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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Tuesday 10 December 2002

Mardi 10 décembre 2002

Speaker
Honourable Gary Carr

Président
L'honorable Gary Carr

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 10 December 2002

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

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The House met at 1845.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

CONCURRENCE IN SUPPLY

Hon Chris Stockwell (Minister of the Environment, Government House Leader): I seek unanimous consent to call orders 7 to 18 inclusive so that they may be moved and debated simultaneously.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Michael A. Brown): Mr Stockwell has asked for unanimous consent to deal with numbers 7 through 18.

Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I'm sorry, but I don't have my Orders and Notices paper. That's the one for concurrence in supply? Thank you.

The Acting Speaker: Agreed? Agreed.

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

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, including supplementaries

Ministry of Education

Ministry of Environment and Energy

Office of the Premier

Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs

Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, including supplementaries

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, including supplementaries

Ministry of Community, Family and Children's Services, including supplementaries

Ministry of Natural Resources

Ministry of Public Safety and Security

Ministry of Tourism and Recreation

Ministry of Enterprise, Opportunity and Innovation.

I propose that the time be split evenly among the three caucuses. I just threw that in.

The Acting Speaker: Mr Stockwell has moved concurrences. Debate?

Mr Bisson: I wish the member for Sault Ste Marie were here because he would have had this spot, but I'm here and I've got the spot.

Interjection.

Mr Bisson: I'm sure he does miss me. We have an opportunity. As the member on the estimates committee, I want to say, first of all, that I'm estimating because I'm

on the estimates committee, so I'm an estimator. Do you follow that?

Anyway, I want to leave a good part of the time to my good colleague and friend Tony Martin who today was working hard on behalf of the people of Sault Ste Marie defending their interests in regard to the Domtar mill. I want to put the government on notice that the move it's making vis-à-vis these changes they're doing to the Crown Forest Sustainability Act I think in the end are really wrong-headed.

Our government, when we were in power from 1990, introduced the Crown Forest Sustainability Act. When we introduced that legislation under Howard Hampton, the then Minister of Natural Resources, it was the intent of the legislation in the way it was drafted and also in the way we talked about it at estimates, and not only at estimates but at that committee and others—it was the idea of the government of the day, of the Honourable Howard Hampton, the then Minister of Natural Resources, that under the crown sustainable forestry development act we would issue forest sustainability licences to a mill and that mill would have the right, by way of the licence, to harvest the timber. It was the full effect of the legislation. What was then put in legislation, under the forest agreement, was any time a mill withdrew from the activity of being able to process wood in a mill, the ministry had to take into consideration the social-economic impact on the local community vis-à-vis the wood in the forest that was tied to the licence.

1850

Until just recently, I would say up until about three or four months ago, if you had a situation where a mill in community X decided it was no longer feasible for them to harvest timber in a particular area and process that wood inside their mill, the way the legislation was written, the licence would revert back to the crown and the crown would then have to open up another RFP process and decide who would be selected through the RFP process to get the rights to that licence to yet again process wood. In that RFP process, they would have to take into consideration the social and economic impact on a local community for what was to happen with that licence.

Let me say what that means in layman's terms. We now have a situation in Kirkland Lake, we have a situation in Sault Ste Marie with Domtar, we have a situation in Sturgeon Falls with Weyerhaeuser, which is the corrugated board mill that's there, where basically the government is allowing those companies to shut down their operations, take the licences that are tied to the

forest and is allowing those companies to divert wood to other mills they own in other communities.

I say that's wrong-headed because what you're going to end up with is a situation where a very few companies will have just a couple of mills to produce the bulk of the wood in northern Ontario from timber to dimensional lumber. Let me look at what it means for our area when it comes to Tembec. It is now the situation that Tembec basically controls all the sawmills except for a couple, from about the Cobalt area all the way up to Hearst. What that company is trying to do, in light of what's happening with the softwood lumber situation, is to say that if they were to shut down a couple of lines, or a couple of plants as it turns out, they would be able, under what the government is allowing them, to move the wood to other mills so that they can increase production in the mills left over and maximize the ability to make money to offset their cost because of the tariff they're having to pay into the United States.

This government is allowing that to happen and I say that's wrong-headed, because if we allow that to happen you're going to end up with communities like Kirkland Lake and others that are going to be left holding the stick. They will have absolutely no ability to get a direct benefit from the forestry activities around their communities.

It is my view, as a New Democrat, and I know in conversations we've had at caucus and the position of my leader, Howard Hampton, that the licences that are issued are tied to the local mills, and if a company decides it doesn't want to cut trees any more, they forfeit that licence, an RFP process starts, and somebody else steps up to the plate to operate that mill or to start up another operation that could benefit by the use of that wood somewhere near the community that's being affected. If we don't do that, we're going to see that Kirkland Lake and Sault Ste Marie, when it comes to Domtar and Tembec, are but the tip of the iceberg.

I say to the government that is wrong. I want to put you on notice that Shelley Martel, Howard Hampton, Tony Martin, and Gilles Bisson and other members of the NDP caucus are not going to stand by and allow this government to change the intent of the sustainable forestry development act and allow communities like Kirkland Lake and Sault Ste Marie to get the shaft while these companies decide they're going to move the lumber off to another community.

If it means, as my good friend Mr Tony Martin says, "Come on, I'll take you on," we're prepared at the NDP caucus to take you on because we believe it's important that somebody advocate for those communities. If the Conservative cabinet ministers such as Mr Ouellette at MNR and Mr Wilson at northern development are not willing to advocate at the cabinet table to defend those communities, I can tell you that we as New Democrats will advocate on their behalf and we will do everything we can to stop the move that's happening.

I think it interesting to note the position the Liberals have taken on this, because I don't think we should allow the Liberals to get off the hook entirely on this. We have

a situation that's happened with Kirkland Lake vis-à-vis the mill up in Kirkland Lake with the closure of the Tembec mill and what's happening with Weyerhaeuser. It's interesting to note that the Liberals on both of those positions are always going to the rallies and saying, "Workers, we're with you. We stand behind you." But when it comes to showing the proof of the pudding of where they're at, they always stop short of taking the necessary position to fix the problem, which is not to allow these companies to take off with the sustainable forestry development licences.

I was at a rally in Kirkland Lake not too long ago and I spoke to the workers at that mill. It was interesting to note that although Mr Ramsay as a local member is trying to do something in order to advance the situation of those workers, he stopped shy of saying that the licence shouldn't be transferred. I think that's wrong. I think Mr Ramsay as a Liberal should recognize that he must represent the community of Kirkland Lake and the workers there. He should take the position, as we do as New Democrats, that the licence is tied to the mill and that the MNR should not be allowed to transfer those trees off that licence to a mill in Cochrane or Timmins. I think that's wrong-headed.

Now, the government and Mr Ramsay hide behind the fact that if the government were to take the position that we advocate, the people harvesting the timbers would be out of work. That's true. Those people who are harvesting the timber would be temporarily put out of work by the decision that we would make as a government not to allow that licence to transfer the wood to Cochrane or Timmins. In the longer run, that would force Tembec to make a decision. I think the decision they would make in the long run would be a better thing for the community of Kirkland Lake. They would either have to decide they were going to keep the operation going, at which point the forestry workers and the sawmill workers would be at work, or they would have to decide to sell off the mill. If they decide it's not profitable for them to hang on to the mill for whatever reason, it would start a process by which somebody would have to look at the purchase of that mill. The workers could organize, as they did in Kapuskasing, Sault Ste Marie and Thunder Bay, to do a worker-ownership buyout if no future employer were to come to the table to purchase the mill, or maybe there are others who are prepared to take over the mill, as is the case in Kirkland Lake.

I say to the Liberals, it's really interesting that you take a position where you say you support workers, but when it comes to showing your mettle or, quite frankly, that you're prepared to do what it takes to defend the workers, it's basically a speech with no substance in it.

I was at the Weyerhaeuser mill on Friday for the announced closure, what's happening with the mill, and there it's a bit of the same situation. Weyerhaeuser, which has operated that mill for a number of years, has decided it's going to close up shop, shut down the mill and basically put 230 people out of work in the community of Sturgeon Falls. As a result, that community is going to be hard done by. Those workers are going to be

displaced, and how they rebuild their lives after such a closure is difficult. I've seen that in various communities around the north and how problematic it is.

Anyway, we took a position and I brought the message of my leader, Howard Hampton, to Sturgeon Falls when I was at the rally on Friday, and I thought it was rather interesting again to watch both the federal Liberal and the provincial Liberal take their positions. Mr Serré, who is a Liberal who sits in the government of Ottawa, said, "Workers, I'm with you. I will fight for you all the way." He said all kinds of nasty things about Weyerhaeuser, but when it came to saying what his government, the federal Liberal government in Ottawa, is prepared to do to really stand up and protect the workers, he said nothing. It was platitudes. It was, "I stand with the workers and I'm here with you today."

Well, where does that bring you? How do you buy a cup of coffee with that? Basically, they are the federal government and there are certain things they can be doing in order to try to get Weyerhaeuser to deal with some of the issues that CEP has been trying to get the employer to deal with.

For example, Weyerhaeuser has taken a position originally, as of Friday, that they would not allow anybody else to buy that mill. They wouldn't sell it and be in competition with the new owner of that mill. If I had been the federal member from Ottawa in the government, I would have gone there and said, "You can count on the federal government to take a look at the whole issue of what this means in regards to the Competition Act federally, and I will do everything I can in my power as a government member in Ottawa to make sure this company does something that's positive for the workers." All the message you got from the federal member, Mr Serré, was, "I'm here. I'm with you. I stand behind you. And by the way, once you're all unemployed, you'll get extra money in order to do skills training." Well, tell that to the worker who has been in a mill for 30 years. It's not very welcome.

When Mr Ramsay stood up to speak, his speech was even shorter. It was, "I'm here. I'm with you. I stand behind you and I'll fight all the way."

It took a New Democrat—myself, Gilles Bisson—to go there on behalf of my leader, Howard Hampton, and say, "Here's what you do: we have the control of the water rights on the dam that is tied to the Weyerhaeuser mill. We, as a party, take a position through our leader, Howard Hampton, that the Ministry of Natural Resources should cancel the water rights on the dam. If Weyerhaeuser wants to close up the operation, it is our view that the licence for the power dam should be cancelled and not be allowed to be in the control of Weyerhaeuser, where they shut off a mill, put 230 people out of work, and then make oodles of money by selling power in an inflated market vis-à-vis the deregulated hydro market in Ontario."

1900

It is interesting to note that when I was there and made that comment, the people there—I wasn't surprised the

workers were really onside—some of the business people who were there at the rally as well said, "Gilles, it's interesting that it's a New Democrat that comes and puts a solution on the table which would give the community some real bargaining power in order to force Weyerhaeuser to sell that mill and allow somebody to come out and buy it." The media reported widely across northern Ontario the comments I made on behalf of my leader, Howard Hampton. As a result—surprise, surprise—we find out today by way of a press release that Weyerhaeuser is going to entertain the idea of being able to discuss the sale of the mill to someone else.

So I say, "Victory for the New Democrats." It took New Democrats going to Sturgeon Falls and saying—because the Liberals wouldn't do it—that we're prepared to use the levers of government, if we were there, or to force this government, if they're willing, to stop the water rights, to put some pressure on Weyerhaeuser so that they, at the end of the day, are forced to sit down with the workers and the community to try to find a solution. It is interesting to note that there has been some movement, so I have to think the government must have been listening to what my leader was saying through me. The government maybe had a bit of a change of heart; I don't know. I have to hope that's the case.

Weyerhaeuser all of a sudden said, "Whoa, we don't want to get into that one." So, yes, we're prepared to sit down with the workers and the community to sell the Weyerhaeuser mill to a new owner and we will facilitate that process if you can find one. It is interesting to note that there is a potential investor in the United States who is prepared to take a look at the Weyerhaeuser mill. Let's hope that comes to a successful conclusion of negotiations and we're able to save all of those jobs in Sturgeon Falls.

But I make the point that it wouldn't have happened if New Democrats weren't there. It took New Democrats in all of those instances—Kirkland Lake, Sturgeon Falls, Sault Ste Marie—to be there and to say things that are bold and to say to some of these companies, "Listen, it's not a question of being anti-corporation; it's a question of saying that you have to balance off the needs of the corporation with the needs of the local economy." If it means that to protect those jobs in Kirkland Lake, Sturgeon Falls or Sault Ste Marie it takes a government saying, "We're not going to transfer water rights and allow Weyerhaeuser to leave with the water rights on that dam once they pull out," or cancelling the licences of both Tembec and Domtar on those mills that they want to close down in Kirkland Lake and Sault Ste Marie, so be it, if that's what it takes to get these companies to do the right thing.

Now, I understand why Tembec is doing it. I feel a little bit odd, because I have a lot of good friends in the management group at Tembec—people like Pierre Corbeil, Martin Michauld and Frank and others whom I know quite well, I know are quite upset at the position I am taking. They are very upset that as a local member in the area I'm taking the position that Tembec should not be allowed to transfer the wood off the Kirkland Lake

licence to Cochrane and Timmins. I understand that they are mad at me, but I think they understand where I am coming from. They say, “Gilles, we don’t like it. Gilles, we think you are wrong, but we know which side of the debate you’re falling on. You’re falling on the side of the communities and the workers.”

I can tell you, any time that you have a New Democrat representing you, you’ll know that we will do what is right in our hearts when it comes to protecting workers and protecting local communities. I think the record speaks volumes. The record is: when it came to Kapuskasing and other communities that were down—I was waiting for that note—basically that we would do so. So, I look forward to the comments of both my good friend Mr Martin and Mr Christopherson, who want to speak on that, and I look forward to the rest of this debate.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr Steve Gilchrist (Scarborough East): On point of order, Mr Speaker: I would just like to draw to the attention of the members here today that we are joined in the visitors’ gallery by three individuals. We have Angela Sciberras, Brad Rogers and, of particular note, we have a daughter of a former Premier of Ontario, the honourable Bill Davis. Meg Davis is joining us here today for the first time as an adult back in the chamber. Welcome, all, to the Legislature.

The Acting Speaker: Of course, it is not a point of order, but we welcome you. Further debate?

Mr Gerry Martiniuk (Cambridge): I’m pleased to speak on concurrences this evening. If I could, for just a couple of minutes—I’m sharing my time with the member for Nipissing and the whip for our party. If I may deal with the Ministry of the Environment 2003 operating budget, there has been a substantial percentage increase during that period over last year’s budget of 12.9%. Remarkably, since the year 2000, staffing at the Ministry of the Environment has been increased by over 350 positions. That represents an increase in staffing of 23.6%. Then on June 17 of this year, this government committed to invest \$500 million in the next two years to implement and enforce safe drinking water initiatives. This year alone the government will provide \$245 million toward ensuring safe drinking water.

Mrs Sandra Pupatello (Windsor West): I’m very happy to participate in the debate tonight, despite this cold. I hope you’ll indulge me.

I wanted to speak about health matters, as I usually do, and in particular how they affect the riding of Windsor West and all of Ontario, which is undergoing tremendous change in the health field, and our constant disappointment at watching the number of announcements that we’ve seen, especially in this session, but when we actually look to the action plan, we’re always left wanting. There are more and more examples of this every day.

It’s certainly no different now than when we started in 1995, to be continually disappointed. But what began as this wonderful manna from heaven come down in the name of a restructuring commission that was going to go across Ontario and change the way we deliver health

care—almost eight years later we are looking at the debacle of the Health Services Restructuring Commission’s implementation plans for Ontario; namely in the area of 75% of our hospitals suffering significant debt, and that being used as an excuse, when up to 19 of our hospitals are waiting desperately for MRIs and CT scans only to be told, “No, you need to take care of your fiscal situations before you would ever get approvals.”

In the meantime, the government, in their latest scheme, decided to announce private MRIs and CTs, put out a request for proposals for that and we get a list of some 250 pages of rules on how these private companies can come forward that will create—as they did in Alberta, which this government is using as the model—two-tier health care in Ontario, to create an opportunity for people who can afford to move ahead in the system to jump the queue. If they don’t jump the queue in that diagnostic setting, they manage to get in the side door to get that diagnostic test. As soon as that diagnostic test indicates that intervention by the health system is required, guess what? They move to the front of the line for their services to determine and to do something about their problem as well. So it’s queue-jumping right through the entire system.

But tonight I wanted to specifically publicly extend an invitation to the environment minister to come to the riding of Windsor West. We have asked the minister personally. We’ve put a letter of invitation in writing. We’re told now that this minister will not come to Windsor West. Why would a Liberal MPP invite the Conservative Minister of the Environment to Windsor West, in particular to Sandwich Street, which is in the west end of the riding? There is a home there. It’s an area that is the oldest, most populated town in Ontario, known as Sandwich Towne. In this area, there is a home that is near a factory that put in a new machine. When they put this machine in the factory, they probably didn’t dig a ditch that was deep enough to fit the machine into this factory, and every time they run the machine, a number of houses in the area shake.

A lot of people know that they live in an industrialized area, that they’re going to have various issues because it’s in their neighbourhood. But we got a call from this particular family who had gone up and down and every which way to work with the environment ministry to say, “Look, somebody has to help us here because our house is shaking.”

Let me tell you that this problem has been going on for years. By the time they called our office and we started investigating and looking at the paper trail here, we see that the family has done everything right, everything they were told to do, following all of the paths that were to be taken, working with the environment ministry staff to do the right kinds of tests. All of that was done, and if you can imagine, the ministry people came back to tell this family there’s nothing wrong, that there are no limits that are being exceeded here on these various tests.

1910

Well, it’s hard to believe. So off I went to this home—a wonderful family on Sandwich Street. I went into the

home, and we had to be sure that it was a time that there was a shift when the factory was actually running the machines. We went up, we took a glass of water and we sat it on the desk. We sat it where the family typically has the computer running and where they'll be doing work. You could watch the water moving in the glass. Imagine what the home or the foundation might be like after several months even, never mind years, of a factory shaking the houses in the neighbourhood. It's pretty hard to imagine.

So I came back to the minister here and I said, "You know, Stockwell, you just couldn't imagine that people are living in this environment and that there's nothing that we can do about it. Could you please just go back to your officials and ask them to do a complete review, independent staff other than those that have been working with his family continually? Put a fresh pair of eyes on this file and see what you can do, because this can't possibly be OK. It can't possibly be OK to have a neighbouring industry create this kind of friction, literally, in the neighbourhood, and no one can do anything about it."

Today, we hear again that the minister doesn't want to come and visit the house. They've done some kind of cursory review, and everything is just fine. You know what? I think that's terrible. I think that's irresponsible. I think it's responsible for Stockwell to stand up and say—look, if you're so confident about the work that your officials did, you shouldn't have a problem coming to see the condition these people have to work in; people who work hard for a living. They pay their taxes. They've done everything the right way, and we can't get anybody to turn around and say, "You know what? There's something about this system that's not fair."

