



No. 113B

N° 113B

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ISSN 1180-2987

**Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario**

First Session, 38<sup>th</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario**

Première session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Tuesday 1 March 2005**

**Mardi 1<sup>er</sup> mars 2005**

Speaker  
Honourable Alvin Curling

Président  
L'honorable Alvin Curling

Clerk  
Claude L. DesRosiers

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Telephone 416-325-7400; fax 416-325-7430  
Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Service du Journal des débats et d'interprétation  
Salle 500, aile ouest, Édifice du Parlement  
111, rue Wellesley ouest, Queen's Park  
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Téléphone, 416-325-7400; télécopieur, 416-325-7430  
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 1 March 2005

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE  
DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 1<sup>er</sup> mars 2005

*The House met at 1845.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY

CITY OF OTTAWA  
AMENDMENT ACT, 2005  
LOI DE 2005 MODIFIANT LA LOI  
SUR LA VILLE D'OTTAWA

Resuming the debate adjourned on February 22, 2005, on the motion for second reading of Bill 163, An Act to amend the City of Ottawa Act, 1999 / Projet de loi 163, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1999 sur la ville d'Ottawa.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. John R. Baird (Nepean–Carleton):** I'd indicate that I'm sharing my time with the hard-working member for Lanark–Carleton.

Je veux dire au début que je suis très impressionné par l'effort du français du ministre de l'Énergie et du chef parlementaire du gouvernement.

Je veux dire aussi que je ne suis pas impressionné par ce projet de loi qui est devant nous. C'est bien sûr une promesse brisée par le gouvernement McGuinty. Je veux dire très clairement à tous et à toutes qui sont présents que Dalton McGuinty et le Parti libéral ont brisé leur promesse électorale. Dalton McGuinty a fait deux promesses avant et pendant la campagne électorale.

Premièrement, il a fait une promesse de déclarer la nouvelle grande ville d'Ottawa officiellement bilingue. Dans ce projet de loi, qui est moins d'une page, cela n'y est pas contenu. Il y a beaucoup de francophones dans la nouvelle grande ville d'Ottawa qui ont travaillé très fort pour avoir un projet de loi qui affirme cette réalité. Le premier ministre, quand il était de ce côté de la Chambre, était très fâché avec l'ancien gouvernement parce que ce n'était pas contenu dans le projet de loi qui a créé la nouvelle grande ville d'Ottawa, mais ce n'est pas dans son projet de loi non plus. C'est très clair. On a lu ce projet de loi. Le mot « bilinguisme » n'est pas contenu dans le projet de loi. Ce n'est pas ce qu'il a dit pendant la campagne électorale et dans cette place quand on a parlé de la nouvelle grande ville d'Ottawa.

La deuxième promesse que Dalton McGuinty a faite comme chef de l'opposition et chef du Parti libéral pendant la campagne électorale était très claire : c'était de prendre le « bylaw » de la ville d'Ottawa et mettre en

place dans les statuts de l'Ontario d'avoir un statut bilingue. Ce n'est pas contenu dans ce projet de loi.

Je veux dire au début de ce débat que j'étais très content, et j'aime dans le domaine personnel ma chère collègue la ministre des Affaires francophones, mais ce n'est pas ce que vous avez dit dans votre circonscription pendant la campagne électorale comme conseil municipal. Ce n'est pas quelque chose dont vous avez parlé pendant la campagne électorale, pendant le débat à l'hôtel de ville. Ce n'est pas la demande que le conseil de la ville d'Ottawa a faite à l'ancien gouvernement. Ce n'est pas ce que vous avez promis pendant la campagne électorale.

J'ai regardé aussi mon cher collègue le député de Glengarry–Prescott–Russell : c'est une promesse brisée. Si vous connaissez un seul chef de la communauté francophone de l'Ontario—un seul chef reconnu par n'importe qui—si vous connaissez quelqu'un qui dit qu'en réalité votre promesse est en place, je vais dire que je fais une faute. Mais je connais très bien que c'est une promesse brisée du plus haut—whatever.

1850

I should say, and put on the record very clearly, that it's a promise that I'm glad they broke. I'm glad they didn't keep their promise; I'm glad they broke it. I think it's a good thing that they didn't keep their promise. The Liberal leader at the time, Dalton McGuinty, and his Liberal team—save one member, the member for Ottawa West–Nepean—were very critical of the previous provincial government on this issue. From the very day that bill saw the light of day, they were very critical that there wasn't a declaration of the bilingual character of the city of Ottawa. They were very critical of that. The Liberal Party sought to divide people in Ottawa and people in Canada on the basis of language.

I say to the member for Ottawa–Orléans that he should get back to his riding and try to fight for the Hydro One assets that were waiting to be transferred, because if that hasn't happened by election day, that will be a big issue.

**Mr. Phil McNeely (Ottawa–Orléans):** We're going to do it.

**Mr. Baird:** Well, I've waited 18 months, and I've seen nothing.

**Mr. McNeely:** You had five years—

**Mr. Baird:** I promised not to do it. I was honest; I never lied to my constituents. I never lied to my constituents. So I say to the member for Ottawa–Orléans—

**The Acting Speaker:** Will the member for Nepean–Carleton please withdraw that unparliamentary reference?

**Mr. Baird:** I haven't accused any member of lying in the House.

**The Acting Speaker:** Will the member please withdraw that unparliamentary reference?

**Mr. Baird:** I withdraw it.

**The Acting Speaker:** Thank you.

**Mr. Baird:** As an MPP, I think it's important to be honest. I don't lie to my constituents. I do not lie to my constituents. I look forward to the next election campaign, and if they're not there, paying the lower price, there will be big trouble, I say to the member for Ottawa–Orléans, because they will be—he shakes his finger, puts it up and says, “Yes.”

**Mr. McNeely:** We'll do it.

**Mr. Baird:** “We'll do it.” Baloney. You've had 18 months, and you've done nothing. People say, “What the heck happened to Phil McNeely? We haven't seen hide nor hair of him. We haven't seen him at all.” They'll be looking at that, I tell the member, and he'll be called upon—

**The Acting Speaker:** I would like to remind all members of the House that we have a tradition here to refer to other members by riding name or by ministry, not by their personal name or their surname.

**Mr. Baird:** I say to the member opposite that he will not be able to look the francophones in the city of Ottawa in the eye and say he has kept his promise. I challenge the member to stand up in the two-minute questions and comments and name me a single francophone in your riding who says that this is 100% keeping your promise. I challenge the member to name a single francophone in his constituency—anywhere in the city of Ottawa—who says this isn't a broken promise and a betrayal of Dalton McGuinty's election campaign promise. A single name; you've got 120,000 constituents. I challenge him, and I challenge the minister of francophone affairs and the member for Glengarry–Prescott–Russell.

Le président de l'ACFO, l'Association canadienne-française de l'Ontario, sera assez fâché. C'est l'ancien député libéral de cette place, Jean Poirier. Il est bien connu que ce n'est pas une promesse qui a été mise en place; c'est une promesse brisée.

I challenge any of the members to name a single francophone in Ottawa who says this is 100% keeping Dalton McGuinty's campaign promise. They won't be able to find anyone.

This issue was exploited by Dalton McGuinty like no issue has been. This was a divisive issue for Canadian unity, a divisive issue for linguistic unity in Ottawa. Sheila Copps, the then minister of Heritage Canada, was phoning me and saying, “You've got to declare it officially bilingual,” when I was the minister of francophone affairs, that this would be doing irreparable harm to Canadian unity; or Jean Charest, the then leader of the opposition, now the Premier of Quebec, phoning me and saying it had to be done for the sake of Canadian unity,

that it would just be playing into the hands of the Parti Québécois and the Bloc Québécois.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins–James Bay):** Who said this?

