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of Ontario**

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**Assemblée législative
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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Tuesday 3 December 2002

Mardi 3 décembre 2002

Speaker
Honourable Gary Carr

Président
L'honorable Gary Carr

Clerk
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 3 December 2002

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 3 décembre 2002

*The House met at 1330.
Prayers.*

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

GESTION DES ÉLÉMENTS NUTRITIFS

M. Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell): Je m'adresse aujourd'hui aux ministres de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation, et de l'Environnement.

Nous savons que présentement au Québec, il y a un règlement en date du 15 juin 2002 qui empêche tout agrandissement ou nouvelle porcherie à s'établir pour une période de 18 à 24 mois dans 281 municipalités dû à la pollution des nappes phréatiques, en conclusion que la contamination des terres par le phosphore contenu dans le lisier du porc pouvait mener à la contamination de l'eau potable et des puits, et pouvait donc menacer la santé de la population.

Il y aura aussi une étude complète pour étudier le développement durable de l'industrie porcine et de mettre en place des règlements environnementaux afin de contrer les effets néfastes sur la santé et l'environnement.

En Ontario, la Loi sur la gestion des éléments nutritifs vient tout juste de passer sa troisième lecture. Cependant, il n'y a aucune considération ni réglementation en place afin de prévenir les problèmes encourus par les mégaporcheries.

Toute municipalité devrait avoir un règlement intérimaire qui ordonnerait une étude environnementale avant d'émettre un permis aux nouvelles mégaporcheries. Après tout, nous savons tous jusqu'à quel point Walkerton a mis notre santé, notre environnement et notre sécurité en question.

Je demande donc aux ministres de prévenir au lieu de créer une deuxième catastrophe telle que Walkerton et de permettre aux municipalités le refus d'émettre les permis de construction pour ces mégaporcheries.

LABOUR DISPUTES

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): We've got workers here in the public galleries today from the Sudbury Star, where 75 of their membership of the newspaper guild have been locked out now into their ninth week, and 41 workers from the Cobourg Daily Star and Port Hope Evening Guide, who have been on their picket lines now for eight weeks.

Both of these groups of workers, be it in Sudbury or be it down in Cobourg or Port Hope, are being denied any meaningful bargaining at the negotiating table: locked out, on strike, and seeking the most modest of gains in their contracts, modest wage increases—you should know that the base wages at these workplaces are \$8 and \$8.50 an hour—some modest improvements in pensions, some modest improvements to benefits.

Why are they out on strike? Why have they been locked out for eight and nine weeks? I'll tell you why: because scabs have been taking their jobs in the workplace; scabs have been crossing their picket lines. I tell you that the New Democratic Party anti-scab legislation in the early part of the 1990s created fewer labour disputes, and when there were strikes or lockouts, they were far shorter. These workers' jobs are being stolen from them by scabs, companies like Corporate Security Services and Accu-Fax, the scum of the corporate world, enforcing scabs and protecting them as they walk through these workers' picket lines to take these workers' jobs. These workers are here to support the New Democratic Party's Bill 214, anti-scab legislation which will restore peace. These workers are here to tell readers of the Sudbury Star, the Cobourg Daily Star and the Port Hope Evening Guide not to buy those papers and advertisers not to advertise until these labour disputes are settled.

Interruption.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Just before we begin, we have some guests in the gallery. Unfortunately, we're not allowed to clap during any of the proceedings. I'd appreciate the co-operation for the members. They may not have been aware of that. I thank them for their co-operation.

The member for Niagara Falls.

Mr Bart Maves (Niagara Falls): Thank you—

Interruption.

The Speaker: Order. You've come a long way. We're going to have to throw you out if you do that. I would ask your co-operation. You've come—

Interruption.

The Speaker: You leave me no alternative. I ask security to clear the entire gallery on that side, please; the entire gallery, please, because I don't know who else is coming next. I warned him twice. Everyone out. It's too bad.

Interjection.

The Speaker: That's right. I can't tell the difference.

Interruption.

The Speaker: That's why we did the whole gallery, because that was a different person. I guess we won't need to worry any more.

The member for Niagara Falls—sorry for the interruption.

2010 COMMONWEALTH GAMES BID

Mr Bart Maves (Niagara Falls): It's OK, Mr Speaker. I am pleased to rise in the House today to reiterate our government's and my own support for the city of Hamilton's bid for the 2010 Commonwealth Games.

Hamilton was the birthplace of the Commonwealth Games in 1930. The Hamilton bid committee launched their bid book in Hamilton in October 2002, with the support of the Minister of Tourism and Recreation, Frank Klees, and the Minister of Labour and MPP for Stoney Creek, Brad Clark.

Bringing the Commonwealth Games to Hamilton would be an honour for Ontario and Canada. It would demonstrate our capacity to host international sport and multi-sport events. The Commonwealth Games would also involve the greater Toronto area and cities in the Golden Horseshoe such as St Catharines, which might host the rowing event.

Our government is continuing to work with and support the city of Hamilton in their Commonwealth Games bid and other tourism, sport and recreation initiatives. In the past three years, we have committed more than \$30 million to support tourism, sport, recreation, culture and other local projects that would help build a solid foundation for the continued growth and prosperity of Hamilton. More than \$8 million in community grants has flowed into the Hamilton area from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, and the province has invested more than \$4.8 million in grants to local sport, recreation and culture organizations.

We have also invested \$2.25 million in the World Cycling Championships being held in Hamilton next year. Through our SuperBuild initiative, we have invested more than \$96 million in sport and recreation facilities throughout Ontario, with the approval of 216 sport and recreation facility projects to date. The Ernie Eves government is committed to helping communities attract sporting events that promote Ontario as a world-class tourism destination.

This government is on Hamilton's team, and we look forward to welcoming the world to Canada's greatest province, Ontario.

AVONMORE FALL HARVEST DAY FESTIVAL

Mr John C. Cleary (Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh): I take this opportunity to rise in the House to tell our members of a very successful initiative undertaken by the residents of the small community of Avonmore, Ontario, in my riding.

On October 12, 2002, residents of Avonmore participated in the Fall Harvest Day festival. As part of the celebrations, organizers and residents pulled together to beat the existing Guinness World Record for the largest display of scarecrows. Altogether, 3,102 scarecrows were displayed, beating the existing record of 2,071 held by the residents of Meaford, Ontario.

This community-based event was made possible by the hard work of organizers like Nancy Legue and by the determination of countless volunteers and the students at Roxmore Public School. In addition to establishing a new world record, the festival was able to raise more than \$10,000, all of which was invested back into the community public school of Roxmore.

I must also acknowledge that I attended high school in the beautiful community of Avonmore and, as such, I hold this community in very high regard. It is my pleasure to congratulate all those who took part on how they contributed to the festival. I applaud their efforts.

1340

DAVID GRANT

Mr AL McDonald (Nipissing): Today I rise before the House to pay tribute to a fine individual who has passed away in my riding of Nipissing. Recently, more than 300 people, including members from 65 fire departments across four districts, attended the funeral of Deputy Fire Chief David Grant of the Bonfield Fire Department. The attendance of people indicated what a respected man he was. The ceremony marked the township's first formal firefighter funeral since it became an official fire service in 1971.

David Grant is survived by his wife, Linda, and his two sons, Scott and Sean, both of whom are firefighters with the Bonfield Fire Department. Scott Grant, David's oldest son, has said: "Anyone who knew my dad loved him. He was a very caring man who was always there for his community." David Grant's other son, Sean, agrees with his brother but adds that it's going to be a challenge to get back to firefighting without his father alongside him.

I've spoken with many people who knew Mr Grant, and the underlying theme that was heard from everyone was what a truly unique and caring individual he was. He was very well received by his community and by his co-workers. I would like to say to Linda, Scott and Sean that our thoughts are with you during these difficult days. May you find comfort in your family and friends.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF DISABLED PERSONS

Mr Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings): It is my pleasure to rise on this, the International Day of Disabled Persons. It is appropriate that this day is set aside, although it would be nice if we didn't have to, because every day should be the day for these individuals.

I have yet to meet a person with a disability who is disabled. I have been inspired, motivated and enriched by my contact with them. But this is a day for those of us who do not yet have a disability to stand up and speak for our fellow citizens. We need to make changes in this province. We need to listen to individuals with disabilities to meet their needs so we can level the playing field. We need to allow them to work without clawing back all of the money they make. We need to immediately stop building new barriers. Certainly, the goal is to remove existing barriers, but at this present time in Ontario we continue to erect new barriers to those with disabilities.

We need to ensure that those who are unable to work can have a life that is not at or below poverty level. These are our fellow citizens. Everyone in this chamber will ultimately be judged on how they treat Ontarians with disabilities. We need to do more and we can do more. I urge everyone in this House to act immediately, to remove barriers and ensure a life of dignity. These individuals want to have the same access to services and the same opportunity as everyone else. Those doors have yet to be fully opened.

Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): It is my pleasure to announce that today is the International Day of Disabled Persons. This day, designated by the United Nations in 1992, is a day to promote increased awareness and understanding of disabled issues.

By observing this day, we take the time to recognize the contributions and achievements of people with disabilities. Barriers must be removed to tap into the full potential offered by those with disabilities. In Ontario, there are more than 1.9 million people with disabilities. Our government is committed to breaking down the barriers faced by these individuals and to ensuring a drive toward full accessibility.

As you know, at this time last year our government passed the Ontarians with Disabilities Act. This legislation is key to our vision of creating a barrier-free society. Additionally, the 12-member Accessibility Advisory Council of Ontario is fully active and helping to assist in moving the Ontarians with Disabilities Act ahead. The Ontarians with Disabilities Act is designed to increase independence for people with disabilities so they have more opportunities to participate fully in our society to the benefit of us all. The ODA is Canada's first and most comprehensive legislation for people with disabilities. It builds on our government's multi-billion dollar commitment to programs and services.

Mr Speaker, honourable members, please take this special day and every day as an opportunity to increase awareness about accessibility for people with disabilities in your communities.

GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair): There are seven days left in this session before the House adjourns, and presumably before the next provincial election. We

are faced with a government that is on the ropes in every sense of the word; a government that has to time-allocate legislation that all three parties in this House support; a government that is tabling 50 FOIs on expenses all at once today. Why? Because they want, I presume, to get all the bad news out at once, all in one day, knowing full well that the auditor's report is today.

And what a report that is. This volume speaks volumes about a government that can't manage its affairs, about a government that puts the interests of its friends ahead of the interests of the people of Ontario, a government that will sacrifice principle for re-election every chance it gets, and this session more than any has demonstrated that; a government with a lack of vision, singularly devoted to one thing, and that is just trying to clean up its own messes.

Yet today, we learn of dozens of other messes that have been created by the policies of one Ernie Eves. Whether as Premier or Minister of Finance, he has presided over the slow deterioration of this province, the mismanagement of the affairs of the government of Ontario. The people of Ontario will cast a very harsh judgment on that record, hopefully early next spring. It's never too late to change. There's a lot of toothpaste to get back in the tube, but this report condemns the government yet again.

MISSISSAUGA FIREFIGHTERS

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): I'm delighted to learn that a trio of female firefighters from Mississauga won the International Firefighter Combat Challenge held in Florida in November 2002. Angie Holman, Tanya Mayers and Tammie Wilson not only finished first, they also set a world record of one minute and 50 seconds in the challenge, which is a gruelling relay race that simulates an actual fire rescue situation.

Only the fastest, fittest and brightest of firefighters can compete at this level. Mississauga's amazing squad achieved their victory even with injuries. One member had a broken finger and another suffered from tennis elbow during the competition. Among the arduous tasks these female firefighters accomplished were carrying a 45-pound hose pack up five flights of stairs, then hoisting a 50-pound rolled hose over an edge; using a nine-pound mallet to drive a 65-pound I-beam a distance of five feet; running through 140 feet of pylons; and dragging a 170-pound rescue dummy a distance of 75 feet.

Dr Paul Davis, founder of the firefighter combat challenge, said of the Mississauga team, "These are the ones you want fighting a fire.... They are the best in the world."

Angie, Tanya and Tammie, Mississauga residents are indeed fortunate to have you in our fire department. We are very proud of you and congratulate you on this remarkable achievement, and the members of our Legislature join in the congratulations.

VISITORS

Mr Ted McMeekin (Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Aldershot): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I'm sure the members of this Legislative Assembly will want to join my esteemed colleague from Hamilton West, David Christopherson, and me in welcoming the grade 9 students from Hillfield-Strathallan College, including those from my daughter Whitney's class. They're in both the east and west galleries. They're accompanied today by Mr Dalton, Mr Warner and Mr Wilkinson. Welcome.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): We welcome our guests.

Mr David Christopherson (Hamilton West): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: If I might also draw to the members' attention in the west members' gallery, in addition to the students from Hamilton, my beautiful partner, Denise Doyle, who is here today also.

ANNUAL REPORT,
PROVINCIAL AUDITOR

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): I beg to inform the House that I today laid upon the table the 2002 Annual Report of the Provincial Auditor.

1350

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): I beg leave to present a report on enhancing the role of the private member from the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly and move the adoption of its recommendations.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

Mrs Marland: I'm very pleased to present this report on enhancing the role of private members and on expanding the role of technology in the House and its committees.

I am doubly pleased because the report was the product of an all-party consensus and I want to thank all the members of this House who participated in the committee meetings that led to the making of this report.

The report recommends that private members' time on Thursday mornings be expanded by two additional hours; that up to three members should be allowed to co-sponsor private members' bills and resolutions; that private members' bills that receive the support of at least 75% of the membership of the House should be fast-tracked for early consideration of, and voting on, all post-second reading stages of the legislative process.

The report also recommends that there should be more referral of bills to committee after first reading, more committee scrutiny of draft bills, more use of select

committees, more consistency in the referral of bills to committees and further discussion on quorum requirements to improve fairness and equity for all private members.

Finally, the committee recommends that consideration should be given to more use of technology in the chamber, starting with the table and the dais.

In my 18 years in this Legislature, I have not enjoyed any committee and work of a committee as much as this one, and I do again thank those members for the tremendous amount of commitment, work and homework and for being part of these discussions and producing this report. I congratulate those members and thank them.

I now move adjournment of the debate.

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

AUDIT AMENDMENT ACT, 2002
LOI DE 2002 MODIFIANT LA LOI
SUR LA VÉRIFICATION
DES COMPTES PUBLICS

Mr O'Toole moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 218, An Act to amend the Audit Act to insure greater accountability of hospitals, universities and colleges, municipalities and other organizations that receive grants or other transfer payments from the government or agencies of the Crown / Projet de loi 218, Loi modifiant la Loi sur la vérification des comptes publics afin d'assurer une responsabilité accrue de la part des hôpitaux, des universités et collèges, des municipalités et d'autres organisations qui reçoivent des subventions ou d'autres paiements de transfert du gouvernement ou d'organismes de la Couronne.

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

The member for a short statement?

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): I urge the House to give this bill some consideration before they pass judgment. This is about accountability in public sector spending. In light of the fact that the auditor of Ontario, Erik Peters, is here today, it's more out of respect in the circumstances that I ask the opposition to read the bill before they comment and to be accountable to the taxpayers of this province.

VISITEUSE
VISITOR

M^{me} Claudette Boyer (Ottawa-Vanier): Monsieur le Président, j'aurais un point d'ordre: I would like to introduce a good friend of mine in education from Newfoundland who really wanted to visit the Ontario Legislature, Andrée Thoms.

ORAL QUESTIONS

GOVERNMENT CONSULTANTS

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition):

My question is for the Chair of Management Board. Minister, on the basis of the Provincial Auditor's report tabled today, to be a consultant in Ernie Eves's Ontario is to have died and gone to heaven. You are spending two and a half times as much on consultants this year than you did in 1998. That's \$662 million this year. Your consultants are often paid two or three times more than ministry staff to do the exact same work. In fact, in the case of the Ministry of Public Safety and Security, more than 40 consultants are former employees of the ministry. It's like winning the lottery, Minister. You quit the ministry staff on a Monday, and by Wednesday you can get hired back to the same job and get paid more than double your original salary.

How can you possibly justify this incompetence, this mismanagement, this outrageous use of taxpayers' dollars?

Hon David H. Tsubouchi (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet, Minister of Culture): First, I would like to thank the Provincial Auditor for the report. We do welcome his recommendations, as we do every year, as every government does. This is an opportunity for us to improve the way government does business; we recognize that as well.

What I will tell you is this: in terms of the consultants, there are a number of measures which the auditor is requesting or recommending. I'm pleased to tell you that a number of mandatory requirements have been instituted in our directives in order to deal fully with the auditor's concerns.

If I could share some of them, dealing with some mandatory requirements, in terms of the consulting services, the following best practices will now be mandatory requirements: require ministries to fully document the process for determining the availability of internal ministry or government resources prior to acquiring consulting services; clearly define requirements for the assignments; follow an established process for evaluating bids and selecting vendors. These are a few of them.

We have fully agreed to follow all the recommendations of the auditor. We agree with them. They will be instituted.

Mr McGuinty: Minister, all of that is simply all too lame. You've had seven years over there to get your act together and somehow act in a responsible way when it comes to taxpayers' dollars.

Let's take a look at some specific examples. The Ministry of Health paid one consultant \$360,000 over a two-year period. When the contract finally ended, they hired a staff person and paid that person \$60,000. In short, you paid a consultant three times the cost of hiring a ministry staffer.

One contract at the Ministry of the Environment was supposed to be capped at \$25,000 but wound up costing taxpayers \$455,000. That's more than 18 times the

projected cost. Your own ministry hired one consultant whose rates started at \$725 a day in April 2000, doubled to \$1,800 a day one month later, and then jumped again to \$2,600 a day just four months later.

So you tell me that we haven't got money for textbooks, for MRIs, for affordable housing, for public transit, but in your Ontario, there is no shortage of money when it comes to consultants.

Hon Mr Tsubouchi: What I did say, and very clearly, was that the auditor made certain recommendations. We have fully agreed to implement all of them.

I will share some other things with you, if I could. In the annual report of the Provincial Auditor, page 42, he indicates that, "Many of the contracts were continuous arrangements with the same consultants who had previously worked on other ministry projects. For example, four consultants had been under contract to the minister for more than seven years at rates between \$250 and \$430 daily, earning fees between \$60,000 and \$100,000 annually. These earnings by consultants were more than double the salaries earned by employees occupying the comparable positions within the ministry."

That was from his report in 1988. That was under the Peterson government, the Liberal government.

I think we should make sure we compare apples to apples and oranges to oranges.

Laughter.

Hon Mr Tsubouchi: They think it's funny, but this is their past record.

Every year, the auditor brings forward recommendations. We've agreed to implement them. I would hazard a guess that there has never been an auditor's report that has ever said the government has done a wonderful job.

Mr McGuinty: I can understand why the minister wants to talk about the last millennium, but I want to talk about today's Provincial Auditor's report. I want to talk about your record and the fact that you've had seven years on the job to get your act together, and you've failed to do so.

Again, Minister, you're spending two and a half times as much on consultants today as you did three years ago. You're the guy who promised to get government spending under control. Instead, you cut funding to our hospitals, you've cut funding to our schools, you've cut funding to our seniors and our most vulnerable; but when it comes to consulting friends, there is no shortage of money whatsoever.

1400

You're hiring former ministry staff days after they've quit their jobs to do the same work at two to three times the cost. And you're going to like this one, Minister: the Provincial Auditor points out that some of the people you're hiring don't even pay their taxes. One consultant you hired in your ministry had tax arrears of over \$100,000.

I ask you again: at a time when there's no money for MRIs, no money for textbooks, no money for affordable housing, no money for public transit, how can you possibly justify this outrageous use of taxpayers' dollars?

Hon Mr Tsubouchi: First of all, let me respond in a couple of ways. The Leader of the Opposition has certainly taken liberties with his expression of his idea of what reality is. The reality is, the hospital budgets have been going up substantially under this government; health care has been going up substantially under this government. I have no idea where he's getting his information. There's no connection to reality.

I will tell you this. Within the auditor's report, he does indicate as well on page 174: "The directive provides adequate direction and guidance to ministries to ensure that, if followed, the planning, competitive acquisition, and management of the use of consulting services are undertaken with due regard for value for money."

Clearly there have been some breaches of the protocol of that directive. We have undertaken to make sure they do not occur. We have in fact taken measures to make sure that these steps are taken care of. Some of the other things we've implemented as well: the Minister of Finance will be required to verify the accuracy of tax declarations submitted by vendors. This information can be made available to the contracting ministry.

We've identified that there has been a problem; the auditor has identified a problem. We've agreed to follow all of his recommendations. Clearly we've taken the steps to ensure that this does not occur.

GOVERNMENT'S RECORD ON LAW AND ORDER

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): A question to the Solicitor General: your abysmal record on law and order has finally been exposed. On the matter of arrests, there are 10,000 outstanding arrest warrants for offenders in Ontario, including high-risk offenders. On the matter of rehabilitation, the auditor tells us, of the 3,000 sex offenders who have been released into the community, 2,400 are not receiving essential rehabilitation. On the matter of supervision, one third of the most serious offenders on parole have reoffended, without any immediate consequences, not even with a change in their parole conditions.

Despite all of your continuing tough talk on crime, it's clear that your incompetence is putting Ontario families at risk. How can you possibly justify this don't arrest, don't rehabilitate and don't supervise approach that you are bringing to serious crime in the province of Ontario?

Hon Robert W. Runciman (Minister of Public Safety and Security): We have, obviously, read the Provincial Auditor's comments with respect to outstanding warrants. I think the auditor used a figure of 10,000 outstanding warrants. That was an estimate. He indicated, I gather, in the report that it was an estimate, and it's unfortunate that he extrapolated in the way he did after visiting a number of offices.