I'm embarrassed that the minister doesn't want to come to Windsor. Now that he's here maybe he'll stand up for two minutes and tell us why he doesn't want to come. I have begged, and I want the people who live on Sandwich Street to know that I am prepared to beg to have the minister come to Windsor. I'm not embarrassed to beg, because I think it's important that if the Ministry of the Environment officials are confident about the work they've done on this file, they won't mind coming and proving it to me.

If I hadn't watched the water literally shaking in the glass—the people in this home have filled the house with various gadgets to stop things from moving. The china cabinet that sits in the dining room, where the glass panes are literally parallel with each other, they've got it jammed with cardboard so that the glass won't continually shake for the entire shift that the factory is running this machine.

You have to ask people. Can it possibly be appropriate that Ministry of the environment officials wouldn't say, "You know what? I think this needs another view. I think this needs a fresh pair of eyes on this file." I think it's totally appropriate that the environment minister would want to do this for this family that has paid taxes for a long time. If this doesn't work in terms of public embar-

assment, maybe you have too much work to do, Stockwell. Maybe you have too many things on your plate that you can't bother with an essential part of your portfolio in the Ministry of the Environment. Maybe the House leader duties are just getting a little bit too much for you and you might have to give a little bit up.

The reality is that you're trying to get us out of the House by December 12—every year we're here practically until Christmas Day—so you get a bonus several days here. I'm asking you, the hour it takes to fly to Windsor, the half hour it takes from the airport to drive to Sandwich Street, probably one hour to go through this; we'll pick a time when the factory is actually running a shift. You can be back on an airplane in a two-hour period. Then you can talk to your Ministry of the Environment officials and say, "You know what? I went to the house on Sandwich Street. The water is shaking in the glass. This can't be appropriate that our ministry can't do anything for this family. I think it's totally inappropriate that you would respond in this manner."

I could go on about health care, and I know I'll have an opportunity to do so, but I hope this minister is completely embarrassed. And yet again I will end by saying that I extend a personal invitation to this minister to visit this home with me on Sandwich Street.

Hon Mr Stockwell: What I want to say to the member opposite, whom I know to be a very honourable member who works very diligently—

The Acting Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Stockwell: Damn, I moved it. I can't speak.

The Acting Speaker: You're out of order. Further debate?

Hon Mr Stockwell: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: May I seek unanimous consent to speak briefly to this again?

The Acting Speaker: The minister has asked for unanimous consent.

Mrs Papatello: On this issue.

The Acting Speaker: On this issue. Agreed.

Hon Mr Stockwell: I know the member opposite to be a very honourable member and I certainly would not, in any way, shape or form, suggest for a moment that her dramatization of the issue is incorrect. All I can suggest to you is that the member brought this to my attention—and I appreciate that—a week or so ago, maybe a little longer—OK, a couple of weeks ago. I'm not going to debate—

Mrs Papatello: It has been four weeks.

Hon Mr Stockwell: OK, four weeks ago. I'm not going to debate the time period. I requested the ministry staff to forward me all documentation. The ministry staff forwarded me all documentation. There were three tests done in the house, and they all passed the minimum requirements with respect to shaking. I think odour was another one, and there was a third one. You may help me recollect.

At that point in time, the member came to me and said, "It's terrible. You should probably send someone else in," and I said to the member opposite, "I will give

you my undertaking to send someone else in.” I thought someone else had gone in and done the test, but apparently not.

I promise you that I will go back to the ministry first thing in the morning and I will insist that a different person go out to Sandwich Street, a different person inspect the site and a different person determine whether or not it contravenes any legislation or acts that I have control of. If it shakes too much and contravenes it, I give you my undertaking that I will be on it like white on rice to ensure that that is in fact looked after; if it’s not and if it doesn’t meet those standards, I’ll report back to you.

There is very little I can do out there. I’m not an expert on shaking houses. I know of no poltergeist special process to get houses to stop shaking. I’m not suggesting for a moment that this person doesn’t have a legitimate complaint, but I guarantee you—an absolute undertaking as I stand before you today and swear to my mother in Bowmanville—that I will get so much more staff out there to inspect this house that you will be sick of the Ministry of the Environment around this house by the time this is done.

Mrs Papatello: Before Christmas?

Hon Mr Stockwell: I’m busy before Christmas, to go myself, but I guarantee you they will be there before Christmas—guaranteed.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr Tony Martin (Sault Ste Marie): That was a commitment cast in stone that I heard here just a few minutes ago. It’s done.

Interjection.

Mr Martin: I know you are.

I appreciate the opportunity this evening to put a few thoughts on the record. We’re speaking to a process here called concurrence, where we agree as a government, as members of all three parties in the Legislature, to pay the bills that government needs to pay to do its business, to cover the cost of—and the member from Renfrew is here to speak on concurrence too, I would guess.

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke): No, I’m just here to welcome you back.

Mr Martin: Thank you very much. Yes, I got unceremoniously, or ceremoniously, removed from here this afternoon.

Mr Conway: It’s like Dag Hammarskjold getting a penalty.

Mr Martin: Thank you. Dag Hammarskjold getting a penalty? Not bad.

Interjection: You’re moving up in the world. You’re doing pretty good.

Mr Martin: It gets me set for my speech.

This is a unique opportunity in this place to speak on some things that members feel personally concerned about or interested in in terms of how we deliver government services, what government should be about and what it is that we as a society should be about in relation to how we govern each other and how we collect resources and spend those resources.

A colleague of ours in this corner of the Legislature—all nine of us—Mr Romanow, a previous Premier of Saskatchewan, just travelled the country for quite a while doing very intensive research on how we deliver health care in this province. He delivered a report, and in that report he referred to values. He talked about Canadian values.

I’m going to take about 11 or 12 minutes here and then I’m going to turn it over to my colleague from Hamilton West, who will also speak to whatever it is that’s on his mind and in his heart tonight where concurrence is concerned.

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I want to talk just for a few minutes about Canadian values, because it’s something that’s close to my heart. It’s actually one of the reasons that I chose to run for government, to participate in public life in the way that I do, and that I feel Canada, the country that we as a family chose to come to and live in some 42 years ago from Ireland has become such a special place. It is at a point in its history where we now make decisions that will either take us further down that road to developing the kind of Canadian value that I’ll speak to here in a second, or in fact turn over the direction of our country and the life that happens in the communities that populate this country, the ability of citizens to participate, to that which is practised south of the border—our American brothers and sisters, our cousins or whatever.

Certainly we see very clearly, I believe, two approaches to how a country develops and supports itself and works within its constitution to develop its character, its personality and to support and protect one another. In the United States we have, because of its history and where it came from, a very individualistic approach to life, a tremendous dependence on what a person can do for himself and what a person can do in terms of industry and private sector activity, private sector enterprise, commercial activity. We in Canada have tried to find a mix because of, I suppose—and I just go back to my own experience of coming to Canada and learning to live here—the challenges we face this far north in the hemisphere, with geography, with distance, with weather. We decided that we would be better served if we acted out of and into community, if we worked together, if we pooled our resources, if when our neighbour found himself in trouble, we reached out and assisted and, in turn, that favour would be given likewise in time of some challenge and some difficulty.

It’s a way of life, a way of ordering the communities that we live in, a way of doing business that I believe is particularly Canadian. We, as a government, as a people, levy taxes on each other, decided in a democratic fashion, collect those taxes and then spend them on some basic services that we feel should be available and accessible to everybody who calls this province and indeed this country home. We have, over a period of years, decided that there were some fundamental things that needed to be in place. Life has evolved for us as a people. As the population of the provinces has grown, as industry has

grown and as opportunity has grown, and with it the challenges that come with that kind of growth set upon us, we decided that there were some very basic and fundamental things that needed to be in place if we were going to continue to respect the quality of life, the standard of living, the dignity that exists within each community and with each individual, and if we were going to support that, and if in doing that, if we were going to be able to take advantage of further community development that can happen as we travel our journey together.

We decided that, for example, no family or individual should be put into crisis financially because somebody in the family or themselves got sick, and so we brought in a medicare program, first introduced to Saskatchewan by the leader of the New Democratic Party government in that province, some 40 or 50 years ago. Then, from there, because it was such an important thing to do for all of the people of Saskatchewan, he felt it should be done for all of the people in Canada. In partnership and co-operation with the Liberal government of the day and, I believe, leadership given by people like Lester B. Pearson and Pierre Trudeau, we then developed a Canada-wide health care system—we refer to it as medicare—a system that had attached to it some very basic qualities such as universality, accessibility and affordability, and ultimately the provinces across the country bought into this, as did the province of Ontario. We moved very aggressively, and I believe very courageously, to get rid of any premiums that families or individuals might have to pay who weren't fortunate enough to have a benefit package at work that would cover such a cost for access to the medicare system. And so we prided ourselves in being able to provide that service to everybody.

But in the last few years in this country, I believe a right-wing wind has blown in from the United States, driven by the Republican effort there to highlight some of what they see as defining qualities of their society, and to bring them into Canada, that we should be charging people for more services, that we should be turning more services over to delivery by the private sector and that we should be diminishing and moving government out of the way. I suggest that hasn't served us very well. I don't think there's anybody in this place who can honestly say, as they look around at the circumstance that their families and neighbours find themselves in, that we are better off now than we were five or 10 years ago where health care is concerned.

I would suggest that if you looked at education and how it is that we also deliver hydroelectricity in this country and this province, you'd probably be able to make the same arguments, that we're not better served some ways down the road to a regime that would see more private interest involvement in the delivery of those services, to a regime where we would see less government leadership and involvement and investment in those services, and to a regime where government wasn't involved at all to that end. I think we have to really analyze and consider where it is we are now, how it

compares to what it was like five or 10 or 15 years ago, and what it is that we want to leave for our children to come, for future generations.

I suggest to you that if we are being honest and if we are in contact with the people whom we purport to represent here, and we listen to them very carefully and we look at what it is that Roy Romanow has said in his report and the Canadian values that he highlights, we will make some very different decisions and choices as we compare them to the agenda and the decisions and choices that the government across the way have made.

See, the government across the way, the party across the way, and right-wing governments in this country will tell you and try to convince you that we just cannot afford a first-class publicly funded, publicly delivered anything in this province and in this country. I suggest to you that they're dead wrong, that in fact it is in investing in and finding the money to support those public systems that we generate the kind of new resource that is required to enhance and develop further and create exciting opportunity for communities and people across this country.

You know, a lot is made of the fact that from 1990 to 1995, when we were government, we ran up a fairly substantial debt, and we did; I don't deny that for a second.

It was because in those five years, we were living—and anybody who's being honest will agree—in one of the most difficult recessionary periods of our history. We had to make a choice as government whether we were going to simply lay off people in the public sector, which we had the power to do, considering the spinoff effect of that on to the communities where these folks work and live. We had to make a decision whether we were going to cut the services that were in fact more obviously needed in difficult times than in good times, or whether we were going to borrow money to keep those services in place, sit down with our partners in the public service and find unique and different ways to handle matters.

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We chose a way that, yes, initially caused some anxiety and concern even within our own ranks as to where it was we might be going, but we did that with the confidence that this province and this country had an economy that was strong enough to see that through and to have us come to, say in the year 1995, a position then with a renewed economy happening worldwide and, yes, in the United States and Canada, and more revenue coming into our coffers to deal with the debt and the deficit and to continue to make the investments that were required and obviously continue to be required if we are going to have our health care and education system, and if we are going to provide public energy to people, so that we will be able to invest in the kinds of new infrastructure that is obviously needed from time to time in those particular areas.

We had a plan in place, and we took it to the people in 1995. Alas, we weren't successful in convincing them that if we were sent back to Queen's Park to govern,

within a couple of years we would have balanced the budget, we would have begun to pay down the deficit and the debt, and we would still be able to continue to invest in those public services that define so clearly who we are together as a community of people and how we serve each other in Canada.

But what we got, in turn, was a government that believed that government needed to get out of the way, that we needed to turn over public services for delivery by the private sector, that we needed to make sure that red tape and regulations were removed, and that we should be turning over a lot of that very important money that we were getting by the renewed economic activity that was happening out there back to the private sector by way of tax breaks. Alas, we find ourselves in a position where, even this afternoon, we get a report from a gentleman who was contracted by the government to look at the formula that we use to fund education. He says that we're, at the very minimum, short some \$1.7 billion to \$1.8 billion in the system. We, as a party, suggest that this government should take some of the money that they are experiencing now by way of surplus and invest it, at least \$1 billion of it, immediately into the education system before we lose it completely.

I will end my thoughts there this evening and suggest to you and to the folks in the chamber and the folks out there that we really do need to—as we move into the holiday season now, as we move into that time of the year when people of all faiths take time to step back and reflect—reflect on what it means to be Canadian, reflect on those values that Roy Romanow has laid out in his report and reflect on how it is we want our government to act on our behalf.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr AL McDonald (Nipissing): It gives me great pleasure to speak tonight on concurrences. To all of you who are watching at home, really what we are talking about is budget items and estimates. I can tell you that the galleries are overflowing with individuals who are very interested in our topic tonight. I'm surprised. They should really sell admission tickets. We could probably balance our budget even better with all the people who are sitting here watching tonight. It's a pleasure—

Interjection.

Mr McDonald: Shh, it's my turn. It is a pleasure to be here from the great riding of Nipissing and speaking to many of the individuals from my riding regarding things that happen in government and happen in Queen's Park from day to day, it's really interesting to hear what they have to say. In speaking with some of these individuals, one of them who comes to mind is Rick Ferron, a retired principal of Sunset Park Public School, who really spear-headed the Early Years for children program in our area. He has done just a tremendous job for us. It helps young children as they go into the school programs. It has shown that they do better than the students who don't really get exposed to that. He's a great individual in our riding. He lives in the city of North Bay.

I can think of John and Layla Krieg. I believe John is an engineer. I'm not too sure what type of engineering he

does, but I know that he donates a lot of his time to charitable work, to helping kids out and to helping his community out. He's just a great individual.

Ralph Celentano, I believe, is a past distinguished president of the North Bay Kiwanis Club. He always seems to be in the middle of everything that's going on. He's just a great community leader.

When we were losing our Junior A team last year, there was an individual who jumped up and joined in trying to spearhead to keep the team here. His name is Ray Irwin. He was actually part owner of another OHL team, and he was willing to give up that part ownership in the team to buy into the North Bay Centennials to try to keep them here. Unfortunately, as the community of North Bay and area and my riding of Nipissing know, they actually moved to the United States. We were heart-broken that not only did our area lose the team, the Ontario Hockey League lost a team to the United States. We didn't necessarily agree with that.

I can think of friends of mine. Wayne Poeta is a retired police officer who worked with children, worked with youth in trouble, and really took me under his wing as well when I was younger. His family, his kids, John, Bob, Sue, Dwayne and Micheline, are personal friends of mine. I treasure their friendship. I think of Bob Poeta, who is just a young businessman who owns his own backhoe. I know he works night and day to make things happen for him and his family.

There are a couple of councillors I wanted to point out because I know they're really concerned about safe drinking water. I know they campaigned on it and balanced budgets and health care. One of them who comes to mind is Mike Anthony, who is just a young fellow. I believe he's the youngest councillor in the city of North Bay. I don't know if he's the youngest ever, but he's very young. In the first year he was learning the ways of municipal government, and I had the opportunity to work with him. He was one of my colleagues. I can tell you that the people of North Bay are served very well by this individual who really takes his jobs seriously. He reads all the work and makes the best, informed decision that he can with the information that's given to him.

Another councillor who comes to mind actually used to sit right beside me, Councillor Peter Handley. He was a well-known radio announcer. I think his famous line was "A good sport is good for sports." He's kind of well known in our area.

Another councillor I can think of, who was very strong in the financial side of the decision-making, was Councillor Peter Chirico. I know from talking to this councillor that he watches Queen's Park quite a bit when he comes home from work. He's probably watching right now the debate that's going on regarding budget items that I know he's concerned about. All I want to say to Councillor Chirico is, "Get a life." I'm just kidding, by the way. I think he could just get on with his family and go out and enjoy the winter that's up there, because there's a lot of snow and it's pretty cold in our area right now. I say that jokingly, Peter. I know that he watches quite a bit.

We have a very special individual, not just in North Bay and Nipissing, but I believe he's probably an outstanding ambassador to northern Ontario, who just seems to be everywhere, doing everything, lending a hand, raising money for churches and school groups and helping out with festivals. His name is Ted Hargreaves, and we like to call him Mr North Bay. He was like a mentor to me. I followed what he was doing, and he helped me so much when I was joining all these different groups and volunteering. He got me involved in the Heritage Festival, which is just this wonderful festival in our area that draws about 150,000 every August civic weekend. I invite all the members on the other side to come to our area next August and enjoy the Heritage Festival.

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I've also had the opportunity to work with Jack Campbell. Jack Campbell is Ted Hargreaves's partner at BDO Dunwoody. For anybody watching from Nipissing tonight, Jack Campbell is this unbelievable individual. When he starts laughing, you have to laugh with him. He's that type of individual. I just want to say hello to Jack tonight if he's watching.

I'm very proud to be the representative from Nipissing. I think it's important that I share my thoughts on what these individuals do for our area so the whole Legislature and the province of Ontario understand how great an area we really have and how these individuals make our area that much greater to live in. It's just incredible how great Nipissing is, how great North Bay is, Mattawa, Trout Creek, Callander, Powassan. These are all great communities, very caring communities, where if anybody needs a hand, they're the first ones to reach out; if it's to write a cheque to help a family out or if somebody needs shelter or to help the Santa Fund. They're just unbelievable individuals.

I want to speak about another individual. We call him the unofficial mayor of North Bay: Carmine Ricciuti. He owns a tailor shop downtown on Main Street. He's well known. He's a fixture down there. If you walk down the street, he'll be the first one to greet you with a big smile. He plays the accordion. I think on December 20 at Twiggs Coffee Shop, which is just up the street from his shop, there's a fundraiser going on that will raise funds for the Santa Fund, which helps families in need, those less fortunate than us, so that they may have toys for their children, a turkey and some gifts for them. I think that's a great initiative, and I want to invite everyone out. I know Scott Clark and Katherine Murphy do a great job hosting this event in the morning. It lasts a couple of hours. It's live on Easy Rock. It's just a lot of fun. He gets up and does his accordion thing. It's wonderful.

There is a tailor I must say hello to. Vince, I will be in next week to pay my bill. His name is Vince Orlando, and it's Orlando's Men's Wear.

Mr Rob Sampson (Mississauga Centre): Did he do that suit?

Mr McDonald: This is one of his suits. Yes, Mr Sampson, it is one of his suits. He's actually calling me

and saying, "We need to get you some more suits. Please come in." He's quite a salesman.

Mr Gerretsen, I invite you to go over and visit Vince. He's just a tremendous tailor; you too, Mr Bartolucci. If you make that nice trip from Sudbury over to North Bay—it's only about an hour and 20 minutes if you don't speed—I invite you to come over. I'd be happy to share the area with the member from Kingston and the Islands and the member from Sudbury.

Interjection.

