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**Legislative Assembly
of Ontario**

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de l'Ontario**

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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

Monday 12 June 2000

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Lundi 12 juin 2000

Speaker
Honourable Gary Carr

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable Gary Carr

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 12 June 2000

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 12 juin 2000

*The House met at 1330.
Prayers.*

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

PHILIPPINES INDEPENDENCE DAY

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough-Rouge River): I stand today with this great privilege, on behalf of the Liberal Party of Ontario, of recognizing this special event, the 102nd anniversary of Philippine independence. For more than 100 years now, the Philippines have been a free, independent and democratic republic.

Philippines Independence Day is an important date in history not only for Filipinos but also for Canadian citizens of Filipino heritage. In recognition of the immense economic and cultural contribution that Canadians of Filipino heritage have made to the province and the country, the blue, red and white flag of the independent Philippines was raised earlier today. The colours of the Philippine flag represent the indomitable spirit of Filipinos amidst adversities. They have become a symbol of democracy and freedom. Though many of us take our democratic system of government for granted, the celebration of the establishment of the democratic Republic of the Philippines serves to remind us that we must be vigilant and guard it well.

This celebration also gives us a welcome opportunity to strengthen our bonds of friendship and participation. I congratulate all the members of the Filipino community in Ontario. All Canadians join with you in celebrating your anniversary of freedom and self-determination. May your cultural heritage and deep religious faith serve to guide you. Mabuhay ang Filipinas.

I also want to recognize all the wonderful Filipinos who are joining us here today.

VOLUNTEERS

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): Last Thursday evening I was honoured to co-host with Janet Ecker the 2000 Volunteer Service Awards ceremony held in Whitby. It's a well-known fact that volunteers who put time and energy into their communities are making a significant contribution not just to their community but indeed to the province of Ontario.

Each year the Ontario government recognizes valuable volunteers with from five to 30 years of service with the

Outstanding Achievement Award, honouring exemplary performance, and the Volunteer Service Awards celebration of service.

The province also recognizes volunteer initiatives such as the Ontario screening initiative, safeguarding children, seniors and vulnerable adults. In addition, the Trillium fund's community- and province-wide grants of \$100 million annually also support such charitable organizations.

I'm proud to acknowledge the 38 out of 155 recipients that evening at the awards who live in my riding of Durham. Some of the nominating organizations that put forward the names include the Lions Club of Bowmanville and Newcastle, Cartwright public school community council, Clarington Community Care, the Ontario Working Dog Association, Newcastle and District Historical Society and the township of Scugog.

I congratulate all the volunteers who become involved in their communities in the region of Durham and personally extend my thanks for their service to our community. It is members like these who make our communities a better place to live and raise our families.

I'd also like to thank the staff at the Ministry of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation, specifically Nanda Casucci-Byrne.

GOVERNMENT FEES

Mr Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings): My statement today is to the Minister of Finance. This government in many ways has balanced its budget on the backs of the poor, the elderly, the young and the sick. However, I believe the government has reached a new low with its tax on orphans.

I have a young man in my riding whose parents were tragically killed in a car accident. The money from the insurance settlement was paid into court and is held in trust for him by the accountant of the Superior Court of Justice until he becomes of age.

He earns interest on this money, which the government taxes, and that's fair and normal. However, Minister, as of May 1, your government is charging him a special surcharge tax for every investment income credited to him and for every payment made out of his account, and indeed, an annual administration charge is now being added on to this orphan's trust fund account.

Whether you call it a user fee, a management fee or whatever, it is a tax on the orphans of this province. Surely, in our rush to balance the budget in this province,

we didn't have to, at the same time we were giving lower taxes to industry, offset that money with a special tax on those who have been unfortunately orphaned.

I call on the minister to immediately rescind that tax and place these most vulnerable citizens back on a level playing field rather than surcharging them because they have not the ability to fight back.

ONTARIO WORKS

Mr Brian Coburn (Carleton-Gloucester): I would like to share with the assembly a success story from my riding of Carleton-Gloucester involving the Ontario Works program set up by our government. As members undoubtedly know, this program is a growing success story, as evidenced by experiences in my riding and other ridings across Ontario. This program allows people on welfare the opportunity to develop skills, make contacts with potential employers and give something back to the community.

On Monday, June 5, my colleague the Honourable John Baird, Minister of Community and Social Services, announced that the Ontario government and its municipal partners have created over 30,000 placements through Ontario's workfare program since its inception over three years ago. In fact, the actual number of placements is double the number from only one year ago, keeping Ontario on the right track.

Why is this program such a success? The answer indeed is simple: Workfare gets people into the workforce. It enables them to gain self-confidence, which they either never had due to a lifelong dependence on welfare, or which they lost due to difficult circumstances that forced them into welfare in the first place. This program is remarkable in the way it allows people to make positive contributions to society while breaking the cycle of dependence which long-term welfare dependency breeds.

The story I'd like to share with the assembly today is one that has touched my staff and I personally. Through Ontario Works, a young lady was given the opportunity to gain valuable experience while practising her administrative skills working two days a week in my constituency office. This hand up helped her gain the confidence, essential job-related skills and practical experience she needed to find herself a meaningful job. In fact, within two months of working in my office, this young lady had found herself employment that allows her to put her skills to work.

I am proud of this success story, and I truly believe the Ontario Works program is an excellent initiative, furthering our commitment to ensure that Ontario continues to be a province of jobs, hope and opportunity.

HIGHWAY SAFETY

Mr Pat Hoy (Chatham-Kent Essex): I stand here today in horror and shock at the death of veteran OPP officer Sergeant Marg Eve on Highway 401 last week. My heart goes out to her family, friends and colleagues.

It is obvious that the accidents and the many deaths on 401 are not a coincidence. We have gone far beyond coincidence. This is a dangerous highway. If, for any reason, there is a problem on this killer stretch of road, there is no place to go. It is simply too narrow.

There has been more than a 1500% increase in fatalities over the previous 12 to 13 months. Speeding and aggressive drivers are a problem, but that is true anywhere. Why are the fatalities occurring here and why now? People do not turn into maniacs only when they enter Carnage Alley.

We cannot second-guess this tragedy, but I urge the Minister of Transportation to immediately implement photo radar, at least in this dangerous stretch. Photo radar is an effective deterrent, and it does not require chase cars on the road for the most frequent infraction, which is speeding.

The government must also proceed immediately, with the force of all its resources, to upgrade and widen this stretch of highway to protect the lives of motorists and our police officers. It could save the next life. Let's give our officers and all the driving public every safety advantage when they must be out there. Highway 401 must be wide enough, with level shoulders on both sides, so there's someplace to pull over safely in the event of any emergency.

How much public pressure will it take before the government listens and takes action?

1340

WHISTLE-BLOWER PROTECTION

Marilyn Churley (Broadview-Greenwood): Last week I raised concerns expressed by people who work at the Ministry of the Environment that they are under a gag order and fear for their jobs should they speak out on Walkerton and cuts to the environment. Now that the public inquiry has been called, it is essential that whistle-blower protection be proclaimed.

Whistle-blower protection was passed by the NDP in 1993 and unfortunately was not proclaimed because we were still in the process of putting the commissioner in place. It's now seven years since that act was passed. The NDP has been calling on the government repeatedly over the past five years to proclaim this law.

Today we're calling on the government to immediately, without delay, proclaim part IV of the Public Service and Labour Relations Statute Law Amendment Act covering the area of whistle-blower protection, as passed by the House in 1993.

It goes without saying, now that the inquiry has been called and the Premier has said repeatedly he wants all information on the table, that if he really means that, he will understand the importance of proclaiming this law today so that the workers, people who will be called forward to testify at the inquiry, will not fear for their jobs, as they do at this moment.

We call on the government to proclaim this law today.

SAINT PAUL HIGH SCHOOL

Mr Bart Maves (Niagara Falls): I am pleased to have the opportunity in the Legislature today to talk about an achievement of one of the high schools in my riding of Niagara Falls.

Saint Paul High School, of the Niagara Catholic District School Board, was presented the School.Net Award for Internet Site of the Week earlier this spring. School.Net is a national school Internet organization.

I had the opportunity to meet again recently with Nick Colosimo from Saint Paul High School, who brought the Web site to my attention. After having the opportunity to browse through the Web site myself, it is easy to understand why this site won this very special award.

This interactive site provides visitors with the opportunity to take a tour of the school, view upcoming academic and sporting activities, read the school newsletter, read course descriptions and be made aware of many other school activities.

I would like to take a moment to congratulate the Web site team at Saint Paul High School. The team is comprised of students Robert Adams, Jamie Laslo, Vince Lepiane, Christopher Massi, April Mullen, Orlando Pingue and Jason Shawana.

I would also like to congratulate teacher Robert DiPersio on his role as site coordinator and Mr Mike Mechelse for his support as the network technician.

I would encourage everyone, especially constituents in my riding, to view the Saint Paul High School Web site at www.niagararc.com.

OCUFA AWARDS

Mrs Marie Bountrogianni (Hamilton Mountain): On Friday, June 9, I had the opportunity to attend the annual awards luncheon of the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations. This organization represents approximately 10,000 professors and librarians from university faculty associations across Ontario. It was a wonderful event, at which the outstanding work of Ontario's university academic staff was recognized.

In particular, I want to mention the following professor award winners: Denis Marshall from Queen's University; Deborah Britzman from York University; Duncan Hunter of the University of Western Ontario; Leo Jonker, Queen's University; Marilyn Laiken, OISE; Miroslav Lovric, McMaster University; Patricia McKeever, University of Toronto; Michael Munro, University of Ottawa; Judith Poe, University of Toronto at Mississauga; and Jim Silcox, University of Western Ontario.

What an irony, that while OCUFA is recognizing the excellence of the faculty of our publicly funded universities, this government continues to undermine these institutions by introducing private, for-profit universities through the back door. This will further erode the resources available to our public universities, including the

availability of faculty which will need to be replaced by the thousands over the next 10 years.

This government makes a mockery of our public universities and the outstanding faculty who contribute so much to the students of Ontario. This government is still deluded in thinking there is no connection between the well-being of our public institutions and the future prosperity of Ontario.

The Liberal caucus would like to congratulate these professionals and recognize their valuable contribution.

MAYOR'S COMMENTS

Mrs Brenda Elliott (Guelph-Wellington): This Saturday's Hamilton Spectator reports that Dundas Liberal mayor John Addison has accused Wentworth-Burlington Conservative candidate Priscilla de Villiers of exploiting her daughter's death for political purposes. This is what the Liberal mayor said: "I just find it tacky and I think she's really out of line. If my son had been murdered 10 years ago, I certainly wouldn't be exploiting it to win an election. The introduction of her daughter is solely for political purposes and I find it distasteful." Later in the article he goes on to say. "I don't want to discuss her daughter. I don't want to hear about it."

If you put yourself in Priscilla's place, you can imagine the effect such an attack would have. In fact the article confirms the devastating effect that this assault did have on Priscilla.

While I hope Priscilla is able to properly respond in the future, I believe I speak for her and many others in public life when I say that most of us can look back and point to some specific personal event that prompted us to ultimately get involved in public issues and public life. We often hear speakers in this House return to specific events during debate that they refer to as having gotten them involved in politics. For some of us these events were as mundane as poor garbage pickup or unsafe crosswalks, but for others among us they were life-changing events that are not dimmed with the passage of time.

The mayor's disgusting and insensitive comments reflect poorly on the Liberal Party. I would suggest that Mr McGuinty, his candidate Ted McMeekin, and every member of the Liberal caucus owe Priscilla de Villiers a profound apology.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

PUBLIC INQUIRIES AMENDMENT ACT, 2000

LOI DE 2000 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES ENQUÊTES PUBLIQUES

Mr Flaherty moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 87, An Act to amend the Public Inquiries Act /
Projet de loi 87, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les enquêtes
publiques.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Is it the pleasure of
the House that the motion carry? Carried.

The Attorney General for a short statement.

**Hon Jim Flaherty (Attorney General, minister
responsible for native affairs):** I'll make a minister's
statement later.

MOTIONS

HOUSE SITTINGS

**Hon Norman W. Sterling (Minister of Inter-
governmental Affairs, Government House Leader):** I
move that, pursuant to standing order 9(c)(i), the House
shall meet from 6:45 pm to 9:30 pm on Monday, June 12,
Tuesday, June 13, and Wednesday, June 14, 2000, for the
purpose of considering government business.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Is it the pleasure of
the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say
"aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it. Carried.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

VICTIMS OF CRIME

**Hon Jim Flaherty (Attorney General, minister
responsible for native affairs):** This statement is with
respect to the commemoration of victims of crime. This
government has consistently said that we stand solidly on
the side of victims. I am proud to say that we have taken
a leadership role in acknowledging and addressing their
needs.

Our commitment to victims of crime is reflected in a
series of announcements we have made every year since
1995. In 1995 we enacted Ontario's historic Victims' Bill
of Rights. The Victims' Bill of Rights was an important
starting point for Ontario. It sent a clear signal that this
government is committed to supporting victims of crime.
It sent a clear signal that Ontario will show leadership in
ensuring that our justice system understands and respects
the needs of victims of crime.

This government has continued to build on this
commitment. In 1996 we began the expansion of pro-
grams to assist victims, such as the victim witness assist-
ance program and the victim crisis assistance and referral
service.

1350

In 1997, our Agenda for Action established a
comprehensive and coordinated response to address
violence against women, focusing on safety, justice and
prevention. In 1998, Ontario created Canada's first
Office for Victims of Crime to ensure that crime victims
in Ontario would have a clear voice as we moved for-
ward with improvements to the system and in services.
Today, I would especially like to acknowledge the
presence in the House of Sharon Rosenfeldt, who plays a
vital role for victims as chair of the Office for Victims of
Crime. This office is run by and for victims.

In 1999, our domestic violence justice strategy began
the important process of doubling the number of special-
ized domestic violence court programs to 16 across the
province and enhancing justice-related victims' services.
We also provide a range of other important services,
including sexual assault centres throughout Ontario and
our 24-hour-a-day victims' support line. In addition, we
have hired more crown attorneys to ensure that the voices
of victims and witnesses of crime are heard in the justice
system.

In the current budget, we committed to a significant
additional investment in safe communities, victims' ser-
vices, law enforcement and crime prevention. This in-
vestment totals \$111 million. Among new supports for
victims are: \$10 million annually to increase the number
of domestic violence courts by a further 50% to 24; \$10
million annually for programs to help women and
children who have experienced domestic violence; \$1
million to permanently establish the Office for Victims of
Crime; \$2 million annually to establish a specialized OPP
team to fight crimes that target senior citizens; and \$5
million annually for a prevention and intervention pro-
gram to help teachers identify children at risk of neglect
or physical or emotional harm.

But no matter how hard we try, we cannot make all the
needed changes to help victims all by ourselves. This is
because criminal laws are outside the province's control.
Criminal law is set in Ottawa by the federal government.
We have made considerable efforts to persuade the
federal government in Ottawa that the needs of victims
and public safety must be paramount. That is why I wrote
to the federal Minister of Justice five months ago to urge
her to amend the Criminal Code so that conditional
sentences can never again be handed out for certain vio-
lent crimes. To date, there has been no legislative action
by the federal Liberal government.

In the wake of federal Liberal inaction, a directive has
been issued by my ministry to assist prosecutors in mak-
ing appropriate sentencing submissions. We believe that
violent offences, including sexual offences that cause
psychological or physical harm, sexual offences against
children and driving offences causing death or serious
bodily harm, require sentences that deter and denounce
these crimes. The federal Liberal government must fol-
low our lead and make protecting victims a priority.

The changes we have made give victims a voice in the
justice system. At the same time, we must not forget the

voices of victims and the traumas that affected their lives. Yesterday, we honoured victims on Ontario's annual day of commemoration for victims of crime, which coincides with the anniversary of the proclamation of the Victims' Bill of Rights. In memory of those who lost their lives to violent crime, Ontario government-owned buildings flew flags at half-mast.

I represented the government in a ceremony held yesterday at Nathan Phillips Square in Toronto. Among the speakers were Priscilla de Villiers, founder of CAVEAT, and Debbie Mahaffey from the Office for Victims of Crime. These two women, and Sharon Rosenfeldt, who I introduced earlier in my remarks, perform valuable work and have given a voice to victims who, for the longest time, were silent in their suffering.

Today, I ask that we pause and reflect upon the loss, the pain and the suffering of those in our communities who have been victimized by crime and that we celebrate the courage, the hope and the strength of these victims and their families, who inspire us with their determination and their faith.

This government has heard the voices of victims and we have reflected upon the voices of those silenced by crime. We commemorate victims of crime in Ontario. They are in our prayers, and I know that all members of this House join me in honouring their struggle and their courage.

Mr Speaker, would you see fit to ask all members to rise for a minute of silence in commemoration of victims of crime and their families in Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Agreed? Agreed. Would our visitors in the galleries join us as well for a moment of silence.

The House observed a moment's silence.

WHISTLE-BLOWER PROTECTION

Hon Jim Flaherty (Attorney General, minister responsible for native affairs): This statement relates to the bill which I introduced a few moments ago.

What happened in Walkerton is a tragedy that must not be repeated. That is why it is so important that a full, open and public inquiry review what went wrong and why, and make recommendations that will avoid similar tragedies in the future.

The people of Walkerton demand answers; the Ontario public demands answers; Premier Harris and this government want answers.

On Friday, I was pleased to announce that Mr Justice Dennis O'Connor of the Ontario Court of Appeal has agreed to accept an appointment as a commission of inquiry under the Public Inquiries Act. Justice O'Connor is an eminent jurist and I am happy that someone of his reputation and stature has agreed to assist in this important inquiry.

The Chief Justice of Ontario, the Honourable Roy McMurtry, was involved in the selection of Justice O'Connor and has agreed to make his services available

for the duration of the inquiry. I thank the Chief Justice for his assistance in this regard.

As members will be aware, the appointment of a commission of inquiry is made by cabinet through order in council. That order will set out the terms of reference for the commission's work. I am still in the process of consulting with Mr Justice O'Connor about those terms of reference. I want to make sure that he is satisfied that the terms give him a free hand to look into everything needed to get to the bottom of this issue. I expect to announce the formal appointment by cabinet, including the terms of reference, tomorrow.

As Premier Mike Harris has already pledged, once the inquiry is formally launched, this government will co-operate fully. All members and employees of the Ontario government will be directed to furnish Justice Dennis O'Connor with whatever information or documents he requests. This is an important point. Ministers and staff will not be invited to co-operate, they will be directed to co-operate.

Further, a few minutes ago I introduced legislation that would protect any employee who participates in a public inquiry. If passed, the law would prohibit employment-based reprisals against anyone who discloses information in good faith to a commission established under the Public Inquiries Act. In particular, the proposed amendment to the Public Inquiries Act would, if passed, protect an employee who in good faith discloses information to a commission or makes representations as a party to a public inquiry, and make it an offence for an employer to discipline or dismiss an employee who engages in one of the above activities. Contravention would result in a fine of up to \$5,000.

It is proposed that the bill, once it becomes law, if passed by this Legislature, would apply effective June 12, 2000, that is, today. It is important to note that these protections would extend not only to Ontario government employees but to people employed anywhere.

We all want answers. We are committed to getting to the bottom of this issue. In closing, I encourage all members of the Legislature to support this important legislation, and I ask for their co-operation in ensuring quick passage.

1400

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): I want to take the opportunity to congratulate the government for taking my advice. While this is a step in the right direction, it is—and I think it's important to see it in the proper context—only a half-step. What it will do is ensure that employees who have something to tell us with respect to the Walkerton tragedy can step forward and do so without fear of reprisal. I am convinced that this legislation will do that.

But what we really should do here is ensure that those employees who have something to tell us in the future, related to any matter that affects the health and safety and well-being of Ontarians—that any employee in the provincial government has an opportunity to do so. It shouldn't have to be in connection with a particular

public inquiry. That protection should be afforded to all civil servants at any time should they wish to step forward because they feel they have important information and it's in the public interest that that information be shared because failure to put that information forward would present a real danger to the people of Ontario.

While this government has taken a step in the right direction, it is only half a step. On top of that, there is a law that could be proclaimed into force by the end of the day—it is there, it is waiting—and that would represent a full step and would really do justice to this apparently shared interest we have in protecting our civil servants who want to step forward and provide important information in the public interest.

VICTIMS OF CRIME

Mr Michael Bryant (St Paul's): It is sometimes said that the role of the official opposition is to force wind into the sails of government. On this day, with the introduction of this bill, we can say that Dalton McGuinty has pronounced on this issue with the force of a hurricane.

With respect to the Attorney General's statements on victims' rights, I wish we had more time and more opportunity.