**Mr. Baird:** Jean Charest, Premier of Quebec, the then leader of the opposition.

Sheila Copps; Stéphane Dion, whose leader, Jean Chrétien, destroyed the attempt at constitutional reconciliation, criticizing me about national unity. And to see this government come back here—they should be apologizing to the federalists in Quebec for the damage they did to national unity by all the stories on this issue that were on the network newscasts. They should apologize to this House, and they should apologize to every francophone in Ontario.

Francophones may not always have liked where John Baird stood; they may not always have liked where Mike Harris stood. But they could respect it, and they knew that when they made a promise, they would keep the promise. They knew, when an issue came up, that they would get the straight goods, and they don't have that from this Liberal government.

I'd be interested to hear the speech on this issue from my colleague, the member of the third party, because I disagree with the member for the third party—

**Mr. Bisson:** I disagree with you.

**Mr. Baird:** —and he disagrees with me, but I respect him, because he's going to honour his campaign commitment. He's going to do what he said he would do before the election.

The members sit across there, smug, with smiles on their faces. This was a terrible black eye to Canadian federalism and on the unity of the linguistic duality of the city of Ottawa. They should be ashamed of themselves—no comment whatsoever to say that they weren't straightforward, that they weren't honest with the electorate.

I say to the member for Lanark–Carleton, would you like the full 20 minutes after this? Would you like me to go for the full 20?

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling (Lanark–Carleton):** You go ahead.

**Mr. Baird:** I'm not going to split my time, Speaker. The member for Lanark will be speaking in the next go-round.

I'm hearing from francophones in my riding. Here's a letter written by the school board in my riding, le Conseil des écoles catholiques de langue française du Centre-Est. C'est une lettre qui est écrite à vous, madame la Ministre, au sujet des coupures budgétaires de TFO.

La chef de ce conseil, Marie Biron, demande à vous, « Dans votre double rôle de ministre de la Culture et ministre responsable des Affaires francophones, nous sollicitons votre appui pour contrer toute tentative visant à amputer TFO des ressources dont elle a besoin pour accomplir sa mission. »

J'aime personnellement, j'ai beaucoup d'égard pour, madame la Ministre, mais je veux demander, est-ce que vous appuyez ces coupures ou êtes-vous contre? Est-ce que vous appuyez la communauté francophone? Votre

chère collègue la ministre responsable de TVO/TFO est ici. Vous pouvez peut-être parler avec elle ce soir sur cette initiative très importante. Elle n'est pas consciente des besoins de la francophonie. J'ai entendu que l'émission Panorama va être coupée à cause de cette décision du gouvernement libéral. Je suis bien content et je suis bien sûr que si Dalton McGuinty était sur ce côté de la Chambre et un gouvernement conservateur avait fait ça, il serait fâché. Il a parlé contre ces coupures budgétaires. Ce n'est pas quelque chose dont vous avez parlé pendant la campagne électorale et c'est très important.

J'ai ici la lettre de Marie Biron du Conseil des écoles catholiques de langue française du Centre-Est, et je demande au gouvernement pourquoi on n'a pas fait un débat sur cette politique qui est très importante pour la communauté francophone. Pourquoi n'a-t-on pas eu un débat sur ces coupures budgétaires à Panorama et à TFO ? On attendait l'ancienne députée d'Ottawa-Vanier, M<sup>me</sup> Boyer, pour qu'elle fasse un projet de loi pour avoir un conseil d'administration pour TFO. C'est pareil.

*Interjection.*

**M. Baird:** Un conseil autonome pour TFO. Je l'apprécie, madame la Ministre. Est-ce qu'on a vu ce conseil ? Non, on a vu les coupures budgétaires de ce gouvernement.

**1900**

J'ai ici la lettre de Marie Biron. J'ai aussi une politique du conseil des écoles publiques anglaises de l'Ontario. L'école DesLauriers, dans la circonscription d'Ottawa-Ouest-Nepean, a besoin de beaucoup d'appui. Ce n'est pas en bon état physique. Il y a de bons profs et de bons enfants, de bons étudiants, de bons directeurs ou directrices, mais l'édifice a besoin de beaucoup de travail. Est-ce qu'on fait un débat sur ce problème dans la région du grand Ottawa ? Non, on fait un débat sur un projet de loi qui est moins d'une page. Je demande pourquoi on n'a pas eu un débat sur ça.

On n'a pas assez d'argent pour avoir une nouvelle école pour ces étudiants dans la circonscription d'Ottawa-Ouest-Nepean. Les étudiants de mon comté peuvent aller à cette école DesLauriers, cette école de la septième année à la douzième année. Les enfants chez moi ont besoin d'une meilleure école, mais est-ce qu'on avait une initiative sur ça ? Mais non. C'est quelque chose qui est très important.

Why are we debating this meaningless, one-page bill? Why aren't we debating long-term care? That's what I want to know. That is an initiative that is really big in our constituencies. I had occasion to attend Granite Ridge in Stittsville. The member for Lanark-Carleton is here tonight. He knows Granite Ridge in Stittsville; it's a brand new, 200-plus, long-term-care facility. He and I fought very hard. He fought hard to get the commitment to build it and I fought hard to get it completed when he was the member and then when I became the member. Granite Ridge is talking about the effects of the devastating cuts to schedule 5 physiotherapy being made by Dalton McGuinty and George—sorry, le premier ministre et le ministre de la Santé du gouvernement libéral. J'ai visité

cette maison vendredi, and I saw the seniors who so desperately need this physiotherapy coverage. Some of them get it two or three times a week. The McGuinty government is cutting it—not by 10%, not by 20%, not by 50%, but by 100%. That money is not being re-invested into health care. That money is going into the black hole of the consolidated revenue fund. It's not that they are cutting it there to hire a new nurse in a hospital; they're cutting it and it's going into the black hole that is the consolidated revenue fund. This will have devastating effects. I met with the administrator of Granite Ridge, Linda Chaplin.

The member for Lanark-Carleton will know that he and I have talked many times about the Garden Terrace facility in Kanata that he worked so hard to get built. I also talked to Karl Samuelson, the administrator. They wondered, are we debating this at Queen's Park? I said no, we're debating this meaningless, less than one-page bill on bilingualism in Ottawa-Carleton, a bill that does not even contain bilingualism.

I met these two administrators and saw first-hand the work that is being done with physiotherapy and the devastating consequences that are going to happen to one patient I met who had had a stroke, who needs her legs to be mobile so she can have a quality of life. I talked to one gentleman who spoke to me about how when his wife takes the physiotherapy, she comes back and it's like she's alive again. If she loses that, within a matter of months she'll be bedridden and won't have that same quality of life.

Well, that is something that is tremendously important. People may have said that while we built 20,000 new long-term-care beds when none had been built in the 10 years before us under the Peterson and Rae governments, no net new places, that we didn't do enough on the operating side. But they're going backwards, not forward. I say to the member for Lanark-Carleton, do you remember them talking during the campaign about cutting physiotherapy for seniors who have had strokes or who are suffering from dementia? Do you remember that?

**Mr. Sterling:** Of course not.

**Mr. Baird:** Of course not, he says. I say to the member for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, do you remember them talking about cutting physiotherapy services?