Mr McDonald: Tom Mason: I can tell you, Mr Bartolucci, Tom Mason, who plays the bagpipes and has a very thick accent, would be happy to pipe you in all the way into North Bay. We'd be happy to have a reception for you. Maybe take Highway 11 up, Mr Bartolucci, because there's only about 47 kilometres left.

Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands): Four-lane it.

Mr McDonald: We're about seven years away, and hopefully we can speed that up to make it three to four. We're working on that. Infrastructure in northern Ontario is very important not only to economic development and tourism but also to the safety of our residents who have to travel that highway between Toronto and North Bay. The distance seems to be getting shorter as the four lane evolves. I know it's about three hours and 20 minutes now to Toronto, and it's a very nice drive. So I want to invite all those who are watching in southern Ontario, by all means. Take Highway 11 to northern Ontario, and you'll see some incredible scenery.

There's an individual I had the opportunity to co-chair an event with, and her name is Cindi D'Agostino. We did a fundraiser for the Capitol Centre. Culture and the arts are very important to the members of northern Ontario and in my riding of Nipissing. She did an unbelievable job. We developed this play where we had all the community leaders go on stage and they were actors or actresses for a night. It was well-attended. I believe we had about 500 people out. We raised \$30,000 for the Capitol Centre to keep their budget going. It was just an unbelievable night. I had a lot of fun. The credit really goes to Cindi, who did all the work. I was able to stand beside her and take half the credit. I just want to say hello to Cindi and her family. They might be watching tonight as well.

In speaking about that play, it was all about our area, Nipissing. An individual by the name of Patti Fedeli, who is just an incredible playwright, is a resident of Callander. She's married to Vic Fedeli, who everybody in that area knows has done so much in the ABPC. He created this aerospace industry. Patti Fedeli should be in Hollywood. She wrote the play Shotgun and Shadflies. It's a true story about our area, an escaped convict who got away for many years back in 1975 and was finally caught. She did a whole screenplay on it. It was well-attended at the Nipissing Stage Co. She actually wrote the play for Cindi and I, Northern Overexposure, which was really a comedy about ourselves. We had to laugh at ourselves. We made fun of ourselves, and that's what made it very special.

I want to say hello to Marc and his wife, Peggy O'Connor, who live in Callander. They're good friends of mine, and I want to say hello to them. Being down here in Toronto, and we're here till midnight—I just want to say to everyone watching that tonight we're here till midnight. Some of you might go home early, and that's OK. We're happy to serve on this side of the House. We're happy to stay till midnight tonight.

Mrs Marie Bountrogianni (Hamilton Mountain): So am I, although it's my birthday.

Mr McDonald: Yes, that's right. Happy birthday, by the way.

We're happy to stay till midnight because we're serving the people of the province of Ontario, and I'm pleased to represent the area of Nipissing. Midnight is a long night. That makes for a long night. We're in here—I think we start at 7:30 tomorrow morning, but that's OK.

Interjections.

Mr McDonald: They're asking about the Heritage Gardeners now. I can hear them asking. They're saying how beautiful North Bay is and the waterfront.

Interjection.

Mr McDonald: I'm being asked to speed my little speech up. Whip, you're telling me three or four minutes. I have a few more people I want to say hello to, so I hope you'll indulge me for a little while.

Mr Sampson: There's no one left in North Bay to say hello to. You've said hello to everybody.

Mr McDonald: I haven't said hello to everybody yet. Everybody watching in Nipissing is enjoying this, I can tell you. They want to hear more about the people of our area. I'm going to keep talking till the whip or the Speaker turns my mike off.

I started with the Heritage Gardeners, which I heard from across the floor. Two of them are Wanda Wallace and Harriet Madigan, who head this group of volunteers. I think there are about 400 of them. They plant flowers and trees all down along the waterfront. They're all volunteers. You see them all summer long making adjustments.

Mr Whip, I will wind it up as quickly as I can. I have just a few more. I just want to say that we have a very famous person in my riding whom we're very proud of. Her name is Lynn Johnston, who just happens to live down the street from me. She is a famous cartoonist, For Better Or For Worse, as you know. Her husband, Rod, is a dentist by trade and has actually retired so that he can volunteer for the waterfront, to develop it, to make it a great place for the downtown. They are just incredible individuals. We're very lucky to have Rod and Lynn Johnston in our riding.

Out in Mattawa we have Vala Monastine Belter and her husband, Wayne. The spirit out in that small community, which is about 45 minutes east of North Bay—Vala's mom's name is Zena Monastine. I believe she was a Russian world-class ballerina. She taught me, when I met her, that it's not like the French custom where you just kiss on each cheek; you do three.

Interjections.

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Mr McDonald: I can hear the contingent on the other side of the House. Do you still want to hear more? I'd be happy to say a few more names here.

Bob Young, who is the mayor of Powassan, does a great job down in Powassan. It's a farming community, and Bob Young is a great representative for that group.

Hec Levigne is the reeve of Callander. They have just named their town back to Callander. During his campaign he had a button that said, "Give 'em Hec." That was his whole platform. He does a great job.

The Santa Fund is ongoing. I think it was just shy of \$25,000 the last time I called, the other day. So I encourage everyone—all the community groups, schools, churches—to get involved, because there are a lot of families in need. I too will be at Twiggs on December 20 to participate and donate as well.

I want to say a special hello and thank you to my staff. This is Christmastime and I should thank my staff in North Bay for doing a great job: Algisa Lennie, Sharon Norton and Lisa Bangs. They do a wonderful job for me up in Nipissing, and just so that the people of Mattawa know, Lisa Bangs will go over for half a day once a week to service the town of Mattawa.

I have a great assistant here in Toronto at Queen's Park. Her name is Heidi Rogers. She is not actually from Toronto, she is from Erie, and she commutes every once in a while. I can tell you, I'm very lucky to have her as an assistant.

I must say hello to my mom, Judy.

Interjection.

Mr McDonald: That's the only thing to do, right? You have to say hello to your mom, because your mom is very important. And my dad, Ron: he has Algonquin flight school, a small business. He's doing a great job. He is a small business man.

Interjections.

Mr McDonald: We're having some fun. We're here until midnight. Mr Whip, I've just got a couple of more, if you'll bear with me.

I have to say hello to my brother and sister, Dave and Lisa.

I will finish it, Whip. You asked me to fill out an hour and I don't understand why you're compressing my time. I still have 26 minutes, but I'm happy just to finish off.

I just want to say a special hello to two individuals: Sister Nora Murphy, whom the community is going to hear a lot more of, and I'm not going to say anything more than that. She is just spearheading something I think is so wonderful. And somebody I have a lot of respect for—she's a lawyer in town—is Judy Shea.

I hope I didn't leave anybody out. If I did, I apologize. I will twist the whip's arm a little later to see if I can get up and say hello to a few more individuals who are so important.

Mr Speaker, thank you very much for allowing me to say hello to my friends and family in my riding of Nipissing. I just want to say thank you very much. I appreciate being your representative.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr Gerretsen: I concur totally with the member from St Catharines, who in effect is saying that's the best and the most truthful speech we've had from that side of the House in quite some time. So I think the member ought to be congratulated.

I'd like to turn to something a little bit different, though. It really speaks to the unreality of what happens here at Queen's Park from time to time. I always feel that once you leave here and get in touch with the real world, as we do in our ridings, you get this total feeling of unreality that pervades here around Queen's Park, with all the spin-doctoring, and I'll admit there is spin-doctoring on all sides.

Let me just give you one example. You may recall Bill 198 that was passed here the other day. You may recall there were some pension benefits provisions in that bill in which the government basically tried to attack the surpluses that there were in many pensions so that the retired people who should be getting the benefits of those surpluses weren't going to get them. You may recall that we fought in here, both opposition parties and basically Mr Smitherman, the member for Toronto Centre-Rosedale, on our side, that the pension benefits section of Bill 198 should not be passed under any circumstances.

Well, there were a couple of news releases that were issued. Every now and then you get something in this place that really makes you chuckle or laugh out loud. I'll just read this press release. Remember what happened: the opposition pressured the government, in effect, into getting rid of those pension benefits provisions. The first communiqué that went out went something like: "The government confirmed today that the measures in Bill 198 dealing with the pension issues will never be proclaimed, even if the budget bill is passed by the Legislature." I cannot ever remember a government saying, "Pass a bill, but we're not going to implement it." That must have been unique in its own right, but it gets better.

The next release that went out, on December 4, 2002—I think the Speaker knows what I'm talking about—is a two-line press release in which the government says, "The Ontario government has sought and won unanimous consent to withdraw the amendments to the Pension Benefits Act from Bill 198, Finance Minister Janet Ecker announced today."

Now, you talk about somebody wanting to have it both ways, making it sound in the press release as if they had to wrestle us down to take those pension benefits out of Bill 198. This is the most unmitigated nonsense I've ever heard, that the government "sought and won unanimous consent." No, we gave them the consent two or three weeks ago. They didn't win anything at all. They lost on that. The only people who won, as a matter of fact, were the pensioners who at least now will once again, with the employers, have to negotiate how the pension surpluses are to be divided between them, which they've had to do since the mid- or late 1980s. But at least they've got a fighting chance now which wasn't there before.

I just thought I'd bring it to your attention, because I thought it was the most comical government press release that I've seen here in my seven years: that the Ontario government has sought and won unanimous consent to withdraw the amendments. They were forced into it because of the hundreds of pensioners who were sitting here. There were forced into it because of repeated questioning, particularly by Mr Smitherman, and by other members in my caucus and the NDP caucus. They had to withdraw it because there was a tremendous outcry out there where people were saying, "Do not turn the excess pension funds back over to the employer," which this bill in effect would have allowed them to do. Anyway, that's just one point I want to make.

The other point I want to make is dealing with the economic outlook and fiscal review document that the government issued through the Minister of Finance last week. Maybe the people are already aware of this, but I think there's one figure in this that really stands out. It's the figure that talks about the fact that sales and rentals of government property this year will net the government \$2.424 billion. The significance of that is this: if you look at last year's amount that was received through sales and rentals, it was \$344 million, more than \$2.1 billion less than the anticipated amount this year. If you look at the year before, it's \$637 million. If you look at the year 1998-99, it's \$640 million. As a matter of fact, the only other year in which it went over \$2 billion was in the election year, 1999, when of course the 407 was sold. Then, to balance to budget, they had to insert a figure of \$2.1 billion in there.

My point is simply this: in order to balance this budget in which we take in revenue of something like \$66 billion in expenditures of the same amount, in order to balance that, the government has to sell assets of the people of Ontario that amount to \$2.4 billion.

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What are those assets? Well, we know that they're still insistent on trying to sell 49% of Hydro One. That's still on the table. A lot of people somehow figured, because the consumer price has been stabilized over the next four years, that the whole hydro situation—yes, it's still out there—would remain in public hands. I just want to tell the people of Ontario that's not so. The government still intends to sell 49% of Hydro One, which basically means that we will still have control, but I say, why sell any of it at all? It's a public asset and it should remain in the public domain, particularly an important utility such as the electricity company, and it raises money besides.

The other thing that's included in this \$2.4-billion figure relating to sales is that the government intends to sell the Province of Ontario's Savings Offices. Now, it does not play a major role in my community of Kingston, but I do know that there are many, many smaller communities where the bank has operated for well over 75 or close to 80 years. These are particularly smaller communities that commercial banks, probably for business reasons, have not gone into, and yet those people also needed a place in effect where they could handle their financial transactions, which is the reason

why the Province of Ontario Savings Office was set up in the first place. That's included in there. There may be other items as well.

I suggest to the people out there, if you are really concerned about these two issues, that is, the sale of 49% of Hydro One and the sale of the savings offices of the provincial government, e-mail, write, fax letters to the Minister of Finance, to the Premier, to each one of the government members. If you want to send us a fax or a letter or an e-mail as well, that's fine, so that we would know what's going on. But let the government know how you feel about it. There's absolutely no certainty at this time that 49% of Hydro One will not be sold. The only way that you're going to change that is by letting the government know that you are diametrically opposed to the sale of any of these assets I've mentioned.

In the few minutes I've got left, I just want to talk about the Provincial Auditor's report of last week. I am a firm believer that when you spend the taxpayer's money, you should be doing it on the same theories and using the same practices that each one of us tries to operate our own financial situation with. If you think of the government's money, which after all is the people's money, in the same way as if it were your own, then some of the outrageous situations that the auditor has identified in his report this year, simply would not occur, or they should not occur.

There are all sorts of examples I could use. For example, the use of consultants has gone up by something like \$400 million in just the last two years—

Mr Richard Patten (Ottawa Centre): What?

Mr Gerretsen: Four hundred million dollars.

Mr Patten: My God.

Mr Gerretsen: Last year, \$662 million was spent on consultants—

Mr Patten: Incredible.

Mr Gerretsen:—which is a \$400-million increase on a yearly basis over 1998.

Mr Patten: You're not serious.

Mr Gerretsen: Yes, I'm serious. It's unbelievable—

Mr Patten: It's unbelievable.

Mr Gerretsen:—particularly in situations where we now have consultants checking on the consultants. It is totally unacceptable as far as the people are concerned.

The other one that I found absolutely astonishing is the fact that apparently more than half of the Ontario corporations in the province do not file annual tax returns.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): Surely not. Surely not.

Mr Gerretsen: That's almost incredible.

Hon Helen Johns (Minister of Agriculture and Food): Where's Shirley?

Mr Gerretsen: Where's Shirley? Shirley is just down the hall. The minister may be poking fun at it and maybe she's trying to divert attention away from the fact, but I wonder if somebody could stand up on the government side, particularly one of the cabinet ministers, and try to explain to me how it is possible that over half of the corporations of Ontario could get away with not filing a corporate income tax return.

Mr Bradley: Time for a snitch line.

Mr Gerretsen: Oh yes, they were all in favour of snitch lines at the time to catch people on welfare if you thought somebody was cheating. You may recall—one of the first things that I ever said in this House, as a matter of fact, to then Finance Minister Eves—I said to him, and maybe quite naïvely and innocently, “If you're going to have a snitch line for people who cheat on welfare, why don't you have a snitch line for the people who don't pay their taxes, either personal taxes or corporate taxes? I think what's good for one is good for the other.”

Generally speaking, I'm not in favour of snitch lines, but if you're going to have it, have a snitch line for everybody who's out there, and not just for one segment of society and not for the other segment of society. But how, Speaker—and I'm asking you the question—is it possible that, out of the 773,000 corporations that we have in the province of Ontario, more than half of them don't file their income tax returns? OK, you could say, “It's up to them to file.” But surely to goodness the Ministry of Finance should have been on top of this situation and should have sent out reminder notices, should have done something or other to try to get the system moving.

You see, what's interesting, and I again go back to the budget document, when you look at the amount of corporate taxes actually coming into our system here, it's very revealing. In the year 2000-01, the corporate tax revenue paid into the province of Ontario, paid into the system, was \$9.2 billion. You know what it is anticipated to be this year? Some \$6.1 billion.

Some people could say that some of it's due to the fact that corporate tax was lowered, something that we have never agreed with, because we always felt that rather than giving corporations and individuals an income tax cut, it would have been much better to put that money into much-needed education and health care services. But most of that money, or lack thereof, is due to the fact that people simply aren't filing. If they're not filing, most of them aren't paying. The auditor points this out. It'll be very interesting to see what the response of the Ministry of Finance will be once they appear before the public accounts committee.

There's also another section that I personally found very troubling, and that dealt with the long-term-care situation. As long-term-care critic for our party, I feel that the way we treat our elderly in our long-term-care homes is something that should be our top priority. These are basically people who, many of them, are in the last days of their lives. I think what we owe them, more than anything else, is that they can live out their lives with dignity, respect and in comfort.

I see, for example, that none of the homes that the auditor took a look at had an up-to-date licence and that some of the licences went back to 1998, 1997, since they were last renewed. I find that a deplorable situation. You could say, “What has the licence renewal got to do with the home?” The point is simply this: if we as a government, or the Tories as a government, don't even care

about renewing the licences of the nursing homes etc, how many other things that are much more meaningful in the lives of the elderly who live in these homes are being, in effect, neglected as well?

I always point out that I have the highest regard for the people who work in these homes. Most of the people who work there are greatly overworked because of the tremendous acuity problems that many of the seniors have, which is ever-increasing as the population ages in these homes. The demand on the people who work there is more and more and higher and higher.

What I say to the government is quite simply this: try to deal particularly with the problems that affect the most vulnerable people in our society, whether they're young or whether they're old. In this particular case, I think the auditor has made a very compelling argument for the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to immediately move into this area and correct the deficiencies that he has pointed out in his report.

With that, I'll turn it over to the next speaker.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

2010

Mrs Julia Munro (York North): It's a pleasure to be able to rise this evening and speak on the concurrence issue. I think one of the things that I, as a member of the government, am particularly proud of is the recent announcement of the creation of one million jobs. I think that for many of us who look back to the early part of the nineties, this was something that seemed to be unobtainable. Although, as a member, I certainly remain committed to the notion that this was something to work toward, I think that it is certainly an achievement in which many of us take great pride. It means fewer people are on welfare. It means that those people have not only the material advantages of a job, but also the self-esteem. It speaks to the climate for investment that we have created in this province.

I want to speak particularly to the issue of the small business owner. When I talked to small business owners in the early nineties, they were crippled by the burden of taxation, of employer taxes, and they were extremely depressed about the opportunities that they thought lay before them. It was then the commitment that we had to ensure that in fact small business would have the confidence to be able to add even one more employee. Small business accounts for the greatest growth in employment in this province, and adding one more employee was extremely important to them.

It's really a pleasure for me to be able to just comment on that particular accomplishment. It speaks to the industry and the commitment that the people of Ontario have, that they have been able to create one million jobs.

Mrs Bountrogianni: I'm happy to join this debate. I'm going to spend the 12 minutes I believe I have to speak on post-secondary education and what the cutbacks have done to post-secondary education, but I want to focus on the double cohort. We can't talk about the double cohort enough. It's coming. It'll be here in the fall of 2003. We're unprepared for it. The government's own

report showed that they are short 6,300 spaces. Just this week we learned that they're asking the colleges and universities to consider taking fewer non-traditional students. By non-traditional students: college transfers and older students; in other words, adults who have decided to go back to school. That's a shame. They had seven years to plan for the double cohort. Someone named Mr Gourley who used to work for then-Finance Minister Ernie Eves actually told him, to the student, the number on the double cohort. He did excellent research seven years ago and told them how many students would be entering school in 2003, but they ignored it and low-balled the estimate and now, even if they gave the money tomorrow, the schools would be scrambling to hire professors by the fall. That was a huge failure on the part of the government. The honourable member opposite talked about jobs. Well, we have to think about future jobs as well. Students are a big part of that.

The second thing I'd like to highlight is the OSAP problems we're having right now. Fewer students are eligible for OSAP right now. It's gone down significantly in the last few years. The reason is, the criteria have been tightened so that now, if you've lived out of the home up to five years—in other words you can be 23 years old, you've lived away from home for five years—the government still considers that your family needs to pay for your education. There are all sorts of reasons why the students may be living away from home for five years or more. As well, they've lowered the amount of family income in order to be eligible for OSAP. In the past if a family of four had a family income of \$40,000, they weren't expected to be able to pay for their kids' education in post-secondary. Now they are. These are the reasons why OSAP have made it really difficult for students to apply for and get OSAP.