Interjections.

Mr Bryant: It's difficult to hear over this cacophony of incoherence, but I will tell you this: I have listened to the voices of victims across this province as well, and here's what they've said. MPP Ernie Parsons and I met with the sexual assault centre in Quinte and district. I can tell you that they're not getting the stable funding to ensure they get the sexual assault crisis line they deserve. That's something this government could be doing for victims, but they're not.

I also met with the Nova Vita women's shelter, ably represented by David Levac, and as Mr Levac explained to me, they're not getting the funding for second-stage housing. In fact, they're not getting enough funding at all. They have to fundraise in order to get by. This government, which talks the talk about victims, needs to back it up with the appropriate investment so that victims are getting the access to justice and are getting the access to bail hearings, so that victims are getting the access to their legal rights that are created in order to permit them to fulfil these rights, and not just talk about them in the Legislature.

At the Haldimand-Norfolk women's services in Simcoe, they explained to me that they are getting no victims' access to bail hearings. At the Cayuga courthouse, the victim proximity is right next to the accused. The whole purpose of the victims' rights movement, amongst other things, thanks to some of the people who are here today, was to ensure that in the courts victims are treated appropriately, that victims aren't silenced, that victims get the opportunity to speak. In not all parts of this province is that the case. That's something this government could be doing.

I would be remiss without mentioning two further items. First, with respect to the Grandview survivors, I yet again call upon the Attorney General to release the internal government report of 1976, which will permit the full story to be told for these victims and for all those Ontarians who have grown up with this tragedy.

Last, how can we talk about victims' rights in this province without acknowledging that we rank fifth in the world in terms of children who are the victims of gun violence? Yet this government is positively in the holster of the gun lobby. On behalf of the victims of gun violence, it's time for this government to get out of the holster of the gun lobby and start acting for Ontarians.

WHISTLE-BLOWER PROTECTION

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): I want to respond to the Attorney General's announcement regarding the participation of public employees and other employees in public inquiries. I want to say to the Attorney General that two weeks ago I sent you a letter advocating that you should put this into the actual terms of reference of the commission of inquiry, and while I consider the legislation you have introduced today to be a step forward, I would still urge you to put this language into the terms of reference of the public inquiry.

As you know, this Legislature is scheduled to sit only until June 22, and your government has been known to allow important pieces of legislation to fall off the order paper before. So while I am pleased that you have introduced this legislation, I hope you will put similar language in the actual terms of reference of the inquiry so that there can be no doubt and so that the commissioner of the inquiry, from the inception of the inquiry, will be able to take that language and apply it within the civil service, within government agencies and elsewhere in quasi-government agencies.

The fact that you're prepared to pass this into legislation sometime down the road does not do away with the need to have this very language—and I suggested language even stronger than this in my letter to you—in the terms of reference of the commission of inquiry.

I find it interesting that you have chosen to proceed by way of legislation rather than putting it in the terms; I hope still that you'll put it into the terms. I want to say again, I hope you'll put some other things in the terms of reference of the inquiry, most specifically the need for a very early interim report from the commission of inquiry, because as you know, Mr Attorney General, sometimes in the past governments have allowed commissions of inquiry to go on for four or five years. That may be necessary to sort through all the information, but to deal with the immediate tragedy and crisis, it will be necessary to have an interim report from the commissioner. I would suggest an interim report by this time next year. I say again, I hope in the interests of getting all of the information and getting the information out such that it arrives in a pertinent, relevant way, that you'll include that in the terms of reference of the inquiry.

I want to say as well to the Attorney General that we gave our suggestions to you on what should be included in the terms of reference of the inquiry. We've heard nothing back from you other than this statement today that you're going to proceed by legislation.

I would have hoped that you would have stood in your place today to tell us what advice you've accepted and what the terms of the inquiry are that you are thinking about at this point in time. I think you need to do that, and I'm calling on you to do that further before setting out the terms in an order in council.

1410

VICTIMS OF CRIME

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): I want the Attorney General to know that we join with him and the government in commemorating the victims of crime, of course. It's a most serious matter, and it causes some concern when I listen to the Attorney General and find his comments marred firstly by the clear partisanship of them as he participates in an upcoming federal election campaign, but it's of even greater concern when he leads off with reference to his government's Victims' Bill of Rights.

We should be commemorating as well the anniversary of Mr Justice Day's ruling here in the province of Ontario, which said that that piece of legislation contained within it no rights; that it, in effect, wasn't worth the paper it was written on. We've seen that impacting on victims and their positioning through the court system ever since 1995.

Bradley and I raised cases from Niagara, Ms Even and Ms Vanscoy, both from the Niagara region, who had very clearly been denied rights. As a matter of fact, it was their litigation that made it clear in our courts that this government not only hadn't stood up for victims with their Victims' Bill of Rights, it clearly had abandoned them. In the course of 13 months now, it has made no effort to redress the serious errors contained in the Victims' Bill of Rights, errors that were pointed out during the course of second and third reading debate here in the Legislature by the members of the opposition parties and warnings that were given to this government.

I say to you, Attorney General, if you were really serious about victims and rights, you'd be introducing a new Victims' Bill of Rights with teeth, that would give victims the rights that they deserve in this province.

MARGARET EVE

Mr Dave Levac (Brant): Mr Speaker, on a point of order: I sadly rise today and seek unanimous consent of this House to quiet ourselves and ask for a moment's silence for Margaret Eve, who has unfortunately died as a result of an injury that was received while on duty as an OPP officer in the Chatham-Kent area.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Is there unanimous consent? Agreed. Will all the members and our guests in the galleries kindly join us for a moment of silence.

The House observed a moment's silence.

The Speaker: I thank all members and our guests.

The member for Parkdale-High Park on a point of privilege.

GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING

Mr Gerard Kennedy (Parkdale-High Park): I rise today on a point of privilege. As required by standing order 21(c), I filed the appropriate notice with your office this morning and I would like, very quickly, to make my case.

The point of privilege I wish to make arises from a radio advertisement that's currently running on radio stations around the province of Ontario. It is an ad paid for by the government of Ontario using public funds. This is the text of the advertisement: "After-school activities like sports, choir and science clubs are important to Ontario's children. Unfortunately, once again, our kids are facing the threat of having these activities cancelled. We don't believe that children should be used as bargaining chips by teachers' unions. That's why we, the government of Ontario, are taking action to ensure that these important activities are provided to our children, because we believe in putting kids first. A message from the government of Ontario."

It is my submission to you, Mr Speaker, that this advertisement is in contempt of this Legislature. Erskine May explains the concept of contempt in the following terms:

"Generally speaking, any act or omission which obstructs or impedes either House of Parliament in the performance of its functions, or which obstructs or impedes any member or officer of such House in the discharge of his duty, or which has a tendency, directly or indirectly, to produce such results may be treated as contempt even though there is no precedent of the offence. It is therefore impossible to list every act which might be considered to amount to a contempt, the power to punish for such as offence being of its nature discretionary...."

"Indignities offered to the House by words spoken or writings published reflecting on its character or proceedings have been constantly punished by both the Lords and the Commons upon the principle that such acts tend to obstruct the Houses in the performance of their functions by diminishing the respect due to them...."

"Other acts besides words spoken or writings published reflecting on either House or its proceedings which, though they do not tend directly to obstruct or impede either House in the performance of its functions, yet have a tendency to produce this result indirectly or by bringing such House into odium, contempt or ridicule, or by lowering its authorities may constitute contempt."

I think this ad pertains to rulings that have been made previously in this Legislature, for example, the important

ruling by former Speaker Stockwell on January 22, 1997, involving a government pamphlet outlining its plans for reforming municipal government in the city of Toronto. The opposition indicated then that the advertising occurred in advance of consideration by the House of legislative measures that would be necessary to implement the reform agenda in advance of public hearings on these measures.

In this case, Speaker Stockwell ruled that the government advertising was in contempt of the Legislature, and I quote:

“In my opinion, they convey the impression that the passage of the requisite legislation was not necessary or was a foregone conclusion, or that the assembly and the Legislature had a pro forma, tangential, even inferior role in the legislative and lawmaking process, and in doing so, they appear to diminish the respect that is due to this House. I would not have come to this view had these claims or proposals—and that is all they are—been qualified by a statement that they would only become law if and when the Legislature gives its stamp of approval to them.”

Mr Speaker, it is my assertion that this is also the case with this ad. It suggests we do not live in a democracy where debate about legislation matters or where hearings matter, where the public can come forward with views and have their views listened to and which may lead to changes in the legislation.

This ad pertains specifically to Bill 74, a bill that, when these advertisements started in heavy rotation at various radio stations around the province, was actually in minuscule hearings dictated by a closure motion put forward by this government. That closure motion limited public input. It had the effect of restricting it to two hours. This is actually the wording and the specificity put in the closure motion: two hours in the city of Barrie and one day, a Friday, in the city of Ottawa—10 hours in total.

There is no question that these advertisements took place deliberately at the same time that very minor opportunities were being provided to the public to have the same effect: to cloud over the participation, and the demand of the public to participate, in the said hearings. There was no qualifying statement in the ad that the government's changes or action will only become law if passed by the Legislature.

In his ruling Speaker Stockwell noted that previous Speakers had “strong words” for ministers or the government of the day on the subject of government advertising. He stated, “It is not enough for yet another Speaker to issue yet another warning or caution in circumstances where the wording or circulation ... cross the line ... that a reader of that document could be left with an incorrect impression that undermines respect for our parliamentary institutions.”

It is not enough that another warning be issued today. In the run-up to the provincial election last year, this government spent over \$100 million on government

advertising of a purely partisan, political, self-serving nature.

The Provincial Auditor has now more than once called upon the government to establish advertising guidelines. In a March 1999 letter to the Liberal House leader, Jim Bradley, Auditor Peters wrote, “I believe it would be in the interest of improving public accountability, for the government and/or the Legislature as a whole, to consider the establishment of principles, guidelines and criteria that clearly define the nature and characteristics of taxpayer-funded advertising.”

In his annual report to the Legislature last fall, the auditor reiterated his concerns with government advertising and again advised the adoption of guidelines: “With respect to the wide public debate on the subject of government advertising, we believe it would be in the interest of improving public accountability for the government and/or the Legislature as a whole to consider the establishment of principles, guidelines and criteria that clearly define the nature and characteristics of taxpayer-funded advertising.”

The auditor also revealed in his report that in December 1998 he had sent a letter to the government expressing his concerns and providing the government with information on this matter. Mr Peters has emphasized the highly unusual number of inquiries he has received questioning the use of public funds for certain advertising and public communications campaigns.

As well, Speaker Stockwell expressed his grave concerns about this government's use of advertising.

“At this point in my ruling, I want to express some personal concerns about the propriety of public funds being used to advocate, through advertising, a particular position on a matter that is before the House. Let me be clear: I am not speaking about politically paid-for advertising, but rather about funds that are contributed to by every Ontarian, regardless of his or her political view. Personally, I would find it offensive if taxpayer dollars were being used to convey a political or partisan message. There is nothing wrong with members debating an issue and influencing public opinion; in fact, it is part of our parliamentary tradition to do so. But I feel that it's wrong for a government to attempt to influence public opinion through advertising that is paid for with public funds.”

We had a controversial bill, Bill 74, put into a closure motion with limited, precious time for public debate. I would add, not a dime of public expenditure was spent to advertise those hearings. Yet we have varying accounts of from \$200,000 to \$500,000 worth of advertising being spent at the very selfsame time that the public is supposed to be participating in these parliamentary-mandated hearings.

1420

In point of fact I would submit to you, Mr Speaker, that the conjunction of those two things: heavy rotation advertising—and I would counsel you to look at the wording of the ad, because it talks about action already taken by this government without regard for any parlia-

mentary authority. But it also takes place in a medium, radio, that is measured by impressions. I would counsel that it matters that this government bought a heavy rotation of impressions on radio at the same time as it's trying to submerge the actual public hearings and their availability to the public—their access to us, their elected representatives, to consider, to listen, to have some regard for their point of view, to perhaps change what they in their wisdom tell us needs to be improved about this particular bill.

Instead we have this blanket of paid-for, government-funded—not partisan-paid-for, not paid for by the Progressive Conservative Party, but government, taxpayer-funded advertising subverting the effect of those hearings and the access that the public has to this bill.

I would like to close by quoting Speaker Fraser in Ottawa on the subject of government advertising: “We are a parliamentary democracy, not a so-called executive democracy, nor a so-called administrative democracy.” This ad ignores that reality.

I submit to you, Mr Speaker, that this advertisement does constitute a prima facie case of contempt. I ask for your urgent and serious consideration. We rely on you to be protected from this government when it abuses its power to have a circumspection around public debate on the matters of the day, the very job we are all sent to stand in our place and conduct here in the first place.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): I thank the member.

Hon Norman W. Sterling (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Government House Leader): Mr Speaker, on the same point: First of all, there was no closure moved on this bill. There was a time allocation motion put forward with regard to this bill which was included in our standing orders—

Interjections.

The Speaker: You can heckle on other things. I do need to hear this. All sides waited patiently while their member did this and went through the detail of it. A point of privilege is a very important matter, and I can't hear it if other people are yelling. So I would appreciate the indulgence from all members.

Hon Mr Sterling: There was a time allocation motion moved. The provision for it was included in our standing orders between the years 1990 and 1995 by the previous government.

The ad, as I understand it, says that the government is taking action, and we are taking action on a number of fronts. A number of negotiations have gone on in meetings between the ministry, as I understand it, and various boards, meetings with teachers, to try to resolve disputes in the past which denied young people extracurricular activities across this province. We tried in the past to prevent the taking away of a very important part of a young person's education, and this government has taken action in the past with regard to doing that.

There is nothing in the ad which makes a presumption that the legislation is law or has passed, or that this Legislature has done something that it has not already done. You could in fact characterize the introduction of

the piece of legislation, the first reading of this bill, as taking action. That is a matter which has already taken place. Surely the government is not shackled by the standing orders or the rules of this particular Legislature in not being able to put forward what its policy is from time to time and wanting to take action with regard to a particular matter. That can be in the form of a whole range of ways that the government can take, but, Mr Speaker, I believe if you read and get the text of these ads, you will find there is no presumption that this Legislature has done anything or will do anything in the future.

We are proud of the fact that we are taking action in this matter. We are proud of the fact that we are going to restore and assure that extracurricular activities for the young people across this province will continue to be part of the normal education system.

The Speaker: I thank the member for his input. I will reserve judgment on that. If the member for Parkdale-High Park has any transcripts that would be helpful to pass along, that would be helpful as well. I thank all the members for their input.

ORAL QUESTIONS

WATER QUALITY

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): My question is for the Premier. I want to return to this memo of January 2000 prepared by the water policy branch of the Ministry of the Environment, a very important document that your government sat on since January of this year.

One of the statements made in this leaked memo says, “A number of smaller municipalities do not comply with the minimum monitoring and reporting requirements.” That information is of real concern to many Ontarians today. They're wondering, and I think they've got a right to know, if they're on that list. Are they today living in one of those smaller municipalities which is not living up to its responsibilities when it comes to monitoring and reporting?

Premier, will you now release a complete list of the municipalities that are failing to meet their minimum standards for drinking water?

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): The Minister of the Environment can respond.

Hon Dan Newman (Minister of the Environment): As I indicated two weeks ago, a review of all certificates of approval for all water treatment facilities in our province is underway; approximately 630 facilities in our province are being looked at. I have indicated that all those certificates of approval would be reviewed by the end of the year. In addition to that, inspections would be done of all facilities in the province to ensure that each and every facility in our province is in compliance. If a facility is found not to be in compliance, a field order

would be issued and measures would be taken to bring that facility back into compliance.

Mr McGuinty: Minister, a memo was prepared in your ministry in January of this year and it talked about a number of smaller municipalities which aren't doing everything they should be doing to make sure their community members are getting safe drinking water. Today Ontarians want to know which communities are on that list. They want to know why you won't provide them with that list. They believe they've got a right to know who is on that list.

Do you know what I want to bring to your attention here? Back in 1994, Mike Harris, in dealing with a matter that dealt with drinking water, said the following: "We too ... think it is the minister's responsibility to notify the public when they are at risk or potentially at risk." That's what your Premier said. He believed, at the time at least, that it was important to disclose information about safe or unsafe drinking water.

Minister, why won't you provide the people of Ontario today with that secret list you've been sitting on that lets us know whose water today is not safe?

Hon Mr Newman: Again, there are the four investigations underway, including the public inquiry.

Water is tested in our province. Populations of under 100,000 have their water tested a minimum eight times per month plus an additional test for every 1,000 of population. Populations in excess of 100,000 have 100 tests done per month, with an additional test for every 10,000 of population.

I can tell you that all the investigations that are underway are obviously going to find answers. That's what everyone in Ontario wants: answers to what happened in Walkerton.

Mr McGuinty: The answer I want has to do with who is on a list prepared and presented to your ministry by your employees that outlines in detail those small Ontario municipalities that are not doing the minimum monitoring and reporting requirements. That's what Ontarians want to know today.

1430

Walkerton is huge news. Seven people died there. Ontarians right across the province have had their confidence shaken in their own drinking water. On top of that, last week we found out that there was a memo prepared, presented to you and your ministry, which provides a list of small municipalities that have not been able to provide their residents with safe drinking water. On behalf of all of those Ontarians living in all those small communities, why will you not today produce that list?

Hon Mr Newman: That's why all certificates of approval are going to be reviewed for all water facilities in the province. That's why inspections of the plants are going to take place by the end of the year—some 630. Those sites that are not in compliance will be brought into compliance.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): New question.

Mr McGuinty: My question is to the Premier and it has to do with the same subject. When we've been talking about this issue, Ontarians have been sorely disappointed in the approach brought by this Premier and this government to this terrible tragedy. This government is into laying blame elsewhere, it's hiding vital information and it is now refusing to act on information to which it alone is privy.

One of the things that frightens me most when it comes to this issue is that there is no law in Ontario which would mandate safe water. The minister understands that; the Premier understands that. We have directives, we have guidelines, we have objectives, none of which amount to anything in a court of law. We don't have, today in Ontario, an Ontario safe drinking water act. Premier, will you now commit to passing in Ontario an enforceable Ontario safe drinking water act?

Hon Mr Harris: The tragedy in Walkerton is something that certainly has touched us all and is a very serious situation. It is a tragedy, and I have to tell you that our government has responded very quickly. I think within the first day the Legislature sat, the minister made a statement of reinforcing the requirements of all municipalities. We sent a signal that we will do everything possible to get to the bottom of what happened in Walkerton. We've made it very clear that we'll leave no stone unturned in not only getting to the bottom of this inquiry but ensuring that we can restore confidence, not only to the people of Walkerton but to all citizens of the province.

There is a review underway. If legislation is required, we'll pass legislation. If more money is required, we'll have more money. If more people are required, we'll have more people. We've said there is absolutely nothing we're not going to do to restore confidence in clean water throughout the whole province.

Mr McGuinty: Premier, if you are dedicated to restoring confidence in Ontarians when it comes to the safety of their own drinking water, then why won't you commit today to passing an Ontario safe drinking water act, something with real teeth in it, something that will be enforceable, something that will ensure that any contraventions that might have happened in the past would be against the law in Ontario from here on in?

My greatest concern is that this public inquiry is going to conclude and that it will determine that from a purely technical perspective, nobody broke the law in Ontario when it came to the Walkerton tragedy because all we have on our books are objectives, guidelines and directives. What we need, and what Ontarians want by means of reassurance, is an Ontario law that will provide them with the necessary confidence that there is now a law on the books that requires that safe water be delivered and that talks about the responsible parties. We committed to this, by the way, at the time of the last provincial election. I'm asking the Premier, on behalf of all those Ontarians who have had their confidence shaken in the safety of their water, why will he not commit to passing

that kind of legislation, with teeth in it, that will make safe water, for the first time in Ontario, enforceable?

Hon Mr Harris: I think the member would agree that the inquiry by the Ministry of the Environment, the coroner's inquest, the judicial inquiry, all of the reviews are designed to do just that: Are there rules and regulations in place that were followed? Are they not followed? Are they enforceable? Should we have enhanced legislation? Would legislation give it more force of law? I realize that you've made all your conclusions already, but we intend to wait for the Ministry of the Environment to report. Should it be deemed advisable that this will enhance protection, I think it's a good idea, and of course we will proceed. But we're not going to proceed willy-nilly; we're not going to proceed in a knee-jerk fashion. We would like to proceed in a logical way, seeking all the expert advice we can, including the advice that—since you have already come to your conclusion.

