



No. 12A

N° 12A

ISSN 1180-2987

Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario

Fourth Session, 37<sup>th</sup> Parliament

Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario

Quatrième session, 37<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Wednesday 21 May 2003**

**Mercredi 21 mai 2003**

Speaker  
Honourable Gary Carr

Président  
L'honorable Gary Carr

Clerk  
Claude L. DesRosiers

Greffier  
Claude L. DesRosiers

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 21 May 2003

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE  
DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 21 mai 2003

*The House met at 1330.  
Prayers.*

ESTIMATES

**Hon David H. Tsubouchi (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet, Minister of Culture):** Mr Speaker, I have a message from the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, signed by his own hand.

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** The Honourable the Lieutenant Governor transmits estimates of certain sums required for services for the province for the year ending 31 March 2004 and recommends them to the Legislative Assembly.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

HOME AND COMMUNITY CARE

**Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands):** The Home and Community Care Round Table, made up of 22 different organizations, including the Canadian Association of Retired Persons, the Alzheimer Society of Ontario, the Ontario Community Support Association, the Ontario Coalition of Senior Citizens Organizations, the Ontario Federation of Labour, the Ontario Health Coalition, the Retired Teachers of Ontario and the Victoria Order of Nurses, recently had a meeting with the Premier and his staff to plead with the government to live up to its solemn commitment made four years ago to increase home and community care funding by \$76 million in this year's estimates. This was not included in the throne speech and was not included in the budget fiasco.

Why? There are over 115,000 vulnerable seniors and persons with debilitating diseases who have lost services completely. The number of hours of service has declined by 30%. Over six million hours of homemaking, personal support, nursing and therapy services have been cut. What was the government's response? The government's response was to instruct community care access centres across this province to begin cutting service volumes by up to 37% immediately if they are to balance their budgets in the year 2003-04.

Premier and government, don't wait until the next election. Live up to the promises you made four years ago to those people in this province who need home care and community care services the most.

PUBLIC SAFETY

**Ms Marilyn Mushinski (Scarborough Centre):** I rise today to speak of an important announcement made

recently in Scarborough by the Premier and the Minister of Public Safety and Security. But first I want to tell you about what my constituents have been telling me at the door as I have visited them throughout Scarborough Centre. They told me that they want their government to crack down on crime. Simply put, they want to feel safe in their homes, on their streets and in their neighbourhoods. I agree wholeheartedly with my constituents.

That's why I was so delighted that the Premier and the Minister of Public Safety and Security came to Scarborough on May 5 to announce that once again the government would be funding 1,000 new police officers. This follows the 1,000 additional police officers already hired since 1998. As the Premier put it, the "announcement will mean a more visible police presence in Ontario that will keep our communities safe, strong and vibrant."

I note that the 1,000 new police officers are but one part of the government's throne speech plan to increase public safety in our province, and particularly in my riding of Scarborough Centre. I therefore wish to express my sincere appreciation and that of my constituents to both the Premier and Minister Runciman for first listening and then acting upon the concerns of my constituents in Scarborough Centre.

JUVENILE DIABETES

**Mr Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings):** Every day in Ontario there are citizens who suffer heart attacks—and suffer them needlessly, in some cases. There are citizens who experience kidney failure and have to have kidney dialysis or transplants. There are Ontarians who are experiencing vision loss, again in some cases needlessly, and citizens who are having to undergo amputation of their limbs.

I say "needlessly" because these people are victims of juvenile diabetes. It's very difficult to manage diabetes. There is no cure for it, but there's a wonderful device for managing juvenile diabetes called the insulin pump. It costs approximately \$5,000. From a humanitarian viewpoint, it makes sense. From a cost viewpoint, a heart attack costs the public health care system about \$100,000. If we think about the \$5,200 for an insulin pump and contrast that with the \$400 million this government has spent on ads, those ads would have bought 77,000 insulin pumps for victims of juvenile diabetes.

We have a two-tier system where some citizens are able to access insurance plans; others simply can't afford it and put their health or their children's health at risk. I call upon the Minister of Community, Family and

Children's Services to immediately add insulin pumps to the assistive devices program. They are literally a life-saving appliance that makes sense from a financial viewpoint and a humanitarian viewpoint. They need to be funded for Ontario's citizens now.

#### RURAL SCHOOLS

**Mr Toby Barrett (Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant):** It gives me great satisfaction to report to this Legislature that, after many months of debate and public meetings, the members of the Grand Erie District School Board listened to the good people of the Delhi area and voted unanimously to keep the doors to Delhi District Secondary School open. This is a great victory for all of us who fought for the survival of Delhi high school through meetings, petitions, briefs to the board and our Minister of Education. I thank the board for listening and making the right decision for the students in the Delhi area.

It's also a great victory for all of us throughout Ontario who have argued that rural schools are worth fighting for, that rural Ontario one-school communities need their schools to thrive and survive. Our government understands this. That's why we've allotted \$50 million and appointed Dr James Downey to develop a rural school strategy to address the unique challenges faced by boards with rural schools. However, the fight for our rural schools is far from over. We must continue to work together, much as all sides did quite recently in this Delhi debate.

I've been contacted by Dr Downey's office and I will be providing every assistance I can to provide insight on the rural school challenges we have faced in Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant. I encourage all who have been involved in school closure debates to relay their experience and input to Dr Downey.

#### CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF EASTERN ONTARIO

**Mr Richard Patten (Ottawa Centre):** This Harris-Eves government placed full-page partisan ads in three Ottawa daily newspapers last Saturday on the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario. The information contained in the ads was absolutely nothing new. The people of eastern Ontario already know that CHEO has a built-in reputation as a centre of excellence. We already know that CHEO is a remarkable institution. We already know that until the SARS review is completed, the government is allowing CHEO to continue providing pediatric cardiac services.

The government knows full well that the people of eastern Ontario want to be reassured that their pediatric cardiac surgery is staying in Ottawa. Just before the last election the government told the people of London that their Children's Hospital of Western Ontario would keep all their specialized programs, but after the election, and despite the efforts of a human outcry, the government decided to centralize pediatric surgery in Toronto at Sick

Kids, shutting down the service in London and Ottawa. The people of eastern Ontario need to know that the pediatric cardiac unit is staying at CHEO in Ottawa, now and in the future—end of story.

The people in eastern Ontario are smart enough to see what these ads really are: partisan, promotional pieces that cost tens of thousands of dollars and should have been paid for by the Conservative Party of Ontario, not Ontario taxpayers. It is unethical, uncouth and despicable behaviour of this government at the expense of trusting Ontario citizens.

1340

#### EDUCATION LABOUR DISPUTE

**Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina):** I'm happy to have a minute and a half to talk about what's happening with the Catholic teachers here in Toronto. We'll have another opportunity as soon as the Premier himself today will introduce a bill that will force teachers back to the schools. We're talking about a lockout, not a strike, that teachers are engaged in. We're talking about an issue where teachers want to get back to the classroom, were in the classroom, and the Toronto Catholic school board decided to take the extraordinary action of locking the teachers and the students out of their schools. The board decided to lock 69,000 students out of their schools when there was absolutely no reason to do so. What the teachers want is a settlement that's negotiated and bargained in good faith—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** Please stop the clock. The member for Ottawa Centre, please come to order. You had your chance during the members' statements. It's now the member for Trinity-Spadina. This is going to be a very hectic day, I'm sure, and we don't need to start in members' statements right off the bat.

Sorry for the interruption, member for Trinity-Spadina.

**Mr Marchese:** What the teachers want is a negotiated settlement. That's what we want and that's what we hope they will be able to get: a fair and just settlement with their board. My argument is, their board is not treating these teachers in a fair and just way. By locking them out, they've done the unfair and unjust thing and have given this government the leeway and the power to have teachers be prey to their politics and their ideology. We think it's wrong.

We urge the board, Mr Carnevale and the other board members, to get back to the table and communicate to Eves today that this bill they're about to introduce is wrong. It's not needed. The teachers were teaching, the teachers want to teach, and the students should be back in the classroom.

#### DAVE BABBITT

**Mr Marcel Beaubien (Lambton-Kent-Middlesex):** In my riding of Lambton-Kent-Middlesex we are extremely fortunate to have many outstanding teachers who

diligently, consistently and unselfishly go above and beyond the call of duty. Today I want to share with the House one such teacher who has been singled out for recognition a couple of times in the past year.

Mr Dave Babbitt is the music teacher at Wallaceburg District Secondary School. Mr Babbitt was born and raised in Wallaceburg, graduated from the local high school and, after receiving his teaching degree, returned to his hometown to teach and share his love and passion for music with his students and his community.

In addition to his teaching duties, Mr Babbitt spends countless hours providing individual music instruction to students, directing school musicals, leading the school band, and producing an outstanding community production called "Hometown Christmas," which attracts audiences of more than 1,000. He also leads his own band called The Brass Factory, which lends its support to many community endeavours throughout the year.

This past year, Mr Babbitt was awarded the Bob Brooks award from the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation for excellence in school-community relations. But of even greater significance was his selection for the Who's Who of American Teachers, which recognizes and publishes the name of the top 5% of teachers from all across North America. Mr Babbitt was nominated for this prestigious award by Ms Amanda Hale, a former student who earned the right to make the nomination based on her achievement as a member of the dean's list at her university. Tragically, Amanda was killed when the car she was driving was struck by a drunk driver just weeks after nominating Mr Babbitt for this award.

I know the House will want to join me in saluting Mr Dave Babbitt, just one of the many thousands of teachers across Ontario whose dedication and professionalism we should recognize and honour.

#### PREMIER'S RECORD

**Mr George Smitherman (Toronto Centre-Rosedale):** I have watched Ernie Eves very closely since he became Premier, and I am often reminded of that great Shaggy song, "It Wasn't Me." Just like Stockwell Day blaming his staff for not knowing which way Niagara Falls flows, every time Ernie hits a new stumbling block, he proclaims "It wasn't me," and points the finger in all different directions.

When he was caught handing out millions of dollars to pro sports teams, "It wasn't me." When he was ridiculed for having an infomercial budget presentation in an auto parts plant, he blamed the media; he blamed the Speaker. "It wasn't me," he shouted. When he was quoted in a press release calling Canadians cowards, he turned around and blamed his staff. "It wasn't me." When it was discovered that Ernie Eves authorized \$36 billion in government spending without the scrutiny of the Legislature, he blamed it on the bureaucrats: "It wasn't me." When hydro prices skyrocketed because of his complete mismanagement, Ernie Eves blamed Mike Harris: "It wasn't me."

This is a Premier who has lost his way. The wheels are spinning but the go-kart isn't moving. Ernie's blame-game approach is tired and old. It's typical of a government that's out of steam and out of ideas. They're out for themselves and their friends.

There is only one leader and only one party that will fix our public services, fix our schools and our hospitals, clean up our drinking water and give us air that we can breathe. That's Dalton McGuinty and the Ontario Liberal Party.

#### SARS

**Mr Bert Johnson (Perth-Middlesex):** I rise today to congratulate Premier Eves, Minister Clement, Doctors Colin D'Cunha and Jim Young, and all doctors, nurses and health employees and our entire medical community on a well-fought battle against SARS.

I want to recognize Dr Susan Tamblyn, medical officer of health for the Perth district health unit, who worked at the SARS provincial operations centre sharing her expertise in epidemics and pandemics. Her days were long and stressful, and I want her to know that we appreciate her hard work.

I also want to recognize the entire staff of Listowel Memorial Hospital, who dealt with a suspected case of SARS with great professionalism and care.

Now that we've defeated SARS, we have turned our attention to the economic fallout from the disease. I hope all Ontarians will take advantage of the tax holiday on accommodations and admissions and rediscover our great province. Next Monday is the Stratford Festival's opening night for its 51st season, and I want to remind everyone to include a trip to Stratford in their summer plans.

Having defeated SARS, we are being confronted by another disease with the potential for equally devastating economic repercussions. With a single case of mad cow disease in Alberta, the United States and other countries have closed their borders to Canadian beef and cattle. Last night I spoke to many farmers in my riding who are very worried. I know our testing system works. It identified the one isolated animal, but we need to make sure other countries know that too. We need to put the same effort into proving that our beef is safe that we put into proving that it is safe to visit Toronto.

#### REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

##### STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** I beg to inform the House that today the Clerk received the report dated May 21, 2003, of the standing committee on government agencies. Pursuant to standing order 106(e), the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

**Mr Joseph Spina (Brampton Centre):** I beg leave to present a report from the standing committee on finance and economic affairs and move its adoption.

**Clerk at the Table (Mr Todd Decker):** Your committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill 2, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act to restrict the conveyance of passengers for compensation / Projet de loi 2, Loi modifiant le Code de la route pour restreindre le transport de passagers moyennant rémunération.

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed. The bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

**Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina):** I beg leave to present a report from the standing committee on regulations and private bills and move its adoption.

**Clerk at the Table (Mr Todd Decker):** Your committee begs to report the following bill without amendment:

Bill Pr14, An Act respecting Redeemer University College.

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

BACK TO SCHOOL  
(TORONTO CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY)  
AND EDUCATION AND PROVINCIAL  
SCHOOLS NEGOTIATIONS  
AMENDMENT ACT, 2003

LOI DE 2003 PRÉVOYANT LE RETOUR  
À L'ÉCOLE (SECTEUR ÉLÉMENTAIRE DU  
CONSEIL CATHOLIQUE DE TORONTO)  
ET MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR  
L'ÉDUCATION ET LA LOI SUR  
LA NÉGOCIATION COLLECTIVE DANS  
LES ÉCOLES PROVINCIALES

Mr Eves moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 28, An Act to resolve a labour dispute between the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association and the Toronto Catholic District School Board and to amend the Education Act and the Provincial Schools Negotiations Act / Projet de loi 28, Loi visant à régler le conflit de travail opposant l'Association des enseignantes et des enseignants catholiques anglo-ontariens et le conseil scolaire de district appelé Toronto Catholic District School Board et modifiant la Loi sur l'éducation et la Loi sur la négociation collective dans les écoles provinciales.