A few weeks ago we had the college students come here and talk about OSAP in a very constructive way and actually give constructive advice to the minister. She said she would look into it—that would be the education minister; the other minister was not available—that is, basically administrative changes that would make it easier for the students.

One change is for the appeal process to be brought in. In the past if you were not successful in your application for OSAP, you were able to appeal. The administrators would then look at your situation and say, "OK, you're in the grey area. You may not fit the rules exactly, but we can see why you need the money," and they would grant the appeal or not. That has been taken away by this government, and the students want that back.

The second change they want on OSAP, which really isn't a money issue—it's more an administrative issue—is to give the money sooner than when the OSAP money is given. It is very difficult. Some of them have a lot of trouble getting by the first couple of weeks of school until they get their OSAP money.

The other issue I want to bring up again is the physician shortage. Instead of trying to address this by making it easier for students to go to medical school, they've made it more difficult. Tuition has gone up. It

used to be \$5,000 a year before this government took over. It's now approximately \$15,000 a year.

I highlighted one medical student who actually did her undergraduate at McMaster, Anne Conlin. She's from the town of Ailsa Craig. Anne is one of these amazingly exceptional students. She went to McMaster University. She did not qualify for OSAP, but her parents could not help as well. She's from a rural area. She worked full-time while attending McMaster University for undergraduate studies. Everyone knows how difficult it is to get into medical school. You have to have marks in the 90s. You have to have had volunteer work. A lot of people do missionary work in Africa. The average age is going up for medical students—

Mr Patten: They have to work here too.

Mrs Bountrogianni: —and work here as well; thank you, Mr Patten. It's very difficult to get into medical school. Anne worked full-time and went to school full-time at McMaster, and managed to get the marks to get into medical school at the University of Western Ontario.

She was fine with that. She was quite willing to work full-time and go to medical school full-time. She's one of these amazingly exceptional young women, but the tuition was \$5,000 a year when she started. In year two, it went up. In year three, it was \$15,000. She went to a bank. To make a long story short, she now owes about \$100,000.

There are no physicians in her town—it's one of the Deputy Speaker's towns, Mr Johnson's town. She's still determined to go back, which again points to how exceptional she is, because she wants to give back to her community. She said she has other friends who are equally motivated, but they didn't go into medical school because they saw what she was going through and said, "It's not worth it. We're going into different fields." What a shame for rural Ontario and for the rest of Ontario.

As well, the medical students who came that day—this was in October—highlighted the fallacy of the free tuition for medical students who agree to serve in rural areas. It's a fraction of the cost, so it's just not worth it. Very few are taking this up, because the average student debt of a medical student is \$100,000. You end up getting, after taxes, \$26,000 with the government's program to pay for tuition. That's just not enough for them to be motivated to do this. There's another area where this government has really disappointed all of us: the students, the future physicians, the physician shortage, and so forth.

I want to also talk about the cutbacks to post-secondary education in general. As soon as they were elected in 1995, they cut nearly half a billion dollars: a 15% cut in operating grants. That was the largest cut to post-secondary education in Ontario history. Instead of increasing money to prepare for the double cohort, they actually did that: they cut nearly half a billion dollars.

We saw what happened earlier today with the Rozanski report. He is saying that the elementary and secondary schools need almost \$2 billion—I think \$1.8 billion—which is approximately what this government

cut from elementary and secondary education. They're doing this the same at all levels of education: they first cut, then the commission reports to show they shouldn't have cut. What was all this turmoil for? The debt still increased.

Mr David Christopherson (Hamilton West): Tax cuts.

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Mrs Bountrogianni: My colleague from Hamilton West says it's about tax cuts. Yes, it's about tax cuts. But I can tell you that tax cuts aren't doing a lot of families a lot of good. There are so many user fees. My son comes home every week—he's in grade 10—with some amount of money he needs for something that in the past students didn't have to pay for. I'm very fortunate. I have a job. I can pay for it. But I really wonder about the families that make a lot less money. I don't know how they do it, because it's challenging for us as well. I don't know how other families can do it.

What they did to elementary and secondary—which is very clear today; they underfunded it for the last seven years—they've done to post-secondary as well. There aren't as many people with kids in colleges and universities, so there hasn't been the amount of turmoil that there was in elementary and secondary. But that's coming now, with the double cohort. That's coming because the government has underestimated by 6,300 the number of spaces needed. This was predicted in 1995 by someone in then-Finance Minister Ernie Eves's office. It was ignored. It was confirmed again by the Queen's research in the summer. They actually tried to bury that report, but of course we got a copy. They still haven't done anything about it.

The tragedy is that even if tomorrow all of a sudden they put in the money for the double cohort, it's too late for the fall, as far as hiring people. Professors aren't as easy to hire as some people might think. Most of them have to relocate to go to the city where they teach. It costs approximately \$6,000 just to interview a professor. They fly the professor in or get them in through a means of transportation, with the family, to check out the neighbourhoods, to check out the schools, and then they decide whether they want to relocate. It's a big decision. So for them to do that, it takes time; it takes money. This government has basically nixed that opportunity.

As well, just the uncertainty surrounding the double cohort has made a lot of high-quality potential faculty say, "Maybe we'll just pass over Ontario now." I know my institution, which is in the riding of my friend David Christopherson, McMaster, is doing all sorts of things and giving all sorts of bonuses trying to get faculty there. I'm sure all universities are doing that. I just happen to know about it, since it's in my town. That is what they're doing. They're giving all sorts of bonuses: "Please come."

The other problem with post-secondary education that I'm hearing from students is regarding the overcrowding of classrooms. Already a certain percentage of students in each university and college are unfunded. They're called

different things in colleges and universities. In universities, they're called "unfunded students," which means the institutions basically absorb the cost of these extra students. Now they're asked to do it again in the fall.

They're trying their best to accommodate, but when I speak to the administrators and the professors, they're quite sad that they have to say no to students who are 25 or 30 years old, who for whatever reason didn't have the opportunity to go to school when they were 18 and now want to go back and are told, "Well, you're going to be on some secondary list." Of course I support the 17-year-olds and 18-year-olds who are now graduating for the first time, but we shouldn't do that at the expense of mature students who want to go back. It's a second chance at a better life. We all know that better education correlates with all sorts of things—better health and so on. It's just a shame that that opportunity has been really reduced, if not taken away, from a lot of adults who want to go back.

As well, there's a group of college students who often take a different route to university. They'll do a college diploma and then they'll apply for university, for whatever reason; either because they weren't ready for university, it was too expensive at the time or they thought they wanted to get into something more applied first. Ordinarily after two years it wouldn't be a problem to get into first-year university with some credits. The institutions are now being told by this government, "Put those on a secondary list too." So fewer of those possibilities will occur as well.

It's not as if this government wasn't warned. They were warned over and over again by stakeholder groups, by students, by members of the opposition. It was just poor planning. My theory is that they were hoping the private universities would accommodate the double cohort. My theory is that they thought that many more private universities would open. Of course, they were really delayed in even getting that going. The quality assurance board has not approved many. I really do think that's what they were hoping: that the private universities would do it. It's not a bad theory, if that's what they were hoping. But that hasn't happened either, because even there there was mismanagement. It took them a full year to get the quality assurance board up and running. It took a long time before people committed to being part of that board, and for good reason.

In short, I just want to say that what they've done to post-secondary education is shameful. We are funded last of all the provinces and states by this provincial government. We should be at the top, not at the bottom. I really feel very sorry for students, my children included, that they have to have these challenges that we never had when we had the opportunity to go to school.

Mr Christopherson: I'd like to pick up where my friend and colleague from Hamilton Mountain left off in terms of having talked about education and the need that's there—

Interjection.

Mr Christopherson: Well, when it comes to Hamilton, nobody else in this place who gets up every day and says, "What am I going to do for Hamilton?" so if we don't do it, nobody is going to. I'm very proud of the fact that we do stick together. I see my other friend, the Honourable Brad Clark, here from Stoney Creek who's a member of the government. When it comes to local issues, yes, we do stick together. That's exactly where I'm going, actually: on a matter of local importance.

I want to talk just very briefly about Chedoke while the Minister of Health is here. I'm not going to get into the particulars because the players know exactly what the issues are. What I do want to emphasize to both ministers, our regional minister as well as the Minister of Health, is that we've got a unique opportunity to do something positive with the lands that are being developed with the new St Peter's facility. The land is being offered to us at no cost. It's adjacent to this new facility. It allows us to keep the families, these individuals and the staff together.

At this time, Minister of Health, the one thing that we need is to hear you step in and at least direct Hamilton Health Sciences that they will not begin moving those individuals out. If that starts to happen before we get an announcement on the new facility, quite frankly it's going to make it that much more difficult for us and your ministry to justify the building of this facility. I know that you've undertaken to look at this. I take you at your word. I know that your seatmate in this case, fortunately for us, is indeed Minister Clark. I would just emphasize to you, Minister, if you're not in a position soon to announce the new facility, if we could hear from you publicly that those individuals won't be moved out it would be very helpful to help alleviate some of the very strong anxiety that exists among the individuals and family members of those there.

Minister, I'll leave that with you. At the earliest chance you get to indicate that they're not going to be moved in the foreseeable future—that would be a really good sign for us. I've offered publicly, and I know my colleagues in the official opposition have too, that if we get these announcements, you'll get the credit that you're due and the acknowledgement that it's a positive thing in our city. Until then, we remain on guard, shall we say, hoping that this works out. I'll leave that and hope to hear from the minister soon.

I asked a question earlier today on behalf of Hamilton city council, where we're in a desperate situation for funding that the city council has been covering with 100-cent city dollars, when actually it's provincial money that should be doing this. I'm going to take advantage of the opportunity to speak on virtually anything we like and the fact that the minister who I asked the question to is here today, the Minister of Community, Family and Children's Services.

The minister knows that we weren't talking about the per diems, and fair enough. There could have been a confusion yesterday. What we are talking about is the fact that the \$240,000 in question that city council has

paid is money they're paying out because they don't want to turn people away, but it really is a provincial responsibility. If you don't step in, not only will individuals who are currently having their needs falling short, but people who now are in beds won't be because the city is going to have to cut back.

On that, I did read part of an editorial from Robert Howard, who wrote the editorial in the Hamilton Spectator today. I got a chance to read some of it. I'd like to put a little bit more on the record, again, taking advantage of the minister being here to underscore the importance of this to our community.

The editorial goes on to say, "The health of Canadians should not be dependent on where they were born, where they end up, or how much money they or their family may have. We have embraced that precept when it comes to physical health; why is it so difficult to come to terms with it for mental health?"

2030

That's relevant, Minister, because you will know that the individuals we're talking about are people with mental illness and other very debilitating disabilities that leave them with no alternative, and if we don't step in—well, you probably think it would be a little over the top if I said it. I'll read how the editorial ends. I appreciate the minister giving her attention to this.

"The tragic fact is that this winter—on probably more than one occasion—a mentally ill homeless person will likely freeze to death on the street of a Canadian city. We acknowledge that even the best-resourced safety nets can't save everyone. But the province—and ultimately Ottawa—must step forward. If not, people will continue to suffer, and some will die."

Minister, I know that earlier today you looked over at me and committed to reviewing this. I took that, based on knowing you the way I do and sort of the body language or the way you expressed it, that you weren't just looking to get out of an answer to a question in question period but that you were sincere about it. I believe that. It's not a huge amount of money, although every dollar is important: \$240,000, and we've got a \$67-billion or \$68-billion budget. If you can see your way clear, it really would allow all of us—you as the government here, our city council and the supports we have in Hamilton—to reach out on those freezing cold nights and make sure that there's at least a warm bed for someone to go to. I know you'll do the best you can in that regard, and we appreciate it.

I want to move now, in the moments I have left, to deal with education. I mean, here we go again. Critics—political, trustees, students, parents, education experts—virtually everyone, has said that your funding formula doesn't work, not that it needs fine-tuning or tinkering but that it doesn't work. The whole concept of a cookie-cutter approach to every community doesn't make practical sense, doesn't make common sense. The needs in downtown Hamilton are very different from the needs in downtown Mississauga, Markham, Oakville. Even Toronto, for that matter, is different from every other

community. To have a formula that doesn't allow that kind of flexibility is actually a formula for disaster. You were told that, over and over and over again. I said in an interview, at least a message I left, with Chinta Puxley of the Hamilton Spectator that the headline ought to read "We Told You, Says Everyone," because virtually every recommendation in here reflects one criticism or another that came from every group that I just mentioned. Pick the subject matter and it's covered off in this report.

But we all know how this process works, and it goes like this. The government cuts funding to education and they completely, radically change everything. At the time they do it, they're warned, cautioned, criticized by experts, by parents, students, trustees, those who know a lot more about the education system than I do. Still, you went ahead and did it because you needed that money for your tax cuts, and this was the price coming out of education. And boy, weren't we forewarned about what was going to happen in the Ministry of Education? We all remember John Snobelen—I think he's actually still a member, isn't he? We remember John Snobelen standing in front of that crowd, the infamous tape of him telling the bureaucrats in the Ministry of Education—I'm paraphrasing—that he and they had to create a crisis to justify the actions they were going to take.

All along, the only real expertise you've brought to education is to point out where it doesn't work and where the problems were. We have said to you over and over that there's no such thing as perfection; go to your favourite international conglomerate corporation and there's always room for improvement. But you use that as an opportunity to say, "We're the only ones who have done anything. Here's this problem," and the piece you left out was whether or not your action solved the problem. You identified it and said, "We're taking action," and somehow that alone is supposed to have Ontarians conclude you were doing the right thing.

No. In fact in most cases—not all; there were some good aspects of it; everyone acknowledges that—on the biggest and most important pieces, what happens in the classroom, you knew this wasn't going to work. The job of the Minister of Education in the last few years, in my opinion, has not been to bring about a better education system but rather to be the chief apologist for the government and the dancer of tunes here in the House during question period.

The government knew this. They knew they could only push it so long and then the crisis was going to rise up and bite them, so they commissioned this report. Now of course what's going to happen is that the government—I understand that the Premier and the minister have a news conference scheduled tomorrow. They'll announce that they are responding to these recommendations because they care about the education system. Look, there's nothing new in here. What this does is provide you with political cover. It allows you to say, "We have to make these changes, not because the system doesn't work," which everyone knows, but rather

it allows you to stand up and say, "We're going to make these changes because the recommendations"—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Excuse me. We really do have to come to order. I'm having some difficulty hearing the member from Hamilton West. If you want to have private conversations, you may have them outside the chamber. I apologize to the member for Hamilton West.

Mr Christopherson: Not a problem, Speaker. I have no doubt that it's not a question of whether they can hear me but whether they want to listen. I'm sure they hear me—at least that's what I intend to achieve, at the very least, while I'm on my feet.

As I was saying, what this report does is give you political cover and it lets you make the changes that should be made—quite frankly, to put things right—without having to say you were wrong. That's the purpose of this, what it's for, so you can say, "We did a review at the end. We'd built in a five-year review. So we don't have to admit we did anything wrong. This is all part of what we were planning in the first place." It's again so transparent.

However, as in the case with the Henderson Hospital in Hamilton—I see my friend the Minister of Labour laughing. He will know that I'm probably about to say that in the case of the Henderson Hospital, the by-election was our friend. In terms of education in this province, the upcoming provincial election is our friend.

Hon Brad Clark (Minister of Labour): You're such a cynic.

Mr Christopherson: Oh, I'm very cynical on these subjects. You're absolutely correct. And why? Why on earth would I be cynical about anything your government has done, Minister?

The only good news in all of this and the fact that the election is coming is that they are probably going to respond to some of these. I can't imagine that at this point even this government can say no to this report. What is a shame—

Interjection.

Mr Christopherson: I hope you're just practising, Minister, for something else, not this report.

I want to point out that what hurts and what is painful to have to accept is that classes for English as a second language haven't been there for how many thousands of students at the very least over the last few years because of your stubbornness? How many hundreds or thousands of special-needs children have not had their needs met? How many have had to stay home? How many have not had the assistance they should have in the classroom because you've refused to admit that there was underfunding in these areas? How many principals have already been fired, laid off, gone from the system because you wouldn't keep a principal in each school? What's the recommendation here? Quelle surprise: a principal in every school. Guidance counsellors: they're back. A recognition that there hasn't been enough money for transportation: it's there in black and white. There's money there for maintaining and repairing schools. How

many times have colleagues from Hamilton got on their feet and practically begged you to put some money into maintenance because our schools are deteriorating around the heads of our children? It's in the report.

2040

There's even a recognition that—I'm going from memory now, but I think it's \$50 million be earmarked for small schools in a community. I see the Minister of Education nodding her head yes, so I assume I've got the figure right. Certainly that recommendation is in this report, but you know it comes awfully late, in fact too late for many schools in Hamilton. I can only imagine how many small communities have already closed their only school. It may already be gone for them. So that's the shame of this report. The heartbreak is that there has been pain, certainly on the part of parents of children with special needs when they saw the supports for their children cut in half, cut to a quarter, eliminated, or their children at home because there aren't any supports there. How many young people across Ontario aren't being given the same opportunity that others will in the future because they didn't get the skills they needed with regard to English as a second language? These are crucial, fundamental pillars of education for so many children above and beyond the complexity of the new curriculum—and that's causing a great deal of grief. The status of textbooks is still an ongoing problem.

There are so many issues that I guess ultimately we just have to take our heartbreak and turn it around and say, "At least, hopefully, those days are over." The best we can hope for now is that tomorrow the Minister of Education and the Premier will stand up and, if they won't admit they were wrong, at the very least, announce that they are going to do, finally, the right thing for the kids in our schools.

Hon Mr Clark: There's a little bit of irony in this, in that we have this wonderful report. I can recall when Premier Eves said that we were going to move forward with a review. The opposition members—and even Annie Kidder was one of them—were saying, "Ah, this going to be a big charade. This is going to be nonsense. We can't trust this government to do anything. This report will be nothing." The reality is, Annie Kidder was just on television praising the report. I was stunned. Earl Manners was praising the report.

Interjections.

Hon Mr Clark: Do you know what's interesting? The opposition begin to heckle because they don't like this when we are right. They hate it when we are right. The fascinating thing is, the opposition—

Interjection.

Hon Mr Clark: That's right, we have to bring in an order—the opposition was saying the funding formula was flawed; it was broken; get rid of it. That's what they were saying. Were they not saying that?

Yet, what does the honourable gentleman say? You should listen to this; this is important: "Although there is general support for the concept and the structure of the student-focused formula (I encountered this support dur-

ing my consultations)” He was just on TVO and said that there is nothing wrong with the funding formula. Everyone agrees with the funding formula, he says. His terminology—you’ve got to listen to it—“virtually unanimous support” is what he said. Those were his words, not mine. We just watched it. You can watch the repeat later on, if you stay up late. He said very clearly that there is support for the funding formula. He has made recommendations on how to improve the benchmarks. That’s what he’s done.