The reality is that we did check on CPIC and the number is 5,900. Of the 5,900—

Interjections.

Hon Mr Runciman: I'm not sure they want an answer. Of the 5,900, there were 178 outstanding warrants for level I category offenders.

Mr McGuinty: I'm going to rely on the Provincial Auditor, if you don't mind, when it comes to the facts, and the facts speak for themselves. Today in Ontario, you are only attempting to rehabilitate one out of five sex offenders. Forty per cent of the most serious level I offenders are lacking a risk assessment or a plan to even keep track of them. And yet all these offenders are out on the street, not just at risk of reoffending but actually committing new crimes because you haven't done your job.

Minister, you are putting people's lives at risk. When I talk about level I, as you well know, we're talking about child molesters, sexual assaults, people who commit assaults causing bodily harm and other violent crimes. It is one thing to write press releases and make speeches to the public, sounding tough on crime. It's quite another thing to do your job and to do it well. I'm asking you, Minister, when are you going to start to do your job well and protect public safety in Ontario?

Hon Mr Runciman: I said this last week: a Liberal talking about law and order is a walking, talking oxymoron, like jumbo shrimp.

The reality is that over the past seven years, the Harris and Eves governments have done more to improve public safety in this province than any other provincial government in Canada. On a regular basis, we have brought issues to this House. I'll just raise one, since the member opposite is talking about sex offenders. This government is the first and only government in Canada to bring in a sex offender registry to track sex offenders in this province. We have attempted to get the federal government to move on this issue. As of today, nothing is happening.

The Leader of the Opposition is trying to change his image and convince Ontarians and Canadians that they are for public safety, that they are for tough law and order. The track record of that member and his party proves just the opposite.

Mr McGuinty: We have more of the same: all talk, all bluster. When it comes to the facts, we choose to rely on what the Provincial Auditor said in his report. The facts are that this government's record when it comes to arrests, rehabilitation and supervision is absolutely abysmal. I think this minister and this government should be embarrassed when it comes to their record on law and order issues in Ontario.

We have a plan for safe and strong communities. We call for 100 more parole and probation officers to make sure that offenders are in fact being properly supervised. We're calling for 1,000 more police officers to start enforcing the 10,000 arrest warrants. We're also calling for 50 additional prosecutors beyond those this government is hiring. Minister, our plan is tough on crime. You're all talk; you're all bluster. We've got a plan here that's going to get the job done.

Hon Mr Runciman: I think that's not going to wash with any of the public or the voters in Ontario. When you talk about what's happened in policing and in public

safety in Ontario, we can talk about the 1,000 new police officers this government put on the front lines. We can talk about the violent crime linkage and analysis system we put in place to track serial predators across this province. When you talk about victims' rights, no government in the country has done more for victims of crime than the Ontario government under Harris and Eves. There's the sex offender registry.

We can ask the members opposite what their stand has been on the Young Offenders Act in this country. What has their stand been on dealing in an effective way with young offenders committing serious crimes in the province? What has their stand been on the strict discipline facility for young offenders that this government put in place? What's their stand on the Club Fed resorts the federal Liberal government runs across this country? We know their stand. Ontarians know their stand. It's weak-kneed at best.

1410

GOVERNMENT CONSULTANTS

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): I have a question for the acting Premier. Your habit of picking the pockets of Ontarians to benefit your corporate buddies has become an addiction. The auditor says you shelled out \$246 million for one of your favourite consultants, Andersen Consulting, although they've now changed their name to Accenture to cover their tracks. What did you get for \$246 million of public money? The auditor says that \$66 million was just a giveaway and \$22.2 million was for work that government employees should have done and could have done. Then he says that at the end of the day, the product you got doesn't work.

Now the auditor finds that you've extended the contract for another \$38 million. Acting Premier, if you can't kick the habit of fleecing Ontarians to benefit your corporate friends, don't you think it's time you went in for rehabilitation?

Hon David H. Tsubouchi (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet, Minister of Culture): That was kind of a funny question. I'll refer the question to the Minister of Community, Family and Children's Services.

Hon Brenda Elliott (Minister of Community, Family and Children's Services): I thank my colleague across the way for the question. We're very pleased to receive the auditor's report. We appreciate the work he does in the public interest, and we welcome his recommendations. I would like to inform my colleagues here in the Legislature that most of the issues addressed by the auditor in his report were issues that our ministry was aware of and in fact had already been working on.

Let me talk about the program that my colleague across the way is referencing. We had in Ontario a system to deliver assistance to those who require social services that was literally archaic. It was a very, very old system, completely incapable of delivering the kind of service, the information needed, not only for those people

who needed the service but for those who were delivering the service.

We undertook a major transformation in our ministry to implement a huge new computer system: eight systems integrated into one. It has been a mammoth undertaking.

Mr Hampton: To that the auditor says the whole thing doesn't work. After a quarter of a billion dollars, it doesn't work. The reality out there is that Andersen Consulting, who have now changed their name to Accenture to hide from the public, and some of your other consultant friends are reaping hundreds of millions of dollars and the people are getting nothing for it.

Let me give you some examples. At Environment, you paid \$455,000 for a contract that was supposed to cost \$25,000. At Management Board, you gave a \$1.7-million contract without a competition. You just called up one of your friends and said, "Would you like \$1.7 million?" At SuperBuild Corp, your mistake resulted in a \$681,000 gift to a financial adviser and a contract that cost \$3 million when it was only supposed to cost \$1.5 million. I'm surprised you guys haven't hired Winona Ryder as a consultant, given your record.

The question is, when are you going to cut off your corporate friends and start looking after the public of Ontario that wants to see money for schools, that wants to see money for health care, that wants to see money for child care? When do you start looking after them?

Hon Mrs Elliott: Speaker, to the Chair of Management Board.

Hon Mr Tsubouchi: That gives me an opportunity to continue with what I was saying in terms of the improvements we've done following the recommendations of the Provincial Auditor. I'm sure the leader of the third party wants to hear these.

These are the new mandatory requirements that are added to the directives to ensure effective management of consulting service assignments. First, all payments must be in accordance with contractual provisions. Second, all payments for applicable expenses must be in accordance with the travel management and general expense directive. Third, any overpayment of fees and expenses must be recovered, unlike other governments before. Fourth, all consulting assignments must be properly documented annually. Fifth, the vendor's performance must be managed and documented. Any performance issues must be resolved and reported to the Management Board Secretariat. Last, all required approvals must be obtained for all changes of scope in terms and conditions of agreements.

There are a number of very technical things that we have now managed, following the recommendations of the auditor, to tighten up on behalf of the people of Ontario to ensure there's more accountability to the system. There are a number of others on another list I have. If we ever continue this, I will certainly share that with the public of Ontario.

Mr Hampton: And the auditor says to that that you aren't following your own rules, that the lure to provide

some booty to your corporate friends means that you routinely ignore these rules.

Another example: your privatizations. The auditor points to your Hydro privatization and he says that just in the last year you've added \$700 million more debt and the taxpayers have had to pick up \$341 million in debt financing charges. So get this: your private hydro friends are making money hand over fist, but the people of Ontario have had to pick up another \$1 billion in costs.

I ask the question again, acting Premier: when are you going to stop looking after the greed of your corporate friends and start looking after all of the things that the ordinary people of Ontario need: the schools, the hospitals, the environment, child care, all of the things that the average family out there is asking for? When do you start looking after them instead of looking after your corporate friends?

Hon Mr Tsubouchi: Since I have the floor, I'm going to continue talking about the measures we've taken to follow the recommendations of the auditor.

Interjections.

Hon Mr Tsubouchi: You might think it's funny but I think it's serious. I've got a whole list of things that I can relate in terms of your government that you didn't follow. But rather than do that at this time—maybe I'll save it for the next time you come back—I'll share with the public some of the measures we're taking, and we're honestly and sincerely trying to follow these recommendations of the auditor because they're important.

The auditor recommended the establishment of an improved process for collecting information on the ministry use of vendors of record. We're now requiring the ministries to provide annual reports to the Management Board Secretariat on the use of consulting services, including vendors of record and their performance in managing the process of planning, acquiring and managing consulting services during the fiscal year.

What that means is this, if I can put it in understandable English: we're requiring a set of accountabilities that will not only seek to manage what they're doing during the course of the contract, but also after the contract is completed, to have a report done then to make sure that the money has been best spent for the people of Ontario. These are measures we believe are very important to follow the directions of the auditor.

CORPORATE TAX

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): To the acting Premier again, the auditor says this has been going on for seven years and is just getting worse. You've shown yourself, as a government, to be really tough on the poor and the vulnerable, but when it comes to the rich and the powerful, you disappear. You're a real pussycat. Today's auditor's report reveals that almost half of Ontario's corporations have not even filed tax returns for the audit year; 355,000 corporations didn't bother filing tax returns for this corporate year. The auditor says you're not even trying to collect those corporate taxes. When it comes to cracking down on the

little guy for sales tax or going after the poor, boy, your government is a real pit bull. The question is, why are you so soft when it comes to getting your corporate friends just to pay their taxes?

Hon David H. Tsubouchi (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet, Minister of Culture): I refer that to the Minister of Finance.

Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Finance): I would agree with the honourable member that whether you are an individual, whether you are a company, you have to pay the taxes that you owe. First of all, our government believes very firmly that individuals and small businesses and companies should be paying less tax, and we have been taking steps to ensure that occurs; but what tax is owed should be collected and that's why the ministry is implementing the auditor's recommendations. In addition, we have hired 750 auditors, investigators, collectors and compliance staff and we are collecting over \$400 million in tax that is owed to the taxpayers of Ontario. We will continue that record because, I agree, taxes that are owed should be paid.

Mr Hampton: I agree. When it comes to going after the little guy for sales tax or when it comes to going after someone who received \$10 or \$20 more in a social assistance cheque, boy, you're really tough.

Some of these corporations actually work for your government. They're consulting companies that haven't been paying your taxes and then you hire them. For example, Mr Tough-on-Crime there, the Minister of Public Safety: they've hired lots of consultants who don't bother paying their taxes, and you hire them again. Management Board—the minister who is supposed to be looking after all this—hired a consulting company that's dodging \$110,000 in taxes.

Premier, acting Premier, Minister of Finance—I don't care who it is over there—don't you think you could at least get the consultants you're feeding money to to pay their taxes?

Hon Mrs Ecker: The honourable member may think 750 investigators to investigate those companies and those organizations that owe tax is insignificant. He may think that \$400 million in increased revenue because of our tax enforcement procedures is not relevant. We on this side of the House would disagree. We are taking steps to improve enforcement, to improve auditing procedures, to improve the information technology that allows the ministry to know which companies are there, which ones should pay tax to the government, and we will continue to do that because we think that is right, is responsible and is being accountable.

1420

VISITOR

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): We'll stop the clock. In the members' east gallery we have a former colleague, Mr Leo Jordan, the member for Lanark-Renfrew in the 35th and 36th Parliaments.

LONG-TERM-CARE FACILITIES

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): My question is for the Minister of Health. Minister, I want to talk to you today about your failure when it comes to taking care of Ontario's frail elderly.

Last year you commissioned a PricewaterhouseCoopers study that found Ontario has the lowest standards of care of all jurisdictions reviewed. It said that we're providing the lowest quality of care, that our frail and elderly are not getting the physiotherapy they need, and that you are restraining the elderly much more frequently than you should be. What's more disturbing, as we discover today in the Provincial Auditor's report more than a year later, after that original PricewaterhouseCoopers study, is that the auditor found "no evidence to indicate that the ministry had addressed the results of the study."

Minister, can you please stand up and explain why it is that you have obviously decided to completely abandon Ontario's frail elderly?

Hon Tony Clement (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): I believe the associate minister can provide an excellent answer to that question.

Hon Dan Newman (Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): I want to begin by thanking the Provincial Auditor for his report today. At the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, we take the auditor's report very seriously. We always strive to do better at the ministry. In fact, our inspections are on target for this year. If you look back to 1995, there were 33 full-time compliance advisors at the ministry; today there are 42. The ministry has taken action, for example, against Oakville Lifecare for non-compliance. We do not issue idle threats when it comes to ensuring the health and well-being of the most vulnerable in our long-term-care facilities in this province.

I also want to add that, back on July 31 of this year, we invested an additional \$100 million in new money to provide better nursing and personal care to seniors and those who require long-term-care services in our facilities. On top of that, we have added some 20,000 new long-term-care beds to the system through our \$1.2-billion investment in new and redeveloped long-term-care beds in this province.

Mr McGuinty: I can appreciate that recitation, Minister, but the Provincial Auditor tells us you are failing miserably when it comes to living up to your responsibility to protect Ontario's frail elderly. Here are the facts: the auditor says you have no standards of care in our nursing homes, something we've been telling you for years. He says that at the time of his investigation, not a single nursing home in Ontario had an up-to-date licence. He tells us that most homes that opened after 1998 have never been issued a licence.

Minister, you're supposed to be the one protecting our seniors, standing on guard for them and implementing tough and rigorous standards. On the other hand, you have removed the requirement to have a registered nurse

on duty, on-site, at all times; you have removed the minimum 2.25 hours of personal care nursing each day; and you won't even guarantee our parents and grandparents one bath a week.

I ask you again, why will you not stand up here and admit that when it comes to living up to your responsibilities to protect Ontario's frail elderly, you have been nothing short of an abysmal failure?

Hon Mr Newman: Again, we take the auditor's report very seriously. We are striving to do better. Yes, it is true that we need to do a better job with our paperwork when it comes to facility licences in this province, but our focus has been on providing even better care for residents. I can say that as of September 1, 2002, each and every nursing home in this province does have a current and valid licence to operate.

The Leader of the Opposition today said he takes the word of the Provincial Auditor. Well, let's look at what the Provincial Auditor said in 1990. In 1990, when he was reporting on the David Peterson government, the Provincial Auditor reported that there were inadequate inspection procedures for homes for the aged in place in this province. In the same auditor's report of 1990, he also pointed out that the procedures used by the Liberal government of that day to monitor the quality of care in nursing homes required significant improvement.

The fact is, it is our government that took action to fix the problems caused by the Liberals and the NDP. That is why we will not take a lecture from the opposition parties when it comes to the provision of long-term-care services in this province.

NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT

Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): My question today is for the Minister of Agriculture and Food. Farmers in my riding and across Ontario are extremely interested in the ongoing consultations related to the Nutrient Management Act. They appreciate the extent to which our government is prepared to listen to their concerns and to ensure that we not only protect our rural water supply but also maintain the competitiveness of the vital agri-food industry.

Minister, I understand that last week at the Ontario Federation of Agriculture convention you made an important announcement related to nutrient management. Can you explain for the members here in the House today, as well as the farmers across Ontario, the details of this particular announcement?

Hon Helen Johns (Minister of Agriculture and Food): I'd like to thank the member for his question and also thank him for his commitment and enthusiastic support of the agricultural community, not only in his riding but in the province of Ontario.

Our government has recently completed the first round of discussions on the nutrient management plan. We have gone to a number of places, addressed the content of the requirements and done a lot of work with respect to that.

At the Ontario Federation of Agriculture meeting last week, I introduced stage 2 regulations. We had a dis-

cussion about how we might proceed forward with them, and it was agreed upon by the farm groups and myself that we would enter into stage 2 of the consultations starting in December and continuing through January. During that time we will be talking about the construction and siting of barns, about issues such as quality standards for the land application of nutrients and about nutrient management plans.

It's a good time for the agricultural community to get involved in the nutrient management legislation that's coming forward.

Mr Dunlop: As I mentioned earlier, farmers, municipalities, environmental groups and other stakeholders are showing a great interest in participating in the consultation process. Could you inform the Legislature on how many people participated in the stage 1 consultations and how and where these people can become involved in the stage 2 consultations?

Hon Mrs Johns: I'd like to thank the member again and say that during stage 1 consultations we heard at the hearings from about 580 people. We also got a number of written submissions. Everyone could write in, either through the EBR, the OMAF Web site or the environment Web site, so we got some pretty clear and consistent messages.

It is now our pleasure to be able to go out on the second set, and we'll be starting those in December. We intend to be in Mississauga on December 11. I believe my parliamentary assistant, Toby Barrett, will be there. We will also be doing consultations on December 13 in Teeswater, on December 16 in Brockville and Trenton—Doug Galt will be doing those—and on December 19 in Grimsby. So we're going to have a lot of discussion in December and again in January. All people have to do is either check the environment Web site or the OMAF Web site if they want to know the location closest to them, and we ask you to get involved.

GOVERNMENT CONSULTANTS

Mrs Leona Dombrowsky (Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington): My question is for the Minister of Community, Family and Children's Services. For the second year in a row, the Provincial Auditor has identified that you have completely lost control of a consulting contract in your ministry. The auditor confirmed that in March of this year, your ministry had paid Accenture \$240 million—\$66 million more than the \$180-million cap set by your government.

You told us this system would save taxpayers money, yet the auditor indicates that the benefits reported by your ministry "continue to be ... questionable." Further, the auditor states, the delivery system implemented in January 2002 is "in many respects a step back from what had previously been available."

1430

In the Kitchener-Waterloo Record it is reported that the local social services committee says your system is costing too much and the service is poor. The new

computer system that you've already mentioned is riddled with glitches, delays and errors.

Minister, can you please explain to the taxpayers of Ontario why you have allowed—

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): I'm afraid the member's time is up.

Hon Brenda Elliott (Minister of Community, Family and Children's Services): To my colleague across the way I say thank you for the question. As I indicated earlier, we're very pleased to receive the auditor's report. We had already been alerted to the number of concerns that he noted in his report and have been working diligently to address them.

I want to explain to my colleague across the way first of all that we undertook a mammoth change in our ministry in finding ways to deliver services. It was a change required not only for those to receive better services, but to assist those who offer the service. It is enormous. For instance, the average daily volume of transactions in delivering this huge program is 1.3 million transactions per day delivering services to more than 600,000 people. It replaced eight outdated systems with one system. It was a very complicated change. The auditor undertook a review of this process while it was still being rolled out. A number of the changes he noted have since been improved. Is there more to do? Probably yes—

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

Mrs Dombrowsky: Minister, what is mammoth is the amount of money you have wasted on a system that isn't as good as the one you're replacing. You cite improvements. The auditor cannot find any. You are spending hundreds of millions of taxpayers' money on a case management system that is not more efficient. The auditor would indicate your system is less efficient. He reports that with this new system the ministry had little assurance that only eligible individuals receive the correct amount of financial assistance. That's what it's supposed to do.

Minister, you've had two years and what have you done? Instead of getting to the bottom of these inefficiencies and addressing the problems, sources in the industry would indicate that your ministry has quietly renewed its contract with Accenture. This scathing report from the auditor demands that you release the details of your new service contract, include how much it will cost, and explain what you are going to do to assure the people of Ontario that no more taxpayer dollars will be wasted on a system that isn't as good as the one it replaced.

Hon Mrs Elliott: While we definitely appreciate the work that the auditor does which allows us to work to improvement, I can say to my colleague across the way that certainly, from our side of the House, we do have a different view. In my hand are letters of support from a number of people who have definitely indicated to us that the system is working. Let me again say to my colleague across the way what we have changed: eight archaic systems into one modern system, a system that allows individuals who are accessing information from individ-

uals requiring service all across the province to ask consistent questions, get consistent information—something that was never possible in days past; on-line processing that allows instant responses to a constituent so they don't have to wait for up to 14 days as they did in days past; more personal response—someone can call up now and get information and know in moments whether or not they are going to be eligible for service, rather than what we had in days past. It is a greatly improved system. It will be more improved as days pass.

ONTARIO DISABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM

Mr Bert Johnson (Perth-Middlesex): My question also is for the Minister of Community, Family and Children's Services, the hard-working, energetic minister from Guelph, the Honourable Brenda Elliott. Last week a member of the opposition talked about a form that he said would make it very difficult for Ontario disability support program recipients. He claimed the recipients would have to know all of their medical appointments and needs a year in advance. Minister, I cannot believe this is true. My wife and kids, my neighbours and friends can't believe that this is true. Nobody believes this is true. I've always maintained this government does everything we can to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities. Minister, what is this form, what is this misguided member talking about and what have you done to improve the application process for Ontario Disability Support Program recipients who are in need of these benefits?

Hon Brenda Elliott (Minister of Community, Family and Children's Services): To my very hard-working colleague from Perth-Middlesex, I'm glad he didn't believe it is true, because in fact it is not.

We've worked very hard to improve services for those who are disabled in Ontario, and that includes the application process, again working to replace haphazard, cumbersome forms of days past with a single application form that was designed with assistance from those in the Ontario Medical Association along with our ministry officials. We moved from an after-the-fact type of system to an upfront form of application, which was particularly helpful to citizens who might have an ongoing medical problem.

Let me give you an example. If someone was going to require dialysis treatment, this disabled individual could speak to their doctor, have the form filled out indicating how much care was going to be needed, how many treatments were going to be needed for an extended period of time. That could then be submitted to our ministry office and the funds flowed up front as opposed to after the fact with each individual service, and so make life easier for that person who's not only disabled but in fact ill.

Mr Johnson: I knew the Minister would not introduce a form that would make it more difficult for ODSP recipients.

Interjections.

Mr Johnson: I knew you'd use all your influence to do the right thing, unlike the opposition.

To eliminate the confusion, Minister, I'd like you to stand in your place and clarify for me and all of us once and for all why this is a better system, and can you still help people who face unexpected or emergency medical costs?

Hon Mrs Elliott: It was very important that we provide the flexibility for someone to be able to get care and manage their funds at the same time. So we have this new form that the client can fill out with the doctor to anticipate what kinds of costs are going to be needed in the future, which can be initialled each time they go to the doctor's office to verify that that care has been given. In the case of an emergency, we have the flexibility that a receipt can still be submitted. That cost can still be reimbursed to that disabled individual who has required medical attention.