**Mr. Bill Murdoch (Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound):** They never mentioned it.

**Mr. Baird:** Never mentioned it. I have petitions here from literally thousands of people in my riding on this issue, and they say, "Why aren't you debating that at Queen's Park?" Because we're debating this bill that's less than a page long.

I say to the government that they have broken both their promises, they have chickened out and backed down on bilingualism, they've adopted something that is no better than the previous Conservative government. I'm glad they broke their promise. I think this bill is silly; I think it's ridiculous.

The city of Ottawa is always going to have a bilingualism policy. There is no one of any prominence in the city who says they don't support providing good-quality French-language services where it would make sense to do so. I don't know a single councillor who has said they shouldn't provide good-quality French-language services where it makes sense to do so.

Under this meaningless bill, the city of Ottawa could bring in a bylaw and say, "We're only going to offer French-language services in North Gore between 3 a.m. and 4 a.m." That would be allowed under this bill. That's how hollow and meaningless it is.

Is there any shame over there? I have respect for the minister, but on this issue I have a tiny bit of respect for her because at least she wouldn't put her name on the front of this bill. She was so embarrassed by the measly content of the bill that she forced her colleague the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to put his name on the bill. She was too embarrassed to put her name on the bill. I say to the members opposite that they really should bow their heads in shame. When they look at the next election and choices, they may, on a few issues, disagree with this government. They agreed with us when we brought in funding for education for every French student in the province to get fair treatment. They agreed with us on that. They agreed with us when we started 12 independent French-language school boards. They will look at this record and think it's rather paltry.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**M. Bisson:** Je veux dire à mon collègue M. Baird—de Nepean—Carleton; excuse-moi, monsieur le Président—que je suis d'accord avec lui sur un point. Ce point est simplement ceci : au moins quand les conservateurs ont été au pouvoir et la cité d'Ottawa leur a demandé de passer un projet de loi pour s'assurer qu'on enchâsse dans la loi provinciale le bilinguisme officiel pour la ville d'Ottawa, le gouvernement conservateur de la journée a dit non. Je n'étais pas d'accord. J'ai pensé qu'ils auraient dû le faire. Mais au moins les conservateurs ont été très clairs. Ils ont dit, « Non, on ne veut pas le faire. »

Les libéraux, en opposition—moi, j'étais là—ont dit, « Oui, nous autres sommes en faveur, comme le NPD. » Moi, comme critique des Affaires francophones pour le parti néo-démocrate, j'ai pris la position—en discussion avec mon caucus et faisant affaire avec la politique de notre parti—que si n'importe quelle municipalité demande à la province l'habileté d'enchâsser un projet de loi tel que ça pour le bilinguisme officiel, la province doit le faire. Le gouvernement conservateur a dit non. Mais les libéraux, eux autres, ont dit oui.

Je n'ai pas mes lunettes avec moi. Ça va mal pour être capable de lire un document. Mais si on regarde dans ce projet de loi à la section 2, « La cité établit la portée et le contenu de la politique adoptée en application du paragraphe (1) », ça veut dire que oui, on confère dans ce projet de loi une politique de bilinguisme officiel dans la ville d'Ottawa. Mais dans le projet de loi, on dit que si la cité d'Ottawa décide de changer sa politique, elle a le droit de le faire. Ça veut dire que la politique elle-même

qui est établie ici, quand j'ai poigné le site Web de la ville d'Ottawa—s'ils décident de mettre vide la politique, à zéro, ils ont le droit de le faire.

Les libéraux ont dit une affaire avant les élections et ils ont fait complètement la différente affaire une fois arrivés au pouvoir. Je suis d'accord avec le député de Nepean—Carleton. Le gouvernement libéral, franchement, n'a pas fait ce qu'ils ont dit qu'ils étaient pour faire dans la dernière élection, puis ils ont été contre leur mot à la communauté francophone.

**M. Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell):** Monsieur le Président, j'étais vraiment à l'écoute de mon ami de Nepean—Carleton.

Je me rappelle lorsque le gouvernement avait demandé à M. Shortliffe, le commissaire, de regarder à la fusion de la ville d'Ottawa, les 11 municipalités. Dans le rapport de M. Shortliffe, il avait hautement recommandé qu'on puisse enchâsser dans la loi le bilinguisme de la ville d'Ottawa. Nous savons très bien que l'ancien gouvernement conservateur a refusé de s'assurer à ce que le bilinguisme fasse partie de cette restructuration. Notre gouvernement McGuinty démontre vraiment que nous sommes à l'écoute de la communauté francophone de la ville d'Ottawa.

Nous savons que dans la ville d'Ottawa ils ont passé un arrêté conseil—on pourrait dire « bylaw » en anglais—en mai 2004, demandant à ce que la ville soit reconnue comme une ville bilingue, afin de pouvoir donner les services aux francophones dans les endroits où il y avait une demande. On n'a jamais dit qu'on demanderait aux opérateurs de charrue, par exemple, qu'ils devaient être bilingues. C'est absolument faux. Lorsqu'on se promène sur la rue et qu'on dit qu'il va falloir que maintenant l'opérateur de la charrue puisse parler les deux langues, le français et l'anglais, c'est complètement faux.

On se rappelle que, actuellement, avec les consultations, tout démontre que les lois mises en place par la ville d'Ottawa seraient satisfaisantes pour la communauté francophone d'Ottawa. Donc c'est cela exactement que nous faisons. La ville d'Ottawa adopte une politique traitant de l'utilisation du français et de l'anglais dans la totalité ou dans certaines parties de son administration, et dans la fourniture de la totalité ou de certains de ses services municipaux. Donc, ceci est clair.

**1910**

**Mr. Murdoch:** Here we are again, late at night, debating a one-page bill. What did we do this afternoon? We debated another one-page bill, and before that we talked about pit bulls. You would think this Liberal government would want to get down to something that's important.

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman (Leader of the Opposition):** Like beer and wine in corner stores.

**Mr. Murdoch:** Maybe beer and wine in corner stores.

What is going on over there with the Liberals? We're having trouble with long-term care, our health care, we've got farmers coming here tomorrow upset with

what's going on in the farming community, and we're here tonight debating a bilingual bill that's one page.

I'm sure it must be important to somebody, but there are a lot of people in this province who are suffering, and we're not here debating the things that are important to the majority of people in Ontario. As I said, tomorrow we're having a big rally outside, with thousands of farmers coming here, saying, "Hey, we can't make a living at this. You've got to help us out." And we're sitting in here today, again, debating a one-pager—something about bilingualism in Ottawa—and there are all these other serious things that are a problem.

This afternoon we debated a one-pager again, and that was a political one, so we wouldn't have any strikes around 2007 because there might be an election then. Before that, we talked about pit bulls. Come on now; somebody has to get serious in the Liberal government. The Minister of the Environment is here. Maybe she would like to get something on here to talk about because we have environment problems in our country, and here we are again, late at night again, debating one-pagers.

It shows me that there is no plan with this Liberal government. You got elected a year and a half ago, and you haven't figured out yet that you're the government. Hopefully, somewhere along the line you do, so you can give us a plan of what you want to do.

**L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur (ministre de la Culture, ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones):** C'est malheureux qu'on ait à entendre aujourd'hui, en 2005, des débats de la sorte : que les francophones—ce n'est pas important qu'à Ottawa que l'on offre des services dans les deux langues. Et je pense que mon collègue de Nepean-Carleton—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker:** I would ask the members of the opposition to allow the minister to make her points.