They’re laughing about this, but we stand by our student-focused funding formula. We said there would be a review. You didn’t even support the funding formula. You opposed the funding formula. Yet this recognized gentleman is stating, “It’s a good formula and we’re improving it.”

Mr Bradley: The report to which reference was just made, of course, is a total condemnation of what this government has done since it has been in power. Now for this government to try to say, in some way spin it, that it justifies what the government has done, is beyond belief. The member must have taken his cranky pills because I’m surprised he was able to say this without having a smile on his face when the report repudiates, in virtually every way, what this government has done to education. I’ve read it from cover to cover. I’m very familiar with its provisions, and that is the case.

Let me tell you that I have been amused as well. This is as amusing—as my friend from Kingston and the Islands mentioned—the press releases that came out when the government was in full retreat over its pension surplus blunder. I could hear this beeping sound, like something backing up, and I saw this white flag and I could hear the bugles of retreat being played as the minister who early on in the questions was saying that the opposition was simply scare-mongering, and at the end, trying to say that it was her idea that the pension provision be withdrawn from the huge budget bill. Of course it was put in there in the first place to hide it so no one would find it, but of course the very assiduous opposition looked carefully and found it in the bill, as we were reading the bill cover-to-cover at that time. So the government was forced to retreat. Yet another victory, even with rules stacked against us in this House: the opposition, along with people of this province, forced this government to back down from a policy which was designed to provide to its corporate friends the ability to, as some people would say, steal the pension surplus.

Hon Mr Clark: Oh, that isn’t parliamentary.

Mr Bradley: Well, I think some people would say that—steal the pension surplus from the people. We got the letters and the e-mails and so on of people who were genuinely concerned. We took up the cause and the government went into full retreat. It reminded me, as well, of all the fighting we did on this side over Visudyne and how we, day after day, got up in the House and demanded that the Minister of Health provide coverage for Visudyne, and how he would dodge the questions and dance around the questions. He finally came up with a

half-baked formula that still forces people to be half-blind before they’re able to access funding for this treatment. So we see the government again having to capitulate on an issue that, if it had done the right thing in the first place, it would not have had to capitulate on.

Hydro is another good example. The government was boisterously defending its hydro policy and saying it was the best thing that ever happened. Of course the intense questioning from the opposition, the e-mails that were coming into the offices of the government members, and the letters that were coming in, the telephone calls, the government put on the brakes. Even the member for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound who, at least when he is in his own riding, is certainly anti-government, and when he comes down here is a government man—even when he came down here, he had to take off his government hat and tell you people that the opposition was right in the first place and that what you were doing was going to be a disaster for the people in terms of the amount they were paying for electricity. So the government backed off on that. I was pleased to see the government back off on that particular issue.

Interjections.

Mr Bradley: I will ignore the interjections because of the short period of time I have.

I was also horrified by the auditor’s report that just came out that said this government was now spending \$400 million a year more on consultants, that it hadn’t even licensed many nursing homes in this province, that inspections were well behind. It had many horror stories in it. They like to be the law-and-order party over there. My friend the minister of—I used to call him the Solicitor General and the Minister of Corrections—now I think it’s public safety; Tom Ridge’s job in the US—they took \$60 million away from him. Then they expected that he was going to be able to have his ministry catch all these people where there were warrants for the arrest. Well, how do you expect him to be able to? I’m sympathetic to my friend Bob Runciman because I say, “How do you expect the man to do this kind of job when you whittled \$60 million out of his budget?” He needed it very much. I told him, and I will continue to do this, I’ll fight to get that \$60 million back in his budget. So he is not the stooge for the government, the one who has to accept all the criticism for the government, because he doesn’t deserve that criticism, in my view; the government does, those who provide the funding to his ministry.

2050

We have many problems out there. I had a call today from a constituent who could not get a CT scan. The person, as it turned out, had cancer of the colon and had to go over to the United States and pay US\$300 to get a CT scan that discovered he was in the third stage of cancer of the colon. He is asking why he couldn’t have had that kind of scan in a timely fashion here in Canada.

Now, the Minister of Health says, “I’ve got the solution. We’ll give it to the private sector. That will speed it up. We’ll put out a request for proposals.” All

that has to be done, I tell the Minister of Health, is to put those diagnostic machines in the hospitals, not out to the private sector. If you put them in the hospitals and give them the funding to operate these diagnostic machines, first of all, it will be cheaper, and second, it will be within the public domain instead of having the profit in it. I think that's what everybody in this province is looking forward to. They hope the minister will withdraw those kinds of proposals, although he seems wedded to them at this time.

I want to tell him that hospital restructuring in Niagara has been a disaster. The government took millions upon millions of dollars out of hospital funding in our area and created a crisis in the hospitals. Now, wherever we find restructuring taking place in the province and the government has an estimate, you triple that estimate and you have the real cost of the disruption that was caused by this government to the hospital system in Niagara and other parts of the province.

We have a shortage of doctors. This government has given some hints that it's finally going to address this issue, after great pressure from the opposition. Of course we find that their policies have been inadequate in this regard. Thousands of people right across this province, many of them in the Niagara Peninsula, do not have access to a family physician and all that means to them.

We have drug costs where people have to pay out of their own pockets for necessary drugs and are not receiving this cost because the government made a deal which allowed them to de-list many of these drugs that are essential for the good health of people.

We find that people are being discharged quicker and sicker from hospitals and, as a result, many times have to come back into hospital or are left in a very vulnerable position. They are unhappy people.

Ophthalmologists in the Niagara region are small in number and large in caseload and require a temporary increase in the billing cap to allow people to be properly serviced in our part of the province.

We have the problem of the double cohort, where there are simply not going to be enough spaces for post-secondary students who want to get into the institution of their choice, an institution they deserve to be allowed into because of their marks and their desires. The changes to OSAP, while sometimes subtle, have meant that people with a lower income have not had the access they should have to post-secondary education. And we have seen tuition go up sky-high, in some cases, for the professions and very high in other cases. It's all right for the rich in this province. We look like we're going back to the good old days, as the government would say, where only the extremely bright and the extremely rich had the best access to the best positions in post-secondary education, but of course that's what this government is all about.

We had the government peddling Highway 407 to save its bacon back in the 1999 election—a \$3-billion giveaway—and customers are being gouged constantly by the Highway 407 corporation. Now they want to sell

the Province of Ontario Savings Office. Most of the calls I'm getting are from people who were once Conservatives, who are saying this is a good institution, something you should maintain, and yet you're eager to sell that in a fire sale so you can balance the budget.

You should be saying to the corporations, "I'm sorry, we're not going to give you more tax breaks. We're going to create a good atmosphere in this province with a strong health care system and an education system. We're not going to give you that \$2.2-billion tax cut that you have been promised by this government. Instead we're going to invest it in services that are needed by the people of this province."

I heard a member talk about the Ministry of the Environment budget. Of course, that is a joke. Having cut the Ministry of the Environment to the very lowest it's been in years, the government is now putting some money back in and rehiring staff. They conveniently forget to say that they virtually annihilated the Ministry of the Environment. One promise they kept was the nod and the wink to polluters in this province when they said to them, "You know, we'll get the Ministry of the Environment out of your face." Promise made, promise kept. The result: incidents such as Walkerton, Ontario.

I wish I could be more positive about members of the government, but I know that members of the government have it in their own purview to be positive about themselves. I simply say that while you are making the rich richer in this province, people relying on disability pensions have not had an increase since 1993. These are not people who can easily find additional work for themselves or increase their income. At the very least, the government should provide funding to those individuals, and surely that can be done within the concurrences we have today.

Hon Doug Galt (Minister without Portfolio): I was quite entertained by the member for St Catharines and some of the comments he was making. He was talking about health care: MRIs, hospital lineups, people not getting in for CT scans just as soon as they might. But I'd remind the member for St Catharines and all the Liberals that obviously it must have been a whipped vote, because they have voted against every budget bill. Every dollar that our government has tried to spend, they have been opposed, it doesn't matter whether it's health care or whether it's to build hospitals. We built one in Bancroft, and of course the Liberal member there, the member for Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington, took great glee in being at the grand opening, like, "We did it," when in fact she voted against putting money into that hospital. That's their track record.

Mr Bradley: Nonsense.

Hon Mr Galt: It's not nonsense, member for St Catharines. They voted against every budget bill, every financial bill that has come before this House since I've been here, since 1995.

I'll make a prediction. In approximately half an hour we're going to be voting on concurrences. That's about estimates and about money and about payments. How are

you going to vote? I predict you'll vote not to do it; you'll vote against concurrence. Again, you're going to vote against it. I think it is extremely unfortunate that they stand up holier than thou, but when on earth are they going to do something and support the government when the government wants to spend money and increase spending on health care?

I heard the member for St Catharines talking about the environment. In a 10-year period, from 1985 to 1995, the only legislation I know they brought through was the Environmental Bill of Rights, a pretty poor track record for a 10-year experiment. Maybe the member for St Catharines, who was Minister of the Environment at the time, might enlighten me on some of the things they did, because I don't see anything they did.

There's a whole list of things that the Conservative government has been doing for the environment. If you look at the track record over many years, you'll find legislation brought in and regulations brought in by a Conservative government, not by a Liberal or a socialist government. They do a lot of talking. They talk about the cutbacks. Well, what were all those people doing through the late 1980s and the early 1990s at Walkerton, when records were being changed and fudged and all the rest? What were they doing, all these people they had? Obviously they weren't monitoring. But they get on their high horse and yell and scream that a few people have been cut back for efficiency purposes, that that's the whole problem. I don't think so.

2100

I'd like to bring to the attention of the members of this House the fact that Canada now leads all the G8 countries in economic growth. Over and above that, the province of Ontario is leading Canada. That has taken us from 1995, when we were the worst in economic development in the world, to first. I think that's quite a record and quite a statement for our Premier of the day, Mike Harris, and now Premier Ernie Eves, who was the Minister of Finance. What a wonderful team that took us from worst to first. It didn't take very long from 1985 into the early 1990s to go from first to worst. It was pretty embarrassing here in Ontario, the area that we consider is the power, the engine that drives this whole great nation of Canada.

I was thrilled when the Honourable Janet Ecker stood up and read her Ontario Economic Outlook and Fiscal Review. It was a particular thrill when she read this sentence: "The government's plan for a balanced budget this year, our fourth consecutive balanced budget, is on track." It's not only on track, but we are headed for a fifth one.

The federal government brags about their balanced budget. Where do you think their extra dollars came from? Where would they be if Ontario hadn't stimulated the economy? Where would they be if they hadn't followed Ontario's example in tax cuts and stimulating the economy? We'd still be back there. They'd still be paying into a deficit problem, adding to the debt.

Fortunately, with the kind of tax cuts that were brought in, we are moving ahead.

It was an added thrill to find that we've a million-plus new jobs since we've taken office. The five years before we took office, I believe it was a net minus 20,000 new jobs, or no jobs, less jobs. But to look at the province of Ontario—seeing Toronto at 23.7% more jobs than when we took office; my area, 18.6%; eastern Ontario, 20.3%; southwestern Ontario, 13.4%—if you look at any five workers coming out of a plant, one of those people did not have a job in 1995. Today over a million people came home from a job interview and said, "Hey, guess what? I got the job."

I hear the opposition whining and crying about gridlock around Toronto. Well, that's unfortunate. I can tell you that there was absolutely no gridlock around Toronto in 1995. I could drive in or out at any time. Part of the reason for that gridlock is a million-plus people going to work. I think it's wonderful we have that many people going to work. Yes, we do have a new challenge to look at how to get them in and out and to their jobs, but that gridlock isn't just a coincidence. It's because we have a million-plus more people going to work and coming home. Certainly, it is a challenge that we have to look at.

Here's the example showing economic growth in Ontario: Ontario at 4%, Canada at 3.6%, the US at 3.4%. The opposition often likes to talk about, "Oh, we're just riding on the coattails of the US economy." What happened in the early 1990s when the US was doing very well? Why did we crash then? In the late 1990s we were moving ahead; the Americans were going down. After 2000, 2001 the Americans were in big trouble, but the province of Ontario seemed to be going ahead very well. There was a similar situation out on the west coast where that socialist government crashed in the good times in the US. So I think, I believe, that whether you are doing well or not in a province, depends an awful lot on the economic policies that you have in that particular province.

It was interesting to look at this graph in here to see the average family incomes in Ontario. The average family—that's probably in a lot of cases two-income families—in 1993 got down to about \$52,000—just a hair over. It moved up a bit in 1994, back down in 1995 and from 1995 on steadily climbed to over \$62,000 in 2000. It's probably significantly higher than that at this point in time. Also, look at the tax cuts that boost real take-home pay and how that has increased as a result of tax cuts. The opposition just loves to stand up and talk about, "Yeah, if you hadn't made the tax cuts, look at all things you could have been doing with those dollars." I think you have to really look at what happened to tax cuts and the stimulation of the economy, putting over one million people back to work, a million-plus people paying income tax, a million people with salaries to go out and buy goods that the provincial sales tax is collected on. Corporations pay their taxes. As a result we've increased our tax revenue by approximately 50%.

So if you want to increase taxes, which Dalton McGuinty would love to do—he talks about increasing them by \$2 billion—what would happen? We'd stifle the economic growth in this country; we'd reduce the number of people working; we'd reduce the amount of income tax coming in; we'd reduce the amount of goods that people could buy because there would be fewer people with incomes, and we'd end up with less tax revenue. That's probably what's going to happen if we should be so unfortunate again to try that experiment of a Liberal government, because the one we tried back in 1985 through 1995 certainly was not a very good success at all.

Just in the conclusion of the Honourable Janet Ecker's report, she talks about the balanced budgets of various years. Back in 1999-2000 we paid down \$0.7 billion; then in 2000-01 we paid down almost \$2 billion—\$1.9 billion—of the debt; in 2001-02 we paid down \$0.4 billion; we aim this year at a balanced budget, and I wouldn't be surprised if we have a significant amount to pay down the debt again this year. Then, as we look forward, there doesn't seem to be too much question that we are going to have a balanced budget for next year.

Certainly, it's time that that kind of thing was happening here in the province of Ontario, that we had successive balanced budgets. When we had three in a row, I think the talk about that was the most since back to the early part of the century. So, probably—and I underline that—with five in a row, that may be a total record that's never been in place before.

I think what's interesting about what our government's been doing is to see what's happening in many other jurisdictions. I would like to draw to your attention what I have come across from the Liberal government in BC. As I look at what they're doing and what they call their vision—and this is from their campaign materials—I'd just like to share with you the similarities. It is an honour, I think, that they would be copying from us. The first is a top-notch education system for students of all ages. The changes that we've made have been absolutely phenomenal in developing curriculum, testing of students, standardized curriculum, standardized report cards.

The second one is high-quality public health care services that meet all patients' needs, where they live and when they need it. I think back to the health services restructuring committee and the marked changes they made in this province. As a matter of fact, there has been a hospital completed in my riding and there's another one under construction—that's two hospitals. Do you know how many hospitals were built from 1985 to 1995 in Ontario? Two hospitals. Two in my riding in these two terms, and in Ontario in those two terms, 1985 to 1995 all across Ontario, two hospitals. That just happens to be fact. That's what we're doing with health care. I see they're going to try to do the same in BC, a Liberal government.

“A thriving private sector economy that creates high-paying job opportunities”—does that sound like the Common Sense Revolution? Maybe they plagiarized

from it. Certainly, that's been something that we've been working toward, creating jobs. A million-plus jobs certainly supports that.

“Safer streets and schools in every community”—that's almost dead-on the kind of things that we've been working on. Safer schools—now of course the Liberals, I'm quite sure they voted against that; didn't want safer schools, didn't want safer communities. I know they're talking in their platform about 1,000 more police officers. That's exactly what we did, and they're kind of copying it.

Their fifth point is, “Better services for children, families and First Nations.” I think of what we did for young children, preschool children and early years, the early years centres that are being developed across this province, recognizing the tremendous potential in our youth, in our preschool children.

Number six, “The fastest-growing technology industry in Canada”—that's the vision in BC. We have it here in Ontario. It has occurred in the last six to seven years, a phenomenal amount of technology. If you talk to any of the universities, the amount of research money that we've put into the universities has been exceptional.

“A leading edge forest industry that is globally recognized for its productivity and environmental stewardship.” “Greater equity and equality for British Columbia in Canada.” It's their province, and that's basically what we've been doing. “The most open, accountable and democratic government in Canada.” “Responsible, accountable management of public resources and tax dollars.”

That comes from a Liberal government, copying very much from the Common Sense Revolution and from the Blueprint that was our platform in 1999.

2110

I want to spend a few minutes on some of the things that have happened in my riding through SuperBuild. I think some of the members here would be interested in some of the things that have happened in Northumberland.

Interjections.

Hon Mr Galt: I know the member from Sudbury would love to hear about the heliport we've developed in Campbellford. The old one was on a high school football yard and it had to be moved. We've developed in Cobourg an Extendicare with a large number of beds. There's one being developed in Port Hope through Extendicare, approximately 130 beds.

I mentioned a few minutes ago about a hospital being built. That's the Northumberland Health Care Corp in West Northumberland, almost \$40 million from the provincial government. What a phenomenal fundraiser they had. It's gone way over any expectations and my hat's off to the fundraising team that raised so much money for that. Money has gone into the long-term-care facility at Regency Manor in Port Hope and the Streamway Villa in Cobourg.

Highways also: over the last few years since we took office we have spent approximately \$100 million on the

401 through Northumberland. That's putting in the centre barrier, and I'm sure that some of the members, like the Minister of Public Safety and Security, driving up through the riding from his riding, would appreciate the fact that barrier is there. It has increased safety and saved an awful lot of lives. It was a big campaign issue back in 1995, to get that centre barrier in. Also it's now six-laned right into Northumberland, with a tremendous number of dollars being spent on the cloverleaves and the bridges, particularly the bridge under construction right now that goes over the Ganaraska River.

Money has gone into transit renewal programs in Cobourg, Port Hope and Trent Hills. Also, the Baltimore Recreation Centre is upgrading and expanding; approximately \$2 million through SuperBuild that was presented only a month or two ago. Also there is money to Haldimand township, looking at their arena in Grafton. Also there are fish and wildlife programs, infrastructure rehabilitation and the Codrington well system. A Ganaraska fishway has been developed. Also there are a very large number of projects, some 11 projects at Presqu'île park, everything from comfort stations to improving trails, boardwalks, improving the lighthouse visitor centre, just to name a few.

There have also been dollars that have come in—very appreciative of Minister Tsubouchi and what he did for the RCAF museum. That's not in my riding, but it's right on the edge of my riding. There was roughly \$750,000 to give assistance to the RCAF museum, with many of the air force men working very hard to restore a Halifax aircraft that will be housed in this new addition that will be alongside the present museum. It's going to be a very impressive structure. I highly recommend to anyone here, if they're driving along the 401 through Quinte West, to drop in. It's only two or three kilometres off the 401. If you have any interest in aviation, it certainly would be quite a thrill for any of you to go through it.