Why did we do this? Because it matters to us that we work to make the lives of those disabled better in the province of Ontario. Whether it's filling out forms or getting care, they can count on the Eves government to be behind them and to help them in every way possible.

LONG-TERM-CARE FACILITIES

Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): I have a question to the Associate Minister of Health. Your government has abandoned Ontario seniors who live in long-term-care facilities. The auditor makes it clear today that you have no idea how or where nursing dollars are being spent. You have no staff-to-patient ratios, so you can't guarantee that the frail and elderly are receiving quality care in these institutions.

In 1995 the auditor told your government to renew the standards for hands-on nursing care, and you cancelled those standards altogether. You've done absolutely nothing about the shocking results of the 2001 report, which clearly showed that Ontario seniors are at the bottom of the heap when it comes to receiving nursing, bathing and therapy services.

Minister, admit it today. You have no idea where these dollars are going, and you can't guarantee that Ontario seniors in long-term-care facilities are receiving quality care.

Hon Dan Newman (Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): I want to thank the Provincial Auditor for his report today, and to state again that we take his report very seriously.

He did point out some areas that the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care could show some improvement in, and we are doing that. For the member opposite to say we have done nothing for long-term care is absolutely wrong. We have done 100 million things since July 31 this year, when we announced \$100 million in new funding for nursing and personal care, so that each and every nursing home, municipal home for the aged and charitable home in this province would get additional money so that additional nurses, additional personal care

workers and additional health care aides could be added to the system.

We might want to look at what the Provincial Auditor said about the NDP in 1995. He said the NDP was aware of significant growth projected for the population over age 65 in this province, but they simply did not have a strategy for dealing with the anticipated increase in demand for long-term-care services. It was this government that acted by building the 20,000 beds.

1440

Ms Martel: Minister, the auditor made it clear: you don't have a clue where your long-term health care dollars are going. He said that you have no standards of care for hands-on nursing, that you have no staff-to-patient ratios, that you were not issuing licences to new nursing homes that opened after 1998 and that you have no system in place to monitor those facilities that regularly fail to meet compliance standards. In short, you don't have a clue what's going on and you can't guarantee that the \$100 million you announced in July is ever going to go into improving patient care.

Minister, when are you going to implement standards of care in Ontario nursing homes so that Ontario seniors will be at the top instead of at the bottom of receiving quality care?

Hon Mr Newman: I can say that this government has taken long-term care much more seriously than your government did when you were in office. In fact, the NDP government didn't add a single net new bed to the system. In the 10 years from 1988 to 1998, there wasn't one net new bed added to the long-term-care system in this province. The Provincial Auditor pointed out to the NDP in 1995 that there was a growing and aging population in this province. He pointed out that they had no strategy in place to deal with that growing and aging population. They were not adding beds to the system.

It was this government that in 1998 moved forward on an ambitious plan: \$1.2 billion and 20,000 new beds added to the system, up to 16,000 beds in our older facilities being updated, as well as the record investment announced on July 31 of this year of \$100 million. That's 100 million things we've done for long-term care in this province to ensure we're improving the nursing and personal care of our most vulnerable residents of this province in Ontario's long-term-care facilities.

CORPORATE TAX

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): My question is to the Minister of Finance. It has to do with the auditor's report. One of the most shocking things in it, among many, was the fact that it looks like about half of Ontario's corporations are not even bothering to file a corporate tax return.

In your answer earlier you indicated that, well, you've taken steps now, but I want to know the answer to this: the auditor points out that the reason for it happening is that the Eves government has stopped enforcing things. Since 1995, you don't even send out a letter telling peo-

ple to file. Since 1997, you don't send out a letter saying that if they don't file, there will be some action taken. So the government deliberately did not follow up on half of the corporations in this province not filing taxes.

I want to know the answer to this: why did the Eves government allow this non-filing to double, and why did you refuse to send out the letters telling people to get their income tax in?

Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Finance): First of all, I disagree with the assertion in the honourable member's question. We have indeed taken steps going back to 1996 to put in place improved procedures, to hire new staff to make sure we were going out and collecting tax that was owed to the Ontario government, to the taxpayers. As a matter of fact, we collected over \$1.4 billion this spring. As of March this spring, we have collected over \$1.4 billion in taxes that are owed to the government, taxes that were owed that had not been paid. There was a \$400-million increase from what we anticipated we would get.

The improved enforcement procedures are working. Do we need to do more? Absolutely. That's why we started with the last auditor's report to put in place improved procedures. They have been coming on-line on a regular basis. We are improving the enforcement. We are improving the amount of money we're bringing in. We thank the auditor for his continued vigilance in this area, and we will continue to implement his recommendations as we improve tax collection in the province.

Mr Phillips: Listen, I think the public understand and pay attention to the Provincial Auditor. I've been saying about the government, don't listen to what they say; watch what they do. The auditor's report shows half of the corporations not filing their returns. The auditor's report says the major reason for that is because of the government. The auditor's report—the people of Ontario, I think, have confidence in the Provincial Auditor. This is what he says: this increase is “largely attributable to the ministry's reduced efforts.” Default notifications haven't gone out since 1995. “The threat to cancel a corporation's charter and seize its assets” hasn't gone out “since 1997.”

It's very clear. Despite all of your rhetoric, the auditor has found you out. I say again to you on behalf of the Premier, how in the world could you allow the number of corporations in this province, virtually half of them, to not be filing corporate income tax, when people in this province are begging for money for health care and education?

Hon Mrs Ecker: The reason we have had over a billion dollars' worth of tax revenue collected that was owed to us as of March 31, this spring, is because of the steps we have taken and are continuing to take to improve the collection of taxes in this province: over 750 auditors and investigators; new information technology; new field audits; training of staff. The auditor has continued to push us in this area. We agree with his recommendations. We've started taking steps since 1996 and we will continue to take steps because, whether it's an individual, a small business or a company, if taxes are owed, they should be paid.

FIREARMS CONTROL

Mr Steve Gilchrist (Scarborough East): My question today is for the Minister of Public Safety and Security. As all members of this House are aware, an ongoing battle has been waged in the streets of Toronto over the last few weeks involving gun violence. Far too many people have lost their lives in the violence involving a firearm. In fact, at least one victim, the individual who had illegally overstayed his short-term entry visa, was a resident of my riding.

I think all Canadians understand that the federal government is supposedly moving forward with gun control. They have every right to question how all of these crimes can be committed when, supposedly, guns are controlled in this country. The legislation is designed to keep firearms out of the hands of the wrong people. I wonder how the minister can explain how all these crimes are being committed with guns in the city of Toronto.

Hon Robert W. Runciman (Minister of Public Safety and Security): Thanks to the member for Scarborough East for the question. The sad fact is that the gun control legislation brought in by the federal Liberals simply does not work, nor evidently does the sentencing associated with gun-related crime. The federal cousins of our friends across the floor have spent far too much of taxpayers' hard-earned dollars on a registry that fails to target criminals and instead targets the farm widow who has an antique shotgun stored in her attic.

In addition, the sentences and fines that are given out to offenders who use a weapon in the execution of crimes is hardly a deterrent. The fines are often just the cost of doing business for criminals and criminal groups, and the sentences they receive are often plea bargained down.

We have called on the federal Liberals to not only invest dollars into front-line policing initiatives, such as our community policing partnership, but also to create stiffer sentences for crimes that involve the use of a weapon.

Mr Gilchrist: I thank the minister for his response. Much like we've seen with the Romanow report this week, where the federal government is trying to suggest that just because there are some recommendations out there, magically a problem has been solved. Contrary to what the members across in this House think, we on this side of the House are not at all surprised to hear the auditor's report suggest that the billion-dollar boondoggle that has been federal gun control legislation has not protected the people of the province of Ontario. In fact, I'm sure that the fed's own auditor will agree and will go into great detail to comment about the failures of the federal legislation.

As well, it's quite obvious that the members opposite have no idea what it takes to implement a law-and-order agenda since they've simply photocopied ours.

Our government is onside with victims of crime and the law-abiding citizens of this province. I would like to ask you to tell the members of this House what we've

done here in Ontario to try and get a grip on gun violence in this province.

Hon Mr Runciman: I'm pleased to see the member for Scarborough East has pointed out the fact that the Liberals here in Ontario are just as weak with their law-and-order agenda as their cousins in Ottawa. The Dalton-come-lately approach just won't sell.

I'm proud to say that our government does take the issue of gun violence very seriously. One example is the OPP's provincial weapons enforcement unit. This unit has an ongoing relationship with other police forces, as well as the RCMP, to reduce the flow of guns into Canada. Their projects have seen quite a number of firearms taken out of the hands of criminals in Ontario. In fact, this year to date they've seized 807 weapons and laid 230 charges. That's over 800 weapons that would have been used to terrorize our neighbourhoods that are now safely out of the hands of criminals. The Toronto police weapons unit is also making successful seizures.

We are making headway, but with increased support from the federal Liberal government, we could clearly make greater gains. It's time the federal Liberals got off the bench and into the game.

1450

HYDRO ONE

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): My question is to the Minister of Finance. The Provincial Auditor today gave a significant warning on the electricity front; I might add that I think the auditor has been very vigilant in this area on behalf of taxpayers. The warning he gave us today was about selling off more assets of Hydro One. He urges the government to be very cautious in selling off assets, because if you sell off the 49% of Hydro One, that revenue cannot be used to pay down the stranded debt. He is concerned, as we are, that over the next few weeks it is your government's intention to sell it off. Recognizing that the auditor has now warned you sufficiently, can you announce today that the plans for the sale of 49% of Hydro One are not going to proceed?

Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Finance): As the Premier and this government outlined in the spring, we have started a process for a strategic partner to assist the government in bringing private sector discipline into Hydro One. I think some of the discoveries that have occurred in the last couple of months would certainly show the need for that. Second, we need investment in the system, and a strategic partner will help us do that. We have a competitive process out there. At the end of the day, we will make a decision in the best interests of Ontario taxpayers when the bids are in.

Mr Phillips: Well, I love the private sector discipline Mr Farlinger has brought to the management of Hydro for the last eight years.

You are, I gather, confirming that it is your intention to proceed to sell a significant portion of Hydro One. You told the Legislature a few weeks ago that this would

be done in a public way. We've since found out it's all being done behind closed doors, privately, with a deal that will be signed, the contents of which the public may never get to see.

Recognizing what the auditor has warned us, the Legislature, about—this is his message of warning to us today—will you agree not to proceed with the sale of Hydro One unless you bring forward any deal—we are against the deal, by the way—for approval here by the Legislature in public? Will you agree to that today, if you will not agree to simply do what the auditor is recommending and cancel the sale completely?

Hon Mrs Ecker: If the honourable member is seriously suggesting that we should debate the finer points of electricity, the hydro transmission lines and offers here at the table, then he doesn't understand much about the competitive process that is laid out to have bidders assessed in an appropriate way to make sure the offer is good for Ontario taxpayers. That is exactly what we are doing. It is a process where the criteria are out there, where the bidders have an opportunity to make their case.

At the end of the day, what is important here is that there be private sector investment in the hydro transmission lines, that consumers can be assured that the system will function the way it is supposed to, so that the electricity system can function the way they want it to function, that when they turn on a light the power is there, and also to ensure that the organization is being run in the most cost-effective fashion possible.

We laid these criteria out in the spring. Those are the criteria we will—

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

INDEPENDENT HEALTH FACILITIES

Mr Bart Maves (Niagara Falls): My question is to the Minister of Health. As the Romanow report makes clear, Ontario is the leader in health innovation across Canada.

Interjections.

Mr Maves: It's true. Pardon my voice, Speaker.

There are almost 1,000 independent health facilities currently operating in Ontario right now. These IHFs offer services such as CT scans, X-rays, laboratory testing and dialysis. All are privately owned facilities providing Ontarians with quality, publicly funded health care services.

Could the minister please clarify once and for all for this Legislature that our plan to extend access to MRI services in Ontario through privately owned facilities is acceptable under the Canada Health Act? Could the minister also explain that this plan is consistent with our established practices—by the way, originated by the Liberal Party of Ontario and followed through on by the third party since 1990—that govern the hundreds of independent health facilities currently operating in Ontario today?

Hon Tony Clement (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): I thank the honourable member for the question. As I've said on many occasions, our approach to MRIs and especially the legislative, regulatory and contractual protections to prevent queue jumping is not only consistent with the Canada Health Act, but is a model for other provinces contemplating enhanced access for their citizens. As the Premier said yesterday in this Legislature, we have spoken to Mr Romanow, we have talked with his officials at the commission about this and we have their support for our approach and its specific protections.

I welcome the opportunity soon to cut ribbons on these new clinics to serve the people of Ontario, to reduce wait times and to get better health outcomes, which of course is the goal of at least the members on this side of the Legislature. As the member for Niagara Falls mentioned, there are many private labs, many X-ray clinics, many other such institutions that exist in this country. It's like when you visit your family doctor or local clinic. The buildings you go to are privately owned and run, yet the service—

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

VISITORS

Mrs Sandra Pupatello (Windsor West): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Today in our gallery we have representatives from the Yonge-Bloor-Bay Business Association that I was very happy to speak with not long ago, if they could rise and have applause: Rose Hahn, Norman Bergstein, our own Douglas Jure—I love to say that—and of course Jon Johnson is also here and is well known as one of the pre-eminent authors for books regarding NAFTA. Perhaps you wouldn't mind standing and taking a bow.

PETITIONS

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that reads as follows:

“Whereas the Eves government has increased the fees paid for by seniors and the most vulnerable living in long-term-care facilities by 15% over three years, or \$3.02 per diem in the first year and \$2 in the second year and \$2 in the third year effective September 1, 2002; and

“Whereas this fee increase will cost seniors and our most vulnerable” citizens “more than \$200 a month after three years; and

“Whereas this increase is above the rent increase guidelines for tenants in the province of Ontario for 2002; and

“Whereas according to the government’s own funded study, Ontario will still rank last among comparable jurisdictions in the amount of time provided to a resident for nursing and personal care; and

“Whereas the long-term-care funding partnership has been based on government accepting the responsibility to fund the care and services that residents need; and

“Whereas government needs to increase long-term care operating funding by \$750 million over the next three years to raise the level of service for Ontario’s long-term-care residents to those in Saskatchewan in 1999; and

“Whereas this province has been built by seniors, who should be able to live out their lives with dignity, respect and in comfort in this province;

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

“Demand that Premier Eves reduce the 15% increase over three years in accommodation costs to no more than the cost-of-living increase annually and that the provincial government provide adequate funding for nursing and personal care to a level that is at least the average standard for nursing and personal care in those 10 jurisdictions included in the government’s own study.”

I affix my signature. I am in complete agreement with this petition.

1500

HIGHWAY 69

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): Yesterday there was another tragic accident along Highway 69. This petition deals with the multi-laning of that Highway 69 between Sudbury and Parry Sound.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas modern highways are economic lifelines for the north; and

“Whereas the stretch of Highway 69 from Sudbury south to Parry Sound is a treacherous road with a trail of death and destruction; and

“Whereas the carnage on Highway 69 has been staggering; and

“Whereas, in the last three years, 46 people have tragically died” on that highway between Sudbury and Parry Sound; and

“Whereas so far this year 10 people have been tragically killed” driving between Sudbury and Parry Sound along Highway 69; and

“Whereas the Harris-Eves government has shown gross irresponsibility in not four-laning the stretch of Highway 69 between Sudbury and Parry Sound; and

“Whereas immediate action”—not promises, not rhetoric, but immediate action—“is needed to prevent more needless loss of life; and

“Whereas it is the responsibility of any government to provide safe roads for its citizens, and the Harris-Eves government clearly has failed to do so;

“Therefore, be it resolved that we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to urge the Harris-Eves government to begin construction immediately and four-lane Highway 69 between Sudbury and Parry Sound so that the carnage on Death Road North will cease.”

Of course, I sign this petition, and I give it to Garnet to bring to the table.

DÉRÈGLEMENTATION DE L'ÉLECTRICITÉ

M. Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell): J’ai une pétition ici qui contient plus de 3 500 noms, ce qui porte à plus de 6 500 signatures de citoyens concernés.

« À l’Assemblée législative de l’Ontario:

« Attendu que le gouvernement Harris-Eves a déréglementé le marché de l’électricité ontarien le 1^{er} mai 2002 sans que cela ait fait partie de ses programmes de 1995 ou 1999 et sans mandat de la population de l’Ontario;

« Attendu que le prix de l’électricité a atteint des niveaux outrageux, augmentant parfois de 100 % depuis le 1^{er} mai 2002 et causant de graves difficultés financières aux Ontariens et Ontariennes;

« Attendu qu’Ontario Power Generation (qui appartient au gouvernement de l’Ontario) a demandé à la Commission de l’énergie de l’Ontario la permission de réduire de 20 % le rabais promis aux Ontariens et Ontariennes si le prix de l’électricité dépassait les 3,8 cents le kilowattheure;

« Attendu que l’instauration d’un climat de concurrence dans le marché de l’électricité a été gênée par l’incertitude engendrée par les tentatives du gouvernement Harris-Eves de vendre une portion d’Hydro One et qu’un tel manque de concurrence a eu un effet à la hausse sur les prix;

« Attendu que le gouvernement Harris-Eves a autorisé le versement de salaires et primes exorbitants de l’ordre de 2,2 \$ millions par année à l’ancienne présidente de Hydro One et au-delà de 1,6 \$ millions par année au vice-président d’Ontario Power Generation;

« Nous, soussignés, demandons au gouvernement Harris-Eves de prendre des mesures immédiates pour faire en sorte que les Ontariens et Ontariennes payent ce service essentiel qu’est l’électricité à un juste prix et demandons également que le gouvernement conservateur et son chef, Ernie Eves, déclenchent une élection générale sur l’instabilité du marché de l’énergie pour ainsi donner aux Ontariens et Ontariennes la parole à ce sujet. »

J’y ajoute ma signature avec fierté.

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

Mrs Sandra Pupatello (Windsor West): I’m hoping that the page from Windsor West can bring these to the desk once I read them. This is our page from Windsor

West. You have to stand in so everyone back in Windsor can see you, Niyi. Our petition:

“Whereas animal abusers are not currently subject to any provincial penalties;

“Whereas it is currently impossible for a judge to ban puppy and kitten mill operators from owning animals for the rest of their lives; and

“Whereas Ontario SPCA investigators need to act on instances of cruelty to animals in a more timely fashion, thereby lessening the animals’ suffering;

“Whereas it is currently not an offence to train an animal to fight another animal; and

“Whereas Ontario’s animals are not adequately protected by the current law;

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

“To pass the amendments to the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act developed by a governmental working group (which included the Ontario SPCA) and submitted to the office of the Solicitor General of Ontario in June of 2001, so that the above conditions, among others, will be properly addressed.”

I will be signing this petition. I’m giving it to Niyi for submission.

SCHOOL BUS SAFETY

Mr Pat Hoy (Chatham-Kent Essex): “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas some motorists are recklessly endangering the lives of children by not obeying the highway traffic law requiring them to stop for school buses with their warning lights activated;

“Whereas the current law has no teeth to protect the children who ride the school buses of Ontario, and who are at risk and their safety is in jeopardy;

“Whereas the current school bus law is difficult to enforce, since not only is a licence plate number required but positive identification of the driver and vehicle as well, which makes it extremely difficult to obtain a conviction;

“Therefore, be it resolved that we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the measures contained in private member’s Bill 112, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act to protect children while on school buses, presented by Pat Hoy, MPP, Chatham-Kent-Essex, be immediately enacted. Bill 112 received the unanimous all-party support of the Ontario Legislature at second reading on June 13, 2002....

“And we ask for the support of all members of the Legislature.”

I have signed this.

LONG-TERM-CARE FACILITIES

Mr John C. Cleary (Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh): My petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the over 60,000 Ontarians living in long-term-care facilities are older, frailer and sicker and require more care than ever before;

“Whereas government funding has not kept pace with increasing needs of residents of long-term-care facilities;

“Whereas current funding levels only allow limited care;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly” of Ontario “to ask the government to provide additional operating funding to increase the levels of staffing to an acceptable level of service and to reduce the risk to those individuals living in long-term-care facilities across Ontario.”

I have also signed the petition.

COMPETITIVE ELECTRICITY MARKET

Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): I have a petition on behalf of my constituents. It says:

“Whereas Ontario opened its electricity market to competition as of May 1, 2002, with resultant extremely high prices; and

“Whereas suppliers are permitted to upwardly adjust metered consumption by a factor which varies area to area, and base most elements of the rendered accounts on this upwardly adjusted consumption; and

“Whereas this practice appears to be in conflict with the provisions of the federal Gas and Electricity Inspection Act, section 33(k), (l) and (m);

“Therefore, the undersigned petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to dispense with the competitive market system and revert to the system in effect prior to May 1, 2002.”

I’ll sign that on behalf of my constituents.

POLICE SERVICES

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Thunder Bay-Atikokan): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas in 1956 the province of Ontario ordered the township of Atikokan to create a municipal police service because the township’s population had exceeded 5,000; and

“Whereas the province of Ontario has since failed to make any provision for Atikokan to return to provincially subsidized policing when the township’s population fell below 5,000 in 1980”—it continues to be below 5,000; in 2001, it was “3,632;

“Whereas since 1980 Atikokan has had to spend over \$14 million on policing while the province was providing free ... or heavily subsidized ... policing to all 580 of the other small towns in Ontario; and

“Whereas this injustice has resulted in a significant municipal infrastructure deficit and an onerous burden on Atikokan ratepayers;

“We, the undersigned, call upon the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to right this injustice by negotiating a fair and equitable settlement with the representatives of the council and police services board of Atikokan.”

I first presented this petition yesterday. There are now over 300 signatures from the township of Atikokan on this petition. I affix my signature in full agreement.