**L'hon. M<sup>me</sup> Meilleur:** Mon collègue de Nepean-Carleton sait très bien que le projet de loi qui est présenté n'est pas un projet de loi des Affaires francophones; c'est un projet de loi qui relève du ministère des Affaires municipales. C'est pour cela que c'est de la part du ministre des Affaires municipales, parce que c'est un amendement à la loi créant la ville d'Ottawa.

L'amendement répond très bien aux demandes du conseil municipal parce qu'on demande ici « que la cité d'Ottawa adopte une politique traitant de l'utilisation du français et de l'anglais. » Alors, on n'a pas besoin de parler de bilinguisme parce que, si on dit « en anglais et en français dans la totalité ou certaines parties de son administration et dans la fourniture de la totalité ou de certains de ses services municipaux, » on demande que la ville continue à offrir ces services-là suivant la politique sur le bilinguisme adoptée en 2003, suite à la fusion des 12 municipalités de la région. C'était une recommandation du commissaire, qui avait été nommé par le gouvernement précédent, que la ville soit déclarée bilingue. C'est ce que notre gouvernement fait aujourd'hui.

**The Acting Speaker:** That concludes the time available for questions and comments. I return to the member for Nepean-Carleton for two minutes in way of reply.

**Mr. Baird:** The challenge I gave out was for any Liberal member to name one single francophone anywhere in Ottawa who supported this bill, who thought it kept your campaign promise. Despite 105,000 francophones in Ottawa, you people can't name a single one who doesn't believe that this bill—not the members—isn't a bald-faced lie to the election commitment that Dalton McGuinty made. That is the reality, and for the minister to get up and say that we're still debating whether there should be French-language services is an insult to the people of Ottawa. It's an insult to the people of my riding of Nepean-Carleton. It's an insult to urban, suburban and rural voters where there is a 99.9% recognition that we should provide good-quality French-language services where numbers promote. You say that Glen Shortliffe should have recommended we declare Ottawa bilingual? You haven't followed it.

I like the member for Ottawa-Vanier, I like the minister of francophone affairs, but she has lost all credibility on linguistic issues. When you compare the McGuinty government's record on French-language services, it is pathetic. You're cutting TFO; you've broken this campaign commitment. I can't think of a single difference the average francophone family anywhere in Ontario would notice since the change in government with respect to the offering of French-language services.

Furthermore, the Liberal Party divided this country, divided this province, divided this city on linguistic lines for cheap, cheap, cheap political points, and they all ought to be ashamed of themselves and bow their heads.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to do the lead; my colleague from Timmins-James Bay will. But I did want to just have a moment to say a few things about the bill. So I'd like to defer the lead, and he will do that. Do we need unanimous consent?

**The Acting Speaker:** Member for Nickel Belt, you need to seek unanimous consent to defer the lead. Would you like to seek unanimous consent?

**Ms. Martel:** I'd ask for unanimous consent to defer the lead.

**The Acting Speaker:** Agreed? Agreed.

**Ms. Martel:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and all the members who are here. I won't speak that long, but let me make a couple of points because my community as well was a community that went through a forced amalgamation under the previous government. We didn't have the same request coming forward from our city council to the previous government that came to the previous government from the city of Ottawa, but I do want to deal with this because we have a significant francophone population in our city. I'm very conscious of that population in Ottawa and their desires and aspirations, and the fact that the city itself, through its council,

which is an elected representative body, has made it very clear that they want the city to be bilingual.

Let's deal with a little bit of history, because my take on this is, frankly, that there isn't any difference between what didn't happen under the Tories and what's not going to happen under the Liberals. I don't see any difference, except the member for Nepean—Carleton is correct when he says his government said no. They were very clear about saying to the city of Ottawa during the amalgamation process that no, they were not going to pass a provincial statute or amend the amalgamation statute that was coming forward to declare the city of Ottawa officially bilingual. They were not going to do that in a provincial statute. People were clear about that.

I disagreed with that because I felt that if the city and council came forward during the amalgamation process, representing the wishes of the people, as they do because they are elected, and made that request, then during the amalgamation process and with the bill that forced the amalgamation, that should have been part of the bill, to respect the wishes of the council which legitimately represents the people in the new city of Ottawa.

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This government, however, is not going to do anything different, because you are not going to, in a provincial statute, also declare that the city is officially bilingual. You're not going to do that. I find it a little reprehensible that you would try to portray this bill as doing that, because that is not the effect of the bill at all; I don't think it was ever the intent of the bill. I think what is happening here is that you are using a bill that you hope most people won't clearly understand doesn't deliver to them what you specifically promised to deliver to them before the last election and during the last election.

So a little bit of history: Under the previous government, four different communities dealt with amalgamation. Mine was one, Hamilton was another, Chatham-Kent was the third and Ottawa was the fourth. Under that process, as the different boroughs and communities in Ottawa were amalgamated through provincial legislation, the council of the day came to the province and said they wanted the city to be declared officially bilingual in the new provincial statute that was establishing the new city. If I'm wrong, the member from Carleton is going to correct me when he gets up. This is my understanding of the history of this.

The government of the day said no. We disagreed with that, but they did. They were up front with the people of Ottawa and the council that they were not going to do that. OK?

Then during the last election—I think I have a quote from Mr. McGuinty at the time. I do. Hang on. At the time that that happened, when Mike Harris refused to do this, Dalton McGuinty demanded that the Premier “stand up for the rights of francophones in Ottawa by amending the legislation to establish that the new amalgamated city of Ottawa be bilingual.” Here's what Premier McGuinty said—he wasn't Premier at the time; he was the leader of the official opposition at the time. When Mike Harris

said that he would not, by way of provincial statute, declare the city of Ottawa officially bilingual, Dalton McGuinty demanded that the Premier, Mike Harris, “stand up for the rights of francophones in Ontario” and amend the legislation that was being dealt with at that time in 1999 to require that the new city of Ottawa be bilingual. That's what Mr. McGuinty said at the time.

Then, before the election and during the last election, Mr. McGuinty said very clearly that, if elected, a Liberal government would pass a provincial statute that would clearly declare the city of Ottawa as officially bilingual. That's what his promise was before the election and during the election.

Are we dealing with a bill that purports to have a provincial statute declare the city of Ottawa officially bilingual? Is that what we're dealing with in this bill? The answer is: absolutely not, categorically not, no way; this is not happening.

What we have is a statute that says that essentially the bilingualism policy of the city, which the city has already adopted by a city bylaw, will remain in place. There is a very significant, very important distinction to be made. You are not passing a provincial statute that clearly says, “We, the province, say that the city of Ottawa is officially bilingual”; on the contrary, all you are doing is saying that the city of Ottawa can continue to have the bilingualism policy that it has had in place for some time now.

But the problem becomes—and this is what the council in 1999 was trying to deal with when it came to the province in the first place to ask you to amend the provincial legislation on amalgamation. The concern is that a future council can make changes to the bylaw. Indeed, a future council could make a determination that the city would not have a bilingual policy at all, could vote on that and it could be extinguished. The rights that francophones in the new city of Ottawa have come to enjoy and to expect could be extinguished as easily as that, by a new council either amending the bylaw on bilingualism or getting rid of it altogether.

That's why the council came to the province during the amalgamation debate and said, “Do it as a provincial statute so then it will always be in effect, it will always be in force and the very significant francophone population in Ottawa will always enjoy the ability, the right and the opportunity to receive services in their official language.”

What you are doing is completely contrary to what you promised. It is in fact yet another broken promise. The city again in 2004 reaffirmed the bilingualism policy, so it's very clear what their wishes are. But this bill tonight does not respect the request that had been made to a previous government and does not respect, most importantly, the promise that your leader made during the election campaign to the people who live in Ottawa. That promise was very clear: that a provincial statute would declare clearly, categorically and for all time that the city of Ottawa was officially bilingual, and that as a result of doing that, no city council could then or in the future



make changes at council to the existing bylaw to diminish or extinguish the provision of French-language services to its citizens.