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** 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 five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1350 to 1355.*

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

Ayes

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

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

Nays

Agostino, Dominic	Curling, Alvin	Martel, Shelley
Bartolucci, Rick	Di Cocco, Caroline	Martin, Tony
Bisson, Gilles	Dombrowsky, Leona	McGuinty, Dalton
Bountrogianni, Marie	Duncan, Dwight	McLeod, Lyn
Boyer, Claudette	Gerretsen, John	McMeekin, Ted
Bradley, James J.	Gravelle, Michael	Parsons, Ernie
Brown, Michael A.	Hampton, Howard	Patten, Richard
Bryant, Michael	Hoy, Pat	Phillips, Gerry
Caplan, David	Kennedy, Gerard	Prue, Michael
Churley, Marilyn	Kormos, Peter	Pupatello, Sandra
Cleary, John C.	Kwinter, Monte	Ramsay, David
Colle, Mike	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Ruprecht, Tony
Conway, Sean G.	Levac, David	Sergio, Mario
Crozier, Bruce	Marchese, Rosario	Smitherman, George

**Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers):** The ayes are 52; the nays are 42.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

PEOPLE'S ACCESS  
TO THE FACTS ACT, 2003  
LOI DE 2003 SUR L'ACCÈS  
DU PUBLIC AUX FAITS

Mr Wood moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 29, An Act to amend the Public Inquiries Act / Projet de loi 29, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les enquêtes publiques.

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

The member for a short statement?

**Mr Bob Wood (London West):** The title of this bill is the People's Access to the Facts Act. It amends the Public Inquiries Act to allow any member of the Legislative Assembly to propose a resolution to set up an inquiry into any matter that the act allows. The Assembly is required to vote on the resolution within 60 sessional days after it is proposed.

This in effect gives the Legislature itself the same power to call inquiries as the cabinet now has. Surely this power should rest in the hands of all the elected representatives of the people. Democracy and transparency do work.

This bill is similar to one which I introduced earlier in this session of the Legislature, except that it requires two thirds of the MPPs to support introduction of an inquiry resolution.

1400

#### ADULT PROTECTION ACT, 2003

LOI DE 2003

#### SUR LA PROTECTION DES ADULTES

Mr Bartolucci moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 30, An Act to protect adults from abuse and neglect / Projet de loi 30, Loi visant à protéger les adultes contre la maltraitance et la négligence.

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

The member for a short statement?

**Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury):** I'll make it brief. The bill provides for the appointment of the director of the adult protection office to provide protection for abused and neglected adults who are unable to protect themselves from abuse or neglect due to physical or mental disability.

"Abuse" means one or more of the following: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, medication abuse, financial abuse or abuse of one's rights and freedoms.

"Neglect" means that person is not receiving proper care and attention in the premises where he or she resides, is incapable of caring properly for himself or herself by reason of physical or mental disability, and refuses, delays or is unable to make provision for his or her proper care and attention.

#### DEMOCRATIC HERITAGE ARCHAEOLOGICAL PRESERVATION ACT, 2003

#### LOI DE 2003 SUR LA PRÉSERVATION ARCHÉOLOGIQUE DU PATRIMOINE DÉMOCRATIQUE

Mr Marchese moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 31, An Act to ensure the preservation of the site of Toronto's first parliament buildings / Projet de loi 31, Loi

visant à assurer la préservation du site des premiers édifices parlementaires de Toronto.

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

The member for a short statement?

**Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina):** The bill is intended to ensure the preservation of the site of Toronto's first Parliament buildings, built in 1798 and 1820.

Section 2 provides that the site be deemed to have been designated under part VI of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Section 3 provides that the minister responsible for the administration of that act shall ensure that a full archaeological excavation and investigation is conducted and shall promote the purchase of the site, including the relocation of the businesses and its donation to the city of Toronto, the construction of a museum and the provision of operating funds for the museum.

#### VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** Just before we recognize the member for Mississauga South, we have with us today in the Speaker's gallery the interns from the National Assembly of Quebec. Please join me in welcoming our special guests.

I shouldn't do this, but I will; they're joined by Mr Tom Wills from London, England, who is a goaltending buddy of mine.

We welcome all our honoured guests.

#### ONTARIO WATER RESOURCES AMENDMENT ACT, 2003

#### LOI DE 2003 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES RESSOURCES EN EAU DE L'ONTARIO

Mrs Marland moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 32, An Act to amend the Ontario Water Resources Act / Projet de loi 32, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les ressources en eau de l'Ontario.

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

The member for a short statement?

**Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South):** This bill provides that no one may sell in Ontario for human consumption water or ice in a sealed container or package or from a dispenser other than a water dispenser that is connected to a water distribution system of a municipality unless the water or ice meets the minimum standards prescribed in the regulation made under the act. The regulations can also regulate dispensers of water or ice for human consumption.

## GAS PRICE WATCHDOG ACT, 2003

LOI DE 2003 SUR L'AGENT  
DE SURVEILLANCE DES PRIX  
DU CARBURANT

Mr Gravelle moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 33, An Act respecting the price of motor vehicle fuel and the appointment of a Gas Price Watchdog / Projet de loi 33, Loi concernant le prix du carburant pour véhicules automobiles et la nomination d'un agent de surveillance des prix du carburant.

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

The member for a short statement?

**Mr Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay-Superior North):** This legislation would establish the office of the gas price watchdog, which would have the power to monitor pricing practices in the province with respect to motor vehicle fuel and the power also to conduct inquiries into pricing practices on the order of the minister.

While the gas price watchdog would be responsible for the monitoring of pricing across the province, I feel it will have particular relevance in northwestern Ontario, where the price fluctuations have frequently been much more volatile than in other parts of the province. In Thunder Bay last weekend, the price of gas shot up 10 cents a litre just before the long weekend, with no justification whatsoever. Consumers are fed up with this practice, and it is precisely for that reason that we need meaningful legislation such as this.

I want to pay particular thanks to my colleague from Eglinton-Lawrence, Mike Colle, who brought forth this legislation previously and who has been very supportive in helping me bring it forward once again.

REPRESENTATION AMENDMENT ACT  
(WATERLOO-WELLINGTON-  
KITCHENER), 2003LOI DE 2003 MODIFIANT LA LOI  
SUR LA REPRÉSENTATION ÉLECTORALE  
(WATERLOO-WELLINGTON-KITCHENER)

Mr Arnott moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 34, An Act to amend the Representation Act, 1996 / Projet de loi 34, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1996 sur la représentation électorale.

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

The member for a short statement?

**Mr Ted Arnott (Waterloo-Wellington):** As you're aware, Mr Speaker, at present the names of provincial electoral districts are identical to those of the federal electoral districts. This bill makes an exception to that rule by changing the name of the present provincial electoral district of Waterloo-Wellington, my constituency, to Waterloo-Wellington-Kitchener.

I introduced a bill similar to this in the previous session, and of course all the private members' bills died

on the order paper when the House was prorogued. I would ask all members to consider supporting my bill.

ONTARIO WATER RESOURCES  
AMENDMENT ACT  
(WATER SOURCE PROTECTION), 2003LOI DE 2003 MODIFIANT LA LOI  
SUR LES RESSOURCES EN EAU  
DE L'ONTARIO  
(PROTECTION DES SOURCES  
D'ALIMENTATION EN EAU)

Mrs Dombrowsky moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 35, An Act to amend the Ontario Water Resources Act with respect to water source protection / Projet de loi 35, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les ressources en eau de l'Ontario en ce qui concerne la protection des sources d'alimentation en eau.

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

The member for a short statement?

**Mrs Leona Dombrowsky (Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington):** The bill amends the Ontario Water Resources Act with regard to the availability and conservation of Ontario water resources. Specifically, the bill requires the director to consider the Ministry of the Environment's statement of environmental values when making any decision under the act.

The bill also requires that municipalities and conservation authorities are notified of an application to take water that, if granted, may affect their water sources or supplies.

1410

ONTARIO DRINKING WATER  
SOURCE PROTECTION ACT, 2003LOI DE 2003 SUR LA PROTECTION  
DES SOURCES D'EAU POTABLE  
DE L'ONTARIO

Ms Churley moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 36, An Act to protect sources of drinking water in Ontario / Projet de loi 36, Loi visant à protéger les sources d'eau potable en Ontario.

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

The member for a statement?

**Ms Marilyn Churley (Toronto-Danforth):** As members in the House are aware, we are marking the third anniversary of the tainted water tragedy in Walkerton. To help prevent such a tragedy, this bill offers protection of the sources of drinking water, because the protection of sources of drinking water is integral to the multi-barrier approach recommended in the Report of the Walkerton Inquiry. This bill sets out a framework for

comprehensive watershed-based drinking water protection, as recommended by Justice O'Connor.

MUNICIPALITY OF  
CHATHAM-KENT ACT, 2003

Mr Beaubien moved first reading of the following bill:  
Bill Pr12, An Act respecting the Municipality of Chatham-Kent.

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

The member for a short statement?

**Mr Marcel Beaubien (Lambton-Kent-Middlesex):** The restructuring order that created the municipality of Chatham-Kent specified that certain bylaws and resolutions of the former municipalities and/or local boards ceased to be in force on December 31, 2002. This bill changes this date to December 31, 2004. The bill is made retroactive to December 31, 2002.

ONTARIO WORKERS'  
MEMORIAL ACT, 2003  
LOI DE 2003  
SUR LE MONUMENT COMMÉMORATIF  
DES TRAVAILLEURS DE L'ONTARIO

Mr Agostino moved first reading of the following bill:  
Bill 37, An Act to establish the Ontario Workers' Memorial / Projet de loi 37, Loi visant à ériger le monument commémoratif en hommage aux travailleurs de l'Ontario.

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

The member for a short statement?

**Mr Dominic Agostino (Hamilton East):** The purpose of this bill is to require that a memorial be established adjacent to the legislative precinct of the Legislative Assembly to honour the memory of those workers who have died on the job. Appropriately, this Legislature has chosen a memorial to honour firefighters and police officers who have died on the job. This would extend it to all workers, and it would be at least a small tribute to the families of and to those hundreds of Ontarians who die on the job every year, who get up and don't come home from work that day. This would be, I think, a fitting tribute to those men and women.

TYNDALE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE  
& SEMINARY ACT, 2003

Mr Dunlop moved first reading of the following bill:  
Bill Pr21, An Act respecting Tyndale College & Seminary (formerly Ontario Bible College and Ontario Theological Seminary).

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

Pursuant to private members' rules, that is ordered for third reading.

CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES  
AMENDMENT ACT, 2003

LOI DE 2003 MODIFIANT LA LOI  
SUR LES SERVICES À L'ENFANCE  
ET À LA FAMILLE

Mr Bartolucci moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 38, An Act to amend the Child and Family Services Act to Allow one Children's Aid Society access to information held by another Children's Aid Society / Projet de loi 38, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les services à l'enfance et à la famille afin de permettre à une société d'aide à l'enfance d'avoir accès aux renseignements détenus par une autre société d'aide à l'enfance.

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

The member for a short statement?

**Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury):** This bill will amend the Child and Family Services Act to allow a society to have access to information held by another society, unless the information is protected by solicitor-client privilege, the information may not be disclosed under the Youth Criminal Justice Act or under section 35 of the Mental Health Act, or this information is subject to an order of the courts.

NO HOG FACTORIES ACT, 2003

LOI DE 2003 INTERDISANT  
LES PORCHERIES INDUSTRIELLES

Ms Churley moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 39, An Act to restrict the operation of large hog farms and to amend the Nutrient Management Act, 2002 / Projet de loi 39, Loi visant à restreindre l'exploitation des grosses fermes porcines et à modifier la Loi de 2002 sur la gestion des éléments nutritifs.

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

The member for a short statement?

**Ms Marilyn Churley (Toronto-Danforth):** Again, on the eve of the third anniversary of the tainted water tragedy in Walkerton, I'm introducing this bill to help protect water in this province. The bill prohibits large hog farms, subject to the ability of the Lieutenant Governor in Council to make exemptions where it is appropriate to do so.

The bill also amends the Nutrient Management Act, 2002, to provide that a regulation under the act only supersedes a municipal bylaw if the regulation provides greater environmental protection. The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations exempting any person from complying with section 2 if the Lieutenant Governor in Council is satisfied that Ontario legislation is in force that protects sources of drinking water from contamination that may be caused by the factory hog farm. It relates to my bill I introduced earlier on source protection.

MOTOR VEHICLE MANUFACTURER'S  
WARRANTY ACT, 2003  
LOI DE 2003  
SUR LA GARANTIE DES FABRICANTS  
DE VÉHICULES AUTOMOBILES

Mr Sampson moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 40, An Act respecting warranties offered by manufacturers of motor vehicles / Projet de loi 40, Loi concernant les garanties offertes par les fabricants de véhicules automobiles.

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

A short statement from the member?

**Mr Rob Sampson (Mississauga Centre):** This is a bill identical to the one I tabled in the third session of the 37th Parliament concerning remedies that would be available to consumers who enter into a purchase agreement for a vehicle and find out that major defects haven't been repaired at three attempts. It gives the purchaser the remedy to be able to say to the manufacturer, "Give me a new car or give me my money back."

**The Speaker:** I'm sorry to inform the members—I didn't realize the time was going on—that under standing order 33(f), the period for introduction of bills shall be limited to 30 minutes. Unfortunately, we're over the 30 minutes. Tomorrow, we will get to the members who were up today first. I apologize for that.

## MOTIONS

### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

**Hon Chris Stockwell (Minister of the Environment, Government House Leader):** I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion, without notice, regarding private members' public business.