Mr McGuinty: Premier, last week you were singing a different song. Last week when you were asked by a reporter, "Have you taken any preventative measures?" you said, "I'm not waiting for any inquiry to fix any problems we may see in any part of the system." This is a huge problem. Ontario doesn't have a safe drinking water act on the books. There is no law in Ontario today—and I'm sure Ontarians would be shocked to learn of this—that mandates safe drinking water. We have directives, we have guidelines and we have objectives. That is the painful truth, reluctant though government members may be to admit to this.

Premier, you said yourself just last week you're not going to wait for any inquiry to do what has to be done. I can tell you what has to be done to begin to restore some confidence of Ontarians in their own drinking water and to restore some sense of sanity when it comes to protecting Ontarians from contaminated water. Why would you not commit to passing today in Ontario, introducing at the earliest possible opportunity, a safe drinking water act?

Hon Mr Harris: I honestly don't believe it's helpful to have nonsensical fearmongering. There's lots of legislation, there's lots of regulation, there are lots of rules and procedures that are to be followed. It is certainly against the contract of employment to not follow those rules and regulations and it is against the law, of course, to break the law.

I would say I appreciate the advice of the member and I appreciate the advice that we will receive from the review that's taking place right now in the Ministry of the Environment. As soon as we have information, we will release it. As soon as we have anything that we think will improve confidence in the water system, as soon as we have anything that we think, whether it's legislation—call it a safe drinking water act—in addition to the other legislation we have, or call it regulation or call it procedure, we will act on it.

MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): My question is for the Premier. Residents of many Ontario communities are worried about the safety of their drinking water. In Rocklyn, which is southwest of Owen Sound, residents have learned that they have high levels of E coli contamination in a number of wells that serve over 30 homes. Your government has known about this since February, but a Ministry of the Environment spokesperson has said that the MOE doesn't have the resources, the staff, to investigate the problems in Rocklyn until the serious situation in Walkerton is dealt with.

Premier, will you admit that when you told the citizens of Ontario on May 29 that the cuts to the Ministry of the Environment had no impact on the delivery of service, in particular the delivery of quality, clean, safe water, you were wrong in saying that? And will you instruct your government to deal with this serious problem in Rocklyn right away and restore the resources to the Ministry of the Environment so they can do that? Would you do those things?

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): If there are specifics, I'll ask the Minister of the Environment to respond in supplementaries. Let me say if there's any situation anywhere in the province that needs investigation, we have made and will make available every resource and every professional and every body that we can find anywhere in the world to solve the problem. That's our commitment.

1440

Mr Hampton: Here's the problem: You're out there saying that cuts to the Ministry of the Environment haven't affected the capacity of staff at the Ministry of the Environment to protect our drinking water. There is a serious problem in Rocklyn. The Ministry of the Environment has known about it since February. Today a spokesperson for the Ministry of the Environment said: "We can't do it now. It'll have to wait until later. It'll have to wait until it would be the earliest convenience for staff to do it." Premier, he's contradicting what you said. My question is: Who's right here?

Ministry of the Environment staff, who are supposed to be out there protecting drinking water, are saying clearly, "We don't have the staff." That's why Rocklyn has to wait. That's why they've been waiting since February. They've been waiting since before the tragedy happened at Walkerton, and you're saying there's no problem.

Premier, do you still believe your cuts to the Ministry of the Environment haven't had an effect on the capacity of your government to ensure the citizens of Ontario that their drinking water is safe?

Hon Mr Harris: I think I made it very clear that this government has taken actions to improve the efficiency of the delivery of services in all ministries, including the Ministry of the Environment.

On the other hand, we clearly have a serious problem in Walkerton, which has led to seven deaths and a number of people being injured. So, quite correctly, we have asked for an internal review of all government actions, of Ministry of the Environment actions. We've asked for a coroner's inquest and for a judicial inquiry to review. If you have specifics vis-à-vis Rocklyn, I'd be happy to look into it.

Mr Hampton: Premier, in 1997, Ministry of the Environment officials told your government that there were problems ahead in terms of drinking water. That's on the record. In January of this year, Ministry of the Environment officials put forward a paper which said there are serious problems. They were almost clairvoyant on the scenario that happened in Walkerton. Your government now says you didn't see it, you didn't hear about it and you don't want to know about it.

Here's another example, Rocklyn. They have known about E coli in the water since February, before the Walkerton tragedy happened, and your Ministry of the Environment officials are saying clearly and simply: "Sorry, we don't have the staff to do this job. You will have to wait."

Premier, how many other communities like Rocklyn will have to wait because the Ministry of the Environment doesn't have the staff and the expertise to do the job any more, and how long will people have to wait before you admit that your government cut the staff and cut the expertise and that's why there's a problem? How long do people have to wait?

Hon Mr Harris: When it comes to clean water, nobody should have to wait. You brought forward an example; I'd be happy to look into it. If there is a problem with the water in Rocklyn, if there's any doubt, they will not have to wait. We will get on to it. If there are other examples, we will respond as well.

The Ministry of the Environment and the minister himself can talk to you about priority areas and placing priorities. Clearly if there is one person anywhere in the province, anywhere within our jurisdiction—I can't speak for some of the federal jurisdictions and native reserves, but we would be happy to assist there as well; I want to be as inclusive as I can. If there's any person threatened anywhere and a concern about drinking water, then we will immediately look into it.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): New question.

Ms Marilyn Churley (Broadview-Greenwood): Premier, as my leader has already told you, your government has known about this problem in Rocklyn since at least February and you haven't acted.

On May 29 you told this House that cuts to the environment ministry had no impact on the delivery of service. I have letters from May 1996 and January 1997 from the assistant deputy minister in charge of operations at the environment ministry about the elimination of 752 positions, 279 of them inside the operations division. It tells us, "Staff reductions have been made in the investigations and enforcement branch." It goes on to say,

"These measures will have an obvious impact on the amount of work we can accomplish."

Premier, I'm going to ask you again: Will you admit at least that you misspoke on May 29, or do you want to blame your staff again?

Hon Mr Harris: I think, by way of calling the inquiries—look, we're asking for a review of every action that has been taken by this government vis-à-vis the Ministry of the Environment over whatever period of time you, those interested or the commissioner deems appropriate, and clearly that will be the appropriate vehicle to look at it. I can repeat to you that at no time has this government ever taken an action that we felt would ever jeopardize water, water quality, safety of people in the province. I think common sense would tell you we would not do that.

Ms Churley: Premier, you were warned by your own staff that your cuts were going to have an impact on your ability to keep our drinking water safe. That's on the record. These letters I referred to were written by the ADM in charge of operations at MOE about the cut of 752 staff. She writes, and I quote: "I wish I could tell you that the surplus notices issued today are the last we will issue for the foreseeable future. Unfortunately, this is not the case." There's even a section anticipating questions from ministry staff themselves: "Why, when we are the front-line program delivery arm of the ministry, did our division take such a big hit?" The answer: "The savings required to be made by the ministry were allocated across the divisions."

Premier, she was talking about you. You made those decisions. You can't blame your staff for this one; it was your decision to make these cuts. Are you waiting for another tragedy such as happened in Walkerton before you will admit you were wrong and restore the cuts?

Interjections.

Ms Churley: Premier, don't wait until the end of an investigation. You know the cuts are hurting your ability to do the job. Tell us today that you'll restore those staff to the ministry immediately.

Hon Mr Harris: I think it's pretty public knowledge we made a number of reductions. In fact, we campaigned and committed to bail the province out of bankruptcy that your party left us in. We would have to find efficiencies. We would have to find savings. We would have to find more efficient, more effective ways of delivering programs. Obviously not everybody agreed with that. Not everybody in the civil service agreed with that, and I think there was a 40-day strike by a number of members of the civil service, saying, "We disagree with that."

On the other hand, we've made thousands and thousands of decisions to get this province back on track, to get more effective delivery of services. I was told, for example, by your party you couldn't cut taxes and balance the books. Lo and behold, we cut taxes and balanced the books ahead of schedule. There are lots of people who disagree with our government and our policies and our party, and I appreciate and understand that.

What's important here is that we get to the bottom. Has any action this government has taken, has any action a municipal government has taken, has any action a lab has taken, has any action an individual has taken, contributed to the tragedy at Walkerton? If so, how can we find that out and how can we—

The Speaker: Order. I'm afraid the Premier's time is up.

EDUCATION LEGISLATION

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition):

The question is to the Minister of Education. Minister, you made an announcement this morning that you'll be tinkering, when it comes to Bill 74, with the extra-curricular provision. We've known for quite some time that this tinkering was on the way. But the fact of the matter is, your bill is fatally flawed. It is beyond redemption. It cannot be saved.

Had you taken the time to attend some of the committee hearings, you would have learned something about your bill. You could even have attended the Liberal hearings; you would have learned something there as well about your bill. What we have is a common thread that runs through the commentary we received about your bill: "It's a money grab," "It's a power grab," and, most importantly, as one teacher put it, "I won't have more time with my kids; I'll have less time with more kids." That's fundamentally what this bill is all about. It is going to ensure that our teachers have less time to spend with our children. This bill was flawed from the start, Minister. Why don't you admit that? Why don't you agree today that you're going to withdraw Bill 74?

1450

Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Education): I realize the honourable member spent his Friday at the hearings. I was hoping perhaps today he might make some recommendations about amendments to improve the bill, but instead he is asking this question today, which is fine.

First of all, where in Bill 74 does it say anything about taking money out of the system? As a matter of fact, we are spending \$263 million new dollars to bring down class size in elementary and secondary classes. If he disagrees with that, perhaps he should say that, but Bill 74 is not about taking money out of the system. Quite the contrary, it is making sure that more new money goes into the system, but it is also ensuring that we have the ability to make sure those dollars go where they need to go.

If a board decides to use money for textbooks for something else, if he says we should stand back and say, "Gee, let's let that happen," perhaps he should tell the parents out there who have been crying for more accountability in the education system for years.

Mr McGuinty: Do you want to know what I think? I think you should stop wrecking public education in Ontario.

Minister, this bill has prompted something which is unprecedented in the history of this province. You re-

ceived a letter criticizing your bill from 14 separate groups which are committed to public education: French, public and separate board representatives, trustees, principals, teachers. They're all there. You have a copy of this letter. Never before has this happened in the history of this province, for that many people to come together. Teachers, principals, trustees, superintendents, directors, parents, and on and on, have come together and have asked that you take this bill and kill it because it is contrary to public education and it is contrary to meeting the interests of our children in their capacity as students.

Minister, had you attended any of the hearings, you would have quickly learned that there is no public support for Bill 74. On behalf of Ontarians and on behalf of public education, I am asking you today to do the right thing and withdraw your bill.

Hon Mrs Ecker: The honourable member has a funny definition of "wrecking." A new, better curriculum: That's wrecking the school system? More money for special education, more teachers, smaller class sizes, more help for students who need extra help—that is about improving the education system.

The member says we should withdraw Bill 74. I know he has friends in the teacher unions, but is he saying that when they use extracurricular activities as a union bargaining ploy we're supposed to stand back and let it happen? That legislation says that is not to be used as a strike. If he doesn't agree with that, perhaps he should tell all those parents and students out there who have had those opportunities taken away from them. Parents said it was not acceptable. They asked this government to act. This government is acting. Unfortunately, he doesn't seem to think it's a problem.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Mr Doug Galt (Northumberland): My question is directed to the minister responsible for children. In communities across Ontario—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Would the member take his seat. Order. Member for Northumberland.

Mr Galt: My question is to the minister responsible for children. In communities across Ontario, families are facing the challenge of providing for children with special needs. In both their home and in their school environment, these children require additional support to learn, grow and achieve their full potential. In my riding of Northumberland, there are a number of parents who are faced with this challenge and need the assurance that our government is working towards improving the supports available.

Minister, what new initiatives have we introduced to help Ontario's special-needs children and their families?

Hon Margaret Marland (Minister without Portfolio [Children]): I'd like to thank Doug Galt, the member for Northumberland, for his question.

Our government has taken many positive steps to ensure that Ontario's special-needs children receive the

extra care and support they require. Last year I announced \$11 million in new funding for children with intensive special needs. This included \$7 million annually for additional respite care for families caring for almost 1,700 children who are medically fragile and technologically dependent. Also, children's treatment centres received an increase of \$4.5 million in annual funding. Our \$20-million investment in preschool speech and language programs will increase this year by \$6 million annually, to include children over 5 years of age not yet attending school.

Mr Galt: I'm certainly pleased to hear that our government is continuing to improve the supports we provide for disabled children and their families. Certainly the list you just gave was very impressive. Could you please explain some of the other new initiatives that have been introduced as part of the commitment to assist our special-needs children?

Hon Mrs Marland: All children are a priority of this government, particularly children who require specialized services and support. This year, we are increasing special education funding by \$140 million annually for early intervention programs. We are the first government ever to be concerned enough to commit \$19 million annually to help children with autism receive the treatment they need.

Another new program includes \$7 million in annual funding towards a screening program for infant hearing, and \$4 million to test and identify young francophone students with learning disabilities. Our government is truly dedicated to ensuring that these at-risk children continue to receive the essential support they need. We believe in opening the doors to our children with special needs.

NANTICOKE GENERATING STATION

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): My question is for the Minister of the Environment. When it comes right down to it, Minister, we believe the environment is really an important health issue. It's your job to protect the water we drink. You've failed on that score. It's your job to protect the air we breathe. You've failed on that score as well.

Over the weekend, people in southern Ontario got another taste of the smog that's expected to kill prematurely at least 1,800 more people this year. This morning, our environmental record got another black eye. I've got a copy of a release that was put out in Buffalo. It tells us that today there's going to be a billboard unveiled on the corner of Elmwood and Mohawk, which will help educate New York state residents on air quality issues affecting this region. You know what that billboard says? It says: "Buffalo is choking on Ontario's smog. Protect our children's lungs."

In particular, they are very concerned about the pollution coming from the Nanticoke generating station, which is the biggest coal-fired electrical generating station in North America. At the time of the last cam-

paign, my party committed to converting that plant into a cleaner, natural-gas-burning generating station. Are you now prepared to convert Nanticoke into a cleaner burning, gas-fired electrical generating station?

Hon Dan Newman (Minister of the Environment): The protection of the environment is indeed a priority for the government. The protection of the water, our air and our land is very important. What's important with respect to smog is that smog knows no borders. Over half of the smog that comes into Ontario comes from the United States; that's where it originates. It doesn't stop at the 49th parallel. We're doing our part here in Ontario. We've placed a moratorium on the sale of all coal-fired generation plants in Ontario. There are other measures we have taken—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Minister, take a seat. We'll just wait. Sorry for the interruption, Minister.

1500

Hon Mr Newman: There are other things, like the anti-smog action plan, which is going to reduce emissions that affect smog in our province. As a province, we are also committed to accelerating our commitments. We set a target of 45% reduction by 2015. We said we'll move that up to 2010, but we want the United States to do their part as well.

The Speaker: Supplementary?

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): Not only is western New York choking on Ontario smog, but southern Ontario is choking on smog created in southern Ontario itself. It's from the Nanticoke coal-fired power plant, the largest plant of its kind in North America, a plant with totally inadequate pollution controls on it. The toxic soup that pours from the Nanticoke plant spews across farmland in the Niagara Peninsula, converts to acid rain, pollutes Lake Erie and causes smog which results, according to the Ontario Medical Association, in 1,800 premature deaths in Ontario per year.

Will you now require that the Nanticoke plant, operated by Ontario Power Generation, a company wholly owned by your government—will you immediately order, because you did not do so in your response, that the Nanticoke power plant be converted to natural gas and that the best available pollution control technology, namely, selective catalytic reduction, be placed on that plant?

Hon Mr Newman: I placed a moratorium on the sale of all coal-fired generation plants in our province. It's a positive step forward. This is something we wanted to see happen that will improve the air quality for the people of our province. There's also a regulation in place that took effect on May 1 of this year with respect to the monitoring and public reporting of emissions of concern for all electricity generators in our province.

On the issue of smog, I also want to take this moment to remind everyone about a ministry Web site that we've set up: www.airqualityontario.com is a Web site that people can go to, to find out more about the air quality.

To date there have been more than 360,000 hits to that Web site.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Mrs Tina R. Molinari (Thornhill): My question is to the Solicitor General. But before I do that, I would like to extend my condolences to the family of Sergeant Marg Eve, who was the first woman police officer to die in the line of duty this past Friday.

Minister, constituents in my riding of Thornhill have consistently told me that they take the issue of community safety very seriously. At local events, on radio open-line shows and door to door, people I talk to in Thornhill all believe that we should be able to live in our communities free from fear and crime. Our government has made commitments to the people of Ontario to make our neighbourhoods safer. Can you tell the House and the people of Thornhill how our government is addressing the issue of community safety and putting more police officers on our streets?

Hon David H. Tsubouchi (Solicitor General): I thank the member for Thornhill for the question. My apologies, first of all, because I think perhaps I can answer the second part of your question, but I'd like to take a moment to say something about Sergeant Marg Eve of the OPP, if I could.

We certainly convey condolences to her husband, John, and her family and friends. I spoke to her husband last Thursday, who under very trying and tragic circumstances displayed a great deal of courage. Marg Eve was a mother, a wife and a police officer. She was well respected by her peers and her community. She was well loved by her family and friends. I believe I speak for all of us in the House when I say that our prayers are with her family and friends today in Chatham.

I'd also like to acknowledge the London Health Sciences for their very efficient and very sensitive treatment of Marg, of course, and her family. They showed a great deal of concern for the family. I want to acknowledge their part in all of this. While I have the opportunity, I'd also like to pass our best wishes to Constable Patti Pask and Constable Brad Sakalo, who are in the Chatham hospital. We wish them a speedy recovery, from all of us in the House.

Mrs Molinari: Minister, everyone in Ontario has the right to be safe from crime. We should be able to walk in our neighbourhoods, use public transit, live in our homes and send our children to school free from fear of criminals.

Our government has made a commitment to the people of Ontario to improve the safety of our communities. Having more police officers on our streets and providing them with the tools they need to make our streets safer is one way our government is helping to make our streets safer. Minister, could you tell my constituents about the investments our government is making in the riding of Thornhill to help make our streets safer?

Hon Mr Tsubouchi: Instead of mentioning the fact that there are 77 new front-line police officers in York region, I might talk for a second about the fact that the government assisted York region with a helicopter pilot project. This is of interest right now, I believe, because of Chief Fantino in the city of Toronto. They are speaking now of a helicopter for the city of Toronto for the protection of their citizens.

I'd like to tell you that during the time of the pilot project in York region, the helicopter brought a lot of benefits to my community and Tina's community, certainly to Thornhill. I know that they assisted in the search for missing persons, both for seniors and children. In fact, during the pilot project time they assisted in the apprehension of armed robbers. But just as important, during that last summer when we had the terror that was striking northern Scarborough with respect to the Scarborough rapist, the helicopter project was able to assist the Toronto police in terms of policing those areas.

NURSING HOMES

Ms Frances Lankin (Beaches-East York): My question is to the Minister of Health. Walkerton has tragically underscored the importance of frequent inspections, of compliance checks and of ongoing monitoring. Unfortunately, it's not only the Ministry of the Environment that has been failing the public in this respect. On April 11, I provided you with information that your ministry had been failing in its duty to carry out annual reviews of nursing homes. As I'm sure you'll recall when you denied any wrongdoing, we began a file-by-file review, and an initial investigation showed that from 1990 to 1995, between 91% and 100% of nursing homes had been inspected. By 1998, only 52% had annual reviews.

It has now been over two months since I raised this issue, Minister. You committed that we would have a full report made public within three weeks. Families deserve and have the right to know what's going on in our nursing homes. The public has a right to know. Minister, will you live up to your commitment and will you immediately table this report?

Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): As the member knows, our government has made a commitment to maintain very high-quality standards for all of our facilities, and I was quite disappointed when the investigation began to find that there had been no complete compliance for the past 10 years. This certainly was most disappointing. I indicated at that time that the practice was totally unacceptable and that I had asked the deputy minister to ensure that we had a plan of action that would ensure in future that all of our long-term-care facilities would be reviewed annually without exception.

I'm very pleased to say that that report is at a point now where the compliance and all the measures are being put in place to ensure that we don't have a situation such as we've had for at least 10 years in this province, and

unfortunately longer, where we've not had 100% compliance. I can tell you that is totally unacceptable.

Ms Lankin: Minister, you're totally unacceptable too. You know it didn't fly the last time you tried to shift blame. It's not going to fly this time. You committed to a full public report in three weeks. It's now over two months. I submitted an order paper question and I got a response from you last week. It said that the answer can't be made available in the normal time period. Instead, it said I can expect an answer on or about June 23. Is that a coincidence, the day after the House rises on June 22? I think it isn't.