I just want to make the point in the legislation that points that out very clearly, that the responsibility here is not a provincial one, by the province making a clear and categorical statement that the city will be bilingual and having that in provincial statute—no. All the current law that we're debating here tonight does is essentially say that the city can maintain its bylaw, and, here in subsection 11.1(2): "The scope and content of the policy adopted under subsection (1) shall be as determined by the city"; that is, the provisions of the bylaw itself.

So any future council can come forward and change the current bilingual policy, and that's the end of the debate. That's the end of the rights that people who lived in Ottawa, especially francophones, thought that they were going to get from you when your leader, during the election and before the election, stood up and promised people that he would bring in a provincial statute to make the city officially bilingual.

This bill that we are dealing with here tonight makes it absolutely clear that it's the city itself that can change any and all provisions with respect to the provision of French-language services to the citizens of Ottawa—any and all. Amend, extinguish, take away—add to, maybe—the fear was, by previous councils and the current one, extinguish. That can be done, and you're letting that happen with the bill that we are debating here tonight.

Let me just conclude by saying that your leader was oh, so fierce on this issue when we were dealing with the amalgamation of the city of Ottawa under a previous Conservative government. When the city came forward and asked to be declared officially bilingual under the bill that was creating the newly amalgamated city, Mr. Harris said no. And Mr. McGuinty said, "Stand up for the rights of francophones in Ontario. Amend the legislation to allow that the new amalgamated city of Ottawa be bilingual."

That's what he promised. And we are here tonight dealing with a bill that does nothing like that at all. We are essentially in the same position tonight, and we will be after this bill passes, as the city of Ottawa found itself in when it came to the former government and asked them for a provincial statute. They refused to do it. At least they were up front and told the city that. You are not doing it with this statute.

**1930**

The most regrettable thing about this debate is that, during the course of the debate—because I was here when this debate started—I heard any number of Liberals try to say, "We are doing what the city asked and we are maintaining our election promise." Frankly, folks, you're doing nothing of the sort.

The people who are going to suffer are the people in the city of Ottawa if any future council comes forward and decides to try to diminish or lessen or amend or even extinguish rights that francophones currently enjoy with respect to city services now.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Baird:** The shame game never ends. Not a single Liberal MPP can stand up and name—I'm going to expand my challenge, I say to the member for Nickel Belt. Name me a francophone anywhere in the world who thinks you kept your promise with this bill. Name me a francophone anywhere in the world who would stand up and say—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Baird:** —and who's not a member of the Liberal caucus and you're not a francophone, I say to the chief government whip—this promise is broken. It is worthless.

**Mr. Dave Levac (Brant):** That's not true. I'm a francophone.

**Mr. Baird:** Are you a francophone? I'm sorry; I didn't know that.

I've never heard him speak French.

**Mr. Levac:** I'm hiding in the weeds.

**Mr. Baird:** You should be proud to be a francophone.

All I can say is that not one of them can stand up and name me a single francophone anywhere in Ottawa—so I expanded it to anywhere in Ontario. I'm now expanding it to—the member for Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound is laughing, because you're not going to name one anywhere in the world who wouldn't say that this bill makes a lie of the campaign promise. They can't name a single one.

I say to the member for Nickel Belt, I may disagree on with her on this issue but at least she's honest. At least the member for Nickel Belt doesn't lie. You can agree or disagree with her, but she's honest, she tells the truth, and I respect that about the member for Nickel Belt.

So I repeat my challenge. I say to the members opposite, name me a single francophone anywhere in the world who says that this is keeping your promise.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Baird:** Name me a single francophone. We know the minister's too embarrassed to put her name on the front of this bill. Every francophone in Ontario knows that I was honest and I didn't lie to them.

**Mr. Bisson:** People who watch this debate on television or read it in Hansard should have the benefit of sitting here in the House and listening to the heckles, because I thought it was absolutely hilarious. My friend Mr. Baird was saying, "Name me one francophone in Ottawa who is prepared to say this is a good thing," and I hear my friend Mr. Lalonde across the way from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell saying, "They're going to be in Ottawa, dancing on the streets, enjoying it tomorrow in the city of Ottawa." My God, it's going to be a small street party. Oh, Lord. Elle va être petite, cette affaire-là.

Je suis d'accord avec tous les commentaires que ma collègue M<sup>me</sup> Martel a faits. Justement, je vais avoir l'opportunité dans ce débat de faire le discours d'une heure pour le Nouveau Parti démocratique. Je veux dire au gouvernement que je ne vais pas prendre mon heure, je vais prendre un petit peu de temps, parce que demain je vais proposer un amendement qui fera de ce projet de

loi ce que la loi est supposée de faire, et c'est de conférer à la ville d'Ottawa un statut qui dit, « Vous êtes officiellement bilingue. »

M<sup>me</sup> Martel, la députée de Nickel Belt, a clairement dit dans ce débat ce qui est arrivé. Quand la ville a été fusionnée, les conservateurs ont refusé de conférer ce droit à la ville d'Ottawa. La ville d'Ottawa a demandé aux partis d'opposition, comme au gouvernement, de le conférer à eux. Les libéraux, comme les néo-démocrates, ont dit, « Si on forme le gouvernement, on va le faire. » Les libéraux arrivent ici avec un projet de loi, qui est ici, et on dit dans ce projet de loi qu'on va conférer la politique du bilinguisme à la ville d'Ottawa, mais si la ville veut changer de politique, elle a le droit.

**M. Lalonde:** Trouve-moi cette place. Ce n'est pas dedans du tout.

**M. Bisson:** Regarde, tu vas avoir une chance de faire des cocoricos au comité.

Je veux seulement dire que je vais avoir mon opportunité plus tard de parler un peu plus. Félicitations à la députée M<sup>me</sup> Martel.

**Mr. McNeely:** I sat on city council when this bylaw that's presently in place for bilingualism in the city of Ottawa was brought forward. It was very divisive, and my community was split as well. I think that once the bylaw got in place, it was very well accepted. It's going very well in Ottawa.

When this election came up, we did exactly what we promised. We promised before, and we made sure that it was down in writing so we would know it. This divisive attitude from that side is not assisting this debate. We did exactly what we said we would do: Ottawa is a bilingual city.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker:** I don't need any help. I would ask the member for Nepean-Carleton to refrain from heckling the member for Ottawa-Orléans. The member for Ottawa-Orléans has the floor.

**Mr. McNeely:** We did exactly what we said. We went through this policy very carefully with Premier McGuinty. I told people exactly what we were going to do; we've done exactly what we said. This is working in Ottawa. It's not what the people want on this side, but for 90% of our people—when this bill came out a few weeks ago, I had three phone calls. That's all I had. I think that there's generally acceptance by the people in Ottawa-Orléans; it's 35% francophone. Over half of my riding association are francophones. I sit on Team Ottawa-Orléans, which is a business group, and half of Team Ottawa-Orléans are francophones. It's working in Ottawa. It's going to work in this province.

We did what we said we would do. We've delivered, and I just hope that we move on in a nice way to make sure that Ottawa is and stays a bilingual city.

**Mr. Lalonde:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I would just like to clarify what the member for Timmins-James Bay—

**The Acting Speaker:** You don't have a point of order, no. Take your seat.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker:** Your comments are not being recorded by Hansard. You may take your seat.