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** Is there unanimous consent? Agreed.

**Hon Mr Stockwell:** I move that notwithstanding standing order 96(g), notice for ballot items 7, 8, 9 and 10 be waived.

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

**Hon Mr Stockwell:** I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion, without notice, regarding private members' public business.

**The Speaker:** Unanimous consent? Agreed.

**Hon Mr Stockwell:** I move that notwithstanding standing order 96(d), the following changes be made to the ballot list for private members' public business: Mr Guzzo and Mr Beaubien exchange places in order of precedence such that Mr Guzzo assumes ballot item 10 and Mr Beaubien assumes ballot item 7—

*Interjections.*

**Hon Mr Stockwell:** As controversial as it is, I will continue—and that Mr Beaubien and Mr Wood exchange

places in order of precedence such that Mr Beaubien assumes ballot item 15 and Mr Wood assumes ballot item 7.

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

## HOUSE SITTINGS

**Hon Chris Stockwell (Minister of the Environment, Government House Leader):** In the spirit of collegiality, I say to you, Mr Speaker, I move that pursuant to standing order 9(c)(i)—reminding of the collegiality that's taking place—the House shall meet from 6:45 pm to 9:30 pm on Wednesday, May 21, for the purpose of considering government business.

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

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

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

*The division bells rang from 1423 to 1428.*

**The Speaker:** All those in favour of Mr Stockwell's motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

### Ayes

Agostino, Dominic	Eves, Ernie	Munro, Julia
Arnott, Ted	Flaherty, Jim	Murdoch, Bill
Baird, John R.	Galt, Doug	Mushinski, Marilyn
Bartolucci, Rick	Gerretsen, John	Newman, Dan
Beaubien, Marcel	Gill, Raminder	O'Toole, John
Bountrogianni, Marie	Gravelle, Michael	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Boyer, Claudette	Guzzo, Garry J.	Parsons, Ernie
Bradley, James J.	Hardeman, Ernie	Patten, Richard
Brown, Michael A.	Hastings, John	Phillips, Gerry
Bryant, Michael	Hoy, Pat	Pupatello, Sandra
Caplan, David	Hudak, Tim	Runciman, Robert W.
Chudleigh, Ted	Jackson, Cameron	Ruprecht, Tony
Clark, Brad	Johns, Helen	Sampson, Rob
Cleary, John C.	Johnson, Bert	Sergio, Mario
Clement, Tony	Kells, Morley	Smitherman, George
Coburn, Brian	Kennedy, Gerard	Spina, Joseph
Colle, Mike	Klees, Frank	Sterling, Norman W.
Conway, Sean G.	Kwinter, Monte	Stewart, R. Gary
Crozier, Bruce	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Stockwell, Chris
Cunningham, Dianne	Levac, David	Tascona, Joseph N.
Curling, Alvin	Marland, Margaret	Tsubouchi, David H.
DeFaria, Carl	Martiniuk, Gerry	Turnbull, David
Di Cocco, Caroline	Mazzilli, Frank	Wettlaufer, Wayne
Dombrowsky, Leona	McDonald, AL	Wilson, Jim
Duncan, Dwight	McLeod, Lyn	Witmer, Elizabeth
Dunlop, Garfield	McMeekin, Ted	Wood, Bob
Ecker, Janet	Miller, Norm	Young, David
Elliott, Brenda	Molinari, Tina R.	

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

### Nays

Bisson, Gilles	Marchese, Rosario	Prue, Michael
Hampton, Howard	Martel, Shelley	
Kormos, Peter	Martin, Tony	

**Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers):** The ayes are 83; the nays are 7.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### EDUCATION LABOUR DISPUTE

**Hon Ernie Eves (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs):** Today I have introduced the Back to School (Toronto Catholic Elementary) and Education and Provincial Schools Negotiations Amendment Act. This act represents the decisive action our government is prepared to take to ensure students in the Toronto Catholic elementary system are able to complete their studies. They will be able to do this without further threat of school year disruptions because of lockouts or so-called work-to-rule campaigns.

Some 69,000 students are out of their classrooms. Instead of being in class and learning, they and their parents are helpless pawns in a struggle between the teachers' union and the school board. We all know that a day of lost instruction is a lost opportunity for success.

We have heard from parents, we have heard from students and we have heard from teachers. They are disgusted with the current situation. Parents want to know their children are getting the best education available, and they want to see report cards and results. They want to be assured that if their children need extra help in a subject, they will get it. They want to see their hard-earned taxes pay for education, not a power struggle. Most importantly, they see their children's futures at risk.

The legislation introduced today would, if passed, end this disruption. It would protect students and their opportunity to learn and succeed.

This government has already invested almost \$700 million to provide 3% increases to teachers' salary benchmarks this school year and a further 3% for next year. Clearly the problem cannot be solved just by money. This problem needs strong and decisive action. We are doing our part. Now we expect the boards and the teachers to do their part.

Our government takes the education of our children seriously. We know that most teachers are dedicated professionals who want to be in their classrooms teaching. They do not want to be on strike or take actions they know are detrimental to the education and safety of their students. We also know that there are activists who want nothing more than to disrupt the system for their own reasons.

The time for classroom disruption is over. Our goal is to ensure that students receive the education they deserve without the threat of school-year disruption because of strikes, lockouts or work-to-rule campaigns.

Our children's education is a top priority for Ontarians and for our government. That is why we have continued

to invest in education. This next school year we will be investing \$15.3 billion, which will increase to \$16.2 billion for the 2005-06 school year. We have also introduced Ontario students to a new and more rigorous curriculum and province-wide standardized tests to better prepare them to compete in today's global economy. It simply doesn't make sense to allow these strides forward to be jeopardized by labour disputes.

I am asking for the Legislature's approval for our actions. I am asking for the Legislature to consider the needs and the future of the children first.

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** Could we stop the clock for a quick moment, please? Before we continue, we have a former member in the members' gallery east. Speaking with the member for Kingston and the Islands is a former member for Kingston and the Islands, Mr Ken Keyes, a member of the 33rd and 34th Parliaments. Please join me in welcoming our colleague.

**Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Deputy Premier, Minister of Education):** Over the past several years, our government has made a number of changes to Ontario's education system. In making those changes, we have been guided by one goal. That goal is very simple: to ensure that all the young people—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Minister, sorry to interrupt. Stop the clock. Order.

Members will know that we fight very hard to have ministerial statements done in the House, and then when they do it, you yell and scream across at them. You're going to have five minutes. If you expect the ministers to make statements in here, then I suspect you'd probably want to give them a little bit of courtesy to do it; otherwise, quite frankly, they'll do it outside. I've been one of the ones fighting to do it in here and forcing them to do it in here, and then you can't even hear the minister. I would appreciate your co-operation.

The Deputy Premier and Minister of Education.

**Hon Mrs Witmer:** Our goal is to ensure that all the young people in Ontario receive the best education possible, an education that enables them to learn, experience new opportunities and reach their full potential. We want to ensure that every student achieves personal success.

Parents, educators and students have told us that they want a government that is committed to listening and responding decisively to their concerns; they want a government that is willing to take the necessary steps to ensure that students have the tools and the resources they need to achieve success in life.

We have spent the past year listening to parents and educational stakeholders and seeking their advice on how best to move forward to provide the best opportunities for our students.

Last April, in response to concerns about textbooks, the first action we took under Premier Eves was to announce an additional \$65 million in new funding for textbooks.

In response to concerns about the funding formula, we appointed Dr Mordechai Rozanski to review our funding

for schools and make recommendations on how we should move forward. Dr Rozanski's report confirmed that per pupil funding is providing equality to all students in this province no matter where they live. He also provided us with immediate and long-term recommendations.

I'm very pleased to say that our government responded immediately, after the release of the report, with additional funding for special education, salaries and transportation, as had been recommended. The recent budget committed almost \$2 billion in new funding over the next three years to move forward on the rest of his recommendations.

We have made good on our commitment to make the children of this province and education a priority. That's why we set up the task force on students at risk. Recently, in response to their recommendations, we have introduced the GOALS strategy to benefit students in grades 7 to 12 who need extra help in reading, writing and math and in their transition from school to the workplace. That's the reason we are investing approximately \$250 million annually in new special education funding to better support our students with special needs.

#### 1440

Unfortunately, our work is not yet complete. Recently, parents have been telling us that they want further stability in Ontario's education system. They want a system that ensures that labour negotiations do not disrupt the quality of the education of their students. They want stability in the classroom, and so do we. They want students learning the new curriculum in a stable learning environment. They want regular reports on how their students are doing.

Today we are again acting on behalf of our students. We, today, with this legislation, are putting our students first. Students cannot learn and teachers who want to teach cannot teach if they are not in the classroom. That's the reason this legislation is being introduced today, to ensure that the education of the children in the Toronto Catholic District School Board is not further disrupted by a labour dispute that keeps teachers away from their students. I have been encouraging both sides to negotiate.

It's because we want our teachers in the classroom that we have increased funding for salary benchmarks by a total of \$680 million. That amounts to an increase of 3% to the benchmark this school year and another 3% next year. We did this to provide stability.

This funding was provided to boards to ensure that they could negotiate fair and reasonable agreements with their teachers. More importantly, it was provided to ensure that the learning environments of Ontario students are not disrupted by labour disputes. Labour negotiations belong in a boardroom. They belong in a boardroom with senior administrators and union representatives, not on the picket lines or in Ontario's classrooms, and not at the expense of the educational experience of our students.

I believe, and our government believes, that the most important factors contributing to a child's education are excellent, outstanding teachers, such as those we have in

this province, working in a stable learning environment. Ontario today has some of the hardest working, most highly skilled and dedicated teachers in the world. We have made the maintaining and updating of their skills essential to the success of our students.

On the occasion of World Teachers' Day last fall, I told this Legislature that we ask a lot of our teachers; in fact, we ask more of them than we have ever asked. We ask teachers to equip students with the knowledge and skills they need for success in today's competitive global economy. We ask teachers to help our children develop the self-esteem and confidence they need to live productive and fulfilling lives as active and responsible citizens. We ask teachers to inspire in our young people a love of learning that will last a lifetime, because in today's changing world, the need for education never ends. We ask our teachers to be educational leaders, to work closely with their colleagues, parents, other professionals and members of the community to improve student learning. They are doing all this and more.

In order to do what is asked, teachers now need our support. In response, we have implemented a comprehensive program to ensure teaching excellence, because it's important that teachers have the most up-to-date skills and knowledge when they stand at the head of their class. Parents require it, and the success of our students demands it.

Because of that, we're expanding our faculties of education in Ontario. From 1999 to 2003, 6,000 new spaces for teaching students were created, a 24% increase over the previous five years. We're also working with teachers to attract young people into the teaching profession. The recent Be the Spark campaign was a joint effort of the government, the Ontario Teachers' Federation, the Ontario College of Teachers, the Council of Directors of Education and the Ontario Association of Deans of Education. The campaign demonstrated what I personally know: teaching is a great profession. It allows an opportunity to make a tremendous difference in the lives of young people.

When they do enter the profession, teachers have access to a range of supports to keep their skills up to date. To facilitate professional learning, our government recently committed \$5 million for distance learning, on-line courses and other courses. We want to be sure that a sufficient number of low-cost, easily accessible professional learning courses are available to teachers across the province.

Teachers are taking advantage of these learning opportunities. Thousands of Ontario teachers have voluntarily taken summer courses to help them teach the new curriculum.

We're also providing resources that help teachers do their jobs on a daily basis. As we've implemented the new curriculum, we have provided teachers with real examples of completed tasks and assignments at different grade and ability levels so that they are better able to consistently assess their students' work.

As we move forward with our GOALS strategy to ensure the success of our students in secondary school,

expert panels are working to give school boards, principals and teachers advice on the most effective strategies and resources to help students achieve success at reading, writing, math and the transition we now have in place from school to the workplace, college or university.

Our new supports and the hard work of our teachers and students are paying dividends. Our test scores show that our teachers are helping our students be more and more successful. In provincial, national and international tests, our students are doing better. They're showing that they can perform as well as or better than students anywhere in the world in reading, writing, math and science. We cannot afford to let labour disruptions take away from the significant gains we have made in the last seven years.

If this legislation passes, teachers at the Toronto Catholic District School Board will not only be in the classroom, they will be there with the tools and the support they need to ensure that our students are able to achieve success in a safe and stable learning environment.

I would encourage all members of this House today to put our students first.

**Hon Brad Clark (Minister of Labour):** The act we've introduced today represents the decisive action our government is prepared to take to ensure that students are able to complete their studies without the threat of school-year disruptions because of strikes, lockouts or so-called work-to-rule campaigns.

As members are aware, the Toronto Catholic District School Board has locked out its elementary school teachers due to the inability of both parties to reach a mutually acceptable agreement. Some 69,000 students are out of school, and this isn't the first time. Over the years, we've seen labour skirmishes occur in one board or another. Parents, teachers and students have told us over and over again that strikes, lockouts and work-to-rule campaigns disrupt our children's education and can often create unnecessary anxiety and stress for them and their families.

If passed, this bill would end the lockout by the Toronto Catholic District School Board. It would get the 69,000 students back in the classroom, where they belong. At the same time, steps are being taken to protect those students and to put a halt to the harmful work-to-rule actions by the teachers.

Work-to-rule campaigns are destructive in many ways. For instance, work-to-rule hampers instruction time. Before the lockout at the Toronto Catholic District School Board, teachers were arriving 15 minutes before class and leaving 15 minutes after the end of class.

Work-to-rule keeps parents and students in the dark. Teachers were not providing comments on report cards. As a result, parents have no idea how their children are doing in school or what help they need.