Minister, three staff in our office made their way through 5% of 10 years of the reports in one morning. Are you telling me the whole ministry needs more than two months to tell us how many of these nursing homes, not to muddle it all up, didn't get their inspections? Or maybe it's the spin cycle, the Tory information cleansing machine that's taking so long.

Minister, we don't believe you're going to give us that information before the House rises, but I'd like to be wrong on this one. Will you commit to giving us immediately the report that you committed would be in the public's hands, in the media's hands, in this House's hands within three weeks?

Hon Mrs Witmer: As you can well imagine, we were quite disappointed to find that there had been no complete compliance for at least 10 years.

I'd just like to quote from the Provincial Auditor's report of 1995, where he refers to the NDP period of time. He says, "No annual reviews of homes for the aged were conducted in 1993 and 1994." Again I can assure you the deputy is preparing the plan of action to ensure that all—and I would stress "all"—LTC facilities are reviewed annually, every year without exception, because anything less would be totally unacceptable.

1510

EDUCATION LEGISLATION

Mr Gerard Kennedy (Parkdale-High Park): I have a question for the Minister of Education. We held hearings that your government was afraid to hold. We've seen twice as many people here in the opposition as you in your sham hearings heard around the province last week.

If the minister had attended hearings, if there had been sincerity on the part of this government to have this bill exposed, it would have been exposed for what it is and for what people are starting to appreciate: It's an attack to dilute, to degrade, to downgrade education in this province.

Minister, will you admit to the House today that what you are doing in this bill, and the only reason you brought this bill forward, is to lower the number of teachers, remove teachers from teaching positions in boards and dilute the quality of education in this province? Will you at least have the courage to stand up and agree that the core of your bill really is a lower teaching standard,

the one that was, by the way, at work in the region of Durham and that the minister still, despite everything she might have heard, or that she would on reflection, wants to export to the rest of the province? Will you at least agree, Minister, that that's your goal: cutting the number of teaching positions and diluting education in this province?

Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Education): I'm not in the habit of agreeing with things that are not accurate.

Mr Kennedy: We see nothing on this government's part, and now we have it confirmed, not even any interest in putting forward their full agenda. In your absence, Madam Minister, I'll do that. This government has cut \$1.6 billion from their share of education. This minister and all these members opposite have been challenged to put forward figures contradicting that almost a month ago, and they've failed to do that.

This Bill 74, which we're being subjected to advertisements about but not honest debate about, purports to take hundreds more teachers from our system and save this government another \$130 million. On the one hand they say there are reduced class sizes, but for every three teachers they're trying to tell us they're putting in, they're taking 10 teachers away.

We would like a direct answer from this minister: How do you intend to improve the quality of education when you're removing teachers from the system, when you've demoralized the teachers that are there, and when you won't be forthcoming about your government's agenda to the public and you're so afraid of it you're trying to stuff it through at the earliest opportunity?

Hon Mrs Ecker: Excuse me, Mr Speaker, for laughing, but the honourable member should have the name of Hans Christian Andersen in terms of the fairy tale that he has just put forward today. First of all, this government had a full debate on our education quality reforms in 1995 during the election, when we laid out in great detail a whole series of education quality reforms that parents told us they wanted. We did it again in 1999, with more quality education reforms, like more money in the classroom. We are now spending more money on education, more in the classroom than has been spent before; a new curriculum which better prepares our children; more teachers.

The honourable member keeps talking about fewer teachers. We need more teachers in our education system because we want to have smaller classrooms. The honourable member keeps forgetting that.

We also have more help for students who need extra help with the new curriculum, more money in standards for special education.

Our quality reform agenda is very clear. We've been very open with the people of Ontario about—

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): The minister's time is up.

MUNICIPAL RESTRUCTURING

Mr R. Gary Stewart (Peterborough): My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. I am pleased to inform the House that the municipality of Lakefield and the municipalities of Smith and Ennismore in my riding have chosen to restructure their governments so that they can provide their communities with a reduced number of local politicians, eliminate waste and duplication and provide taxpayers with better services at lower costs in the long term. Can you tell me what assistance—

Interjections.

Mr Stewart: I can stand as long as well, Mr Speaker. I refuse to—

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): No, I'm afraid you can't. You have one minute and your time is almost up. I'd appreciate if you would put the question.

Mr Stewart: I'd be pleased if at least the municipalities knew I asked this question and could hear it.

Minister, can you tell me what assistance our government is providing to municipalities like the ones from my riding to help them through their restructuring process?

Hon Tony Clement (Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing): I thank the honourable member for the question. This is about municipalities voluntarily coming together because they want to deliver better services at less cost to the taxpayers, be more accountable and reduce the size of government so that it can do its job better. In fact, we have been working with a lot of those municipalities that are committed to these goals, to doing better with less, improving the kinds of services they are delivering to their taxpayers, but also making sure that they can do so with lower taxes and small government.

We understand that municipalities are incurring one-time, upfront costs as they restructure to become more efficient and more cost-effective. To help the municipalities like the ones in the member's riding, we have extended the municipal restructuring fund to provide financial assistance to municipalities that are undergoing restructuring. It is set up in recognition that the restructured municipalities will be making an investment in the new structure of their municipalities, and we are there to help them.

Mr Stewart: As you know, I've been very supportive of municipal restructuring for a good number of years, back to my days of municipal politics, so I commend these municipalities for doing this. Could you please tell the House today what municipalities are eligible for when applying under the fund and how they can apply?

Hon Mr Clement: It's quite straightforward. Under the Municipal Act, if you've had a restructuring that has taken place, ordered between April 1 of last year and March 31 of this year, you are eligible. Through that assistance fund, as I mentioned, the municipal restructuring fund, we can cover up to 75% of eligible municipal costs. As a municipality, you must submit a detailed business case showing the potential for savings and giving evidence of prudent fiscal management and

send that to us by June 23. That's when the business cases are due. We will work together with those municipalities to ensure that the best services are delivered to all of our citizens in Ontario at the least possible cost.

1520

RURAL SCHOOLS

Mr John C. Cleary (Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh): My question is to the Minister of Education. I met with a group of concerned school board chairs, parents and teachers in the town of Inkerman in Dundas county last Thursday night. We met to discuss the plight of rural schools in Ontario. Many of those who attended the meeting asked me to try to get some answers from you. Geographically, the Upper Canada District School Board is one of the largest boards in Ontario. It covers 12,000 square kilometres, which is 18 times the size of the Toronto District School Board. The trustees and staff have to travel long distances to attend meetings. Our board includes eight different counties but only one town is large enough to be a city. Our board is predominantly rural in composition, yet it does not qualify for the rural and remote funding under the current formula.

Minister, can you tell the people of Dundas and the rest of the residents of my riding and all of the Upper Canada District School Board why it does not qualify to get remote and rural funding?

Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Education): This is indeed an extremely important issue. Many of my caucus colleagues as well as members of the opposition have raised the concerns around rural school boards. We recognize that there needs to be more work done to make sure they are getting the financial support they need. We've already made some steps in this direction. For example, in the recent budget, there was more money for bus transportation which was predominantly to be focused in the rural and northern boards. They do get more grants that specifically recognize this, but we recognize that there may well be some more work that needs to be done. We've asked the boards to provide us with that information. They are diligently working on making sure we've got the best data we can have so we can make the best decision.

Mr Cleary: Thank you for your answer, Minister. Not only does the rural Upper Canada District School Board not get fair treatment under the current education funding formula, but it also does not see the reduced class sizes that your government says can be found in schools across Ontario. Rural schools have larger class sizes, more split classes, and have to transport students farther. The current formula fails to take into account the fact that smaller communities often have to lose their schools so students can be transported to growth areas.

When you close a rural school, you take the heart right out of the community. The possibility is that six rural schools may be closed in my riding. Rural schools are essential for the preservation of rural communities. What

do you intend to do to see that the rural schools may remain open?

Hon Mrs Ecker: My rural caucus colleagues in this caucus have made recommendations to me about how we should deal with this in the best way. As I mentioned, we have asked the school boards to submit to us their long-range capital plans so we can see the needs they have and make sure we're meeting those needs, and that certainly will involve the rural boards, as it should.

But just on the class size issue, our government has moved twice now to bring down average class sizes, once through Bill 160 and again through Bill 74, if it's passed by this Legislature. We take that seriously. We've put forward more money to help make that happen. If members of the honourable member's community are concerned that a particular school board is not doing what they're supposed to be doing on class size, Bill 74 does provide a mechanism for those parents to make a complaint to say that those class size standards are not being met, and it does allow the provincial government to act on that if it is indeed an accurate allegation.

FOOD SAFETY

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): My question is for the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Last year our government announced the Healthy Futures for Ontario Agriculture initiative. Given the recent interest in food safety and water quality, would you please give the House an update on the program to date of the Healthy Futures for agriculture?

Hon Ernie Hardeman (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs): I want to thank the honourable member from Durham for the question. As all members of the House will be aware, the Healthy Futures for Ontario Agriculture program is a four-year, \$90-million initiative that is designed to address issues such as rural water quality, food safety, and to help open up and expand new and existing markets for our agriculture products. An industry review panel has been appointed and is reviewing applications. Recently, they approved six projects in excess of \$2 million, and I'm looking forward to seeing more projects in the near future.

Mr O'Toole: I'm very confident that you as minister will see that food safety will certainly be the focus of Healthy Futures. However, on a very serious note, last week in the House, the Liberal member for Chatham-Kent implied that a project would help the apple industry improve pasteurization techniques and that it was turned down for funding. If this was the case, my apple producers—for instance, Bob Simpson, Kirk Kemp, Ted Watson, Fred Archibald and Charles Stevens—would be very, very upset, as you would know. Could you please confirm whether or not the project was turned down for funding on this important food safety initiative?

Hon Mr Hardeman: I want to thank the honourable member from Durham again for that very important question, because I too share the concerns that were brought forward here in the Legislature last week. The

member opposite I'm sure intended to bring a serious situation to our attention, that it was an application that dealt with the quality of our food and that in fact it had been turned down by the Healthy Futures panel.

I want to say that we checked it out and there was absolutely no application from the Apple Marketing Commission or the apple growers' association. We were unable to find in the secretariat any sign of an application like that. There was an application to the CanAdapt program—

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Order. I'm afraid the minister's time is up. New question?

Interjection.

EDUCATION LEGISLATION

Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina): Little did he realize that you're the watchdog of this place. He thought he could run the clock.

I have a question for mon amie Madam Ecker, the Minister of Education.

Earlier in response to a question—I've got your notes here—you said, in your sinister silkiness, "where ... does it say we are taking money out of the system?" I want to tell you where you're doing that and how you're doing it, because I think you know. And do you know what? The teachers know, the parents know and the students know as well. You would know that the act substantially increases the workload of high school teachers by requiring them to teach an additional class each school year, for a total of 6.6 instructional periods. This means that each teacher will be expected to instruct an additional 25 to 35 students. What that means—I think you know, but you pretend not to—is that fewer teachers are going to be there to teach more students, which means the loss, the firing of a potential 1,500 to 2,000 teachers. That's where we get it from. Teachers know and students know. Everyone wants to hold you accountable through good hearings, through lots of hearings, and you won't make yourself accountable.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Order. Question, please. The member has gone over the time; he may have missed the time. Wrap it up very quickly.

Mr Marchese: The question is this: You're holding everyone else accountable to your government, but why won't you hold yourself accountable to the teachers, the parents and the students?

Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Education): I'm glad the honourable member for Trinity-Spadina got his question in, because it allows me to make sure the public watching this knows that Bill 74 will actually mean smaller classes and therefore more teachers. We heard very much the concern from teachers about the loss of jobs. That's why we've made two very important changes. One, we are bringing down class sizes in Bill 74. I hope the honourable member will support that. We've already announced and put out the money to make that happen, so that's smaller classes and more teachers. We have already announced changes in how we calculate

instructional time. For example, remediation: We recognize clearly that teachers do provide extra help for students. Again, the money is already going out for that for the coming school year. We've already moved to address that, because we have had the concern about loss of teachers and additional classes. We believe that with these steps we will help moderate any potential impact in that area.

The other point is on accountability. We do see ourselves as accountable. That's one of the reasons Bill 74 has mechanisms in it to make sure that if our education standards are not being met, we indeed can take action.

The Speaker: The time for oral questions is over.

1530

TIME ALLOCATION

Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I rise on standing order 69(d), which refers to the ability of the government to have a bill before this House and a bill before a committee from the same ministry at the same time. Standing order 69(d) clearly prohibits that from happening.

In its time allocation motion with respect to Bill 74, or I should say its motion to effectively limit debate, the government did provide that the standing orders of this House be waived in this sort of situation. What we have happening is, first of all, a Ministry of Education bill before committee this afternoon during Orders of the Day. Second, we have a bill in House at the very same time. We have researched all the precedents and have looked at it recognizing that the time allocation motion effectively suspended our ability to meaningfully debate this legislation. Critics have to be in two places at the same time. It's a clear contradiction of the history of this place and of parliamentary procedure.

I ask, sir, will you rule, will you find that this type of behaviour, this type of deliberate attempt to rewrite the standing orders of the House in favour of the government and against the opposition to allow debate on two items from the same ministry to be occurring in two different places at the same time—I ask you as Speaker, will you step in to prevent this today, and moreover, in the future, look to parliamentary history to suggest that this sort of thing is patently wrong?

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Thank you. Just a moment, please.

What we could do is go into petitions and, before we begin, I'll take a bit of time to go through that and have a ruling before we get to orders of the day. That would give me time during petitions to research it further.

Hon Frank Klees (Minister without Portfolio): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I just want, for your benefit, to give you the government's view on this issue.

We believe the motion which authorized the standing committee on justice and social policy is a very clear authorization by this House to sit and consider Bill 74 this afternoon. The motion governing Bill 74 amounts to

a special order of the House which, among other things, supersedes the restraints of standing order 69(d).

The motion respecting Bill 74, passed on May 31, states, "Notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House," and goes on to establish certain directives for the remaining schedule of Bill 74. One of the directives given is for the standing committee to meet this afternoon for clause-by-clause consideration of the bill. The normal application of standing order 69(d) is overruled by the order of the House, which requires that the committee consider this bill this afternoon.

Time allocation motions are, by their very nature, temporary suspensions of the rules of the House with respect to the scheduling of business. Erskine May states, "The House has adopted the standing orders, which are permanent rules for the guiding and the control of the House in the conduct of its business. The standing orders do not form a complete code of procedures for the House to discharge its functions. They may be supplanted from time to time by sessional orders or special resolutions to facilitate the progress of business through the House."

As was stated by former Speaker Stockwell on December 2, 1997, time allocation motions "can very rarely be out of order because they suspend the very standing orders that we live by."

These authorities make it quite clear that a suspension of the standing orders such as this suspension of standing order 69(d) is not out of order, we submit, but an established part of legislative practice.

We submit that any argument that the House may not consider government notice of motion 54 this afternoon because of the business being conducted in committee is simply not valid. Our standing committees exist at the pleasure of the House and, as such, the House always takes precedence over the committees. Evidence of this exists insofar as our standing orders do not allow our committees to sit unless the House is sitting, or some special order has been given by the House to a committee that it may sit outside the House's hours. The business of the House can never be suspended, we suggest, because of activity in committee. Under the normal application of standing order 69(d), it is the committee, not the House, that would be required to suspend its business if there was an overlap of policy areas being considered by the two bodies. The House always takes precedence.

In this case, Speaker, the House has given a special order to the committee permitting it to meet this afternoon notwithstanding standing order 69(d) and the business being debated in this House.

The Speaker: I thank the chief government whip. The member for Timmins-James Bay on the same point of order?

Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay): I just want to raise for your consideration the two following points. We understand the argument that has been put forward, but from our perspective in the third party there are two things. First of all, you recognize that given the size of our caucus, it really puts our critic at a disadvantage, in not being able to cover off the committee at the same

time as she is debating the bill in the House, where she's a critic at the same time. The point is that with fewer members it's much more difficult for us to cover off both of those activities. I want you to consider that.

The other thing you need to consider is that the government is in the habit now—and I listened to the government whip talk about how once you get into time allocation, that suspends the general rules we have under the standing orders. The reality is, the government is always using time allocation motions in order to push their bills through the House. By virtue of their time allocation, we find ourselves not being able to benefit from our own standing orders. If it was a rare occasion, maybe you would have an argument. I would argue no, but I would understand the argument. But this is not a rare occasion. As you know, the government time-allocates many of its bills, I would argue about two thirds of them, and it makes a bit of a mockery of the rules of the House.

I ask you to take those two points into consideration.

Mr Duncan: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: What we just heard was in part a veiled threat that they would take away clause-by-clause consideration of the bill in committee today. I should point out that Erskine May is quite correct: The standing orders do not comprise all the orders of business. Perhaps if this House had met more than 40 times in the last year, we wouldn't be jamming legislation of this importance all into one day.

I'm also curious to know how the government can schedule Bill 69 for today, and I suggest to the chief whip perhaps he might want to switch from the afternoon to the evening so we don't have two bills going on concurrently. It strikes me that this is first of all a blatant abuse and it has only been used, frankly, by this government on a lot of occasions, where this is going on. Then to get up and threaten to take away the very few clause-by-clause hours we have on a major piece of legislation is just indicative of the nature of the government, in our view.

I would submit, sir, that perhaps the government, since they've now indicated, late in the afternoon, that they intend to consider Bill 69 this evening, should switch that and consider Bill 69 in the House this afternoon and Bill 81 tonight so as to facilitate or not violate the rules, recognizing what the chief government whip says. He acknowledges that the government used its majority to change the rules to in effect foreclose debate on two major pieces of legislation, both of which members on all sides of the House would like to have an opportunity to participate in. If that is the case I ask the government whip, and I ask you in your deliberations, if they will change the order: Debate the education bill, Bill 81, this evening, and do Bill 69, the labour bill, this afternoon while committee hearings are going on with respect to Bill 74.

Also, I ask you to look at the precedents with respect to how these so-called motions—they're not motions, really; they're the government just imposing its majority

to effectively shut down meaningful debate. I ask you to consider it in both of those contexts.

The Speaker: The member for Parkdale-High Park on the same point of order?

Mr Gerard Kennedy (Parkdale-High Park): Not to prolong the discussion, just to say very briefly, Mr Speaker, that it has the effect of preventing me from being in this House to discuss cutting off debate, which is the discussion this afternoon, on Bill 81, which has only been in the public domain for a very short period of time, or to apply my time with Bill 74 and the clause-by-clause hearings there. Mr Speaker, we do not have such limited resources as the third party, but that effect does cause, I think, an artificial limitation, in terms of the access, to moving this bill forward and frankly to see them being explained and heard in the way they should be.

1540

Hon Mr Klees: First of all let me say that this is not the first time this has happened in this House. The member for the official opposition makes it sound as though this is some veiled scheme on the part of the government. That's ridiculous, absolutely ridiculous. The member knows that these things happen. It's in the order of business. We're simply following the procedures that are set out clearly for this House.

With regard to the remarks made by the member for the third party, Speaker, neither you nor I are responsible for the fact that they only have nine members in this House during this Parliament. That is a decision that was made by the electorate in this province. We feel for them, but I think it's up to them to order their business to ensure that someone is here to debate the matters before the House.

With regard to the suggestion to change the legislation for debate, we can't do it, for the reasons that we have our speakers' order and that we have already notified the critics. Had we done that, had we come forward and suggested we'd switch the business, the member would object to that too and he'd suggest that this is a last-minute change.

I would ask you to rule, Speaker, in favour, as we've put the argument.

Mr Duncan: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: This is an example of the absolute, belligerent approach this government is taking to this. We only found out an hour ago about Bill 69 being on tonight. The whole agenda has already been changed today.

Mr Speaker, I ask you, as the defender of this House, not to let this kind of belligerent approach to the governance of this province happen. Had we as a collective been a little more careful, other situations might not have happened.

They seem to think it's a big laugh. They seem to think it's a big joke. The Minister of Labour came here less than an hour ago and told us we're going to do his bill tonight, and then the chief whip has the audacity to suggest that they can't change the orders in a short period of time.

Mr Speaker, I call upon you to protect the collective rights of this House and our parliamentary traditions in a manner that protects the third party. It's only a matter of fairness, sir. It's only a matter of fairness. Yes, they took their majority and they jammed through the time allocation motion, the motion that effectively limits debate. They have refused to meet even the minimum number of days stipulated in the standing orders, committees have met less than in any other Parliament in the history of this Legislature, and now they want to do two bills from the same ministry at precisely the same time.

You know what? They laugh, they make jokes, but it isn't a joke. It's a very sad commentary on the state of this Legislature.

