks when he talked about how Toronto depends on the tourism industry and how we can't have tourists seeing those panhandlers on our streets. Get rid of the human debris. Get the human garbage off our streets. We don't want the tourists to see that. They may not want to come back.

It's a sad and sorry day when the priority of this government is to go after squeegee kids and panhandlers when we have such serious crime in Ontario.

Mr Bert Johnson (Perth-Middlesex): I wanted to get up and compliment the member for Nickel Belt on her analysis of this bill. There are parts of it that maybe she didn't emphasize as much as others and indeed did get into a lot of the social dilemmas that are rampant in our society today. I don't think any of us want to minimize the difficulty with the swarmings, home invasions, the

spousal abuse and those sorts of things. I don't think any of us want to minimize that. But to stand up here and say that is the only thing and therefore we shouldn't address the issues we are talking about in this bill leaves unsaid those things that should be commented on.

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Indeed, some of us who come to Toronto on occasions, who don't live here, aren't used to people swarming up to the car and wanting to do things to it that they shouldn't. I see the member from Rosedale isn't here, but I had an experience with a squeegee person who wanted to clean my windshield. It was raining, and I didn't want them to. The windshield wipers were on. After opening the window several times, I had to physically grab the weapon so it wasn't going to damage—

Interjection.

Mr Johnson: A lot of us who visit from out of town aren't used to that. It was an experience. If the light hadn't turned green and I hadn't been able to stop it, I'm not sure what I would have done. I don't think I'd want to call a policeman, or that sort of thing. But it is something we don't find at the stoplights in Listowel.

Mr Levac: I want to compliment the member for Nickel Belt for her kind words, the compassion she shows in her comments and her true feelings towards the issues of the day. I also want to compliment the member for Toronto Centre-Rosedale for an eloquent explanation of why we on this side believe there are problems with the bill. The problems with the bill go beyond the content. It goes into the conversation that the member for St Catharines began, and I want to add to his concerns about the police.

In my discussions with the police in the last few days and previously, they have expressed concern about what this government and the Solicitor General have yet to commit to do that would help us with this problem. There are two items that I would bring to the government's attention that need their commitment and their legislation immediately, just as fast as you are able to put this legislation on the books.

One is the understaffed police force. It has been said time and time again, and there have been no denials from the other side, that we supposedly have 1,000 new police officers coming through this mandate. It doesn't exist. The police themselves are telling you, and in the little meetings you've been having with them you can't deny that you've been asked by them, to make the 1,000 a true 1,000; you're not committing to that.

The second thing they've asked you about, in their lobbying and their important adventures into understanding why the government won't commit to that, is this government's inability to commit publicly, in legislation, to the public of Ontario that, we will not privatize our police force. You haven't done so. You're not doing so, because it goes against your philosophy of privatizing our province. I hope you change your minds, because the police want you to.

Mr David Young (Willowdale): I appreciate the opportunity to speak to the Safe Streets Act. As a new

member in this chamber, it's very interesting to see how this Legislature operates. The members opposite essentially adopt the slogan that: "Whatever it is, we're against it. It doesn't matter if it's in the best interests of the people of Ontario; if it's brought forward by this government, we're against it."

I appreciate that we on the government side of this Legislature operate as a relatively cohesive unit. That's one of the reasons that we're able to pass so much good law and this province has prospered in the way it has. When you're dealing with a bill as important as this, it's important to leave the political rhetoric aside. I would encourage the people who are here today and the people who are watching through their television sets to consider what others have said about the need for this legislation. While the member for Nickel Belt talks about the fact that we don't need this legislation, that the Highway Traffic Act is comprehensive enough to deal with any aspect of this problem that is required—by the way, I disagree, because the Highway Traffic Act has no applicability to private property and would be relatively useless. That is why we have so many chiefs of police and other representatives from law enforcement agencies coming forward and advocating and asking this government to pass some meaningful laws, so that when the police are out on the streets trying to do their job they have the tools they need.

But it's not just the police who have asked for this new legislation. It's also the mayor of this city. I represent Willowdale, which is part of Toronto, and the mayor of our city has been pleading for legislation to deal with this problem. It's not just the mayor and the police; it's also the head of the hotel association.

Mr Bradley: I hope that the member for Willowdale is as anxious to pass other legislation that the mayor of Toronto is imploring the provincial government to pass. We know that we'll be able to count on his support for the other initiatives being brought forward by the mayor of the city of Toronto.