**1450**

Work-to-rule hurts a well-rounded education. Teachers were withdrawing from school trips, including a year-end traditional trip to Quebec City, which pres-

ented an emotional and financial cost to the students. The teachers were refusing to administer the standardized test. These tests are a part of our government's commitment to better prepare our children to compete in today's global economy.

We've heard from parents, we've heard from students, we've heard from teachers: they are all disgusted with the actions that both the board and the union are taking. Parents want to know their children are getting the best education available. They want to see the report cards and test results. They want to be assured that if their children need extra help in a subject, they will get it. Parents want to be able to discuss their child's education with teachers and not be told that such meetings are not a part of the teacher's job. They want to see their hard-earned taxes pay for education, not for ongoing fights between boards and unions. Most important, they see their children's futures at risk.

The legislation today would, if passed, end this practice of using students and their parents as bargaining chips in contract negotiations. It would protect students and safeguard their opportunity to learn and succeed. If passed by the Legislature and proclaimed by the Lieutenant Governor, this bill would provide a fair and balanced approach to the situation at the Toronto District Catholic School Board. It would get students back in their classrooms by ordering the board to resume normal operations immediately after the act comes into force. It would allow the school board and the union to continue to negotiate toward a fair settlement by giving the parties seven days in which to reach a mutually acceptable agreement. If the school board and the union were unable to resolve their differences, they have the opportunity to mutually agree upon mediator or arbitrator. If they are unable to agree, the Minister of Labour would appoint one. Until a new agreement is reached, the terms and conditions of employment would remain those that were in effect immediately prior to the parties being in a legal strike position.

This bill would also provide for maximum penalties of \$2,000 for individuals and \$25,000 for the union if they're not in compliance. Each day of non-compliance would be a separate offence.

We want the students back in the school.

**The Speaker:** I know the minister wasn't finished but the time was up. Responses?

**Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition):** What we have just witnessed has to be one of the most shallow, cynical displays of political gamesmanship that has ever, ever been witnessed in this Legislature. The Premier and the other ministers who have just spoken would have us believe that somehow this has everything to do with ensuring that the 69,000 students who are found today outside the classroom are returned to the classroom. It has nothing to do with that. It has everything to do with political gamesmanship and the next election. If this government, but more importantly, if this Premier, were genuinely interested in ensuring that those kids were back in their classrooms, the first thing that he

would have done, in anticipation of this lockout—because pretty well everybody knew that this was around the corner; everybody knew this was going to happen. The first thing the Premier should have done was pick up the phone and talk to the teachers' representatives and the school board representatives and ask what he might do to facilitate a resolution.

That kind of an exercise doesn't cost a cent and is in keeping with the true responsibilities that are attached to the Office of the Premier of Ontario. This guy doesn't understand that. Then when the lockout had taken place, the Premier would have done the same thing. He would have invited both sides into his office and said, "What is it that we can do by working together to facilitate a resolution and get the kids back in the classroom?" What this Premier decided to do instead, very deliberately, was to take a seat on the side, fold his arms, smile, grin from ear to ear, watch this unfold and hope that somehow he could make this work into his plan for electioneering in Ontario.

If this Premier were genuinely interested in getting these kids back to school, then he would have introduced a bill today that would have done nothing more and nothing less than that. What he has done—

*Interjection.*

**Mr McGuinty:** You don't know what they've roped you into. You'd better pay attention to what I'm about to say here.

What they have done—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Member, take your seat. Stop the clock. Order. Members come to order. The other side was very quiet for the Minister of Education.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** They were so. I will say this very clearly: we've got a very important vote coming up, and I will throw people out before the vote if they misbehave. If everybody wants to stay for that vote—and I'm sure the whips want them here—they'd better be good or I will throw them out.

I beg to differ with a few of the members. They were good for the minister when she spoke. I listened very quietly. They started off, and then they were quiet for her. I'm expecting the same from the leader of the official opposition.

Sorry for the interruption, leader of the official opposition.

**Mr McGuinty:** We had indicated our intentions to the government to support legislation. Let me say at the outset that we would have preferred that the parties be given at least 24 more hours to resolve the differences. But failing that, we indicated we were prepared to support a bill which would have the effect of doing nothing more than returning the kids to the classroom, bringing an end to the lockout and putting in place an arbitration process. We thought both parties would reconcile themselves to that over the course of time.

What the government has decided to do here with this back-to-work bill is amend provincial education policy.

What they are doing here is saying that the definition of a strike is now going to include work to rule. What they're going to do is to make voluntary extracurricular activities mandatory. Coaching the basketball team is now going to become mandatory. Coaching hockey, soccer, baseball and anything else is going to become mandatory. If you're going to act as a drama coach in the evening to help out your students, that's going to become mandatory. If you're going to help students with the yearbook, that too is going to become mandatory.

I want to quote you something the Premier himself said not that long ago to the Pembroke Daily Observer, on March 6 just last year. He said, "I think it's time to bury the hatchet and talk to teachers to see what they want in their education system. You can legislate anything you want, but you can't legislate goodwill and legislate respect. You have to earn that." The Premier could not have been more right.

I want to state this again so it is clear and emphatic. This has nothing to do with returning Toronto kids to their classroom. It has everything to do with political opportunism and preparing themselves to go into the next election. If they want to get the kids back to school, then introduce in this Legislature today a clean bill. We would be delighted to support that.

**Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** First of all, I want to respond to the Premier. The Premier spoke today in terms of wanting to "restore stability," I believe were the words he used, and that he wants to present himself as the white knight here who is somehow going to bring peace to our schools.

I just want to remind people that it wasn't so long ago that someone said, "We need to create a crisis in education in Ontario." For people who haven't been around for a while, they might not know who that was, but in fact it was the first Conservative education minister who said, "The government needs to create a crisis in education." I say, for the majority of parents, students, teachers and school trustees across the province, this government has certainly succeeded in that. You have succeeded in making our children's education an ongoing political football. If your television ads aren't attacking teachers, then you're out there attacking trustees or you're out there on many occasions trying to insinuate that somehow our children are not doing as well as they should.

The reality was disclosed by Dr Rozanski, who conducted your own task force report on education. He said, after going from one end of the province to the other, the real problem is that, after your decision to create a crisis, after your decision to cut funding from school boards and cut funding from schools, our schools in this province are under-funded to the tune of \$2 billion a year. Now you say, on the eve of an election, that you can be trusted to put the money back in. On the eve of an election, you want to present yourselves as somehow recreating or fixing the mess that you, in fact, are responsible for.

That's exactly the character of this legislation today. This is a government, this is a Minister of Education,

who could have phoned up the chair of the Toronto District Catholic School Board and said, "Please withdraw the lockout. Please get back to the bargaining table. Find a settlement."

Did the minister do that? Not at all. Because the minister, the Premier and the Minister of Labour are more interested in making our children's education into a political football. You're more interested in using it as a launching pad for your election campaign. I say to you, the people of Ontario are on to you. They have watched these tactics from you for eight years now and they're not going to fall for them, this time. They're not going to allow you to continue to use our children's education as a political football that you can kick around whenever it suits you, whenever you think you can get a little bit of political advantage from it.

Shame on you. Shame on using those children, those teachers for nothing more than your cynical ploy to try to get some kind of leg up in advance of an announcement of an election campaign.

**Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina):** It amazes me that it requires three ministers to deliver a simple message that says teachers are going to have to get back into the classrooms—three ministers, and one of them is the Premier. I've never seen that before; it's unprecedented.

I want to say to this House that this back-to-work legislation is not about students; it's about an election. We know it's pure, political, pitiful, craven, desperate opportunism by this government which needs to get re-elected, and they need to engage in class warfare in order to maintain a third term. This is what this is about. It's class warfare and this warfare is against the teachers.

You're not going to get away with it. It's quite clear. I feel it; I know you're not going to get away with it. What the parents want are more librarians, more textbooks, more principals in each and every school, more ESL support, more music teachers, more art teachers. That's what they want. They don't want an interventionist and more centralist government like yours disrupting our educational system. That's what you've done. The real disrupters are not the teachers. The one who has disrupted the system is you. You have done it for seven or eight years, and you continue to do it. You are the problem, not them.

## DEFERRED VOTES

### CONTEMPT OF PARLIAMENT

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** We now have a deferred vote on the motion by Mr Conway arising from the Speaker's ruling of May 8, 2003. Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1503 to 1508.*

**The Speaker:** Mr Conway has moved that this House declares that it is the undoubted right of the Legislative

Assembly, in Parliament assembled, to be the first recipient of the budget of Ontario.

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

### Ayes

Agostino, Dominic	Curling, Alvin	Martel, Shelley
Bartolucci, Rick	Di Cocco, Caroline	Martin, Tony
Bisson, Gilles	Dombrowsky, Leona	McGuinty, Dalton
Bountrogianni, Marie	Duncan, Dwight	McLeod, Lyn
Boyer, Claudette	Gerretsen, John	McMeekin, Ted
Bradley, James J.	Gravelle, Michael	Parsons, Ernie
Brown, Michael A.	Hampton, Howard	Patten, Richard
Bryant, Michael	Hoy, Pat	Phillips, Gerry
Caplan, David	Kennedy, Gerard	Prue, Michael
Churley, Marilyn	Kormos, Peter	Pupatello, Sandra
Cleary, John C.	Kwinter, Monte	Ruprecht, Tony
Colle, Mike	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Sergio, Mario
Conway, Sean G.	Levac, David	Smitherman, George
Crozier, Bruce	Marchese, Rosario	Sorbara, Greg

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

### Nays

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

**Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers):** The ayes are 42; the nays are 53.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion defeated.

## VISITORS

**Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I know that members of the Legislative Assembly would like to welcome to the assembly today in the gallery behind me students, teachers and parents from Prince Philip Public School in St Catharines.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### EDUCATION LABOUR DISPUTE

**Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is to the Premier. Premier, just a short while

ago, your government introduced in the House a bill that you claim would have the effect solely of returning some 69,000 Toronto schoolchildren to their classroom as soon as that bill received third reading and became law. But the truth of the matter, as you well know, is that this bill has much more to it than that. Part II of the bill provides for some amendments to the Education Act and the Provincial Schools Negotiations Act.

You know, Premier, that had you introduced a bill that was clean and did nothing more than what you claimed it would do, you would have our support. But instead, what you have chosen to do is to include an amendment to provincial education policy. I think it would be more appropriate, it would be fair and it would be responsible for you—if you want to make that kind of change, then you have a responsibility to get a mandate from the people of Ontario through an election.

I'll repeat the offer I made in my response to your statement, Premier: if you yank part II from this bill, you will receive our support to get the kids back in their classrooms. Will you do that, Premier?

**Hon Ernie Eves (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs):** We have introduced a piece of legislation that will return students in this board to the classroom, where they should be. There is nothing in this bill that prevents the board and the teachers' union from continuing to negotiate. They can be negotiating today. As a matter of fact, we have said repeatedly that a negotiated settlement is still by far the preferred option of everybody, I believe, with respect to this dispute or any other dispute.

With respect to his comment about part II, there is nothing in part II with respect to changing the regulations under the Education Act that teachers should not be performing in the classroom on a day-to-day basis.

**Mr McGuinty:** Premier, if part II is of no real significance, then why did you include it in a simple back-to-work bill? The fact of the matter is that what you're trying to do is to include in your back-to-work bill a fundamental change to provincial education policy. We feel that if that's what you want to do, then you have a responsibility to get a mandate from the people of Ontario through an election. If you were sincerely committed to doing nothing more than getting those 69,000 kids back into the classroom, then I ask you again on their behalf, why not strip from your bill part II, so that we have nothing more in the bill than what you purport it claims to do?

**Hon Mr Eves:** What the leader of the official opposition is complaining about is that teachers in the province who are not in a legal strike position and the teachers in this particular board are going to "fully and completely fill out report cards with comments and grades." Does he object to that? "Co-operate and assist in the administration of tests under the Education Quality and Accountability Act." Does he disagree with that? "Participate in regular meetings with the students' parents." Does he disagree with that? "Performing duties as assigned by the principal in relation to co-operative placement of their

students." Surely he can't disagree with that. "Performing duties traditionally associated with the graduation of students." He can't disagree with that.

Those are the only things that are different. They surely fall within the definition of everyday work of any teacher in the province of Ontario, and surely the leader of the official opposition isn't objecting that we are asking teachers to perform this work.

**Mr McGuinty:** Premier, I'm not sure that you even know what is found inside your bill. Part II provides that a strike is going to include "programs involving co-instructional activities." If you look up "co-instructional activities," the definition says they're activities "not limited to activities having to do with school-related sports, arts and cultural activities ... letters of support for pupils" and other things. Premier, this does much more than what you are describing. You are talking, in what should be a simple back-to-work bill, about a fundamental change to provincial education policy. You're going to make extracurricular activities, co-instructional activities, which includes voluntary activities—which is what we're really talking about here. You're going to make those mandatory.

Premier, you yourself said not that long ago, "I think that it's time to bury the hatchet and to talk to teachers to see what they want in their education system. You can legislate anything you want, but you can't legislate goodwill and respect. You have to earn that."

Do you honestly think that with this so-called back-to-work bill today you're going to earn the respect of teachers Ontario-wide? Is that what you honestly think? If you're going to make that kind of fundamental change, do you not think you have a responsibility to call an election and let the people of Ontario pass judgment?

**Hon Mr Eves:** We are here today to take care of these 69,000 students and make sure they get back to the classroom. The leader of the official opposition and his colleagues will have an opportunity, time enough, to discuss issues such as this before the people of the province of Ontario. He won't have to worry about having that opportunity. But the first and foremost thing is to get these 69,000 students back into the classroom, where they should be, receiving the instruction that we know the overwhelming majority of professional teachers want to provide to their students.

What we see here in the House today is a great demonstration of a leader of the official opposition trying to twist the logic so he can justify not putting these students back in the classroom, where they belong. Are you in favour of the students or the teacher's union?

