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**Official Report
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**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Monday 6 December 1999

Lundi 6 décembre 1999

Speaker
Honourable Gary Carr

Président
L'honorable Gary Carr

Clerk
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Monday 6 December 1999

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 6 décembre 1999

The House met at 1845.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SERGEANT RICK McDONALD
MEMORIAL ACT
(SUSPECT APPREHENSION
PURSUITS), 1999

LOI DE 1999 COMMÉMORANT LE
SERGENT RICK McDONALD
(POURSUITES EN VUE D'APPRÉHENDER
DES SUSPECTS)

Mr Mazzilli, on behalf of Mr Tsubouchi, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 22, An Act in memory of Sergeant Rick McDonald to amend the Highway Traffic Act in respect of suspect apprehension pursuits / Loi commémorant le sergent Rick McDonald et modifiant le Code de la route en ce qui concerne les poursuites en vue d'appréhender des suspects.

Mr Frank Mazzilli (London-Fanshawe): This is a very emotional bill for me, as I've met the family of Sergeant Rick McDonald. It's a pleasure for me, on behalf of police officers and the family of Sergeant Rick McDonald, to address their concerns.

I'm pleased to tell members that our government will be introducing amendments to the Highway Traffic Act. These amendments, if passed by the Legislature, would provide for court-ordered driver's licence suspensions of not less than 10 years and up to life, with the suspension to be consecutive to any other suspension in cases involving death or bodily harm; increase existing provisions for driver's licence suspensions for escape-by-flight offences to five years; double the fines for failing to stop for police, up to \$10,000; and introduce a fine for escape-by-flight offences, up to \$25,000.

The amendments would also impose a minimum jail term of 14 days for flight and a maximum of up to six months in jail.

Criminals who try to take reckless flight from police, endangering innocent citizens and police, must be held accountable. All too often critics point the finger at the wrong people. It's time to get tough on those who think they can get away with endangering the lives of police officers and innocent bystanders. We have to make sure that our streets are safer, and start by putting the blame

where it belongs, and that blame belongs on the criminals who take reckless flight from the police

Criminals fleeing from the police must be stopped quickly and safely. We will not solve this problem until we make it clear to the offenders that attempting to escape from police is not an option.

In consultation with Ontario's police services, our government has already taken action to better train and equip Ontario police for situations in which criminals take flight from police. Last April, for the first time in Ontario, we announced the development of new regulations under the Police Services Act to provide better guidelines for police officers who find themselves in pursuit situations. The guidelines are in the hands of Ontario's police services and they are developing procedures and ensuring their officers are familiar with these guidelines.

I can tell you that this is not an easy area, developing guidelines that officers have to follow while pursuing a vehicle, making the decision about whether someone's life is in danger, the seriousness of the offence, the identification of the person. To develop these guidelines, on which officers often at a moment's notice have to make a decision whether they are following the guideline or not, is not easy. We're certainly asking for their input into the guidelines, but at the same time we want to allow the public to have their say on the guidelines as to when they do not want police to pursue vehicles.

At the same time, the Ontario Police College is developing new training procedures to complement the regulation and to encourage alternatives to pursuit. We have provided funding for the purchase of tire-deflation devices and helicopter pilot projects.

While we're on the tire-deflation devices, these are rather new in Ontario. They've been used for a couple of years and they've been used successfully despite it being a tragedy in the case of Sergeant Rick McDonald, where a tire-deflation device was utilized and the officer was struck by a moving vehicle. I can assure you that any time a tire-deflation device is used, officers are usually in a dangerous position, and certainly training can only help reduce the consequences that happened to Sergeant McDonald. I don't know that we'll ever totally prevent that type of situation with the tire device alone.

It is our objective to have the toughest penalties for criminals who try to take reckless flight from the police. I can't say enough about this. Often at the end of a police pursuit, a police chase, whatever we may call it, we're all trying to assess what happened, what went wrong, what

went right. The reality is that we've likely failed because that pursuit took place in the first place. It likely should have been prevented before it took place, but nevertheless these things do take place, and how do we best deal with them?

Like many other Ontarians, I have seen people involved in police chases who at the end of the day are not penalized for that behaviour, and a week later or two weeks later, they repeat that behaviour by being involved in another police chase. I can assure you that police services have been working hard over the last decade on preventing chases. At one point police in this province pursued vehicles for just about any type of infraction. Be it a provincial infraction or a criminal infraction, a pursuit continued. Today, because of the guidelines, at certain points police pursuits are discontinued.

Again, on these new measures, dangerous driving is defined in the Criminal Code. If there is one thing that we as a government—our Premier, Mike Harris, or our Solicitor General, David Tsubouchi—have been calling on the federal government about, it is to deal with dangerous driving offences, and clearly police pursuits fall under those parameters. The federal government has essentially refused to deal with making penalties stiffer, harder on criminals who, through criminal acts, are generally suspended. The saving grace is that the licensing or suspension of drivers' licences is also a provincial jurisdiction, and we will be dealing with it with these tougher penalties, if I can point out, by imposing a minimum jail term of 14 days for flight, up to six months. That is the same as what the federal government has on a second conviction of impaired driving. That is how we view a police pursuit on a first attempt.

We believe it's time to stop blaming innocent bystanders, it's time to stop blaming police and it's time to stop blaming society; it's time to start blaming the criminals who consciously know that they have initiated a pursuit and that at the outcome there will be no consequences. In Ontario, with our government, there will be consequences.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Bert Johnson): Questions and comments?

Mr Dave Levac (Brant): I'm pleased to speak today to Bill 22, the Sergeant Rick McDonald Memorial Act. I would also indicate to you that I'm going to share some time with the member for Sudbury on this side.

The Deputy Speaker: This is questions and comments.

Mr Levac: Sorry. I would take my time to respond to the member opposite. I've taken 30 seconds of confusion off my clock, so I'll make my comments short.

Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Education): It happens a lot around here.

Mr Levac: Absolutely.

In response to the member, a point that I'd like to make with him is that on this side we've already dedicated ourselves to quick passage of this bill. He can be assured of our concern, and the idea that anyone on this side or anybody in this Legislature would not want to

protect our police officers or our public is a misnomer and should never be portrayed. We support our members and the police service.

We also want to point out that the federal government is attempting to do some work on this level, and we will get some co-operation as long as we hold out our hand as a province to let the government of Canada know that we're speaking with one voice. Once that is done, I'm absolutely convinced that the federal government will act quickly, as long as we can co-operate together and do not throw sticks at them, and say: "Let's work together. The people of Ontario and the Legislature want to work together to ensure that criminals are punished."

I would absolutely guarantee the member that we're going to see some action on this from both the provincial and the federal government, and we're going to send a message very loud and clear that criminals will be punished under these circumstances.

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): I'm going to be speaking to this bill once the Liberals have made their presentations. That will be around 7:30, I suppose.

I want to tell the parliamentary assistant what we told the government when they introduced the bill for first reading: that we're going to support this bill. We've got things to say about it, though, but we're going to support it. I was a little anxious, and I congratulate the parliamentary assistant, because last week I went over and spoke to him one on one and explained to him that it was urgent that he persuade his House leader to get this bill called—obviously he was able to do that—because the bill risked lingering around long enough so that if it were to pass before the Christmas break, it would be done with one of those second and third readings in one day. I don't think that's right, because there are observations that have to be made on the theme of this bill, the theme of this legislation.

We called upon the House leader at the House leaders' meeting to be sure that there was debate here on second reading, and there will be some today, not as much as we would like but we appreciate the need to get this thing rolling, and certainly there is the need for committee hearings.

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I hope the government remains committed to modest hearings—I appreciate modest—perhaps two days of committee hearings. I wish they could be longer but I appreciate the time frame we're in, because there are some observations that have to be made, some input that has to come, perhaps there are some amendments that should be not just considered but enacted. I'm going to speak to those when I speak in around 30 minutes, at 7:30 p.m.

I've talked about these amendments that may be necessary here with police officers and with the folks down in my riding in Niagara Centre, and most recently last night when I was over at the seniors' dinner at Front 54 where all the seniors in Thorold, some 350 of them, have a Christmas dinner served by local councillors, and the mayor and I join in. They let me serve wine last

night. They were interested in this bill and interested in the discussion about it.

Mr Dominic Agostino (Hamilton East): I rise as well to pledge full support for this piece of legislation. I think some of the finest moments in the short time, the almost five years, I've been here in this Legislature have been when all three parties have found common ground on an issue we all can support and work together on.

We certainly pledge our support for it and also pledge our support for speedy passage of this piece of legislation. I truly think it's long overdue. I think it's important that this Legislature, united, send out a clear message to people across this province that we are interested in ensuring the safety and protection of our police officers and our citizens, and that people who decide they're going to lead police on chases understand that using that vehicle as a weapon will result in the same consequences as if they were using a gun or a knife as a weapon, and that's how it should be.

We urge this government to move very quickly. We will support you on this legislation. We also urge our federal colleagues in Ottawa to do their part and to very quickly bring in legislation at the federal level that will make this even tougher and more enforceable. There have been too many victims, too many police officers, too many innocent citizens who have lost their lives or been seriously injured or maimed as a result of irresponsible acts by someone behind the wheel who decides they're going to try to escape and flee from police officers chasing them.

That is unacceptable. They must understand that the consequences are clear. This legislature, Ontario, by bringing this forward this evening and hopefully very quickly putting it into the books as law, is going to send a clear example, a clear message to police officers, that on all sides of the House here we all support their safety and their well-being on the job, to ensure that all citizens in this province can feel a little safer, knowing this piece of legislation is there.

Hopefully, when individuals behind the wheel are making that split-second decision whether to flee police officers, they'll think for a split second what the consequences are and will not do it. I believe this will save lives, will help police officers and will help citizens. You have our full support to pass this as quickly as possible.

The Deputy Speaker: Questions and comments? The member for London-Fanshawe has two minutes to respond.

Hon Mrs Ecker: I just wanted to thank—

The Deputy Speaker: Maybe I wasn't clear. The member from London-Fanshawe has two minutes to respond.

Mr Mazzilli: I was represented by somebody else there for a moment. I'm pleased to hear that all three parties are in support of Bill 22. I think it will be a tribute to the family of Sergeant Rick McDonald. I know the member across, from Sudbury, spoke on the day the McDonald family was in the Legislature. He spoke of how when he was a police services board member he had

a fine young person who had just been hired by the Sudbury Police Service.

I can assure you that our government views police chases as a last resort. We are doing everything that is physically possible to prevent police pursuits, and in doing so, Premier Harris tasked me and the member from Cambridge to the crime commission and the first thing we were to look at was stolen vehicles in Ontario. We've been doing that since early July.

There is some excellent technology in the way of anti-theft devices that allow vehicles not to be hot-wired, and the reason that is so important for us is that we know that of the 60% to 65% of vehicles that are stolen that are recovered, the vast majority are stolen by young criminals who use them to go from point A to point B. And if the police attempt to stop them in the process, they will flee and there will be a police pursuit. Our government is committed to preventing these automobile thefts and these pursuits.

The Deputy Speaker: Further debate?

Mr Levac: I am pleased to speak to Bill 22, the Sergeant Rick McDonald Memorial Act, regarding criminal apprehension pursuits.

On a personal note, let me offer my heartfelt sympathy to the family of Sergeant McDonald and, indeed, to all the families of all members of the police services who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty.

We believe that honouring these fine men and women is not only appropriate but speaks to the appreciation and respect we have for all police service in this province. We wish to reinforce our commitment to the Solicitor General that the passage of this bill is as important to us as it is to the government of the day. We also want the Solicitor General to know how much we appreciate the directness of the bill, the language of the bill and the fact that no unrelated legislation is included to cause division in the House. We encourage the rest of the government to follow the fine example of the Solicitor General to present clear, direct legislation as a matter of regular course. We dedicate ourselves to quick passage of this bill. Again, there is no question that all members of this House are in favour of this bill, and quick passage is indeed very possible.

Contrary to attempts by some people to paint us as soft on crime, we believe that we need to provide the police with the tools and the support to keep our citizens safe and secure. Of course, a balanced approach to punishment for crimes committed and preventive measures is a more favoured approach by most civilized societies—the carrot and the stick, if you will.

Late last week I indicated to the Solicitor General that I would provide him with some food for thought. I look forward to working with him to provide the people of Ontario with the best possible police service available today and well into the future.

The bill being debated today is the stick, but only part of the stick. Fed-bashing is not the way to encourage action. Contrary to the image of an inactive federal government, the Solicitor General and most members

opposite really know full well that a private member's bill, C-18, by Toronto-area MP Dan McTeague has received unanimous, all-party support at committee level. Federal Justice Minister Anne McLellan has endorsed the bill, and it is believed that the bill will pass before Christmas.

Working together in a non-confrontational way does work and can achieve what is best for the citizens of Ontario and, indeed, the country. Don't be fooled. It does not mean, "Do what I want and I'll co-operate." What it does mean is, "Let's work together, share our ideas and come to what is best for public safety and for all of us."

To that end I dedicate myself to listen attentively to answers, to offer constructive criticism, to ask specific questions and, dare I say, to not heckle if I'm not tempted.

Mr McTeague's bill makes fleeing police in a vehicle a crime punishable by up to five years in jail. It also carries a maximum life sentence for causing death while fleeing police, and 14 years for causing injury. Let's send an all-party letter, written in a non-partisan, non-confrontational, invitational way to the federal government requesting fast passage of Bill C-18, to show it's what all Ontarians want.

What can be done to support and strengthen police services as we know them today to provide our citizens with the safety and security they need and deserve? This is the carrot end of the carrot and the stick.

What can we do? Let's provide every vehicle with the proper equipment to engage in or back up criminal apprehension pursuits. You have provided some funding. To date, it's not adequate for Ontario's police services.

Provide and fund adequate ministry-accredited training for police and civilian members. It is interesting here to note that no formal training for pursuits took place before 1982. The Ontario Police College needs practical and financial attention if it is to maintain its reputation as one of the best in the world.

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A commitment from this government to pass legislation to guard against privatization of our front-line police service: This means no private police service or force doing a trained police officer's job. Again I call on the Solicitor General to commit to tightening regulations and ensuring that the citizens of Ontario will be protected by properly trained police officers.

A commitment from the government to explore, provide and properly fund new technologies that will assist our police to do an even better job than today: Some examples are working with private industry and private business for anti-auto theft devices; satellite tracking devices; even lockout or stall devices. These, again, require tri-level co-operation, along with private industry, and I respectfully recommend reaching out in a manner that invites and is inclusive rather than accuses and blames.

We must ensure that our police officers are treated fairly in cases involving investigation of our front-line workers.

Commit to safe school zones, in which any drug or weapon offence results in stiff penalties.

Greater support for project P, fighting against child pornography.

Provisions preventing mental health patients from being discharged unless community help is available.

Support gun registration.

Photo radar is a tool that can assist our police. Direct any funds that have accumulated from fines from the photo radar to either hire more police officers or improve highway and road safety.

Support a private member's bill, presently on by the member from Sudbury, to protect teenagers from the evils of prostitution.

I've only touched on a few of those ideas. As I said earlier, I want to work with the Solicitor General and his PA to provide for our police service in our communities the best possible opportunities to make our province safe and secure.

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): I'm proud to be able to speak for a few moments to this bill. I hope that I would add maybe a bit of a human aspect to this bill entitled the Sergeant Rick McDonald Memorial Act.

As members in the House know, I was a member of the police service in Sudbury when Rick McDonald came and applied to the force and we hired him. I must tell you, ladies and gentlemen who are in the House and people who are listening across Ontario, we were looking at a huge, tall man. His heart was as big as he was in size. He combined those important elements of a human being to his policing. He was kind, he was fair, he was just and he was compassionate. He cared deeply about not only the service but about the people he served and protected. He did that in his many years with our force.

He rose to the rank of sergeant and was president of the police association in Sudbury. We worked very closely together. In fact, when you talk about proactive community policing, you're talking about Sergeant Rick McDonald. I think Rick is probably looking down on us and he's pretty happy because the Solicitor General was in Sudbury last weekend looking at our facility and hoping that someday soon he'll be able to say that the northern academy of policing will be announced for the Sudbury site. I don't want to pre-empt the Solicitor General, because that's not my role, but certainly that's the hope and the aspiration of the Sudbury Regional Police Service. Certainly it's the vision and the dream of Chief Alex McCauley and Deputy Chief Jim Cunningham. There is no doubt that Sergeant Rick McDonald worked hard to make sure that the northern academy of policing would become a reality in northern Ontario so that those northerners wouldn't have to travel south in order to garner the skills that are so necessary to serve and to protect. We look and we hope with a great deal of fervour that the Solicitor General will soon be able to announce that Sudbury will be the site of the northern academy of policing.

I'm a bit dismayed this evening that we're even debating this bill. I believe, my caucus believes, there's

absolutely no question this bill should be passed already. I don't believe there's a need for public hearings; my caucus doesn't believe there's a need for public hearings. This is, as our critic said, a very straightforward bill. We shouldn't be debating the merits of this bill tonight; we should be rejoicing in its passing. I only hope that we get unanimous consent to be able to do that very quickly.

I say that for a variety of reasons and probably one of the biggest reasons is that Rick had a very close, loving, caring family; a family that is watching these proceedings very carefully. Rick's parents would love to see this enacted in law as quickly as possible. His wife, Corinne, who is dedicated to policing in Sudbury, who has attained the rank of sergeant already, is a committed member of our police services, works very hard with the community and in the community to ensure that our community is a stronger, safer, more secure place because of very proactive community policing.

Ladies and gentlemen in the House this evening, there is absolutely no reason why this bill cannot achieve complete passage tonight. This bill does not have to go to committee. This is a straightforward bill. There's an opportunity here to show our police forces across Ontario, to show the people they serve and protect, to show the family of Sergeant Rick McDonald, that we're serious, that we want quick passage of this bill, that we want to ensure that our police are protected, that they have the tools, that the people they're mandated to serve and protect have the safeguards in place.

I urge this House to have quick passage of this bill, not only in memory of Sergeant Rick McDonald, whom I considered to be a very good friend, but because it is the right thing to do, because there are people, there are families who need closure to this tragic episode that can best happen if quick passage takes place. I urge this House to act expeditiously.

The Deputy Speaker: Comments and questions?

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I'm going to take just a couple of minutes to add along with some of my colleagues some comments to this particular bill because all of us had a chance very recently to meet with members of our police forces. We know from meeting with them over the years that one of the problems they face, one of the challenges they have faced, is the challenge of whether to undertake a police chase and, in doing so, when the police chase might end. We don't have people in our police forces who are looking for police chases. It's the last thing they want, because there are several people whose lives are placed in danger: First of all the police officers themselves, and they are engaging in a chase with somebody who is fleeing from a law enforcement officer, so they are not people who are going to want to undertake a police chase unless it's necessary. Most of the time you'll find that they're going to enlist some assistance from other police officers with other vehicles and use every method possible to apprehend the person without a dangerous chase.

It's important that the people who are knowingly fleeing the police, particularly from vicious, serious

crimes, that those individuals be aware that the penalty is very strong indeed.

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Yes, some, and I suspect many, people, when they see a light on with a police cruiser, are inclined to pull over to determine what the problem is, to comply with the request of the police officer. Those who feel that they are in severe jeopardy because of a crime they have committed are those who are more likely to flee the police. When they see the penalties that are now to be available, this is going to act as a disincentive for at least some of those individuals to undertake fleeing from a police officer, particularly as we relate to vehicles being involved.

One of the other things the officers said to us, particularly those who perhaps have been part of a police force for years, was that they would like to see as much training as possible for police officers in a police chase. It's not an easy thing to do, racing through traffic, having to violate what are normal rules of the road. It requires some intricate training that police officers who have not already had the training would seek to have. I would encourage the government to undertake a more extensive program, one which would involve those who have not yet had that opportunity to be involved in extensive police chases, in terms of the training that is involved.

We've heard a little discussion of restructuring from time to time. I want to say to members, in the Niagara region something that makes sense is having a police force which is region-wide. I can think of nothing else that makes sense, but that does make sense. I think police officers understand that when we're talking about restructuring. We already have in Niagara a police force which is region-wide.

I think we recognize as well that police officers have a very tough job. Many of us have personal friends who have joined the police department over the years. They are people we grew up with. I'm not one who believes in nepotism, so I didn't get anybody a job in the police force, but I can tell you that we know them. They're our neighbours, they're our friends. I can't think of any relatives I have, but some people in the House may have relatives who are police officers. Every day when they go out on to the highway, every day when they go out on to the streets, every day when they go out on to the beat, their lives are potentially on the line.

What I would add to this bill or some future bill would be a further allocation of police officers on the front line, in our streets. One of the things they will tell us, as well, is that if we had more officers to deal with the problems that are facing them, sometimes the chances of a police chase taking place would be significantly reduced. So I hope the government will embark upon a program. Not many of them are at this point in time convinced that it's going to be a reality, the program that has been announced, that there are going to be 1,000, I think you said, net new police officers. Last I counted, there are fewer police officers now than when the NDP was in power, and you used to be very critical of the New Democratic Party at that time.