I want to ask the member for Nickel Belt, because she knows this area well, whether she feels that, with some of the people who are what we refer to as panhandlers, if indeed there are sufficient supports there for people who have psychiatric problems. We have had announcements of even further numbers of psychiatric hospitals being closed in the province and the individuals who are in those hospitals are supposedly to come out into communities to receive appropriate treatment and support. A number of the individuals, not all, who find themselves on the streets of a major metropolitan city such as Toronto are individuals who have experienced some psychiatric problems and have no place to go. Sadly, in many cases their families have abandoned them. Sadly, in many cases their friends essentially have abandoned them because they have a severe psychiatric problem.

We have moved towards deinstitutionalization. That's another argument. I'm not convinced, personally, that

that is a wise thing to do when you don't have the supports back in the community. But I'm wondering about the member's opinion of the supports which would be available and the treatment which would be available for former psychiatric patients and those who are still experiencing psychiatric problems, because often, as I say, they're lost to families, they're lost to friends, they're left in the street to beg. They often need some very strong supports to get them back on track and this bill does not address that in an adequate fashion.

The Acting Speaker: Response, member for Nickel Belt.

Ms Martel: I want to thank the members for Perth-Middlesex, Brant, Willowdale and St Catharines for their comments.

Let me respond in this way to the member for St Catharines: I suspect there are a number of those folks who are on the street right now who really should be receiving some kind of treatment somewhere else and be off the street, and they can't find it. That leads me to ask in a serious way to the government, what is the bill really all about? If I thought the bill was going to do something serious about public safety, I'd be supporting it. I have kids too and I worry about their safety. I worry when I take them up and down the streets of Toronto too. But I recognize that the only way this bill is going to work is if you have police in the community to enforce it. The bill doesn't speak to that, and I wouldn't expect it would, because the government record is clearly moving the other way.

We have a situation that in 1999, according to Stats Canada, there are fewer police officers on the streets in Ontario than there were in 1995. Not only are there fewer now in sheer numbers; if you added population in, the situation would be even worse. Coming down the track in front of us is a train that will run us over, because we have at least 6,000 more officers who will retire and we have no strategy to deal with that. If I thought the bill could even work, could even be monitored, could even be enforced, I would support it, but I know it won't and that's why I think it's so phony.

What worries me is that what is really at the heart of what is being dealt with here has very much to do with what the member for Simcoe North said in his comments. We don't want the tourists to see the human garbage, the human debris. We don't want the tourists to see the people suffering from mental illness who are panhandling, those people who are panhandling who have the smell of liquor on their breath, the squeegee kids who have a ring through their nose. I think that's what this is really all about and I regret the government has chosen to use this bill to deal with that issue in this way.

The Acting Speaker: It being close to 9:30 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until 10 of the clock tomorrow morning.

The House adjourned at 2130.

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Davenport	Ruprecht, Tony (L)	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Cunningham, Hon / L'hon Dianne (PC) Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Don Valley East / -Est	Caplan, David (L)	London West / -Ouest	Wood, Bob (PC)
Don Valley West / -Ouest	Turnbull, Hon / L'hon David (PC) Minister of Transportation / ministre des Transports	London-Fanshawe	Mazzilli, Frank (PC)
Dufferin-Peel-Wellington-Grey	Tilson, David (PC)	Markham	Tsubouchi, Hon / L'hon David H. (PC) Solicitor General / solliciteur général
Durham	O'Toole, John R. (PC)	Mississauga Centre / -Centre	Sampson, Hon / L'hon Rob (PC) Minister of Correctional Services / ministre des Services correctionnels
Eglinton-Lawrence	Colle, Mike (L)	Mississauga East / -Est	DeFaria, Carl (PC)
Elgin-Middlesex-London	Peters, Steve (L)	Mississauga South / -Sud	Marland, Hon / L'hon Margaret (PC) Minister without Portfolio (Children) / ministre sans portefeuille (Enfance)
Erie-Lincoln	Hudak, Hon / L'hon Tim (PC) Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines		
Essex	Crozier, Bruce (L)		
Etobicoke Centre / -Centre	Stockwell, Hon / L'hon Chris (PC) Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail		
Etobicoke North / -Nord	Hastings, John (PC)		
Etobicoke-Lakeshore	Kells, Morley (PC)		
Glengarry-Prescott-Russell	Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L)		
Guelph-Wellington	Elliott, Brenda (PC)		
Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant	Barrett, Toby (PC)		
Haliburton-Victoria-Brock	Hodgson, Hon / L'hon Chris (PC) Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / président du Conseil de gestion		