We have time for one last question and comment. You've already had one, Nepean-Carleton.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker:** The member from Nickel Belt has two minutes to reply.

**Ms. Martel:** I would like to thank all the members who participated.

Let me say this in response: If you want the city of Ottawa to be bilingual, then you pass a provincial statute to do just that. Have the guts to do what you said you would do during the last election, because let me tell you, this bill is a sham. It's a charade. And because we get up and expose that and make that clear, you call us divisive? Give me a break. What is divisive is you making an election promise that you had absolutely no intention of keeping.

Let me say this to the member from Glengarry-Prescott-Russell: You should read the bill, because if you would read the bill you would understand that the city, through the bilingualism policy, can amend that policy and could extinguish the rights that are in that policy tomorrow.

Read subsection 11.1(2), which says, "The scope and content of the policy"—that's in reference to the bilingualism policy that the city adopted—"adopted under subsection (1) shall be as determined by the city." So the city council tomorrow could make an amendment to the bylaw or change the bylaw to get rid of French-language services altogether.

**Mr. Lalonde:** Not true; not true.

**Ms. Martel:** If you would read it, Mr. Lalonde, you would understand that, and that is the point that we are making.

It was your leader who got up and told the former Premier, "Stand up for the rights of francophones in Ontario." Well, why don't you stand up for the rights of francophones in Ottawa and do what you promised? That was, to bring in a provincial statute that would declare the city of Ottawa officially bilingual. This bill doesn't do that. You know it. We know that you don't like it when we expose that. But the only people who are being divisive are you, by not doing what you promised.

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**The Acting Speaker:** It would appear that I have to remind the House of a few things. First of all, it's traditional that you make your comments through the Chair. Secondly, it's traditional that you refer to other members by their riding names, and third, that you maintain decorum in the House at all times.

Further debate?

**Mr. Sterling:** I've been through a lot of debates in this Legislature, and I find this one really, really tough in terms of the integrity of the government and the integrity of the Premier, in terms of what he said during the campaign and how he campaigned against the former government with respect to this issue.

If we go back and we talk about the amalgamation of the city of Ottawa, we brought together 11 municipalities into one. They ranged in francophone content from probably 1% or 2% up to 35% or 40%, and maybe there were some that even were in the majority. But as a whole, I think the people of Ottawa and the people of the former Ottawa-Carleton understood that we had a significant francophone minority in our city and our area, and that services had to be provided in the French language. That was their right. I don't think anybody in the greater Ottawa area now would deny that.

If you look at the map of Ottawa, the west would be dominated by a larger anglophone majority and a smaller francophone minority, whereas east of the Ottawa River, you would have a larger francophone minority and a smaller anglophone majority. So when the former government was trying to put the city together—and it's difficult to put the city together, particularly when you are a mayor, Mayor Chiarelli, who was fighting the Ontario government tooth and nail, because he was fighting the next provincial election. He was using every possible tool that he had at his disposal to embarrass the provincial government of the day.

Official bilingualism has not been a tremendously popular or successful policy at the federal level. There are many people who have suffered as a result of official bilingualism at the federal level. Notwithstanding that, I think Canadians as a whole accept that it perhaps was a step that had to be taken because they are our national government and because we have a large francophone population in our country. But as you try to amalgamate, bring partners together, get people working together, you can't all of a sudden impose rules that don't make sense in a local community when you're taking that local community and making it part of a larger community.

So we had the situation where we had the mayor coming, and the city council basically abrogating their responsibility in taking the decision to become officially bilingual or not, saying, "You, the province, have this responsibility to make us officially bilingual." Our government was saying, "If you want to make your city officially bilingual, go ahead and do it." But they didn't have the intestinal fortitude to go ahead and do that, because of course they knew it was poor policy.

Then the Liberals and the mayor got the support of Stéphane Dion, Sheila Copps, and even the former Prime Minister, Chrétien, who was saying to Mike Harris and Ernie Eves and everybody else, "You should"—the province—"make the city of Ottawa officially bilingual." There may come a day when that kind of policy makes sense, but we're not there at this particular time because the population isn't homogeneous. There are differences in different parts of the city of Ottawa where it is very, very difficult to argue that that kind of policy would make sense.

As we're trying to meld together a community, a community of very diverse interests—in some cases, an extremely rural community with a very urban area—we have this kind of phony war that took place when the

amalgamation took place. We had the Premier talking about the fact that it should be officially bilingual. I want to say to the member for Ottawa-Orléans: You might not be sitting here if the Premier had not said that. Maybe Brian Coburn would be sitting here if your Premier hadn't made that kind of promise during the election.

**Mr. McNeely:** I doubt it.

**Mr. Sterling:** You doubt it. But you're thinking that it might have been. So it had electoral effect. It had electoral effect, particularly in the east part of the city of Ottawa.

**Mr. McNeely:** Not in your riding.

**Mr. Sterling:** No, it wouldn't affect my riding, because I only have a 3% or 4% francophone population, so that particular part of the population would not be affected by a statement that you were going to have a bilingual city. In fact, it probably would have worked to the negative in my riding, and probably would benefit my election in terms of that part of it.

But you did a saw-off. The Premier did a saw-off in terms of what he said and what he did during the election. There was no question, when you read the press, about the promise that this government was going to make the city of Ottawa officially bilingual.

I agree with the member for Nepean-Carleton: This would be a very difficult thing to legislate for the city, particularly at this time. We're still early in terms of our growth as a city, of the city coming together and people trusting each other in terms of their wants and desires and what they're doing.

City council has essentially tried—for instance, before the last municipal election—to gerrymander the boundaries so that the rural areas would lose a lot of their representation. They held a few meetings. For instance, out in the west part of the city of Ottawa, they held one meeting in the Corel Centre, which is about 60 or 70 kilometres from the edge of the city of Ottawa, and most of the people weren't aware that they were talking about ward boundaries. Consequently, there was an appeal to the OMB. The city lost the appeal to the OMB, and so their gerrymandering didn't work.

Mayor Chiarelli and the Liberals who were in charge of the city of Ottawa were trying to embarrass the province of Ontario, the provincial government at that time. It's unfortunate, because what they did was to create a lot of divisiveness in the city. Then they came into this bilingual issue, and I think they really did capture the francophone vote in the last provincial election, to our detriment, and got people like Mr. McNeely in Ottawa-Orléans elected on the basis of that kind of promise.

I don't know how a francophone in Ottawa would say, "I can trust these people." I can't understand Jean-Marc and Madeleine coming into this place and defending this piece of legislation. It's embarrassing. The legislation says the city of Ottawa must have a French-language policy. You'd have to be an idiot, sitting on city council, to not have a French-language policy, because there is a significant presence of francophones in the city of

Ottawa. They are one of the two founding peoples in our country and in our province, and they are there in the city of Ottawa in large numbers, and you must respect them. Therefore, the city of Ottawa would always have a French-language policy. What kind of neanderthals would not have some kind of accommodation for the other founding people of our country? It just doesn't make sense

If I were a member representing a city of Ottawa riding and I saw this bill coming forward, I've got to tell you what I would do. I would have said in caucus that I would rather not have a bill than have this. I'd rather go to the next election trying to explain why we didn't make Ottawa officially bilingual. I would rather have done that. I would rather have tried to help out the francophone minority in Ottawa with regard to their other hopes and desires in our city and to make Ottawa a more cohesive city as we went forward.