I do want to join my colleagues in the Liberal caucus in expressing my support for the bill. The sooner it is passed by this Legislature, the better it is. Very often we in the opposition are people who believe that bills require more consideration, more debate and public hearings. This seems to be the kind of bill that lends itself to quick passage. There's a relative consensus in this House as to the advisability of having such a bill. I can't think what would be added to it by extensive public hearings, in this case. I think police officers themselves, the Solicitor General himself, all people of goodwill would want to see the provisions of this act implemented as soon as possible. For that reason, I add my very strong and vehement support to this piece of legislation.

M. Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell) : C'est avec plaisir que je prends part au débat de ce projet de loi 22, Loi commémorant le sergent Rick McDonald et modifiant le Code de la route en ce qui concerne les poursuites en vue d'appréhender des suspects.

Lorsque nous regardons les statistiques, ce sont des statistiques, vraiment, qui donnent un message au gouvernement qu'on doit mettre en place une loi immédiatement afin d'arrêter ces poursuites, surtout dans le secteur résidentiel. Sur les 10 421 poursuites qui sont survenues depuis 1991, 27,7 % ont été à l'intérieur d'un secteur résidentiel.

J'ai vécu une expérience. Même si les statistiques ne font référence qu'à depuis 1991, je peux vous dire que j'ai vécu toute une expérience en 1989 lorsque mon neveu était dans la cour avec moi puis il m'a dit, tout d'un coup, « Je vais aller faire une randonnée dans la ville de Rockland. » Il est parti une journée après que son père lui avait acheté une auto pour se rendre aux études à l'Université d'Ottawa et puis la personne, complètement innocente, a été frappée par une auto qui était poursuivie par la Sûreté provinciale de l'Ontario.

Aujourd'hui, avec cette loi, j'espère bien que le gouvernement va l'appliquer selon la loi que nous déposons aujourd'hui et que nous débattons. Je peux vous dire que dans le passé, le gouvernement, à plusieurs reprises, a mis des projets de loi de l'avant mais ne les a pas appliqués parce que cela entraîne d'autres changements du bureau du procureur général. Dans ce cas-ci, j'espère que les changements ont été apportés au niveau du procureur général en même temps.

Lorsque je regarde les contraventions qui seront impliquées dans ces poursuites, nous parlons d'amendes allant de 5 000 \$ à 25 000 \$ et aussi de suspensions pouvant aller jusqu'à 10 ans, et même suspension à la vie de conduire. C'est bien beau de parler de ces projets de loi et de dire que nous, le gouvernement, voulons mettre en place des restrictions ou des pénalités plus sévères, mais il s'agit d'apporter tous les changements nécessaires.

Les statistiques démontrent que nous avons eu 10 421 poursuites depuis 1991, dont 27,7 % dans le secteur résidentiel. Cela a définitivement encouru beaucoup de dépenses et aussi de dommages matériels. Je me

demande jusqu'à quel point, à ce moment-ci, lorsque nous voyons que 71,5 % mettait en cause des conducteurs de 25 ans et moins, mais lorsque je regarde les autres statistiques, on dit que les poursuites de personnes de 18 à 25 ans, ce sont les poursuites que nous voyons le plus souvent.

Est-ce nécessaire de poursuivre une auto dans un secteur résidentiel ? La journée où mon neveu est décédé à l'occasion d'une poursuite policière dans la ville de Rockland, je pourrais dire que c'est mon neveu qui a été frappé, mais environ une minute avant cet accident, on aurait pu frapper une mère avec ses deux enfants qu'on a manqués de justesse.

Aujourd'hui, nous allons définitivement supporter un projet de loi de la sorte parce que je crois qu'il est très nécessaire pour le gouvernement de mettre en place un projet de loi qui va protéger soit nos piétons ou nos automobilistes qui font des randonnées. Comme on voit, depuis 1991, nous avons connu 33 décès, 33 personnes qui ont été tuées pendant ou après une poursuite policière, dont six qui étaient des personnes très innocentes, tuées par suite d'une collision avec un véhicule conduit par un suspect qui tentait d'éviter d'être pris ou impliquant un tel véhicule. Nous avons eu un agent de police, comme nous le savons tous, qui a été tué à Sudbury. Encore là, est-ce vraiment nécessaire de continuer à faire des poursuites à l'intérieur des limites d'une municipalité, des limites résidentielles ?

Si nous regardons les statistiques au complet, nous voyons que même dans le secteur commercial et le secteur rural—nous savons que souvent ces poursuites se poursuivent dans les secteurs ruraux. Même si ce n'est pas dans un secteur résidentiel, c'est toujours très, très dangereux, et souvent la personne qui est au volant de l'auto peut être innocente aussi, même s'il essaie de s'éloigner d'une poursuite policière. C'est que nous sommes pris par surprise et puis la personne essaie de s'en sauver afin que ses parents ne soient pas mis au courant.

Mais je crois que ce n'est pas nécessaire la majorité du temps. Sur les 10 421 poursuites que je vois dans les statistiques depuis 1991—

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M. Marcel Beaubien (Lambton-Kent-Middlesex) : Êtes-vous en faveur ?

M. Lalonde : Oui, je suis en faveur, au membre, mais je veux dire que nous devons nous assurer à ce que le gouvernement actuel applique le projet de loi 22 à la lettre. Si nous regardons dans les rapports que nous connaissons actuellement, lorsqu'on passe à un livret sommaire—actuellement les personnes ont dit que la loi dit que les permis de conduire sont suspendus pour un minimum de 10 ans—les personnes sont encore sur la route. La loi n'est pas assez forte ou bien nous avons toujours un moyen de nous en sortir. Mais aujourd'hui, j'espère que le gouvernement va se tenir debout encore une fois. Je le dis à plusieurs reprises parce que dans le passé, c'est quelque chose qu'on essayait de passer afin

de bien paraître au point de vue du public, mais nous ne mettons pas ces projets de loi en place.

Donc, je peux vous dire que oui, nous allons définitivement voter en faveur de ce projet de loi, et j'espère que le gouvernement va mettre en pratique le projet de loi 22 afin d'assurer la sécurité de nos citoyens et citoyennes de l'Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker: I just wanted to remind the members that I need to know who you are splitting your time with when you start.

Comments and questions?

Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): Of course, our party has already indicated that we support this bill. We did that on the same day that the government introduced the bill, when we had an opportunity to speak after the comments were made by the minister.

The critic for justice for our party will speak tonight about the bill, and he will do so at some length.

Where I disagree with my colleagues from the Liberal Party is that they want the bill done as quickly as possible, without any public hearings. Before they get too far down the road or get into too much of a tizzy here tonight about the fact that we have asked for some public hearings, the fact is, we think there can be some changes to the bill that will make it better, that will increase the fines that appear here. In fact, I should tell my colleagues in the Liberal Party, who seem to be getting into quite a lather here about the fact that this might go to committee, that my colleague has taken an opportunity to talk to the police associations about one of the amendments in particular that we would like to move, and they are very interested in what he has to say and I suspect would support it. But the only way that amendment can be moved and can be dealt with is in committee. So we will have to have—

Hon Chris Stockwell (Minister of Labour): Committee of the whole.

Ms Martel: Well, committee of the whole doesn't happen around here anymore, as a result of megacity. So we won't even talk about committee of the whole, because we know what happened when we did that. So it will have to go to a committee. I understand there have been some discussions already, as a matter of fact, about it going to committee, and a first indication of some agreement around that.

So I think the bill can be strengthened. I am quite sure the amendment that my colleague will talk about will be supported not only by the other two parties but by the police associations, and I would encourage us to have the debate tonight and let this go to committee so that we can make what is a good bill even better.

Mr Mazzilli: Just to comment on what we have heard, the intent of this bill, and I'm getting the co-operation from the Liberal Party, is strictly penalties, penalties for those who have offended. As I've said before, the penalties are either a 10-year licence suspension or life in the case of death or serious injury, and doubling of the fines.

So any amendments that the NDP propose—and I can only suspect what they are going to be. I suspect they will be training issues. I can tell you that that is being done across the province, so this bill is not intended to deal with training; it is intended to deal with suspensions. I believe the Liberal Party understands that and that is why they're supporting it. The NDP in this case certainly makes their training issues known to the ministry. The ministry has been working hard for several years to change training; and with the development of new technology, training changes.

Again, our government, with the co-operation of the opposition party, is targeting the criminals who are fleeing from police.

Ms Caroline Di Cocco (Sarnia-Lambton): It is a pleasure that I speak in support, of course, of this bill. I have to say that it is important that we pass bills such as this, and as quickly as we can, because I believe it's important that we ensure that we safeguard the people who put their lives at risk every day when they go to work.

This bill is going to increase fines. It's also going to give maximum penalties to the drivers who wilfully continue to avoid police when being pursued, stronger penalties for people who wilfully endanger the lives of the police officers. These police officers are making our communities safer in their line of duty. There have to be stiffer consequences for those who wilfully continue to avoid police being pursued. We know that the actions of individuals who flee from police endanger their own lives, the lives of the police and the lives of others. I know that often stiffer penalties can be a deterrent, and that's what we hope this bill will do.

I support this bill wholeheartedly and, as I said, I think it is wonderful to see that the whole House is in favour of safeguarding the lives of those people who every day go out there and put their lives at risk for us. Again, I hope this bill has quick passage and we don't have to take the time to go to extra hearings.

The Deputy Speaker: Questions and comments? The member for Brant has two minutes to respond.

Mr Levac: In response to the discussion that's taken place to this point, I want to bring it down to the bill itself. We want to make sure that we don't get too far ahead of ourselves. The compliment that I paid the government was the fact that this legislation was very poignant. It was to the point. It made very obvious references to what the fines and the penalties are going to be. That's what the police want, that's what the public wants and that's what we want. I'm not hearing anything different.

What we're going to try to do now is add to the bill or change and modify it, and I would tell you that it's not the appropriate thing to do with this bill. We want to get quick passage. We want to get this out there and into the hands of the people who secure our community. My suggestion very strongly is that we can get this done today, no problem. If we get all-party co-operation, it can get done.

I also want to say that in my research and in my discussions with the police officers and all the different associations and the chiefs of police, I was taught that as little as 60 seconds is involved in a police chase. With such little time in terms of how a police officer responds, we need training. I'm going to suggest respectfully to the government that its training process right now is still not adequate enough. We still need to move on to it. We also know that more legislation can be provided by the government, and I think it would address the NDP's concern that there are things that need to get added to this in order to make a comprehensive set of rules out there.

If we can get ourselves fixed on this particular piece of legislation first, we can get this thing passed tonight and then we can move on to some serious discussion about what I've been talking about and suggesting to the government: that we investigate its training, that we investigate all of the other avenues that I mentioned earlier, and say to the government and to the NDP collectively, along with the federal government, we can make a safe and secure Ontario for everyone.

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Mr Kormos: I appreciate the chance to speak to this bill. Shelley Martel, of course, represents all those wonderful small communities around Sudbury, places like Hanmer and Capreol and Lively, which won't exist much longer. To be fair, Shelley Martel very much wanted me to make sure that she knew when this bill was being debated because of her strong interest in it and her appreciation of the incredible sacrifice of Rick McDonald of the Sudbury police force.

Let me also tell the government and the parliamentary assistant that I appreciate what the ministry has done, because promptly after the bill was presented for first reading, I got a call from Bill Campbell from the minister's office. He had provided me with the compendium and the various briefing notes. I had a rather considerable conversation with Bill. He was speaking on behalf of the minister. I then raised with Bill my concern about getting this bill on promptly for second reading, and I raised with him my concern about elements that weren't in the bill that should be there by virtue of amendment. I'm very concerned in this respect.

Let's just talk about the issue for a minute. I have to tell you, I do not have the data that I'm sure is available. Let me tell you this, Parliamentary Assistant: I'm proposing that this bill go for hearings at the justice committee on Monday and Tuesday of next week, the 13th and 14th, so it will be available for third reading before the end of next week. Let me tell you why. I think it's important that this bill be passed before Christmas because of the very nature of things that tend to happen out on our roadways and highways come Christmastime.

When I mention data, I'm hoping the ministry will have these data available. I've simply relied on my own exposure to this from some years ago now—I spoke with several police officers—in terms of getting a handle or an idea of who these drivers are that the police are compelled to pursue. Who are we talking about here?

The information from police officers—I appreciate it's anecdotal but I suspect it matches the data pretty closely—is that the biggest chunk are drunk drivers and suspended drivers. That's the single biggest chunk of drivers who lead police on high-speed chases.

Interjection.

Mr Kormos: Hold on. So you have drunks and suspended drivers. The second group, when you move down in terms of volume, are people driving stolen cars. All them joyriders, car thieves, what have you. That is the second-largest, but by far the biggest group of offenders that police find themselves in high-speed pursuit of are the drunk and suspended drivers, and more so the drunks because with the distortion of perception they're simply unable to appreciate what's going on.

Then you've got the class of people who are car thieves and joyriders. At the end of the day the smallest number—not to say that they're any more or any less dangerous, and they're a very small number in the total scheme of things—are the literal bank robbers, leaving the scene of a bank robbery. The reason I mention those is let's look at what the largest single group tends to be, and I suspect the data will confirm this: What cops have been telling me and what my observations have led me to believe is that you're talking about drunks and suspended drivers as the largest single group of people. I hope the parliamentary assistant would take this as seriously as we have over here.

In terms of the increased fines, fine. In terms of the jail penalties, once again, fine. All of us who have been here, some of us for a considerable period of time, have gone through a regrettable history of high-speed-chase incidents, and inevitably the second-guessing, the arm-chair quarterbacking that people try to do.

I, for one, find it very difficult to try to second-guess a cop or cops who are out there, upon whom we impose incredibly high expectations. We have incredibly high demands of our police officers, who are called upon to exercise judgment in the matter of not seconds but milliseconds, fractions of a second, and who more often than not find themselves in a scenario of being damned if they do and damned if they don't.

This goes to what the PA talked about in terms of developing policies. I appreciate the policies, and if and when policies are developed, I tell you, it's got to be with the primary consultation being with cops themselves—no disrespect to their chiefs, but not with chiefs of police or public relations officers from police services boards—cops who are out there on a daily basis, the women and men who are out there and are called upon to make those judgments within the context of those guidelines, whatever they will be. I look forward to seeing those proposed guidelines and listening to what cops have to say about them, bouncing them off and reflecting them, based on their own daily real-life experience out there.

With respect to this particular legislation—I mentioned this before. I mentioned it to a group of seniors last night who were having the Thorold seniors' dinner at Front 54. I told them it was going to be debated this

evening. These folks in Thorold said, "We'll tune in because that's something we're interested in." So people are watching out there, watching this government's progress with this bill and, I suspect, similar types of legislation.

The comments of the parliamentary assistant himself about the need for training are a given, aren't they? The parliamentary assistant acknowledges that there are inadequate resources out there to ensure that police officers are properly trained. Where I come from, this means yes, Parliamentary Assistant. When you move your head up and down, it means yes.

Mind you, the police college at Aylmer only instituted or initiated its high-speed-chase training in 1982. That's almost 20 years old now, just three years shy of 20 years old. The problem is, how many police officers are getting to that training? That's the problem: How many police officers are getting to that training? That's number one.

Number two, you talked about using spike belts. I've told you what police officers in Niagara have told me. I'm telling you what they tell me. One pulled me over, opened the trunk of his car, showed me this neat Velcro classy package—the spike belt is up on the roof of the trunk—looked at it and said: "I don't even know how to remove the thing. Everybody's got the spike belts now, good so far, but I haven't received any training in the use of it." He was frustrated.

Interjection.

Mr Kormos: One of our colleagues says it's not that complicated. Please. Look at what happened to Rick McDonald. He wasn't in a car chasing a culprit in a high-speed chase, where police officers know they're exposing themselves to some significant risk. He was using the new technology. That's what makes his death all the more tragic; it really is. When a police officer is in a car pursuing somebody, they know they're putting themselves at risk and, yes, they know there's an element of risk to bystanders who may appear unexpectedly. No cop purposely enters a high-speed chase thinking they're going to injure somebody—themselves or the culprit or the public. Come on.

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I don't trivialize the lack of training when it comes to even using spike belts. There's a difference between a video, where you're recreating a street scenario, and being out there. And it's expensive training. It doesn't take place in 45 minutes. It involves the use of vehicles, resources and training officers, and it can take several days out of a police officer's week. The police officer will be paid, of course, but won't be available for duty in his or her detachment. It costs money, and even more so because you can't just say, OK, you've done it, and that's all you're going to do for the next 25 or 30 years that you are a police officer. That sort of training has to be ongoing. As we develop or acquire new technologies that assist our police in stopping fleeing vehicles, we have to train them in that too.

All of us here have gone through one form of training or another. But at the end of the day, the real test was

when we are out there in the real world applying in a real-life experience.

Interjection.

Mr Kormos: Please, Parliamentary Assistant.

There is a crying need for this government to assure police and the public of Ontario that our cops are not only going to get the best when it comes to resources and tools and the newest technology, but that they're going to get the training to use them effectively and safely.

That doesn't detract from this bill even in the slightest way. But I note that the bill increases the monetary penalties, and indeed imposes jail sentences in cases where there is bodily harm or death. That doesn't mean by any stretch that we should vote against the bill. Those are inevitably cases where the Criminal Code sections on negligent driving are going to apply in any event, where the Criminal Code is going to be utilized.

When you have the provincial statute and the Criminal Code overlapping, one would hope that a prosecutor would be using the Criminal Code, among other things because of its stigma as a criminal conviction as compared to a provincial offence conviction which appears on your Highway Traffic Act record for five years and then automatically disappears. If I have my druthers, I'd rather see criminals prosecuted under the Criminal Code, and I think they should be, so there is a criminal record that is long-standing and hopefully so that appropriate penalties can be imposed.

On higher fines, we have a huge outstanding accounts receivable of fines in this province. With respect, these fines aren't going to be paid. We've seen the evidence of that. The auditor's report from last year indicated an incredible volume, millions of dollars of uncollected fines. That's not to say that fines shouldn't be a part of this bill. For many offenders, fines will act as some modest deterrent.

Let's talk about real deterrents. I talked about these at length with Bill Campbell from the minister's office, when he was courteous enough to call me. I asked him to please urge the minister, urge the government, to adopt as part of its bill the amendments I am going to speak to right now. At the end of the day there may be sufficient disagreement with my proposals that they warrant moving on from them, but I suspect to the contrary.

You know that I was disappointed—a whole lot of us were—in the latest red tape bill. The Minister of Transportation spoke with me after we raised the question on the amendments to the red tape bill. His explanation for those amendments was as I expected. They dealt with impoundment provisions for driving under a suspension that flows from a Criminal Code conviction. The most frequent would be drunk driving over .80, dangerous driving, criminal negligence etc. I appreciate that the minister was very candid with me, and his response was what I anticipated. But that bill went to committee after having second reading here today. And because of time allocation and because the House sat late into the day before question period ended, there wasn't a minute of questions or discussion, especially about the

part that dealt with the regulatory power of the government to exempt certain persons or vehicles from periods of impoundment—45, 90 or 180 days respectively. I don't blame the minister for that. I just say it's very regrettable.

If I don't recite the exchange accurately, Minister, please jump up and say so. You explained that one consideration here was rental cars: Avis, Hertz, whatever the rental company happens to be. My response to you was to let rental companies be aware that if they rent a car to a suspended driver, they risk having their car impounded for 45, 90 or 180 days. They should be called upon to exercise some due diligence before renting a vehicle. Because I know how it is done; I know the scam of how suspended drivers get rental cars.

Hon David Turnbull (Minister of Transportation): Corporate fleets.

Mr Kormos: Now the minister is talking about fleets or lease cars. Well, impoundment once again. Rather than dipping into the well and trying to divide things and split things up, I say, too bad, so sad. Let those lessors collect their damages from the suspended driver who caused them to have their car impounded for 45 or 90 days in the same way they would go after the lessee if that person smashed up the car or left cigarette burns all over the interior.

I know what you're talking about, Minister, but it causes me some concern. We impose a stiff standard, the impoundment, and now we're talking about ways—and I know where you're coming from. The sad thing also is that we didn't have a chance to talk about it. But you didn't make that decision, and I understand that.

The reason I raise that is that I realize we supported the impoundment provisions—not a shabby deterrent. The fact is, suspended drivers drive because they don't think they're going to get caught, and if they do get caught they're going to get—the fines have gone up recently—another six-month suspension. But get the car impounded with the associated fees, because you don't get the car back until you pay those fees, and the price of poker goes up. Mom or dad will think twice before lending the family car to a child who has a suspended license, or the message will get out.

I have had couples come to my office, and my advice to couples who have two cars and one of the spouses has been convicted of drunk driving is, put one car in your name and don't let that person drive it. That's one modest area where if you really lay down the law with the insurance companies—they won't do it automatically, but you've got the whole excluded driver business—the innocent partner in the marriage isn't punished or put at risk because of vicarious liability by a drunk-driving spouse.

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I have no sympathy for that scenario, or a friend. I accept that I should be responsible for ensuring that I don't lend my vehicle to somebody whose driver's license is suspended because they're a drunk driver, and if my vehicle gets impounded under those circumstances,

once again, too bad so sad. The message had better get out there that you'd better use more caution and exercise better discretion about who you rent your car to, or lend your car to, or—there, I've said it, who you rent your car to. I think that's an important thing to consider. Just wait and see all those regulations start flowing down.