In Cobourg, again, Minister Tsubouchi was down and made an announcement for the Waterfront Regeneration Trust, again roughly \$750,000, and that's going to help with the old Diversy plant, getting it cleaned up, and doubling the number of slips for boats in the harbour. The unfortunate part is they should be matching dollars with the federal government, but they're Liberals and we can understand why they drag their feet. I expect they'll do the right thing and will come through with some funds.

I want to share in the last minute and a half just a few of the Liberal positions. This was on Tuesday, November 26, McGuinty in the morning: "In keeping with their request, we will give municipalities the option to place up to 3% visitor's levy on hotel room bills. This will yield potential revenue of up to \$75 million per year for promotion and development of tourism." With McGuinty in the afternoon, the secret tax plan is missing. I don't know what happened to it, why they would announce it in the morning and pull it in the afternoon, but that's what seemed to happen.

I noticed that some of the Liberal policy on math just doesn't add up. Mr McGuinty said he would "expand

power generation at Niagara Falls creating enough new clean electricity to power every home in a city the size of Hamilton, which is almost 500,000." Then he later says, "We'll expand power generation in Niagara Falls creating enough new clean electricity to power every home in a city the size of Brampton; that's slightly over 300,000." I expect he was trying to capitalize on the select committee on alternative fuel sources, taking advantage of some of those recommendations, but the numbers should at least be consistent.

Mr Speaker, I look forward to the opposition voting in favour of concurrences and I thank you very much for the opportunity to speak.

The Acting Speaker: Mr Stockwell has moved concurrence in supply for the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, including supplementaries. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All in favour will say "aye."

All opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

We'll stack these votes.

Mr Stockwell has moved concurrence in supply for the Ministry of Education. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All in favour will say "aye."

All opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

We'll stack this vote.

Mr Stockwell has moved concurrence in supply for the Ministry of Environment and Energy. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All in favour will say "aye."

All opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

We'll stack this vote.

Mr Stockwell has moved concurrence in supply for the Office of the Premier. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All in favour will say "aye."

All opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

We'll stack this vote.

Mr Stockwell has moved concurrence in supply for the Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All in favour will say "aye."

All opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

This vote will be stacked.

Mr Stockwell has moved concurrence in supply for the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, including supplementaries. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All in favour will say "aye."

All opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

This vote will be stacked.

Mr Stockwell has moved concurrence in supply for the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, inclu-

ding supplementaries. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All in favour will say "aye."

All opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

We will stack this vote.

Mr Stockwell has moved concurrence in supply for the Ministry of Community, Family and Children's Services, including supplementaries. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All in favour will say "aye."

All opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

The vote will be stacked.

Mr Stockwell has moved concurrence in supply for the Ministry of Natural Resources.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All in favour will say "aye."

All opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it. We will stack this vote.

Mr Stockwell has moved concurrence in supply for the Ministry of Public Safety and Security.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All in favour will say "aye."

All opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it. We will stack this vote.

Mr Stockwell has moved concurrence in supply for the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All in favour will say "aye."

All opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it. The vote will be stacked.

Mr Stockwell has moved concurrence in supply for the Ministry of Enterprise, Opportunity and Innovation.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All in favour will say "aye."

All opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it. The vote will be stacked.

This will be a 10-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 2121 to 2131.

The Acting Speaker: Mr Stockwell has moved concurrence in supply for the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, including supplementaries.

All those in favour will rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Arnett, Ted	Hastings, John	O'Toole, John
Baird, John R.	Hudak, Tim	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Barrett, Toby	Jackson, Cameron	Runciman, Robert W.
Beaubien, Marcel	Johns, Helen	Sampson, Rob
Chudleigh, Ted	Johnson, Bert	Snobelen, John
Clark, Brad	Kells, Morley	Spina, Joseph
Clement, Tony	Klees, Frank	Sterling, Norman W.
Coburn, Brian	Marland, Margaret	Stewart, R. Gary
DeFaria, Carl	Martiniuk, Gerry	Stockwell, Chris
Dunlop, Garfield	Maves, Bart	Tascona, Joseph N.
Ecker, Janet	Mazzilli, Frank	Tsubouchi, David H.
Elliott, Brenda	McDonald, AL	Turnbull, David

Flaherty, Jim
Galt, Doug
Gilchrist, Steve
Gill, Raminder
Guzzo, Garry J.
Hardeman, Ernie

Miller, Norm
Molinari, Tina R.
Munro, Julia
Murdoch, Bill
Mushinski, Marilyn
Newman, Dan

Wettlaufer, Wayne
Wilson, Jim
Witmer, Elizabeth
Wood, Bob
Young, David

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

Nays

Agostino, Dominic	Conway, Sean G.	Martel, Shelley
Bartolucci, Rick	Crozier, Bruce	Martin, Tony
Bisson, Gilles	Di Cocco, Caroline	McGuinty, Dalton
Bountrogianni, Marie	Dombrowsky, Leona	McLeod, Lyn
Boyer, Claudette	Duncan, Dwight	Parsons, Ernie
Bradley, James J.	Gerretsen, John	Patten, Richard
Bryant, Michael	Gravelle, Michael	Peters, Steve
Caplan, David	Hampton, Howard	Phillips, Gerry
Christopherson, David	Hoy, Pat	Prue, Michael
Churley, Marilyn	Kormos, Peter	Pupatello, Sandra
Cleary, John C.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Ramsay, David
Colle, Mike	Levac, David	Ruprecht, Tony

Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers): The ayes are 53; the nays are 36.

The Acting Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Mr Stockwell has moved concurrence in supply for the Ministry of Education.

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

Ayes

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

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

Nays

Agostino, Dominic	Conway, Sean G.	Martel, Shelley
Bartolucci, Rick	Crozier, Bruce	Martin, Tony
Bisson, Gilles	Di Cocco, Caroline	McGuinty, Dalton
Bountrogianni, Marie	Dombrowsky, Leona	McLeod, Lyn
Boyer, Claudette	Duncan, Dwight	Parsons, Ernie
Bradley, James J.	Gerretsen, John	Patten, Richard
Bryant, Michael	Gravelle, Michael	Peters, Steve
Caplan, David	Hampton, Howard	Phillips, Gerry
Christopherson, David	Hoy, Pat	Prue, Michael
Churley, Marilyn	Kormos, Peter	Pupatello, Sandra
Cleary, John C.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Ramsay, David
Colle, Mike	Levac, David	Ruprecht, Tony

Clerk of the House: The ayes are 53; the nays are 36.

The Acting Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Mr Stockwell has moved concurrence in supply for the Ministry of the Environment. All those in favour will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

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

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

Nays

Agostino, Dominic	Conway, Sean G.	Martel, Shelley
Bartolucci, Rick	Crozier, Bruce	Martin, Tony
Bisson, Gilles	Di Cocco, Caroline	McGuinty, Dalton
Bountrogianni, Marie	Dombrowsky, Leona	McLeod, Lyn
Boyer, Claudette	Duncan, Dwight	Parsons, Ernie
Bradley, James J.	Gerretsen, John	Patten, Richard
Bryant, Michael	Gravelle, Michael	Peters, Steve
Caplan, David	Hampton, Howard	Phillips, Gerry
Christopherson, David	Hoy, Pat	Prue, Michael
Churley, Marilyn	Kormos, Peter	Pupatello, Sandra
Cleary, John C.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Ramsay, David
Colle, Mike	Levac, David	Ruprecht, Tony

Clerk of the House: The ayes are 53; the nays are 36.
2140

The Acting Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Mr Stockwell has moved concurrence in supply for the Office of the Premier. All those in favour will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

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

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

Nays

Agostino, Dominic	Conway, Sean G.	Martel, Shelley
Bartolucci, Rick	Crozier, Bruce	Martin, Tony
Bisson, Gilles	Di Cocco, Caroline	McGuinty, Dalton
Bountrogianni, Marie	Dombrowsky, Leona	McLeod, Lyn
Boyer, Claudette	Duncan, Dwight	Parsons, Ernie
Bradley, James J.	Gerretsen, John	Patten, Richard
Bryant, Michael	Gravelle, Michael	Peters, Steve
Caplan, David	Hampton, Howard	Phillips, Gerry
Christopherson, David	Hoy, Pat	Prue, Michael
Churley, Marilyn	Kormos, Peter	Pupatello, Sandra
Cleary, John C.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Ramsay, David
Colle, Mike	Levac, David	Ruprecht, Tony

Clerk of the House: The ayes are 53; the nays are 36.

The Acting Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Mr Stockwell has moved concurrence in supply for the Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs. All those in favour will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

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

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

Nays

Agostino, Dominic	Conway, Sean G.	Martel, Shelley
Bartolucci, Rick	Crozier, Bruce	Martin, Tony
Bisson, Gilles	Di Cocco, Caroline	McGuinty, Dalton
Bountrogianni, Marie	Dombrowsky, Leona	McLeod, Lyn
Boyer, Claudette	Duncan, Dwight	Parsons, Ernie
Bradley, James J.	Gerretsen, John	Patten, Richard
Bryant, Michael	Gravelle, Michael	Peters, Steve
Caplan, David	Hampton, Howard	Phillips, Gerry
Christopherson, David	Hoy, Pat	Prue, Michael
Churley, Marilyn	Kormos, Peter	Pupatello, Sandra
Cleary, John C.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Ramsay, David
Colle, Mike	Levac, David	Ruprecht, Tony

Clerk of the House: The ayes are 53; the nays are 36.

The Acting Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Mr Stockwell has moved concurrence in supply for the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, including supplementaries.

All those in favour will please stand one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

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

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

Nays

Agostino, Dominic	Conway, Sean G.	Martel, Shelley
Bartolucci, Rick	Crozier, Bruce	Martin, Tony
Bisson, Gilles	Di Cocco, Caroline	McGuinty, Dalton
Bountrogianni, Marie	Dombrowsky, Leona	McLeod, Lyn
Boyer, Claudette	Duncan, Dwight	Parsons, Ernie
Bradley, James J.	Gerretsen, John	Patten, Richard
Bryant, Michael	Gravelle, Michael	Peters, Steve
Caplan, David	Hampton, Howard	Phillips, Gerry
Christopherson, David	Hoy, Pat	Prue, Michael
Churley, Marilyn	Kormos, Peter	Pupatello, Sandra
Cleary, John C.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Ramsay, David
Colle, Mike	Levac, David	Ruprecht, Tony

Clerk of the House: The ayes are 53; the nays are 36.

The Acting Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Mr Stockwell has moved concurrence in supply for the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, including supplementaries.

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

Ayes

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

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

Nays

Agostino, Dominic	Conway, Sean G.	Martel, Shelley
Bartolucci, Rick	Crozier, Bruce	Martin, Tony
Bisson, Gilles	Di Cocco, Caroline	McGuinty, Dalton
Bountrogianni, Marie	Dombrowsky, Leona	McLeod, Lyn
Boyer, Claudette	Duncan, Dwight	Parsons, Ernie
Bradley, James J.	Gerretsen, John	Patten, Richard
Bryant, Michael	Gravelle, Michael	Peters, Steve
Caplan, David	Hampton, Howard	Phillips, Gerry
Christopherson, David	Hoy, Pat	Prue, Michael
Churley, Marilyn	Kormos, Peter	Pupatello, Sandra
Cleary, John C.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Ramsay, David
Colle, Mike	Levac, David	Ruprecht, Tony

Clerk of the House: The ayes are 53; the nays are 36.
2150

The Acting Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Mr Stockwell has moved concurrence in supply for the Ministry of Community, Family and Children's Services, including supplementaries.

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

Ayes

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

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

Nays

Agostino, Dominic	Conway, Sean G.	Martel, Shelley
Bartolucci, Rick	Crozier, Bruce	Martin, Tony
Bisson, Gilles	Di Cocco, Caroline	McGuinty, Dalton
Bountrogianni, Marie	Dombrowsky, Leona	McLeod, Lyn
Boyer, Claudette	Duncan, Dwight	Parsons, Ernie
Bradley, James J.	Gerretsen, John	Patten, Richard
Bryant, Michael	Gravelle, Michael	Peters, Steve
Caplan, David	Hampton, Howard	Phillips, Gerry
Christopherson, David	Hoy, Pat	Prue, Michael
Churley, Marilyn	Kormos, Peter	Pupatello, Sandra
Cleary, John C.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Ramsay, David
Colle, Mike	Levac, David	Ruprecht, Tony

Clerk of the House: The ayes are 53; the nays are 36.

The Acting Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Mr Stockwell has moved concurrence in supply for the Ministry of Natural Resources.

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

Ayes

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

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

Nays

Agostino, Dominic	Conway, Sean G.	Martel, Shelley
Bartolucci, Rick	Crozier, Bruce	Martin, Tony
Bisson, Gilles	Di Cocco, Caroline	McGuinty, Dalton
Bountrogianni, Marie	Dombrowsky, Leona	McLeod, Lyn
Boyer, Claudette	Duncan, Dwight	Parsons, Ernie
Bradley, James J.	Gerretsen, John	Patten, Richard
Bryant, Michael	Gravelle, Michael	Peters, Steve
Caplan, David	Hampton, Howard	Phillips, Gerry
Christopherson, David	Hoy, Pat	Prue, Michael
Churley, Marilyn	Kormos, Peter	Pupatello, Sandra
Cleary, John C.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Ramsay, David
Colle, Mike	Levac, David	Ruprecht, Tony

Clerk of the House: The ayes are 53; the nays are 36.

The Acting Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Mr Stockwell has moved concurrence in supply for the Ministry of Public Safety and Security.

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

Ayes

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

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

Nays

Agostino, Dominic	Conway, Sean G.	Martel, Shelley
Bartolucci, Rick	Crozier, Bruce	Martin, Tony
Bisson, Gilles	Di Cocco, Caroline	McGuinty, Dalton
Bountrogianni, Marie	Dombrowsky, Leona	McLeod, Lyn
Boyer, Claudette	Duncan, Dwight	Parsons, Ernie
Bradley, James J.	Gerretsen, John	Patten, Richard
Bryant, Michael	Gravelle, Michael	Peters, Steve
Caplan, David	Hampton, Howard	Phillips, Gerry
Christopherson, David	Hoy, Pat	Prue, Michael
Churley, Marilyn	Kormos, Peter	Pupatello, Sandra
Cleary, John C.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Ramsay, David
Colle, Mike	Levac, David	Ruprecht, Tony

Clerk of the House: The ayes are 53; the nays are 36.

2200

The Acting Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Mr Stockwell has moved concurrence in supply for the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation.

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

Ayes

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

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

Nays

Agostino, Dominic	Conway, Sean G.	Martel, Shelley
Bartolucci, Rick	Crozier, Bruce	Martin, Tony
Bisson, Gilles	Di Cocco, Caroline	McGuinty, Dalton
Bountrogianni, Marie	Dombrowsky, Leona	McLeod, Lyn
Boyer, Claudette	Duncan, Dwight	Parsons, Ernie
Bradley, James J.	Gerretsen, John	Patten, Richard
Bryant, Michael	Gravelle, Michael	Peters, Steve
Caplan, David	Hampton, Howard	Phillips, Gerry
Christopherson, David	Hoy, Pat	Prue, Michael
Churley, Marilyn	Kormos, Peter	Pupatello, Sandra
Cleary, John C.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Ramsay, David
Colle, Mike	Levac, David	Ruprecht, Tony

Clerk of the House: The ayes are 53; the nays are 36.

The Acting Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Mr Stockwell has moved concurrence in supply for the Ministry of Enterprise, Opportunity and Innovation.

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

Ayes

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

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

Nays

Agostino, Dominic	Conway, Sean G.	Martel, Shelley
Bartolucci, Rick	Crozier, Bruce	Martin, Tony
Bisson, Gilles	Di Cocco, Caroline	McGuinty, Dalton
Bountrogianni, Marie	Dombrowsky, Leona	McLeod, Lyn
Boyer, Claudette	Duncan, Dwight	Parsons, Ernie
Bradley, James J.	Gerretsen, John	Patten, Richard
Bryant, Michael	Gravelle, Michael	Peters, Steve
Caplan, David	Hampton, Howard	Phillips, Gerry
Christopherson, David	Hoy, Pat	Prue, Michael
Churley, Marilyn	Kormos, Peter	Pupatello, Sandra
Cleary, John C.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Ramsay, David
Colle, Mike	Levac, David	Ruprecht, Tony

Clerk of the House: The ayes are 53; the nays are 36.

The Acting Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS EMPLOYMENT PROTECTION ACT, 2002

LOI DE 2002 SUR LA PROTECTION DE L'EMPLOI DES POMPIERS VOLONTAIRES

Resuming the debate adjourned on December 9, 2002, on the motion for third reading of Bill 30, An Act to amend the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997 in order to protect the employment of volunteer firefighters / Projet de loi 30, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur la prévention et la protection contre l'incendie afin de protéger l'emploi des pompiers volontaires.

Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I rise pursuant to standing order 9(c), which deals with what can be dealt with on a motion. Today's motion—we reviewed Instant Hansard—clearly indicated that the government would call government business. I will read to you the relevant

section of standing order 9. It's quite long; I will shorten it. It says:

“Evening meetings held under subclauses (i) or (ii) shall be limited to the consideration of government orders or private members' public business or both, according to the terms of the motion....”

Instant Hansard says very clearly, and the Speaker repeated very clearly, that it was for the purpose of government business. A review of today's order paper indicates that the item that was just called is in fact a private member's item: M30. It's clearly designated as an “M” item. I would suggest that, because the terms of the motion limit our consideration tonight to government business, that calling this order is out of order. It's not in compliance with the motion that was put and passed by the government today.

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): On the same point of order, Speaker: Indeed, the argument is even stronger. If you take a look at standing order 9, in particular standing order 9(c), as well as the motion that was passed, you will note that the motion was passed with specific reference to 9(c)(ii). The addendum to 9(c) indicates that evening meetings held under (i) or (ii) shall deal with either government business or—and it is an exegetical “or”—private members' public business, or—and once again exegetical—both, as indicated in the motion. It doesn't apply to motions brought under 9(c)(iii). This is clearly a motion brought under 9(c)(ii), because 9(c)(ii) is referred to in the motion itself.

But take a look further, to paragraph (d) of standing order 9, which indicates that when it is private members' public business that is to be called, there are further requirements on the government House leader when presenting that motion. Paragraph (d) very specifically indicates that where a motion under clause (c) indicates that all or part of an evening meeting will be dedicated “to the consideration of private members' public business, the motion shall indicate the business to be considered.” Clearly, this motion not only identifies itself as being for the purpose of considering government business, but it cannot be argued to somehow implicitly embrace private members' public business, because clause (d) goes one further and indicates that when the government is contemplating calling private members' public business, it has to indicate which private members' bills are to be called.

Interjections.

2210

The Acting Speaker (Mr Michael A. Brown): It is so noisy, I cannot hear the member for Niagara Centre. If you want to have private conversations, take them outside. I need to be able to hear the member for Niagara Centre.