**1950**

As my friend from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound has said, we dealt with legislation this afternoon which was kind of a phony piece of legislation. It deals with how long contracts are going to be made with teachers, two or four years but not three, because that's going to be near an election year. Now we're into another piece of legislation, and members here on the opposition side are saying, "What are we doing back here in February, when this place costs"—what is it?—" \$150,000 to \$200,000 a day to run? Why are we here doing this with this kind of legislation?"

I don't know whether to support, vote against or sit down and abstain when a piece of legislation like this comes along. Quite frankly, it doesn't do anything for the city of Ottawa. It doesn't change anything one iota. I guess the reason you might want to vote against it is because, in my view, it's an insult to the francophone minority. I really believe that if I was a francophone in the city of Ottawa, I would say, "Hey, how can you possibly support a piece of legislation which is as phony as this piece of legislation?" It really doesn't have any kind of guts to it. In fact, it almost, as the member for Nickel Belt said, invites the city council to revisit their policy on French-language services and maybe water them down. I don't know.

When I lose a friend in this Legislature like Brian Coburn, who worked so hard for the people of eastern Ontario, and I see an issue like this, which may have cost him his seat, I get angry. I get real angry because I don't like a genuine guy like Bruce—Brian Coburn—

**Mr. Bisson:** I like Bruce Cockburn too.

**Mr. Sterling:** I like him too. But I don't like a guy like Brian Coburn losing his seat, or potentially losing his seat, over a promise like this, a promise that has been broken. I think every francophone in eastern Ontario should be ashamed of this piece of legislation.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Bisson:** I'm going to do this in English, because the speech was in English and I want to make sure my

good friend understands, even though we have translation here.

I heard what you said at the beginning, but I really have to say I object and disagree with the statement that bilingualism is a failed policy that has hurt people. First of all, we need to recognize that there's a certain history in our country when it comes to the two founding nations, not to speak of the First Nations on top of that. We tried to recognize in our Constitution some years ago and we try to recognize in our institutions that there is a linguistic duality in our country, and to say it has been a failure—I think Canada has been a great success.

As I travel around the world, be it Vietnam, Europe, Africa, wherever it may be, Canada is viewed as a very big success story. One of the things that is a very big success story is the ability in this country for all of its people to live with a certain amount of respect that is not seen in many other places in the world. I think, if we look at various nations around this world where you have sections of different ethnicities that are fighting each other over stories that go back sometimes hundreds of years, this country has been very successful. And not to say what it has also meant for us as a people, because I think it makes our country richer, as far as being able to enjoy each other's culture.

The other great beauty of this country, and I think we can all agree, is the multicultural aspect that has grown above and beyond our two founding nations. This country has been made greater, not just by the fact that there were francophones and anglophones who first settled this country, but that we're finally starting to recognize that there were First Nations people here first and that there are other people who emigrated here after: the Chinese, the Portuguese, the Italians—I could go on—

**Mr. Baird:** Spanish in Dufferin county.

**Mr. Bisson:** —Spanish etc.—who have made this country a greater place to live. That's something that I just wanted to reflect on in my two minutes for comments.

**Mr. Runciman:** I want to compliment my colleague from Lanark-Carleton for his contribution here this evening.

I was particularly struck by his comments with respect to a former colleague, Mr. Coburn, and the impact that the promise to follow through on requiring the city of Ottawa to be officially bilingual might have had with respect to Mr. Coburn's fortunes in the election. Certainly, I share the member's view with respect to Mr. Coburn as a hard-working, dedicated representative of the people of his riding, but I think you can extrapolate that right across the province with respect to promises made by the Liberal Party of Ontario going into the last election campaign. I think there were 231 promises in their campaign platform.

**Mr. Bisson:** How many have they broken—197?

**Mr. Runciman:** Well over 40 of those promises have been broken, many of them very significant, in about a year and a half in office.

We can talk about Mr. Coburn and we can talk about good people like Doug Galt and Marcel Beaubien, very strong members of this assembly who worked very hard on behalf of their constituents and, by relatively narrow margins, lost that election and are no longer part of the assembly.

My colleague from Nepean used the term “electoral fraud.” Whether that’s parliamentary or not, I think that many Ontarians are concerned and I’m sure that group includes Franco-Ontarians in the Ottawa area who felt they had a commitment from the Liberal Party of Ontario with respect to their views on official bilingualism. That hasn’t happened. And it’s happened right across this province in so many instances, and good people are not here—

**The Acting Speaker:** Thank you. Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Baird:** I want to compliment the member for Lanark–Carleton on particularly the latter part of his remarks. I don’t agree with everything he said, but the one thing I respect about the member for Lanark–Carleton is, he doesn’t lie. He’s honest. You may disagree with him, but he doesn’t say one thing before the election and another thing after the election.

I’m also surprised that the member from Lanark–Carleton couldn’t name a single francophone in the world who would think this was an election commitment that was honoured. Not a single francophone anywhere in the world can say that Jean-Claude supports this, Monique supports this or Claudette supports this. I don’t know a single francophone anywhere in the world who wouldn’t say, “This bill makes a lie of an election promise.”

I say to the member from Lanark–Carleton, maybe he could help me out. Maybe he could tell me of anyone who would agree that this bill is anything short of electoral fraud.

**Ms. Martel:** Very briefly, the member from Lanark–Carleton said that this bill really doesn’t provide for any change. All you have to do is go to the explanatory note and you can see that that’s very clear. The explanatory note says the following: “The new section 11.1 of the City of Ottawa Act, 1999 requires the city to adopt a policy respecting the use of the English and French languages in all or specified parts of the administration of the city and in the provision of all or specified municipal services by the city.”

Here’s the policy there. Frankly, the policy has been in place in the new city since May 9, 2001, so there’s no change there because this is already in effect in the city.

**2000**

The only thing I can see is that the bill allows for a council at a future date to actually amend this policy, to the point where it could even extinguish the policy. That right of the city comes under subsection (2), which says, “The scope and content of the policy”—that’s this—“adopted under subsection (1) shall be as determined by the city.” So it is very clear that at any point in time the city can amend this bilingual policy and may even extinguish some of the rights that people have now, which

was part of the reason, I think, that the former council came and asked the province to enshrine protections in a provincial statute so that changes couldn’t be made by a future city council.

This government isn’t doing that. This government hasn’t brought forward a provincial statute to enshrine Ottawa as a bilingual city, and it’s a shame that you are trying to portray this bill as doing something like that.

**The Acting Speaker:** The member for Lanark–Carleton has two minutes to reply.

**Mr. Sterling:** I’d like to say to the member for Timmins–James Bay that I don’t know whether I used the word “failure,” but if I did, it was probably too strong a word to use. I thought I’d said after that that it was a policy which was necessary in order to keep Canada together and to recognize our two founding nations, our founding people. But I guess what I wanted to portray was the difficulty that that policy had in my community in the west end of Ottawa. It had a very significant impact on the employment opportunities that many anglophones had in the western part of the city of Ottawa. Therefore, the move toward a bilingual city in Ottawa would be very difficult for them to accept, given the experience they have had with regard to federal bilingualism.

What we said and what we were dealing with at the time was basically a policy that is mirrored in this legislation, which says to the city of Ottawa, “You can make the decision. If you want to become officially bilingual, then you take that step as a municipality. You have the autonomy. You have the right to do it.” Quite frankly, I think the city council couldn’t do it successfully at this time, because they are trying to marry 11 parts of the city together. They are trying to weave it together and bring them all together as the new city of Ottawa.

I’m glad, as the member for Nepean–Carleton is, that this Legislature is not foisting official bilingualism on the people of Ottawa.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate.