That takes me back to this bill, Bill 22, because I consider the impoundment provisions to raise the stakes for the offender. I raised this with Bill Campbell from the minister's office a week and a half ago. I'm not suggesting that impoundment provisions should be contained in this bill and I'll tell you why. I'm suggesting that confiscation provisions should be contained in this bill because an impoundment for a scenario as heinous and dangerous as this—45, 90, 180 days—in the total scheme of things you'll wait out your time. I'm talking—and I've already asked legislative counsel to draft up the amendments—about confiscating the car of somebody who engages in high-speed chases. If it's their own car, confiscate it. If it is their mom or dad's car, confiscate it. If it is their spouse's car, confiscate it. Because the message has got to go out there.

That's why I started with who does this offence. The biggest single group is drunk or suspended drivers because they try to escape the police, perhaps on just routine pullovers or RIDE checks, that sort of thing; it's the biggest single chunk. Now, please, I'm not suggesting that it be applied to the owners of stolen vehicles; that would be ludicrous.

But you've raised the bar, you've done it in a fundamental way. What you've done is you have not only told the offender that you're playing with stiff fines. Look, with scofflaws stiff fines aren't—I mean, if \$1,000 didn't work, why will \$10,000 in the total scheme of things? Jail sentences? Now you're starting to hit closer to home. But if you lose a \$20,000, \$30,000 or \$40,000 vehicle, it goes off to the pound—go buy it back at the police auction. See if you can outbid the other bidders.

I raise this because I think that starts it again. I respect and support the intent of the bill but why are we monkeying around? If you're going to go with tough penalties, let's do it, let's drive her home, because this also deals with the Kineapple situation, an appellate decision. When you've got two statutes that basically do the same thing, you pick one or the other. But if one has a substantially different goal—let the lawyers argue this—then Kineapple is less likely to apply. We'll drop the HTA charge for fleeing a driver and stick with the federal Criminal Code conviction, because I agree, if the federal amendments, whenever they do get passed, are as tough or tougher than these, by all means use the federal Criminal Code. If it has merely fine and imprisonment as penalties, it substantially then does the very same thing that the HTA does, which means that you've got to pick one or the other. My respectful submission to you is that if the HTA moves itself into a spotlight or an arena of its own—and I'm suggesting that confiscating the car can do that—you prosecute both of them. You prosecute the Criminal Code offence to whack the driver and you pro-

secute the Highway Traffic Act failing-to-stop offence to seize the car, to hit the owner.

Interjections.

Mr Kormos: You're darned right. I advised the ministry that I had concerns. I asked why wasn't it there. I don't know what the process was, because the police association of Ontario has indicated through some of its spokespeople that they very much want confiscation of vehicles as part of the penalty provisions here, Parliamentary Assistant. I want a chance for them to make that submission to a committee and to move—and look, if you want to move the amendment first, please, by all means. I'll share with you as soon as I get it from legislative counsel—because I've asked for two versions of the confiscation amendment. You could either go sort of *prima facie* confiscated, subject to a court order, and that would be in the case of a stolen vehicle, where you would count on a judge automatically to say “No confiscation,” or some remarkable plea by the owner of the vehicle who was not the offender that would persuade a judge to not impose it. So you've got “presumed to be confiscated,” subject to whatever argument you can make. In the case of stolen vehicle, the argument's automatic. In the case of a grey area, let them make their case. Or simply amend the penalty sections to say, “And in addition, the judge may order the car or vehicle confiscated.”

I prefer the “presumed confiscated,” because you know what's going to happen. It's going to get caught up in the real but sometimes very regrettable process of plea bargaining, where a prosecutor will agree not to request confiscation of the vehicle. It'll result in all sorts of inequities across the province, where one jurisdiction may deal with it one way just because of a judge's inclination or a group of judges' inclination, and in another jurisdiction, another way.

The law is pointed. It's straightforward. It deals with a very singular issue. It isn't a complex one; it's not a hard one. You don't have to be a rocket scientist to figure out when you're breaking this law. It doesn't involve the intricacies of very complex offences. It's straightforward. If you take the cops off on a high-speed chase, you're done like dinner. As simple as that. The cops deserve it; our communities deserve it.

Does confiscation as part of the penalty provisions raise the price of poker? Of course it does. But what price? More dead cops, more injured cops, more dead, innocent passersby or more injured pedestrians. We've got to deal with this. This Legislature has been flirting with this issue, trying to accommodate it, for the 11 years that I've been here, and it certainly predates me.

Work on the guidelines; get them rolling. Please, take us seriously when we talk about training and new technology. When we talk, as we did upon our response to the ministerial announcement of this bill—I talked then about the helicopter for the Toronto Police Services Board. I believe the cops when they tell me that a helicopter is a useful tool. Quite frankly, let's get one into Toronto, because the location of Toronto, with the

whole huge development, Durham and so on up along the lake, all the way down through Burlington, Hamilton and Niagara region, means that helicopter will be available for basically all those police services as well.

Once again, is it the be-all and end-all? Of course not. I don't know what the police would have in mind. Do you keep it in the air literally 24 hours a day, or do you let it sit on a pad and only utilize it when it's called upon? I don't know what the answer to that is. Let's find out.

But I believe the cops when they tell us that helicopters—a helicopter in Toronto, for starters—can be an effective tool in police work. It certainly can be utilized in high-speed chases. Most of them are very brief. They end in hopefully a mere arrest, but more often than not in a collision of some sort or another.

So please, Parliamentary Assistant, you've got two minutes to respond to me. Tell us that you're going to push the idea of accommodating Toronto's cops, plus the surrounding police forces, with support. Is it expensive? Of course it's expensive. Of course it is. But you know, we're sending our cops out there with far fewer tools than the criminals have more often than not. The criminals have more resources available to them than our cops do, and then we tell our cops, “Go shut down the bad guys.”

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You've got drug traffickers who are wealthy and have access to huge financial resources that make drug trafficking still the plague of virtually every community in this province. Down in Niagara, because we're a border community, we have to bear more than our share of the tragedy foisted upon communities by illegal, illicit drug trafficking. I don't have to tell you that you can take the biggest chunk of those daily crimes, the break-and-enters, the armed robberies of the corner store—not the bank jobs, but more often than not the armed robberies of the corner store or the gas bar, the snatching of purses—and more often than not you're talking about druggies pulling that off to finance and support their drug habit. We've got drug traffickers—I'm not talking about the punks on the street; I'm talking about what are inevitably very wealthy, well-resourced individuals and groups of individuals—who have more resources than the cops do.

Parliamentary Assistant, you know that. You know what drug investigation takes. It takes a lot of surveillance work. Incredibly labour-intensive, isn't it? It's expensive. How many times has a major drug investigation in any number of our communities been interrupted because the project simply ran out of money or you've got the hiatus of two or three days, the gap in the surveillance which throws the whole investigation out the window because you lose that link? You know what I'm talking about. I know you do.

I know the cops who do these things, and I know they're committed to dealing with these issues. They're more frustrated than anybody could be when they start a drug investigation project that they know is going to have results but they're told, “You're budgeted out of the

investigation.” It happens, doesn’t it? You bet your boots it happens, Parliamentary Assistant. They’re budgeted out of the investigation, and another drug trafficking ring flourishes.

Gosh, we had a community policing sergeant here from the Toronto police force the other day who talked about some areas here in the city where drug traffickers are like cockroaches. It was an interesting—well, call William Burroughs. We need him now more than ever. He referred to them as cockroaches, a double entendre if there ever was one, because he talked about how you can scoop these street traffickers and the next day they’re replaced not just by one but by two. You scoop those two and then there are four. But you see, the problem is you’re dealing there with the addicts and the punks out on the street. You’re not dealing with the kingpins. Why not? You’re not dealing with some very well-resourced, wealthy, powerful individuals and organizations where you’ve got to do the real busts, and that’s where cops need the tools. They can’t be out-gunned in every sense of the word by the criminals, or else you create or impose upon them Sisyphean standards; you impose upon them the drudgery of doing their best but realizing that it’s never going to result in any delivery. I mean, you put them like in a cage and they’re constantly turning in that circle, expending incredible amounts of energy, costing no less money, but without the results.

I read the press reports of the Minister of Correctional Services and the Attorney General not being given standing at the federal committee that’s reviewing the proposed—I don’t know what the new name is. Let’s call it what it is: the new YO act. I talked to the Solicitor General about it, even though it didn’t appear he was one of the two—it was the minister of corrections and the Attorney General, fair enough, that sought standing—and I said, how do you guys like it now? Well, think about it. In my view it was entirely inappropriate to exclude a provincial Attorney General from the discussion about the YO act. Provinces have to administer it. They’ve got to provide the correctional facilities. I thought it incredibly inappropriate to exclude those two ministers. It was appropriate that it was the minister of corrections and the Attorney General.

But, you see, that’s what happens here at Queen’s Park when closure motions are used to impose incredibly compact periods of time on committees, so that when people phone saying, “I represent a major group that has an interest in this legislation,” they say, “Sorry, no more room.” Maybe it was just a Christmas thing, maybe there was simply no room at the inn, maybe there was a parable there. I wasn’t pleased to see the province’s Attorney General excluded from that, but I also said, aha, please, maybe this will be an object lesson. You understand now what it means to have the door slammed in your face.

I think the Attorney General and the minister of corrections had important things to tell the feds. I believe that and I wanted to hear what they had to say to the feds as well. The door was slammed in their face. Unfort-

unately there was some bizarre justice contained in that, because here at Queen’s Park the door is being slammed in people’s faces when they try to get to committees to make some presentations; quite frankly, more often than not.

It was interesting. At the very beginning of last week I got a phone call—as a matter of fact, Ms Martel got a phone call first—from some police officers’ association, saying, “We’ve heard that the NDP are stalling this bill.” I thought that was interesting. So I phoned them up and explained to them that I was here in this Legislature waiting and ready and prepared to speak to this bill every single day of last week and every single evening. And Ms Martel was here as well.

We were anxious to see this bill brought forward for second reading last week, and I prevailed upon the parliamentary assistant—what day was it, PA? Was it Thursday or Wednesday? Which day? It was either Wednesday or Thursday, wasn’t it—that’s right—that I spoke with you and said, “Please, use your influence to get this bill called, because it is important to get it passed before the Christmas break.” And why? Let me go back to where I was there.

Understanding who fleeing drivers are: Drunks and suspended drivers are the two biggest single groups. Please, don’t you know about the ways and means act, PA? Come on. Don’t you know about the missing tail-light or the weaving across the centre line so you turn the cherries on to try to pull them over, and then they take off like a bat out of hell because they’re under suspension and they don’t want to be caught driving under suspension? So don’t tell me that police don’t have to pursue suspended drivers. The police want to pull a vehicle over—they’ve got a right to pull you over to check your insurance and your driver’s license—and the car doesn’t pull over; it takes off. It’s either a drunk or a driver under suspension.

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The problem is, the data should be there. I’m looking forward to having that data before the end of the week, because I think you’ve got access to it and can put it together very quickly. That will be helpful to us in persuading us not just to increase fines but to have substantial penalties here where it’s not a fine that never gets paid, because fines go unpaid, but once a car is confiscated, you’ve been dealt with. Right? At the end of the day there is still going to be the incredibly stupid person and again pure scofflaw who doesn’t evaluate this. Of course, are we ever going to end high-speed chases? Not with mere legislation.

There are some interesting and very high-tech Jetson type—remember the Jetsons?—of proposals about ways of automatically turning those off. I’m sorry. I don’t think the technology is there yet. If the purported technology is there, it’s as likely to shut off my Chevy truck when I’m travelling home on the QEW doing the speed limit, or yours, as it is the pursued vehicle’s. That’s the reality of it. Some day that technology may exist, and then we’ll be a lot closer towards avoiding—

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): Starting with Chev trucks, then Ford trucks.

Mr Kormos: Well, as a matter of fact, I've got to tell you, we had the Santa Claus parade in Welland on Saturday. Then last Sunday we had it in Thorold. We are doing Fenwick's next weekend, I think. David Chev-Olds—I've told you about them, the Chev dealer up on Niagara Street—gave us a vehicle to drive in. It's a unionized shop. They gave us a year 2000 Monte Carlo SS, a beautiful car. We put my sign on the side and their signs too, but they're incredible. David Chev-Olds on Niagara Street: a union shop, which means, you see, the mechanics are paid salaries. They're not on piecework, job by job, so they don't have to rush the job, nor do they have to sell you work that you don't need. I've trusted them absolutely for I guess at least 20 years now. I'm grateful to them for supporting the community, because I'm not the only person who has had a car from David Chev-Olds in these small-town parades, those small towns whose future is very much at risk. So David Chev-Olds on Niagara Street, and also Cathy Robertson, who has sold me every car I've bought in the last 20 years. Incredible. I trust her absolutely: 735-3690. An incredible dealership and one that I have the highest regard for, and one I want to thank for making sure we've got a car for these parades. They do it all the time.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Michael A. Brown): My, we digress.

Mr Kormos: High-speed chases: Parliamentary Assistant, you've got two minutes to respond. You tell me whether you think the confiscation of a vehicle as part of the penalty provisions here—are you with us or against us? Do you want to join together to toughen up this legislation so we give the cops a break, so we give them the best possible odds they could hope for? I think you're starting to hit home when you talk about confiscation as well. It's not inconsistent, but again it varies very much from the impounding: 45, 90, 180 days. Again, I tell you as well, I'm concerned about government having regulatory power to exempt. The problem with regulatory power is that it happens in the secrecy of cabinet. It shows up where, in the regulations committee? But it's done in the secrecy of cabinet and isn't the subject matter of debate. That's why I'm concerned about it.

We publicly pass the law that said "Impound the vehicle" if they catch you driving under suspension. But now we're giving—not just this government, any subsequent government—the power to, without debate, exempt drivers, or classes of drivers, or vehicles, or classes of vehicles, from the impoundment provisions or from the compounding of the impoundment provisions.

I don't think impounding is relevant here. This activity is simply too dangerous. And why I find confiscation even more attractive is that it helps them to involve other people in ensuring that drunk or suspended drivers, the two drivers most likely to lead police in a high-speed chase, don't drive. It means that you don't lend your car to a suspended or drinking driver.

Quite frankly, this is where the regulations contained in the red tape bill concern me, because I was worried that, among other things, Hertz and Avis rental car companies were going to be among the exempted owners. I was also worried that you were going to exclude, let's say, lenders of cars; to wit, your neighbour, your spouse, your parent or your child. I was very uncomfortable with that because that relieves them of the responsibility to make sure that suspended drivers don't drive your car, because now you can be like the little boy who wet the bed and simply say: "I don't know. I don't know how that happened, how it got there."

Mr O'Toole: "It wasn't me."

Mr Kormos: That's right. "I didn't know they didn't have a licence." And that covers you.

I'm talking about making other people share some of the responsibility. And you know that whomever you lend your car to or whomever you let use your car is the type of person who maybe fits into a profile of somebody who might flee from the cops, you're not going to lend them the car. You've got to accept some responsibility for that too.

Isn't that what it's all about? Making sure the community accepts a little bit of the responsibility as well so that cops aren't put into these scenarios? So that we don't read about it in the paper on Monday morning and engage in all that dramatic armchair quarterbacking where we try to second-guess the cops. But we still mourn the loss of any life.

I'd like very much to see the technology that would eliminate high-speed chases, but it's not here yet.

Interjection.

Mr Kormos: Quite frankly, it's not here yet, PA. Don't be razzle-dazzled by those sorts of things. Come on. You didn't just fall off the turnip truck; I know that much. You know a little better than that. It's the same as the fingerprinting technology. Whatever the companies were—I think they were Texas-based, were they?—what they were doing was trying to sell that stuff to government so they could do their R&D with public money. Because it doesn't work.

Mr Wayne Wettlaufer (Kitchener Centre): And you bought it, right?

Mr Kormos: It's a scam. It's the same scam as what you're talking about. They want the public sector to fund their R&D. So just cool down a little bit. I'm not saying the technology will never happen, OK? I'm saying, don't be misled by the "Oh, watch this" sort of stuff. Out there on the road, in the wet, the ice and the snow, no, that technology isn't available yet.

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The other issue is that it's pretty ominous stuff. You might want to explain how that proposed technology works. Does that mean that a hacker, for instance, could shut down any of our vehicles? Does it?

Interjection.

Mr Kormos: You seem to know a little bit more about current technology than some of your colleagues.

Interjection.

Mr Kormos: It's true. There are pros and cons.

That's been the problem. I appreciate that I'm somewhat Luddite in my whole approach to this. I appreciate that. Touch-Tone phone technology is wonderful. I got a Touch-Tone phone a couple of years ago, because I was going to be darned if those thieves at Bell Canada were going to charge me for a phone and then charge me extra for a Touch-Tone phone.

Mr Bradley: Who?

Mr Kormos: The thieves and scoundrels at Bell Canada. How dare they call a dial phone—catch this. They call a dial phone their base phone, but you can't get a dial phone. "Here's the base charge for the phone; it's a dial phone." "OK, give me a dial phone." "We don't supply dial phones." "What are you talking about, the base charge, you thieves?"

Mr Brad Clark (Stoney Creek): They keep calling you for it: "Return that rotary phone."

Mr Kormos: It's a consumer fraud and these guys should be brought into line.

Mr Bradley: What about the banks?

Mr Kormos: Which one? Toronto-Dominion Bank, which stole \$700 from me? You remember that, don't you, Jim? You talk about crime. The parliamentary assistant to the Solicitor General should know about this, because I spoke about this at length several times, trust me, in this House.

It was an account that had a few bucks in it, maybe \$1,000, from 20 years ago when I articulated or did my bar admission course here in Toronto down at Osgoode. I had the bank account and, from time to time, I put a few bucks in it. Then several years went by during which I hadn't made any deposits, and I was shy some cash. I went, "OK, I've got bucks there." I went down to the bank, trusting that banks are there to take care of your money. Not only did I not have any money, they told me I owed them money because the service charges accumulated still after they emptied the account. They stole my money, the Toronto-Dominion Bank.

Interjection: It wasn't a unionized bank?

Mr Kormos: That's part of the problem. When I talked about this a few years ago, I urged people to take their money out of the bank before they steal yours too, because they stole mine.

Mr Wettlaufer: Did it help their bottom line?

Mr Kormos: Oh, it helped their bottom line, you bet your boots, yes. Holy cow. If you want to start talking about crimes, Parliamentary Assistant to the Solicitor General, have we got something to talk about when it comes to banks. Multi-billion dollar profits, and how do they respond to multi-billion profits? By laying off more staff, by creating more unemployment.

Don't get suckered into this telephone banking. All you're doing is taking away people's jobs. Don't get conned into telephone banking. I appreciate that there are maybe some people who are housebound, people who are stuck in their homes, ill people. But please, don't get suckered into telephone banking, because the ultimate goal of these folks is to create virtual banks, right?

Mr Bradley: Are their profits dropping?

Mr Kormos: Their profits are climbing. Let's understand what George Soros said. George Soros—one of the wealthiest men in the world, and a strong advocate of capitalism; no pinko, George Soros—in his most recent book, *The Crisis of Global Capitalism*, writes about how let's understand, let's cleanse ourselves of this myth that corporations are there to provide service and create employment, create jobs and all those nice and warm things. Corporations are, as you folks know, artificial entities that have no heart, no soul. Their job is to make money. There is nothing inherently wrong with that, I would like to do it someday myself, but the job of corporations is to make money, to make profits, and you make profits by generating the highest revenues and hiring the fewest people. It's as simple as that. It's not rocket science.

Soros comments on this because he wants his colleagues in that international corporate world to understand that the more people you lay off, the more people you force down into lower-wage jobs, you start to erode your own consumer base. The people who make your Sony television set, in what Pacific Rim country, can't afford to buy one, but a high-wage economy worker, which was traditional in North America and most parts of western Europe, could.

As we see the abandonment of the high-wage economy, as we see the corporate world making huge profits and doing it by laying off more workers and endorsing the whole concept of part-time work, contract work, Soros warns that that multi-national corporate world is at risk of literal self-embowelment, if you will, something akin to corporate and economic hara-kiri. Please keep that in mind.

Let me finish up on Bill 22. Parliamentary Assistant, I tell you, I haven't hidden my light under a bushel here. Last week I talked candidly with one of your staff people in the ministry, Bill Campbell, from the minister's office. He called to say, "What are your concerns about the bill?" I told him, "We want to see speedy passage." But I also told him that the police association, as you know, has been calling for more than just increased fines and periods of imprisonment; they've been calling for confiscation, for forfeiture. Quite frankly, I agree with them.

I put it to you, Parliamentary Assistant, that if you want to bring those amendments in your name, as I say, I'm going to give them to you as soon as I get them from leg counsel. I've requested them. If you want to move them yourself, by all means, feel free. We'll support them. If you don't want to move them, I'll move them, but then I'm asking you to support them as well.

If you really want it, let's start doing this stuff right. I'll concede that too much has been done wrong for too long, too many times, especially when it comes to cops and policing, and in a whole lot of other areas too, but especially when it comes to cops and policing.