Hon Chris Stockwell (Minister of Labour): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: My name was invoked into this by the House leader for the opposition party. Let me say, first, I wasn't laughing about this. I didn't see a single person on this side laughing about this. Every point of order the member stands on I take very seriously, and I think this side takes them very seriously.

The question was put about, I came in here an hour ago. Yes, that may be true, but before that took place, I approached the critic for the Liberal Party and informed him that I would like to call Bill 69 for the night reading tonight. We had a discussion, and I agree that it was a last-minute situation, but I did ask.

If he had said, "Absolutely not; no way" etc, I think our relationship is good enough that I would have said, "OK." I then went to the third party and asked them if it was OK to call it tonight. They had difficulty getting their member back. They said they could only get him back for the evening session. That's why switching it would not be acceptable, because their critic couldn't be here for the afternoon debate.

All the other deals that took place after that I'm not so certain of, but no one was laughing. Before you make any charges against ministers of the crown, I think you should check the record.

The Speaker: I thank all members. I've heard enough on this point of order. I am going to rule after petitions. We'll have some time, and I will come back with a ruling.

PETITIONS

PROSTATE CANCER

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas prostate cancer is one of the leading causes of fatal cancer in Ontario;

"Whereas prostate cancer is the second leading cause of fatal cancers for males;

"Whereas early detection is one of the best tools for being victorious in our battle against cancer;

"Whereas the early detection blood test known as PSA (prostate specific antigen) is one of the most effective tests at diagnosing early prostate cancer;" and whereas the Minister of Health's inaction is literally causing men to die needlessly;

"Therefore be it resolved that we, the undersigned, petition the Legislature of Ontario to encourage the Ministry of Health and the minister to have this test added to the list of services covered by OHIP, and that this be done immediately in order for us to save lives and beat prostate cancer."

I affix my signature to this petition as I'm in agreement with it and ask Stephanie Craig from Waterloo-Wellington to bring it to the table.

EDUCATION LEGISLATION

Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay): I have here a petition signed by a number of people from the city of Timmins that reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Bill 74 diminishes quality education for students in this province by ensuring teachers will be responsible for more students each day and will therefore have less time for each student;

"Whereas Bill 74 attacks the very heart of local democracy and accountability by creating a system of informers and absolute powers for the Minister of Education;

"Whereas Bill 74 cuts not only the heart out of education but also the spirit by making teachers perform voluntary activities on threat of termination;

"Whereas Bill 74 is an unprecedented attack on the collective bargaining rights of Ontario teachers; and

"Whereas Bill 74 turns over all control over education in this province to one person, the Minister of Education;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"We call on the government to hold public hearings on Bill 74 immediately."

WATER QUALITY

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): I have a petition from my riding of Durham. Miss Jessica Markland presented it to me, and there are Bill Woods, Joan Anderson, Dave Smith and a number of other constituents of Durham.

"To the Legislature of the province of Ontario:

"Whereas it is well known that cattle are a significant source of degradation strains of E coli bacteria; and

"Whereas cattle can be a serious source of degradation to rivers, streams and lakes through (1) defecating in or near the water, (2) breaking down and trampling banks and beaches, and (3) destroying vegetation in riparian zones; and

"Whereas many farmers permit their cattle to enter lakes and streams as a source of water;

"We, the undersigned, respectfully request that the government of Ontario pass binding legislation to

establish mandatory setbacks from all watercourses, lakes and wetlands to prevent landowners or tenants from using such watercourses, lakes and wetlands as a source of water for cattle and other animals;

“We further respectfully request that the legislation be drafted in such a way that it cannot be overturned by the Normal Farm Practices Protection Board or any other special interest group.”

I'm pleased to present this on behalf of my constituents.

CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Mr Dave Levac (Brant): I have a petition signed by over 1,500 people from the wonderful communities of Penetanguishene and Midland.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the government of Ontario is actively pursuing private sector operators to run Ontario's correctional facilities, including adult strict-discipline boot camps, three megajails and five young offender facilities;

“Whereas findings show there is no cost savings to the taxpayer of Ontario;

“Whereas public safety will be greatly jeopardized in our communities;

“Therefore, be it resolved that the government of Ontario abandon all plans to privatize any aspects of the province's correctional system.”

I proudly affix my name to this petition and offer it to David.

Mr R. Gary Stewart (Peterborough): I also have a petition to present on behalf of my colleague from Victoria-Haliburton.

“Whereas the government of Ontario is actively pursuing private sector operators to run Ontario's correctional facilities, including adult strict-discipline boot camps, three megajails and five young offender facilities;

“Whereas findings show there is no cost savings to the taxpayer of Ontario;

“Whereas public safety will be greatly jeopardized in our communities;

“Therefore, be it resolved that the government of Ontario abandon all plans to privatize any aspects of the province's correctional system.”

1550

EDUCATION LEGISLATION

Mrs Leona Dombrowsky (Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington): “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Bill 74 diminishes quality education for students in this province by ensuring teachers will be responsible for more students each day and will therefore have less time for each student;

“Whereas Bill 74 attacks the very heart of local democracy and accountability by creating a system of informers and absolute powers for the Minister of Education;

“Whereas Bill 74 cuts not only the heart out of education but also the spirit by making teachers perform voluntary activities on threat of termination;

“Whereas Bill 74 is an unprecedented attack on the collective bargaining rights of Ontario teachers; and

“Whereas Bill 74 turns over all control over education in this province to one person, the Minister of Education;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“We call on the government to hold public hearings on Bill 74 immediately.”

I very happily sign my name to this petition and will deliver it to the page, Maria Dombrowsky from Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington.

NORTHERN HEALTH TRAVEL GRANT

Mr Michael A. Brown (Algoma-Manitoulin): I have more petitions carrying hundreds if not thousands of signatures.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the northern health travel grant was introduced in 1987 in recognition of the fact that northern Ontario residents are often forced to receive treatment outside their own communities because of the lack of available services; and

“Whereas the Ontario government acknowledged that the costs associated with that travel should not be fully borne by those residents and therefore that financial support should be provided by the government through the travel grant program; and

“Whereas travel, accommodation and other costs have escalated sharply since the program was first put in place, particularly in the area of air travel; and

“Whereas the Ontario government has provided funds so that southern Ontario patients needing care at the Northwestern Ontario Cancer Centre have all their expenses paid while receiving treatment in the north which creates a double standard for health care delivery in the province; and

“Whereas northern Ontario residents should not receive a different level of health care nor be discriminated against because of their geographical locations;

“Therefore, we, the undersigned citizens of Ontario, petition the Ontario Legislature to acknowledge the unfairness and inadequacy of the northern health travel grant and commit to a review of the program with a goal of providing 100% funding of the travel costs for residents needing care outside their communities until such time as that care is available in their communities.”

I proudly affix my signature.

EDUCATION LEGISLATION

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas Bill 74 diminishes quality education for students in this province by ensuring teachers will be

responsible for more students each day and will therefore have less time for each student;

“Whereas Bill 74 attacks the very heart of local democracy and accountability by creating a system of informers and absolute powers for the Minister of Education;

“Whereas Bill 74 cuts not only the heart out of education but also the spirit by making teachers perform voluntary activities on threat of termination;

“Whereas Bill 74 is an unprecedented attack on the collective bargaining rights of Ontario’s teachers; and

“Whereas Bill 74 turns over all control over education in this province to one person, the Minister of Education;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“We call on the government to hold public hearings on Bill 74 immediately.”

I’m sending that with the page, Bryan, who’s from Etobicoke-Lakeshore.

Mr Doug Galt (Northumberland): I have a petition from the great riding of Oxford, addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It has some five whereases expressing concern about Bill 74, and I noticed that the original form has been faxed by the OSSTF District 11.

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“We call on the government to hold public hearings on Bill 74 immediately.”

Thank you.

REPORT CARDS

Mr John C. Cleary (Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the Upper Canada District School Board has a policy which causes inaccurate marking of grades 7 and 8 on the Ontario provincial report card; and

“Whereas this policy unnecessarily increases the workload of the teachers,

“We, the undersigned, hereby petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“We request that the Ministry of Education direct the Upper Canada District School Board to amend this policy to accurately reflect the achievements of the students and to allow the teachers to use one marking system.”

I submit this petition and have also signed it.

EDUCATION LEGISLATION

Mr Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell): I have a petition that I received from Nathalie Bélanger de Casselman.

“Whereas Bill 74 attacks the very heart of local democracy and accountability by creating a system of informers and absolute powers for the Minister of Education;

“Whereas Bill 74 cuts not only the heart out of education but also the spirit by making teachers perform voluntary activities on threat of termination;

“Whereas Bill 74 is an unprecedented attack on the collective bargaining rights of Ontario’s teachers;

“Whereas Bill 74 attacks our human rights by demanding teachers be available seven days a week, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to do assigned duties; and

“Whereas Bill 74 turns over all education in this province to one person, the Minister of Education;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“We call on the government to hold public hearings on Bill 74 throughout the province immediately.”

I also add my signature to this petition.

Mr Doug Galt (Northumberland): I have another petition here addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. There are some five “whereases,” and it talks a lot about concerns being expressed about Bill 74. It’s another form that was faxed by the OSSTF District 11 in Ingersoll. It goes on to say:

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“We call on the government to hold public hearings on Bill 74 immediately.”

I am submitting this on behalf of the great riding of Oxford.

TIME ALLOCATION

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): It now being 4 o’clock, it is time to go to orders of the day.

Just on the point of order that was raised earlier, there are two precedents, one from November 16, 1993, under Speaker Warner, who said, and I’ll paraphrase a little bit, that a time allocation motion is not out of order where it contains a notwithstanding clause that in effect allows a standing committee to consider a bill before the expiry of the usual five-day waiting period mentioned in standing order 74. That was a ruling on November 16, 1993, by Speaker Warner.

Furthermore, there was a Speaker Stockwell ruling on April 2, 1997, which said the same thing:

“A bill may be called for consideration in the committee of the whole within a day of the bill being reported from a standing committee pursuant to the pre-existing time allocation order that has the usual”—and this is the main point, and I quote—“notwithstanding any other standing order clause, but that makes no specific mention of a suspension of standing order 76(c), which states that a bill that is reported from a standing committee or a select committee and then referred to the committee of the whole shall not be taken up before the second calendar day after the referral because the general ‘notwithstanding’ clause overrides or supersedes the individual standing orders that would otherwise determine the procedure of the bill.”

So while members have a very valid point about the overlap of time, there are two recent precedents, from Mr

Stockwell on April 2, 1997, as well as Speaker Warner on November 16, 1993, which say that indeed the government may proceed with that, notwithstanding. As such, the government will be allowed to proceed.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TIME ALLOCATION

Hon Tim Hudak (Minister of Northern Development and Mines): I move that pursuant to standing order 46 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House relating to Bill 81, An Act to increase respect and responsibility, to set standards for safe learning and safe teaching in schools and to amend the Teaching Profession Act, when Bill 81 is next called as a government order, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading;

That no deferral of the second reading vote pursuant to standing order 28(h) shall be permitted; and

That the order for third reading of the bill may then immediately be called. When the order for third reading is called, the remainder of the sessional day shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, the debate time being divided equally among the three caucuses, after which time the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

That, pursuant to standing order 28(h), the vote on third reading may be deferred until the next sessional day, during the routine proceeding "Deferred Votes"; and

That in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

1600

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Bert Johnson): Mr Hudak has moved—dispense? OK. The Chair recognizes Mr Hudak.

Hon Mr Hudak: Mr Speaker, I think it's the opposition's turn to speak.

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): I guess we're to understand here that the government is giving up their time to debate this time allocation motion. It is so typical of this government to be very confused when it comes to handling the business of democracy, and indeed that's exactly what happened, because under normal circumstances there's absolutely no question that the government would be standing up and defending their time allocation motion. First, the reality is there is no defence for a time allocation motion ever. Indeed, in this bill, Bill 81, certainly that is the truth again. There's no way this government can defend stifling, limiting or dispensing the debate on a very important piece of legislation.

This is all part of the public relations program that this government has with regard to implementing an agenda for change in education that is certainly more fluff than substance, that is certainly more based upon a philosophy as opposed to being very good in a practical way. I would suggest that Bill 81 is again a veiled attempt at trying to demonstrate this government as being one that cares and wants order in schools and in the classroom. What they've done effectively with Bill 81 is provide again enormous roadblocks that now teachers and principals are going to have to try to get over in order to implement good, sound practices—if they follow Bill 81. The reality is, they'll probably do what people in education have done for years when it comes to bad policy. They'll just ignore it, know where it's coming from and ensure that children and students remain happy and productive in environments that have always been very safe, have always been very secure and have always been in the best interests of children. This is what the government misses with Bill 81 and certainly they've missed it entirely with Bill 74.

Codes of conduct are not new. Thirty-six years ago, when I first started teaching, we had a code of conduct at St Alphonse's school in Sudbury. Sister St Paul devised the code of conduct. It wasn't mandated by the Minister of Education at the time, who knew nothing about education, and this Minister of Education obviously has very limited ability when it comes to understanding what happens in a classroom and in a school.

When I first became a principal, I had a code of conduct. My children who went through the Catholic system in Sudbury went through schools that had codes of conduct. What the government is doing here is nothing new; in fact, in many ways it detracts from what are established, sound, excellent practices already in place. Let me just highlight a few of those areas.

With regard to the suspension of students by teachers, I want to know as a principal and as a teacher what they, the government, define as a school day. If someone acts up in a negative way at 2 o'clock, is that child suspended from 2 until 3:30, is that child suspended from 2 o'clock that day until 2 o'clock the next day or is that child suspended from 2 o'clock until 4 o'clock? When does a one-day suspension take place? Does it take place at the beginning of the day, does it take place at the time of suspension or does it take place at the beginning of the next day? You'll need that for record-keeping purposes. You'll need that for record purposes because you're still going to have to fill out the forms with regard to a suspension. I don't think the government knows the answer to that question, and that's really scary.

I also want to spend a little bit of time wondering with regard to expulsion of students. They say if anybody brings an illicit drug to school, that is automatic expulsion. I happen to agree with that, as long as you qualify it. A cigarette is an illegal drug in the hands of anybody under a certain year of age. So if a grade 1 child happens to bring her father's cigarettes to school, does that mean the government's going to have to expel the

kid? Does that mean the principal is going to have to say, "I'm sorry, you're expelled for the rest of the year"?"

This might sound like a pretty outlandish example, but the way this legislation is written, that's exactly what can happen. It is not good legislation, it's not sound legislation, it's not legislation that's been well thought out from a public education point of view. From a public relations point of view, it probably only gets a C, not an A. So I would suggest to you that they're only average learners when it comes to education, certainly not above average. When it comes to implementing policy, they are certainly well below average.

I'd like to just read something that appeared in the Sudbury Star on Saturday that I think summarizes this government's philosophy with regard to education, or their lack of philosophy. If they only understood this, they would understand what good policy means and how important good policy is in education. It's called, "Teachers Will Learn Harris's New Lingo."

"I am a teacher.

"I eat lunch standing up while supervising a school activity.

"I know Susie, Johnny and Marie.

"There are kids who come to our school's breakfast club because there's no food at home.

"I am surrounded by dedicated and academically specialized teachers.

"They are also human beings who love kids.

"I cannot name even one teacher colleague on my staff who doesn't do some extracurricular activity.

"I have a principal and vice-principal who are teachers at heart.

"I believe in a well-developed and applicable curriculum delivered by teachers who love their subjects, whether academics, arts, technology or athletics.

"I believe that there is more to a well-rounded education than high test scores.

"I believe that every school needs custodians, secretaries and a teacher-librarian.

"I know what a poor teacher Mr Harris was. I had him as a supply teacher when I was in school in North Bay.

"I don't understand oxymorons such as 'mandatory volunteerism,' even after years of university training.

"But I will keep learning because I am a teacher."

This was the work of Carolyn Otto, who is a secondary school teacher at Sudbury Secondary School. She teaches music and she's a dedicated professional.

The Deputy Speaker: Further debate?

Mr Doug Galt (Northumberland): I certainly appreciate the opportunity to speak on this time allocation motion as it relates to the Safe Schools Act, Bill 81. I found kind of interesting many of the comments being made by the member for Sudbury, particularly when he's a past principal. It's amazing how you can get caught up in the rhetoric of your party. I thought some of his comments were interesting, that this was going to be great for public relations but maybe not all that great a bill, and on and on he went.

I think a lot of the things that we've been doing as a government in education, particularly since we took office back in 1995, have been to position our young people, position our students ready for a competitive world. There's no question that out there that competitive world is indeed a moving target. As we improve our students and improve our system—because the problem really wasn't with our students, the problem wasn't with our teachers, but rather with the boards and with a system that was indeed broken, there is no question.

But as we change that system and as we change and put it in a more productive manner, more efficient manner, so are other provinces, so are other states and so are other countries in this world. It's going to have to be a real push to ensure that we do have the quality of education that's going to help our young people so that they can meet that competitive environment, if we're going to have a province like Ontario that's the engine of economy for the rest of Canada. It's going to take an awful lot.

One of the things, for example, that we brought in over the last five years was the fair student-focused funding. Too many dollars were going to administration. I can look at my own board with the multimillion-dollar headquarters that were built. Fortunately, they didn't put fountains in it or develop a golf course beside it, as has happened in some of the other boards. Certainly more resources are now going into the classroom than ever before.

There's a new rigorous curriculum out there, and it's now rolling out the final bit for the secondary panel. I hear teachers talk about the elementary panel with glowing comments about the kind of curriculum that's out there.

1610

We've also brought in the testing of certain grades, starting out with grades 3 and 6 and so on, measuring student progress. Much to the frustration of the union, it was also measuring the ability of the schools, the ability of the board and the ability of the teachers. Also, of course, there's a standardized report card. As a student moves around, at least within the province, there will be some continuity—continuity of report cards, continuity of the curriculum etc. In the past, even if a student moved within a board they tended to be lost, just moving from one school to another. That was very wrong. You can see that since 1995, the best quality of education has certainly been at the base of our thinking and the direction we wanted to go as a province.

We hear a lot about violence in our schools, particularly in the US. Some people read about what's going on in the US or wherever and say, "Just give it a few years and it will be here in Canada, here in Ontario." Unfortunately, we are starting to see, in the province of Ontario and across Canada, some of these violent episodes that are going on in our schools. That's not right. Students cannot learn when those kinds of threats are there, when they read and hear about those kinds of violence. That does have to stop. With the code of

conduct, we will be promoting respect, we will be promoting responsibility and of course we'll also be promoting civility.

A safe school environment will contribute to student learning and to quality education. Just imagine a student petrified of maybe being beaten up on the way to school or on the way home. Is his or her mind on education? It certainly isn't; their mind is on what's going to happen to them physically, and they're very concerned about that. We're looking at providing a safe school environment, which will contribute to the proper learning of these students. It's very important that this happen. As you talk to people on the street and talk to people in Northumberland, there's consistent support for this kind of thing. People quickly go into their days at school and how they were concerned. It's very different today than it was for people my age. When they went to school, the kinds of violent concerns they had were pretty minor by comparison.

This code of conduct, I'm pleased to say, will set out some very clear expectations of the kind of behaviour that we expect of our young people in school. At present, schools are required, as the member for Sudbury mentioned when he was a principal, to have a code of conduct. That was great for its time, but unfortunately there are too many inconsistencies as we move from board to board. In the past, boards had the right to expel and principals had the right to suspend, but individual teachers did not have any powers other than to send the student to the principal or, sometimes, to the board for consideration to be expelled. Now there will be more authority, more power given to the principal and also to the individual teacher.

If Bill 81 is passed, and I trust that with the support it's receiving it probably will, the principal will continue to be able to suspend students for up to 20 days, but over and above that he or she will receive the power and the ability to expel students for up to one year, or refer it to the board of education.

Teachers, with this bill, will now be able to suspend for at least one day. I heard the member for Sudbury going on about, "What's a day and where does it start and where does it end?" It almost sounds like some of the foolishness that we hear in courts, trying to play around with words. The intent is right and there's no question what is going to happen here.

In the past, it has been very unfortunate that expelled students seemed to think it was going to be a holiday for them, and many would just go out and really enjoy it. Fortunately, a lot of them really did want to continue with their education. With this bill, there will be strict-discipline facilities for them and they will be able to work on their education.

I think it's very important that we have these province-wide standards, as I was referring to earlier. Certainly province-wide standards are important when you are looking at something like discipline and codes of conduct. For less serious infractions, there will still be a code at the local board level.

As we look at something like a code of conduct, we're talking a lot about the principles that really came through with the Ontario charter of education—the rights and responsibilities they talked about—that came out with the previous government, of course. In it, they were saying that every student has the right to a safe learning environment, that every student has the responsibility to respect others and respect themselves within the education system in particular and, of course, that teachers have the right to maintain order in their classrooms.