WATER EXTRACTION

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

“Whereas we, the residents and cottagers of Bob’s Lake, strenuously object to the permit issued by the Ministry of the Environment to OMYA Inc to remove 1.5 million litres of water per day from the Tay River, without adequate assessment of the consequences and without adequate consultation with the public and those people and groups who have expertise and interest; and

“Whereas it is our belief that this water taking will drastically impact the environment and seriously affect the water levels in Bob’s and Christie lakes. This in turn would affect fish spawning beds as well as habitat. It would also affect the wildlife in and around the lakes;

“Whereas Bob’s Lake and the Tay River watershed are already highly stressed by the historic responsibility of Parks Canada to use Bob’s Lake as a reservoir for the Rideau Canal; and

“Whereas the movement of water from the lake through the watershed for navigation purposes in the canal provides sufficient stress and problems for the lake. This water taking permit will only compound the stresses on the waterway;

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

“We request that this permit be rescinded until a comprehensive evaluation of the impact of water taking by OMYA Inc on the environment, the water levels and the water needs of these communities is complete. An independent non-partisan body should undertake this evaluation.”

I’m happy to affix my signature to this petition and hand it to the page, Brian.

1510

HIGHWAY 407

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): My petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas motorists using Highway 407 are being gouged with charges that are far beyond what is reasonable and justified;

“Whereas billing errors are forcing motorists to spend hours on the telephone trying to have such errors corrected;

“Whereas some motorists in frustration and exasperation are paying charges they did not incur for the use of Highway 407;

“Whereas the government of Ontario acts as an enforcer for the Highway 407 Corp and is, in our view, complicit in the collection of questionable charges;

“Whereas the Eves-Harris government sold Highway 407 to a buyer who has increased charges well beyond what the government promised;

“We, the undersigned, call upon the Legislative Assembly to condemn the Conservative government of Ontario for selling Highway 407 to private interests and for permitting the Highway 407 Corp to raise charges for the use of the highway and other administrative charges that cannot be justified.”

I affix my signature; I’m in complete agreement with this petition.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): This is a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Eves government has increased the fees paid for by seniors and the most vulnerable living in long-term-care facilities by 15% or \$7.02 per diem effective August 1, 2002; and

“Whereas this fee increase will cost seniors and our most vulnerable more than \$200 a month; and

“Whereas this increase is 11.1% above the rent increase guidelines for tenants in the province of Ontario; and

“Whereas the increase in the government’s own contribution to raise the level of long-term-care services this year is less than \$2 per resident per day; and

“Whereas according to the government’s own funded study, Ontario ranks last amongst comparable jurisdictions in the amount of time provided to a resident for nursing and personal care; and

“Whereas the long-term-care funding partnership has been based on government accepting the responsibility to fund the care and services that residents need; and

“Whereas government needs to increase long-term-care operating funding by \$750 million over the next three years to raise the level of service for Ontario’s long-term-care residents to those in Saskatchewan in 1999; and

“Whereas this province has been built by seniors who should be able to live out their lives with dignity, respect and in comfort in this province;

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

“Demand that Premier Eves reduce his 15% fee increase on seniors and the most vulnerable living in long-term-care facilities and increase provincial government support for nursing and personal care to adequate levels.”

Of course I affix my signature and give it to our page, Olaniyi, from Windsor to bring to the table.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TIME ALLOCATION

Hon Chris Stockwell (Minister of the Environment, Government House Leader): I move that pursuant to standing order 46 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House relating to Bill 210, An Act to amend various Acts in respect of the pricing, conservation and supply of electricity and in respect of other matters related to electricity, when Bill 210 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, at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading, which order may be called on that same day; and

That, when the order for third reading is called, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

That the vote on second and third reading may, pursuant to standing order 28(h), be deferred; and

That, in the case of any division—I want to be very clear about this—relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Bert Johnson): Mr Stockwell has moved government notice of motion number 81.

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): I stand in my place and proudly say that I won't be supporting this time allocation motion as we, Dalton McGuinty and the Ontario Liberals, have consistently spoken out against time allocation motions because what they do is stifle and limit debate. They stifle and limit the opportunity for Ontarians to take part in the process of policy-making. We all know that this particular government, especially since Premier Eves has taken over, has used time allocation, or might I say, has abused time allocation on too many occasions.

If we were to do a little history on the use of time allocation motions, you would see that the government that the Conservatives across the way like to refer to so often, the Peterson government, only used time allocation five times from 1985 to 1990. Bob Rae's NDP government used time allocation 18 times in their five years—a 300% increase from what the Liberals did. But here is the figure that is I think most startling to the people of Ontario: between Mike Harris and Ernie Eves, the government in power today has used time allocation motions 87 times.

So you wonder why we as the official opposition constantly refer to the governing body over there as the Harris-Eves government: because Mike Harris and Ernie Eves—partners, if you will, in crime—have decided that they will stifle debate in this Legislature, that they will cut off opportunities for people in Ontario to take part in the Legislative process of defining policy by limiting the amount of input that they can have. They've done that on

87 occasions. Premier Eves took power just a little while ago, and it should be noted, quite sadly, that he has invoked time allocation on every bill with the exception of one. So what we have here, people, is a government and a Premier across the way who don't want to have debate, who don't want the people of Ontario to have debate.

Do you know that when you define a time allocation motion, what you are really saying is that it's a closure motion, that the government doesn't want any more debate on it? They are carefully worded so that they don't only stifle debate in this particular instance, but they also stifle debate when every bill comes back for third reading. So it's a double whammy that the people of Ontario are getting. They are, in fact, not being provided with opportunity to have input into the laws which are going to affect them directly.

Let me speak in particular to this bill, Bill 210, which is the Electricity Pricing, Conservation and Supply Act. I believe the people of Ontario should have input into this. I believe that this has serious ramifications for the municipalities across Ontario. It would have been my hope, certainly, as an individual, that this government send this to committee so that the committee could travel to Sudbury and hear from people who are running our local utility why this government has to ensure that they provide resources for those municipalities, like Sudbury, which had started to prepare for deregulation.

1520

Our city is going to suffer to the tune of approximately \$6 million to \$7 million. That's what it cost us to prepare for deregulation. Do you know that Bill 210 doesn't address that? Bill 210 says, once again, "Guess what, residents of municipalities across Ontario? You're going to be hit with another downloaded cost. There is no question, with Bill 210, you will be getting a rebate, but those costs that have already been expended by our local utility have to be recovered." The way they will be recovered is through our property taxes. That's extremely sad.

There are alternatives to that. Had you sent this out to committee, had you sent Bill 210 on the road, to travel and to visit municipalities, like the municipality of Sudbury, which is going to be negatively affected because of your changing of the course with regard to deregulation—what we have here is no opportunity for my city to have input into this bill. I think that's wrong.

For that reason, and also because you are stifling debate, I will be voting against this time allocation motion.

The Deputy Speaker: Further debate?

Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I raise this point of order on a very serious matter. We were just presented with a motion by the government House leader which he refused to address. I think you will agree with me that in the last seven years that you and I have been here, this has never happened before. The government has not in any way tried to justify the reason for bringing this motion forward.

Now, on the second go-round, they refuse to get up and discuss the bill. It has been an accepted practice in this House that we go by way of rotation, and to force one party to use up all of its time so that the other parties can somehow get involved in the rotation later on, I believe, is an abuse of the process, in particular since this particular motion wasn't even addressed or given any justification at all by the government House leader.

I'd like you to rule on that point of order, Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: That is a point of order, but until you get me a prod so I can go around and make people stand up and do it, I will rule that it's not my job to get speakers. So I go in rotation. Further debate?

Mr Dave Levac (Brant): Thank you, Speaker. I appreciate your ruling but I hope somewhere down the line that the House leaders or the three parties do address that very serious issue. It's getting to the point where people are wondering what's going on inside here. It has raised concerns of many members from all sides who have been here for a long time and are deeply concerned about these types of democratic processes. So I would encourage that something get done for it.

Time allocation: here we go again, shutting down debate. In the 37th Parliament: total bills passed, 89; bills passed with time allocation, 51. Some 57% of all of our bills are being passed this way now, and it's stifling debate. It's stifling great opportunities for people to point out concerns with legislation: some of the faults in it, some of the flaws, some of the improvements that could get offered. The process of consulting, throwing a bill together and saying they have consulted, without anybody seeing the bill until they want to do it, and then they throw in the first, second and third reading closure motions, making the debate stop so that no one can put feedback in except what's in this House: so when you diminish that, there are really big problems with the process that are being pointed out.

I will say again, it is being pointed out by many members on all sides of this House. They're very concerned about this process, and I have to voice my concern. Being relatively new to this process, my expectation was that we were trying to pass the best possible legislation in this place for all of the citizens of Ontario, and, boy, have I ever got it wrong. I'm sorry to say that, and I hope there's a glimmer of light in this with the member for Kingston and the Islands' point of order. The fact is, we hope we can get members from all parties to stand up and start talking about the process in this place. There's deep concern about that, and I know that no one is going to heckle, because they know we have to seriously talk about that reform. Once we get into that, I'm sure we can get back to passing legislation that's the best possible legislation, not one party's complete, total idea of how this should run.

Why am I talking about that? I'll give you the examples. I had an interesting meeting with my municipality. They brought me in to talk to Brantford Power about various issues about this particular bill, Bill 210. Maybe people are not aware of this, but the municipi-

palities are going to be on the hook for a tremendous amount of money according to this legislation. I'm going to go over three or four things that I hope the government is very aware of, and I hope it understands that AMO, small urban municipalities and utilities across the province will not be happy with them. This particular bill is going to cost my Brantford Power utilities, and city council by extension, at least \$5 million to \$7 million in putting this thing together. I saw the figures they showed me in terms of the calculations. Their calculations showed that if this rebate plan were allowed to be kind of functionally done by the municipalities, because of their efficiency and the way they've run their utilities, that rebate cheque would be for \$45. They're on the hook now for a \$75 refund. That's a difference that they have to make up. It's unbelievable that people are not aware of this.

I would caution us, let's not jump on the wagon so quickly as to say that this government's got it right. Maybe they've headed down the path of rebate, which was already in existence, that should have been in existence. It was in existence, but not the way it turns out in this particular piece of legislation. I'd ask people to make sure that utilities understand and then educate yourself on what's going to happen in your municipality.

There were three different options they had: declare themselves non-profit, declare themselves profit, or sell it back to the person they brought it from, Hydro One. Guess what happens. They have to sell it back for the price they bought it for. By selling it back for the price they bought it for, whatever that price was that they got, that money is gone. It's probably gone into roads, sewers and water. In some cases, it's up around \$50 million to \$60 million. That municipality, if they choose to do that, has to come up with \$50 million to \$60 million. A lot of the municipalities I'm aware of have decided to adopt a no-debt format, so that means they have to re-enter debt of \$50 million or \$60 million. That, to me, deserves a lot of attention and possible debate, but we can't do that. We can't bring that to your attention because this is it; this is our last kick at the can.

There are other issues here. If you declare for-profit, and here's the real rub, you're given a resolution by the government, the government's resolution that they're telling city councils they must pass. The wording basically says, "We, the municipality, have been ripping you off; therefore we adopt this particular process that the government says is the way to go." Well, tell me that you're not going to get preambles to that resolution, and deservedly so. If you get preambles to that resolution that condemn the government for this particular program, you're going to cost municipalities \$5 million to \$7 million and possibly go into debt for \$50 million to \$60 million if you sell it back. Who gets that gain? Nobody gets a gain except for Hydro One.

And guess what Hydro One gets to do. Hydro One doesn't get to set the price. It's already got its price protected at 9.93. Our municipality has to set it at 4.3. The question I have that still hasn't been given an answer

by the government side is, where did the 4.3 come from? They made it up. Municipalities get it locked in at 5.2, I believe. What's the difference? Who pays that? Another cost to the municipality.

I'm saying to the government, you have not paid attention to this particular project. It's another example of trying to put a Band-Aid on a six-inch gash.

The mismanagement: I come back to that one. I've said it from the very beginning during these debates. There is large mismanagement that is going on from that side, and they're going to placate. I saw the member from Stoney Creek stand up the other night and say, "I have not received one telephone call. They're gone." He said, "The telephones have stopped ringing completely because we solved the problem."

1530

Number one, you created the problem in the first place. Two, you had no plan on how this was going to roll out. Three, I want to include, and I think the member for Sudbury is right, the member for Durham, because he's the one who says they've got it right, that they did it right all along and everything was perfect and hunky-dory, thank you very much.

Quite frankly, what we're going to find is municipalities across the province ringing the phones of the MPPs on the other side off the hooks, and I challenge them to do that, because they're the ones who are saying there are no more phone calls, there are no more concerns about hydro, that it's all been taken care of. There's been a large hue and cry coming from the other side saying that there's a lot of fearmongering going on—they first accused the NDP and then they included the Liberals in this—that there are going to be blackouts. I didn't hear there were going to be blackouts from Joe Schmo down the street. I heard there were going to be blackouts from experts in the field, people who know exactly what happened in California and all over North America where they decided to go down this road. The first thing they said is, "You know what? You think California was bad. You're in deep, deep trouble."

I want to end with just a couple of observations and a plea. My first observation is very clear: something is wrong that our municipalities are going to have to absorb all the bad news in this situation. I challenge the government to ensure that our municipalities are not faced with that. And last, but not least, answer the question: where did you get all your information; where did you get all your statistics? I'm telling you, they didn't do their homework and they've mismanaged the portfolio.

Mr Steve Gilchrist (Scarborough East): It must be a real treat being a member of the official opposition and being able to come into this House day after day and give exactly the same speech. It sure must cut down your research time and your preparation time and allow you to sleep in every morning. We hear the same old, same old whenever it's a time allocation motion, about how terrible it is that the government is actually moving forward, that the government is showing initiative, that the government is listening to people in this province and

is then reflecting what we've heard with a piece of very positive and proactive legislation such as Bill 210.

The members opposite would suggest that if we continue the harangue that passes for debate in this chamber for more than the three days that have already taken place on this bill, somehow it would change the outcome. The members themselves know that aside from the rare day in committee where they offer the occasional amendment, the debate here invariably involves the opposition saying we are 100% wrong, that even if we did our policy development using a dartboard, we couldn't get anything right in seven and a half years. That's really quite arrogant and it's really quite insufferable, and it is also quite inaccurate.

The reality is that this bill in large measure arises from an all-party report of the select committee on alternative fuels, that had as its members three Liberals and one NDP, as well as four government members, and a government member as the Chair. While it may be painful, particularly for the members of the official opposition, to be reminded of this fact, they signed on verbatim to the conclusions of that very important report. They signed on to a commitment to move forward with the decarbonization of our energy stream, to promote alternative energy, to raise the profile of wind, solar, biomass, geothermal and fuel cells to unprecedented levels in this province, to come up with incentives to clean the air by cleaning our energy stream.

Now the members opposite would suggest, having signed on to that report in June as the representatives for their party, that somehow the government shouldn't act on it. But you know that if we didn't act on it, tomorrow's question period would revolve around why isn't the government moving forward, that it's been X number of months since this report came in or that report came in. All day today we heard them talk about the auditor's report: why didn't the government do this; why didn't the government do that in a timely fashion? The reality is that with this bill, we deny them the ability to continue to fearmonger, we deny them the ability to continue to create the false impression that notwithstanding the fact that they each had five years at the helm, they each failed miserably to change the environment, to change the very mechanisms through which power is generated in this province, and instead went down that same old road, building more coal plants and considering it a major accomplishment when one of the coal plants was converted to heavy oil or another one was converted to natural gas—baby steps down that road to cleaning up the energy stream. That's the best that either of those two parties can point to in a full decade of stewardship, a full decade of sitting on this side of the Speaker.

Our government not only commissioned the select committee, not only ensured that the report was received and accepted by the two most relevant ministries, Environment and Energy, but has now given rise to over 50 different actions flowing from the select committee report. Let me pause for just a second here and explain some of the things the government is doing.

We have put in place the most comprehensive, the most aggressive and the most creative assortment of tax incentives for businesses to develop new sources of green power generation. We're talking about exempting them from capital tax. We're talking about rebating sales tax. We're talking about exemption from property tax. We're talking about allowing them to write off the cost of building the generation equipment in the very first year in which those funds are expended. We're talking about taking the sales tax off solar products. We're talking about creating a mandate for the OEB to guarantee that every local utility puts in place something called demand-side management, which, just like the natural gas industry, will create an environment where, ironically, the utilities will be incented to cut your demand. They'll make more money if they help you, the consumer, control the amount of electricity you're using in your home or your small business. In the natural gas industry, the natural gas suppliers have received \$50 million as a result of those programs, but they've saved consumers \$500 million in so doing.

We've also said we're going to be taking some bold and unprecedented actions to clean up the environment in northern Ontario. We've said we are committed to eliminating the use of diesel as a fuel for generating electricity in the north and replacing it instead with completely clean and environmentally benign forms of energy generation, such as wind, solar and fuel cells. No government in the province of Ontario has ever made that commitment. No government had ever suggested the complete closure of all its coal plants until our government.

Unlike the official opposition, which, having signed on to a report, having travelled, having done the research, having listened to hundreds of presentations, written and oral, and coming to the same conclusion as the government members that the year 2015 was a reasonable benchmark, was a reasonable deadline for the closure of the last of our coal plants, I guess feeling that they'd been trumped, outmanoeuvred, just arbitrarily decided they'd pick an earlier deadline. The small problem is that currently coal generates 21% of all the electricity used in this province, so if you don't have a plan over the next four years to add 21% new capacity plus the capacity you're also going to need for the growth in the economy, you're going to have the blackouts that our colleague from Brantford was just suggesting.

On the other hand, there is nothing in this bill that does anything nearly that irresponsible. There is nothing in this bill, just as there was nothing in any previous electricity bill we've passed, that will lead to brownouts or blackouts in the province of Ontario, as the member knows full well. There has not been one blackout in Ontario related to electricity supply—has not been and will not be. That sort of fearmongering has no place in this chamber, and I think the member should be very ashamed to have made that suggestion here today, as many of his colleagues have in the past.

We've gone much further than any government in the history of Ontario. But I think what is most gratifying, as

a member of that select committee, is the enthusiasm with which our Premier has embraced the concept of green power. I can tell you that as a member of the select committee, it was certainly my goal that we would see actions on the various recommendations we brought forward: a total of 141 recommendations covering not just fixed forms of electricity generation but also cleaner ways of powering motive engines—your cars, buses and trains.

1540

With this bill we have basically empowered the Minister of Energy to move forward on virtually every one of the recommendations that deal with fixed forms of electricity. And in those areas where we have not announced a concrete action yet, I have been asked by the minister to take on the job of further research, working with stakeholders, consumer groups, the Ontario Energy Board and everyone else involved in the production and use of electricity, to see how fast we can move on the balance of those recommendations.

Our commitment is absolute. Ontario is going to take a leadership role, not just within Canada, but all across North America when it comes to the promotion of green energy. We already have in this bill the framework for bragging rights. There is no jurisdiction in North America that has offered the sort of tax incentives and the strong, strong support for the philosophical concepts that were the underpinning of the select committee report. This is a bill that not only should pass very quickly, and for which every member of this House should be demonstrating support—we shouldn't even have wasted the three days of debate we've already spent, because every day we delay in passing this bill is another day's delay in getting the \$75 rebate cheque out to every consumer and small business in this province. It's another day's delay behind the empowerment of the ministry to move forward on these green power initiatives.

I'm excited to be able to share with you that, notwithstanding the bill has not passed yet, we have had incredible feedback from folks in the wind industry, the water power industry and manufacturers of solar products. We have had offers of support in diagnosing all of the existing barriers to the development of green power. I can tell you that the input we have had has been so detailed and thorough that we are going to be able to react at record speed in the preparation of the regulations and the policy statements arising from the new direction that this bill empowers the Minister of Energy to take. It will be an extraordinarily exciting time to be in Ontario if you have an interest in alternative fuels. Of course the bill does much more than that.

The bill also lowers electricity costs for consumers. It creates stability and certainty. It takes away the ability for—unfortunately, I have to say—the folks on the opposite side here to do the day-in and day-out fearmongering that the sky will be falling, that people will face bankruptcy in their homes.

It was most humorous when the members opposite would trot out stories of people here in the city of

Toronto whose bills had gone up, according to them, 100% or more. The small problem was, here in the city of Toronto, as a result of the tardiness of Toronto Hydro in their application to the Ontario Energy Board, they were never relieved of the ability to continue to charge the same 4.3 cents that they had been charging before the market opened on May 1. And so, if the rate for every consumer in Toronto was still 4.3 cents, precisely how do the members opposite explain that anyone's bill would have gone up? Could it be that perhaps they used more power? I don't think there's ever been a circumstance, not just here in Ontario but anywhere in this country, where folks buying more of a service shouldn't expect to pay more for that service. If you decide to leave your hot tub on all day, or if you decide to leave your air conditioner on in a summer with record heat, all day while you're away at work, you can expect your electricity bill to go up. For the members opposite to have somehow suggested that that increased bill had something to do with bringing in new competition and clarity in the electricity market was preposterous.

But they are now the architects of the portion of the bill that deals with giving stability back to people, not just here in Toronto but across the province. I personally believe that at 4.3 cents the province has created a plan that will pay for itself. When you look at the fluctuating price of electricity, not just within each day but from month to month, and average that cost over 12 months, you will find that if this model had been applied over the last two years, for example, we would have made money.

So the bad news is, thanks to the fearmongering from those who suggested the sky was falling, the reintroduction of the 4.3 cents means that individual consumers will not see as great a saving personally as electricity users. What they'll see as taxpayers, though, if we are right and the plan pays for itself and, I believe, creates a surplus, is that the \$38 billion in debt that that vaunted public utility our colleagues opposite promote all the time, Ontario Hydro, a \$38-billion legacy of its 30-plus years of selling electricity for far below cost, will be paid down that much more quickly, relieving our children and our children's children of the obligation to pay for the electricity we used.