1520

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** New question?

**Mr McGuinty:** I'm very interested: you maintain, Premier, that you're committed to putting students first and that you have nothing more that you want to do except to get the kids back in the classroom.

I want to know what specifically you did to intervene in this matter and to help bring both sides together so that they might work this out among themselves and, I would

gather, in a much speedier way than we're now going to have in terms of dealing with this legislation here. Because I want to tell you what I did, Premier. I got hold of representatives on behalf of teachers, I got hold of a representative at the school board, and I asked them if there was anything at all that I could do to facilitate a resolution.

*Interjections.*

**Mr McGuinty:** The other side might not think that is a worthwhile undertaking. You might think that, in these kinds of things, what you should do is simply sit back and do nothing. But we over here feel a sense of responsibility to try to bring the sides together and get the kids back in the classroom. So what I want to know from you, Premier, is what exactly have you done, apart from sitting on your hands and crafting this bill, which has provincial implications? What specifically did you do to reach out to both sides and bring this matter to a resolution?

**Hon Mr Eves:** We, my office, contacted both the head of the union and the head of the board of education and asked them to continue negotiating, because that is where this problem is going to be resolved: at the negotiating table.

I might say—all these little fingers pointing over there, Mr Speaker—that we did it without offending the integrity of either individual involved, which is more than I can say for you.

**Mr McGuinty:** So I gather, Premier, that you yourself did nothing. Personally, you stayed a hundred miles away from this. Because this plays into your agenda.

Let's be honest about what's happening here. You are absolutely delighted with this turn of events. The fact that you introduced this bill at this time is a lot more than pure coincidence. You are delighted with this turn of events. What you intend to do is to come across as some kind of a strong-arm in Ontario, and when it comes to the interests of children, you will do nothing more and nothing less than advance your own political interests. That's what this is all about.

What happened to the Ernie Eves who said, "You can't legislate goodwill and respect. That is something that you have to earn"? What happened to the Ernie Eves who said that to the *Pembroke Observer* back in March 2002?

**Hon Mr Eves:** I have here a certain bill that the leader of the official opposition introduced in this Legislature on April 23, 1992, called Bill 14, introduced in the name of Mr McGuinty, proposing to do away with teachers' strikes entirely in the province of Ontario. What happened to that Dalton McGuinty?

**Mr McGuinty:** Premier, you know better than that. You know what my bill did.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Sorry to interrupt. We need to have a little quiet, please. Order. The leader of the official opposition has the floor. Sorry for the interruption, leader.

**Mr McGuinty:** Here's something else you'll be interested in recalling, Premier, in terms of what you said in

response to these kinds of approaches in the past. When your colleague Mr Flaherty proposed a ban on teachers' strikes, you said, "This type of dogmatic approach is the politics of the past. When we're throwing out these neat solutions scratched on the back of an envelope, we might want to think about what the cost is and if we really want to go there."

Premier, I am wondering if you've determined what kind of cost will now be connected with mandatory volunteer services in our schools right across Ontario. How much are you now prepared to pay for the basketball coach, the volleyball coach, the hockey coach, the soccer coach, the football coach, the drama coach, the after-school tutoring and the teachers who stay behind and help out with putting the yearbook together? What kind of solution have you scratched on the back of your envelope so that you have, instead, avoided the issue of doing what is right for our students, which is to introduce today in this Legislature nothing more than a clean bill, as we have done in keeping with the traditions of this House in the past? Why is it that you have chosen instead to put a second part to this bill which has province-wide implications to all policy? Why wouldn't you do the right thing, the honourable thing and the responsible thing? If you want to make a change to provincial education policy, then why wouldn't you stand up and call an election?

**Hon Mr Eves:** Yesterday cabinet passed a change to regulation 298 under the Education Act, which defines "strike." The only five activities that we included are the five I rhymed off to him today. So he might want to know what he's talking about before he yips and yaps. The only five activities that we are asking teachers to perform are the five I mentioned to him earlier in question period. Can he remember them? He should get a copy of *Instant Hansard*. Tell me which one of the five you are against, because that's all we are asking you to do.

#### PENSION PLAN

**Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** My question is to the Premier. Premier, sitting in the gallery are some 35 members of the Participating Co-operatives of Ontario Trusteed Pension Plan. They represent over 2,300 employees of farm and dairy co-operatives located all over Ontario. They worked hard all their lives and they thought they could count on a modest income in their retirement years from their employment pensions, but that hasn't happened. Their pension plan has been fatally damaged by a risky investment strategy gone terribly wrong, accompanied by a breakdown in the regulation of pensions in this province. This month, those very modest pension benefits were cut in half, and the plan will be wound up.

These people played by the rules, they worked hard all their lives, they met their responsibilities, and now the pension rules let them down. Will you take immediate action and have your Minister of Finance meet with the

plan's sponsors and develop an action plan to restore those benefits for people who deserve those hard-earned pension benefits?

**Hon Ernie Eves (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs):** The Minister of Finance will respond very directly to the leader of the third party.

**Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Finance):** I appreciate the honourable member raising this issue. As he knows, my office has been in touch with him. I will be meeting with the representatives of the pensioners after question period.

This is certainly a very difficult situation for these individuals. The financial regulator has been working with this particular pension plan to ensure it was on a sound footing. When the board trustees attempted to work out a resolution—when it became evident that there were problems there, they attempted to work out a resolution. I think, as the honourable member knows, virtually all of the board of trustees are made up of plan members or former plan members. They were not able to come to a solution. They exercised their rights to wind up the plan. That is their right under the plan, and the regulator is working with them to try to resolve that. In the meantime, the plan members have served notice that they will be taking legal action for breach of fiduciary duty against the board members.

1530

**Mr Hampton:** I asked the Premier the question because there is a long list of government failure here and a real need for government action. The Premier should know that multi-employer pension plans, such as this pension plan, are not covered by the pension insurance fund. The Financial Services Commission of Ontario, your government's pension regulator, had ample warning of the investment problems, yet you chose to do nothing.

Premier, your government made mistakes, the plan trustees made mistakes, the investment manager made mistakes, but it's these innocent pensioners who are now being forced to pay the price. What are you going to do to restore the full pensions that these people worked hard all their lives to have which have now been taken from them?

**Hon Mrs Ecker:** As the honourable member will know, the majority of workers do not have pension plans. The multi-employer plan, which this kind is, was an attempt to make sure that more workers were covered, so it did provide them with pension benefits. In this case, the plan ran into financial difficulty. The regulator had been working with them to put that plan on a solid basis. They had been able to do that until recently.

I appreciate the honourable member's concerns. We are attempting to find a resolution. There is a notice of legal action by the plan members against the board, which is also part of what is occurring right now.

**Mr Hampton:** The Premier should know and the minister should know that the only reason these folks were forced to go to court is because your government has been missing in action. We told you over a year ago that there were serious problems with Ontario's pension

regulatory system and with Ontario legislation that's supposed to protect pensions. We told you, for example, that there was no coverage for multi-employer pension plans. We told you, for example, that in other jurisdictions they already allow vesting at day one. Other jurisdictions already allow for portability. Other jurisdictions have already put in place tougher regulations to ensure that the investment adviser doesn't take some kind of risky jaunt with other people's money. Your government has been missing in action. You have done nothing.

My question for the Premier is this: Will you do something for these people and for all the people across Ontario who have contributed to pension plans but who are now facing increasingly risky situations because your government has chosen to do nothing?

**Hon Mrs Ecker:** I appreciate the honourable member's concern but it is a good, interesting point to note here that when your party was in government, sir, some of the things you are advocating today, you refused to do at the time.

Mr Speaker, I appreciate his point. We know we have an issue with this particular plan. The regulator is very sensitive to trying to work out a resolution here. As I've said, I'm going to meet with the representatives of the pensioners here to resolve this issue. Again, I would caution the honourable member, there may well be legal action against the board members. There are a number of issues that need to be resolved. The regulator has been on this case with this plan for quite some time to try to work out a resolution, and we need to do that.

#### MEAT INSPECTION

**Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** Again to the Premier: Premier, the report of mad cow disease in Alberta has rocked Ontario's beef cattle industry, and the people of Ontario are nervous about the quality of the food. We need to realize the importance of meat inspectors, just as we needed to realize the importance of water inspectors in the wake of Walkerton.

It was a meat inspector who pulled the suspect cow from the line of cattle going to slaughter in Alberta and deemed it, rightfully, unfit for consumption.

In 1995, Ontario had 150 full-time, committed and well-trained meat inspectors in the province. Today, under your government, there are eight full-time inspectors. The rest are part-time, on-contract people who lack training and lack experience. Premier, what do you intend to do to beef up the meat inspection in Ontario? Or do you think it's okay to ask private contractors—who do not have adequate training, many of whom move on after only a few weeks on the job—do you think that's adequate protection for the food safety of Ontario residents?

**Hon Ernie Eves (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs):** The Minister of Agriculture and Food can respond very directly to the leader of the third party and correct the misinformation he left the public with.

**Hon Helen Johns (Minister of Agriculture and Food):** First of all, I want to say to the people and the farmers

and processors of Ontario that we have done a thousand tests of beef in Ontario this year and not one has come back with BSE. Our research indicates that our food in Ontario is safe.

We have a number of things we do to ensure safety. We have meat inspectors who are trained adequately and full-time contract inspectors, and we do some 160,000 hours of inspections in a year. We also do more lab work than any other province for the number of cows we have in the province. With that, we have found that we have no BSE in this province.

**Mr Hampton:** It's about the quality of meat inspections and the quality of meat inspectors. In 1995, there were 150 full-time trained inspectors. Today there are only eight full-time inspectors; the rest are part-time contractors. This is what the auditor said in his 2001 report, when he noted that food safety deficiencies that could pose risks to human health were not corrected fast enough by your government. He also said that an effective meat inspection program was highly dependent upon recruitment and retention of trained staff. Your program has failed miserably at this, with over a 30% turnover rate. In other words, of the meat inspectors you have, 30% are always leaving the job. Why? Because you've frozen their pay, because you don't provide them with adequate training and because there's no pension and no benefits. So they leave. And what happens? Ontarians are put at risk.

I put to the Premier and to the Minister of Agriculture: in view in what has happened in Alberta, don't you think it's time to hire full-time, trained meat inspectors in Ontario once again?

**Hon Mrs Johns:** First off, I'd like to say this is a really important issue in rural Ontario and I can't believe the third party; I just can't believe it.

The meat inspectors in the province have a grievance before the grievance settlement board, and I'm not speaking to that issue today, but I want to tell you that we have increased our inspections in Ontario. As I said, we have done 160,000 inspections. That is more than we have ever done in the province. We have 35,000 additional inspector hours. For future processing activities we have 10 new food inspectors, scientists and technicians, the equivalent of 17,000 hours, to better target our meat inspection processes. There is not one animal slaughtered in this province without a meat inspector being there. This province has the safest meat inspection and slaughter abilities of any province. We should be proud of that. We should be standing here today and talking about the great job we're doing. We should be talking about the new facilities we have at the University of Guelph that we spent \$500,000—

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

#### RENDERING INDUSTRY

**Mr Pat Hoy (Chatham-Kent Essex):** My question is to Minister of Agriculture. The animal rendering industry

is in chaos today. Ontario produces 12,000 tonnes of dead animal stock and remnants from slaughter and restaurant grease. This is rendered into meat meal, and 40% to 60% of that is exported to the US. The border is now closed to Canadian meat meal because of BSE. Renderers have no capacity for storage. Farmers are going to have rotting carcasses under the blazing sun. I don't need to explain the potential health hazards from these rotting animals. The rendering industry has told your ministry there will be a crisis within days. Farmers have nowhere to take their dead animal stock.

So far, your response has been to suggest a meeting next week. That's not good enough. We need you to take action immediately. Why has your ministry been unwilling to meet immediately to address this major public health and economic crisis in the rendering industry?

**Hon Helen Johns (Minister of Agriculture and Food):** Let me say that the rendering industry is a very important industry in the province, and this government has done a great deal to ensure it has a future in the province.

I understand the border is closed, but we have every intention of working with the federal government to quickly resolve this issue. It's important for the beef production industry, it's important for the processing industry and it's important for the customers who eat beef in Ontario to have this border open.

I was talking to the federal government today—to Minister Vanclief and to Shirley McLellan out of Alberta—and they both assure me they are doing everything they can to open this border as quickly as possible. Ontario is monitoring, we're pushing and we're working to ensure that the beef industry has a strong future in Ontario.

1540

**Mr Hoy:** The rendering industry wants you to talk with them. Minister, I just mentioned that 12,000 tonnes of this material is in place every week. The economic impact of BSE will be terrible across the cattle industry. We need to act to ensure this doesn't become a public health crisis. The normal day-to-day by-products of abattoirs and processing plants can't just be left lying around. They won't wait calmly while we try to get the border reopened. They are going to rot and be a potential source of disease to other animals and perhaps to humans.

Your ministry has been treating this like a secondary issue. Preserving the public health of Ontarians should be the first thing on your mind. Instead of fobbing off this issue until next week, will you commit to having the ministry take action? Will you immediately call a meeting with the key renderers and develop a strategy for dealing with this serious economic and public health problem now?

**Hon Mrs Johns:** I'm surprised at the tone of the opposition on a day like this for the agricultural community. But let me say that the ministry has been meeting with rendering companies. I'm happy to have the ministry meet. I'm happy to meet; my door is open. I've been out consulting for the last eight weeks. They could have

easily come and talked to me, and I'm happy to have them come in.

But let me say that we're doing everything possible on this side of the House to lower the concerns about this. We know there have been a thousand tests done in Ontario. We know that none of the cows have any positive reaction or show of BSE. Our research tells us that the beef in Ontario is safe. We all need to remember that. We all need to work on that premise. We all need to be supportive of our agriculture and agribusinesses in Ontario. It's the second-largest industry, and it makes this province tick. Our food is safe.

#### VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** Just before we continue, we have a former member in the members' gallery west. We have with us Barb Fisher, the member for Bruce in the 32nd Parliament.

We also have a federal colleague, Mr Peter MacKay, the member for Pictou-Antigonish-Guysborough.

We welcome our honoured guests.

New question, the member for Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale.

#### NURSES

**Mr Raminder Gill (Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale):** My question is for the hard-working Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, who, despite the fearmongering of the opposition, solved the double cohort.

Minister, actually I wanted to ask you this question last week. As you are aware, last week was National Nursing Week, when we celebrate the contributions nurses make to improve our care and standard of living. Ontario is the destination of choice for many internationally trained nurses who want to put their skills to work in our health care system. Our government is committed to helping them become licensed to practise in Ontario. One of the excellent programs our government supports is the CARE for Nurses program. This is a partnership with Toronto's WoodGreen Community Centre, the Kabayan community centre, St Michael's Hospital, the Yee Hong Centre for Geriatric Care and St Joseph's Health Centre. The CARE program is designed to increase the number of internationally trained nurses who pass the licence exam and become certified to practise nursing in Ontario.

Minister, recently you announced additional support for the CARE program. Can you please tell the House about this initiative and how it will help to improve nurses working in Ontario?

**Hon Dianne Cunningham (Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, minister responsible for women's issues):** I am here, obviously, with my colleagues in this Legislative Assembly to continue the celebration of nurses in Ontario and to congratulate them on the great job they do every day on the front lines. On

April 29, I was at George Brown College here in Toronto as we made an announcement for the CARE nursing project. This is a project that supports more internationally trained nurses in being trained and given the kind of education they need to pass their credentials and their exams so they can get jobs. We announced \$475,000.

I will say this is a model for the country, right here in Toronto. Now 115 nurses have become licensed, and 94 are working as registered nurses or registered practical nurses since this CARE program began. It's a great success story, and I hope we'll do much more of it.

**Mr Gill:** Thank you, Minister, for that answer. CARE for Nurses is just one of many programs that our government is supporting to help internationally trained professionals put their skills to work in Ontario. I understand, Minister, that we have programs to support immigrants who are pharmacists, technologists, midwives, computer programmers and a host of other professions that are high-demand in our economy.

Can you please tell the House what the results of the CARE for Nurses program have been so far and how it fits into our government's overall agenda to help internationally trained professionals practise their chosen profession in Ontario?

**Hon Mrs Cunningham:** Again, this new money will allow another 100 internationally trained nurses to be licensed and to get jobs. It's long overdue. It's a great success story.

My colleague the Minister of Health has a program to expand opportunities for internationally trained physicians. The CARE for Nurses program has more than doubled the success for internationally trained nurses to be successful in writing their exams, which is the most difficult part. Before this program, 33% of foreign-trained nurses passed the exam; now 70% of participants are succeeding. We should all be celebrating on behalf of them and their families.

The internationally trained pharmacy graduate program is in its early stages, but we already have 96 people licensed as internationally trained pharmacists. I see the former Minister of Health, who was supportive of this in the very beginning. It's a great thing to be invited to their graduation and to honour them and to share in their success with their families.

This is just two of 13 bridge training programs in Ontario. We've invested \$15 million in bridge training programs, Mr Speaker, and I know you support this as well in your own riding. So thank you very much.

#### PRIVATE HOSPITALS

**Ms Sandra Pupatello (Windsor West):** My question is for the Minister of Health. Minister, last week we learned that a preferred bid has been selected for the private hospital plan at William Osler Health Centre in Brampton. From this it's clear that you've decided to push forward with your plans to privatize health care in this province. You still have not tabled any evidence to suggest that this is cheaper, faster or safer for the public in Ontario, and yet still you press forward.

I'd like to read a quote to you from Mr Romanow. He said, "Many of the so-called 'new solutions' being proposed for health care—pay-as-you-go, user and facility fees, fast-track treatment for the lucky few and wait-lists for everyone else—are not new at all. We've been there. They are old solutions that didn't work then, and were discarded for that reason. And the preponderance of evidence is that they will not work today."

Minister, will you agree to stop plans to privatize our hospitals, freeze this contract process and go to the people in an election so that they will tell you they do not want to privatize?

**Hon Tony Clement (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** The Dalton McGuinty agenda is to stop a new hospital being built in Brampton, Ontario, for the people of Brampton and for the people of Caledon and for the people of Mississauga, to stop a 608-bed modern facility helping to attract more doctors and nurses, better equipment for our community care and hospital care, all university-accessible, all available under the Canada Health Act and the Public Hospitals Act. That's what a Dalton McGuinty government would do. It would stop a brand new hospital in Brampton. We on this side of the House want better health care in Brampton, want better health care in Ontario. We're going to move ahead.

1550

**Ms Pupatello:** Minister, what you just said is absolute nonsense, and you know it. What we're telling you today is that not only are these private hospitals for Brampton, for Ottawa, for Markham-Stouffville, you've moved ahead with privatizing CTs and MRIs, and to this day you have tabled no evidence that it is safer, cheaper or more accessible to the public. The only way these private companies will make money, Minister, is if they operate with a different set of rules. It's the only way they can make money.

Minister, it is incumbent on you and your government to go to the people and ask them if they want privatization in the health system. We call on you: call an election before you let this happen. Call an election, Minister.

**Hon Mr Clement:** In this document, despite the honourable member's protestations, Dalton McGuinty promises to stop new hospitals being built under a public-private formula to make sure they happen earlier, to make sure they're available for the people of Ontario.

Our leader, our Premier, has said we want more health care, we want better health care and we want health care to be universally accessible. We want to use the private sector and the public sector to get better health care. The people of Ontario will choose. I know they'll choose the big plan, not this plan.

#### URBAN STRATEGY

**Ms Marilyn Mushinski (Scarborough Centre):** My question is for the Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, who's also responsible for urban issues. Coming from a predominantly urban riding, I'm particularly pleased to know that the government is

listening to, and in turn responding to, the concerns of our urban centres. I believe it's important for those who live in urban centres to be assured that our government has invested in strong municipalities that will remain globally competitive in the 21st century.

This government has demonstrated its commitment to cities through its responsible funding directions and decisions and sound policy initiatives. Minister, could you please enlighten this House as to your findings from your recently released urban consultation report.

**Hon Tina R. Molinari (Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing):** I thank the member from Scarborough Centre, who is a true advocate for her constituents, for raising the question here today. Ontario's urban centres are the lifeblood of our provincial economy. As I have said before, no two cities in this province are alike, and as our Premier has stated, we need to respond to the challenges facing our cities. Our Smart Growth initiative and the memorandum of understanding which we have with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario are two major examples of how we have responded effectively and in a tangible way for our cities.

I should note that our continuing discussions with cities will not focus exclusively on revenues, but rather on partnerships that will allow for more effective and efficient ways of doing business. In my report 2003 and Beyond: A Smart Approach for Ontario's Urban Centres, I detailed the needs that were expressed to me by Ontario's urban leaders. Urban centres are looking for long-term funding for support and infrastructure, sustainable sources of revenue—

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

**Ms Mushinski:** I'm particularly happy to hear about the part that you're playing in improving our relationship with municipal partners. I know it's your personal initiative that has a lot to do with this, and I believe that's to be applauded.

There was a great deal of anticipation, prior to the federal government's throne speech earlier this year, with regard to assistance for cities.

*Interjections.*

**Ms Mushinski:** Yes, I know that members on the opposite side will be very interested in the response to this, given that their federal cousins did nothing. In fact, the result was absolutely less than satisfactory.

I would like to know what this government is doing to help urban centres deal with the ongoing challenges they face on a day-to-day basis.

**Hon Mrs Molinari:** What I heard from my consultations from the urban centres is that they need long-term funding and support for infrastructure, sustainable sources of revenue and a coordinated way of responding to some of their needs. The federal government has paid lip service to supporting our urban centres and we now need to hold them to their word and have them become a full partner and participate in helping our municipalities.

In the meantime, our government is proposing to help our cities by building and expanding Ontario's highways,

supporting the growth of public transit and resolving key challenges such as waste management, brownfield redevelopment and affordable housing as part of an integrated plan. We will also create a powerful Smart Growth board for each of Ontario's five regions to lead the way in putting Smart Growth principles into action. It's our job as a government to provide the leadership required to meet the challenges facing cities today.

#### HYDRO GENERATION

**Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** I have a question for the Minister of Energy. May 12 was the deadline for your proposals to put dirty diesel generators in urban neighbourhoods across southern Ontario. I've asked that you make public these proposals so that people will know when and where they're going to have one of your dirty diesel generators in their neighbourhood. You've refused to make your proposals public. Minister, don't you think people deserve to know whether or not you're going to put one of your hyper-polluting diesel generators in their neighbourhood?

**Hon John R. Baird (Minister of Energy, Minister responsible for francophone affairs):** I have been clear in stating quite unequivocally that there will be no dirty diesel generators going into urban areas. I know that comes as bad news for the member opposite, as he's seeking to fearmonger and continually arouse concern right across Ontario. He might want to stand in his place and tell this House why, when he was around the cabinet table, they issued more than 500 megawatts of new dirty diesel power generators in this province; why, when he had an opportunity, he could have stood up for the environment. I want to know, will the leader of the third party stand in his place and tell the people of Ontario why he did nothing, not only about dirty diesel but about dirty coal, for five long years in Ontario? Will he do that? Will he come clean for the people of Ontario?

**Mr Hampton:** It's clear the Minister of Energy is living in his continuing fantasyland. What you refuse to tell people is that those so-called 500 megawatts of diesel generation were hospital standbys that were never used. The problem for people in Ontario this summer is, as they know from your failure of hydro privatization and deregulation last summer, that there's every likelihood they will be used now.

But my question to the minister is this: I outlined yesterday how the state of California, when your friends at Enron were manipulating hydroelectricity supply there, used energy conservation and energy efficiency strategies to reduce peak demand in the summer of 2001 by almost 5,500 megawatts. Why aren't you pursuing an energy conservation/energy efficiency strategy, instead of proposing to start up dirty diesel generators across neighbourhoods in southern Ontario?

**Hon Mr Baird:** The member opposite wants to know where the dirty diesel generators are going in urban areas: nowhere. He continues to perpetrate a myth.

But I thought I had seen everything. I've been in this House for eight years. I've listened continuously to ques-

tions from the leader of the third party, talking about how those of us on this side always extol the virtues of California. I read the clippings this morning and it said, "Hampton Lauds California Energy Motto." I thought I had seen everything. He's wanting us in this province to look to California for advice on energy. Well, I'll tell you one person who did. The person who heads Energy Probe, Tom Adams, said, "Hampton's conservation claims are 'not credible.'"

1600

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

##### THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

##### DÉBAT SUR LE DISCOURS DU TRÔNE

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 7, 2003, on the amendment to the amendment to the motion for an address in reply to the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session.

**Mr Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings):** I'm pleased to speak to this. I will be sharing my time with the member for Essex.

It is difficult to know where to start. When going through this speech from the throne, it promises Ontario—actually, it's probably more of a threat than a promise, but I'd like to share with the people of Ontario some of the points that leapt out at me as I ran through the throne speech.

The first thing that I found rather startling was the statement made by this government that, "for the first time since 1908, an Ontario government has introduced five consecutive balanced budgets." That may be their statement, and that may even be their perception. It may very well be that this is an innocent statement because they don't really understand the budget process, but the people that do, such as Standard and Poor's and a number of other professional bond rating agencies, say the budget is not balanced. The budget is contingent on selling assets of over \$2 billion. That is somewhat similar to an individual saying, "My household budget balances for the year, as long as I sell the house."

What these assets are is not defined. Will they be sold at fire sale prices to actually balance the budget or will they be sold or not sold? That statement, I think, is somewhat misleading to the people of Ontario. This is not a balanced budget, according to any of the financial experts in North America.

It says, "Your government has paid down \$5 billion in provincial debt and will continue to pay down Ontario's debt to ensure long-term growth and prosperity." I think to balance that, we need to point out that because of this government's mishandling of hydro and of the entire electricity issue, the provincial debt—there's only one taxpayer and it may be a debt attributed to hydro, but the fact is that the debt is going up every day to cover the energy costs for us purchasing electricity. It's in a separate budget line but I would say—and I'm sure they've

used the line themselves but they don't accept it—there is one taxpayer. For the people of Ontario, our debt is increasing each and every day on the electricity side.

It says here that they are wanting to work with small business to encourage job creation. My experience, from small businesses in my constituency, is that this government—while talking about tax cuts and talking about taking less money, the retail sales tax branch has been absolutely attacking small businesses, coming into one- and two-person operations that do not have a high income, do not have the expertise to fight against a ministry that says, “You owe us more money. You can appeal, but first you give us some money, then we'll deal with the appeal.” I think this government has been absolutely brutal to small business, and that seems somewhat at odds with their statement about being supportive of small business.

The Ontarians with Disabilities Act was passed by this government with no teeth, with no action in it, really, that applied to the average life of an average citizen in Ontario. As far as the Ontario disability support program, this government continues to force thousands of Ontarians with disabilities to live \$7,000 below the poverty level.

The statement says, “Your government recognizes that there are some Ontarians who need extra help to cope with disabilities. It understands that people with disabilities often have special needs that make it difficult for them to work. That's why it will increase Ontario disability support program payments to better help people with disabilities lead happier, more productive and dignified lives.” A very interesting statement—first of all, extremely vague; no commitment to numbers. But I understand why they're not committing to numbers in the throne speech. It's because when one examines this infobudget that they did at an auto parts plant, there's no provision in the budget for an increase in the ODSP. They can't put numbers down because they budgeted zero in their ODSP plan.