I hear a lot of people expressing their respect for teachers, but they're saying: "It's something I'd love to do, but I couldn't handle the discipline. I couldn't maintain order in a classroom." With this code of conduct in place and having the rules and regulations out in front, hopefully down the road more people will feel that a career in education, a career as a teacher, would be more in order for them.

I think it's interesting that things are being laid out in this code that if certain things happen, an expulsion hearing would be required. Some of those would be if a student were to bring weapons on to school property or if a student had drugs or alcohol—providing drugs or alcohol to others—or if there was any physical or sexual assault or even robbery or if there was a threat of harm with a weapon. Then we move on to look at some of the things you could be suspended for—suspension would be a minimal penalty—and those would be things like possession of drugs or alcohol, threatening or swearing at a teacher, vandalism or uttering threats of harm. I think this is laid out quite well in the bill, and certainly the regulations will detail it even further, but I don't think there's any question that the right intent is here. Also, within this bill—

Mr Dominic Agostino (Hamilton East): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I inquire if there's a quorum present.

The Deputy Speaker: Is a quorum present?

Clerk Assistant (Ms Deborah Deller): A quorum is present, Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: The Chair recognizes the member for Northumberland.

Mr Galt: It's obvious that some people need some remedial training in mental math to be able to count whether there's a quorum present.

Before I was interrupted, I was mentioning some of the other things that will be present in this bill. It will allow for criminal checks of various workers who would be in the schools. Also, whether there would be a dress code or a uniform for certain schools would be a decision made by a majority of the parents who send students to a particular school.

There was some concern about daily exercises and what would or wouldn't happen in those openings and closings. This would require and include the singing of our national anthem, "O Canada." Also, whether a pledge of citizenship would be given would be a direction of the particular school council.

All in all, I think this is an excellent bill that's being brought forward by our government to increase the safety and security of our communities in general. In this one, in particular, we're looking at ensuring that our schools are safer. But our government has brought in a lot of bills that are really improving the security and safety of our residents; for example, one we brought in last fall, the Safe Streets Act. Certainly that is working. If you're in downtown Toronto right now, you find there are next to no squeegee kids out there. It was a high risk for them in some of the jobs they were trying to do in cleaning windshields.

1620

We have brought in other things. We've increased tremendously the number of family courts and also brought in, in our previous government, a Victims' Bill of Rights and a permanent office for victims—a big step. It's about time we recognized victims. The opposition is more concerned about the perpetrators and whether they might be in jail too long or whether they will get out on parole. That seems to be their big concern. They never did seem very concerned about the victims. I for one have always been concerned about victims.

We've also increased considerably the number of police officers in Ontario, some 1,000 police officers more in this province than there were when the previous—

Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I think the standing orders say we have to be truthful. The statement about more police officers isn't truthful, so is he lying?

The Deputy Speaker: We have rights and privileges in this House. They're very broad and so on, but they don't allow us to use that word, and so I'd ask you to withdraw it.

Mr Bisson: Mr Speaker, I do withdraw, but I ask the question—

The Deputy Speaker: An unconditional withdrawal, or I'll name you.

Mr Bisson: Unconditionally, Mr Speaker, I withdraw, with protest.

Mr Galt: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I'm glad he recognizes the mistake.

I was mentioning, when I was so rudely interrupted, the extra 1,000 police officers we now have in Ontario, and I hear police chiefs regularly complimenting our government for bringing them in. I bring this to your attention, Mr Speaker, because of the increased safety and security Bill 81 is bringing to this province.

Also, as another example, truck inspections and penalties: When we took office there were a number of wheels flying off trucks. That has been turned around tremendously.

These are some of the things our government has been doing to improve safety on our streets and in our schools, and Bill 81 is going to make a big difference.

Just to wind up I want to point out that I'm sure the official opposition will be interested in what was in the 20/20 Plan back in April 1999, proposed by the Liberal

Party as part of their 1999 election campaign: "Anyone convicted of carrying a weapon or dealing drugs within five blocks of a school will be subject to a new provincial penalty of up to two years in prison." Wow, talk about a penalty—and then the position as getting tough on outside troublemakers who are more often the cause of unsafe schools than the students themselves. So it's great to hear that the official opposition will also be supporting Bill 81.

The Deputy Speaker: Further debate?

Mr Agostino: I would like to add to the debate we're having here again. Certainly when you look at this bill, as usual with this government, it's a lot of rhetoric, a lot of spin, a lot of creative writing in the name of the bill but very little substance to it.

When you look at this bill, the Safe Schools Act, it pretends to do something it really doesn't do. It pretends to give school boards a code of conduct. The reality is that every school board in this province already has a zero tolerance policy and a code of conduct in place. What this bill does is simply stretch even further the resources that are in the schools now to make it more difficult for teachers, principals, psychologists, social workers—what few are left in the schools after your cuts—to deal with kids who are behaviour and discipline problems.

I look at the bill, and it really does some very disturbing things. First of all, teachers having the authority to suspend a student for one day: I have not spoken to one teacher across this province who has asked for that authority or who wants the authority to suspend, because it affects their relationship with the student tremendously; it causes further problems. I challenge the government to bring forward teachers who support that power. They don't want that power, but you're imposing it upon them.

Principals having the power to expel students: Again, most principals I speak to have not asked for that power and don't want that power. It should be left to the school board. It should be left under the system as it was that was working relatively well in regard to that.

As you bring these changes in and you put this on the backdrop of Bill 74, which is going to mean more students, fewer teachers, less money in education, you're now going to impose this extra level of bureaucracy here on schools, on teachers, on principals, and frankly this bill doesn't address the fundamental problems that cause many of the difficulties we're facing. You have cut back on resources for kids. We know that the investment in preventing crime is certainly a much better way to go than the cost after a crime has occurred.

Everything you do is always reactive. Everything you do is, "How do we punish afterwards?" instead of sitting back and saying, "We could help these kids, we could help our school system, and we could help our province much more by taking some steps ahead of time and preventing the violence from occurring," and helping these kids when they're struggling, and having the resources in place. But you don't do any of that.

I look at the bill and I look within the context of what this government has done. My colleague, the previous speaker, quoted the 20/20 Plan. You're right, we support safe schools. That's why we proposed, and the Premier and the government rejected, the idea of safe school zones, which would mean that if you commit certain crimes within five blocks of a school there would be much harsher penalties. Many of the kids who get involved, whether it's gang turf wars that happen within schools, whether it's other types of violence—it's often kids not necessarily from that school; it could be other schools or it could be other neighbourhoods. By having the provision, as they do in many American cities and it works well, they would have safe school zones. That, to me, is one real way of dealing with this problem. But you have chosen to ignore that.

We've also asked for and proposed safe school teams in the schools that would deal with problems and involve principals, psychologists, counsellors—people who have a handle on what the cause of the problem is. But of course to you that's a luxury so you've wiped all that out from your funding.

Then what is most galling and astonishing about these guys across the floor talking about safety and school safety and kids is the atrocious track record of what they've done. Let me remind you that this is the government that allowed 12-year-old kids permission to carry hunting rifles, to shoot hunting rifles. This is the government that did that. This is the government that allowed guides in school on how to load and shoot a gun. The Mike Harris, Tom Long neo-conservative government of Ontario allowed that. This is the government that is in court right now fighting gun registration and gun control. They are in court fighting gun control. They don't believe that the government should be able to restrict guns in this province. They obviously believe we should have a Florida approach: You can go into a corner store and buy a gun any time, anywhere, no questions asked.

My colleague from St Paul's ran a bill that would restrict the sale of pellet guns, replica guns. This government has not brought that forward. Clearly this government's track record when it comes to dealing with gun control, when it comes to dealing with violence is absolutely atrocious. As my colleague from St Paul's continues to state, this is a government that clearly is in the holster of the gun lobby, absolutely.

We have government backbenchers doing ads for the NRA, that wonderful freedom organization in the United States that believes every single American should be able to carry a gun, any time, anywhere, without any questions asked. That's who they're aligned with.

So we're not going to take any lessons at all from this government when it comes to school safety or safety with kids, because you, in many ways, by your actions and by the lack of actions, are contributing to the problem. You are contributing to the problem when you fail to take the steps that are necessary to curb violence in school, and then you bring this fluff piece of legislation—and that's all it is—a fluff, feel-good, pound-your-chest, look-what-

we're-doing piece of legislation that most teachers who have to enforce it tell you is not workable. Most principals will tell you it's not workable. Most social workers and counsellors and psychologists who deal with kids tell you it's not workable. But you don't want to listen, which is typical of this government.

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They didn't listen when they were warned about what would happen with the water quality and we saw the results of that: seven deaths. They didn't listen but they had been warned about what was happening to health care, and we've seen the drastic reductions that have occurred and we've seen the damage. People have died as a result of your funding cuts on the way to hospitals because we couldn't get emergency room. And we're seeing it in education again. You're not listening on this bill; you were not listening on Bill 74. You're simply imposing this republican, neo-conservative agenda of yours on the people of Ontario with total disregard for the impact it has.

If this government was serious about dealing with safe schools and school violence, it would invest in the right areas. They would implement the safe school zone that Dalton McGuinty and the Liberal Party proposed in their campaign and continue to propose today. They would implement school safety teams. They would go in and deal with schools with a problem. They would reinstate funding so kids can get the help—social workers, counsellors and psychologists.

Rather, it's always the hammer. Rather than trying to find a way of dealing with the root of the problem, it's always, "How do we fix it after it's happened?" That's exactly what we've seen. It's crisis and damage control at every single turn and the kids are paying a price.

We support policies that would actually make our schools safer. This does not. All this does is add a layer of bureaucracy to the teachers, to the principals, to the school boards. You put this on top of that other shameful, disgraceful Bill 74 that you're going to ram through the House in the next few days and you have a recipe for disaster again: more students per classroom, fewer teachers, less money.

I just want to remind you, Speaker, and you know this well because you're here, this government has cut \$1.6 billion out of education since taking office. You don't fix education by simply cutting almost \$2 billion out of it.

As a wrap-up, maybe their answer to all of this is that they want to create the kind of problems this is going to lead to. I remember the former minister and the crisis—that's exactly what it's all about. If you can create enough public distrust in public education, then you can start forcing a debate and a discussion on charter schools, on private schools, the American way that you like so much.

I ask you to scrap this bill, scrap Bill 74, start listening to the teachers, stop picking on teachers, stop beating up teachers, and do what is good for education rather than what your pollsters are telling you is good for your political careers.

Mr Bisson: First of all, I must put on the record that I object that the government has called this bill into the House at the same time as another education bill is going on in committee. I know that the Speaker has already ruled on this, but it puts our education critic at a disadvantage when he has to be at clause-by-clause on Bill 74, and then the government House leader calls this bill in the House at the same time. It's not only not in keeping with the standing orders, but quite frankly I think it is a disservice to this place overall.

I want to say on this bill, first of all, what is this? This is placebo politics. These guys across the way have decided people feel, rightly or wrongly, that schools are not as safe as they should be, so they're going to bring a bill into the House to give people the sense that they feel better. Somehow or other, by some magical wave of the legislative wand, we're going to have safer schools now as a result of the Mike Harris bill that he brings before the House today. This is nothing more than placebo politics.

They try to make us, the opposition and the public, believe that this is the first government that's ever moved on the issue of school safety. Nobody else in the world has ever done anything except the Conservative government because only the Conservatives have half a brain to be able to do anything. I'd like to know what happened to the other half of brain they lost, because the reality is school boards across Ontario have been dealing with this issue for years—long before this government got itself into the education business by way of previous bills.

We know, for example, that here in the city of Toronto, the city of Ottawa, the city of Hamilton, even the city of Timmins, in Kapuskasing and other areas, school boards have long been dealing with policies that try to deal with issue of school safety. I would argue that Ontario schools, by far, are safer than people are led to believe by this government.

The other point I want to make, before I get into a few things I want to say on the contents of this bill, is that previous governments as well have introduced legislation in this House and also, by way of policies, have dealt with this issue. I was a member of the NDP government from 1990 to 1995, and Marion Boyd was the Minister of Education who put in place a number of policies that dealt with the issue of codes of conduct within schools and zero tolerance policies when it came to violence. Those are steps that were taken by a former government.

I just want to say, number one, this government doesn't have a monopoly on ideas on how to make our schools safer—they're trying to make us believe that—and, number two, this is, quite frankly, placebo politics.

Now, I want to ask the members of the Legislature this question, and anybody who happens to read this debate later: How in God's name are we going to make schools safer by people singing "O Canada" and people swearing an oath of allegiance of the crown or their citizenship? I want to know how we're going to make our schools safer by that very fact.

It makes us feel better. I'm sure the right-wing Republicans across the way in the Mike Harris caucus feel that somehow or other this is a way to put some discipline into those kids, that we just straighten them out, and if they feel all warm and fuzzy about the flag, if they go into school in the morning and they say an oath of allegiance and sing "O Canada," my lord, we're going to be a safer school.

It's a stupid policy. Why do I say that? Who has been doing this for years and who has the highest violence when it comes to schools? The United States of America, by way of policies that their federal government has done in their states, have been doing the oath of allegiance in their schools since before I was born. They've been singing the "Star-Spangled Banner," stripes or whatever it's called. From the time I can remember, they've been singing it in their schools. I ask you a question: Are their schools any safer? The answer is no, they're more dangerous. They've got 11-year-old kids going into schools and killing people. You've got school violence in places like Chicago, New York in various schools, LA, and the list goes on. The whole idea of oaths of allegiance that they give in the United States when they start school in the morning, and the singing of the "Star-Spangled Banner," have done nothing, not an iota, to make their schools safer. I want to put on the record, because I haven't heard anybody point that out, that this is going to do nothing to make our schools safer.

I want to know how my young daughter, who just graduated from grade 12 and is going on to grade 13 next year, is going to be made safer at école secondaire Thériault if she and her friends sing "O Canada." First of all, most schools play the hymn, and kids who feel they've got to participate will participate, and a number of them do. That's fine. But being forced to sing "O Canada," I don't know how from the beginning that is going to do anything to make that school safer.

The second point is, I want to know how reciting the oath of allegiance or citizenship that some school boards will try to force on to students as a result of this legislation will make our schools safer. I don't think it's going to do anything. What it does is take away how sincerely and seriously we take, first of all, our oath of allegiance and our oath of citizenship. It takes away from the meaning of that and it doesn't do anything to make our schools safer. Trying to force people to sing "O Canada" again just takes away from the whole sense of what Canada is all about, and I don't think that's going to do anything to make our schools safer.

If the government wanted to come in here and talk about how we do that under another guise, then I'm prepared to get into that debate. But when it comes under the guise of trying to make our schools safer, I say no way, it's not going to do anything.

The other point is that in this legislation—I can't believe these guys even think this—we're going to give school principals the ability to kick a student out for up to a year. Then I hear some lame-brained member on the other side of the House get up and say, "That's only in

extreme cases when the child is charged with a serious offence under the Criminal Code.” What do you think happens to that kid in the first place? Do we leave him in school when he gets sentenced? If we charge a child under the Young Offenders Act and that child has to go to jail, they’re taken out of school. You don’t need legislation to do that. So to put it under the guise of, “It’s only on serious occasions where the child is charged under the Criminal Code or under a provincial statute that we’re going to be able to take them out”—you can do that already. What’s the point? Again it’s make-me-feel-warm-all-over legislation, placebo politics, number one.

The other point I want to make is about giving that kind of power to school principals. I would argue that (1) most principals in this province don’t want that kind of power and don’t feel it’s necessary; and (2) tell me how in God’s name you’re going to make our schools safer and, more important, how you’re going to add to the contribution this young person is going to make, because they’re a problem kid, by throwing them out of school for a year? If we’re going to throw a kid on to the streets of the cities of Timmins, Toronto, Kapuskasing or Hearst, I want to know how that’s going to make him any better. It’s not going to deal with the problem. Oh, yes, take the kid out of school, certainly take that little problem individual who’s 15 or 16 years old, who’s got all kinds of baggage at home or has some sort of personal problem that he or she can’t deal with and is acting out in the class—and that does happen—and, by way of a solution: “Oh, we know how to fix this problem. We’re going to throw him out of school.”

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Man, oh man, I can’t believe you guys are in charge of the province of Ontario. You guys should look at yourselves in the mirror to see how silly you are. How you deal with those issues is, yes, in extreme cases to suspend, but certainly not for a year and certainly not without proper supports in place in order to deal with the kid’s problem. A kid acts out for all kinds of reasons which we can have a whole debate on. There are kids out there who have real difficulties. I understand that. I taught at the high school level and I certainly understand that some of the young people in our high schools, as well as in primary schools, have problems when it comes to, as we say, *comportement*, behaviour in school. I don’t take that away for a second. I know it happens. I’ve experienced it. I taught at the high school level for a couple of years as a supply teacher in the trades department.

The reality is that you don’t deal with those problems by throwing the kid out of school. All you’re going to do, I would argue, is make the cost to society in the long run more expensive. If I take those problem children and throw them out of school, on to the streets of the community for a period of time, it’s going to do nothing to allow those kids to deal with their problems. You deal with problems by putting them into proper programs that have the support and mechanisms and dollars for them to be able to deal with their problems.

As a matter of fact just yesterday, Sunday morning, I met with Marcel Camirand from the French school board in our region. He is responsible for organizing basically programs for dropped-out kids. He needs money from this provincial government to make sure those programs exist in communities like Hearst, Kapuskasing, Iroquois Falls and the Tri-town. Iroquois Falls, as we know, has seen many job losses at the mill at Abitibi, and now they’re going to see the same thing at Monteith. They see this turmoil within their household, they go to school, they get all messed up in their heads because of what’s going on at home, they act out and eventually, if they don’t get kicked out, sometimes they walk out of school themselves. Marcel Camirand runs a program that takes these kids off the street and puts them into an educational setting that’s outside of the school and gives them the kind of support they need so that those young people are able to try to get their lives together and at least come out of the program with their grade 12. He has an 87% success rate, where those kids actually finish with a grade 12 diploma and end up doing something good with their lives.

That’s the kind of progressive thing you could be doing. I would argue, if you want to deal with problem kids, support Marcel Camirand and the French school board in the application that they’re making in order to build a program that will deal with these problem kids. Allow these kids the kind of support they need, program dollars, to be able to get them to finish their education in a setting that’s outside of the school, in a setting that’s more conducive to solving their problems. Those school programs under Marcel’s program aren’t the 20 or 25 students per class that we have in the high schools; they are much smaller and they’re in a setting outside of school where the peer pressures aren’t the same. Those young people end up doing much better with themselves through that program.

But, no, this government’s response is to give school principals the right to throw them out of school for up to a year. “Boy, are we ever smart,” said Mike Harris and Janet Ecker one morning. “Boy, we’re so smart, we’re just beside ourselves. We fixed the problems in schools. They’re going to be a lot safer now.” Wait until those kids hit your neighbourhood and tell me how you’re going to feel about those young people who have been thrown out of school without the proper supports. The government is going to get up and they’re going to say: “Oh, don’t worry. We’re going to put dollars into programs. We’re going to make sure that there are programs we can put these young people in, in order to deal with their aggressive behavioural problems.” Yes, right. Show me the money, because you haven’t done it up to now.

I read the Toronto Star this morning. Just as an example, what I see in my community is manifesting itself here in Toronto: not enough money for special-needs education. If you can’t do well by special-needs kids, am I to believe that you’re going to do well by kids that are hard to serve because of behavioural problems?

Not a chance. You're going to put them out of sight and out of mind and into the streets. That's where they're going to end up, and I want to put that on the record today. Shame on this government because it does nothing to deal with the problem. What they're doing is trying to shift the problem out of our schools and into the streets.

I say to the government across the way that this, I believe, is a stupid bill that does nothing to deal progressively with the problems in our schools, where there are some children who have behavioural problems that are problems not only for themselves but for their classmates and their teachers too. I accept that, but this bill is not going to do anything to solve those problems. We solve those problems by putting money into the schools, making sure we have proper programs in schools and orientation programs—I'm orientation; I can't remember the term in English, but the counselling service that you provide in the schools themselves and make sure it's there. If you want to do something really progressive, why don't you fund the application I'm about to give to your Minister of Education and support the efforts of Marcel Camirand when it comes to being able to offer special educational programs for kids who drop out of schools, often because of behavioural problems, in the communities of Hearst, Kapuskasing, Iroquois Falls and the Tri-town. Why don't you do that for a change?

The Acting Speaker (Mr Michael A. Brown): Further debate?