To the members opposite for whom it is not anathema, I would suggest you go back and rethink your position on this bill. I, for one, can never endorse the idea of a future generation paying for a service I've consumed. That is the height of irresponsibility, and it undermines the very concept of why one would run for this office: to do the best when it comes to stewardship, not just for today but over the long haul for generations to come.

There will still be incentives to conserve once this bill is passed. The principal incentive is that the less power you use, the less you'll pay. It's a radical thought, but it happens to be true. It also is true that the large energy consumers, that top 1% that between them use 40% of all the power, are on the spot market. They're not covered by the 4.3 cents, nor do they want to be. They too share our faith that they can do better in the open marketplace.

Yes, there will be days, whether it's a record heat wave in the summer or a record cold snap in the winter, when the power gets more expensive than the fixed price was when the market was closed. But there are going to be a lot of other days in the year when they're going to be able to buy power at very, very affordable rates.

You won't hear it from the members opposite, but even through the summertime it was not at all unusual in the morning hours to see power down below 1.5 cents per kilowatt hour. In fact, one morning it dropped to 0.7 cents, one sixth of the price that businesses and consumers were paying before we opened the market. So for those who have the ability to shift their production, there are extraordinary savings that can still be realized.

The only thing this bill changes, effectively, is the price paid by that relatively small percentage of the energy demand reflected in the purchases by individual consumers. It was a necessary thing to do to take away all the mythology and the fearmongering that had become the commentary from far too many sources about what really was happening in the electricity market.

This bill is something that promotes greater certainty, and with that certainty will come greater investment. The members opposite again would suggest there would be blackouts flowing because now everyone is scared off. Well, those members weren't with me on Saturday up in Ferndale, where a private company—no public money—did the ribbon-cutting for a 1.8-megawatt wind turbine, nor were they there the day before, when a 9-megawatt wind farm opened next to the Bruce nuclear plant. I don't know whether they plan on showing up down in Picton, when a 32-megawatt wind farm opens in the next couple of months. The member from Sudbury may or may not decide to show up when the Sudbury wind farm—the city of Sudbury themselves have decided to partner with a wind turbine manufacturer to create 90 megawatts of power. I'm kind of betting that neither the member from St Catharines nor any of his colleagues will decide to show up if the 400-megawatt project proposed in the middle of Lake Erie goes ahead.

1550

Those are the sorts of good-news stories we are hearing. It's a shame the media don't give as much ink to those as they do to the fearmongering and cries of doom and gloom from the Chicken Littles who tend to be the sources for information on issues such as electricity pricing. The reality is that between the wind and water industries, we're aware of over 2,000 megawatts worth of projects that are either under construction or at the environmental assessment stage. That's the equivalent of building four Pickering-sized reactors.

The initiatives we've brought forward in this bill will do nothing but build on that momentum that has already taken place, thanks to the initiatives the government already acted on over the last two years. By simply putting in place a property tax relief plan for new water power generation, in less than two years we have attracted \$200 million worth of new investments in small hydro plants, \$200 million worth of new construction and

a lot more supply of clean, reliable, made-in-Ontario power.

The members opposite would have us continue to buy, if not coal from Alberta, natural gas from Alberta or Saskatchewan. That's their idea of economic independence for our province. They like the idea of hundreds of millions, if not billions of dollars flowing from Ontario day after day. They don't see the economic benefits. If they do, if I'm wrong in that assumption, I look forward to their voting for this bill. I look forward to their standing in their place and endorsing it today by saying, "Time allocation is appropriate. We want to move forward. We too are finished with the talking. We want to see action." I look forward to seeing them voting for it at third reading.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): What is interesting in following the previous speaker is that I have a suspicion he actually believes what he said. It's one thing to spew forth the rhetoric, but it's another to actually believe it. The danger is that he might believe at least three quarters of what he just said to the Legislative Assembly. It's quite an explanation of how he got to the position he's in now, having been in an entirely different position before, but I can't be too critical of that on this occasion, I guess.

I also say to him that we don't get invitations to these events. We have to crash these events he talks about. I did crash the one in Niagara Falls because I had a hint they were going to follow through on one of my recommendations. I want to tell the member that when I look in this bill, I find a lot of the recommendations we've made. So while I think we can be justifiably critical of how we got in this particular position, I can't criticize you for stealing the ideas we have put forward.

One of them was Beck 3. I remember when Dalton McGuinty and I went to Niagara Falls on our latest visit to extol the virtues of Beck 3. I have several quotes from the member for Scarborough East who just spoke, saying, "Well, at this time it really can't be done. It's going to cost too much," and so on. I have the actual quotes. I won't read them in the House now.

A month or so later I went down to Niagara Falls and there was Bart Maves, my good friend, who had also said some pretty negative things about our visit to Niagara Falls, and he and John Baird were boldly announcing they were going to proceed with Beck 3. I was astounded, but when the media asked me about it, I wasn't critical. I said, "I'm happy to provide them with ideas. When they adopt them, I'm going to be the first one to applaud." So I stood on the sidelines and applauded as the two of them made that particular announcement, because of course they were adopting our policy, and how can you be critical when that happens?

I've looked at several components of this bill. The government got us into this mess. This bill has a lot of ramifications for local utilities and so on that have to be sorted out, but the government in fact has stolen so much in the way of what we have advocated that this bill has some attributes to it. I've got to say that.

Mr Gilchrist: Don't make me table that letter. Don't make me table it.

Mr Bradley: I will. I wish had the quotes from the member now. Maybe if my staff is watching they will get your quotes and I can use them a little later on. I was glad that the member mentioned that our committee certainly made a recommendation in that direction, but it was being fought by the government. This could not be done. Now the government is proceeding, so a big round of applause for proceeding with the project and accepting a good idea from the Liberal opposition. I can't be critical when you do that.

What I can be critical of is yet another time allocation motion. I was sitting down in anger last night—I want to share this with members—because I picked up an e-mail that said the government was going to time-allocate the following bills. To those who are watching at home on channel 67 unfortunately, not channel 15 any more in St Catharines, I will say to you that time allocation really means choking off the debate. Here's what I penned in anger late at night. You should never read those things the next day, but I thought it fit this debate in particular. It says:

"The Eves government is ramming through the Ontario Legislature several important bills with a minimum of debate and often no opportunity for public hearings or committee deliberations. Does anybody care? The Eves government is once again using taxpayers' dollars to engage in an orgy of self-serving, clearly partisan advertising and polling for political purposes. But does anybody care?"

"If the Eves government is not called to account in a very public and prolonged manner, how can Ontario's citizens have any hope that a fair and vibrant democracy can exist in this province? The Eves crowd has rigged the procedural rules of the Legislature to ensure complete control of the parliamentary process and timetable and uses its majority to choke off debate and shut out the public. Does anybody care?"

"If the government can get away with these transgressions with only a passing reference in the media, what hope is there for democracy in this province? Surely the argument that procedural issues are boring and too complicated for the public to care about or understand"—an argument made by the top echelons of the media, who make the final decisions about what gets on the air or what gets in the newspapers—"plays into the hands of an arrogant, condescending, overbearing regime which will impose its will virtually undeterred on the province and relegate the Legislative Assembly to virtual irrelevance. Surely the fact that media moguls are the direct financial beneficiaries of government advertising cannot override the need to embarrass and condemn those who abuse their public position by unfairly and irresponsibly squandering tax dollars for their own political gain. But does anybody care?"

The "anybody" it comes to is, of course, the national, the provincial and the local news media, because they are the ones who ultimately can purvey this message. I look

for the condemning editorials when I see over a quarter of a billion dollars spent by this government on self-serving, partisan government advertising, without a whimper from the editorialists in this province and the cranky talk show hosts who are usually out there condemning unnecessary government expenditures. Surely they are not influenced by the fact that the advertising is on their shows, surely not. That cannot be the case. I would never believe that. I would be too cynical to believe that. But when I look out there and see that government advertising continues, that this government is using taxpayers' dollars now to congratulate itself on the flip-flop it has done on the hydro issue—one which has been emulated—I have to say it's very unfair to the system. If you look at the ads now, they're saying, "Look, we just saved you." What did they save us from? They saved us from their own bungling and incompetence, their own policies that got them into this mess.

1600

Last day, I talked about what I thought was a reasonable thing to advertise, and that was the issue of getting the flu shot. You watch the television ads and you say, "Do you know something? It's not bad." Then it gets to the end: "And this is another way your government is looking after the health care system." There's always that political message that the brain trust in the backrooms of the Conservative Party put into these taxpayer-paid government ads. If they were ads paid for out of the huge war chest of the Conservative Party, a war chest which has been bolstered by its catering to the richest and most powerful people in the province—I notice today, for instance, that the Provincial Auditor said that half of the corporations didn't even file tax returns.

Hon Mr Stockwell: Half?

Mr Bradley: That's what the auditor said.

Mr Gerretsen: And nobody's doing anything about it.

Mr Bradley: And nobody's doing anything about it.

If the Conservative Party were to take the dollars it has gleaned from the corporate captains, the oil barons and others and use those dollars, I might not like the message but at least they wouldn't be using tax dollars to do so.

Here we have a government virtually getting away again with this kind of advertising. I ask the editorialists, I ask those who are the commentators out there, where are you? I don't hear you. You're silent. I don't read you. If that happens, then you'll get away with it. That's why governments do it. You ram things through the Legislature the way you do because you know you can get away with it: "Oh, that's procedural; who cares about that?"

The change in the rules of this House has had a major impact on legislation in this province. You've virtually taken away every chip the opposition would have to play in a process—virtually every one—because you simply time-allocate or set the timetable for all legislation going through. Some of it is very important; for instance, the provision on taking money from pension surpluses that is hidden in one of the bills. The other trick you use is to throw a number of things together into a bill so you've

got a couple of hostages in there. Instead of doing bills on individual subjects, where you could make a reasonable judgment, you throw it all together with a hostage in it.

My colleague says I have two minutes.

On this legislation, I would like to have seen some public hearings where people could have some input. The government might not agree or we might not agree with some of the input, but it would be there.

Another problem I want to mention to the government House leader, who is here, is the timetable in which amendments must be submitted. We were in Walkerton on the general government committee yesterday. Some good suggestions came forward. The ability to translate those into accepted amendments is very restrictive. What you start to outlaw as legitimate amendments makes it very difficult to make the process meaningful. I would like to go into the committee of the whole more often so we can deal with matters in a meaningful way, but of course that's the last place where we have an opportunity to make input.

I don't make this appeal to the government, because it will fall on ears that are not listening, to say the least, but I do make it to the news media out there who are watching and who have a chance to call this government to account on government advertising. This is not literal, but you get away with murder in terms of what you do in this Legislature. They are the last bastion of hope, because we alone cannot expose this with this government. Rather than the government story of the day, it would be nice if we had huge condemnations of government advertising and abuse of this House and of the electoral process.

Mr David Christopherson (Hamilton West): I appreciate the chance to comment. The matter before us today directly is the issue of time allocation, and I thought, since I had a couple of minutes, I would just put some thoughts on the record with regard to where we find ourselves these days.

Every opposition member who stands up and argues that the government automatically plans to introduce a time allocation motion with the introduction of virtually every bill is pretty much accurate, with a few exceptions. But it's worth taking a moment sometimes to stand back and ask ourselves, "How did we get here?" because a lot has changed in a very few short years.

I'm now in my 13th year in this place. When I first came here in 1990, the traditions that had been in place for decades, with very few changes, were still holding. For that matter, I was also, by virtue of being the elected caucus chair, on the House strategy committee, which was chaired by the government House leader at the time, so again I have a pretty good feel for the way things were and the way things are now, having served a couple of years as our House leader.

I can remember that when I first came to this place there were some excellent traditions that we've lost. One of them that I think is a real loss for all of us is the respect that all of us used to show for party leaders,

whether it was the Premier of the day, the leader of the official opposition or the leader of the third party. I can remember when Mike Harris would stand in his place as leader of the third party; you didn't hear heckles from the government backbenches. It just wasn't done. We've lost that. A lot of the heckling that goes on back and forth is there for a whole host of reasons, but I really feel it's a loss for this place that we don't have at least that kind of respect to show a symbol, to reflect the respect we should show this place, at least when our leaders stand up. If we are still having debates of ideas anywhere, which is what this place is supposed to be, it is when leaders are standing up either offering a leadoff speech or doing their question period questions. We've lost that, and now this place will heckle and drown out a Premier just as quickly as a backbencher who says something that upsets people. I think that's a real loss.

But I do remember what started things, and there are members who were here at the same time. My friend the current government House leader was pretty much in the same place I am over here, somewhere in this general area—

Hon Mr Stockwell: Right over there.

Mr Christopherson: Right beside it, he's telling me. He will recall the tradition of this place where at introduction of a bill on first reading, there was never a division—very, very rare. Mr Bradley can speak to it longer than most of us. By the way, he's about to assume the deanship of this place, along with Mr Sterling, assuming they both run again and both win. So he's been here longer than everybody here except two people, and he'll tell you and confirm that first reading divisions just didn't happen. There was a respect of the process to allow a bill to at least be introduced, and it was done because all members were considered to be honourable and they had the right to at least have their bill presented on the floor, even if it went no further.

I can also remember, and again I look to my friend the government House leader, a certain party leader who stood up and read all the rivers and streams and lakes. You know where I'm going.

Mr Bradley: Name names.

Mr Christopherson: I think at that time it would have been the leader of the third party, which was the Honourable Mike Harris. He stood up and it was basically a filibuster. Filibusters had been used in the past; Mr Kormos is well known for his filibuster on the then Liberal auto insurance bill. So it was very rare, and when it happened, it made news and it made a difference.

But what happened was—and now I'm beginning to editorialize, my opinion—the then third party, which is now the governing party, absolutely refused to accept the fact of, “Oh, my goodness, an NDP majority government. How can that be? They have virtually no right to govern. We've got to stop them, using any means we can.” What happened was, they were very effective. They literally gummed up the works of this whole place so that nothing was moving, and they made it clear that nothing was going to move. There was no need for negotiations,

because as long as the bill was on the floor, they were going to make sure this House didn't move.

And at the end of the day, the NDP government, of which I was a member, with a lot of caucus debate—and believe me, the debate at that time was, “Yeah, but what about later? What if we're in a position where we're somewhere else?” It was a valid concern, obviously. Look at where we are today.

1610

The fact of the matter is, we were a government. We were legitimately elected. We had a majority government and, at the end of the day, we had the right, as does the current government, to enact legislation. That doesn't mean that the debate time and the rights of opposition members should be run over, that the public should be denied their opportunity to have a say. I have some real problems with the way this government has approached those matters.

The notion that a majority government at the end of the day has the right to pass laws is, in my opinion, fundamentally sound. Given that the opposition had clearly found a parliamentary technique that seized any processing of the laws that a legitimately elected government was putting through really left us with no choice. And yes, it was our government that took the first major steps down the road that got us to this point.

As I think about this, and have over the last little while, especially since I've had the honour of being in the chair as the Deputy Speaker for the last year, I don't know that there's any real easy solution, because I also know, whether it's the official opposition in the name of the Liberals that forms the next government or the third party in the name of the New Democrats, they're going to be seized of the same issue, and that is, you've got a litany of things you're going to run on. You say, “If we're elected, we're going to implement them.” I assume we would all want to keep our promises and therefore we'll do whatever it takes at the end of the day to get that legislation through.

We're at the point now where this place is so irrelevant simply because—and I see the government House leader throwing his arms in the air. I think that means, “You know, I understand what you're saying. I'm in agreement.”

I don't know where we go. I really do not have a simple answer, but I do know that at the end of the day, those of us on this side of the House who are criticizing you—and rightly so—would be in exactly the same position if we were bringing in legislation that was very controversial or, as we're ramping up to an election, of course, things get tougher around here. But somewhere, the public have a right, in my opinion, to some of the respect and some of the input that was here for—what?—better than a century.

All of that is not to say that it's OK to keep ramming bills through with no public hearings. That one you can't defend. That is just pure cowardice.

You're afraid to go out—we remember what happened a few years ago, particularly when you brought in some

of your anti-worker legislation. We took it out on the road, and what happened? Well, surprise, surprise. You go after working people, they find out there's a public committee hearing dealing with that legislation and they're going to come out. They're going to be loud, they're going to carry picket signs and they're going to do everything they can to get media attention around what the government is doing. As uncomfortable as that may be, it's part of the price and part of the responsibility of the rights and privileges of a majority government.

You do not have the right to bring in controversial legislation, ram it through here with a time allocation motion and deny the public any opportunity to have word one on how they feel about the legislation. That has to change. The dilemma around bringing in legislation and the offsetting balancing rights of the opposition to hold up the government when they think it's appropriate is a conundrum that remains unresolved. It's worthy of any party asking for the right to govern to offer up something by way of change, because this can't continue. This really is becoming a joke.

The Premier and his or her immediate people decide what's going to be done. They take it to cabinet and cabinet gets on board. Rarely—it happens, but rarely—does a cabinet turn on a Premier, especially on a major initiative. So the Premier, having made a decision, can usually count on the cabinet, and once they've got the cabinet, then odds are they're going to be able to carry their caucus.

Although Premier Rae doesn't get nearly enough credit for bringing in a process—a lot of people aren't aware of this, but Premier Rae brought in a process that allowed the caucus to vote on whether or not a bill could be introduced. Under the Constitution, the cabinet has the right to bring in legislation, and that wasn't changed, but in terms of our own internal procedures, cabinet had to bring bills to caucus and receive a majority vote before they could introduce that bill.

Hon Mr Stockwell: How did you vote on the social contract?

Mr Christopherson: Against.

Hon Mr Stockwell: And it carried anyway.

Mr Christopherson: It carried anyway.

Interjection.

Mr Christopherson: I can say that because Bob Rae wrote it in his book, so I'm not divulging any secrets.

There were a number of times legislation was sent back, much to the chagrin of many ministers, myself included. I was the caucus chair when we negotiated that procedure and then I went into cabinet and found the procedure working against me in one case I can remember. But you know what? I'm the first to admit that when I came back with the second bill, it was a better bill. If I couldn't convince my own colleagues, who by and large were philosophically onside with the way I saw the world, that the bill should be the law, how could I expect the citizens, where you have a much broader philosophical approach, to think this is a good law? I just say that as an aside because I don't think Premier Rae has

been given enough credit for the major piece of democratization that he brought to this place.

Having said that, to go back to my point, once the Premier has the cabinet onside, the caucus onside, they bring the bill in here, and my friend from St Catharines is absolutely right when he stands up time and again and says that as soon as you've written the bill to be introduced, you're already writing the time allocation motion. We can literally predict when a law is going to take hold, and that's wrong. What it means is that unless you're a member, first of all, of the governing party in a majority government and you're a cabinet minister, you really don't have a lot of input around here in terms of major pieces of legislation, and that is a shame. In fact, as my good friend Mr Conway has pointed out in previous remarks—and if anybody wants to learn the history of this place, read some of his Hansard speeches; Bob Nixon's too. There are great lessons there in what's happened in our past vis-à-vis this place.

But there was a time when, before you could accept a cabinet position, you had to go back to your riding, hold an election and win on a vote of whether or not you would be allowed to go into cabinet. Why? Because the fundamental *raison d'être* of members of this place originally, back in the days of Confederation and pre-Confederation, was that ministers were seen literally, not just symbolically, as they are now, as the ministers, meaning the agents of the crown. In doing so, they were giving up a lot of their responsibility to speak out against legislation, because they were representing the crown. There was less party politics and a much greater respect for the fact that a majority vote of this place is what mattered. Those majorities would come from across party lines.

We've gone a long way since then, but think about it. Before you could accept a cabinet appointment, you had to go back to your own riding and convince them that you were worthy enough to be released from your day-to-day responsibilities to speak out against legislation on behalf of your constituents to now become one of the monarch's agents in introducing and trying to convince and coerce the rest of this place to support your initiative. We are so far away from that today that it would be almost laughable were it not so serious.

On the bill that this particular motion affects, I'm advised, once again, no public hearings. How many times have each of us on this side of the House had to stand up and say, "At this stage all we want is public hearings"? And when we say "public hearings," we're saying, give the public a chance to have at least some say. On the fact that you can now deny that time after time, I want to agree with the member for St Catharines: where are the media outrages? Where is the public protest around the fact that major pieces of legislation routinely go through this place and nobody gets a say? How did that become OK? How did that become business as usual in Ontario? It bears very little resemblance to democracy as I know it, yet here we are again.

1620

There's a lot being said out there. There are some good discussions happening on TV, public affairs channels and news channels: analysis, in-depth journalistic reports. There's a lot in the print. There's lots and lots of debate, except for in the one place where debate really matters, which is here or in our committees. That's not happening.

Great, the chattering classes, we all get a chance to have our say, but we're this much of the population: a few grains of sand on the entire beach, and the beach gets nothing to say. That is so wrong. If you're going to go out and get beat up, too bad. If you want to drive around in a limo, make all the decisions, have the big office, all the staff, the respect, the perks and all those things that go along with being a cabinet minister, fine. But if you're a member of the caucus and you aspire to be a cabinet minister, and part of earning your spurs is going out there in the public and defending legislation, then you've got to go out and do it. If you're going to take some heat, too damn bad. Either take the heat and suck it up, or go back to your government, which would be far more preferable, and convince them they're wrong and make the anger go away.