It says, “Your government will reform support for children with special needs to ensure that parents have a greater say in how their needs are met.” I talk, and I know government members talk, to constituents who have children with major difficulties. The parents are striving, with all they can, to keep the children at home. Keeping the children at home with them is the best for the child, best for the parents and best for the economy, but this government has been miserly on special-services-at-home agreements that allow the children to continue to remain in the house with their parents and receive services. This won't improve that. This, again, is gobbledegook. We need to be concerned about keeping children with disabilities in the most nurturing environment. That's what their parents said. I'm not just talking about individuals under 15, 16 or 18 years old. There are adult children who may physically be 25, 30 or 40, but they still will receive the best possible service at home with their parents. This province needs to do much better than they're doing on that side.

There is reference in here, as there is in every speech, to cracking down on welfare fraud. I would suggest that at the same time they actively pursue the millions and millions of dollars in unpaid corporate taxes that this province is making very little or no effort to collect.

They talk about their energy supplies: “Your government will ensure that Ontarians have a supply of power today, tomorrow and into the future.” This government, with the boondoggle that they made of Ontario Hydro and electricity, has put thousands and thousands of jobs at risk in this province. Larger industries that are now paying two or three or four or five times what they used to pay for electricity can no longer be competitive in the world market. The advantage of having a business in Ontario for generations has been electricity at cost—an ensured supply at a fair price. Now industry, over and over, is saying, “Our costs have escalated so much that jobs—this government that preaches jobs doesn't actually walk the walk, and has jeopardized thousands of good jobs in Ontario over its mismanagement of electricity.” Again, those words ring hollow.

Here's a statement that hits pretty close to home: “To increase the number of nurses practising in Ontario, your government will launch an aggressive nurse recruitment and retention program.” They're going to try to attract more nurses to Ontario and keep the ones that are here. Here's the problem, folks: in my community, Quinte Healthcare, a hospital amalgamation that consists of Picton, Trenton, Belleville and North Hastings, is reducing nursing hours and laying off nurses. Why? Because this government has underfunded Quinte Healthcare by \$2 million. They are allowing nurses to be laid off and reducing the number of nursing hours.

*Interjection.*

**Mr Parsons:** For the member from Northumberland: you know that it's true that the nursing hours are being cut.

*Interjection.*

**Mr Parsons:** They do not have money to have nurses in the hospital. What kind of a hospital is it when they're forced to lay off nurses, not because of what they want, but because this government has underfunded the operating costs? Nurses are being laid off, while at the same time this rhetoric in here says that they're going to attract nurses.

We're seeing in Ontario half of our nurses being offered part-time hours, having to work at more than one hospital site, being given no benefits, while at the same time other jurisdictions are absolutely luring them away. The words are extremely hollow on this one.

Cancer care: two thirds of patients in Ontario, when diagnosed with cancer, do not get the treatment within the time frame recommended by the medical community. Within eight weeks, they do not get to start the radiation. This says, “No child, parent, senior or any citizen of a compassionate province should have to wait one moment longer than necessary to receive care.” Two thirds of individuals in this province are not receiving the care in the time frame that they need for cancer.

They talk about improving hospitals. What they're going to do is allow the private sector to build hospitals and then rent them back. Isn't it strange, in our average, everyday life outside of this chamber, that each of us struggles to buy a residence, whether it be a condominium or a house? We want to move out of a rental apartment and into an apartment, condominium or house that we own, because we know that it is cheaper in the long run to own it rather than to forever pay rent. This move toward having the hospitals built by the private sector and owned by the private sector will force the government to pay rent forever on these buildings. Long after they're paid off, the rent will continue. This is taking what should be patient money and deflecting it into profit for a corporation.

1610

"Your government," it says under the education component, "will provide tools and resources to ensure phonics are available to all schools."

Phonics never left our school system. Phonics has always been available and is one of the approaches used in teaching. Not every child learns the same way. Not every child benefits from the same program. Schools have used a multitude of approaches and techniques to teach reading and writing. The inference that phonics has gone and this government is going to bring it back is not correct. Phonics has always been there.

Finally, I would refer to a statement which says, "Over the past several years, your government has begun improving public service. While the Ontario public service has been reduced by 23%, it has won international awards."

It may have won international awards, but it hasn't won local awards. You be an individual in Ontario who needs to deal with the Family Responsibility Office. Just try to get through to them. You be an individual in Ontario who is trying to deal with ODSP, trying to get an application, trying to speak with someone. The rest of the world may envy it, but that's because they don't have to phone the 1-800 numbers and wait 27 minutes for a recording to tell them to continue to wait. The Ontario public service has been under attack, and when you attack the public service you attack the citizens of Ontario, who need access to those services. Those services have been reduced.

**Mr Bruce Crozier (Essex):** I am pleased to stand today to say a few words about the throne speech that was given by this government just a few days ago. I want to remind people how this is really an anticlimax. In the normal course of events what we get from a government, once the session has been prorogued, is a throne speech which lays out in general terms what it is the government wants to do in the next session. Sometimes, although not in this case, it's called a vision. The reason I say that is that I don't think there is any vision in this throne speech. But in any event, a throne speech lays out in general terms what is going to be done, and that is then followed by a budget.

But what happened in this case? We got the so-called Magna budget first, before the vision or general plan was

out. Then the government said, "We're going to go to the people and ask them what they want in the throne speech."

Well, tell me: how can you go to the people and find out what they want in the throne speech after the budget? That's kind of putting the proverbial cart before the horse. But that's the way this worked. So we have to deal with the throne speech as it's given. I'm not so sure how much of it was from those consultations with the people. I can't recall, in southwestern Ontario, or at least down our way, any general invitation to the people to meet with and advise the government on what they'd like in the throne speech.

In any event, there are a couple of areas that I'd like to at least cover. One was agriculture. I think in the throne speech the government said that in the upcoming weeks they "will unveil a comprehensive rural strategy aimed at addressing concerns raised by the people in rural communities." Well, excuse me, but I thought that's what they said they went out to do before the throne speech. So I don't know when it is that they're going to communicate with the people in rural Ontario.

Everyone would know—and those who don't, I would hope to advise—that it was over two months ago that our party gave what we feel and what we have heard from the people of Ontario, those points that should be in a government policy when it comes to agriculture.

One of the main points in our policy is that rural schools must be protected. I haven't seen anything in this throne speech that would suggest that this government is giving its obligations to maintaining rural schools. Speaker, you're from rural Ontario. You know as well as I that it's not quite the same as, for example, the situation we're dealing with in a city like Toronto. I suggest to folks that this throne speech gives some shallow words about a comprehensive rural strategy that addresses concerns raised by the people in rural communities, but it really says nothing. That's what we look for in a throne speech, and in a subsequent budget.

Another thing that's talked about in this throne speech is democracy, that there will be more free votes. Well, if today is any indication of this government's intention when it comes free votes, I suggest that you don't trust a word about it that's in this throne speech. Because today, when the vote was taken on an issue that we've been debating over the last week or so, that being the contempt motion, we know that there were government members who spoke out against the government having presented its budget outside this Legislature. We know that there were members on the government side who criticized their own government. We know that there were members on the government side who weren't happy, who weren't pleased, who didn't agree with a budget that was presented outside this Legislature. Yet what did we see today? Every government member who was present in this House stood up and voted against that motion. In fact, it wasn't even a motion that accused the government of contempt; it was merely a motion that said it's the right of this Legislature to have the budget presented here

first. What I can only assume now is that this government, at some future date—and frankly, after an election that seems to be impending, I hope they don't have the opportunity in the near future—a Conservative government would say, "Well, the motion was defeated," albeit that it was defeated by Conservatives, "and from now on the field is free. We can present a budget anywhere. We can go up to Canada's Wonderland, for goodness' sake, and present a budget." So much for free votes.

We talk a lot about free votes in this place, and I'm the first to admit that in the parliamentary party system that we have, free votes are rare. I would be one who would like to see more free votes. But they're always misinterpreted. It doesn't matter which party it is; if there is that rare occasion where there's a free vote, then the leader of that particular party, be it the party in power or the opposition, is said not to have their caucus under control. I do want to say this about free votes, and when you can have a free vote, that may not be totally understood by those who aren't in this place every day: each of us, to kind of describe it, belongs to a team. I know from my experience on our side that there are a number of issues on which we do not totally agree. There are a number of issues on which the discussion in caucus gets very interesting. Sometimes the tempers can even flare a little bit. But what happens at the end of the day is if you belong to the team, you give your input, the leader takes a consensus and he also takes into consideration what a Liberal position would be, and at the end of the day we all come out of the room, and in most cases we're all on the same side and we're willing to support that position. So free votes are an interesting concept, but there really aren't that many times when a truly free vote can be taken so that it would not be misinterpreted as the leader of that particular caucus not having control.

I still am having a real problem with believing that this government has any commitment to democracy. We only have to look back at the record of the government and how many times it has brought in closure of debate—that's not democracy—how many times we've not had the opportunity to take an issue to the public through public meetings. So I don't know about democracy being espoused by this government. I'm afraid that it has been, in this Legislature, one of the most undemocratic governments that we've had. So the throne speech is just so many words. In the words of the minister across, certainly, let's call an election. Then we'll really find out where democracy lies.

1620

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

**Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** One of the glaring omissions in the throne speech involved lack of any mention of what this government intends to do with the Sudbury Regional Hospital. That's a glaring omission indeed, because it has been over a year now since there has been absolutely no construction on phase 2 of the regional hospital, a hospital that I remind you was forced to be amalgamated, three into one, as the result of an order by the Health Services Restructuring Commission.

A couple of weeks before the government's throne speech, the Premier announced that he wanted to have some consultation with people about what should be in the document. Frankly, in my very cynical day that day, I thought that the throne speech was probably already written, but I decided to use that as an opportunity so that people in our community could have their say, particularly about our regional hospital. So I held a press conference with our NDP candidate, and we blew up the page on health care that said, "What is the most important need for health care in your community?" and we put stickers on it that said, "Sudbury says, 'Finish our hospital now'" in English and French, because it is the most important health care issue in our community, and the government has done nothing to deal with the mess that the hospital has been left in for over a year now.

The Health Services Restructuring Commission grossly underestimated the cost to amalgamate three hospitals into one on an existing site. They grossly underestimated, for example, the cost of the equipment that would be needed to furnish a newly renovated regional hospital. As a result, we have a horrific cost overrun, we've had no construction on phase 2 for over a year now and we have people in the community who have fundraised now to the tune of over \$25 million, and still no construction in sight.

This is supposed to be the hospital that's used as a teaching hospital for the new medical school in northern Ontario, if it ever gets completed. So I say to the government, enough is enough. It's time to finish our regional hospital.

**Hon John R. Baird (Minister of Energy, Minister responsible for francophone affairs):** I'm pleased to have a chance to comment on the speech by the member for Essex. It may come as a surprise that I share many of the views he expressed. I thought he gave a fair comment with respect to free votes in this place and the problems that have been encountered on all sides of the House, no matter who's in government or who's in opposition. I think it does become an issue of confidence in the leader of the political party, in opposition or in government. I think he was correct to point that out, and all of us perhaps, in all three political parties, can accept some responsibility, as I think society as a whole—the media, the system as a whole—hasn't been as conducive to that as it is in some jurisdictions.

While I support a smaller House, one of the disadvantages of it is that you have a bigger executive branch on the government side. So, for example, even on Thursday morning votes, if the executive branch isn't here, the opposition would have a two-to-one majority, which of course poses legitimate questions for all people. So I thought he raised some good points on that.

I am cautious, though, when members of his party say—and the member opposite, to be fair, didn't in his speech—"We're better—"

**Mr Crozier:** I basically commented on it, but you didn't listen.

**Hon Mr Baird:** I did listen to it.

To the member opposite, we should all be cautious when people try to say, "We're better than others, we're different," because his party leader has talked about a democratic deficit in Ontario. Yet, forgetting about free votes in this House, what his leader has said is that he's not going to allow free votes to get to this House. In four ridings so far, including the ridings of Scarborough Centre and Ottawa-Vanier, what Dalton McGuinty has said is, "I know there was a free vote scheduled, but I'm cancelling it. With the stroke of a pen, I will choose who the candidate is."

I just ask people to think, is this the guy who's going to deliver real democracy in Ontario, who for the first time takes over the power to nominate candidates?

**Mr Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell):**

First of all, I want to congratulate both members, my colleagues from Prince Edward-Hastings and from Essex, for their comments on the throne speech.

In this throne speech, I don't know what we are getting at. At the present time, with all those announcements that were made, as well as the platform released last Friday, already this government has accumulated an additional debt of \$21 billion since they came into power in 1995.

They also referred to the rural schools. They keep saying they will come up with financial support for the school boards to keep our rural schools open. In my own riding, at the present time, we're talking of closing 15 schools because this government is not giving any money to school boards to keep up the maintenance that is needed in our rural schools. They will give the money to build new schools, but there is no money available to keep open those small schools in small communities, which are the core of the community.

Also, in the throne speech they said they would improve the disability program. There is no mention of this in the budget at all. I would probably call it the auto parts budget, because it was released at the auto parts plant.

Also, we referred to hydro. At the present time, this government hasn't been fair with all the enterprises in Ontario. Some people are paying 4.3 cents per kilowatt hour, and others are paying 10.55 cents per kilowatt hour. We have been unfair to those small businesses. Two-employee businesses will probably have to close down.

**Mr Tony Martin (Sault Ste Marie):** I appreciate the opportunity to respond to the presentations made by the members for Prince Edward-Hastings and Essex. As I'm going to do, they spoke about what was disappointing in the speech from the throne and what actually wasn't in the speech from the throne that should have been—because there are people out there waiting on this government to pull them back from the precipice of total disaster because of the agenda of this government.