Maybe somebody's trying to strike some middle ground here between what the police want and what

someone—there's logic to confiscation, to forfeiture to the crown, as part of the penalty provisions of this bill. You're talking about one of the most dangerous activities on the road: the high-speed chase. It puts the cops at risk. It kills cops and it injures them. It puts the civilian community at risk. It kills civilians and it kills and maims pedestrians. Let's do everything we can; not close to what we can, let's go all out. Let's go hell-bent and amend this bill to contain penalties which include confiscation.

You know what? As we assess the scenario, we all know that legislation in itself isn't going to stop high-speed chases, but it's the best we can do under the circumstances. As we acquire or become exposed to new technology, let's make sure we're prepared to grab the bull by the horns and make the investment in that too and make sure that cops have access to it and that they're trained how to use it. Come on, you know these police officers, Parliamentary Assistant. I know you do. I know them too. As has been noted, they're our families, our friends, our neighbours. These are people who are incredibly committed to the welfare of their communities.

Also, Parliamentary Assistant, take a look around some police services not too far from here and look at the incredible pressures on police, and the declining morale and the problems that brings with it. Let's make this bill one that the police can be proud of, that we can be proud of and that the community can be proud of.

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The Acting Speaker: Questions and comments?

Mr Mazzilli: It's been a pleasure to hear from the member for Brant, from the official opposition, in support of the bill.

If we can refocus back to what the intention of Bill 22 is, it's an amendment to the Highway Traffic Act in relation to suspensions. So that's after the fact. At this point we are no longer trying to prevent anything. The police pursuit has occurred; now it's a question of punishment. In order to do that, we're providing for court-ordered driver's licence suspensions of not less than 10 years and up to life, to be consecutive in cases involving death or bodily harm, and increased provisions for driver's licence suspensions up to five years for escape by flight by doubling the fines.

The member from Niagara Centre has put a proposal. Talk about an omnibus bill; he wants to look after suspensions, he wants to look after training, he wants to look after confiscation, he wants to look after unionized workers in his riding. Certainly he understands that cannot be done in one bill.

Our ministry is committed to preventing police pursuits. We've invested in the helicopter evaluation projects, three on their way in York-Durham, Peel-Halton-Hamilton-Wentworth, and London, and a fourth in Toronto is presently on hold.

With Bill 22 we are targeting, along with the official opposition, criminals who flee the police.

Mr Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings): My memory of when I was younger is that the need for police

chases was relatively rare. Certainly in my own case, all through high school and university I drove an Austin Mini; it was absurd. It wasn't much of a car, but it was better than a Ford. There was also the sense at that time that we didn't even think about doing that. There was a different atmosphere there.

I wonder at times whether TV shows such as Cops, with the American style of life, have encouraged people to take off and run more. It is being glamorized every week on TV.

I can think back to many years ago when it was funny to drink and drive. There were jokes made and all kinds of humour, and ridiculous things people said when they were drinking and then went driving. Then we realized the seriousness of it. I believe there has been a substantial change in that type of crime, and I give a great deal of credit to MADD, Mothers Against Drunk Driving, who worked from the grassroots to say: "This is wrong. People are dying; people are being injured." I believe they produced a real change in this province.

I'm hearing a grassroots movement again to stop police pursuits, to say that we need to give the police the weapons to prevent this. For young people, I think the loss of a licence is a very serious threat. I'm not saying all police pursuits are necessitated by young people, but I think the majority of them are. This government is doing its own bit to reduce that by making it so difficult for them to get appointments to go and get their driver's exams, but for those who manage to work their way through the system and get in their car—

Mr Bradley: The minister should resign.

Mr Parsons: Thanks, Jim—we need a penalty in place that will cause them to not take off. There are too many lives at risk when they do.

We need to get on with it now, and I heartily endorse this bill.

Ms Martel: I listened carefully to the debate—I was here for all of it—and I listened to the response by the parliamentary assistant. I am wondering if he was in the same place here tonight as I was. My colleague from Niagara Centre talked about one amendment that he now has legislative counsel drafting, to be shared with the parliamentary assistant and the members of the Liberal Party, to hopefully be moved in committee if we can get the committee to sit next Monday and Tuesday. It can, and this bill could go there. It's available for that.

The one amendment would be simply this: that your car will be confiscated if you try to flee the police. Point final. That's not difficult; that's not complicated. He didn't move an amendment about training or about this and that; he talked about one single thing and he asked for your support for it. He's asked the Liberals for their support for it.

You have premised this bill on a deterrent. You have said, "Once we put all these fines in, this will act as a deterrent for people who want to flee the police." We say there is one additional single important thing that you can do, and the police are interested in this. You can get even tougher and say to people, "Not only will you have to

deal with fines and other things; your car will be confiscated." That will be a deterrent for people who are fleeing the police. It's a simple thing to do. It's a single amendment. But in order to get that amendment moved, because we can't move into committee of the whole any more because you guys changed those rules, we have to bring this bill to committee. It could go to the justice committee next Monday and Tuesday, and if you folks like it, you can move the amendment. We don't care. If you don't like it, we'll move it there. But at least allow the committee to sit.

Surely you must agree that this would be a deterrent. Why don't you support this simple thing?

The Acting Speaker: Questions and comments?

Mr Bradley: I understand there are questions and comments, and I enjoyed the member's speech very much, particularly those parts which were relevant to the bill, such as his tirade against the banks. I can tell you, he was right on. All these people do is make unprecedented profits—right on—and then they boot the bodies out in the streets. They're talking now about eliminating 17,000 jobs in the banking system while the banks are making huge profits. I want to say to the member that he's absolutely right.

What they do as well is they cut back their hours. At the Royal Bank at the Grantham Plaza in St Catharines at one time not that long ago, they had banking hours from 8 in the morning to 8 in the evening—so if you were coming to Queen's Park, you could go and do your banking in the morning before you left—and then from 9 in the morning on Saturday to 5 in the afternoon. That keeps shrinking.

Interjection: Canada Trust.

Mr Kormos: The member mentions Canada Trust. I wish that were the case. I think one of the big banks has purchased Canada Trust and they're going to close them all down. It's open 8 to 8, and I was going to go to Canada Trust there, but I know that one of the big banks—not the Royal Bank—has purchased Canada Trust, and you watch them close them all down.

So we're getting less service, fewer people have jobs there, and the banks still continue to make huge profits. That's a blip in the stock market, and the CEO gets a big bonus for that and everybody around the Albany Club cheers him on. But I'm going to tell you that people in St Catharines, the rank-and-file people, don't like the services that are being lost, the across-the-counter personal services that should be part of banking. I think the member is absolutely right in his remarks in that regard.

The Acting Speaker: In response, the member for Niagara Centre.

Mr Kormos: Look, I've made a very simple proposition this evening. Please. We indicated that we were going to participate in speedy passage of this bill, and we will. You know that I'm on the justice committee, and I am prepared, as a member of the subcommittee, to arrange for the justice committee to consider this bill Monday and Tuesday of next week, the 13th and 14th. I

have but one goal, and that's to move one amendment to beef up the penalty provisions here.

I don't want to hear this stuff about, "Oh, what if they're not the owner of the car?" We talked about that during the course of my comments. I talked about the amendment being worded—and I've yet to receive it from leg counsel; I'll give it to you as soon as I have it—to permit an interested party, to wit the bona fide or legitimate owner in those cases of a stolen car, to make an application to a judge. But I also don't think there should be exemptions for people who lend their car to a family member.

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Interjection: Or borrow.

Mr Kormos: Or who borrow a car. Exactly. Let's start putting some onus on people who don't do due diligence about who they let drive their car. Is it regrettable? Of course it's regrettable. But damn it, every time a cop is killed, it's regrettable. Every time a pedestrian is injured or slain, it's bloody regrettable. Are these tough provisions, the amendments? You bet your boots they are. So I say to you, Parliamentary Assistant, show your stuff and tell me that you endorse that amendment being discussed and approved by committee.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr Mazzilli: Has moved second reading of Bill 22. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Shall the bill be ordered for third reading?

Mr Mazzilli: I ask that it be referred to the standing committee on justice and social policy.

The Acting Speaker: So ordered.

CONCURRENCE IN SUPPLY

Hon Frank Klees (Minister without Portfolio): I seek unanimous consent to call the orders for concurrence in supply for the following ministries and offices and that they be debated together: Municipal Affairs and Housing; Education and Training; Office of the Premier; Solicitor General and Correctional Services; Community and Social Services; Environment; Health; Attorney General; Ontario Native Affairs Secretariat; Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs; that at the end of tonight's debate there be a recorded division on the concurrences, and that it be deferred until tomorrow, December 7, 1999, at "Deferred Votes."

The Acting Speaker (Mr Michael A. Brown): Is there unanimous consent for Mr Klees's motion? Agreed.

Hon Mr Klees: I therefore move concurrence in supply for the following ministries and offices:

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Ministry of Education and Training

Office of the Premier

Ministry of the Solicitor General and Correctional Services

Ministry of Community and Social Services

Ministry of the Environment

Ministry of Health

Ministry of the Attorney General

Ontario Native Affairs Secretariat
Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

The Acting Speaker: Mr Klees has moved concurrence in supply for the following ministries and offices—
Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: Dispense.

Just before you start, the time will be split. Three hours will be split evenly between the three parties.

Mr Wayne Wettlaufer (Kitchener Centre): I will be dividing my time with the member for Peterborough and the member for Durham.

It gives me great pleasure to rise and speak to concurrences. I'd like to go back a few years for the benefit of the members opposite. I know the Liberals will recall that in the red book they said—this is in 1995 now, remember—they would add \$17 billion to the debt before they balanced the budget. That's very interesting, because we've come under a fair amount of criticism from the Liberal Party over the last couple of years about the fact that the debt has actually increased during our term. The Liberals like to take one position and then they like to take the other position. They like to have it both ways.

Hon David Turnbull (Minister of Transportation): That's the definition of being a Liberal.

Mr Wettlaufer: That's the difference between a Conservative and a Liberal. That's right.

It brings to mind a discussion I had with a member of the NDP during a committee hearing, probably three years ago. This member of the NDP said, "You know, Mr Wettlaufer, you and I will never, ever philosophically agree, but we have our principles, something the Liberals don't have." I did want to bring that out because it does point out something very specific. Something else occurred today—

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): On a point of order, Speaker: I want the member for Kitchener Centre to help out the House, if he can. Was this a discussion of a promise not to close hospitals in the province?

The Acting Speaker: That is not a point of order.

Mr Wettlaufer: That really brings up an interesting point, and I'm glad the member for St Catharines raised it, because in my riding of Kitchener Centre we have a hospital that the Liberals in their administration let go so badly that a doctor made the statement that the ICU-CCU in that hospital was the equivalent of a Third World hospital. That was because the Liberal government ignored that hospital. In fact, the Liberal government ignored health care in my riding. That is unconscionable.

Mr Bradley: Is that St Mary's?

Mr Wettlaufer: It was St Mary's, yes, a hospital which has been saved, thanks to the health care restructuring commission. St Mary's hospital has also had not only a reprieve but now they are going to receive a cardiac centre, something that you people didn't even feel Kitchener needed. The Liberals felt that we didn't need a cardiac centre. They felt that we didn't need a cancer care centre. They felt that we didn't need an MRI. They felt that we didn't need specialist services and they

sure as heck didn't care that we had an underservice problem even 10 years ago.

Interjection.

Mr Wettlaufer: The member for St Catharines is trying to humour me by telling me that he's going to send me a Christmas card. Well, I sent you one too.

The Liberals do have problems. They go from one position to the next. Today, in this very House, the Liberal leader and the Liberal Party all stood up, and do you remember what they did? They voted against the municipal restructuring bill that our government introduced. I want the people who are watching this on television to understand that during the election campaign the Liberals campaigned on restructuring. They came out in favour of restructuring municipal governments, and today they stood in this House and they opposed it. They stood in this House and opposed tax cuts. Yes, they opposed tax cuts, but they turned around and they voted for a balanced budget. They voted for the taxpayer protection act.

I do recall that on June 2, 1999, the London Free Press printed an article, and member for St Catharines, you'll recall this. This was just before the election campaign this year. The Free Press reporter called Dalton McGuinty in his hotel room and his wife, Terri, answered the phone from the morning show hosts Pete, Jeff and Mindy. I guess it wasn't the London Free Press that called him, it was the morning show. McGuinty was heard telling her—and I'm quoting from the newspaper article here—"Tell them I'm in the shower." That indicates to me that he was afraid to take a position because he knew he would have to contradict it later on. It's a terrible thing, just a terrible thing.

We talk about tax cuts. We know what it has done. But I'd like to take you back a few years again, if I may. I'm quoting now from the Kitchener-Waterloo Record and the date is Wednesday, May 7, 1997. "Gerry Phillips, Liberal MPP and the party's finance critic, says the tax cut is not working. 'Everybody likes a tax break, but another \$3 in someone's pocket isn't going to be the sort of thing that kick-starts the economy.'"

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You'll remember, Mr Speaker—I know you will because we heard it so often from the member from Scarborough-Agincourt over the last few years—he said: "Oh, you're not producing the jobs you said. You weren't producing the jobs in the first month or the second month or the third month after the tax cuts." A year later, he said, "Oh, you're still not on track to produce those jobs" We knew on this side of the House that there was a thing called economic lag. We knew that. They had a little trouble with that. But do you know, Mr Speaker—I wonder where the member is going. He doesn't like hearing this. Member from St Catharines, I wonder if you gave back your tax cut.

We heard the member from Scarborough-Agincourt over a whole period of about three years saying: "The jobs aren't coming. You said you were going to produce these jobs. They're not coming." Then all of a sudden,

after the economic lag disappeared, the jobs started coming. What has happened in that time? We now have produced—not our government. We have created an environment in which 640,000 net new jobs have been created in less than five years. We said that 725,000 net new jobs would be created in five years. According to all of the economic experts, we're on target to produce those jobs.

The members opposite criticized the tax cuts. It's very interesting. In May 1996, when the budget was introduced, we allowed—thanks to the hard work of the member from Waterloo-Wellington, Mr Ted Arnott—provision for the members to pay back the tax cut into a special fund which would be applied to the debt.

Mr Bradley: Point of order, Mr Speaker.

Mr Wettlaufer: This is not a point of order. I know what's coming, Mr Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: Point of order, the member for St Catharines.

Mr Bradley: The member did use my name in the House and ask what I did with my tax cut, so that's a point of order.

The Acting Speaker: I don't think it is, unfortunately.

Mr Bradley: I gave it to charity because so many charities needed money after they underfunded everything in this province.

Mr Wettlaufer: I'm really glad the member from St Catharines gave it to charity. I wonder which charities he gave it to.

Interjections.

Mr Wettlaufer: Yes, the Liberal Party. In other words, what you're saying, member from St Catharines, is that you did not give back your tax cut.

Member from Timmins-James Bay, you talk a lot about the tax cuts too and how dangerous they are—

The Acting Speaker: I just would like to remind the member from Kitchener Centre, the debate is supposedly through the Chair, so try to at least allude to that.

Mr Wettlaufer: Thank you, Speaker. Through you, Mr Speaker, I would like to ask the member from Timmins-James Bay what he did with his tax cut. I wonder if he gave it back to the government, to that special fund. He's shaking his head no. So far, of all the members I have asked, last week and this week, not one of them has admitted to giving the tax cuts back to the government. Now isn't that interesting? They say how damaging—

Interjection.

Mr Wettlaufer: They wanted a Mercedes. Yes, right.

I would just like to conclude my remarks by saying that there were two articles written by grade 10 students over the course of the last few years—I cut the articles out of the Kitchener-Waterloo Record—and one grade 10 student at the time—I would guess he might be 20 years old now—said:

“Ontario is in trouble. It is close to \$100 billion in debt. The interest on this money alone is causing Ontario to dig itself into a deeper and deeper hole every year. The protestors are too proud, too stubborn and too greedy to

make sacrifices when our province is going through tough times. Is it really even Harris they should be mad at? Who are the real creators of this gigantic problem? If we look back to the booming 1980s, we will find the authors of our present economic state.”

You know, David Peterson's name is mentioned in here as being one of the authors. He says: “All Harris is attempting to do is mend the tears in our economic fabric caused by all the short-sighted political geniuses who knew nothing but their current prosperity.

“I am not angry with the way Harris is dealing with the difficult situation before him.

“He is not the murderer of our province, as many people have made him out to be. He is the doctor trying to revive a dying economy.”

That was Garth Cressman, as I said, at the time a grade 10 student at Waterloo-Oxford District Secondary School.

This next one was written by Dennis Hahn, a grade 10 student at St David Catholic Secondary School in Waterloo. This also was about three or four years ago. He says:

“If there was ever a time Ontarians needed to stick together, it is now. This debt isn't going to go away if we ignore it. We must deal with it.

“We must also have respect for Harris. He must abolish a \$100-billion debt and still make our conditions liveable. Either we get rid of our debt or let our grandchildren deal with it.”

This was written by a grade 10 student as well. These two grade 10 students had more insight than the members of the opposition parties.

I will conclude my remarks now and let the member for Peterborough take his time.

The Acting Speaker: The member for Prince Edward-Hastings.

Mr Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings): The words “tax cut” seem to cause so much enjoyment on the other side, but I would like to share with the group a list that my constituents have shared with me when they've come into the office. We need to talk about the benefits those tax cuts have produced, or the lack of benefits.

What have we done to get the tax cuts? In some cases we've stopped feeding children. It's easy to talk about welfare people and how we have to reduce their benefits, but half the people on welfare are children, and they are not eating as well as they did four and a half years ago. I don't need statistics. I can simply look at the number of schools now operating breakfast clubs for hungry children.

I look at workfare. Where we have people not prepared to participate in workfare, their family unit receives a cut. I know the cut is supposed to just be for that person who's not doing the workfare, but children in that home are sharing some of that pain and those cuts. I guess it is even a little tougher to understand when I realize the millions and millions of dollars that went to American consultants to deal with welfare and workfare. At least it

could have stayed in this province, but we shipped the money south for it.

What else have we done to achieve the tax cuts? We've reduced staffing in our hospitals. Let's not go by the press releases; let's go into a hospital emergency ward and see people in the hallways. Let's deal with the people who phone and say their parents can't get a room in the hospital. Or talk to an 82-year-old constituent of mine: an operation at 7 o'clock in the morning; 11 o'clock, sent home. For her, that tax cut caused a great deal of pain. For an operation that was relatively serious, an 82-year-old woman was sent home to be looked after by her 89-year-old husband. She helped to pay for the tax cut for the people.

We've reduced the support to students for special ed. I accept that the government is correct when it says we're spending more money on special ed than we did in previous years, but we need to look at special ed funding. Traditionally some of it has come from the provincial government and some from the local board. The local board's ability to raise that special ed funding has gone, so the total spent—not the total spent by the government, but the total spent on special ed—is less than it was before.

As I see that leaked document and I see the plans for more cuts, I'll share with you that for the Hastings and Prince Edward board, they transferred nearly \$500,000 out of administration into special ed to make it work in their board area. If there's an additional cut to administration, which sounds politically great, that's \$500,000 that won't go into special ed.

We stopped bearing a responsibility for provincial ambulance services, downloaded it. We passed it on to the local municipalities, because that produces more tax cuts. So now the citizens of Ontario had better hope they live in an area with high assessment, a good industrial base, because the quality of their ambulance service depends on their local assessment rather than on their previous rights as an Ontario citizen to have good ambulance service.

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We've stopped maintaining roads. The auditor acknowledged that. The percentage of Ontario roads is deficient. The number of roads that truly are provincial highways that were downloaded on to municipalities—and that will work because the government did give a lot of money up front and the roads were all painted black and new yellow lines were put on them and they look great, but five years from now and 10 years from now, the crunch will come when these new roads are owned by municipalities that don't have the tax base to do the support on them that they were able to do in the past.

We cut the number of licence bureaus in this province. That's an issue. For the older residents in my riding, having to travel greater distances to get their driver's licence renewed is a burden, but it did produce a small tax cut for the higher-wage earner.

We stopped busing students as much as we used to. There was certainly room for improvements and for cuts

there, but I see an urbanization philosophy taking place in this province. For students who reside in an urban area, it's easy to stay after school and take part in extracurricular activities, or play on the football team, or belong to a club or stay and talk to a teacher about a particular problem.

For years and years in this province they were able to catch a late bus back home. Now they can't. The funding formula doesn't allow for late buses. For students in a rural area who may have parents who are not able to come and pick them up, the opportunity to stay after school and take part in these activities is gone. But that helped pay for some of the tax cuts.

Cuts to agricultural offices: As I said a minute ago, we're thinking in terms of the big city. If it works in Toronto, it will work everywhere. Agricultural offices have been the lifeblood. I had a constituent in my office last Friday almost in a panic when he realized the downsizing, because for him, the people from the ag office weren't in his face telling him what to do; the people from the ag office were there to keep him informed of the newest developments taking place in his industry, which happens to be apple growing for him. The research and the new information coming from Guelph or Alfred or Kemptville was given to him by his ag representative. That person won't be there now. But it paid for some of the tax cuts.

We have nearly 300 fewer police officers in Ontario now than we did four years ago. But we all got a little tax cut.