Ontarians are reasonable people. If you bring in reasonable legislation, they'll understand. Yes, you're going to have the opposition parties load up the hearings as much as they can to bring in their supporters, but, hey, give me a break. You've cut our budgets; we don't have as much money as opposition members as we used to, so we can't mount the same kind of effective campaign. Besides, even if we were back up to full speed on what the budgets used to be for members, it's still nothing compared to the resources of a majority government. You not only have full caucus services like all of us and more, because there's more of you, but you have all the resources of a government: all those cabinet ministers and their staff; all of the communications departments within ministries. Albeit there's a fine line that has to be respected between the business of the government and the business of the party in government, but those resources are there.

It's not good enough to say, "Well, we go out to committee hearings, and all that happens is that the NDP goes and gets all those labour people to come out and complain." Duh. That's how a pluralistic democracy works. At least, that's how it's supposed to work, because we know those same labour people aren't getting access to the decision-makers through any other means; your friends do, I have no doubt about that. Unless you're a friend of this government, you don't get a say. You don't have any vehicle to have a say.

Do you know what? This is probably going to go through, and there won't be much said. There won't be any public hearings on something that practically bankrupted individuals and small businesses in my community. What you did to hydro is shameful, and nobody gets a say.

You scared people half to death. There were families who didn't know where they were going to get the money to pay for the hydro they need to warm their families and the food to feed those families. That's how serious the crisis was in Ontario, and nobody gets a say?

That riles me up a lot more than the time allocation motion. I'm not happy about the time allocation motion, and I'm going to vote against it, but I have to tell you that I feel much more passionately about the fact that nobody else will get a say. It's one thing to shut us down after a few days. I, at least, have my chance to vent and to represent my 100,000-plus constituents as best I can, but that is not the same as coming to Hamilton and giving the people of Hamilton a chance to come out and have their say, and to have the experts come out and have their say and put it on the public record. That's what's shameful about this. It's become routine. That is now not just shameful, that's frightening.

What's the next thing we're hearing? Now you're going to spend \$1.4 million on an advertising campaign to tell the public how you're going to solve the problem you caused in the first place. You listen to the ads, you read the ads, you watch the ads and you think: "Boy, we must have been invaded by aliens who came in and took over our hydro system and did all kinds of damage. Thank goodness Premier Eves and his government are there to step in on our behalf and save the day." Except that's not the way it happened. You did it. It was your plan—more of this, "If we privatize it, it'll be better."

I've always maintained there is a lot of room for a mixed economy. Nothing should automatically be public or private without good reason. Our hospitals should remain public for good reason. We've now learned—as New Democrats we knew all along but now the rest of the province knows, especially the government—that there is a very good reason to keep power generation and power supply in the public domain.

Why? Let's see. The government said they were going to do this because it was going to bring in more investment. With more investment would come more competition, and with competition would come lower prices as everybody competed for our business. That's the theory. The problem with that theory is that the only way new investment is going to come in to create said competition is if the hydro rates are high enough that it will make the return on investment high enough to make it worthwhile to invest in the energy sector as opposed to somewhere else.

Now you might say that's just another theory arguing the original theory. Fair enough. Do we have any examples? Is there anywhere we can look around the world to see which theory seems to hold the greatest amount of water when it's put to the test of reality, where it really happens? Yes, we do. Alberta: the same thing happened. California: they went full-blown privatization is going to solve everything, with the investments and the competition and the lower rates. "Boy oh boy, we'll get out of this public bureaucracy and all this public debt that's been generated. We'll get away from all that and we'll go

to the purity of the marketplace. The market will take care of it.”

California alone, without the rest of the United States, is within the top 10 economies of the world. They had brownouts and blackouts. By the way, it's interesting to note parenthetically that the people who faced the blackouts and the brownouts were the people who had the least amount of discretionary income. They took the private plan that was offered that cost the least, but in the small print it says that those who have these cheaper rates and cheaper premiums and cheaper plans, by the way, are the first ones who get blacked out and browned out. California started having massive brownouts, blackouts, rising prices, crisis, and in the heart of the US, the leading capitalist country in the world, they went into full-speed reverse and are doing everything they can to re-regulate, and, by the way, spending hundreds of millions of dollars of Californian tax money to do it. Sound familiar? We all know about Enron. And guess what, about Enron? They were one of the key consultants in putting together the Tory plan. Come on.

1630

The only way that major investors are going to put literally billions of dollars into Ontario's energy sector is if they're going to get a bigger return than they would somewhere else, and that means higher rates. Lower rates mean no investment; higher rates mean lots of investment. Higher rates mean the people lose, and let me remind the government: we are debating a time allocation motion that limits the right of the public to have a say about this plan, their emergency repair plan.

What else do we know about the markets to the south of us? Oh, it's coming out now. They manipulated the market, because do you know what else you need to think about when you consider energy in this province? If the demand goes high enough and/or the supply is not there, guess what happens in a supply-and-demand economy. The price goes up. There are major scandals happening all across the United States now where it's being found out how the private sector energy corporations manipulated the supply market so that there was less of it, because in a competitive market environment where there is demand but little supply, you have high prices. Suddenly, all these major power-generating plants had to go on prolonged maintenance programs, meaning they were shut down. Investments that were supposed to come didn't. You're not going to invest more money than you've originally invested to bring more power supply on-line, because the more the supply is provided, the more the price drops. If you're already in the energy sector, why would you do something that deliberately lowers the price? Come on. That's not the way business works.

All kinds of other manipulations went on that are very complex. And you know what? If we were talking about widgets, there would still be crime but it wouldn't be of the same severity, would it? Widgets, unlike power, don't run our hospitals or medical equipment in people's homes, or air conditioning for individuals who have dis-

eases and are sensitive to the heat. Widgets don't interfere with people's lives to the point where moms have to worry about where they're going to get the money to buy baby food.

All of this, supposedly, was done at the beginning because of all the debt that was generated in the past. And how does their repair plan get paid for? Borrowed money. The corporation that assumes the stranded debt of the old Ontario Hydro will now have its debt go up to pay for this. It's nuts. It truly is nuts. You don't solve everything by selling it.

Oh, but what was their latest response? “OK, we won't deregulate right away.” That's still going to happen in 2006. We're back on track till 2006, where it's regulated, and of course that means capped. But the wholesale market itself hasn't changed. All those other factors are still out there applying themselves with the price going up and down. I wouldn't be the least bit surprised—and I use my parliamentary privilege here to say this—if down the road we find out there's manipulation going on. Oh, what a horrible thought. But I'll bet you it's there.

All these things are happening, but the taxpayer only has to pay 4.3 cents. Who's paying the difference? The taxpayer, through more debt: the very reason you said you were stepping into this quagmire in the first place. And you want people to believe that you've got this in hand?

Oh, yes, you've got to love this. You were going to sell the entire kit and caboodle. You were going to sell everything. Now we're down to 49%, like somehow 49% is going to give us all the capital we need to deal with some of these problems, which, by the way, it won't. They're going to be nice, quiet, silent partners; they're not going to do anything to interfere with the 51%. That would be us, the public. They wouldn't do anything to interfere with the 51%, so we're supposed to quietly go back to sleep and assume everything is just fine because we own 51%.

Don't be fooled. The 49% is going to go along with doing what's in the best interests of the public, the 51%, up to the point that it costs them a dime. Once they start losing money on their investment, and we are talking big money, does nobody think that they are going to suddenly start putting some pressure on, through legitimate political means, to have those decisions changed or to not take those decisions? Come on. It's so transparent, it's insulting to suggest the people aren't going to understand exactly what this means.

The other thing about the 49%: it's bad enough that they insult us with this transparently phony plan—I agree with the member from Scarborough-Agincourt, Mr Phillips. I was here in 1999 when the government sold the 407. What did they do with that money? Did they take that long-term investment that was owned by the people of Ontario and take the money derived from that and put it into some other long-term benefit for the people of Ontario? That would be the logical thing to do, first of all, if you assume that selling it made any sense,

which it didn't. By the way, it has since been sold again, I think, for at least three times what that private entity paid for it. So how good a deal did we get in the first place?

Notwithstanding how bad a decision it was to sell the 407, you'd think they could have at least taken that money and said, "OK, we've got a big chunk of money here"—it was close to a couple of billion dollars—"and we're going to put it somewhere that's going to give different but equal benefit to the people of Ontario." No. Do you know what they did? They sold the 407, took the money, counted it as revenue for that one year and then used that money to pay for their promises to get re-elected. Think about it. That's like selling the family car to pay the gas bills. At the end of the year you may not owe anything on your gas credit card, but what's the point? You don't own a car any more, so what have you gained? You sold the 407, you took all that money and you used it as revenue, as if somebody said when they sold that car, "Oh, look at that. I'm making \$80,000 because we got \$15,000 for the car. And I only earn \$65,000 in salary; now I make \$80,000 a year." No, you don't. You still make \$65,000 a year but you don't have a car. That's exactly what happened here. They took that money and used it for the in-year revenue, used it to pay for their promises, and then called a snap election the day after—I believe it was the day after—they dropped the budget.

1640

Now here we are, on the brink of probably another provincial election next year—likely in the spring; could be in the fall. If we look at their last budget, we know that they have to find more than \$2 billion just to pay for what was in that budget. "Asset sales." We knew what it meant. So now you're going to take this 49%, which is still going to leave you a bit of a fiscal problem, but I guarantee you that the member for Scarborough-Agincourt is bang on when he predicts the government will take that money, use it as in-year revenue to inflate what the income of the government is, and that's how they'll pay for whatever election promises they're going to come up with. Probably more tax cuts, because most of their promises were more tax cuts. So a good chunk of the 407 was taken and converted into tax cuts for people who don't need tax cuts—certainly not as badly as our communities need schools, hospitals, sewers, child care and environmental law and protection.

I made a note earlier, and my friend from Brant commented on it too. I won't say which minister because that doesn't serve any real purpose, but a few days after the announcement by the Premier that the rates were going to be capped, during the bantering back and forth in this place, one of the prominent cabinet ministers said in response to a heckle, "Yeah, but my phone's stopped ringing." I sort of thought that said it all.

This is not about a long-term plan for the provision of power. This is to bail you out of one of the stupidest political scandals that any government ever arranged for

itself. And that's all it is: a band-aid to get you over the hump, past the next election. That's all.

Nobody's arguing the fact that power at cost, right now, is not reflected with 4.3 cents. We didn't argue it when we were government; neither did the other two parties when they were in government. We, collectively as a population, chose to let the debt rise rather than pass on those costs—and before we go on condemning all politicians of the past of all political stripes for doing that, let's keep in mind that one of the things that made this one of the most successful provinces in a successful nation was the provision of affordable, reliable power. And quite frankly there were politicians in the past that didn't want to go mucking up that formula by passing through all the costs. Did they do the right thing? We can stand here from this point in history and say no, but I wonder how quickly any of us would want to go around and kill the goose that was laying the golden egg, because in large part that's what Ontario Hydro did for us. Those auto plants: it's not a coincidence they didn't end up in the middle of the plains of Saskatchewan. We were very fortunate, and we are very fortunate, those of us who live in this part of this great country and this great province, because we're so close to the major American markets. Virtually all the communities of the members I see in here, all of us, have as part of our brochures and promotions for our local communities diagrams that show, within an hour's drive and within an hour's flight and within a two- or three-hour train ride, the markets you can reach from our particular locale. What a huge benefit.

The national railway: what a huge benefit. Being on the Great Lakes, linked through the St Lawrence Seaway out into the markets of the world: what a great advantage. When you take all that and a skilled workforce and our beloved universal health care system, which gives us a tremendous competitive advantage, and wrap it up, and as the bow provide reliable power at reasonable cost, you've got a winning formula.

For the entire duration of the last century, we and all the people we represent in this community benefited from power. So we went from power being one of the best competitive advantages we had—I'm talking about comparing us to other world locations. That's how lucky we were and are. We went from that kind of world to one where seniors were trying to decide whether to pay their hydro bill to keep the lights on or whether they should scrounge up enough dimes to go out and buy medicine. That was your answer to the problem: privatize it. Sell it off. Everything will work magically. The magic of the marketplace will take care of everything.

I want to remind anybody who's watching that this is the same government—this is important because we're coming up to an election—that prior to the last election rammed through changes to how political campaigns are financed, doubled the amount of money a corporation can give to a political party. Boy, what a coincidence. They doubled the amount of money corporations can give to a political party, and virtually everything they've done has

been to the benefit of corporations and the very wealthy. Hmm. How about that? What a coincidence, eh?

By the way, it's worth reminding the House that when those laws were unilaterally rammed through by the majority government, never in the history of Ontario had changes to the election laws been made without negotiation and ultimate agreement from all three parties. I was in those initial meetings, with the member for Windsor-St Clair, who is the current House leader of the official opposition, and I think it was Norm Sterling at the time who was the government House leader. No, actually we were dealing with Mr Hodgson, who was carrying that legislation. I think we had maybe two meetings, because the minister opened up our discussions by saying, "No matter what you two say and no matter what the tradition of this place has been, if we don't like the ultimate agreement, we're going to bring in legislation unilaterally and ram it through using our majority." That's a great way to foster an environment of negotiation and give-and-take. What a great way to maintain confidence that the electoral system doesn't benefit one political party over another.

This is the same government, the same crew that's now spending \$1.5 million to convince the people of Ontario that they are wonderful people for solving this horrible tragedy, the horrible tragedy you brought in against all evidence. It's not as if California happened after you changed things, or Alberta or the Enron scandals happened after. All those things happened well before you made your changes, and yet you went right ahead.

1650

I suspect, Speaker—again, twice today I'll use my parliamentary privilege. I'm going to say that I think they were so far down the road of making promises to their friends—because we're talking billions of dollars here; billions of dollars finds lots of friends—that they couldn't afford the politics of backing away. The people of Ontario couldn't afford for you to move forward but what carried was your politics, where you had obligations to people who have long memories and have enough money to have staff who will do nothing but remember those things. That's where these lobbyists come from. They get paid big money, for good reason: they deliver. And boy, did they deliver on this one, eh? And you know what? They're still winning.

One could almost argue the evil genius of all this is the fact that the wholesale price is still being paid. They're still making their profit; it's just not being reflected in the bill. The difference is being carried by going further into debt. So in the last three minutes of my comments, I point out that that's exactly where you began. The problem was we weren't reflecting the true cost because the debt kept rising, and that's exactly where we are today, exactly where we are. As we speak, local utilities are already implementing much of what you've got in here, and every day that we, as consumers, use energy that costs 4.3 cents to us, the real cost is being added to the debt. That's the boondoggle.

The government likes to say, "The NDP government, you guys, increased the debt by \$3 billion," but I would also remind the government that I believe it was in the last two years of our term we actually did pay down the debt. Overall, during the full term in government—I see one of the cabinet ministers look over at me like, "That can't be. You've got to be making it up." It's the same look I get when I say, "You know what? We would have balanced the budget before the Tories because we didn't have billions of dollars going out the window in tax cuts." It's true. They refuse to accept it. To this day, it still riles them.

Interjections.

Mr Christopherson: Look. Seven years, eight years later, they still go nuts at the idea, but it's true. It's true. So I grant you, the system hasn't worked well for a long time, and yes, it went up \$3 billion in our time, but we had a plan to start bringing it down. You know what? That's more than you're doing right now, because you don't have a plan. What you've got is a band-aid that allows whoever the government is in 2006, if they let this thing run its term, the right to find itself in exactly the same quagmire that you found yourself in and that previous governments before you did, because you have solved nothing. You've hurt people, which you've done in other legislation.

Again, the same minister looks at me like, "How can he say those things?" Go talk to environmentalists, Minister, and ask any one of them if there's anything you've done that's helped the environment. Go talk to any worker representative in the province and ask them if you've passed any legislation that actually helped anybody. Go talk to any municipal councillor who didn't drink the Kool-Aid and ask whether there's anything you've done that's helped municipalities and councils. And we can say the same thing about health care and education and child care and virtually every other area—public transportation, you name it—except the area of taking care of rich, especially corporate, friends. On that one, you win everything hands down, gold medal. Absolutely. Nobody took care of rich people like you took care of rich people. And for the longest time, Speaker, they had the public convinced that they weren't doing that. That day is rapidly coming to a close as people take a look around and say, "I know the wealthy are better off. Am I? Is my community better off?" And the answer is no.

Hon Doug Galt (Minister without Portfolio): It's interesting. I sat here for the last three quarters of an hour and heard a speech that I've heard probably 70, 80, maybe 90 times so far in the last seven years. Not even the players are being changed. He just rants and rages and carries on, talks about how the rich, the wealthy, are the only ones who have had any improvement since we took office.

Mr Speaker, I want to remind you, and I'm sure you remember, of the 1.008 million net new jobs in the province of Ontario since we took office. Some 1.008 million people came home and said, "Guess what? I just

got the job.” How many jobs, in the first half of the decade in the 1990s, did your government create? I believe the record shows minus, net, 20,000. That’s what you were doing for the people of Ontario: a tremendous number of people who have been unemployed in this province, caused mostly because of the NDP government and what they did. Now we have 1.008 million who are out there working.

Interjection.

Hon Mr Galt: Yeah, yeah. I hear the member for Kingston and the Islands talking about hydro. At least there are 1.008 million people who have a salary coming in that your government didn’t help in the late 1980s either when you doubled spending and tripled welfare rates. No wonder—

Mr Gerretsen: I thought we did a great job.

Hon Mr Galt: I know you thought you just did a marvellous job, but I’m sitting here listening this afternoon and I’ve yet to hear any solutions. I understand why the Liberal Party would have no solution, because a week ago Monday their Web site on electricity was blank. It was blank, I guess like most of their minds. There was nothing there. But once it was brought up in the Legislature, instantly they threw something on for the next day. That’s how much consultation they went through; that’s how much thought they put into it. I guess the wind vane swung around, aimed at a few policy issues, and they put it on the Web site. I can understand why they would come through just like that.

At least when I look to the NDP, they have been on track. They’ve maintained the status quo of direction. They’ve kept rolling. They even had a bus, speaking of rolling, on the issue of electricity. I do have to recognize that at least they have been consistent in their direction.

I have no idea where the Liberals are going to go next. I guess if you’ve checked with them in the last five minutes, you may know what their policy is on electricity or anything else, but if you wait another five minutes, I’m very, very sure they will have changed.

I heard a lot of ranting and raving, particularly from the member for Hamilton West but also from the Liberal speakers, about consultation. If you look at the record of what has been going on in the last seven years, there’s been more time spent in committee, on the road, than by any other government since way back to 1985, more time spent on bills here in the Legislature than any other government has spent. I think that’s the kind of record that speaks for itself. You can get up and rant and rage, but the real numbers, the real facts, are what come through.

1700

When they talk about time allocation motions, they are there because of the opposition blocking every move the government tries to make. Maybe with just a little more co-operation when we come forward with bills that they totally agree with, we could—

Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I don’t believe we have a quorum present in the House to hear these enlightening words.

The Deputy Speaker: Would you like me to check and see?

Mr Duncan: Yes.

The Deputy Speaker: Would you check and see if there is a quorum.

Deputy Clerk (Ms Deborah Deller): A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker ordered the bells rung.

Deputy Clerk: A quorum is now present, Speaker.

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

Hon Mr Galt: I appreciate the concern that some of the Liberal members had about a quorum being present. It’s unfortunate that as soon as they called quorum, they ran out of the Legislature, but I appreciate them now returning to listen to the important words that we’ll be sharing.

There’s just one other comment that I wanted to share with both of the opposition parties, and that has to do with committees on the road. Just check with other Legislatures in Canada, check with the federal government, and see how many of those governments take committees on the road. I think you’ll be very surprised to find out that it is almost negligible, certainly in other provinces. On rare occasions the federal government does—on rare occasions, I believe. Other provinces think we are rather silly to go out on the road. Check with other states and I think you will find a tremendous record on the part of our government.

This afternoon we are indeed debating a time allocation motion, a motion that we shouldn’t have to put on this bill, Bill 210, but do because of the opposition blocking. It is obviously necessary to get on with this bill so that the people in Ontario can receive their rebates and can receive adjustments on their bill. People across Ontario are demanding immediate action from the members of this House. They want help quickly to lower their hydro bills. They want our help to conserve energy.

Our government believes that Bill 210 is in the best interests of the people of this province. Many of the members opposite clearly share this view, although, typical of partisan positions, they don’t want to admit it. The Liberals support the cap on electricity as well as many other elements of our government’s action plan. They know it’s the right thing to do, yet we continue to debate this proposed legislation. For this reason, I’m speaking today in favour of the motion that would allow this important piece of legislation to be passed. I urge all members of this House to do the right thing and vote in favour of this motion.

Our government recognizes that rapidly rising hydro bills are indeed unacceptable. We listened to the people of Ontario and we agree with them that electricity is a necessity of life. As the Premier has said, there are many things in this life that you can do without, but electricity is not one of them.

So we took action. We introduced legislation and a comprehensive plan to lower the cost of electricity in Ontario and to ensure its long-term supply. As part of this

policy package, we are taking immediate steps to lower the hydro bills of families, small businesses and farms across the province. We are taking action to increase the long-term supply of electricity in Ontario. We're putting forward measures to promote green energy, alternative fuels and conservation. Effective December 1, the legislation that we have introduced, together with the associated regulations, would lower the price consumers pay for power to a constant 4.3 cents per kilowatt hour. This would end the price hikes of recent months.

The issue is not only that hydro prices have been too high. We've also heard from families, farmers and businesses right across this great province that they cannot tolerate the fluctuations in the rates that we've seen in recent months. We agree that rate volatility makes planning and budgeting difficult for everyone. That's why our plan, as well as lowering the price for power, would freeze the price at 4.3 cents per kilowatt hour until at least 2006, our goal being to introduce stability to hydro pricing in the province of Ontario.