Mr Kormos: I realize that this is a serious problem for the government House leader this evening. However, it is not this caucus that drafted the motion. In fact, we voted against the motion. We didn't want to be a party to this motion. The government House leader chose the motion to put forward. It is not ambiguous; it is clear. So

is standing order 9. The language is clear; it is not ambiguous; it is as specific as could be. Any doubt about the intent of the scope of this motion is surely addressed by paragraph (d), which is the one that requires that when it is private members' public business, the private members' public business that is going to be considered has to be identified in the motion.

That, I submit to you, Speaker, does not shut down the evening but requires the government to call a government bill if we are to proceed any further tonight.

The Acting Speaker: Anyone else on this point of order? The government House leader.

Hon Chris Stockwell (Minister of the Environment, Government House Leader): First of all, this is exactly how it was done last night. So as far as the precedent is concerned, if there's a timeliness to a point of order, the timeliness was brought at the time of the point of order. Last night there was a timeliness issue, and the issue was exactly this: the timeliness of that point of order should have been brought at that time.

Secondly, this is exactly how it is done every single session.

Interjection: Oh no.

Hon Mr Stockwell: Oh yes. We sit late, it's for government business and we deal with private members' bills.

Thirdly, I have not known a time when this House didn't sit late and deal with private members' business during late sittings.

Interjection.

Hon Mr Stockwell: Am I going to be heckled by the member? I listened to him very carefully.

We've dealt with this as long as I've been in this House; where private members' business was done after 6 of the clock during late sittings to do government business.

Furthermore, once a bill is called, it is called as government business. Once a bill is called, the government calls the bill and it becomes government business because—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: I need to hear the government House leader; I don't need all your assistance.

Hon Mr Stockwell: It becomes government business for the simple reason that the only person who can call an order of the House is the government. As the government, I must be allowed to call the order of the House. If I don't have the power to order government business, I can't—

Interjections.

Hon Mr Stockwell: I appreciate your knowledge on this, but I'm trying to explain it to my friend from Algoma.

The fact of the matter is that as long as I am here as House leader, we are the government. We only have the power to order business of the House. Therefore, all business we call in this House ultimately becomes government business.

So firstly, if they were to call this, there's a timeliness issue. They should have brought it up last night.

Secondly, from a point of history, we've always dealt with this business during late sittings.

Thirdly, by virtue of being the government and the only people who can order business of the House, we are the government, so it must be government business.

It is not an acceptable argument, Speaker. I put it to you to make the decision.

The Acting Speaker: On the same point of order, the member for Niagara Centre.

Mr Kormos: I would ask the Speaker and other members who are interested to refer to standing order 96, paragraph (f), which specifically refers to private members' public business and how private members' public business bills can only be called by the government House leader for third reading but still clearly retain their status as private members' public business.

You see, there's no other way for private members' public business to reach third reading other than by consent or if it's called by the government House leader. That's the case whether it's a Liberal bill that's private members' public business, a New Democratic Party bill like our anti-scab legislation that's private members' public business, or a government backbencher's bill, or quite frankly a member who is not a part of any given caucus or identified party.

So 96(f) clearly refutes any suggestion that somehow there's a metamorphosis of a bill. An opposition member's private members' public business can only be called for third reading by the government House leader. This suggests that somehow, if Mr Bisson's legislation as private members' public business is called for third reading, it then becomes a government bill—

Hon Mr Stockwell: Exactly.

Mr Kormos: I beg to differ. No matter how much Mr Stockwell wishes it were true, and I understand why tonight he wishes it were true, he can't wish away the ongoing status. Private members' public business remains a private member's bill throughout its passage through the House as long as it is in the name of that private member.

Secondly, Mr Stockwell argues some awkward proposition of estoppel by making reference to last night's debate.

One, the government chose to bring the bill to the House last night on a particular motion. It had another motion today. The motion the government purported to rely upon last night died at midnight last night. There was another motion voted upon today, which is now the operative motion. That makes this a very timely point of order, because this point of order by both Mr Duncan and myself refers not to any previous motions that permit evening sittings; it refers to the very specific motion for which notice was made and which was voted upon today and which the government relies upon for this evening's sitting. That's number one.

Two, I put to you that at the very worst—I put to you that it's not necessary to consider last night, because you can't create precedent by acquiescence. Precedent is

created by active conduct. Precedent is created by a ruling.

If, for instance, Mr Speaker, you, or a Speaker, permitted me to use unparliamentary language with respect to any given government member over and over and over again, the fact that a Speaker at some point says, "Oh, member for Niagara Centre, that language is unparliamentary," cannot be defended by my saying, "But previous Speakers never prevented me from calling somebody a whatever." So you can't acquire precedent by acquiescence.

Three, with respect to yesterday evening, I submit that it was, if one refers to the record, *prima facie* out of order, but that at the very least there was an implied—if there were any implications—consent by virtue of there having been no objection made to the utilization of last night's session from 6:45 to midnight.

There ain't no implied consent today. There is a clear point of order before you. What you have to look at, with respect, is at the motion the government relies upon, at the bill and whether or not it's a private member's bill, government bill, and at whether or not that motion permits that bill or any other private member's bill to be called this evening.

I appreciate that the government House leader is not pleased about this turn of events. I wish I could do something for him. I wish I could make life a little more pleasant for him this evening, but I can't.

Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay): On the same point of order, Mr Speaker: I just want to add two points, and I'm not going to belabour it. Clearly, our standing orders deal with private members' business and government bills separately. For the government House leader to say one and the other are the same is a complete stretch. If we look at the standing orders as they're written, we deal with private members' bills in one procedure and we deal with government bills in a totally separate procedure. So to accept the government House leader's argument that both types of bills can be dealt with in the same way at third reading is completely a stretch. All we need to do is take a look at our standing orders. How we pass private members' bills in this House is totally separate from how we pass government bills.

The second point is that the government House leader made the point that at times at the end of sessions, we have dealt with private members' bills. The key point, as my House leader has pointed out, is that that is only by unanimous consent. At no time are we dealing with private members' bills by way of a government bill. You've been here, Speaker, and you understand far too well how it works: only by unanimous consent do we allow a private member's bill to go forward.

For the government to put forward the argument that these private members' bills be dealt with as government bills I think is completely off the mark. Private members' bills are totally separate, as set out in the standing orders, from government bills.

The Acting Speaker: Is there anyone else who wishes to be helpful? I am going to take five minutes to consider this. This House will stand in recess while we do that.

The House recessed from 2221 to 2228.

The Acting Speaker: First, I would like to thank the member for Windsor-St Clair, the member for Niagara Centre, the member for Timmins-James Bay and the government House leader for their assistance in this matter.

I would bring to members' attention that standing order 9 states that a night sitting must be limited to government orders, private members' business, or both. I might be inclined to agree with the member if this was all the guidance I had. Yet standing order 96(f) clearly states that private members' bills, having been given second reading, shall be called in the same manner as government business. This is a standing order. This has been our practice. I therefore rule that this order is properly before the House.

The Minister for Northern Development and Mines had the floor.

Hon Jim Wilson (Minister of Northern Development and Mines): I'll just be quick and recap for the people at home that we're talking about Bill 30, An Act to amend the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997 in order to protect the employment of volunteer firefighters. This bill was put forward by the member for Waterloo-Wellington, Mr Ted Arnott, who has done an excellent job on this piece of legislation.

To me, it boils down to a very simple concept, the concept that's cherished by our society and is the *raison d'être* for this Legislative Assembly and all Legislative Assemblies in the British parliamentary system, and that is to preserve freedom. For the people at home, what the Professional Fire Fighters Association wants to do and has been doing, and it's even written into collective agreements, is stop their members from volunteering back home on their own time to fight fires in their local fire brigades.

If you live in New Tecumseth, Clearview, Grey county, most of Simcoe county, Huron county, all of rural and small-town Ontario, throughout this province and this country we rely on volunteer firefighters and we especially appreciate those volunteers who also have the full-time job of professional firefighter. They bring expertise, they bring knowledge, they bring experience and they bring in fact human power to our local brigades, and they're very much valued and very much appreciated. No union, no association, no body not elected by the people at large should have the power in any democracy to tell you what you can or cannot do on your day off. Many firefighters in my area who volunteer locally also are professional firefighters in the city to Toronto; for example, I have firefighters from New Tecumseth and Alliston who perform both roles. The fact of the matter is they have five days on, when they're firefighting professionally in Toronto, and they have five days off. Their association, because of a powerplay, simply wants to stop

them from volunteering in Alliston, Tottenham, Beeton, New Tecumseth and throughout my riding.

It's a very clear issue of freedom, a question of justice, a question of fairness and a question of good citizenship. As legislators you have to ask yourselves a few questions. Is this fair? No, it's not fair. It's not fair that anyone tells you what to do on your own time in a free and democratic society. Is it just? I have a degree in religion. A simple test of justice for all of us is: does that firefighter who volunteers on a free basis in their local community on their own time deserve to be punished? Did he or she do anything wrong? I think most objective people would say no. In fact, they're upholding good citizenship. The best definition of good citizenship that I've heard in my life is that if at the end of the day the people you meet, the places you work in, the communities you live in are better for the very fact that you were there, that you were there that day, then you've embraced good citizenship that day. Are our communities better because volunteer firefighters who are also professional firefighters risk their lives, risk their safety, risk their loved ones to save other people's loved ones? Yes, they are.

On a number of fronts this bill deserves to be supported. Firefighters do not deserve to have their union tell them what to do on their spare time. It's a great Conservative principle and I wish it was a principle the New Democratic Party, who were rude last night, who were vicious in their attack on freedom and in fact on this member and many of my colleagues who stood up for freedom in this Legislature, and I'm glad they were, because I've had my doubts whether I'm running again or not, but my doubts were put to rest when I spoke at midnight last night. People have to defend freedom in this society, and if they won't do it and if the Liberals won't do it, then, by God, I hope the majority of members in my party will do it. People deserve to have their rights protected.

Mr Speaker, in the beautiful prayer that opens this Legislative Assembly, which you read on our behalf every day at the opening of the session, the beautiful words you recite on behalf of the people of Ontario to guide us in our deliberations in this assembly, there's the wonderful line that says, "Inspire us to decisions which establish and maintain a land of prosperity and righteousness where freedom prevails and where justice rules."

This is a bill that allows members to live up to those beautiful words, indeed a prayer to God, and to face their God and face their fellow citizens and say, "Today we embraced good citizenship. Today my community is better. Today the rights of volunteer firefighters are protected. Today I did what my constituents want, what my conscience dictates and what the people of Ontario deserve."

With that, I now put the question.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Mr Wilson has moved that the question be now put. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 30-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 2236 to 2306.

The Speaker: Mr Wilson has moved that the question be now put. All those in favour will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Arnott, Ted	Hardeman, Ernie	Murdoch, Bill
Baird, John R.	Hastings, John	Newman, Dan
Barrett, Toby	Hudak, Tim	O'Toole, John
Beaubien, Marcel	Jackson, Cameron	Sampson, Rob
Chudleigh, Ted	Johns, Helen	Snobelen, John
Clark, Brad	Johnson, Bert	Spina, Joseph
Clement, Tony	Kells, Morley	Sterling, Norman W.
Coburn, Brian	Klees, Frank	Stockwell, Chris
Cunningham, Dianne	Marland, Margaret	Tascona, Joseph N.
DeFaria, Carl	Martiniuk, Gerry	Tsubouchi, David H.
Ecker, Janet	Maves, Bart	Turnbull, David
Elliott, Brenda	Mazzilli, Frank	Wettlaufer, Wayne
Galt, Doug	McDonald, AL	Wilson, Jim
Gilchrist, Steve	Miller, Norm	Witmer, Elizabeth
Gill, Raminder	Molinari, Tina R.	Young, David
Guzzo, Garry J.	Munro, Julia	

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

Nays

Agostino, Dominic	Colle, Mike	Levac, David
Bartolucci, Rick	Conway, Sean G.	Martel, Shelley
Bisson, Gilles	Crozier, Bruce	Martin, Tony
Bountrogiani, Marie	Dombrowsky, Leona	McMeekin, Ted
Boyer, Claudette	Gerretsen, John	Patten, Richard
Bradley, James J.	Gravelle, Michael	Peters, Steve
Brown, Michael A.	Hampton, Howard	Prue, Michael
Caplan, David	Hoy, Pat	Ramsay, David
Christopherson, David	Kormos, Peter	Ruprecht, Tony
Churley, Marilyn	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Wood, Bob

Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers): The ayes are 47; the nays are 30.

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Mr Arnott has moved third reading of Bill 30. Just so we're clear too, on both sides: for the side that doesn't favour, because this could be a close one, it's not going to be a shouting match. We'll try to get a consensus. That side that doesn't agree, five members stand. We can have bells. Just so you're clear on both sides.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All in favour will please say "aye."

All opposed will please say "nay."

We need a sound meter. We're clear on what can happen, so we do have a recorded vote with the standings. In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members; this will be a 30-minute bell.

"Pursuant to standing order 28(h), I request that the vote on Bill 30, An Act to amend the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997 in order to protect the employment of volunteer firefighters, be deferred until December 10, 2002."

Interjections.

The Speaker: Sorry. I apologize; that it be deferred until December 11 after orders of the day.

Hon Mr Stockwell: I want to apologize. That was my fault, I say to the opposition.

ONTARIO SOCIETY
FOR THE PREVENTION
OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS
AMENDMENT ACT, 2001
LOI DE 2001 MODIFIANT LA LOI
SUR LA SOCIÉTÉ DE PROTECTION
DES ANIMAUX DE L'ONTARIO

Mrs Munro moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 129, An Act to amend the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act / Projet de loi 129, Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société de protection des animaux de l'Ontario.

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): On a point of order, Speaker: I will be brief, but I rise on a point of order. I submit to you that this bill is not in order, with the same—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Order. I'm going to be very clear now, folks. Tempers are up. People are yelling and screaming and I'm not going to put up with it. I'm not going to be mad. We are going to simply remove people, and I'm going to remove them quickly. Tempers are up when we sit at night, and I'm not going to put up with it. I want it to be clear to everyone. I am not going to take abuse of people yelling at me or anybody else in this House, and you will be removed. The Sergeant at Arms is prepared to remove you, if need be. I will have co-operation here. It's because of the way you behave that I have to act like this, but I will control this place.

Mr Kormos: Speaker, I understand your ruling on the previous points of order, but I submit to you, consistent with the arguments made with respect to the calling of M30, the calling of this bill is similarly out of order with references to standing orders 9 and 96.

The Speaker: It followed the procedures. It was in order. The last one was for the same reason that was given. I agree 100% with the ruling of the other Speaker.

Mrs Julia Munro (York North): I think many of us understand the importance of this bill that we are looking at this evening. Many of us have seen the kind of media attention that has been given on numerous occasions to the appearance of animals that have been neglected, animals that have been kept for breeding and sale.

This act is designed to address that particular problem. It is clear when the Ontario SPCA is called in to those situations where animals are kept in a way that demonstrates neglect. It is on the basis of that particular issue that prompted me to consider looking at methods by which to strengthen the Ontario SPCA act.

If you look at the act today, when those inspectors make a raid, the most that they can do is seize the

animals. The individual owner has the ability to appeal to the Animal Care Review Board. Again, the only mechanism that the SPCA has is to be able to seize the animals, go to the Animal Care Review Board and that board, then, makes a decision. If the owners are prepared, they can pay costs and have the animals back again. The SPCA can adopt a criminal process but the maximum fine is \$2,000, so this has meant that for years people have seen this as the cost of doing business.

This is a market-driven problem. People are tempted to buy, very often on a whim, on the appearance of a cute little puppy or kitten. Many people are driven by the fact that they want to rescue this little animal. Unfortunately what they do is simply line the pockets of the individual who is keeping the animal in a way that's inappropriate. The person who is conducting the business in such a way doesn't care what the motive of the buyer is. The fact the buyer has paid for this puppy or kitten is all they care about.

That's one of the problems this bill tries to address. The limitations by which the current legislation provides tools for the SPCA is one of the problems, and the fact there are hundreds of animals that are kept in these circumstances to provide the market and meet that demand. This is what prompted me to consider looking at this issue and how it might be addressed.

I also looked at other jurisdictions. It's quite clear to me that this is not a problem that exists only in Ontario; it's a problem that exists across the country and in North America. When you look at other jurisdictions, they often seem tangled in legislation that is very prescriptive, very costly, and quite frankly, really only serves to identify responsible individuals, because just as with gun legislation criminals don't register their guns, so equally, those people who are raising their animals in inappropriate conditions aren't the people who are going to sign up for a registry to become part of any kind of program.

I think it's important to note that this is not a problem that is unique to Ontario, but it is a problem that obviously we, in this Legislature, have the power to make a difference on for the people of Ontario, and in this case I would argue, as importantly, for our puppies and kittens.

When I looked at the various jurisdictions and the kind of legislation other people were dealing with, I recognized some of the limitations: whether it's the cost, whether it's the problem of the wrong people being covered by the legislation, whether it's unduly punitive. Some jurisdictions look at numbers, and numbers are not the issue.

I began to consult with various groups of people, including a number of veterinarians who have participated in raids with the OSPCA, a number of veterinarians who have treated animals that have come from these circumstances, and a number of veterinarians who have had to tell their owners that while they have a really cute, harmless, sympathetic little puppy or kitten, they will also have a huge vet bill because they are looking at an animal that has not been raised with any kind of care or consideration.

I also talked to the Canadian Kennel Club, and from them had the perspective of the fanciers, the breeders, across the country who try to maintain standards that allow them to present themselves to the buying public as responsible breeders.

I also talked to the Ontario SPCA and asked them, if they were to look at the key issue around their raids, what was it that prompted them to go to a business? What was it they found? What was it that was most unsavoury about the kind of circumstances they came across? Their answer to me was very clear. It centred around the issue of neglect. That is the key point they observe when they go to any of these places. They saw animals that were inadequately housed. They saw animals that were put in situations that might be dangerous to them. That might simply be having too many in one pen. It might be having inappropriate age ranges of animals together. There were situations where animals were actually ill, where they had not been adequately treated in terms of veterinary care.

2320

From that, I understood that the most important thing the SPCA dealt with was the question of neglect and therefore the question of care. What followed from that was that I created a definition, because so many jurisdictions struggle with, what is a puppy mill? In the public mind, there is the notion of numbers, the notion of crowding, the notion of adults being bred in an irresponsible way. There's the notion of puppies not being adequately cared for, not being socialized; for instance, having genetic testing and so forth. It became clear to me that was the critical piece we had to deal with.

Rather than get caught up with what had happened in so many other jurisdictions where they looked at numbers, where they looked at specific breeds, and looked at the number of breeds in some jurisdictions, it became clear to me that what we want as legislators, that what we want to be able to support the work of the SPCA, is to give them a clear direction that it is standards of care that is the key issue. None of the other issues are germane to the issue of neglect.