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): It's my pleasure and my privilege to speak on this motion on Bill 81. I'd just remind the members that Bill 81 today has been called not a particularly significant contribution to the debate on education, and I disagree with that. I quite honestly think that the previous member who was speaking, from the NDP caucus, would know that they brought in regulations and changes to address school behaviour, a code-of-conduct kind of legislation. They brought in that model. I think the reason is, it's out there and people see it in many ways, both on the news and in the media.

First of all, there are very few young people in our schools who are actually the problem. I want to start by saying that, by and large, 99% of the children are model students who are working in a world that's changing. It's filled with knowledge and information and computers and global issues, and 99% of them are getting on with meeting the challenging, changing world. There are a few for whom, unfortunately, we require this legislation, to make sure that our schools are safe places for students and safe places for our teachers. That's my starting point. What the whole thing boils down to is that everyone has rights but everyone also has responsibilities. What we're looking for is a balance between the rights and the responsibilities of the individual.

The previous member also made some elusive reference to how unimportant it might be for the national anthem. I beg to differ. I think we start significant events with some moment of reflection and certainly just recently at the ballgame—the Blue Jays and the Montreal Expos—the national anthem was an important part of the

beginning ceremonies for that game. I also see other sporting events and other community events where the singing of the national anthem is very appropriate. It's important for our young people not just to learn the words but to take a moment and reflect and bring some order to the day. I would say no more than that, except that it's part of the history they are actually learning in our schools.

Is this legislation necessary? I was in Peterborough on the weekend and I picked up a few columns. I'm going to quote the Peterborough Examiner, June 10. This is the paper here and it says:

“Student Banned from School Buses.

“A 17-year-old student who threatened to kill a school bus driver got a suspended sentence but was banned from school buses and ordered to behave in school under conditions of his probation.”

This took place in Peterborough, a small town; I'm very familiar with it. It says, “The male youth, who cannot be identified under the Young Offenders Act”—that's another issue; there's no accountability. Yet the school bus driver's life was threatened by this abusive student. It went on to say, “The verdict should send a clear message that everyone must be accountable for what they say and do while riding on a school bus.” This is Ron Gerow, school bus driver.

I think it's really that tone, that there are consequences for your actions. So that's one. We're talking about motive here. I think there's more to be said here on this program. There's a new program here. This is the same paper, the Peterborough Examiner of Saturday, June 10. I was just reading the Saturday paper. This is another headline here. “Pilot Program to Help Pupils Get Fit, Be Safe.” In this one here it goes on to say, “At King George and Queen Elizabeth public schools, parents' greatest concern was traffic, followed by stranger abduction and bullying.”

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The article states, “This program stems from a study performed in February by Trent University.” Really, it was children walking to school and feeling safe. They talked about the bullying that occurs going back and forth. I don't know where this aggressive behaviour is coming from, but certainly it is coming.

But it goes further than that. This is the June 10 Peterborough Examiner—I'm giving them lots of coverage tonight.

The Acting Speaker: It's quite permissible to read, but not to use anything as a prop.

Mr O'Toole: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I won't do that, but I will read from it, with your permission. This one says, “Teacher Acquitted of Assault.” It's worth reading this article. It says, “The conduct of some pupils”—in this school; I won't say which school—“grade 6 class was ‘terrible’ and ‘disrespectful,’ Mr Justice Tim Whetung ruled yesterday in finding a supply teacher not guilty on charges of assaulting five of them.”

It goes on to say that there was such disrespect in the classroom that this supply teacher was basically being

insulted and intimidated in a grade 6 class. For someone to say that there's no problem, they've either got to be a Liberal or an NDP, because they don't do anything. The way you don't upset anyone is don't do anything. That's the policy of do-nothing governments: if it's going to upset somebody by setting a line in the sand where we protect the safety of the students and the teachers—of course there are going to be those free-thinking, I hate to say it, Liberals who don't stand for anything. I shouldn't say that; I get so upset when I start to think of this.

When I look at the bill—and there have been some suggestions made where I have to correct the record. It's being left to me once again.

Mr Raminder Gill (Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale): The Liberals are trying to please everybody.

Mr O'Toole: Exactly. This one—and I'm reading right from the beginning of the act here: "A new statutory scheme is also created to govern the expulsion of pupils." There's an appeal process in this. "Section 309 provides for mandatory expulsion if a pupil commits an infraction listed in that section or in a board policy. Provision is made for an inquiry and an expulsion hearing. Two categories of expulsion are created"—limited expulsion and full expulsion. It goes on to say that, "Expelled students are required to meet certain requirements before they can return to school." That seems like a very fair, clearly communicated process where there are consequences for your actions. Everyone needs that clear direction in life.

"Programs, courses and services for suspended pupils and for expelled pupils are authorized under section 312 of the act." So there's a mandatory component of providing some sort of program, not just kick them out of the system.

What we have to do is look at the curriculum itself. I can tell you that there are initiatives, for instance, when you're looking at the prevention strategy. This is, respectfully, an ounce of prevention. You've heard the expression. This government understands that prevention is essential with negative behaviour in young people. The grades 1 to 8 health and physical education curriculum includes topics on areas such as bullying, peer assault, gang violence, decision-making and problem-solving. In grades 1 to 6, the social studies curriculum students are expected to learn respect, tolerance and understanding towards individuals, groups and cultures. It starts through having an understanding that with rights there are also incumbent responsibilities: My freedom ends at the end of my swing and at the beginning of your nose.

I think it's important—and that's where I have to end my remarks, because I have to share the time with one of my better friends in caucus—that the federal Young Offenders Act sets the tone that there are no consequences for your action. Anne McLellan should be ashamed that she's not bringing in stiffer penalties for repeat violent offenders. I'm not talking about the first-time vandalism kind of thing;+ I'm talking about repeat violent, predatory-type offences. There are no con-

sequences for the actions. What is that telling the young people? What signal does it send?

What we're trying to say with this rather innocuous little bill is that schools should be safe places for students to learn and for teachers to teach. The curriculum complements that. We have the regulations which I've remitted to try to remediate the issue. I'm appealing to the opposition, those few who are here, to vote for this bill. It's time to do the right thing and speak up for students' safety in our schools. Put the politics aside. It's the right thing to do, and you know it; both of you do.

Ms Caroline Di Cocco (Sarnia-Lambton): I'm pleased to have an opportunity to add my voice in opposition to this bill. The reason I'm opposing this bill is because it's developing this myth that codes of conduct are something that the Harris Conservatives know something about and no one else in this province knows anything about.

I have asked all of the schools and our school boards in Sarnia-Lambton to provide to me their codes of conduct, because one of the things that seems to be missing here is the evaluation that codes of conduct are a part of every school in this province as we speak. I have a handbook, *A Safe Learning Environment*, from the Lambton Kent District School Board. It talks about violence-free schools, and this is at every school. This is a comprehensive document, and it speaks about prevention; it talks about intervention and also implementation of school strategies. I would like to suggest to the honourable members that codes of conduct also have to deal with prevention, and prevention is something that this government doesn't seem to understand. It only understands the punitive aspects of what they call codes of conduct.

This is the document from the Lambton Kent District School Board. I also have codes of conduct from St Patricks High School, from St Christopher's High School. Sarnia CI & TS in Sarnia-Lambton has a code of conduct. Northern has a code of conduct. Alexander Mackenzie has a code of conduct. Gregory Hogan school has a code of conduct. St Theresa's Roman Catholic School has a code of conduct; St Joseph school. We've got Sacred Heart school. We've got Our Lady of Mercy. We have St Michael's Roman Catholic School; Queen Elizabeth II school. We have Aberarder Central School. We have Lakeroad Public School. We have Brights Grove school. I have Rosedale Public School's code of conduct. We have here Errol Road Public School. We also have King George VI school's code of conduct, and I have High Park school as well.

What I find absolutely offensive is the implication, or at least the suggestion, that a code of conduct is something that has to be, if you like, imposed on the province by this government, making assertions that there are no codes of conduct unless they impose them.

The other aspect of this bill that I have a real problem with is that this bill is basically, in my estimation, about control. It's about control by the minister. In Bill 81, all the various sections talk about—in section 301, it says,

"The minister may establish a code of conduct governing the behaviour of all persons in schools."

Another section says, "The code of conduct is a policy of the minister."

It goes on to say, "The minister may establish additional policies and guidelines.... The minister may establish policies and guidelines with respect to disciplining" students. I don't know where the minister's going to find all this time to go to every school in this province and micromanage the system.

"The minister may establish policies and guidelines to promote the safety of pupils.

"The minister may establish different policies and guidelines under this section for different circumstances...."

Literally, it's all about control. That's basically what this bill is about. It has nothing to do with enhancing or adding to safety in schools, because in actual fact the previous bill—and I have in front of me an evaluation that was done and prepared by the Institute for Catholic Education. What they have done is they've evaluated the implications of the Education Accountability Act and they suggest that "notwithstanding the reduction of average class sizes under the Education Accountability Act, there will be fewer teachers available to cover classes through the on-call process to support field trips and school activities."

It says that among the areas that will be affected are supervision and safety, staffing, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, and coverage of absent teachers' classes. So one of the areas that's going to be problematic is supervision and safety.

1700

I have received numerous letters from teachers, students and parents in my reading and across the province, and I must put on the record a very emotional letter that I received. It stated:

"Little did I know 15 years ago, when I began the lengthy process of earning my teaching credentials, that after finally earning the right to throw my heart and soul into a profession that I am deeply impassioned about, I would soon hereafter find myself cast as the antihero of the politically charged, dollar-driven educational drama which continues to unfold in Ontario under the Harris Conservatives."

She goes on to say:

"I absolutely love teaching. I am completely nuts about 140 young people who were entrusted to my care this year. However, I admit that my ability to relate on an individual level with students was stretched to the breaking point when I had a peak number of 196 students in my care in the fall of 1998 when we had our first three-month taste of teaching 6.5 courses, as Mike Harris would have us do from now on."

She adds:

"Why am I writing a letter which, painfully, may never be read or seriously taken into consideration, especially as my dining room table is piled with students' work which must be evaluated before our mark deadline

a few days hence? Why do I take the time after I've spent five hours in meetings last week, an additional 10 or more hours at home crunching numbers in my role as co-chairperson of our school's budget committee, trying to find ways to bridge a \$105,000 gap between the \$240,000 our department needs and the \$135,000 that has been allotted?"

She goes on about Bill 74 in particular and says:

"But what a shame that these proposals were not introduced in a spirit of mutual respect rather than being permeated with vindictiveness, included in an omnibus bill that, if closely examined, is structured in a manner which undermines many democratic and enlightened ideals that teachers spend much of their time highlighting for students."

You know, one of the worst scenarios here is the fact that this government's systematic and sustained attack on teachers is going to do nothing to improve education. It's going to continue to erode our public education system, and I hope it doesn't do it to the point where it's irreparable.

Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina): I'm happy to be here, because I was in committee in room 151. We were dealing with Bill 74, the act that whacks teachers very badly. We've got a couple of hours to do the clause-by-clause and when that's done it comes here for third reading debate and it's gone. So while my friend and colleague Gilles Bisson is sitting in for me, I'm here to speak on Bill 81.

You see the speed with which these bills are moving? They just keep on coming. It's never-ending. They never end.

Mr Frank Mazzilli (London-Fanshawe): Promises made, promises kept.

Mr Marchese: Promises made? With Bill 81, before I get back to Bill 74 in a little while, what problem are we trying to fix? What is Bill 81 fixing that we don't already have in place?

Mr Gill: Real benefit for real people.

Mr Marchese: "Real benefit for real people." What does that mean? It may be true to you and in your own mind, but what does Bill 81 say except, "We're going to be tough on kids"? That's the message. Yes, it is. It's the law-and-order punishing message that you people like to talk about. It's punitive. That's what you want to be able to communicate to the public.

The real point is we already have a code of behaviour. Since 1994 we've had a code of behaviour. They say: "Oh no, it's not good enough. It's just not good enough." Why isn't it good enough to have a code of behaviour that's in place that deals with bad behaviour, that deals with students who are difficult, that deals with students who bring in guns or do drugs in the classroom or cause violence to some other student? The code already says that when that happens you bring in the law. Frank, you're a former policeman; you would know. When that happens, when some kid comes in with arms, you would be there. You would be called upon to deal with that problem.

What does the code of conduct do that the code of behaviour brought in by the New Democrats doesn't? It's the same thing with a new name, except, "Now we call it the code of the conduct and we, the Tories, have brought it in." There you have it: "We, the Tories, brought it in, therefore it's different. Therefore it's"—you got it—"better."

What problem are we trying to solve except a political perception issue, a placebo politics kind of thing? Placebo politics: Make people feel good; tell them you're doing something. Even if it isn't new, just tell them it is. That's what they're doing. That's what Bill 81 is all about.

To top it off, the minister says: "The teachers have asked us to bring it in. The teachers have asked for this." We ask: Name one, name two, name three. Or, to start backwards: Name three, name two, name one. There aren't any teachers who asked for the power to suspend, because they are afraid of teachers suspending students willy-nilly, without a process. I remind you, good public, when the minister made this announcement a couple of months ago, there was no process in place. Journalists laughed at her and said: "Excuse me, we have no process in place in terms of dealing with an appeal. Should a teacher decide on the spur of the moment, in the heat of the moment, 'You're gone from the classroom,' they magically disappear and there is no process of appeal?" The journalists were in consternation. They thought it was the oddest of things that teachers would expel and there's no process of appeal. Does it seem odd to you, Frank, as a former policeman? Rule of law is basic, right?

I said at the time, "Minister, is there any research that would show or prove that somehow we have a problem now bigger than before?" She said, "No, our research is we've talked to students, we've talked to parents and we've talked to teachers." That's the extent of the marvel of this government: "No, we don't need any objective research because the way we achieve objectivity is we talk to teachers, we talk to students and we talk to parents." So we asked, "Name one."

Mr John Hastings (Etobicoke North): That's private.

Mr Marchese: It couldn't be so private to name one parent who says, "By the way, the rules are too lax." It couldn't be so private to name a school where you might have had these discussions. If anything, invent a school if you have to, but name someone. Name a school, name some process that you were engaged in.

I've got to tell you, the same thing applies to Bill 74. You know, the bill that would have forced teachers to work after school, no longer voluntary? That's Bill 74. It's not a negotiated thing between teachers and government; the government says: "You will teach it whether you like it or not. You will do sports whether you like it or not. You're not a football player? Too bad. You will be." Imagine a teacher saying: "I'm not a football player, but I'm being mandated to coach football, or hockey. I can't play the sport. Besides, you can't obligate or man-

date me to play a sport I have no interest in or love for. I'm going to say, 'Fine, you put me on the field and I'll coach,' and the students will say: 'Sayonara. We're not going to play football with a teacher who doesn't have a clue about the game.'"

1710

The bill that's being debated in clause-by-clause in committee right now—it was beautiful: Today Madam Ecker, in response to a question by another opposition member that she was cutting staff, said: "Where does it say that? Show me where it says that." She did have the courage—I dare say, temerity—to say, "Where does it say" that she's cutting staff?

So in my question I pointed out to her quite clearly how she's doing that. She knows, and she didn't even answer my question. I didn't expect her to. But I pointed out in clear, grade 3 kind of language, more or less—grade 3, grade 4 or grade 5—in order to be clear, for the purposes of lucidity, I made sure she could comprehend what I had to say. I said to the minister, "If you change the definition of instructional time, which now obligates teachers to teach another 25 or 30 students"—because that's what your bill does. You know that figure, 6.67 periods? John, you would know that as a former teacher.

Mr Hastings: I'm not a good mathematician.

Mr Marchese: Yes, but you were a teacher, so you would know the implication of that by practical experience. The implication of 6.67 is that teachers will now be forced to teach 25 to 30 more students.

The minister says, "That's more contact time." We say: "No, that is not more contact time with individuals who need help. That's more students being taught, not leaving the teacher free to teach those who need help." If you block in every moment of the teachers' lives to teach more students, they have no time to assist students who desperately need help in a field such as biology, math, chemistry or, dare I say, trigonometry or the like.

So I said to the minister, "By getting fewer teachers to teach more students, you will be firing 1,500 teachers," give or take a few, Speaker; I know this subject interests you. Fifteen hundred teachers gone, anywhere from 1,500 to 2,000, but to be modest let's say 1,500 teachers gone, and in response to an opposition question that we would be cutting staff the minister says, "Where in the bill does it say that?" There you have it, John. You understand, right?

Mr Hastings: You got your formula mixed.

Mr Marchese: Quite appropriately, member for Etobicoke North, your minister decided she'd better not answer the question. But she knows. You see, that's the game. She knows the politics, but she pretends she doesn't have a clue and then turns it around and says: "No, we are putting more teachers into the classroom. We are reducing class size. What's wrong with that?" There's nothing wrong with reducing class size. But if you fire a couple of thousand and then put a few bucks back in and say, "We're decreasing class size," do you see the math, member for Etobicoke North? The two things are not symmetrical. One contradicts the other. We

fire 1,500 or 2,000 teachers and then we put a couple back and say, "We're putting more money back into the classroom." That's the bill that's being debated downstairs in 151 that I'm missing to debate Bill 81, which deals with a problem we don't have in our school system.

They say, "We're responding to the teachers," and the teachers are saying: "Sorry, Madam Ecker, we didn't ask you for that power. We already have the code of behaviour." So I'm assuming she would say, "Too bad, you're getting it anyway," like extracurricular activities. "Too bad, you're getting it anyway. We know you're doing it voluntarily, but we don't like that. We want you to do it mandatorily." Mandatorily. Do you get the word "Tory" in there? Everything fits into Tory.

Bill 81 also empowers the minister to gather information on whomever she wants in the school system and then presumably give this private information to anybody she chooses. It's in Bill 81. She's empowered to collect information on the basis of gender, sex, creed—on the basis of anything. It's in Bill 81. For what purpose, and to whom would she want to give that kind of information? Should this kind of power be entrusted to the minister, and why is it needed in the first place? I don't trust this government. Second, why would we give ourselves such power? For what purpose? I don't know. From everything we've seen of this government, I don't trust them, and neither does half the population. I hope more than half the population doesn't trust this government.

Theirs is a punitive agenda. It's based on punishing people, on punishing young people. It demonizes young people, in effect, at least in terms of the politics of it. There appears to be no desire or interest on the part of this government to mediate a problem, no desire to talk about how we prevent a problem, no desire to find a solution to bad behaviour or to understand why it's happening—no interest, no desire. It's a punitive agenda that says, "Students misbehave and they're gone." Magically, they're gone. "We'll simply throw them out of the classroom and we'll create a boot-camp style of classroom that doesn't exist." But it doesn't matter for the general public; all they need to know is that you're creating a boot-camp kind of classroom somewhere outside of the classroom, assuming that by law you could oblige them to do that, once they're out of the school. And the problem is gone.

With this kind of government and this kind of politics, we don't have time to talk about things. We don't have time to understand why things happen and how we mediate a problem. We have to simply establish a law-and-order agenda, and when an activity happens that is against the law we simply clamp down. That's the basis of this government's approach to problems. They're not interested in understanding why problems occur.

For a New Democrat it's almost primal—it is. We need to understand why some students have a problem. Is it because there's stress in the home? Is it because a parent or both parents are drinking? Is it because there might be general substance abuse in the family? Is it

because there might be some mental illness in the family? Is it because both parents are so stressed out with work, that they have so very little time to devote to their children, that their children, in response to that kind of thing, and with a desire to reach out, to be able to say, "I'm looking for some attention," may act out in the school?

You would want a teacher to be able to try to reach out to that young man or woman and say, "We're going to help." But no, the way this government is approaching it is to say: "We've got a problem. Throw them out." That's the approach of the Tories. Isn't that the approach of the Tories? Am I misstating the issue, do you think? Young people who are poor, kids who suffer poverty in the home, day in and day out, bring a problem to the school system. It's inevitable that if I'm suffering an economic loss of sorts or an emotional loss of sorts, I'm going to have a problem in the classroom, not as a general rule, but by and large it happens. What you want is a school system to be there to help out.

So they cause a problem such as underfunding our institutions, of which the deceased Dr Paul Steinhauer said, "Even the province's plans for so-called boot-camp schools for expelled students would just create breeding grounds for bad behaviour." Dr Steinhauer was the head of Sparrow Lake Alliance, or a member of that alliance, and he said, "All the government cutbacks to schools and social services are causing a significant increase in the number of kids behaving in a negative and disruptive manner."

1720

You people caused the problem. You, the Conservative government, caused the problem. You nod your heads. I'm simply looking to an expert who gives an expert opinion, which—presumably in your terms he's not an expert. You say, "No, no, no." He says quite clearly that your cuts have caused, in many instances, misbehaviour in our school system. Then you, in order to correct the problem, punish the student even more. Instead of acknowledging that perhaps you have been responsible for the problem, you say, "We'll correct the problem we've caused by punishing them some more." It's tragic. It really is tragic.