That's not all. As well as lowering power rates and freezing them until 2006, we propose to refund the difference between the new 4.3-cent price and what consumers have actually paid for power since May 1, 2002. Consumers will get the refund whether they've been buying electricity from local distribution companies or whether they have entered into a contract with an electricity retailer. Under the provisions of the proposed legislation, an initial \$75 refund cheque would be mailed to consumers as soon as possible, in most cases by the end of December. If a consumer were owed more than \$75 in refunds, the balance would be credited to future bills.

Customers of some utilities such as Toronto Hydro have seen no change in the price they paid for power since May 1. That's because while these consumers were paying a fixed price of 4.3 cents, the utilities were paying the actual price of power on their behalf. These customers have what are called variance accounts, the balances of which show the difference between what they paid for electricity and what they actually owe. These customers would not be receiving a cheque under the proposed legislation, but any variance account balances owing would be paid off. Customers with equal-billing-plan accounts would receive their refunds as credits on future bills.

The legislation also provides that until March 31 of next year, no one in the province of Ontario could have their power cut off because of failure to pay their hydro bill. This provision would be retroactive to November 11, 2002.

The cost of power generation is just part of the total cost of hydro to consumers. They also pay for delivery. The legislation we introduced would enable us to cap the price consumers pay for delivery.

The GST also contributes to what consumers pay for power. We believe it is outrageous that the federal government continues to charge GST on electricity bills, because electricity is a necessity of life. However, typical

of Liberals, there has never been a tax they didn't like. As part of our action plan, we continue to demand that the federal government not tax electricity in this manner. Ontario doesn't charge sales tax on electricity and neither should the federal government.

The pricing of electricity is complicated. It is sometimes difficult to know exactly what we're paying for. We are proposing to bring forward a newly designed, standard province-wide hydro bill that is easy for consumers to read and understand.

Finally, we are launching an independent review of how charges on electricity bills are calculated. We want to make sure those charges are reasonable. The review will include charges imposed by the Independent Electricity Market Operator, which we would freeze, and a fixed monthly customer charge imposed by local electricity companies.

That is what we are proposing to do to bring relief to families, farmers and small businesses suffering from rising and fluctuating hydro bills. What's more, the measures we're taking to lower hydro bills will continue until there is enough energy supply to meet Ontario's long-term needs at reasonable prices.

Mr Gerretsen: You used to be a lot better extemporaneously.

Hon Mr Galt: I was extemporaneous for a while, but you seemed to object to it, so I'll stick to my notes so you don't call for a quorum and you can listen to the good message.

We recognize that the needs and concerns of large commercial and industrial power users are different from ordinary consumers. For one thing, their electricity costs, unlike those of individuals, are tax deductible. We will soon be entering into consultations with large commercial and industrial users about pricing arrangements for power.

Looking to the future, our government remains committed to the principles of an open market. We remain committed to the notion that the private sector has a vital role to play in Ontario's power industry. We saw what happened under the old Ontario Hydro regime: a \$38-billion deficit in spite of the fact the NDP claimed they paid off some. After you raised it something like \$16 billion to \$20 billion and then paid down a couple of million, its net went up tremendously.

1710

Our action plan leaves the wholesale market in place. Retail contracts are continued, and we remain committed to paying down the multi-billion dollar debt run up by the old Ontario Hydro. And you're absolutely right, I did say "deficit" earlier. It's debt—a \$38-billion debt—just to clarify and make the member from Kingston and the Islands comfortable.

When we decided to restructure the old Ontario Hydro, one of our goals was to encourage new investment in electricity generation in Ontario. I'm happy to report that the goal is being met. Investments have been made by private sector operators in a variety of types of generation systems. Among the most significant new pro-

jects are the refurbishment of two nuclear generators by Bruce Power at Kincardine, TransAlta's natural-gas-fired operation at Sarnia, which is expected to come on line early in the new year, and ATCO and OPG's natural gas facility at Brighton Beach, which will come on line in 2004.

In addition to these major projects, a number of smaller generators, using wind power, water power and landfill gas, are also nearing completion, under construction or well along in the approval process. This is a direct result of opening up the market to competition, and also because of the select committee on alternative fuels that Mr Gilchrist spoke on a few minutes ago, the new commissioner for alternate fuels. Certainly as chair of that committee, it's a thrill for me to see the government moving ahead on green power, something that neither of the previous parties, when in government, gave any opportunity for, for wind turbines or solar power or any of these green activities.

I can assure members that Ontario continues to be an attractive location for competitive generation. When we undertook to open Ontario's electricity market to competition, we also made a commitment to decontrol Ontario Power Generation. The rationale was that you couldn't have competition when one player controlled such a large part of the market. Ontario Power Generation has made significant progress in reducing its market share through the lease of the Bruce nuclear generating station and the sale of the Mississagi River hydroelectric station.

But decontrol never meant a fire sale of OPG assets. From the beginning we made it clear that these are important public assets and that private-public partnership arrangements must be in the best interests of Ontario taxpayers and electricity consumers. These interests include ensuring not only maximum value but also environmental concerns. For example, the proposed sale of OPG's Atikokan and Thunder Bay plants was rejected because it did not meet our standard for ensuring maximum value.

The best interests of Ontario taxpayers and electricity users include ensuring an adequate long-term supply of electricity in Ontario at reasonable prices. To that end, over the next three years, OPG's focus will be on increasing supply, on building generating capacity. The first of the four units at Pickering A is expected to come on line in the second quarter of 2003. We have also directed Ontario Power Generation to proceed with the Beck tunnel project.

To sum up, with both Ontario Power Generation and a range of private sector players, the wholesale market for power in Ontario is open for business. We believe that in the long run an open competitive market for power generation will lead to increased investment, more capacity and lower prices.

As well as lowering hydro bills and encouraging new supply, we are taking action to promote green energy and conservation. We recognize that efforts to increase electricity supply must respect our obligations to the environment, sustainability, and future generations.

The proposed legislation would provide for a range of tax incentives to promote conservation and stimulate new investment in electricity from alternative fuels and renewable energy sources.

The proposed legislation also gives the Minister of Energy and the Ontario Energy Board powers to promote energy conservation and efficiency. We propose to bring forward other measures that encourage customers to conserve energy and to use it more efficiently.

The actions we are proposing will enhance the efficiency of the energy sector, keep in place the incentives for the wholesale market to increase supply, and protect the consumer. They would lead to lower hydro costs, both now and in the future. We are taking these actions because electricity is not like other commodities; it is a basic need like health care.

For these reasons, I'm speaking today in favour of the motion that would allow this important piece of legislation to be passed. I urge all members of the House to do the right thing and vote in favour of this bill, Bill 210.

Mr Gerretsen: First of all, I would like to start off by complimenting the member from Hamilton West. I think he gave an excellent speech here today on this issue, both from the closure point of view and also from the viewpoint of the content of the bill. The unfortunate part, of course, is the fact that the way the rules are set up in this House now, the NDP gets to speak about four or five times longer than each Liberal member on a particular issue, which is regrettable because it somehow doesn't speak to the equality in the House of the individual members.

First of all, we're dealing again with a time allocation motion. I don't want to dwell on it at great length but I do want to say that even the time allocation motions, the closure motions, are in my opinion getting to be more and more restrictive. At one time we used to have a motion, for example, that a bill be given second reading after a particular stage in the debate. Then it would go to committee for a while, it would come back, and there would be an hour or two or a day's debate on third reading. Now that's not even happening any more. If you look at the motion today, it basically says that once the motion is passed—which will be at 10 to 6 today, because of the government's majority—then the next time it's called, it has to be voted on immediately for second reading. It doesn't go to committee and it will be given third reading right away.

It seems to me that this is a complete attack on the democratic principles and the parliamentary rules that have been a tradition within the Westminster model. Now we don't just have closure on an item any more but we cut off all possible debate, we cut off all possible committee time that is required with a major bill like this.

I could go through all the statistics about how closure was hardly ever used up until the mid-1980s and how it's become more and more a custom of this House. I won't be doing that today, you'll be glad to know. I will not be doing that, other than to say that closure has now been used 88.8% of the time in this House, with this govern-

ment, which I think isn't right, to say the least. It just isn't right.

However, dealing with the substance of the bill, there are so many things one could talk about. The one that really gets me probably more than any other is that it is quite clear, from everything that has happened on the electricity issue and anything relating to electricity within the last year, the government has completely changed its mind. Whereas at one time it was in favour of an open, free market as far as the consumption and generation side are concerned, it no longer believes in an open market as far as the rates people are going to be charged are concerned. It has decided it is going to charge people 4.3 cents per kilowatt hour for the next four years, and that's it. So there is no longer an open market. For anybody to suggest that somehow there still is an open market is just plain incorrect. It's not right. It's not accurate.

The government somehow likes to weasel out of that situation by saying, "Well, it's the Liberals' fault," or "It's somebody else's fault." The point is, they've totally changed their mind on it. At least have the honesty of your convictions and say, "Yes, we tried the open market and the rates went up too high. We didn't want to saddle the people of Ontario with the tremendous rates out there so we decided to take this course of action."

At least I would have some intellectual respect for you and say, "OK, I think you're doing the right thing." I do believe you're doing the right thing. I totally believe there are certain public services that the people of this province should be able to rely on, in the highly developed country and the highly developed province that we're in. I think water should be a public utility and there should be no private involvement. I think electricity should be a public utility and there should be no private involvement. I think public education should be there for all to enjoy so that we can have that equal opportunity in life. I think the same thing about health care. That's why I totally applaud the Romanow report and what it stands for—totally and completely. I can tell you that right now, because I believe in good public health care and that it be accessible to everyone.

1720

Let there be no question about that: you guys have changed your minds, and you're entitled to change your minds. I would hope that in a parliamentary system somebody changes their mind at some point in time about something, or else what the heck are we doing here? You've changed your minds. We're now on to something totally different, and that's the point of it.

There was a point made earlier today with which I totally agree as well, and that is that one of the reasons we enjoy such a good economy in Ontario and why we are the leaders in many respects has been the fact that over the last 100 years there has been cheap electric power available. It hasn't been at cost, but we have used the electricity rates in Ontario as an economic development tool in order to get industry to locate in this province, which we all want. We all want the jobs that are associated with industry. So this whole notion that some-

how the stranded debt that Ontario Hydro has or its successor companies have is entirely due to mismanagement and everything else that is associated with it is totally incorrect. It has an awful lot to do with the economic policies that governments of all different stripes have had over the last 100 years in this province. That's the long and the short of it.

Could there be better management? Has there been some mismanagement? Absolutely. The Provincial Auditor in his report today certainly points to a number of different areas where this government during the past two to three years has totally mismanaged the electricity file. I just want to read some of that because it ties directly into what they're trying to accomplish in this bill.

I assume that one of the reasons the government was in favour of opening the market and privatizing a very significant portion of it was to get rid of the debt. We always heard it. It was to get rid of the stranded debt that's there. Well, what's actually happening is that by guaranteeing the rate to individuals at 4.3 cents per kilowatt hour for the next four years, you're going to add to that debt. If we have to buy power or produce power at more than 4.3 cents per kilowatt hour, whether it's done privately or through Ontario Power Generation, who is going to pay for the difference? The difference is going to be added to the debt. That's the reality of the situation. So it could very well be that at the end of four years, the debt is not where it is right now but it will be more, by whatever the difference is between 4.3 cents per kilowatt hour and whatever we produce it for or buy it for.

What the auditor talks about is how this government over the last two or three years has allowed the deficit situation and the total debt of Ontario Hydro to increase by something like \$341 million. Let me just read you what he says. He says, "In my view, as of March 31, 2002, there is an increasing risk that part or all of the stranded debt will not be recoverable from the rate-payers—the people who pay for the electricity—"and will therefore become a liability of the taxpayers."

You could argue that in many cases they're the same people, and in a lot of cases they are, but not entirely. He goes on to say, "My view is based on the following observations:

"The financial performance of Hydro's successor companies for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2002 was well below expectations. The government expected its two wholly owned Hydro successor companies—Ontario Power Generation Inc and Hydro One Inc—to earn \$524 million—that's what they thought they were going to earn—"during that fiscal year; instead, the two corporations jointly earned only \$179 million, a shortfall of \$345 million."

He goes on to say, "Accordingly, none of the \$179 million in earnings is available to reduce the stranded debt, and as a result \$341 million was absorbed by Ontario's taxpayers," as an increase in the debt.

That leads me to one other thing. I may not be all that popular, but I personally—I'm not speaking for my party now—don't agree with the \$75 rebate to individuals. I

think individuals should be protected, but wouldn't it make a heck of a lot more sense if we would take that \$75 off the individual's next hydro bill—

Interjection: Credit.

Mr Gerretsen: —as a credit? You're already doing that after January 1. We're trying to somehow buy people off just before Christmas, and there may be people out there who need it. But the one way in which we could guarantee that as a result of people not getting the \$75 they're not going to be inconvenienced, we could for example say in the legislation—and it may very well be there—that nobody's power can be cut off. You reach exactly the same conclusion, but you don't get involved in this silly nonsense of sending \$75 back to people and then somehow getting it back from them again after January 1. It reminds me a little bit about the \$200 cheques, you may recall. We got them just before the last election, which may have had something to do with the government winning re-election in 1999.

Do we really play people to be that stupid, that somehow we're trying to send them \$75, but for the rest of it we're saying, "Well, we'll take it off your next bill"? Why can't we take that off their next bill right now and make provisions for those people who are in really dire financial straits, by guaranteeing that their power is not going to be cut off?

My time is almost up. Unfortunately, there are so many more things that one could say about this. All I can tell you is that whatever mess and whatever anxiety people have had about their hydro bills over the last three to four months, there's only one cause of that: the government of the day simply didn't know what the heck they were doing. It has nothing to do with the NDP policy; it has got nothing to do with the Liberal policy. They're the guys in charge. They bungled it. They didn't know what they were doing, and they've got to pay the price for it. And the price we're all going to pay as a result of their tremendous bungling of this whole situation is that the stranded debt of Ontario Hydro is going to go up even further.

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): I'm very pleased to have an opportunity to speak on Bill 210. That's really the issue we're discussing here. The opposition obviously have talked about a number of other things, as they usually do.

I listened earlier today to the member from Scarborough East and his comments. He's obviously been named to head a concerted effort on the part of the government to lead, really, the discussion on conservation. Conservation is a very important part of this Bill 210, as well as a number of other amendments.

I think for those viewing and for the record, I want to put on the record a couple of things, starting with a brief history of how long this has been an issue.

I heard the member for Hamilton West, Mr Christopherson, earlier today speaking about the economic model of supply, the generation of electricity, and demand, the consumer's part of the equation. There has to be some kind of balance there. If there's a shortage of

supply, ie, gaming the market, then obviously the price goes up. He should be familiar with a report that was issued just recently here. This report I'm referring to is the Market Surveillance Panel Monitoring Report on the IMO-Administered Electricity Markets for the First Four Months, May to August 2002. It's dated October 7, 2002. It's a very worthwhile reference point for explaining some of the causes—I believe independently these people are trying to assess, audit and determine if in fact, as was suggested, that there was market manipulation—were indeed in place. In fact, the report clearly states that was not the cause. If there's enough time here, I'll certainly help the viewer understand what were some of the constraints in the system itself, beyond purely the demand side—that is, temperatures being up and us having to use more electricity to run our air conditioners.

1730

I think if I want to go back to broader implications, we can go further back. Mr Christopherson talked about the marketplace as if he actually agreed with it. But if you go back far enough, you'll find that in 1993 the NDP froze the rates. If you go back far enough, you'll find that Sir Adam Beck's original concept was, and it's a well-known phrase, "power at cost."

So then it comes to, what is the cost? That is a fair question. Certainly my consumers in the riding of Durham want to know what the costs are. Well, the costs are a function of how efficient the organization is, how effectively they operate their various reactors or water turbines or turbines using fossil fuel, and how much competition they have.

It's my understanding that, under the Power Corporation Act, smaller companies and indeed large companies were not allowed to cogenerate. Lasco Steel in Whitby wasn't allowed to use the huge thermal current going up their chimney to turn a turbine to create electrons to light the lights. That wasn't allowed. In other words, it was a monopoly. The monopoly was the old Ontario Hydro.

Did they provide power at cost? Well, in anybody's accounting reference, you'll find out that they had accumulated \$38 billion in debt. Obviously, they weren't selling power at cost. They were actually doing what the NDP did: throwing it into the debt bucket and not dealing with the issue.

What did this government do? When first elected, they commissioned the Macdonald commission. As many people would know, Donald Macdonald was Trudeau's finance minister—and I don't want to cast aspersions, but he did a definitive amount of work on free trade, which is really something the Liberals have waffled on all their life. I really think that report indicated that the current model of Ontario Hydro wasn't sustainable.

There are really three parts. There's the generation part, the transmission part, which is the big lines, and the distribution part, which is generally the local lines—and part of it was Ontario Hydro, mostly in the rural parts of Ontario.

What they recommended was trying to find some relationship between the debt and all the assets. So they

set up a market design committee and determined what the debt equity was for the generator, the transmission and the distributor. In fact, at the end of it, they determined that the amount of assets would not support the amount of debt. By anybody's measure, that is a definition of being bankrupt. But because it's a public corporation, they just keep going to the taxpayer, to the government. Indeed, the member from Kingston and the Islands admitted it. He said there was mismanagement. Indeed there was, by all governments of all stripes. But this government had the courage to actually study the issue with the Macdonald commission.

I was fortunate to be involved in an all-party committee. Mr Galt and a few others were involved in it. I think Howard Hampton was on it for the NDP. That committee was the select committee on nuclear affairs, I guess. They considered a report, a proposal, which was called, How Do We Bring Our Nuclear Plants Up to Optimum Operating Capacity? Let it be stated, first of all, that there's an acronym for that report. It was called the NAOP, the nuclear asset optimization plan. In that plan, what they found is that if you went to the fundamentals, if you compared the Candu reactor—a very robust nuclear reactor compared to other forms of nuclear reactors—they're quite robust, but they didn't run very well. In fact, they were down 60% of the time.

In fact, the big controversy right now with the Pickering A station—I live in Durham. That Pickering A station has been a problem for 15 years or more. They retubed that plant under the Liberal government in 1988 at a considerable amount of expense. Some would say the job was poorly managed then. In fact, it's my understanding that the reason it's being retubed now is because there was a problem after it was done in 1988. Anybody who works there, and many of them are my constituents, tells me that the job was done poorly then.

If you look at the operating reports for the nuclear plants, you'll find that in fact they haven't operated at capacity anything over the 70% until recently.

The point I wanted to make is that one of the important parts of the supply-demand problem is making sure we don't reduce what they call "built supply," or existing inventory of supply. One of the problems that was clearly in this report I referred to earlier—indicated the fundamental causes why there was a shortage of supply and how long that shortage of supply has existed. You should know, and we should all know, that the majority of our peak power has been provided from the United States for the last number of years. This is not something new with the market opening. It is not anything to do with the market opening. But I would also say that the peak load has in fact shifted from what used to be purely a winter peak load to a summer peak load because of air conditioning. So the balancing of the system's full capacity at peak demand is a significant problem because the increased consumption—I guess some would equate that to being our standard of living, more air conditioners etc—is going to cause the demand for energy to increase. So we have to increase the supply of electricity. Mr

Gilchrist is leading a number of initiatives, basically around the framework of building more generation, but more specifically looking at conservation and also looking at new forms of green energy.

Another very technical area, and I don't have enough time because of the limited time I was allowed to speak, is the transmission congestion. That's something not well understood, but in fact the generating capacity in certain areas of the province can be stranded by the incapacity of the transmission system itself. It is referred to as constraints within the system. So to get the power that's needed in a certain part of the province, you can't get it from a water dam in northern Ontario. You may indeed have to import it from the southern United States. In fact, most of our peak load for the last number of years during hot periods and very cold periods has indeed saved our ass by bringing it in from other jurisdictions. Well, I'm not sure that's appropriate. I withdraw that "ass" part, but I'll say they saved our bacon, so to speak.

I do think it's important to put on the record that the current challenge of both the Bruce and Pickering nuclear plants needs to be solved. When you look at our overall base load and where it comes from, you'll see more clearly the issue that I speak of. I want to put that on the record. That's why I'm going quickly here. Our base load is basically made up of nuclear, which is about 32%; coal, about 27%; oil and gas, about 13%; hydroelectric is about 27%—that's from the water dams—and miscellaneous about 0.28%. Clearly we have to increase the generation. In fact, when the nuclear equation happened, with Bruce being partially available and being an unplanned outage and Pickering not being up, obviously we had a supply generating problem. Now, was that real or was that manipulated, or as someone would say, gaming the market? There are other people looking at that, but it certainly is a question we should all be interested in.

Our demand, looking forward, is going to increase from 27,000 megawatts of power to 37,000, and I can show you there is a considerable amount of work by Mr Gilchrist and others to increase that 10,000 additional megawatts by a number of projects that are either on paper or in the ground. I'm confident that we've identified the problem, but more importantly we've put consumers first. They have confidence in stability of price at 4.3 cents per kilowatt. This government is the government to go forward and address the deficiencies of the last decade. I say all three governments have had a part in that. It's this government that's made a difference by taking action. This bill will address that.

Mr Mike Colle (Eglinton-Lawrence): It's a great opportunity to rise in the House and speak to Bill 210 about a very critical and important subject to all Ontarians, and that is the price of electricity and the price of their hydro bill. As you know, it certainly has been on everybody's mind over the last—I guess it's almost been a year now that it's been non-stop. Really, through all this, one of the things that is very apparent is that when I talk to people at the grocery store, the thing they keep asking me is, "What is the government going to do

next?" "Frankly," I tell them, "I don't know what they are going to do next."