We've stopped giving people a voice in Ontario. That produced a small tax cut. We don't go through public hearings. We can dictate out of this building, is the philosophy. There's no recognition of legally elected municipal representatives, who were elected to play a role. We're still seeing decisions made that were made by these elected officials, but now they're being made by employees. No disrespect to the employees, but the virtue of the old system of having relatively low-paid elected officials was that when the public disagreed with their actions, they had an opportunity every three years to change the municipal council. As more and more decisions are being made by employees rather than elected officials, there's a little bit of democracy—I know democracy costs money and I know democracy gets in the way of a lot of actions, but democracy has been eroded with that reduction.

The worst example of that, to me, is Toronto. I certainly am not in the position to say that we should have 22 or 44 or 57, but I think the people in Toronto should have input into that. That input may be through their legally elected officials, but to give them a day or a day and a half is a bully tactic. I'm embarrassed by that. To the rest of the world it looks like we're doing our planning on the back of an envelope in Ontario. I fear too often we are.

We've all accumulated a little bit of a tax cut by stopping protecting the environment. I think that's wrong. I'm looking at the mega-dump situation by my

own riding, how fast it is happening and how brief it is going to be with not a lot of opportunity for the people to have input in it, because they have no money to put forward their case. They cannot get on a level playing field when we have a large organization funding as a proponent for the dump and I have hundreds and hundreds of people in my riding passing around a galvanized pail to try to collect enough money to hire a lawyer and hire consulting firms to do the test wells to give them the data to fight back. It's not a level playing field for them. But we've got a little bit of a tax cut by letting the environment go away.

This list can go on and on. We're dealing with fewer nurses and one time, not that many years ago, we referred to them as hula hoop workers and no longer needed. Now we're in a situation of not being able to hire them all back. But we saved a few dollars when we let the nurses go, I'm told. I'm not convinced of that by the time we did severance. We lost a group of extremely dedicated and committed individuals who provide front-line service. I see money spent on training nurse practitioners, but I see no funding for them because we need that little bit of a tax cut.

I believe there is a need for us to balance these tax cuts with the very real pain we've inflicted on this province and ask, are we spending our money wisely?

Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay): Again we get an opportunity in the House to speak on concurrence, which gives us the opportunity to speak on a number of different issues, and I'll take my opportunity to do that because there are a number of things I want to put on the record.

More importantly, there are a number of things I want to bring to the attention of the governing party because I think it's important to do so. One of things at the forefront of my mind and I think in the minds of a lot of people in the riding Timmins-James Bay and particularly in the community of the city of Timmins is the situation with what's happening in the mining industry.

Mr Speaker, you would know, as you come from northern Ontario, that the mining industry is a very fragile industry in the sense that if we are not doing the kind of investment necessary to reinvest in exploration, to make sure we're replacing the ore bodies that are being depleted as we mine them, if we don't keep that investment up to the top level possible, as we mine the reserves go down and eventually mines start to close because there is no ore to replace them.

As we look across northern Ontario we're seeing less and less mining exploration going on, not only around the city of Timmins but we have far less mining exploration, I would argue, in your riding of Algoma and many other ridings across northern Ontario than there was even five years ago. That bothers me to no extent because I come from a community, as the members from Sudbury or Nickel Belt do, that basically relies to a great extent on the activities of mining.

It wasn't uncommon even four or five years ago to go to any particular diamond drilling outfit, be it Redpath or

Dominik Drilling or whatever other organization, any other one that was out there, and see that no drills were available in the yard. In other words, machines were out in the bush drilling. They were out doing the business they are there to do, and that is to explore and try to find new ore bodies to keep the mining stocks in this province, when it comes to the reserves on the properties, up to a good level so we can keep on mining into the future.

We look at the industry today and we're seeing that there are far more diamond drill machines or rigs, as we call them, sitting in the yards of those companies rather than being out in the bush doing the work they do. I think of good friends of mine who operate Courte Diamond Drilling in Timmins not getting the kind of business they used to get years before.

There's a reason for that. Sure, part of it is global. I would not argue that globalization has not had a negative effect on mining. We're seeing what happens across the world. There are far more properties coming into production. The potential of developing new properties in Third World countries is very attractive to large multinationals because they say, "I can go into some country and not have to deal with any environmental regulations, or very weak ones, or only have to pay workers a dollar an hour," if they're lucky to get a dollar an hour."

Some unscrupulous outfits, I would argue some of the multinationals, will go off and do that. Here in Ontario, as you would know, Mr Speaker, the geology of Ontario is among the best geology in the world and we have really good potential in this province to be able to find mines. Not only is the geology good, but we have the expertise in this province when it comes to both the exploration people, the mining people themselves and all of the associated trades and professions and workers that go with that particular industry. There are some very strong reasons why Ontario is a good place to do mining.

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But we're seeing far less exploration in Ontario, I would argue, not only because of what's happening in regard to the world economy and what's happening with multinationals moving a lot of their investment outside of Ontario. I believe one of the reasons they're doing so is that this government is not as effective as it should be in trying to promote the kind of work that needs to be done in mining.

I look back to the glory days of what we called flow-through shares. That would have been back through the 1970s and 1980s, where mining corporations and explorationists were doing all kinds of work in the exploration field. Grant you, they had a bit of a sweetheart deal going with the federal government when it came to flow-through shares. The federal government, I believe it was the Mulroney government, put an end to the flow-through shares, being able to write off 166% of the exploration that was going on. They dropped that down to somewhere around 100%. It tended to take away some of the ability to attract investment in exploration.

But what happened after is that there were successive governments in Ontario that were quite active in being

able to do all they could in order to try to fill the gap where the federal government had dropped the ball. I only speak of my time in government, from 1990-95, when the then Bob Rae government under the leadership of Shelley Martel, the then Minister of Mines, had a number of initiatives that we had put in place to support the mining exploration industry. As a result, mining exploration started to climb through 1992-93, to a high in 1994-95. We haven't seen that type of activity since. The reason why is that our government, the Bob Rae government, was very active in working with the industry and making sure that we built the kinds of partnerships that allowed us to put the types of programs together that they needed.

We strengthened programs like the Ontario mineral incentive program, otherwise known as OMIP. We put in place a system called ERLIS, the earth resource lands information system, that allowed explorationists to utilize all of the geophysics information we had on file in the province to find new mines. It was a successive number of initiatives that I think were key in being able to spur the industry and to bring it back up again.

But unfortunately we've seen over the last four years, since the time of this Conservative government, a halt to those types of initiatives. Sure, some of those programs exist. They got rid of OMIP; there's no longer any OMIP. You no longer can get money to assist with mining exploration, and that has had a negative effect. There are a few programs left over from that time. The ERLIS and the map system are still there, but by and large this government has taken the approach and said: "Hey, you know, private sector, it's up to you. Provincial government has got no responsibility. Let the private sector do it alone." Because this government knows—that's their mantra—if the private sector ain't going to do it, it's not worth doing. That's sort of their way of looking at things.

Yes, the private sector has a key role to play, but no realization that government has a role to play and that sometimes is to provide the type of infrastructure and support that's necessary in order to support industry and be able to support people in the work they do not only in mining but in other industries, but for this particular part of the debate, when it comes to mining.

Now we see slowly and slowly more and more mines closing across the province because there hasn't been the kind of exploration needed in order to keep those mines operating at the levels that they used to before. I just look since the time of this last election, 1995. Do you realize how many mines have closed down in the last six months in northeastern Ontario? Macassa mine in Kirkland Lake—

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): Resources aren't important.

Mr Bisson: The government member across says, "Resources aren't important." If that's your policy, you should come out and say that. But in reality, I think resources are important.

We see that what happens is that Macassa mine has gone down. The work that is associated with that as far as job loss is very humongous for the town of Kirkland Lake and the surrounding areas. It would be akin to coming into the city of Toronto and closing down probably five or six major employers. That would be akin to what has happened in Kirkland Lake.

We take a look at what has happened up at Detour Lake, north of Cochrane and Kapuskasing. That particular mine has come to the end of its life cycle, and it has shut down. We have now about 250 people who have lost their jobs up at Detour Lake. Those are people who lived in Timmins, people who lived in Elliot Lake, people who lived in different communities across northern Ontario, because it was a remote mine; there was no community there. People travelled in, stayed for a week and went back out again. It paid very good wages. That mine is down.

Government members across the way say, "That all has to do with the price of gold." Hogwash, I'll say, like Mike Harris. It's not all the price of gold. Part of it is that there hasn't been the type of exploration necessary to replenish those mines and the types of programs we need to support industry in difficult times to make sure they're able to stay alive and provide good-paying jobs to the people who work in that industry. We're talking about miners, electricians, mechanics, engineers, all kinds of skilled trades and professions that are needed to run a mine. It's a very complex business that pays very good dollars to the workers.

More specifically, I want to come to the point of what happened to Royal Oak up in Timmins. That particular mine is the third mine since June of last year to have closed down. In the community of Timmins, that's over 200 jobs. I would argue that closing down Royal Oak Mines in Timmins, 200-plus jobs, would be akin to coming into the city of Toronto and closing down five or six major employers. Those are good-paying jobs. Those are jobs that paid workers \$60,000 to \$80,000 a year, working underground as production miners. Those are good-paying jobs, where people paid taxes to the provincial and federal and municipal governments to make sure we had services there for them, their families and their neighbours. Why do I raise this in the House? Because I think it's important to raise so members are aware of what we are facing in this province when we don't take the steps we need to in order to give local communities and workers a bit more control over what goes on within their community.

I'll give you the story of Royal Oak. A while back, the owner of the former company was a woman by the name of Peggy Witte—"Miss Witty" as we used to call her. She was the glory girl of the mining industry. The Conservatives wined and dined her as much as they could. I remember local Conservatives in northern Ontario would wine and dine her as being the brightest, best, most brilliant mining person in Ontario. As a matter of fact, she made miner of the year, if you'll remember, not more than about four or five years ago. This very wise

person in the mining industry, as the Conservatives liked to make her out to be, didn't run her mine as efficiently as she should have. She put that corporation, Royal Oak Mines, into over \$600 million of debt with nothing to show for it.

Because she was so far in debt, she had to pull money out of her profitable mines. She was trying to start up a Kemess mine up in northern British Columbia. In order to find the dollars to finance the building of this new mine, rather than going out like most corporations would do and selling shares and doing the things that have to be done based on good geology, she basically stole the money out of the Timmins mine, Royal Oak, Timmins property, and also out of the Yellowknife mine up in the Northwest Territories, and sucked all the cash out of those corporations, those local companies. As a result, those companies didn't have the money to reinvest in their own mines to make sure that equipment was up to date, things were working properly and, more important—I come back to the first point—they didn't have the money to develop and do the kind of exploration that needed to be done so we had ore to last us into the future.

As a result, because the mine was mining a finite ore body, because there was no more exploration being done, to talk about—there was some, but not to the degree that needed to be done—the mines slowly came to a point where they were really scrambling to find the kind of ore they needed to make a profit. Finally, because of Mrs Witte's economic situation, the company was put into bankruptcy. She fled the country with a whole bunch of money in her pocket and ended up in Hawaii. She's doing quite fine. I have to say, like most Conservatives she fell on her feet. She made sure she took all the money she could out of that corporation and socked it away in her own personal bank account, hid it whatever way she could and she took off for Hawaii. That's what she did.

Interjections.

Mr Bisson: I'm just saying that's what she did. The Conservatives on the other side don't like that, but the fact is Mrs Witte did quite well. She bankrupted those corporations, those local companies, put those people out of work because of her mismanagement, the strong Conservative that she is, and in the end she took off, fled the country with the money she was able to put away.

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Interjections.

Mr Bisson: I don't feel bad saying that. A spade is a spade. That's what she did. What do you think she did? She's sitting in Hawaii spending her money. Now she's trying to invest in another property in Africa somewhere. I guess she's going to go do her thing in Africa.

The point I make is this: This particular company ended up going bankrupt. As a result of that bankruptcy, the company was put under receivership under Price Waterhouse last spring. When it was put into receivership, they started a process to try to find new investors to buy either all of the company or part of the company, in this case Royal Oak Mines in Timmins. They started this process in May or June of last year. About that time, the

union, the United Steelworkers of America, Local 4440, and I, together eventually, went to the Price Waterhouse people and said, "Maybe the workers can try to pull something together to develop some kind of a partnership with the private sector, or alone, to put in a bid to buy this company, because the belief is, with the proper amount of investment when it comes to exploration, this mine could be made to make money."

Price Waterhouse, the good business people they are—they know how to run a business; Price Waterhouse is the best and the brightest of the corporate world of Ontario, and probably all Conservatives as well—said: "No, workers, don't come to us with an employee ownership bid. If the workers come forward, you're going to scare away whatever potential investors are able to come forward and make a bid." There lies the situation. So the workers and I sat down and said, "If there's an opportunity to find a way to buy this," and they're fairly confident there is, "we'll wait, provided that you give us the opportunity at the end to put together a bid." So two, three months went by, Price Waterhouse trotted different people into what they call the data room, to take a look at all the information as far as the economics of buying the place. The price of gold being what it is—that's part of the issue here—they decided collectively not to put forward a bid.

Lo and behold, one day—I believe it was at the end of August, beginning of September, on a Friday—Price Waterhouse called in the workers' union and said: "Hey, by Monday morning this place is closed and you're all gone. And by the way, no severance; no nothing." After 35 years, in some cases, of service in the place, people were being told they were gone. There was no notice. More often than not, they would end up in a very tenuous situation when it came to their severances and when it came to their pension rights.

So I immediately went to meet with the union. We sat down and talked about what could be done. We went to Price Waterhouse and said: "Hang on a second. You guys were supposed to give the workers and the community an opportunity to put in a bid, and you didn't do so. What about giving us the opportunity?" They didn't like the idea too much, and they said, "We think everything has been done that can be done," and "God, we don't want to go there," and all this type of stuff.

Do you know what ended up happening? The Steelworkers and I had to go before Judge Farley in the bankruptcy court and say, "Listen, the workers never got their opportunity." The judge said to himself: "They put forward a good case here. They were told to stay out of this process at the beginning, and Price Waterhouse more or less admitted that and didn't allow the workers to put together a bid." So the judge said, "I'll give you two weeks to put together an offer." Wow. We sat there and said, "Two weeks to put together an offer?" We had to come up with \$5 million in order to put forward a bid, and we had to put together a team to try to pull this thing together. We said to the judge, "We need a bit more time than two weeks," and Judge Farley—what his reasons

were, I don't know to this day—said, “Two weeks is what it's going to be.”

So we took off and did our thing. I met with a number of different private corporations to see if somebody was interested in coming forward to put together a bid with the workers. We sat down with the union and looked at different possibilities. Unfortunately, within the two-week period that we had, even though we were getting close to putting a deal together, we weren't able to put together the cash necessary. Consequently, we ended up going before the court in two weeks and the judge said, “That's that; we want Price Waterhouse to conclude a deal,” with a company called Kinross, that wanted to buy the mine on the basis of the assets, not on the basis of being able to operate it. If they pay \$5 million on the mine, there's probably \$5 million in assets sitting there.

Lo and behold, about a week after that particular point—

Interjection.

Mr Bisson: Member from Etobicoke, you haven't got an idea of what the heck you're talking about. You should sit down for a second. You know nothing about economics, so shut up. How's that?

The Acting Speaker: Order.

Mr Steve Gilchrist (Scarborough East): It's your job to tell us to shut up.

The Acting Speaker: Precisely. It works much better in here when the member who has the floor, who happens to be the member for Timmins-James Bay, has the opportunity to speak without interjections.

Mr Bisson: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I needed a bit of a break to grab a glass of water; I figured that would do the trick. I want to thank you across the way for that.

Anyway, I come back to the point. So here we were about a week after the judge had ruled in favour of giving time for Price Waterhouse to put a deal together with Kinross. Lo and behold, as these things work out, and I think members across the way would recognize how these things work out, we managed to pull together an investment group, unfortunately about five or six days after the fact. But we managed to put together an investment group that was prepared to put together the \$5 million. So here we were in a really weird situation. We had found the money and now we needed to find a way to put an offer on the table, because the judge had said, “You can't do this after a certain date.”

We went back to court when the court was supposed to resume. Back we go to Judge Farley, and you're going to like this story because this is a very interesting situation that has developed here. The investors, through a company called Potter Station—the owner of this particular company is Bill Moffatt—had put together a group of mining people who were interested in putting together an offer on this particular property in partnership with the workers. The workers, either by way of concession or by direct investment, would own a share in the company and then the investors' group, through Potter Station, would own a share by virtue of their own invest-

ment. We sat down and worked out not the details but grosso modo, as we say in French, how the deal would be structured: Potter Station and their investors coming in and investing cash, and the workers coming forward and investing, by direct investment—cash—or concessions as their part of the deal.

So here we were in a situation where we were able to put together an offer. Bill Moffatt and his group put together the secured credit necessary. They put together the letters from the bank to the court and to Price Waterhouse saying: “We have the money to be able to buy this thing. Here it is. It's secured. It's real cash. Look at it. The bank says we've got the money.”

Now here's our problem. We can make this offer—the Minister of Economic Development and Trade will find this interesting, because it's something we need to address in this Legislature somehow. We found ourselves in the position of not being able to put forward the offer by virtue of what was happening in the bankruptcy court. So when the court had to reconvene in order for Price Waterhouse to get themselves an instrument of the court to be able to finalize the deal with the buyers, Kinross, we managed to get in there and put forward the argument that, yes, we had missed our timeline, unfortunately—trying to buy a mine in two weeks is pretty impossible to do—but in three weeks we moved heaven and earth and we figured out a way to do it, lo and behold.

We put forward this letter of intent by the investors to the court, and finally Judge Farley said: “OK, I hear what you're saying. You guys have done your homework.” The community, the union, the investment group and myself had put together this particular offer. “I'll tell you what I'll do,” says Judge Farley by way of the motion that he wrote. He said, “All right, I direct Price Waterhouse to go forward and to close the deal with Kinross, but if that deal is not closed by a particular time, then I give you the ability, Price Waterhouse, to conclude a deal with the investors called Potter Station.” So we managed to get our offer in before the judge, and Price Waterhouse was in a position, should they choose, if Kinross was not able to close the deal by November 1, to conclude a deal with the new investors called Potter Station.

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Now, you say, what's the difference between the two? The difference is simply this: They were both offering the same amount of money, within \$200,000. Depending on how you looked at it, they were actually pretty even. Both Kinross, who wanted to buy the mine, and Potter Station, who wanted to buy the mine, substantially had the same monetary offer on the table. The difference was that Kinross doesn't want to operate it. They want to take the assets from the mine. There are trucks and there's mining equipment and different things that they can sell off. They'll recoup close to the \$5 million that they've paid for the purchase of the mine and then they'll sit on the property, and if the price of gold happens to go through the roof, who knows, maybe one day they'll reopen it. But up to about two days ago, Kinross mines has said they're not interested in operating the Royal Oak

property. I hope they change their mind. I sincerely hope they do. But up to now I was told by Kinross and I was told by Price Waterhouse, and it's common knowledge within the community, that Kinross does not want to operate it. They don't want to rehire the workers.

The Potter Station offer was to buy the mine, recall the majority of the workers, deal with severance rights, deal with pension rights, and accept environmental liability not only on the Royal Oak property but eventually the other properties that were part of Royal Oak: the McIntyre, the Timmins property etc. So from the provincial government's standpoint it's a good deal. From the standpoint of the community it's a great deal, because jobs are saved. From the standpoint of the workers—Minister, you'll agree—it's a great deal. Their jobs are back.

But because of the way the federal laws are written when it comes to bankruptcy, and some of the provincial laws as well, there is a process which is very weighted towards the big guys. People like Kinross have got lawyers. All they do is sit down and figure out, "How can we weasel our way into a deal?" Price Waterhouse, you know as well as I do, has got nothing but accountants, bean-counters and lawyers to do the same kind of thing. But you and me, Minister, as individuals trying to deal with those guys, go in there in a very unequal playing field. You know that. If you, Al Palladini—I forget your riding—Minister of Economic Development and Trade, wanted to go out and compete with these guys, you don't have enough money and you don't have the clout with the lawyers and such to put yourself on an even playing field. That's what we found out through this process.

Here's the really interesting point, and this is the gist of it. On November 1 there was supposed to be a conclusion of the deal between Kinross and Price Waterhouse, and if a deal wasn't made, we assumed automatically that Price Waterhouse would then turn to Potter Station and say: "All right, let's conclude a deal with you guys. Kinross were not able to meet their conditions; therefore we're going to conclude a deal." What did Price Waterhouse do? They said: "We couldn't cut a deal with Kinross; it didn't quite work out. Let's give it a 30-day extension."

You know what I'm talking about, Minister. You've seen this kind of deal-making before. A great big corporation like Price Waterhouse couldn't conclude a deal with another great, big corporation called Kinross, and they decided among themselves, probably over coffee or drinks after supper or a telephone conference—who knows?—to give Kinross a 30-day extension. They wouldn't give the workers or the community or the Steelworkers or Potter Station a two-minute extension, but they found it in their hearts to give Kinross 30 days to December 1.