I think the member for Dufferin-Peel understands what I'm saying and I suspect he believes in what I'm saying. I even suspect that in his caucus he might be saying, "We are going in the wrong direction." But of course he has no voice in caucus—not because you don't have a voice; not for any reason. It's because your cabinet is strong and the Premier's office is even stronger and they shut you guys out. I'm not saying you don't have any power—

Interjection.

Mr Marchese: Oh, very good, Frank.

Interjections.

Mr Marchese: Very good, member from Etobicoke North. You're listening to my speech, I can tell.

The Acting Speaker: Through the Speaker, please.

Mr Marchese: They're helping me out. Even the member from Etobicoke North—now, he was a former

teacher. I suspect he too must have said, while he was in caucus: "No, there's already a code of behaviour. Good God, if we introduce a code of conduct, some people might catch on and they might say we're playing a game here." I suspect he too has no voice in caucus, because cabinet and the Premier's office in particular, the cabal that used to include Tom Long at one time—but he's busy now; he's busy trying to put into effect all of the things you fine people have put here in Ontario, a national kind of politics, Tom Long style.

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): How's he doing?

Mr Marchese: I think he's doing OK. I suspect Manning is a good grandfather of the Reform Party. No offence. Good God, no offence to anyone reaching an age where they're getting on.

Hon Margaret Marland (Minister without Portfolio [Children]): Like you and I, Rosie.

Mr Marchese: I am getting there too. Age is an inevitable law of human nature.

I suspect people will have a choice between Tom Long, the so-called architect of your Common Sense Revolution, and M. Day, the karate guy from Alberta who is trying to tone down some of those tendencies that are somewhat extreme of the right. He wants to be able to bring in people from Ontario to support him, so he has to be careful, right?

Mr Kormos: But isn't it still just the same old Social Credit Party?

Mr Marchese: It's the same old garbage. It was the Social Credit party at one time, then the Reform Party, then Social Credit, right? It's all the same stuff. And now what do we have? The Canadian Reform Conservative Alliance. My God, is this title ever an evolving one, eh? It's big. It's getting longer and longer. It's going to be as inclusive as you need it to be to bring everybody into the party. The party's big.

Mr Kormos: I don't think it will work.

Mr Marchese: I hope it doesn't work. I've got to tell you, I'm frightened as hell. Their tax cuts, if they haven't caused enough damage, of which Walkerton is but one mere example of the tax cuts and the decapitation of the ministry and of the downsizing in their ministry and the privatizing—if we haven't seen Walkerton as one mere example of this kind of agenda—good God, M. Long or M. Day want to extend it throughout all of Canada.

Madam Minister, nice to see you. Madam Ecker is here to join me. I know she was listening to me in the other room.

Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Education): I wasn't getting the full flavour up there. I had to come in.

Mr Marchese: I appreciate that, because I like contact. I like more contact with the minister. It's direct and we can see each other; exactly.

We're not even getting two hours on this bill. What gives? Not even two hours. Member for Dufferin-Peel, can you believe your minister not even giving two hours of time to the good public to debate Bill 81? I think the public deserves a little more time, but the minister says:

"No hearings. It's enough for accountability. You elected us once. That's accountability enough."

Well, sorry, I think, yes, they elected you twice—the Lord is not merciful—but surely when you introduce bills in this place, the public expects you to take them out for some debate. Two hours. One day, one afternoon, at least. You've got to give a modicum of some democracy in the province. You've got to give us a little. But you give us nothing. There is no debate any more. They're shutting everybody out, and I suspect people are as mad as hell and they're not going to take it any more.

Mr Mazzilli: It's my privilege to speak to Bill 81, first by acknowledging that our teachers in this province do a wonderful job with students, and in the vast majority of cases, our students are certainly benefiting from that experience.

I had the opportunity to hear different viewpoints of the House. The member from Sudbury talked about his teaching days, either 33 years ago or back in the 1930s, I'm not sure. But essentially he said there has always been a code of conduct. There always was in his school; it was a policy.

The member from Trinity-Spadina talked about a zero tolerance policy of calling the police when his government was in power.

Essentially, that's what this is all about. In the past there were policies that principals and teachers could not really enforce. They were understood. That's why our government has taken some of the past policies, listened to our teachers and our principals, and made it an act, "An Act to increase respect and responsibility, to set standards for safe learning and safe teaching in schools and to amend the Teaching Profession Act." That's what that's about. It's combining all of the past things that were unwritten into an act.

Let's look at the intent of this. The NDP and Howard Hampton had shown leadership in this in the past when they were in government, to put some of these things into their code of conduct. Dalton McGuinty, on the other hand, shows no leadership and opposes all of this, and I certainly wonder who he's taking his marching orders from.

We've heard about intentions to prevent crime. In 1997-98: possession of weapons, 20 young students were expelled and 649 were suspended for that purpose; threats of serious physical injury, eight were expelled and 1,429 were suspended; assault causing serious bodily harm, 22 were expelled and 2,289 were suspended. That's what the intent of this legislation is.

We've heard of prevention. Well, let's look at the intent: "To ensure that all members of the school community, especially people in positions of authority, are treated with respect and dignity." Who are we talking about? We're talking about our teachers and our principals, to be treated with respect and dignity. I know when I went to school and when most people in this House went to school, you certainly treated your teachers and your principal with respect and dignity, and that's some-

thing that parents want again, and teachers want, to ensure a quality education.

The second intent is, "To promote responsible citizenship by encouraging appropriate participation in the civic life of the school community." This is not only as young people, to learn to participate in our communities, but something that needs to start early on. We all need to continue in that. As adults, we become involved in many different organizations and charities in our communities, so we want to encourage that from a very young age.

1730

I only have a few minutes left but, "To maintain an environment where conflict and difference can be addressed in a manner characterized by respect and civility." Obviously we will not all agree on everything in life, and certainly that's open to debate, but the way some of these confrontations have been handled in schoolyards is not the way for a person or parent can condone, with violence.

"To encourage the use of non-violent means to resolve conflict." We want to learn at a very young age how to resolve conflict without violence and hopefully carry that into our adult lives.

"To promote the safety of people in the schools. To discourage the use of alcohol and illegal drugs." Like I said earlier, the NDP and Howard Hampton had started on this road when they were in government, but it's a road that many teachers and principals felt was unenforceable. They called in the authorities, the police, to investigate things, but if no Criminal Code laws or no provincial laws had been violated, that code had no powers beyond that.

When we look at things like threats of serious physical injury, if it does not meet the criteria under the Criminal Code, then how could you suspend a person? You can threaten someone without it fitting the criteria and still not be acceptable in a schoolyard. That's what this act does and now clarifies. It gives teachers and principals the authority, for the very few people who continually—and I stress that—interrupt school life to remove those young people to allow the majority, in my view, to have a quality education.

Speaker, I'll be sharing my time with the Minister of Education.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate.

Mr Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings): Bill 81, the Safe Schools Act—another misleading title from the cute-name people who brought us the Safe Streets Act. It certainly infers that there's a safety problem in our schools. In 17 years as a trustee, I visited a school at least once a week, probably closer to twice a week, and I didn't see schools out of control and I didn't see young people out of control. I saw education taking place. I saw quietness and calm within the buildings. However, I appreciate that in the movies and on TV we see what's going on in the American school system and so we're going to model it in philosophy here, because the government thinks if we can create the perception that there's a

problem, then we can solve a problem that doesn't exist and get credit for it. Interestingly, the solution is to take the American solution to their problem, which has been proven not to work there either.

The simplistic approach of singing the national anthem each morning: I think that's a wonderful idea. It is played every morning in every school now. The issue of singing with it is rather new, and I'm not sure how you will make a 13-year-old boy, whose voice is changing, sing the national anthem. I guess it's mandatory and he's going to sing it whether he likes it or not. But I believe we don't mandate and legislate respect for our country; we model it. As with our generation, the responsibility is to model what should be happening in our schools.

I would like to talk about the safety issue. In many cases, the hazards that are in school are not from the school community but with people coming in from outside of the school, with intruders into the building. What have we seen happen to prevent that over the last five years? Actually, rather than preventing it, it's getting worse. In many cases, the first school board employee who would come into contact with someone who should not be in the school would be the custodian. Funding for the maintenance of schools has been dramatically cut, and there are now schools in Ontario that don't have a custodian on during the day. They come in the morning before school starts and they return afterwards. Or they're no longer board employees; they are from companies that come in during the evening to clean. That first initial contact of the custodian in the hallways is lost to making schools safe.

Secretaries: The front door, a key component in identifying who's coming into the building and who should be there. Many of our schools in Ontario no longer have full-time secretaries, so we have that front desk empty now for parts of the day.

Certainly teachers are a key factor in keeping the schools safe. However, if we consider this in conjunction with Bill 74, there will be fewer teachers. The teachers will be teaching more hours and there will be fewer of them, which reduces the presence in the classroom for that person to be available to notice somebody who should not be there.

Interestingly, as the teachers are teaching more minutes and there are fewer of them, there will be a lower possibility for a student who wants to come and speak to a teacher to get extra help during the day. The teachers will be in class. What's the alternative for the student? The student can stay after school and speak with the teacher. But not all of Ontario exists within the 905 and the 416 area. When we get into rural Ontario, students can't stay after school and still have that late bus to go home on. The funding for the late bus has been substantially reduced or eliminated, so now we have students who, if they stay after school for extra help, are going to have to get a ride home, which is relatively safe, or they may try to hitchhike, which is not safe. So the reduction in teacher availability and the elimination of

the late buses causes us to put our young people more at risk when they're simply trying to get home.

Larger classes make the students less safe. Larger classes prove more challenging for the teachers. No longer can boards put in an educational assistant simply to work with the class as a whole because of its unique or complex nature. Now the educational assistants are tied to a particular student, so if a class has a lot of challenging students, it can't get the EA unless one is particularly challenging.

I certainly agree with suspensions; I agree with expulsion. But to put it in context, as a trustee and board chair, a board with about 20,000 to 21,000 students, our board expelled one student in the 17 years that I was on the board—one student. That's how unsafe the school was.

How the system works now, and it's not broken, is that if a student is to be suspended because of something in a classroom, the principal is responsible for that suspension. If a student is to be expelled, it is done by the board. That system works great. The new system presents great risks. You've got a teacher in a classroom now with the authority that she or he didn't ask for to suspend a student, a student they can suspend for one day but who will return the following day, to be back in that classroom with that teacher who has suspended them. We don't require the victims of other crimes to levy the penalty on the person who committed the offence against them. We don't say to police officers, "Once you've identified the problem, you not only lay the charge but you impose a sentence on it." We understand the need for the teacher to be neutral or for a victim to be neutral, so we're forcing the teacher into having some responsibility that he or she doesn't want and should not have. The environment in that classroom should not be disrupted by a teacher also having to serve as a judge and jury.

For the principal in the school, the authority to expel is rather awesome. When boards contemplated either long suspensions or expulsions, there were in many cases appeals or even lawsuits over it. I believe it is the board's responsibility as an employer for that particular individual to take the responsibility for any lawsuits or resulting actions out of it. That's not the case in this.

We also need to recognize that although the new bill purports to identify those automatic things that happen, the phrase "zero tolerance" is wonderfully colourful to describe, but I can think, over the years, of young people we have fostered who have been behaviour problems at school. They have been behaviour problems there because of neglect in the home or physical or sexual abuse in the home, and they were victims acting out or trying to get help, rather than to be punished for their actions.

For the young people in our schools, if this act is intended to legislate respect, I would suggest the best way to get their respect is to model respect for them. We have not seen this government model respect for all the citizens of Ontario. The money that is used for the ads for education, both before the last election and the money that's being used now, is money that belongs in the class-

room for the students, not money going to the media. Our young people are not stupid. They understand. When there isn't funding provided for a textbook but they can see an ad on TV on how much the government cares, there is cynicism and hypocrisy there.

1740

The approach being taken to special ed is demeaning to the student and the parent. There's a lack of respect there. A parent has to strive to present their child in the worst image possible to ensure that they get the funding that child needs. There's no respect for the board staff who used to be able to assess a child and identify what level of support they required. Now all knowledge lies within the ministry: "Parents don't know about their child. Teachers don't know about their child. The decisions have to be made here." The parents are put in that awful position of hoping and striving to make their child identified as one with extremely high needs, which is a somewhat humiliating process for a parent to go through. It may be humorous to some in this room, but it's not humorous to parents when they have an extremely high-needs child.

The powers given to this minister to collect and disperse information are powers that have not been earned. We need only think about the 50,000 pieces of information the Province of Ontario Savings Office released to say we cannot trust this government with the type of personal information that the minister is able to collect, with no restrictions at all on who it is to be shared with. We're going to ask parents to open their souls and tell us everything about their child for special-ed funding, with no assurance or guarantee that that information is restricted in where it goes.

This bill is not a flawed bill that needs amendment. This is a bill that reflects a government that has clearly not earned the trust of parents, of educators, of people in the education community who know what's going on. This is a bad bill.

Hon Mrs Ecker: I have a few minutes left to sum up on behalf of my caucus. My colleagues have certainly articulated very well the need for this legislation, the need for a code of conduct in our schools across the province. Yes, as the member for Sarnia-Lambton mentioned, certainly there are some schools with codes of conduct out there, but one of the messages we heard loudly and clearly, from not only parents and students but also from teachers, was that there were still too many times in our classrooms where teachers and students did not feel safe, where they wanted better authority or they wanted to be backed up when they made those decisions to keep themselves, or to keep their students, their classes, their schools, safe. It was very much something we heard loudly and clearly.

The member for Trinity-Spadina, in his usual eloquent and creative way, talked about the lack of consultation. Well, on this particular legislation, there have been many, many meetings, many, many consultations. That's indeed why we're bringing this forward. My predecessor, the Honourable Dave Johnson, when he was Minister of

Education, had many meetings the last year before the election where the need from teachers and parents was clearly articulated here. We said before the election, and we did it in writing, that if elected we would put forward a code of conduct that set very clear standards for behaviour in our schools, that had very clear rules for if those standards were broken, that our goal was not only to keep our teachers and our students safe but to also bring back respect and responsibility, good citizenship, to bring those values back into our classrooms. We said very clearly that if we were elected, we would proceed with this.

So after the election, when I became minister, I had many meetings, my staff had many meetings, again with parents, with teachers. We talked about the need for this in schools. That is what this legislation does. We've actually announced all of the components of this. They're in this legislation. There's nothing new, if you will, in terms of what we see before us. It is simply putting in place the promises we made to the teachers, to the parents, to the students of this province.

The other thing I should also point out, since I know the opposition likes to quote opinion polls, is that there have been recent public opinion polls done by other organizations which show very, very high, 80% and 90%, support for this kind of initiative from parents out there. So there very much is a need for this.

I'd just like to finish by talking about a young lady in my region. The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario has a wonderful award every year, student of the year, and that young lady spoke with great eloquence about her future, about going into high school in her community. What was so shocking was how that young woman also talked about her fear, her fear of going into a high school in a basic, safe, suburban community.

That is why we need to have this code of conduct: to make sure that our young people do not have fear, that our teachers do not have fear. All you have to do is listen to a parent whose child has been a victim of bullying, whose child has been harassed, who's been threatened, who's actually been harmed and the school or the school board did not take the steps they should have taken.

This code of conduct is there to make sure our teachers and our students are safer in our classrooms. I would like to ask the members to support this legislation.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you. The time allocated for debate is now complete.

Mr Hudak has moved government notice of motion number 54. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All in favour will say "aye."

All opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 10-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1746 to 1756.

The Acting Speaker: Would members please take their seats.

Mr Hudak has moved government notice of motion number 54.

All those in favour will please rise one at a time.

Ayes

Arnott, Ted	Hardeman, Ernie	O'Toole, John
Baird, John R.	Hastings, John	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Barrett, Toby	Hodgson, Chris	Runciman, Robert W.
Beaubien, Marcel	Hudak, Tim	Sampson, Rob
Chudleigh, Ted	Jackson, Cameron	Snobelen, John
Clark, Brad	Johns, Helen	Spina, Joseph
Clement, Tony	Johnson, Bert	Sterling, Norman W.
Coburn, Brian	Kells, Morley	Stewart, R. Gary
DeFaria, Carl	Klees, Frank	Stockwell, Chris
Dunlop, Garfield	Marland, Margaret	Tascona, Joseph N.
Ecker, Janet	Martiniuk, Gerry	Tilson, David
Elliott, Brenda	Maves, Bart	Tsubouchi, David H.
Eves, Ernie L.	Mazzilli, Frank	Turnbull, David
Flaherty, Jim	Molinari, Tina R.	Witmer, Elizabeth
Galt, Doug	Munro, Julia	Wood, Bob
Gilchrist, Steve	Murdoch, Bill	Young, David
Gill, Raminder	Newman, Dan	

The Acting Speaker: All those opposed will please rise one at a time.

Nays

Bartolucci, Rick	Gerretsen, John	Marchese, Rosario
Bisson, Gilles	Hampton, Howard	Martel, Shelley
Boyer, Claudette	Hoy, Pat	McLeod, Lyn
Bradley, James J.	Kennedy, Gerard	Parsons, Ernie
Churley, Marilyn	Kormos, Peter	Patten, Richard
Conway, Sean G.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Phillips, Gerry
Di Cocco, Caroline	Lankin, Frances	Ramsay, David
Dombrowsky, Leona	Levac, David	Sergio, Mario
Duncan, Dwight		

Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers): The ayes are 50; the nays are 25.

The Acting Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

It being past 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until 6:45 of the clock.

The House adjourned at 1800.

Evening meeting reported in volume B.

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)	Hamilton Mountain	Bountrogianni, Marie (L)
Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford	Tascona, Joseph N. (PC)	Hamilton West / -Ouest	Christopherson, David (ND)
Beaches-East York	Lankin, Frances (ND)	Hastings-Frontenac- Lennox and Addington	Dombrowsky, Leona (L)
Bramalea-Gore-Malton- Springdale	Gill, Raminder (PC)	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
Brampton Centre / -Centre	Spina, Joseph (PC)		
Brampton West-Mississauga / Brampton-Ouest-Mississauga	Clement, Hon / L'hon Tony (PC) Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement		
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)		
Bruce-Grey	Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	Gerretsen, John (L)
Burlington	Jackson, Hon / L'hon Cameron (PC) Minister of Tourism / ministre du Tourisme	Kitchener Centre / -Centre	Wettlaufer, Wayne (PC)
Cambridge	Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	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
Carleton-Gloucester	Coburn, Brian (PC)		
Chatham-Kent Essex	Hoy, Pat (L)	Lambton-Kent-Middlesex	Beaubien, Marcel (PC)
Davenport	Ruprecht, Tony (L)	Lanark-Carleton	Sterling, Hon / L'hon Norman W. (PC) Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, government House leader / ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales, leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Don Valley East / -Est	Caplan, David (L)		
Don Valley West / -Ouest	Turnbull, Hon / L'hon David (PC) Minister of Transportation / ministre des Transports	Leeds-Grenville	Runciman, Hon / L'hon Robert W. (PC) Minister of Consumer and Com- mercial Relations / ministre de la Consommation et du Commerce
Dufferin-Peel- Wellington-Grey	Tilson, David (PC)		
Durham	O'Toole, John R. (PC)	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
Eglinton-Lawrence	Colle, Mike (L)	London West / -Ouest	Wood, Bob (PC)
Elgin-Middlesex-London	Peters, Steve (L)	London-Fanshawe	Mazzilli, Frank (PC)
Erie-Lincoln	Hudak, Hon / L'hon Tim (PC) Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines	Markham	Tsubouchi, Hon / L'hon David H. (PC) Solicitor General / solliciteur général
Essex	Crozier, Bruce (L)	Mississauga Centre / -Centre	Sampson, Hon / L'hon Rob (PC) Minister of Correctional Services / ministre des Services correctionnels
Etobicoke Centre / -Centre	Stockwell, Hon / L'hon Chris (PC) Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail	Mississauga East / -Est	DeFaria, Carl (PC)
Etobicoke North / -Nord	Hastings, John (PC)	Mississauga South / -Sud	Marland, Hon / L'hon Margaret (PC) Minister without Portfolio (Children) / ministre sans portefeuille (Enfance)
Etobicoke-Lakeshore	Kells, Morley (PC)		
Glengarry-Prescott-Russell	Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L)	Mississauga West / -Ouest	Snobelen, Hon / L'hon John (PC) Minister of Natural Resources / ministre des Richesses naturelles
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		
Halton	Chudleigh, Ted (PC)		
Hamilton East / -Est	Agostino, Dominic (L)		

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