They ask me whether the freeze is a good thing. They ask me, "Do we have enough power if the weather gets cold, or if it gets hot again?" "Frankly," I tell them again, "I don't think the government knows whether we are going to have enough power." I don't think the government knows what is really going to happen to the generation of power, nor to the price of their bills. Certainly there is a cap here, but a lot of people are saying, "Oh yes, after the election the cap will be gone or they'll have some other loophole to get at us again." They've just lost total faith in really, I think, a pillar of Ontario, and that is Ontario Hydro. People thought this was one of the real hallmarks of this province, our hydro, that we could depend on power and depend on it being there for us. But I think what's happened over the machinations of the last year is that people have lost faith in hydro and the government's ability to manage it.

1740

The thing that really struck me was that earlier on we had a court ruling that the government of Ontario had no right to sell Hydro One. We were all told that we're lawmakers in this Legislature, yet this government said, "We don't care what the court said. We're going to pass a law to overrule the courts." And they did that. They're still asking all other Ontarians to obey the courts, to obey judges. This government says, "We don't care what the judges said. We make up our own laws and we don't like that law, so we're going to go ahead, overrule the court, and sell Hydro One."

Today in the House the MPP for Scarborough-Agincourt asked the Minister of Finance again whether they were hell-bent on selling off the other 49% of Hydro One, and the minister indicated that they were proceeding to do that. That is most disturbing in light of the fact that the government really doesn't have a game plan in terms of what they're doing with hydro, yet they're still going to sell off the other 49% of Hydro One. It's especially galling to the people of Ontario that they're proceeding to do this when they've seen the fiasco created by these same ministers, Premier Eves included, when they basically gave away a public asset called Highway 407.

They gave it away to some Spanish-Quebec consortium. Through these years, the value of that 407 highway has almost quadrupled. But that increased value doesn't go back to the Ontario taxpayer; it goes to this offshore Spanish consortium with SNC-Lavalin in Quebec. And then to add more venom to people's kitchen table, if you ever talk to people who ride the 407, they pay the highest toll rates in North America when they ride this highway that they built with their tax dollars. In the history of what happened to 407 and the gouging of the public that continues in southern Ontario, they are now going to proceed, and it's basically the same characters on the government side. They have already set up the fire sale for 49% of Hydro One. If you think the people of Ontario have any kind of confidence that this government is doing the right thing in selling off the rest of Hydro One,

I tell you it's clear—I'm sure in all our ridings, if you did a poll and asked the people in your riding whether they think that Premier Eves should continue on his plan to sell off the rest of Hydro One, they would tell you no. Is there anybody out there who thinks we should sell off, especially in this time of uncertainty when we don't even know whether we're going to have enough power at times, whether we should proceed with the fire sale of Hydro One?

This government doesn't listen to anybody. They proceed to do whatever they think is best, for whom I don't know, but they're hell-bent on selling off Hydro One, no matter what the court said. Never mind what the opposition says and never mind what their constituents are saying. The constituents on both sides of the House are saying, "Don't sell off the other 49%." They're still going to sell it. They're not listening to their constituents or the courts.

In this legislation there is more uncertainty because there are so many giant questions left unanswered. The future of generation: what's happening at Pickering? What's happening at Bruce? There's British Energy, near bankruptcy, having to be bailed out. There are so many huge, unanswered, troubling questions. It's like a black cloud over the province of Ontario because this government, as usual, is so reckless. They don't listen to people. They make decisions in some kind of convoluted way.

It's the unnamed, faceless backroom consultants. That's what they probably did. We know they were paying consultants. The Provincial Auditor said today that they were paying some consultants \$2,800 a day. I wonder how many consultants they brought in on this hydro mess and what they paid them. Maybe you should ask those consultants on the hydro mess to give us their money back. They certainly didn't give them the right information, because they had to redo things. Is this the fourth, fifth or sixth hydro bill we've had before us? You lose count.

I wonder how many thousands of dollars a day the hydro consultants got paid when they advised the energy minister, the Premier and the finance minister. It must have been a consultants' holiday around here at Queen's Park. Every consultant probably looks down at Queen's Park and says, "Hey, there's my pension plan." Every time they see Ernie Eves, the consultants smile. "Boy, what kind of contract am I going to get today?" That's who is making the decision on Hydro One or on these bills. It's not the legislators, the lawmakers. I'm sure it's these highly paid Tory consultants who get these blank cheques to live off the government trough. You can't ask them questions. They're nameless, faceless people. Thank God we've got a Provincial Auditor who at least has the independence to challenge the hiring of all these consultants.

As you know, we had this fiasco with Andersen Consulting spending hundreds of millions of dollars with the minister of community and social services. Now they've changed their name to some other name. I don't know what it is. They're still ripping off the taxpayer; Ander-

sen is ripping off another \$300 million from the taxpayers. These are the people making up our policies that we're supposed to try and somehow explain to our constituents. They hired some guy to come in here the other day. He's going to write the hydro bill. They're paying another guy, Sal Badali, a consultant from Deloitte and Touche or wherever he's from. He's coming in.

I don't know what the energy minister is doing for his salary. Let the energy minister, who couldn't even understand the hydro bill and has probably never paid a hydro bill in his life, write the hydro bill. They've got to bring in somebody from Bay Street to write a hydro bill so that people in small-town Ontario who will have to read this thing, or people in my neighbourhood who will have to try and read a consultant's makeup of a hydro bill—this is how the government works. If they've got a problem, hire 10 consultants. Pay them 2,000 or 3,000 bucks a day. Whatever they ask for, these consultants get. It would be interesting to know how many hundreds of millions of dollars this government has paid on consultants.

Mr Gilchrist: You guys spent it on researchers.

Mr Colle: I saw the member for Scarborough East today. He's supporting the consultants because they're his friends. He says, "How dare you attack consultants?" They're the friends of the government. The consultants are untouchable. "The Provincial Auditor is wrong," you heard them say today—Minister Tsubouchi over there. The Provincial Auditor is wrong. They're right. The consultants know all. They know best, and that's how this government makes its policies. It's not by listening to people or to the courts. It listens to these hired guns, these consultants who get paid—what did the auditor say?—\$2,800 a day.

What does that consultant do for \$2,800 a day? They will never tell us who the consultants were on the hydro mess. They will never tell us how many hundreds of thousands of taxpayers' dollars they gave to these consultants whom they refuse to name. They're still the mystery consultants who should give their money back for the mess they've created in this province.

This is hydro by consultants. It's hydro policy by \$2,000- and \$3,000-a-day consultants. That's not the way to write legislation

The Deputy Speaker: The time for debate has ended.

Mr Stockwell has moved government notice of motion number 81. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, 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 1750 to 1800.

The Deputy Speaker: All those in favour will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Arnott, Ted	Hardeman, Ernie	O'Toole, John
Baird, John R.	Hastings, John	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Beaubien, Marcel	Hodgson, Chris	Runciman, Robert W.
Chudleigh, Ted	Jackson, Cameron	Sampson, Rob
Clark, Brad	Kells, Morley	Spina, Joseph
Coburn, Brian	Klees, Frank	Sterling, Norman W.
Cunningham, Dianne	Marland, Margaret	Stewart, R. Gary
DeFaria, Carl	Martiniuk, Gerry	Stockwell, Chris
Dunlop, Garfield	Maves, Bart	Tsubouchi, David H.
Ecker, Janet	Mazzilli, Frank	Turnbull, David
Elliott, Brenda	McDonald, AL	Wettlaufer, Wayne
Galt, Doug	Miller, Norm	Wilson, Jim
Gilchrist, Steve	Molinari, Tina R.	Wood, Bob
Gill, Raminder	Munro, Julia	Young, David
Guzzo, Garry J.	Mushinski, Marilyn	

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Agostino, Dominic	Curling, Alvin	McGuinty, Dalton
Bartolucci, Rick	Dombrowsky, Leona	McLeod, Lyn
Bountroggianni, Marie	Duncan, Dwight	McMeekin, Ted
Boyer, Claudette	Gerretsen, John	Patten, Richard
Bradley, James J.	Hampton, Howard	Peters, Steve
Brown, Michael A.	Hoy, Pat	Phillips, Gerry
Caplan, David	Kormos, Peter	Prue, Michael
Christopherson, David	Kwinter, Monte	Pupatello, Sandra
Cleary, John C.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Ramsay, David
Colle, Mike	Levac, David	Ruprecht, Tony
Conway, Sean G.	Marchese, Rosario	Sergio, Mario
Cordiano, Joseph	Martel, Shelley	Smitherman, George
Crozier, Bruce	Martin, Tony	

Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers): The ayes are 44; the nays are 38.

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

It being past 6 o'clock, this House stands adjourned until 6:45.

The House adjourned at 1803.

Evening meeting reported in volume B.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon / L'hon James K. Bartleman
Speaker / Président: Hon / L'hon Gary Carr
Clerk / Greffier: Claude L. DesRosiers
Deputy Clerk / sous-greffière: 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)	Haliburton-Victoria-Brock	Hodgson, Hon / L'hon Chris (PC) Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Ancaster-Dundas- Flamborough-Aldershot	McMeekin, Ted (L)	Halton	Chudleigh, Ted (PC)
Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford	Tascona, Joseph N. (PC)	Hamilton East / -Est	Agostino, Dominic (L)
Beaches-East York	Prue, Michael (ND)	Hamilton Mountain	Bountrogianni, Marie (L)
Bramalea-Gore-Malton- Springdale	Gill, Raminder (PC)	Hamilton West / -Ouest	Christopherson, David (ND)
Brampton Centre / -Centre	Spina, Joseph (PC)	Hastings-Frontenac- Lennox and Addington	Dombrowsky, Leona (L)
Brampton West-Mississauga / Brampton-Ouest-Mississauga	Clement, Hon / L'hon Tony (PC) Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée	Huron-Bruce	Johns, Hon / L'hon Helen (PC) Minister of Agriculture and Food / ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation
Brant	Levac, Dave (L)	Kenora-Rainy River	Hampton, Howard (ND) Leader of the New Democratic Party / chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound	Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	Gerretsen, John (L)
Burlington	Jackson, Cameron (PC)	Kitchener Centre / -Centre	Wettlaufer, Wayne (PC)
Cambridge	Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Kitchener-Waterloo	Witmer, Hon / L'hon Elizabeth (PC) Deputy Premier, Minister of Education / vice-première ministre, ministre de l'Éducation
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 Transportation / ministre des Transports
Don Valley East / -Est	Caplan, David (L)	Leeds-Grenville	Runciman, Hon / L'hon Robert W. (PC) Minister of Public Safety and Security / ministre de la Sécurité et de la Sécurité publique
Don Valley West / -Ouest	Turnbull, Hon / L'hon David (PC) Associate Minister of Enterprise, Opportunity and Innovation / ministre associé de l'Entreprise, des Débouchés et de l'Innovation	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Cunningham, Hon / L'hon Dianne (PC) Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, minister responsible for women's issues / ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités, ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Dufferin-Peel- Wellington-Grey	Eves, Hon / L'hon Ernie (PC) Premier and President of the Executive Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / premier ministre et président du Conseil exécutif, ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales	London West / -Ouest	Wood, Bob (PC)
Durham	O'Toole, John R. (PC)	London-Fanshawe	Mazzilli, Frank (PC)
Eglinton-Lawrence	Colle, Mike (L)	Markham	Tsubouchi, Hon / L'hon David H. (PC) Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet, Minister of Culture / président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement, ministre de la Culture
Elgin-Middlesex-London	Peters, Steve (L)	Mississauga Centre / -Centre	Sampson, Rob (PC)
Erie-Lincoln	Hudak, Hon / L'hon Tim (PC) Minister of Consumer and Business Services / ministre des Services aux consommateurs et aux entreprises	Mississauga East / -Est	DeFaria, Hon / L'hon Carl (PC) Minister of Citizenship, minister responsible for seniors / ministre des Affaires civiques, ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées
Essex	Crozier, Bruce (L)	Mississauga South / -Sud	Marland, Margaret (PC)
Etobicoke Centre / -Centre	Stockwell, Hon / L'hon Chris (PC) Minister of the Environment, government House leader / ministre de l'Environnement, leader parlementaire du gouvernement	Mississauga West / -Ouest	Snobelen, John (PC)
Etobicoke North / -Nord	Hastings, John (PC)		
Etobicoke-Lakeshore	Kells, Morley (PC)		
Glengarry-Prescott-Russell	Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L)		
Guelph-Wellington	Elliott, Hon / L'hon Brenda (PC) Minister of Community, Family and Children's Services / ministre des Services à la collectivité, à la famille et à l'enfance		
Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant	Barrett, Toby (PC)		

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 Energy, Minister responsible for francophone affairs, deputy House leader / ministre de l'Énergie, ministre délégué aux Affaires francophones, leader parlementaire adjoint	Scarborough Southwest / -Sud-Ouest	Newman, Hon / L'hon Dan (PC) Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / ministre associé de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
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	McDonald, AL (PC)	Simcoe-Grey	Wilson, Hon / L'hon Jim (PC) Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Northumberland	Galt, Hon / L'hon Doug (PC) Minister without Portfolio, chief government whip / Ministre sans portefeuille, whip en chef du gouvernement	St Catharines	Bradley, James J. (L)
Oak Ridges	Klees, Hon / L'hon Frank (PC) Minister of Tourism and Recreation / ministre du Tourisme et des Loisirs	St Paul's	Bryant, Michael (L)
Oakville	Carr, Hon / L'hon Gary (PC) Speaker / Président	Stoney Creek	Clark, Hon / L'hon Brad (PC) Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail
Oshawa	Ouellette, Hon / L'hon Jerry J. (PC) Minister of Natural Resources / ministre des Richesses naturelles	Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh	Cleary, John C. (L)
Ottawa Centre / -Centre	Patten, Richard (L)	Sudbury	Bartolucci, Rick (L)
Ottawa-Orléans	Coburn, Hon / L'hon Brian (PC) Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre associé des Affaires municipales et du Logement	Thornhill	Molinari, Hon / L'hon Tina R. (PC) Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre associée des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Ottawa South / -Sud	McGuinty, Dalton (L) Leader of the Opposition / chef de l'opposition	Thunder Bay-Atikokan	McLeod, Lyn (L)
Ottawa West-Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest-Nepean	Guzzo, Garry J. (PC)	Thunder Bay-Superior North / -Nord	Gravelle, Michael (L)
Ottawa-Vanier	Boyer, Claudette (Ind)	Timiskaming-Cochrane	Ramsay, David (L)
Oxford	Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Timmins-James Bay / Timmins-Baie James	Bisson, Gilles (ND)
Parkdale-High Park	Kennedy, Gerard (L)	Toronto Centre-Rosedale / Toronto-Centre-Rosedale	Smitherman, George (L)
Parry Sound-Muskoka	Miller, Norm (PC)	Toronto-Danforth	Churley, Marilyn (ND)
Perth-Middlesex	Johnson, Bert (PC)	Trinity-Spadina	Marchese, Rosario (ND)
Peterborough	Stewart, R. Gary (PC)	Vaughan-King-Aurora	Sorbara, Greg (L)
Pickering-Ajax-Uxbridge	Ecker, Hon / L'hon Janet (PC) Minister of Finance / ministre des Finances	Waterloo-Wellington	Arnott, Ted (PC)
Prince Edward-Hastings	Parsons, Ernie (L)	Whitby-Ajax	Flaherty, Hon / L'hon Jim (PC) Minister of Enterprise, Opportunity and Innovation / ministre de l'Entreprise, des Débouchés et de l'Innovation
Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke	Conway, Sean G. (L)	Willowdale	Young, Hon / L'hon David (PC) Attorney General, minister responsible for native affairs / procureur général, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones
Sarnia-Lambton	Di Cocco, Caroline (L)	Windsor West / -Ouest	Pupatello, Sandra (L)
Sault Ste Marie	Martin, Tony (ND)	Windsor-St Clair	Duncan, Dwight (L)
Scarborough Centre / -Centre	Mushinski, Marilyn (PC)	York Centre / -Centre	Kwinter, Monte (L)
Scarborough East / -Est	Gilchrist, Steve (PC)	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.

**STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉS PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Estimates / Budgets des dépenses

Chair / Président: Gerard Kennedy
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Alvin Curling
Gilles Bisson, Ted Chudleigh, Alvin Curling,
Gerard Kennedy, Frank Mazzilli, Norm Miller,
John R. O'Toole, Steve Peters
Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Finance and economic affairs /
Finances et affaires économiques**

Chair / Président: Joseph Spina
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Ted Arnott
Ted Arnott, Marcel Beaubien,
David Christopherson, Monte Kwinter,
John O'Toole, Gerry Phillips,
Rob Sampson, Joseph Spina
Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

General government / Affaires gouvernementales

Chair / Président: Steve Gilchrist
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Norm Miller
Marilyn Churley, Mike Colle,
Garfield Dunlop, Steve Gilchrist, Dave Levac,
Norm Miller, R. Gary Stewart, Wayne Wettlaufer
Clerk / Greffière: Tonia Grannum

Government agencies / Organismes gouvernementaux

Chair / Président: James J. Bradley
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Michael Gravelle
James J. Bradley, Leona Dombrowsky, Michael Gravelle,
Bert Johnson, Tony Martin, Frank Mazzilli,
Wayne Wettlaufer, Bob Wood
Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes

Justice and Social Policy / Justice et affaires sociales

Chair / Présidente: Toby Barrett
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: AL McDonald
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Garry J. Guzzo, Ernie Hardeman,
Peter Kormos, AL McDonald, Lyn McLeod
Clerk / Greffière: Susan Sourial

Legislative Assembly / Assemblée législative

Chair / Présidente: Margaret Marland
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Julia Munro
Caroline Di Cocco, Jean-Marc Lalonde,
Margaret Marland, Bart Maves,
Julia Munro, Marilyn Mushinski,
Michael Prue, Joseph N. Tascona
Clerk / Greffier: Douglas Arnott

Public accounts / Comptes publics

Chair / Président: John Gerretsen
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Bruce Crozier
Bruce Crozier, John Gerretsen,
Steve Gilchrist, Raminder Gill,
John Hastings, Shelley Martel,
AL McDonald, Richard Patten,
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**Regulations and private bills /
Règlements et projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Président: Rosario Marchese
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Garfield Dunlop
Gilles Bisson, Claudette Boyer, Garfield Dunlop,
Raminder Gill, Pat Hoy, Morley Kells, Rosario Marchese, Ted
McMeekin, Bill Murdoch, Wayne Wettlaufer
Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

CONTENTS

Tuesday 3 December 2002

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Labour disputes	
Mr Kormos	3483
2010 Commonwealth Games bid	
Mr Maves.....	3484
Avonmore Fall Harvest Day festival	
Mr Cleary.....	3484
David Grant	
Mr McDonald	3484
International Day of Disabled Persons	
Mr Parsons	3484
Mr Dunlop	3485
Government's record	
Mr Duncan	3485
Mississauga firefighters	
Mrs Marland	3485

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

Standing committee on the Legislative Assembly	
Mrs Marland	3486
Debate adjourned	3486

FIRST READINGS

Audit Amendment Act, 2002, Bill 218, <i>Mr O'Toole</i>	
Mr O'Toole.....	3486
Agreed to	3486

ORAL QUESTIONS

Government consultants	
Mr McGuinty	3487
Mr Tsubouchi	3487, 3489
Mr Hampton	3489
Mrs Elliott.....	3489, 3492
Mrs Dombrowsky	3492
Government's record on law and order	
Mr McGuinty	3488
Mr Runciman.....	3488
Corporate tax	
Mr Hampton	3490
Mrs Ecker	3490, 3494
Mr Phillips	3494
Long-term-care facilities	
Mr McGuinty	3491
Mr Newman	3491, 3493
Ms Martel	3493

Nutrient management

Mr Dunlop.....	3491
Mrs Johns	3491

Ontario disability support program

Mr Johnson.....	3493
Mrs Elliott	3493

Firearms control

Mr Gilchrist.....	3495
Mr Runciman	3495

Hydro One

Mr Phillips.....	3495
Mrs Ecker	3495

Independent health facilities

Mr Maves	3496
Mr Clement	3496

PETITIONS

Long-term care

Mr Bradley	3496
Mr Bartolucci	3499

Highway 69

Mr Bartolucci	3497
---------------------	------

Cruelty to animals

Mrs Papatello	3497
---------------------	------

School bus safety

Mr Hoy	3498
--------------	------

Long-term-care facilities

Mr Cleary	3498
-----------------	------

Competitive electricity market

Mr Dunlop	3498
-----------------	------

Police services

Mrs McLeod.....	3498
-----------------	------

Water extraction

Mrs Dombrowsky.....	3499
---------------------	------

Highway 407

Mr Bradley	3499
------------------	------

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Time allocation, government notice of motion number 81, *Mr Stockwell*

Mr Stockwell.....	3500
Mr Bartolucci	3500
Mr Gerretsen	3500, 3515
Mr Levac	3501
Mr Gilchrist.....	3502
Mr Bradley	3505
Mr Christopherson	3506
Mr Galt.....	3512
Mr O'Toole	3517
Mr Colle	3518
Agreed to.....	3520

OTHER BUSINESS

Visitors

Mr McMeekin.....	3486
Mr Christopherson	3486
Mrs Boyer	3486
The Speaker	3490
Mrs Papatello.....	3496

Annual report, Provincial Auditor

The Speaker	3486
-------------------	------

TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Mardi 3 décembre 2002

DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS

Gestion des éléments nutritifs

M. Lalonde.....	3483
-----------------	------

PREMIÈRE LECTURE

Loi de 2002 modifiant la Loi sur la vérification des comptes publics, projet de loi 218, *M. O'Toole*

Adoptée.....	3486
--------------	------

PÉTITIONS

Déréglementation de l'électricité

M. Lalonde.....	3497
-----------------	------

AUTRES TRAVAUX

Visiteuse

M ^{me} Boyer.....	3486
----------------------------	------