I think it's important to understand that what we are doing here is establishing landmark legislation that will provide the SPCA with a framework that allows them to look at care as the key issue, and gives them more tools by making this a provincial offence. This is something they have certainly asked for, because as I pointed out, currently all they can do is seize the animals, seize the dogs or cats, have a hearing with the Animal Care Review Board, and, looking to the federal Criminal Code, the possibility of a \$2,000 fine.

Once the bill had been debated, I had the opportunity to visit with a group of veterinarians. It was really interesting to hear their stories. They supported this. They sometimes see the inappropriate choices people have made. These little creatures, because usually they are available at a very young age, come to them suffering from the long-term neglect they will have had in their very short lives. One of the vets told me he was involved

in a raid in the 1960s. This problem has been there since then.

This bill, if passed, would give the SPCA the tools that would allow them to take that issue of neglect and be able to charge a provincial offence. That is the essence of this bill.

I think it's really important to understand why the key should be the importance of the standards of care. There are people who make it a business decision to have large numbers of dogs or cats. There are certainly businesses in Ontario that do have many dogs or cats, but these animals are kept in adequate housing, they're fed and cared for in an appropriate fashion and their inoculations are up-to-date. These are examples of the standards of care we're talking about. If those people wish to make that kind of business decision, they will not be impacted by this proposed legislation.

We will not walk down the path that others have, which has created registries and onerous limitations in terms of the number of animals and things like that, because at the end of the day that has nothing to do with whether or not the dog or cat is being well looked after. It is the responsibility of the SPCA to look after the welfare of dogs and cats.

To be able to give them this piece of legislation, which gives very clear standards about food and water, shelter, adequate medical attention, the appropriate size and space they are allowed in an enclosure, and the safety of that enclosure—those are things that are very clear for the SPCA inspectors when they go to identify if this is a place where those standards are met. It means, then, that by definition we're talking about a standard that all will adhere to, whether they have two or three dogs that are kept for breeding and sale or whether they have 60. I think that's the really critical piece that allows this legislation to potentially be landmark legislation. Those people who make the business decision to provide the market with a number of dogs, whether it's 100 puppies a year or six puppies a year, every single one of them is going to be under the same umbrella, the same legislative directive. I think that is the most important thing this bill does.

We need to look at the fact that in this legislation we have avoided the pitfalls so many other jurisdictions have fallen into by looking at a specific number of animals, of dogs or cats, that triggers some kind of special consideration. As we're looking at the time of year when people are often tempted to look at the purchase of a puppy or a kitten, we should also be looking at the manner in which that puppy or kitten has been raised, because it is that secure, confident puppy or kitten that is going to be the kind of pet people want as the family pet.

It is certainly clear from the kinds of evidence the SPCA has gathered over the years that there are those who have obviously been irresponsible in raising those puppies and kittens. I suppose one thing one could say about the bill is that for so many years there has been such an opportunity for people to provide animals to the marketplace that frankly have caused a lot of grief to their new owners because of the way they have been raised.

2330

This bill, then, is all about making sure that does not continue to happen. It's all about creating a public awareness that people should expect that the puppy or kitten they purchase is going to have had the kind of careful raising that will serve them as that future pet in their own home.

I want to close by suggesting to you that the bill is based on the practical realities of what happens in our province on a daily basis and the need to provide the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals the kinds of tools that will allow them to do more than they have previously been able to do, which is simply to seize animals which the owner could then come back and claim. So we have clear guidelines for the SPCA. They have the power to lay a charge as a provincial offence. We are also looking at ensuring that the buying public has some measure of protection, that they can assume that the puppy or kitten they are about to purchase has had the adequate care, food and shelter that will ensure that it is in fact the pet they want to purchase.

The Speaker: Further debate?

Mr Mike Colle (Eglinton-Lawrence): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity to speak on this bill that has been brought forward to us at 11:30 at night. I know why they want to bring forward this bill in the middle of the night: because they're trying to pull a fast one. I know the member for York North fails to inform the public out there that she has a financial interest in this bill because she's a breeder. Her family has been involved in breeding dogs for years. So I don't know why she wouldn't mention to you that she has a bias, at least, if not a conflict, if not a financial interest. So she comes to this piece of legislation from a different perspective. She's in the business of breeding animals.

I am not in the business of breeding animals. I do own a dog. I have been involved with a lot of caring people across this province who are just horrified at what has been happening to innocent animals right under the nose of this government, which repeatedly has done nothing to stop the systemic abuse of animals, whether it be cats, dogs, horses. This bill is really a very devious attempt to make people think something is being done, when the member for York North knows specifically that the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals told you that your bill would do more harm than good.

Let me quote from their press release of March 13. This is the group she says she's trying to help. Vicky Earle, the CEO of the society, said, "They have ignored these amendments that have been sitting on their desk since June, 2001, and instead have rallied behind Julia Munro's private member's bill which is so problematic that the Ontario SPCA cannot support it."

The Ontario SPCA wants real tools to do its job. This bill gives them nothing. It gives them more problems than they had before, because people will think the problem is going to be attended to. Well, it's not.

The member for York North was in committee when this bill was there, and I proposed all the amendments of

the SPCA that they thought would make the bill somewhat more meaningful. She rejected each one of these amendments. She and her committee would not make the SPCA amendments part of her bill. She turned every one down.

Here's what she turned down. First of all, the SPCA asked that all animals in a state of distress be treated, not just kittens and puppies, because we have cases of people breeding birds that kill each other; we have horses that are in a state of distress. The SPCA says "animals" should be included, not just her narrow definition. She refused to listen on that.

She also refused to support making it possible for a judge to ban puppy mill owners from owning animals for the rest of their lives. She also refuses to allow SPCA officers to enter a property without being obstructed. That's the problem. She says there's an interest in the standard of care. Well, the SPCA officers can be obstructed by property owners. These puppy mill breeders can stop these officers from entering their property so they can't even find out what's going on.

This very weak, phony bill also refuses to recognize the fact that there are pet stores across this province that make millions of dollars a year selling animals in their little windows in the plazas across this province. This bill will not stop one pet store from selling truckloads of dogs and cats that come in across the border and that are probably coming in now for the Christmas season, where unsuspecting children and families are going to buy these poor animals that come from puppy mills in the States. This bill refuses to deal with that. That's the kind of bill we need.

She doesn't want to be tough on the breeders in these puppy mills. She doesn't care about them. She cares about the business interests who are behind the puppy mill industry, all these pet stores that make millions on unsuspecting children and families and abuse animals while they're making their millions. This bill doesn't include that kind of protection. That's why the SPCA does not support it.

She also refused to make it an offence to train animals to fight other animals. That should have been in this bill. It's not here. All over this province there are people who train certain breeds of dogs like pit bulls just for the sake of fighting and killing each other. She did not include that in this bill because this bill, again, is just an attempt by her and her party to respond to the outrage across this province where over 230,000 people have signed a petition asking for the OSPCA's tough amendments to be included. Some 230,000 Ontarians said they wanted tough amendments to protect animals, and she refuses to put those amendments in her bill. She doesn't support the 230,000 people who said they want tough regulations and they want these puppy mills put out of business.

Instead, this bill will continue to foster the puppy mill industry because it has essentially given no tools to the people who are underfunded and trying to cope with this plague across this province. They know that in Ontario anybody can be a so-called breeder. To own a dog in

most municipalities, you need a licence. Well, if you're a breeder in Ontario, you don't need a licence. Anybody can claim to be a breeder: in a backyard, behind a barn, anywhere. You don't even need a simple licence to be a breeder. That's why we've got 400-plus of these illegal bandits, pirates, these scum across the province that are breeding these animals in conditions that are horrific. We've seen them on CTV, on CBC. They're in every community across this province, where animals are kept in their own feces and are basically not fed, not even provided with water. We've got 400 of these scum operators, and not one of them will be put out of business by this weak attempt to pretend they're doing something.

That's why advocates who have been fighting for a little bit of protection against this kind of abuse do not support this private member's bill, and that is why she refused to support my private member's bill and her government colleagues voted it down, because my bill asked for an outrageous thing: it asked for breeders to be licensed. They rejected that. If you own a restaurant, you need a licence. Most people in business require some kind of licence, but in Ontario a breeder can breed thousands of animals, make millions of dollars, with no licence, no inspection. You get inspected by no one.

You know what they do? They say, "I have a Canadian Kennel Club membership." Well, they're forged all over the place, plus with the Canadian Kennel Club, you pay your money and you get your membership.

2340

A consumer who gets an animal that has possibly been a product of a puppy mill has nowhere to go to complain. Every day, there are ads in the newspapers; they're sold. Somebody just e-mailed me something tonight when they found out about this horrific attempt by this member to pretend she's doing something. It said there are people at the Pickering flea market selling these poor animals in horrific conditions at the local flea market every Saturday. This is the type of thing that's going on all over the province.

The SPCA just had to lay off 15 people. They can't keep up with it. They don't have the staff. For instance, they've been after the infamous Miesner family north of Toronto since 1968. They still haven't gone to court on their latest thing. They hire expensive lawyers; the SPCA can't afford to spend days and months in court. The Miesners have been in court now for the last three years. The case hasn't even come before the judge yet because of the money they have.

This bill will not put the Miesners out of business. In fact, I call this the Miesners protection act. That's what it does. It ensures that these bandits, these people who don't pay taxes—they abuse animals, they abuse consumers—are going to relish this bill; they're shaking in their boots when they see this bill brought forward by someone who's got an obvious bias because she's in the business of breeding. She doesn't like to tell people she does that for a living, and she should, because this is not about business. As a lot of people say, a civilized society

is ultimately judged by how it treats the most vulnerable and defenceless in its ranks.

It doesn't matter whether or not you're an animal lover or an animal owner, a pet owner; it's about decency and humanity. We don't have to be extremely involved in animal protection, but we have to understand that there's a direct correlation between people who abuse animals and people who abuse human beings. That's why it's important to do something about this. That's been verified in study after study.

The thing that's astonishing—I've got a cabinet document here from last June, marked "Confidential Document: Amendments to the Ontario SPCA Act." It's for the Minister of Public Safety and Security, the committee for justice and intergovernmental policy. It says "Confidential document, Draft 7." It's a 38-page document that basically says that animal abuse in this province is a serious issue, that the government should do something serious about it. They tell us why it has to be treated seriously.

In 2001, there was considerable coverage of the rescue of 300 dogs from a number of puppy mills in Ontario. In April 2002, OPP officers busted a large-scale cock-fighting operation southwest of Collingwood. In Toronto, "...involving horrific animal cruelty resulting in convictions against two men." That was the famous case of the Kensington cat. I sat in the courtroom down here at city hall with people who were so upset that this type of cruelty could take place in this city.

It takes place because there are no laws to protect animals who are in distress. This bill will not stop these maniacs who are torturing animals. We saw the case two weeks ago of a person who horrifically set a cat on fire and threw it out the window of a car. We saw cases every couple of months of a poor animal dragged behind a car or a truck. This bill will not protect animals in distress. Those animals will continue to be abused by these lunatics because there's no prevention out there.

This is such a soft piece of fluff that it will encourage people who are in the business of puppy mill breeding, will encourage people who think it's a joke to abuse animals to continue to do so, because it leaves the illusion that something is being done and that it's not a serious matter. That's why people across this province are saying that protecting these animals is not going to cost any more money. What costs us money is spending all this time in court trying to put these puppy mill breeders out of business. That's what costs the government money. The police are called constantly.

I've been all over this province talking to the police, to the humane societies. I've been in Kingston, Belleville, London, Orangeville. These are people who care. They can't do their job because they're underfunded and they're spending all their time in court. If you put in good animal protection, you won't need to spend all this time in court, in federal court, hire lawyers, spend 25 years trying to close down the Miesners. It's really scandalous that those operators like the Miesners are operating all across this province and nothing is going to be done. This bill is going to give people the impression that everything

is OK, that they passed a bill down at Queen's Park. That is what is so abhorrent. I don't know how to say this. Basically, I don't see the motives here.

We know from cabinet submissions that something could be done. Her own cabinet submission says, the experts in her government say emphatically that something serious should be done. She even contradicts the cabinet submission. The recommendation to cabinet was that the cabinet committee on justice and intergovernmental policy recommended that cabinet approve legislative amendments to the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act. The amendments would create provincial offences—failure to comply with duties of ownership; owner or person having custody, care or control of an animal causing or permitting animal to continue to be in distress—they talk about animals in distress. That should be included in here; it's not.

They also say that in the legislation—this is her own experts in the ministries, in justice—obstructing an inspector or agent in the discharge of duties or the exercise of powers under the OSPCA Act, the regulations. That should be included in there. Failure to comply would result in a fine. Also they said to include an offence for people who engage in the practice of training an animal to fight another animal.

These are all things in this very well researched cabinet submission that was given to the Minister of Public Security. It was turned down by this government. It was turned down by, I guess, people like Julia Munro, the member for York North. Instead she's trying to pawn off a piece of fluff that I consider dangerous, because as I said, it's going to let people let their guard down. That's the worst thing about it. She's going to go around telling people she has done something. There are going to be ads from the government saying they've done something. I really wouldn't want that on my conscience.

That is what this thing is going to do. It's going to give people a false sense of security that the government is doing something. In this cabinet submission the Ontario government even recommended all the things the SPCA wanted, and not one of them of any significance is in this piece of legislation. So we're going to have this ongoing systemic abuse, this profiteering, this inability of professionals who are out there trying to do their job to protect animals—they're not going to be able to do it.

It's especially an affront to all the caring people across this province who really want to see something done. This is not, as I said, just a small group of people. In the history of this Legislature, I don't know if there have been 230,000 people to sign a petition that said they wanted some tough rules in this area. I don't think there has ever been. These are people who are police officers, businesswomen, businessmen in Kenora. The petitions were signed. I went around getting them signed. Everybody signed them. They said, "Yes, please do something. That's what government should be for." That's 230,000 people who said "strong legislation."

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Instead, what we have here is a denial of that request for all those people who said government should do

something that is tough against these criminals—and they're criminals, because they're basically systemically abusing animals. I think that's a criminal act. And they're doing it for profit. We're not talking 100 dogs or cats; we're talking hundreds of thousands of defenceless animals. As I said, if we've got these people in our society, you can imagine what they're doing. If they're going to be cruel to an animal, you can rest assured they're going to be cruel to human beings. So if we as a society can't do the right thing here and take this expedient route—and we've even offered amendments, we've offered to strengthen it; and the government is refusing to do it.

Here's just a small comment from a senior citizen who contacted me today. She's a grandmother in her nineties who lives in North York. Her name is Shirley Baine. She said, "In the Torah, in ancient Jewish law, they have a great deal of respect for their animals, and they even have a saying that you should feed your animal before you feed yourself." That goes back to the time of Abraham.

Then I look at what we do in this province with all our resources, our ability to enact a piece of legislation that won't cost any money, gets respect back in many communities, relieves the pressure on police forces, OSPCA officers. Instead, what we come up with is this attempt to basically make people believe that something is going to be done when the member from York North knows that this is just a facade. Sadly, the systemic abuse will continue, the puppy mill operators will continue. The trucks of puppies will come across the border for Christmas, be sold in these pet stores, and they'll all be basically for dollars. It's a sad, sad day.

Ms Marilyn Churley (Toronto-Danforth): There are just a few minutes left tonight, and I'm sure everybody is relieved about that, including the thousands of people across the province who have been watching tonight to see what would happen with private members' bills, the thousands of people from the adoption community, who were hoping very much that that bill might be called. I'm sad to say to them, as we discuss the puppy mill bill before us tonight, that that's not going to happen tonight.

In terms of the bill before us—cruelty to puppies, to animals—of course we all agree that something has to be done, and I have spoken to Ms Munro's bill before and expressed my view that I didn't think it was strong enough and, as Mr Colle just said, that it has a number of problems and will not actually protect the animals that it supposedly will protect, if passed. We all support doing something about cruelty to animals, which we know exists out there.

I think we also all support in this Legislature doing something about cruelty to human beings. I want to speak about cruelty to puppies and animals, and I want to speak about cruelty to human beings, the thousands of human beings who have been adopted and who are trying to get medical information, who are trying to connect and trying to find out who they are. There's untold grief and pain out there. I was one of those myself, and I'm in touch with those people and I see their suffering on a daily basis.

So here we are. It's peculiar to me because I find that here we are in a situation where last night and tonight we're discussing two government private members' bills. I don't know what the end result is going to be. There are going to be so-called free votes on those bills, and yet the government House leader refuses to call my bill, because he doesn't support it. But I know from canvassing members in this Legislature that the majority of people here do. In fact, a recent study showed that up to 75% of Canadians support opening up adoption records.

When we talk about cruelty to animals and puppies—and I do want to say again that we need to pass a strong bill, a real bill. Mr Colle had a bill that would in fact have done that. This bill, if passed, is just a facade and in fact adds some dangerous elements that may in fact cause more harm to the animals she's saying she wants to protect.

I also want to again come back to cruelty to people and talk about Kariann Ford, an adoptee, who said, "The adoption agencies are neglecting to pass on [medical] information given by birth mothers who are trying to help their adopted children. Life-saving information is being withheld by the very organizations that have been put in place to help and assist."

Miss Kariann Ford was diagnosed a few years ago with life-threatening liver disease, which she had passed on to her children. By the time she found out, it was too late for her. The children are now teenagers and have this life-threatening disease.

Another person who came before our committee said that her reasons for searching for her birth family had nothing to do with being unhappy in the adoptive family. "They were initially, crucially, for medical information, because at age 34 I had undergone two surgeries, neither of which corrected the problem but left me progressively worse. At age 39, with medical information from my birth father's family I was finally correctly diagnosed." She goes on to say, "One of the difficult issues for me to resolve was that the surgeries and the length of time had

left me unable to conceive. I believe that if I had had my birth father's family information and been able to address the problem correctly at age 34, that my chances for conception would have been at least vastly improved."

While we stand here tonight and talk about rights and freedoms, human rights, the freedom to choose and all of these things, we recently had a doctor from North York General Hospital who came down to the Legislature to call on all legislators to pass the bill because, he says, with every day that passes adoptees lacking their family medical history are dying or are unknowingly passing genetic conditions on to their own children.

These are just a snapshot of the kinds of things that are happening daily to real human beings out there. So while I stand and talk about the need to bring in legislation to protect puppies and animals—and it's something I strongly believe in—I have to say to all of the legislators here tonight that you know that a majority of people want to see my bill, too, come for a vote; that my bill has everything to do with compassion and human rights. My bill deals with a person's right to choose.

Here we have tonight a situation where what they're talking about is a deal. Explain that to the adoptees out there. Explain that to them.

Mr Arnott got his bill tonight. It's going to be voted on.

Interjection.

Ms Churley: And you want to talk about deals, who broke a deal, who didn't break a deal. This has nothing to do with that. Explain that to the adoptees out there.

You're standing there saying, "You broke a deal." First of all, there was no deal broken. But that's beside the point now. It's off the table. Bill 30 is off the table. Mr Arnott got his way. The bill is going to be voted on.

The Speaker: I hate to interrupt the member, but it is 12 o'clock.

This House stands adjourned until 1:30 of the clock tomorrow.

The House adjourned at 2359

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