**M. Bisson:** J’ai de la bonne nouvelle pour mes collègues ici ce soir : je ne prends pas toute mon heure. Imaginez-vous. Ce que je veux dire était pas mal dit par ma collègue M<sup>me</sup> Martel, la membre de Nickel Belt, qui a fait le point assez clairement, je pense. Je n’ai pas besoin de répéter tout ce qu’elle a dit. Je « concure » avec tous ses commentaires faisant affaire avec l’historique de ce projet de loi. Mais il y a deux ou trois affaires que je veux dire dans ce débat.

Premièrement, c’était suggéré, monsieur le Président—et je parle directement à vous. Les membres libéraux disent que c’est très divisive de notre part, les membres de l’opposition, de parler de ces débats dans cette Chambre ce soir; que parce que nous autres, on veut avoir notre débat et on veut dire, nous, les néo-démocrates, que le gouvernement ne garde pas les ententes qu’ils ont faites avec les électeurs dans les dernières élections et que les conservateurs disent la même affaire, d’une manière ou d’une autre, on est en train de

diviser la ville d'Ottawa et on est en train de faire quelque chose qui est contre le nationalisme de ce pays qu'on appelle le Canada.

Je n'accepte pas ça pour deux secondes. Être capable de même dire ça dans cette assemblée, je pense, franchement, veut dire que le membre ne pense pas trop avant qu'il parle. La réalité, c'est que dans une démocratie, tous les députés de cette assemblée, qu'ils soient au gouvernement ou à l'opposition, ont le droit de parler sur un projet de loi. C'est un droit qui nous est conféré dans notre constitution.

Deuxièmement, si vous êtes un peu inquiets de ce débat, c'est parce que vous ne faites pas dans ce projet de loi ce que vous avez promis dans la première affaire, faisant affaire avec les promesses que vous avez faites dans la dernière élection.

On veut être très clair, et je n'ai pas besoin de longtemps pour le faire. Les libéraux, dans la dernière élection, ont adopté la même politique que le parti néo-démocrate et M. Hampton, mon chef, ont mis en avant dans la dernière élection. Cette politique est très simple : on dit que n'importe quelle municipalité dans la province de l'Ontario qui demande au gouvernement provincial un statut pour être capable d'accepter qu'une communauté est officiellement bilingue, on va le lui donner. Le Parti libéral a pris exactement la même position dans la dernière élection.

On avance par 16 mois et on arrive ici aujourd'hui, et le gouvernement provincial de M. McGuinty a un projet de loi, la Loi 163. Mon ami de Prescott-Russell dit—oh, c'est difficile de voir sans lunettes— : « Dis-moi où dans cette loi on dit que la municipalité a le droit de nier aux francophones de la ville d'Ottawa le droit d'avoir des services pour les francophones à travers la politique du bilinguisme officiel qu'a la ville d'Ottawa présentement. »

Je veux être bien clair. Si vous voulez regarder, monsieur Lalonde, la section 11.1(2) : « La cité établit la portée et le contenu de la politique adoptée en application du paragraphe (1) ».

En d'autres mots, comme M<sup>me</sup> Martel a très bien expliqué, le conseil, en 1999, a établi une politique pour la ville d'Ottawa. Dans cette politique on dit que ça, c'est la manière dont les francophones veulent être desservis dans la ville d'Ottawa quand ça vient à être capables de—oh, thank you. Il y a quelqu'un qui m'amène des lunettes. Je suis content.

Là, ce qui arrive : quand quelqu'un arrive à la ville d'Ottawa et demande un service, et le service n'est pas donné, la personne peut dire : « Bien, selon votre politique, vous dites que j'ai le droit d'aller rechercher ces services. » Dans ce projet de loi, vous dites : « On va avoir une politique. On va exiger que la ville d'Ottawa ait une politique sur le bilinguisme officiel »—pas de problème; on est d'accord avec ce point-là—« mais la ville d'Ottawa peut à n'importe quel temps changer cette politique. »

Je vais vous montrer comment c'est facile. Vous passez ce projet de loi. Vous dites à la ville d'Ottawa :

« Vous êtes exigés d'avoir une politique officielle d'offrir aux francophones des services bilingues en français. C'est exigé selon la loi. » C'est là qu'on est d'accord. On confère ce droit à la municipalité d'Ottawa. Mais si dans le futur un conseil dit, celui-ci ou n'importe quel autre, « Moi, je n'aime pas la section 1 de la politique, je n'aime pas la section 2, je n'aime pas 3, je n'aime pas 4, je n'aime pas 5 », ils ont le droit de le faire, parce que vous avez dit dans votre projet de loi qu'ils ont le droit non seulement d'établir la politique mais d'amender la politique sur le bilinguisme officiel. Et ce qui peut nous rester, à la fin de la journée, c'est une politique qui dit, « Official Bilingualism Policy of the City of Ottawa / Politique officielle de la ville d'Ottawa sur le bilinguisme », puis un feuillet blanc. C'est ça, le point de ce projet de loi.

Je ne vais pas parler plus que ça—

*Interjection.*

**M. Bisson :** Mais, monsieur Lalonde, ça fait assez longtemps que je suis au Parlement. Je sais comment lire un projet de loi. Les personnes de la ville d'Ottawa avec qui nous avons fait affaire, y inclus la plupart de la communauté, que ce soit les activistes francophones ou les agences et les sociétés francophones d'Ottawa, ne sont pas d'accord avec votre gouvernement. Ils sont en train de dire : « Vous avez nié le droit à la ville d'Ottawa ce qu'ils ont demandé dans ce projet de loi et ce qui était dans votre promesse de la dernière élection. » Justement, M. Lalonde, vous connaissez M. Poirier, le député d'avant vous dans votre comté. Vous le connaissez bien. C'est lui qui est le président de l'ACFO. Vous avez entendu ses discours; et il est très clair.

Je ne vais pas prendre plus longtemps que ça dans ce débat à la deuxième lecture, parce que j'ai un amendement que je veux proposer demain à la ministre. Je pense qu'on est d'accord, madame la Ministre. On veut qu'Ottawa ait le droit non seulement d'établir une politique sur le bilinguisme pour la ville d'Ottawa, mais qu'on enchâsse cette politique dans la loi. Cet amendement est très simple. C'est seulement une partie, qui dit : « Une fois que la politique est établie, la seule manière de la changer est de revenir à ce Parlement. » On va voir demain; le comité siège demain à 10 h. On vous demande de venir, on va mettre en avant cet amendement puis on va voir jusqu'à quel point le gouvernement est préparé à faire ce qu'ils ont dit dans la dernière élection, et c'est de conférer à la ville d'Ottawa non seulement le droit d'établir une politique sur le bilinguisme officielle, ce qu'ils ont déjà le droit de faire, mais aussi de s'assurer que cette politique ne soit pas niée par un conseil au futur.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

Madame Meilleur has moved second reading of Bill 163, An Act to amend the City of Ottawa Act, 1999. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

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

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

The motion is carried.

Shall the bill be ordered for third reading?

The member for Nepean–Carleton.

**Mr. Baird:** To general government.

**The Acting Speaker:** General government?

**Interjection:** No.

**The Acting Speaker:** I will turn to the Minister of the Environment.

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky (Minister of the Environment):** Mr. Speaker, could you please send it to the standing committee on general government?

**The Acting Speaker:** So ordered.

**Hon. Mrs. Dombrowsky:** Mr. Speaker, I move adjournment of the House.

**The Acting Speaker:** The Minister of the Environment has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

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

*The House adjourned at 2012.*

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