I'll tell you, we were all jumping this high. The investors' group, myself, the workers, the union, the community, we were jumping this high. We were saying: "Hold it a second. We had to follow the timelines. When we went to court you said, 'Too bad; if you can't follow

the timeline I'm going to give Kinross an opportunity to close,' but the minute that Kinross couldn't follow the timeline, well, what the heck." The law's on their side. It's not your fault, Minister. I'm not blaming you on this. I'm just talking about where we're at. Here are these guys, they missed the timeline by—oops—30 days, and they get an extension.

I called up Price Waterhouse. I'm not going to give the name tonight because this still has to play itself out, but I called a very senior person within Price Waterhouse and said, "What in hell is going on?" He says, "Well, Gilles, you know, we've been negotiating with Kinross now for some time and it wouldn't be prudent on our part to all of a sudden walk away from Kinross when we're this close to closing a deal." I said: "The heck with it. The workers, the union, the community, the investors through Potter Station didn't get an opportunity like, 'Oops, we need another 24 hours or another 40 hours.' You guys wouldn't give it to us. We had to cry, beg and steal to get two weeks and that wasn't enough, and when we didn't have enough time, you said, 'Too bad.' What gives?" "Gilles, trust me."

And this is the point, Minister. You're going to love this. Price Waterhouse tells me, point blank, on November 1, "If we're not able to conclude a deal with Kinross by December 1, we will walk away from Kinross and we will go close the deal with Potter Station." I said: "That's fine and dandy, but 30 days will go on and you're now flooding the mine, and the longer you flood the mine and the longer you keep it closed, the more expensive it's going to be to open. We have to put some finality to this at some time. Let me go back to the investors and see if they're prepared."

I went back and sat down with Bill and others and we tried to see if the economics warranted waiting another 30 days. It was getting nip and tuck at that point, but Bill said: "OK, I'll hold my investors together. We'll sign another letter of understanding in regard to an offer by way of the banks. We'll secure our offer for another 30 days, but we can't go much further than that." You know as well as I do, Minister—you understand mining, I know—that if you start flooding a mine, if you start putting water at the bottom of the shaft, the higher the water goes the more expensive it is going to be to reopen that mine; not impossible, but more difficult.

I go back to Price Waterhouse and I say: "Listen, I'm still pissed at you. I still think you guys should close the deal with the workers through Potter Station. But the judge and the system have given you the hammer and you guys can do what you want. So all right, we'll be back on December 1 if you can't close the deal with Kinross." "No problem, Gilles. If we don't close by December 1, we'll come back and talk to Potter Station and we'll conclude a deal with them."

Well, tick-tock, tick-tock, 30 days go by. Guess what happened on December 1? They didn't close the deal with Kinross. Do you know what they did? "Let's get another extension." Price Waterhouse gave Kinross another extension. They were talking at the time about 20

days—it may turn out to be 15 days, but it's irrelevant at this point. They gave them another extension. There is something wrong with the laws of this land when big corporations are able to snuggle up to each other and make those kinds of deals to the detriment of the community and the workers.

The member from Etobicoke North was saying earlier: "What were you able to do? Did you get any money? What did the workers do?" We did what we had to do. We got the money. We put it on the table. We found the investors. We did what we had to do. We played the game by the rules, and what happens? These big corporations snuggle up to each other and say: "Oink, oink, we're going to work it out together. We're going to let that clock keep on ticking." They gave them another extension.

I've got to tell you, Speaker, and the minister across, that we need to do something about the laws of this land. I realize it's not all provincial jurisdiction, that some of this is federal. But we've got to do something that says, "There should be no such thing in this province and in this country as a law for the rich and then a law for the poor," because that's what this turns out to be. Big corporations do what the hell they want—I say "what the hell they want" because I'm mad, and you would be too if it was your community, I'm sure. Big corporations do what they want and we have to play by a different set of rules because they hold the power.

So here we are, and now the investors are getting a bit shaky at this point. I had a meeting with them on Friday night until about 11 o'clock at night. Bill is still there. He's saying: "I'm going to do my part. I'll try to hold my guys. I can't hold them all, because some of them are not as interested in staying now. They look at the water coming up the shaft. It's getting more expensive to reopen, Gilles. We look at the equipment; it's deteriorating. We look at how much more expensive this is to pull together. The longer we go, the tougher it's going to be. I might be there." So we're still working this out.

I've got to say to the minister, man, this has been a tough one. We did everything we had to do. Who would have thought, back in September, that the workers and the community would have been able to come up with a bid to save that mine? Everybody said it was impossible, that it couldn't happen, that nobody would be able to do it. Well, we did it. We pulled it off. We went up to bat at the bottom of the ninth, bases loaded; one swing with the bat was all we had, and we hit it. We didn't hit a home run, but we hit it out into the field and we got ourselves on to the bases and we were waiting to come into home and cash in on this thing. But the laws of the land are such that the larger corporations have a much heavier hand. I've got to say, it is really frustrating. There will be more on this particular issue later.

I want to say to the members across the way, if we're talking about economic activity and how well the economy is doing and all the things you think you can do well, then if you can do anything, work with me and work with others to get laws that work for people, so

when communities want to put something together they have the opportunity to do it.

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What I've learned about economic development from living in northern Ontario is that there are a number of different ways to do economic development, but two basic things, two bigger areas we can speak about. There is the laissez-faire, which is that the major corporations can do what the hell they want. The problem with that is that all the decisions are made away from your community. If you have a large multinational corporation, they're bean-counting. They don't care what happens in Timmins or Iroquois Falls or Schumacher or Hearst or wherever it might be. They make decisions from afar. But if you're able to put control of those corporations into your community, it's much more effective in being able to make decisions that are good for your community. This was an opportunity to do so. That's what was so frustrating about that.

It's not to say, let's go to war against the multinationals. They are here and they are here to stay. They're pretty powerful people and we're not going to run them over pretty quick. But we need to find ways to put laws in place that allow people to take their investment, invest it in their home communities and do things themselves. I find more and more as we deal with economic development that it's getting tougher and tougher, because the large corporations, especially the multinationals, have figured out ways to corner the market in almost every sector.

Minister of Economic Development and Trade, you would remember because you're older than I am, but I remember, and I'm only 43. Both my parents were in small business. It was very easy back in the 1950s and 1960s for parents such as mine to say, "Listen, we want to go and invest and start up a business in our community." They did well. They raised a family. They made dollars for themselves. My father retired when he was 55 years old, back in the 1970s. Not too many people got the chance to do that back then. My mother retired when she was about 50 years old. They did well for themselves. They were successful small business people.

But when I look at the small business community today, not only in my community, but as I travel around Ontario, as other members in this Legislature do, the small business community is getting more and more squeezed by the big guy. How do you get into small business now? Not so much as independents any more as buying somebody's franchise so you can work for minimum wage for some other large corporation that can figure out how to make you work more for less and make bigger profits, and then less money stays in your community. We need to find ways to really give independent business people the kind of tools they need to invest in their community and the support they need to keep them going. Some of that has been done over the years—some by our government, some by yours—but there is a lot more room to do things there.

We need to take a look at the whole issue of how banks operate. The member from Welland-Thorold spoke earlier about banks and what happened to him. I'm no big fan of the major banks. I agree with you; some of the Conservative members are nodding with me in agreement. The major banks—my God, how many billions of dollars do those guys want to make in profit every year? If they're making the profit, that's fine, but I'd like to see some of that coming back into our communities.

You know what I'm talking about. I bet you're going to agree with me on this. Pick one of the major three banks which made over \$1 billion last year, and some poor individual in your community has got \$10,000, \$20,000 and they want to go out and start a business. They go to the bank manager. Knock, knock: "Hi, I've got a great idea, I've got energy, I've got talent, I've got the know-how and the will. I want to start up a business. I've got \$10,000, \$20,000 that I've taken out of my RRSPs—or equity from my home or the money I've put away for a holiday. I've been laid off and I want to start up a business." What does the bank say? Slam. "Don't call us, we'll call you. If you can't secure your loan by 100%, we don't want to talk to you." I see more and more hard-working people who are trying to get into business—trucking, the forestry business, retail—who are being turned away by the major banks.

What we need to do, and we have the power here in this House to do it, is to deal with the Credit Unions and Caisses Populaires Act, to take a look at how we can give them a few more tools so they can go out there and help do the kind of work that needs to be done in the banking sector through the credit union movement and through the caisses populaires movement so we're able to find ways to allow cash to get back into those communities so people can reinvest. Credit unions aren't there to make billions of dollars of profits; they're there for their members—unlike the banks, which are there for corporate greed. We've got to get the credit unions a bit more power so they can take some of this profit and put it back into our communities.

Yes, they'll lend to some higher-risk stuff, and some of those people will even go bankrupt. And yes, the credit union won't make billions of dollars of profit. You know how it works: For every 10 businesses that start up about six of them go bankrupt, and that's always been the case. That's how the economy goes. Somebody tries an idea: Four of them are able to run and survive past more than five years and they do well; for others who went down, it's not a total loss, as they've learned something. Most of them end up coming back at some other time with another business, gaining the experience they've had from their first failure. A lot of them go back and try something else. More importantly, those small, independent business people, when they're trying to put something up—even those who fail went into a stationery store and bought a desk and a calculator and an adding machine and a till. They had to buy furniture for their office. They had to do leasehold improvements on their store. That money stayed in our community. It's not a

total loss. So even if the credit union loses on some of them, in the end we get that money back because some other local business in our community makes a few bucks.

I would argue we also have to take a look at how we deal with pension funds, to use some of those dollars and reinvest them back in Ontario. For example, if we look at the money that is invested by way of the teachers' pension fund, the OMERS pension fund, just the ones that are under our control, it's literally billions of dollars. One of the things we should be looking at is how we could maybe direct a percentage of that money back into community economic development. We could say to those pension funds, "We, the government, are going to guarantee that if there's a loss, we'll make sure you don't lose your pensions." The argument I would make is, rather than us taking a holiday on making pension contributions, we should make our pension contributions as a government and as employers and invest some of that money back into our local communities. In the end, I think there are ways we can make that work and put dollars back into our communities.

As well, we can look at programs that used to exist, like the northern Ontario heritage fund and the Northern Ontario Development Corp, which were strictly, at that time, prior to five years ago, economic development tools. The Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, not under now-minister Palladini but under ministers previous to him, had economic development programs that helped individual business people, and, I would argue, some medium-sized, quasi-multinational corporations, to do some really interesting stuff when it came to economic development. Since the Harris government came to power, those programs are all gone. The government says that if the private sector can't do it on their own, it's not worth doing. Hogwash, Premier. The reality is that it's not as easy to attract investment from the car industry to places like where I come from, Timmins—because, by and large, a lot of the boom we're seeing in the Ontario economy is associated with the automobile industry. It's hard to attract automobile business in northern Ontario when it comes to parts manufacturing or production of vehicles. By and large, that will happen along the Highway 401 and Highway 400 area. So we need to find ways to develop other types of business opportunities in the north.

Governments before yours were doing some of that. One of the reasons the New Democrats were re-elected in the numbers we were in northern Ontario, and we keep getting re-elected, is because our government got that part right. Communities like Kapuskasing and Sault Ste Marie and Thunder Bay were able to invest in themselves. Go talk to the workers at Spruce Falls and Kapuskasing who make dividends from the shares they invested in their corporation—at that time Kimberly-Clark, now called Tembec. Go talk to the multitude of workers in Sault Ste Marie at Algoma Steel, at St Marys Paper, Algoma Central Railway. Go talk to the workers

in Thunder Bay at Thunder Bay paper. Go to Atikokan, go to Sturgeon Falls, next to the Premier's old riding. There were opportunities there where the provincial government, then the Bob Rae government, set up partnerships with workers and communities and local economic development funds to have the confidence to reinvest in themselves.

As well, we need to take a look at how we utilize other government programs for job creation. I would argue that one way to do that is by way of our welfare program. With workfare, the government is trying to accomplish something politically, saying: "We're tough on those welfare bums. We're going to force them all to go out and get a job, the bunch of lazy so-and-so's." The reality is that there are people in the welfare system who will try to abuse it—I'm not going to argue that—but they're certainly not the majority. I would argue that 95% of the people on welfare, given the opportunity, would want to work.

2200

If the government wants to do something positive by way of welfare, which they now call workfare, let's look at what we did under Jobs Ontario Training. Under Jobs Ontario we said, "We will help defray the cost of training that worker in exchange for your keeping the worker past the time of training." In my community alone, in the two years that program was there, it meant we created 650 jobs through Jobs Ontario Training. You can argue that program wasn't as successful as it should have been. Let's say I buy the argument. I think it was much more successful than most people realize, but I think we should look at that model because it was a successful model.

Maybe what we should do with welfare is, rather than having a workfare program that seems to be punitive, why don't we have a program that says, "All right, we will provide the training necessary to get the person back to work—not abstract training." We'll say to the worker or the unemployed person through welfare: "You go shopping around for a job. If you find somebody who is prepared to give you a job and you need some kind of training to get you into that job, or the employer says, 'I'm not willing to take the chance; I can't afford to pay you 12 or 14 bucks an hour to do this job while you're training,' we, through the welfare program, will subsidize your wage in some way so you're able to train on the job and be of some worth to the employer, so it's not entirely the cost of the worker."

I look at my own constituency office. I was in small business before as well. I take a look at the opportunities where I was the employer. It's very expensive to train a worker for the first time. If somebody walks through your door—look at your MPP offices. You just can't put somebody behind the desk or on the phone and say automatically they're going to be productive. It probably takes the better part of a year before those people really get to know what they're doing and be of real value to you as an MPP.

My argument is that if welfare people had an opportunity to go shopping around for a job and had

some sort of program that said to the employee, "I'll help defray the cost of training you, and deal with issues such as day care and clothing allowances if necessary," progressive steps, I would argue that would be a very progressive way to deal with the welfare system. Use those dollars and put them back to work directly in the economy.

I'll give you another idea, something I've thought about for a long time that is probably long overdue when it comes to programs in Ontario. We all love to hate workers' compensation; we all love to hate long-term disability plans, as employers; we all love to hate the Ontario disabilities program, as taxpayers. We all say: "Here are all these people on these disability programs. Are they really as disabled as they should be?" There's that whole argument that goes on.

But more importantly, there is almost a competition between those programs. You see it, as I do, in your constituency offices, when somebody comes in and says: "I'm hurt. I'm not able to work, or I'm not able to work to the degree that I used to." The Workers' Compensation Board says, "We see an injury but we don't think it's entirely an injury stemming from work, so therefore you're denied." So we waste all kinds of money arbitrating that particular issue and in the meantime the person goes on the Ontario disability program and they're made to apply for Canada pension, and if they were working for a former employer, maybe there's some LTD involved, and there's this competition among all the disability programs.

Why don't we move to one comprehensive disability program, and pass legislation in this House—in concert with the federal government later, if we're able to get that far—to say there will be one disability program in Ontario? Be damned if you're hurt at work, if you have a heart attack at home, if you're out playing baseball and you hurt your ankle or whatever it might be, we have one program that deals with the issue. Get rid of the duplication of the various programs and fold it under one. You have one program that's either very strongly regulated and administered by the private sector or it's publicly controlled. I would argue the latter, but I'm prepared to go to the other one and debate it if we ever do go there, to see what the possibilities are.

The idea would be that rather than the programs fighting among each other and employers putting in appeals and workers putting in appeals and the government putting in an appeal, everybody fighting among themselves to see how much we're not going to pay this individual, we would say: "Let's look at the facts. What did the doctors say?" The doctors in the system say, "This person broke a leg." They may not be able to work as a truck driver, if that's what their job was, because their right leg has been broken, but we've got something else we can get them to do for the employer by way of vocational rehab. Or maybe the person is not able to work at all, but we'd look at the medical situation and make a determination of what the person can or can't do and then say, "OK, we'll pay benefits for you to con-

valesce until you get back to work,” or if you’re not able to get back to your regular job because of your condition, we’d deal with the issues of training. Again, we’d deal not only with the issues of training, but day care and all those other areas that get in the way of somebody getting back to work.

Then you end up with a situation where, rather than competing among the various programs, we have one streamlined program that puts the dollars where they are most needed, that is, in supporting the sick or injured worker—person or persons—and being able to deal with that in such a way that they’re able to get back into the workforce, or, if they’re not able to work, we’d pension them and check on them every couple of years to see if things have changed.

I would argue that you can go by way of a comprehensive disability program to deal with some of this. One of the reasons we’re not doing that is because there doesn’t seem to be an appetite on the part of the provincial government. The government has the zeal to do all kinds of reforms like municipal restructuring and a whole bunch of others, but when it comes to doing the kinds of things that really would make a difference in people’s lives and, I would argue, to the corporate sector as well, they don’t seem to have an appetite to go in that direction.

I am amazed at how inept at times this government has been at being able to deal with how they administer their change. Just today I was speaking with, I think it was Mrs Dubien; I may have the name wrong. But somebody called me at my constituency office this morning and said, “My daughter’s husband left her.” She was getting very little in the way of family support from her husband even though her husband worked and the situation was that the daughter had to go on welfare. The daughter said: “Listen, my husband has a responsibility. Why should the welfare system have to pay for me to the degree that it is?” So the daughter pushed the district welfare board to try to deal with the issue of getting a change order to deal with what actual support she should be getting. Eventually she got it done and her support went from \$200 to \$540-some-odd a month. The point is, there was a saving to the province of around \$300 a month, because as you know, if you get a support order such as that, they deduct it against your welfare.

The point Mrs Dubien was making was, why was it her daughter who had to force them to make this happen? Why is it that the welfare system itself didn’t see the way to making sure that happened? It seems to us there’s a saving to the province. If you want to save some dollars, there should have been a responsibility for the welfare system. Instead, her daughter had to pay a lawyer \$1,200 or so to be able to go out and do this.

I called back, and I wanted to check with the welfare department what was going on. They told me that in their zeal to deal with all the welfare reforms, this is one part of the package that didn’t get parcelled out at the right time. They didn’t have their support workers in place in time to be able to deal with this particular woman. There

was a period of around six months, if you fell into the system when the government transferred over all of the responsibility for welfare, that not all of it was really all worked out. My argument would have been is that what they should have done was figure out what had to be done and then make the transition so that nobody fell between the cracks. In this particular case, because it was improperly unfolded and implemented, this woman was made to pay. If it had been before or if it had been after the system would have paid, but this woman paid \$1,200 to have the provincial government save money. I think that when the government goes ahead and makes these kind of changes—

Interjection.

Mr Bisson: Yes, it’s about 10 after 10. I take it the Minister of Transportation wanted to know the time and I just let him know what time it was.

I also want to make one other point. I was looking through the Ontario Economic Outlook and Fiscal Review the other day and there’s one point that I want to make because I think it’s a very interesting point in their budget document. The government, with great fanfare, talks about how well they’ve done as far as revenue and how well they’ve done as far as dealing with the debt is concerned, and they want to talk about taxation and the tax rebate that they’ve given people by way of the 30% reduction in income tax. I was going through the budget document and I thought this was quite an interesting number when you take a look at it, if I’m able to find it in time. The copy I was reading from was a French copy; I now have an English one in front of me and it is laid out a little bit differently. Here it is; I’ve got it right here on page 55. It’s quite interesting.

If we take a look at the revenue that came into the province of Ontario—and the government says that because of the tax cut all of Canada did well. The Canadian economy boomed because of the Mike Harris tax cuts. Not only did the Canadian economy boom, the argument from the Conservatives is that the American economy boomed along. The power of the Ontario economy—it’s amazing. Ontario is such a powerful place in North America that when the government gave a 30% tax cut in Ontario, the American economy bounded up, the Canadian economy bounded, all of North America participated in the tax cut of Mike Harris and, wow, the economy shot up.

I was in Hearst on Friday and I was as pleased as punch to sit down to watch both CNN in the States and Newsworld in Canada talk about the unemployment figures and about how unemployment has gone down. We know the whole North American economy can be thankful for the 30% tax cut. It was all their doing.

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I listened to the former Minister of Municipal Affairs and all the Conservatives take a bow. My God, it’s amazing. Who would have known that a 30% tax cut in Ontario would affect all of the northern North American economy? In fact, I hear some overseas in Europe thank Mike Harris for his tax cut because they’re saying that

even in Europe—in France, Spain, England, Germany, Italy—they're doing great. It's all because of the 30% tax cut. It's an interesting argument that the government puts forward.

That's basically what they say. They say, "Our tax cut was the economic boom for North America." I've got to believe them. I look at the numbers; why shouldn't I believe them?

Anyway, here's the interesting point. We look at the economic indicators as far as revenue that came into the province of Ontario is concerned and, because of the economic activity, provincial income tax was up last year, right? There was \$17 billion of income tax last year compared to \$16 billion the year before. Retail sales tax in 1997-98 was \$10.8 billion; this year it's \$11.6 billion. You look at the numbers and say, "Mike Harris, wow." I'm telling you, it's just amazing what that tax cut did.

Then I look at the bottom and it says "miscellaneous revenues." This is all the user fees and stuff charged to people. I'm not talking Ontario Lottery Corp, the liquor board or any of that. I'm just talking vehicle and drivers' registration fees, all kinds of fees, licenses, royalties, sales and rentals, and all those kinds of things that go on within the province of Ontario. A good part of this is user fees.