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Mississauga West / -Ouest	Snobelen, Hon / L'hon John (PC) Minister of Natural Resources / ministre des Richesses naturelles	Scarborough Centre / -Centre	Mushinski, Marilyn (PC)
Nepean-Carleton	Baird, Hon / L'hon John R. (PC) Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs / ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires, ministre délégué aux Affaires francophones	Scarborough East / -Est	Gilchrist, Steve (PC)
Niagara Centre / -Centre	Kormos, Peter (ND)	Scarborough Southwest / -Sud-Ouest	Newman, Dan (PC)
Niagara Falls	Maves, Bart (PC)	Scarborough-Agincourt	Phillips, Gerry (L)
Nickel Belt	Martel, Shelley (ND)	Scarborough-Rouge River	Curling, Alvin (L)
Nipissing	Harris, Hon / L'hon Michael D. (PC) Premier and President of the Executive Council / premier ministre et président du Conseil exécutif	Simcoe North / -Nord	Dunlop, Garfield (PC)
Northumberland	Galt, Doug (PC)	Simcoe-Grey	Wilson, Hon / L'hon Jim (PC) Minister of Energy, Science and Technology / ministre de l'Énergie, des Sciences et de la Technologie
Oak Ridges	Klees, Hon / L'hon Frank (PC) Minister without Portfolio / ministre sans portefeuille	St Catharines	Bradley, James J. (L)
Oakville	Carr, Hon / L'hon Gary (PC) Speaker / Président	St Paul's	Bryant, Michael (L)
Oshawa	Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Stoney Creek	Clark, Brad (PC)
Ottawa Centre / -Centre	Patten, Richard (L)	Stormont-Dundas- Charlottenburgh	Cleary, John C. (L)
Ottawa South / -Sud	McGuinty, Dalton (L) Leader of the Opposition / chef de l'opposition	Sudbury	Bartolucci, Rick (L)
Ottawa West-Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest-Nepean	Guzzo, Garry J. (PC)	Thornhill	Molinari, Tina R. (PC)
Ottawa-Vanier	Boyer, Claudette (L)	Thunder Bay-Atikokan	McLeod, Lyn (L)
Oxford	Hardeman, Hon / L'hon Ernie (PC) Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales	Thunder Bay- Superior North / -Nord	Gravelle, Michael (L)
Parkdale-High Park	Kennedy, Gerard (L)	Timiskaming-Cochrane	Ramsay, David (L)
Parry Sound-Muskoka	Eves, Hon / L'hon Ernie L. (PC) Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance / vice-premier ministre, ministre des Finances	Timmins-James Bay / Timmins-Baie James	Bisson, Gilles (ND)
Perth-Middlesex	Johnson, Bert (PC)	Toronto Centre-Rosedale / Toronto-Centre-Rosedale	Smitherman, George (L)
Peterborough	Stewart, R. Gary (PC)	Trinity-Spadina	Marchese, Rosario (ND)
Pickering-Ajax-Uxbridge	Ecker, Hon / L'hon Janet (PC) Minister of Education / ministre de l'Éducation	Vaughan-King-Aurora	Palladini, Hon / L'hon Al (PC) Minister of Economic Development and Trade / ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Prince Edward-Hastings	Parsons, Ernie (L)	Waterloo-Wellington	Arnott, Ted (PC)
Renfrew-Nipissing- Pembroke	Conway, Sean G. (L)	Wentworth-Burlington	Skarica, Toni (PC)
Sarnia-Lambton	Di Cocco, Caroline (L)	Whitby-Ajax	Flaherty, Hon / L'hon Jim (PC) Attorney General, minister responsible for native affairs / procureur général, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones
Sault Ste Marie	Martin, Tony (ND)	Willowdale	Young, David (PC)
		Windsor West / -Ouest	Pupatello, Sandra (L)
		Windsor-St Clair	Duncan, Dwight (L)
		York Centre / -Centre	Kwinter, Monte (L)
		York North / -Nord	Munro, Julia (PC)
		York South-Weston / York-Sud-Weston	Cordiano, Joseph (L)
		York West / -Ouest	Sergio, Mario (L)

A list arranged by members' surnames and including all responsibilities of each member appears in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month.

Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et le premier lundi de chaque mois.

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