There was \$3.4 billion in user fees in 1995; \$5.6 billion today. Interesting—over \$2 billion. The government will have us believe that there has been no cost of the tax increase. Well, I look just over here and we have increased our user fee collection in Ontario by over \$2 billion just on the provincial share, just on the provincial books.

This doesn't take into account the user fees charged by municipalities. We know there was a whole schedule of user fees that were put forward by the Ontario government back about four years ago—the types of things that municipalities were given the ability to charge user fees on that they couldn't before. So when your child or my kids go to the arena or they use the roller rink or any municipal complex, swimming pool, whatever it is, they pay more. When we use our roads—it's all of it. It's all much higher as far as user fees, and that's just municipalities.

Then you walk into the Ontario hospital system and hospitals are charging you more user fees. You are paying now for things like crutches, whereas in some hospitals you never paid before. You're paying for treatments that you never had to pay for before, and other user fees that the government has put onto the hospital sector.

You take a look in education: user fees. Look at what's happened to tuitions. I have a young daughter—she's a young woman now. She's finished three years of college as a nurse. She managed to graduate from George Brown College with honours and works as a nurse at St Michael's Hospital in the cardiac step-down unit. I'm very proud of her. She decided to go back to Ryerson Polytechnic University this year, and work at the same time, to get her B.Sc in nursing. Do you realize how

much more we pay for tuition fees this year than we did compared to last year and the years before? I've seen it go up year after year.

I'm lucky, because I can afford to pay it. I'm one of those fortunate parents who has the ways and means to help my daughter along and am able to help her go to college and university. She has managed to do a lot herself. I've got to give Julie full credit because I think she paid all but about \$1,000 of her tuition this year. I'm very proud of my daughter for doing that.

The point is we're a lucky family. I'm employed; we've done well over the years. We're not rich but we can make ends meet and we're able to pay those tuition fees to help our daughter along.

How many families, how many sons and daughters across the province can't do the same because their parents aren't as fortunate as you and I to be able to afford to pay those user fees?

So yes, there has been a tax cut. The Conservatives argue the North American economy has benefited as a result of the 30% tax cut, but there are a lot of people in the province of Ontario, including my daughter and probably your sons and daughters, who are paying more in the way of tuition fees and user fees. Grandparents and parents alike are paying user fees in the health care system since the Mike Harris government has come to power.

We can try to cut it whatever way we want but, in the end, I come back to one thing I heard in this House five or six years ago. Remember, member from Renfrew, what Michael Harris, the then-leader of the third party, said about user fees? He said, "A tax is a tax is a tax." He got up in this House time after time and talked about how user fees were taxes.

If it was a tax for Mike Harris prior to 1995, I guess all these \$2 billion in user fees charged by the province—additional over last year—and all the user fees we're paying in municipal services and all the user fees we're paying to use highway 407 and the health care system and education—We all have to pay higher taxes because of Mike Harris and all the things he's done to Ontario when it comes to paying for his phony tax cut.

Mr R. Gary Stewart (Peterborough): It's interesting to follow a speaker like we've just heard and the one before him. They're just are so enthused about this great province we live in. I've had the privilege tonight to listen to one Chicken Little over here and another Chicken Little over there. If you don't know that story, you should go and read it. I've never heard as much doom and gloom. We have one person over here suggesting that everybody in this province is a crook. The one over there must live in a silo, because he doesn't know what the economy is doing in this province.

Tonight I'd like to talk for a few minutes about health care, which goes hand in hand with restructuring. I want to suggest to you that it wasn't our government, over the last number of years, that closed 12,000 beds as did the Liberals and the NDP. Fact: They closed 12,000 beds in this province.

It is interesting to note that in Peterborough, the town I live in, the Liberals closed the emergency ward at St Joseph's hospital. I can remember having a meeting with, I believe, Mrs Grier. I think she was Minister of Health under the NDP at the time. She told us, in the basement of the library, "No problem with health care, none whatsoever, lots of doctors, lots of nurses." The only problem is that she forgot to tell us she went to the United States to get her health care, which left me a bit concerned.

I look at the \$20 billion plus we've been spending in this province. If you read some of the statistics, that could double—

Mr Bisson: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I just listened to the member talk about the former member, Mrs Grier, getting her health care services in the United States. The question I have is: Is he obliged to tell the truth when he speaks in this House?

The Acting Speaker: That's not a point of order. I ask the member to withdraw.

Mr Bisson: I just asked the question on the point of order. Withdraw what?

The Acting Speaker: There was motive imputed.

Mr Bisson: I withdraw if I insulted. I just asked if he had to tell the truth. That's all I asked.

The Acting Speaker: Will the member withdraw now?

Mr Bisson: OK.

Mr Stewart: I take it from where it comes from. I usually leave that type of conduct alone, because although I class many people in this House as honourable, I do have difficulty with those kinds of comments and then turn around and expect to call a person honourable.

I look at what this government is doing in health care and the amount of dollars that are being spent, some \$20 billion plus this year, as I suggested to you. The possibility, forecast within the next 10 years, that it could double or quadruple, is a very concerning situation to me. Will we have that type of money to put into health care?

2220

I suggest that what we should be doing—and I think it's what we're doing now—is concentrating on quality but looking at efficiencies within the system. You do it in any other business, so I don't know why you wouldn't do it here. I don't believe in throwing money at a problem, as other governments have in the past. When the money is gone, the problem is still there. That's one thing that happened in my area, whether it be in education, health care, whatever. You must assess, look at the problem and then react accordingly.

Out of that, I guess, has come the restructuring of the health care system in my community. I just want to comment that since 1995, in Peterborough, there has been a \$46.8-million increase in health care funding. That does not include new long-term care beds, 233. It also does not include the existing long-term care beds that are going to be refurbished to the tune of 451.

The other thing that has happened, certainly in my municipality, is the new dialysis service that was put into effect in the spring of the second year of our mandate. They had been trying to get a dialysis unit in Peterborough for 15 years, and it was our government that put that service in. It has been well received, and recently we expanded it by another seven units.

Also, we now have a new cardiac care lab, something that Dr Hughes and many people in the community have wanted for some 12 years. We announced it last fall, and about two weeks ago we announced that the new funding is in place for both operational and capital. I want to offer publicly very sincere thanks to every person in our community as well as some surrounding communities who went out and raised in excess of \$2 million as a very good start on the capitalization of this unit. Also last year, we announced and recommended a new MRI unit. They have been trying to get that for the last 8 to 10 years.

What we've been doing in that area is working in old facilities. We have a hospital that was built in 1947, and there are some major problems with it. But certainly the ministry has been trying to work with them to make sure that what will be proposed down the way will offer good, quality health care.

I constantly hear people talking about health care in this province. I want to say publicly that I believe the health care workers in this province are second to none. They do not get the type of credit they should, and I would like to congratulate them.

In our case, the hospital restructuring committee came and offered a suggestion of a renovated facility, to the tune of \$56 million. They have done two additional proposals: a totally renovated unit for \$140 million and a new unit for \$183 million. With the bill that was debated today, we are going to have the opportunity and the flexibility to deal with the ministry and to look at the best way to make sure we have quality health care in Peterborough.

Yes, the restructuring committee supported the closing of one facility, concentrating on the new Peterborough regional health care centre. It's working well, and they are way ahead of their time because they've been amalgamating. They have agreed, and have for some time, on one administration, one chief of staff, one governance model, etc. I want to compliment them on that.

Some of the legislation going through now will allow the administration and the boards to look at getting a facility that will offer Peterborough and the region the best possible health care available.

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke): I want to join the debate tonight for concurrence in supply, and there are three votes that I want to concern myself with. The first is the vote on concurrence in supply for the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs; secondly, for the Ministry of Municipal Affairs; thirdly, for the Office of the Premier.

I'm going to try, given the lateness of the hour, to touch very directly on one or two issues per vote, because

I know colleagues here have some additional remarks they wish to offer.

Let me start with the Ministry of Agriculture. It is a reality that we are in a new Legislature with the lowest rural representation ever in the history of post-Confederation Ontario. That is to some degree a reflection of changing demographics, but it is also a reality that the most recent electoral boundaries changes brought about in the previous Legislature paid little or no regard to the rural aspect of Ontario. So we have this week a rising tide of concern in much of rural Ontario about the latest round of cuts made to the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

I simply want to make a couple of points. I was home on the weekend, and I know all of my colleagues were as well. In rural Ontario, if you were at an agricultural event this past weekend, you were undoubtedly approached by some farmer, somebody in agribusiness or some municipal politician who wanted to know what the latest was on these budget cuts.

I don't know whether I should be competing with some of the chatter behind me; it is just a little difficult.

I certainly was approached a number of times this weekend about what the cuts meant to Renfrew. In Renfrew we have lost our ag rep and we are losing one other position, and some new position of information officer is going to be provided. But there is a significant evisceration of the field and extension services of the Ministry of Agriculture.

It's too bad that my friend from Oxford is not here tonight, because if the minister were here to speak to the concurrence in supply for his estimates, I would have this question for him: Minister, it is never easy doing Her Majesty's business, particularly at treasury board. Not for the first time has a Minister of Agriculture been undressed at treasury board, most recently to the tune of \$5.5 million, or \$8.7 million, if you include the cuts to the University of Guelph. But, as was made plain in the ministry document of last week, and I have in my hand as well the analysis of those cuts from the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, what do we find? We find the cuts are very much in the field services. Hard to believe, I say to this House, that we're eliminating the position of ag rep. That's been the core position within the ministry field service for decades. That position is now being eliminated; it's being declared surplus.

2230

The question I would have for our friend from Oxford if he were here tonight: We know what you've done. We know the positions that have been eliminated at the front line, scores of positions, millions of dollars of budget. How many head office positions have been declared surplus? How many directors? How many ADMs? How many communications personnel have been shed at head office? I doubt it's a very long list. Oh, I'm sure there will be a token one or two, but I would simply put the question tonight, and I will be pursuing it, because the farmers—and which of the farmers will be hurt by these cuts? Not the big boys and girls; they'll do just fine. It

will be the small and medium-sized farmers in Renfrew, in Wellington, in Niagara, in Stormont, in Leeds, in Huron, in Grey-Bruce. Those are the people who are going to be left with a reduced service. Oh yes, they'll have the 1-800 number, and they'll have some fancy computer hookup to God knows what, but they're not going to have those extension people and they're not going to have the ag reps in their communities.

I think the Ontario Federation of Agriculture makes a very powerful argument when it observes that we have gutted the core of the ministry's field services, those services that have given this department the kind of credibility and the kind of connection it has had in rural Ontario since the establishment of the department a long time ago.

In the absence of the minister, who I am sure is doing important work elsewhere, my question remains: How many head office people, how many communications experts, how many pollsters, how many public opinion survey artists have been shed in this latest round of cuts?

Mr Bradley: They all got a raise.

Mr Conway: My friend Bradley says, "They all got a raise." I'm not so sure they got a raise, but I am sure that they have been protected and they have been mollycoddled in a way that will not expose them to the job losses and the uncertainties that a lot of these other front-line Ministry of Agriculture people are going to experience.

The second point I wanted to raise tonight concerns the supply for the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Later this week we are going to embark on a debate about restructuring municipal government in at least five communities across Ontario: the national capital area, Haldimand-Norfolk, greater Sudbury, Metropolitan Toronto and Hamilton-Wentworth. I'm not going to spend a lot of time tonight speaking to the specifics of the legislation that was introduced today except to make the following observations. I don't mean to be mischievous about this because, quite frankly, I think it is well known that where a person stands with respect to local government reform to some degree is explained by where the person stands geographically. I live in Pembroke. I do not have the direct involvement that someone from Stoney Creek might have in these proposals. People in Ancaster and people in Hamilton will probably not have precisely the same point of view. People in Rockcliffe Park and people in the Glebe, I suspect, are going to have a different take on aspects of the Ottawa bill.

But I want to say this: There was a lot of fire and thunder here this afternoon about who said what and when. I can just speak for the eastern region. People were very guarded, by and large, in the electoral campaign that concluded on June 3. Why were they guarded? Does anyone here think that any candidates for the major parties would get elected in Nepean if they had offered one city? I'm not saying they wouldn't have gotten elected, but I think it would have been a very close call. I note with some interest where the successful candidates

in Carleton-Gloucester and Nepean-Carleton stood, and I don't quarrel with that. They are shrewd people who know their communities a lot better than I. But I would say to the now absent member from Nipissing, I watched carefully the Ottawa debate over the course of May and June. I know what people said and what they didn't commit to. I know what was generally offered to the general electorate. I simply say that if the package of proposals that was introduced here today had been advertised with any clarity and any regularity around seven or eight of the electoral districts that make up much of the area affected by this legislation, I suspect we would have a different parliamentary cohort than we have in the persons of Skarica and Baird, and others from other parties, I might add, as well.

I say this very seriously, because again we're going to be encouraged to talk about accountability and candour and consistency—

Interjection.

Mr Conway: We have a budding orator from Scarborough, and I'm sure he would want to get into the debate. He has been absent, for whatever reason, these past few weeks.

There was a general election and people were asked their opinions. I simply make the point that now some heroic virtue and some clarity is being offered in the name of the collective that I can tell you was not there in Cumberland and in Gloucester and in Nepean just a few short months ago.

More importantly, we are going to be looking at a set of proposals that continues the argument that I find deeply offensive: that is, that politicians are, a priori, bad. I will say that the current government, in its tone and in its rhetoric, in this respect I find to be deeply offensive. I understand the popularity of the offering, and I understand that to every season there is a special quality. I'm not so disconnected from popular enthusiasm not to understand that anything that denigrates, that depreciates, that undermines and that laughs at the political class is popular these days. I just hope we all understand where that road leads.

I am not here to argue that local government cannot and should not be revised from time to time. As I said earlier today, I take some interest in the fact that in the case of Haldimand-Norfolk we will, in these last hours of the millennium, in our genius, correct the genius of a previous generation. They thought they had it right. John White and company thought they had the alpha and omega of correct municipal design a quarter century ago when they constructed that aberration that we have known as the regional municipality of Haldimand-Norfolk.

It is interesting as well, in my part of eastern Ontario, the Davis government—I suppose it was actually the Robarts government that constructed the regional municipality of Ottawa-Carleton. Let me tell you, there were a lot of bright people associated with that exercise. They were very confident that they had the problems

isolated and the corrective design very much in that legislation of 1969.

I said to someone the other day that I happened to be re-reading Lord Durham's wonderful report about the state of the province of Canada in 1838. Durham of course was a commissioner of his own, "Radical Jack," sent out to see what the problem was. The interesting thing about Durham was that he was absolutely right in his analysis of the problem. There was a serious problem with local government in the Canadas in 1837-38. But as he was correct in his analysis of the problem, he was equally wrong in his recommended solution. His legislative union was absolutely unworkable, and 25 years later the fathers met in several conferences and corrected that mistake in something that we call Confederation.

But the design of local government is a design that to some real extent is going to have to take into account local conditions and local expectations. I simply want to say that when I hear the debate overwhelmingly focused on getting rid of politicians, I have to ask myself the question, why that focus and not other things that I suspect people I know who live in those communities might like to see dealt with?

It is interesting for anyone who cares to read in the Ottawa Citizen a supplement published just a few days ago called A City of Villages. It's quite an interesting four-page supplement on local government restructuring, with a primary focus on the national capital area. What the Citizen, which has editorially very strongly supported the Harris government's plan for one city government, tells us is that there should be little or no expectation that there is going to be a great savings at least in the short and intermediate term.

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There is a very interesting article in this supplement where the paper is interviewing Gardner Church. I'm not going to read chapter and verse of the article except to say that Mr Church, who was the architect of restructuring in Kingston, makes a number of very interesting and salient points about the lessons learned in Kingston restructuring. He makes plain the argument that it is not likely there are going to be any significant savings. If the savings are going to be effected, it is going to be a matter of public policy choice directed by the provincial government.

In my more mischievous moments, when I look at Ottawa-Carleton, for example, or the regional municipality of Metropolitan Toronto—I guess we don't call it that any more—I have one little benchmark that I would like to recommend. It would be simply this: I'd like to see an analysis of the unit cost of police services in the greater Toronto area over the last 10 years. I would like to see the same analysis in Ottawa-Carleton. And I wonder how much the unit price of policing has declined. I listened to the budget chief in Metropolitan Toronto and he appears to be becoming more and more frantic about the rising tide of expenditure on that very large appropriation of the public's money.

We are told routinely that if you make it bigger, it will necessarily be more efficient and the unit cost will stabilize and almost certainly drop. What was our experience when we went to divisional school boards? What was the experience actually when we went to the larger units of local government 25 or 30 years ago? I'm not saying there were not benefits, but I think the analysis, and Gardner Church would certainly seem to support this, confirms one thing: The price of virtually everything went up. So now, yet again, in the triumph of hope over experience, we march down the road embracing enthusiastically the notion, let us make the units of local government as large as possible and let us make the number of elected officials as few as possible.

Earlier tonight I was thumbing through some of the classical texts about representation in democratic society. One of my favourites on this subject is James Madison, one of the principal architects of the federal Constitution penned at Philadelphia in 1787. Madison and many of his Virginian friends felt very strongly that if there was going to be true democratic and republican governments—small-r republican—it was absolutely essential for the efficacy and for the integrity and for the durability of that government to be as close to the people as possible. They were not alone in the embrace of that basic value.

We have had over a long period of time in this Upper Canada, now Ontario, of ours I think, relatively speaking, very healthy and vibrant local government. One of the reasons it's been healthy and vibrant, I would submit to you, is because it has been local. The Baldwin Act of 1849 created a framework which, with much adjustment over the intervening century and a half, has served us well. I simply make the point for those people who want to be rid of the politicians, is it because what they want is an increase in the non-elected lobbyists?

Again the mischievous part of me wants to ask school boards and hospitals and a variety of other public and parapublic agencies, "How much are you spending these days on consulting fees and lobbying fees?" Making very substantial investments are a number of hospitals and other agencies which in an earlier age would've expected their member of the Legislature, whether that person was named Ecker or Arnott or Bradley or Bisson, to have been their man or woman at court.

Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Education): And they do.

Mr Conway: And they do.

But in fact they are doing less of the business because more and more of the business, according to the evidence, is being done by the unelected lobbyists pulling strings and funding God knows what behind the curtain of public view and public accountability.

The New York Times a few months ago ran a series of articles about what was going on on K Street, home of the Washington lobbying industry. Good old Upper Canadians might like to think that's Washington and we are just so much more pure than that. Well, I have eyes and I have ears and I must say that what I am seeing and

what I am hearing in recent years makes me think that K Street has come, big time, not just to Toronto but also to Ottawa and to other of the major provincial capitals.

That's the argument. I think that's a very fundamental part of the argument that informs this government's local government reform. Get rid of the locally elected politicians so you can open the door to the kind of wire-pulling and manipulation that these paid lobbyists are so very good at effecting for a fee behind closed doors. Someone once said that the government of Canada that was created in the middle of the last century was government of the people by lawyers for big business. I wonder how far we've come from that view of the truth.

The final point, because I'm told that my time is quickly waning, has to do with the Office of the Premier. Here I want to be a little critical, I suppose, of all of us. I must say I found the House today particularly unedifying. I am beginning to wonder why so many estimable men and women will put so much of their hearts and souls, their families, their property, their security on the line to come to this place.

I read in the Ottawa Citizen the other day that Peter Dobell and his parliamentary study group have done a big survey of federal members of Parliament. Do you know what they're reporting as the number one stress in the lives of MPs? According to the Dobell group as reported in the Citizen last week, they've got no power. They are without any influence. That is largely true in the provincial legislatures. I would say it is probably even more true in the provincial legislatures.

The University of Toronto Press has just published a book called *Governing from the Centre* by an eminent political scientist named Donald Savoie. What's his thesis? The thesis is very simple, Savoie says from both academic and practical experience inside the upper echelons of the federal government. Thirty years ago Pierre Trudeau said to Canada, "Your MPs are nobodies 50 feet from Parliament Hill." He says, does Savoie, that in 1999, 75% of the cabinet ministers are nobodies at the cabinet table. I won't bother to tell you what he tells readers as to the legitimacy of Parliament.

I'll take my seat, I say to the ever-worried look of my whip from Hamilton East, but not before I ask another question: Why do we bother? Bradley was roaring today, somewhat disconsolately, about how impotent this place has been, and he's right. To be fair it's not totally a criticism of the current government because it has been a trend that has been accelerating over the last number of years.

We vote tonight concurrence in the Office of the Premier. We have an imperial presidency here. We have an elected dictatorship here. We have no countervailing force of any kind. I'm soon going to move a motion to reduce all expenditures to the whole charade of parliamentary councils and parliaments because it's almost an embarrassment.

Do we ever intend to do anything about this as honourable men and women who worked so hard and fought

so long to get elected, to get nominated, to get re-elected, to get renominated?

Mr O'Toole: We could have passed these hours ago.

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Mr Conway: Well, I say to my friend from Durham who's busily signing his Christmas cards, if you were a student and you were sitting in this chamber over the last number of days, you would rightly conclude that the most pressing business before the members of the Ontario Legislature this December week was signing Christmas cards. That's offered to everybody.

The Office of the Premier has gotten larger, its resources have become more significant, its power has become more unchecked, its impatience has become more manifest; and this Parliament, this Assembly, says to every increasing abuse and indecency: "Ready, aye, ready. Give us more abuse, not less."

Can any self-respecting citizen ask, what could be reasonably expected from this so-called parliamentary place if this attitude, this pathetically, transparently supine attitude for this and other legislatures and parliaments around this country continues? I want to say, particularly to you younger and newer members of this place, "Ask not for whom the bell tolls, it will toll for you and your legitimacy."

Mr O'Toole: I'll just be brief, but I did want to respond to the member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke with respect to the concurrence tonight. There were two areas specifically that I wanted to mention. In my riding of Durham, there was the closure of an agricultural access point. I have spoken with many of the farm business people in the community and it will constitute a change. I think, for the most part, they are able to cope with it. But I do want to leave on the record clearly that the expenditures when we came to office—I'm looking at the Ontario Economic Outlook and Fiscal Review here—in the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs was \$263 million. With the outlook in 1999, that expenditure is \$367 million, in-year change of about \$40 million.

Clearly Minister Hardeman, when speaking with him some time earlier on this change, said that they consulted with the farmers of Ontario, not just the Federation of Agriculture but the group referred to as the Farmers of Ontario, and they wanted the ministry to refocus. The ministry has listened and re-utilized those resources within the ministry. So there is a change. There's no question of that change, but it's addressing the changes in agriculture itself—the environmental issues, sustainability in the environment, technology research and the supports, and the supports in themselves are to some extent electronic. But I do want to leave that on the record.

As we are discussing concurrence as well, if you want to take a general statement about where the government has been and what is actually going on, I think it's important for the viewer to recognize that taxes are down, and with that statement of taxes being down, revenue is

up. In-year revenue for the current fiscal year is up almost \$1 billion.

I heard Mr Bisson speaking earlier—and the revenue itself, the change and explanation of the revenue is that more people are working. More people are working, so more people are spending. I can demonstrate for you that the total revenue increase is attributed primarily to personal income tax, which is an in-year change of \$400 million. Clearly, that's more people working, more people paying their share, as opposed to collecting or being on assistance of some sort.

A further increase in retail sales tax—that's our tax revenue on transactions of purchase—\$350 million of an in-year change.

When you couple all this together, this government has reduced taxes, made efficient changes in spending and increased revenue. They've also, I might add, increased the expenditure side of the picture. When we came to government, you would know, the budget was something in the order of \$56 billion. Now, whether this is a proud type of statement or not, it's in the order of \$59 billion. I think it's having a healthy economy so that you can afford to have a good educational system and a good health care system, as well as a strong agricultural sector in our economy.

Because the members tonight are a little impatient to go home, I will relinquish the time and be pleased to complete my statements with that.

Mr Bradley: I'm told that people want to go home tonight. I'm told that even though this House sits until midnight everybody wants to rush out of this place. Well, I'm here to debate things, I'm elected to debate things, not to rush out before the House is supposed to. I take full responsibility for any criticism. I'm the one who's going to take all the flak. I don't care about that. I'm told this is a House leaders' agreement or something, which I won't comment on. I think we have precious few opportunities to discuss certain issues in this House; this is an opportunity to do so. This House did not sit, except for seven days, until we came back very late in October. There was no opportunity at that time. I might say, if anybody wants to go home, let them go home. I will not prevent anybody from going home. If they abandon the House, that's fine. I think there are some important issues that must be canvassed in this House.

First of all, we're going to have a bill called "restructuring" before this House. One bill—we will not have an opportunity to comment on each one of those individual situations—we'll have one bill to deal with it. Now, if that precedent is allowed to stand by the Speaker, I can tell you the next will be Waterloo and Niagara and Durham and Peel and wherever else that will be thrown into one bill. To me, that is simply not acceptable.

I thought the member for Renfrew-Pembroke-Nipissing made an outstanding speech with some historical references on the importance of democracy. Every time we allow more so-called efficiency in this House, for the sake of efficiency, democracy is diminished a little more.

If we see this restructuring across the province, if we see the imposition in my area—I won't speak to the areas in the bill until the bill is there, if I get an opportunity at all to speak then—I want to tell you that in Niagara I do not want to see one big city imposed. I believe that what is operating now, with some modifications, can work quite nicely.

What we're seeing happening is local politicians falling over themselves trying to do the government's work. Why? Because they see the example of Toronto, where you say to Toronto: "Well, you have a choice: It's either 44 members or 22 members. Choose your poison: hemlock or arsenic. What are you going to take?" Of course, they're forced to take that. So you've intimidated a lot of people at the local level in terms of your restructuring.

You're going to see, if you allow in Niagara one big city, nothing but the wealthiest people getting elected, because the campaigns will cost a lot of money. You will also see party politics, on an official basis, coming forward to be an important part of politics at the local level. One of the things that we've had, which has been compelling about the local level, which has been good about our local level of government, is that by and large, even though people may have a political label, they have often checked that label at the door in an effort to bring forward the best government for that area.

The member for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke also mentioned how easily these people can be lobbied. If you think for one moment that if you slam 14 members or 16 members into Niagara, somehow you're going to have access to them, you're wrong. What we have now are elected taxpayers. I think it's an important word to use, "elected" taxpayers. These are part-time people who agree to serve on agencies, boards and commissions, in this case, an elected local government. Those individuals now represent us in the manner in which they should.

What we have now is a situation where some of the local people are scrambling, and some of the others must have seen that, saying, "Well, we'd better amputate ourselves at the knee, otherwise Mike Harris will amputate us at the hip." I'm suggesting that we don't need an amputation at all.

Another problem was raised in the House the other day by Mr Guzzo, who asked an excellent question to the Minister of Energy, and that is about your local Hydro commission. The neo-cons and some who are desperate for money locally, want to take a public service, a basic public service such as the provision of hydroelectric power, or power generated in any other way, and they want to be able to now charge a huge rate. There are two reasons for that. If they charge a huge rate, then they can sell it off and have all kinds of money to spend and say they're not going to raise local taxes.

2300

I can tell you that individual people, senior citizens, people of modest income, businesses, industry are going to recoil at the fact that there is a suggestion there is

going to be something of a massive increase in hydro rates.

I think if the people of St Catharines knew what was going on, if they were aware of the decision that could be made this evening, they would be up in arms to know that their hydro rates, their electricity rates could go extremely high just to make it a profitable company.

Should General Motors, Ford and Chrysler and so on make money? Yes. That is the private sector. There are many, many areas which represent the private sector. The provision of basic services such as water, sewers and hydroelectric power should be available to people at cost. That's what Ontario Hydro was supposed to provide when it was established. It was supposed to provide that kind of service at cost.

Members will have noticed from my cough that I have contracted what so many others have. I also want to dwell on—my friend the member for Oshawa is here. He smiles. He is a star. I've made him famous by mentioning he's a star in the National Rifle Association commercial that appears on—is it TNN?

Interjection: CNN.

Interjection: ESPN.

Mr Bradley: No, I think it's the Tennessee network or something like that. It's a country network, it appears. I'm told it's 6:30 on Sunday morning or something, so it would have to be somebody either coming in or getting up early who would see it, but I know he has been a star there as well as other places, and that is yet another matter.

My colleague the member for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke pointed out appropriately how destructive it is of the system to constantly denigrate the people who are elected representatives, elected taxpayers. In our case it's people who, on a full-time basis, serve the people in their constituencies.

I know it's popular on the right-wing talk shows, and I know it's popular with a certain crowd that will wildly applaud when you say "fewer politicians." What it really means is fewer elected representatives to reflect their point of view.

In each of our communities we have, or have had in the past, a local council. That council is usually a good cross-section of the community. If you have one huge regional council, one huge megacity in all of these various communities around the province, you're going to lose that. You do the profession, the democratic system, no favour when you play into the hands of those Reform Party types who talk about fewer politicians.

They do change their minds from time to time once they're in office, about some of the perks that are available, but I want to say that we do ourselves no favour when we do that. We denigrate local government. I must say the Progressive Conservative Party over the years has been a political party which in the days of Premier Frost, Premier Robarts and Premier Davis respected local government, particularly the first two of those individuals. I don't think we gain anything with that.

What this debate allows us an opportunity to do is to canvas some issues which are important to people. We can't all get on question period. We can't all get on with statements. We can't all get on with a speech on an individual thing.

I say, with the Minister of Transportation here this evening, that there's a great concern, for instance, with the licensing system. More young people are failing these driver's tests for some reason. When I compare them to the driver's tests that were available 30 and 40 years ago, they're much tougher.

These people have been placed in real jeopardy now by the fact that they're unable to obtain their licence. They've gone through far more than most of us in this House had to go through when we obtained our driving licences. That is something that has to be addressed. The minister talked about adding some funds for that purpose. That has not solved the problem by any means to this point in time.

There are people who are concerned about road safety, about the fact that we have so many trucks on the highways now. In this case I think I'll join my provincial colleagues in saying it's incumbent upon the federal government to provide the necessary funding to ensure that we have a viable rail service, that is, for both freight and passengers. I invite all to join with me in urging them to do so. That's their role and responsibility. I don't think their role and responsibility is particularly in roads, but we have a very good case to make for them in the field of providing the alternatives so our roads are better, that is, particularly rail and shipping.

There is some merit perhaps in putting the miles per hour, as I still call it, or kilometres per hour that one can travel—I can recall when at one time it was 65 or 60 for cars, 55 for trucks. There may be some merit to that because we have a real problem on the highway with the number of trucks and the number of individuals who are intimidated by them. We still have some excellent drivers out there in the trucking industry—they're top-notch people—but once it got deregulated, there are a lot more people out there hustling because there's great pressure on them for a variety of reasons.

I want to deal as well with the issue of the general development problems we have in this province. In fact, we're seeing unfettered development right across this province. Much of the agricultural land, which was so beneficial to all of our backgrounds, to all of our areas, is disappearing quickly. I remember when Stephen Lewis, back in 1975 or 1976, had a calculation of how many acres were being lost per hour. I would suggest that we're seeing as many of those acres disappearing today and we're now threatening one of the real gems we have, the Niagara Escarpment.

We have as well a withdrawal of funds—because the Ministry of the Environment is one of the concurrences—from the Ministry of the Environment, which is not enabling it to do its job appropriately. One third of the budget was cut; about 42% of the staff were cut. We have a problem in Sarnia with a leaking dump, a dump

which was allowed to be extended without a full environmental assessment, and the chickens have come home to roost there. One wonders whether there are going to be charges laid in that particular case.

I listened to lectures about saving money from a government which spent \$100 million on self-serving government advertising. I know a lot of the whiz kids thought that was really clever. "We got away with it," you said, and: "Isn't that great? See, we won the election." Would you win the election without it? I don't know that. I can't make that judgement, to be fair. But I can tell you that when you make that kind of commitment of \$100 million, you skew the election in favour of the governing party. That is patently unfair. The Provincial Auditor made reference to his great concern about that. You see, it's no use even talking to most of you people, because I've never seen a House like this, to be honest with you. If you look at the government members in the Davis administration, a lot of them were independent-thinking people. They didn't simply throw the same old answers back at you; they understood that was the case. I'm not looking at the member for Oshawa in this case. I'm just saying it's so discouraging to hear how some people are either simply purveying the propaganda—and if they are, I guess that's one thing, but they seem to believe the propaganda that they purvey. It's very difficult to be in a dialogue. It's like, the committee system used to work so well because people checked their partisan hat at the door. We had some excellent work done. I'm sure if the member for Waterloo-Wellington would consult with his predecessor, he would tell you. In the days of his predecessor, there was a lot of good work done by committees. It is incumbent upon all of us, regardless of our political stripe, to try to check those hats at the door and get positive work done in a committee. But if all we're going to get is the usual government line on every case, I go to my friend Conway and say: "What is the purpose of being here? We're just going through the motions when we go here, because the government will do exactly what it wants to do." That's most unfortunate.

2310

I can remember a former Minister of Energy who was in the Hydro committee, Jim Taylor—a very right-wing member of the caucus, for his day. Jim Taylor was a person who took the opposite point of view from others within his own party.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: The member for Durham.

Mr Bradley: He made the Hydro committee an interesting place. He had been an energy minister. He had been, as he said, mugged in the hallways of power, or words to that effect, and lost that position. But he had an inside knowledge of how the system worked and he was an outstanding member of a committee. There were a number of those people who worked extremely well in those particular days.

I look at my municipalities and see how they struggle today with the costs of downloading. The local business

types are whipped up by the right wing and they're told, "You know, the real problem is your local government." It isn't your local government. The real problem is the downloading by the provincial government onto the municipalities, in the case of Niagara by some \$18 million net increase.

I've raised the issue of Maters Mortgages in this House with the Attorney General. Those individuals are simply asking that there be a meeting of the legal counsel for both sides. They can get together and they can discuss the possibility of an out-of-court settlement in their circumstances. They feel frustrated that that's not happening. The Attorney General did open the door and has answered to me, I must say, which I found to be positive. I have directed a letter to him now, asking that he act upon the commitment that he made on that occasion to explore that possibility, to enter into discussions about the possibility of an out-of-court settlement, or at the very least allow the court case to proceed rapidly as opposed to being dragged out. A lot of the people involved are elderly people or people who are adversely impacted financially as a result of the situation they're facing.

I want to say as well that Brock University and Niagara College are now a bit apprehensive when they hear that the government is going to start pulling back money. Brock University has some excellent applications for provincial funding that I hope the Minister of Colleges and Universities will give serious consideration to, because they are very useful. Niagara College has to watch out, with all this amalgamation taking place, with the one big everything that this government wants, that we're going to see community colleges lost, forced to amalgamate, forced to come together.

If you notice, General Motors doesn't have one plant in Ontario; General Motors has a number of plants. They don't need just one big, massive plant in one place. The same with the other companies that you see around the province.

The last thing I want to mention is a very concerning comment I heard from the Premier. That comment was during his speech to the Fraser Forum out in BC. The Fraser Forum, for those perhaps watching this program who don't know, is a very right-wing, ultra-conservative organization which looks after the richest people and the most powerful people in our society very well. Their policies are geared to that.

The member for Oshawa who—I at least appreciate the fact that he listens in this House; I think he does anyway. I should tell him what the Premier said. He was panning the low dollar. For those in the auto industry, for those in the pulp and paper industry, for those in the resource extraction industry, that is a tremendous asset. I won't get into the quarrel tonight, the discussion over whether it's tax cuts or not. You people believe it is. I believe it's not. I think there are two or three other very compelling factors. One is the low Canadian dollar, which makes us very competitive; some would say arti-

ficially competitive, nevertheless it has produced thousands upon thousands of jobs for Ontario.

The second thing is the low interest rates. Low interest rates are extremely important to business so that they are able to obtain funding at a certain rate.

When I hear the Premier say to the Fraser Forum—I know it's popular with them and I know the right-wingers are now talking about, "Let's get that dollar way up." I don't know whether it's because the foreign holidays are popular with them or not, but for those of us in Ontario and for those of us who represent manufacturing centres, I can assure you that this dollar has made us extremely competitive. Without the dollar at its present rate, we wouldn't have nearly the sales nor nearly the investment that we have in this province. I think each one of us, if we looked in our ridings, would see that to be the case.

I know the Premier got away with saying that out west when he was with the Fraser Forum, and he probably got a nice round of applause. But whether you're in Pembroke, St Catharines, Scarborough, Oshawa, Windsor, Timmins, Sault Ste Marie or any number of places—I've asked them. When I was in cabinet, I met with people who were heads of businesses, as cabinet people do. I said, "What is the difference, for instance, for the pulp and paper industry of one cent on the dollar?" I was told in Thunder Bay that when the dollar shifted one cent one way or the other, it was \$17 million. That was one operation.

If the Premier is advocating a higher dollar, if the Premier is advocating that the Canadian dollar be allowed and encouraged to rise, I hope he recognizes the consequences for communities such as St Catharines, Oshawa, Oakville, Sault Ste Marie, Hamilton and other places, because that is a genuine competitive advantage. It would be like saying you want the interest rates to rise. I don't think anybody in this House would want the Premier to say that interest rates should rise. They have helped out an awful lot. When the province is trying to pay back the debt, it pays at an entirely different rate. When the province wants to borrow money, it can borrow it at a more favourable rate, and it's had to borrow an awful lot of it.

The last thing I would mention is abandonment of the debt. I read an article today about abandonment of the debt. Now it's a problem. Somebody is saying, "No, forget about the debt, it's all tax cuts." I heard for years that it was the debt. I believed my friends in the Chamber of Commerce. I believed my friends in the Taxpayers Coalition and the National Citizens' Coalition that the debt was a problem. I know that the debt will not be eliminated as quickly—it's a big job, a mammoth job—if we implement yet another round of tax cuts which will deprive the government of the funding it needs to carry out its programs.

Some members keep advocating: Why don't we get more money from the federal government? I would say: Why would they give you more money when they know you're simply going to give it away in a tax cut and take

all the credit? It's like Mel Lastman said: "There's Mike Harris out there saying 'Hurrah for the tax cut.' Meanwhile, the people of Metropolitan Toronto, through their local tax base, have to pay for that increase." That's what he is saying.

If all the money were going to be devoted to health care, if they could spend it directly on health care, for that matter, which is very difficult to do constitutionally, then that would be very good. I am for that. But I want to see that all that money is going to health care or education or another transfer area and not simply being used to implement a tax cut. That's exactly what would happen. It just goes to being given away in a tax cut. If you had cancelled the tax cut and said, "Yes, we want all that money devoted to those services," then you'd be on very solid ground.

The Acting Speaker: Mr Klees has moved concurrence in supply for the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing; concurrence in supply for the Ministry of

Education and Training; concurrence in supply for the Office of the Premier; concurrence in supply for the Ministry of the Solicitor General and Correctional Services; concurrence in supply for the Ministry of Community and Social Services; concurrence in supply for the Ministry of the Environment; concurrence in supply for the Ministry of Health; concurrence in supply for the Ministry of the Attorney General; concurrence in supply for the Ontario Native Affairs Secretariat; concurrence in supply for the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

Pursuant to the agreement of the House of earlier today, there shall be recorded divisions on these motions and the vote shall be deferred until tomorrow.

Hon Mr Turnbull: I move adjournment of the House.

The Acting Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried. This House stands adjourned until 1:30 of the clock tomorrow afternoon.

The House adjourned at 2321.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon / L'hon Hilary M. Weston
Speaker / Président: Hon / L'hon Gary Carr
Clerk / Greffier: Claude L. DesRosiers
Clerk Assistant / Greffière adjointe: Deborah Deller
Clerks at the Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Lisa Freedman
Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Algoma-Manitoulin	Brown, Michael A. (L)	Halton	Chudleigh, Ted (PC)
Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford	Tascona, Joseph N. (PC)	Hamilton East / -Est	Agostino, Dominic (L)
Beaches-East York	Lankin, Frances (ND)	Hamilton Mountain	Bountrogianni, Marie (L)
Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale	Gill, Raminder (PC)	Hamilton West / -Ouest	Christopherson, David (ND)
Brampton Centre / -Centre	Spina, Joseph (PC)	Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington	Dombrowsky, Leona (L)
Brampton West-Mississauga / Brampton-Ouest-Mississauga	Clement, Hon / L'hon Tony (PC) Minister of the Environment, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre de l'Environnement, ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement	Huron-Bruce	Johns, Hon / L'hon Helen (PC) Minister of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation, minister responsible for seniors and women / ministre des Affaires civiques, de la Culture et des Loisirs, ministre déléguée aux Affaires des personnes âgées et à la Condition féminine
Brant	Levac, Dave (L)	Kenora-Rainy River	Hampton, Howard (ND) Leader of the New Democratic Party / chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Broadview-Greenwood	Churley, Marilyn (ND)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	Gerretsen, John (L)
Bruce-Grey	Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Kitchener Centre / -Centre	Wettlaufer, Wayne (PC)
Burlington	Jackson, Hon / L'hon Cameron (PC) Minister of Tourism / ministre du Tourisme	Kitchener-Waterloo	Witmer, Hon / L'hon Elizabeth (PC) Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Cambridge	Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Lambton-Kent-Middlesex	Beaubien, Marcel (PC)
Carleton-Gloucester	Coburn, Brian (PC)	Lanark-Carleton	Sterling, Hon / L'hon Norman W. (PC) Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, government House leader / ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales, leader parlementaire du gouvernement
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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)
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Durham	O'Toole, John R. (PC)	Mississauga Centre / -Centre	Sampson, Hon / L'hon Rob (PC) Minister of Correctional Services / ministre des Services correctionnels
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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)
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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)
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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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Gilles Bisson, Sean G. Conway, Alvin Curling,
Gerard Kennedy, Frank Mazzilli, John R. O'Toole,
R. Gary Stewart, Wayne Wettlaufer
Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes

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Règlements et projets de loi privés**

Chair / Présidente: Frances Lankin
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Garfield Dunlop
Gilles Bisson, Claudette Boyer, Brian Coburn,
Garfield Dunlop, Raminder Gill, Pat Hoy,
Frances Lankin, David Young
Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes

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