There was no reference in this budget to northern Ontario on the issues of softwood lumber and hydro, what they were going to do to protect the economy of that very important part of the province in front of those two very troubling agendas we see in the paper every

night being negotiated or talked about by the senior levels of government. There was nothing that indicates they actually understand the real threat that's there, and there was no indication of what their approach is going to be to protect and save those communities and the forests up there and to protect the energy that we have seen as an asset for so long, something we could use to attract investment in northern Ontario, and which now is being turned over to the private sector.

Wawa is on the way to disaster. They have tried to get a meeting with the Minister of Energy and cannot. For over a year now, they have been phoning, writing, faxing and e-mailing the Minister of Energy, looking for a meeting so they can sit down with him and share with him the damage that's being done, but he won't even respond to those overtures.

The other thing I want to very briefly reference is the reference in the speech from the throne to an increase in ODSP. For a couple of days, you left the disabled out there hanging, thinking that maybe they were going to get something—but when and how much? Then, finally the other day it was announced that it was going to be 5%, a mere pittance, no retroactivity and nothing indexed to the cost of living, and you're not going to do this until you get elected as government. However, that isn't going to happen.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member has two minutes to reply.

1630

**Mr Crozier:** I want to thank the member from Nickel Belt, the Minister of Energy, my colleague from Glengarry-Prescott-Russell and the member from Sault Ste Marie.

I want to go back for just a moment, though, to the comments of the Minister of Energy. I didn't say we are any better; I do agree with you that we are different. It's that difference that has made me comfortable being a Liberal. I can say in all sincerity and honesty that there is a significant difference between this government and a government that would be under our leader, Dalton McGuinty. I think back to a former Premier and leader of our party who said that Liberalism is the pursuit of change with the dictates of compassion.

We thought the current Premier was going to be a compassionate Premier. He was going to be different from Mike Harris. It turns out that he's not so different from Mike Harris. It depends on what he's talking about on any given day as to how different he is. He chose to go against Mike Harris's best wishes and not privatize Hydro but instead to roll up, so far, about \$1.5 billion in debt.

The Minister of Energy, who got up to speak about my comments, is the one who has floated the idea—and it may have changed by now—that they'd have those dirty diesel engines producing electricity in this province this summer. I guess we all have to reflect on what we truly represent.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr Toby Barrett (Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant):** I'm very proud of this speech from the throne. I'm proud

because the speech truly reflects thoughts and hopes of people across Ontario. I'm proud because it addresses some of the key priorities: health care and education of course, and agriculture, a key concern in my riding of Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant.

I'm very proud that what I see in the speech from the throne is a structure that's been built on very strong economic fundamentals that we've put in place over the last seven years, fundamentals of tax cuts and related job creation, deficit elimination of course and debt reduction. I'm proud because I know that through maintaining these strong economic fundamentals, we've positioned ourselves for those key investments in health care and education that people cherish in this province. Simply put, our speech from the throne delivers the goods and puts us on the right track toward an even stronger Ontario where a robust economy can support investment in those services we cherish.

This spring's speech was unique in that it was inspired by concerns and thoughts—dreams, if you will—of Ontarians as never before. Before the speech was created, we asked the citizens of Ontario to share ideas. Ten thousand people did just that, and we have listened. We've listened to farmers at consultations across the province. One in Hagersville in my riding comes to mind, where Ag Minister Helen Johns presented some of the main agricultural concerns reflected and dealt with by our government and reflected on the challenges faced by our small family farms.

Over several days of debate in this Legislature late last year, our government voted to push ahead with legislation to protect farms from labour disruptions. This was mentioned in the speech. This legislation will ensure that while farm workers are allowed to organize, they cannot hold a farmer's livelihood hostage through work stoppages. Our family farms, certainly in my area, have enough to worry about; for example, tobacco taxes, the more recent concerns our beef cattlemen are now dealing with, adverse weather, and crop diseases. The last thing they need is to be concerned about threats of job action. Our speech from the throne confirms our government's intention to fully implement the Agricultural Employees Protection Act to protect the rights of both farmers and farm employees.

The throne speech also addresses farm concerns around nutrient management. Over the last several years, I've been involved in four series of consultations across the province. Through those consultations, the number one concern of farmers and others in the farm sector remains the same: dollars. The question was heard again and again at these meetings: how are we going to pay for the upgrades; how will we pay for the work required to come into compliance with nutrient management regulations? Again, after listening to the speech from the throne, I can say to farmers of Ontario that we hear you, and the government has obviously listened. We've reiterated our commitment to our farmers that society will share the cost of paying for the changes that will ultimately benefit us all. The government will be there to

continue working with farmers to provide them with financial support for the nutrient management strategies that will not only keep our environment protected but also ensure that our farms remain strong.

Farmers told us that we needed to continue protection and stability for agriculture from drought, adverse weather, disease and fluctuating markets. Again, in referring to the speech from the throne, we have delivered on a commitment to continue that protection through an array of safety net programs.

Further on issues of concern in my part of rural Ontario in the days and weeks that led up to the speech from the throne, the people in my riding of Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant told us of the need to address those unique, special challenges faced by smaller rural communities, oftentimes dominated by the larger urban society. Once again, we heard what people have been saying, and we will unveil a comprehensive rural strategy—I know this was mentioned across the way earlier this afternoon—to strengthen our rural economy, protect services and preserve what we consider our cherished way of life in rural Ontario.

We realize that while rural challenges in general need to be addressed, the hurdles faced by rural schools in particular must also be overcome. In my area, school closures in rural communities has been a constant issue over the years, and I've argued consistently for school boards to consider the long-lasting area impact and the importance of local schools to the education of our children before they make any hasty decisions, and also to take into consideration the socio-economic impact on a community of closing a school, really to recognize that in our area in particular the rural high school is really the heart and centre of a small town.

The bottom line is that our local high schools obviously serve an educational function, but they are vital to the recreational needs, the social and economic needs, the cultural well-being and, in a sense, the survival of many of our rural communities. We see the door has opened through this throne speech, that every option can now be considered with respect to dealing with an ongoing, almost chronic, issue in much of rural Ontario with high school closings.

This may sound strange to residents of much of our rapidly expanding, urban-centred, go-big-or-go-home society, but when it comes to schools and providing a quality education, in many cases smaller is better. A number of studies recognize this fact. Many school boards in the United States have come to realize that while the big box schools and their little box portables may well maximize some of the enrolment efficiencies that can be accrued, in many cases they can also minimize quality learning potential. As a result, many of these large schools have gone to great lengths to artificially create a small school atmosphere. In Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant, we already have that small-school atmosphere, and we're working hard to preserve it. That's why I was quite heartened to see our government has listened to the concerns of rural Ontario and has announced a \$50-million

rural education strategy to address rural school challenges.

**1640**

As many in the Legislature will know, Dr James Downey has been appointed to head up the charge, and I remain confident that he will guide the strategy in the right direction to answer the questions many parents and children have been asking in rural schools. I would encourage all members of this Legislature from all sides of the House to prepare and send forward a submission to Dr Downey.

Our education quality reforms, as reflected in the speech from the throne, including new curriculum and standardized testing, have restored excellence and accountability to a system that in many ways had lost its way. In the throne speech, the government reaffirms its commitment to fully implement the Rozanski report, including more support for special education and teachers' salaries.

We will give parents more choice to enrol their children in any available school within their board. Parental choice will be further supported through the continued implementation of the equity in education tax credit for parents of children at independent schools. Again, I was quite heartened to see this message presented once again in the throne speech.

Parents continue to tell me that if they're going to foot the bill for their children's education through their tax dollars, they should also have the right to decide where their children will be educated. Supporting parental choice and the equity in education tax credit will ensure that parents have a say in just what type of school and what type of education their children will receive.

You will note that also included in the throne speech were commitments to make phonics teaching tools available to all schools. It was clarified again.

We will provide \$1.6 billion for special education in 2002-03, and close to \$2 billion is being budgeted over three years to fully implement the Rozanski report, including more funding for, yet again, special education and teachers' salaries.

Speaker, the recent SARS emergency—and I know you referred to this earlier today—has shown all of us across Ontario, across Canada, the speed with which a health crisis can take shape and the need for a strong health care system to deal with, control and ultimately end the spread of an emerging disease. The SARS emergency has also shown us all where the real strength in our system lies. The strength lies in our doctors and nurses, who have dedicated themselves every day to get the job done and bring under control what has become an emergency in many other areas in the world.

In the speech from the throne, we announced that we would implement a number of initiatives to help doctors, to help nurses across this province deliver the top-notch services every Ontarian deserves. For example, we will introduce guaranteed wait times for procedures such as general surgery, cataract procedures, cancer treatment, hip and knee replacements as well as for diagnostic

services such as MRIs. I do point out that 20 more MRIs and five more CT scanners are in the works. We've also proposed an historic commitment in the battle against cancer by investing \$1 billion to establish the new Cancer Research Institute of Ontario.

We will increase the number of international medical graduates by 20%. Also, the doctor shortage crisis being felt most acutely in rural and northern Ontario will be addressed on a number of fronts. We will provide free tuition to current and future medical students who agree to practise in underserved areas or agree to join family health networks. We will also provide free tuition to nurses who agree to practise in underserved areas. I am yet again proud to say that we've boosted health care spending to a record level of \$28 billion a year. That's an annual increase of \$10 billion since 1995.

Since 1995, again making reference to our speech from the throne, our government has helped create more than 1.1 million new jobs. We've dramatically cut taxes, we've removed barriers to growth, eliminated an \$11-billion deficit, started paying down Ontario's debt and, as all would know, we've helped 600,000 people get off welfare and find the dignity that comes with a job.

How does this occur? Again, only through a strong economy that supports investment in priorities such as health care, education, secure communities and our natural environment. Only a strong economy provides the means to make record investments while maintaining a balanced budget. Your government remains committed to further reducing the income tax rate for small business to 5% in 2004 and 4% in the year 2005. I was very pleased that Premier Eves visited the town of Simcoe in my riding recently to make these announcements. Upon full implementation of these tax cuts, more than 125,000 businesses will benefit.

We believe that when Ontarians decide how best to spend their own money, we all benefit as a society, and the best way to ensure that they have money to spend is to not tax it away in the first place. Your government believes that tax cuts spur job creation, and the result is greater revenue and greater employment. While it has reduced taxes by \$16 billion, government revenue has increased by exactly that amount over the same time period.

I do wish to contrast that with some of the behaviour that we have seen from the leader of the Liberals opposite. Dalton McGuinty has confirmed that he's committed to delivering the largest tax hike in Ontario history: \$4.4 billion. McGuinty's \$4.4-billion tax hike would surpass both David Peterson and Bob Rae as hoisting the single largest tax hike in Ontario's history.

Just to go back in history—and I'm sometimes reluctant to—

*Interjections.*

**Mr Barrett:** I know that some of the members opposite are getting a little uncomfortable. I probably am touching a nerve. But I do wish to go back to that 10-year period before the Mike Harris and Ernie Eves government came in. I will remind the members of this House

that during those 10 years, those 10 lost years, Ontarians faced the brunt of 65 new and increased taxes. During those 10 years, 1985 to 1995, we were truly hammered with 65 tax increases and new taxes, a total of—hold on to your seats, fellas—a total of \$7.5 billion in new or increased taxes since the Liberal-NDP accord of 1985.

From 1985 to 1994, personal income per capita increased by 54%. That's good news. However, the burden of provincial taxes per capita during that 10-year era of Liberal and NDP governance increased by 73%, more than eroding any pay increases that we may have received during those 10 years.

During that decade, freewheeling government spending, in combination with the relentless tax hikes I've just referred to and the failed job creation schemes some of us recall, in large part contributed to that fiscal crisis that we inherited in 1995.

#### 1650

During that 10-year period, government spending almost doubled, from \$29 billion to \$54 billion. The deficit during that 10 years of Liberal-NDP rule grew from \$2.6 billion to \$10.1 billion, and during that 10-year period the debt almost tripled. Some people across the way would like to forget that. During that period, the debt approached \$100 billion, and it more than doubled under the NDP, from \$42 billion in 1990-91—again, almost \$100 billion in 1995.

Quite simply, what happened back then was that a lot of money was taken out of people's pockets, the economy slowed down and consumers, businesses and investors lost confidence. Once confidence was lost, the drag on the economy contributed to that 1990 recession. Rebuilding that market confidence at the time, and we knew this when we came in in 1995, depended on pumping money back into the economy by leaving money in the hands of taxpayers.

When the Liberals took office in 1985, the first thing they did, with the support of their NDP colleagues, was to begin a tax-and-spend rampage that saw Ontario taxpayers gouged with 32 new and increased taxes. Those were the Liberal taxes alone, 32 of them. Alcohol taxes and tobacco taxes were both increased by the Liberals. In 1988 the Liberals gained a majority government, they ended the NDP-Liberal coalition, and the new government's budget at that time imposed \$1.3 billion in new tax increases.

If this party were to come back, we can obviously predict what's going to happen to not only our pocket-books but to the economy of Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Comments and questions?

**Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough-Rouge River):** I listened to my colleague on the government side very carefully, and I would say to myself that it seems he was sleeping at the time when many of the proposals and plans of the Liberals were put forward. I think he forgot really.

I want to tell you what my constituents have said about the things that I'm hearing now, how disappointed they are in this government. This government, which

itself has insufficient textbooks for the students—and some students are here today, and they can identify with that. Can you imagine, in one of the richest provinces and countries in the world, that we have insufficient textbooks in the classroom, and they brag about what they have done? It's disgraceful. It is said that five out of 10 were failing standardized tests, and they're bragging about that in this place.

In their throne speech, this government did not actually include the fact that they have added, in their eight years, \$21 billion to the debt. "This is a fiscally responsible government," they say, and they're talking about that \$21 billion on the backs of many of the people in my riding who haven't—

**Mr David Caplan (Don Valley East):** That's not including the Hydro debt.

**Mr Curling:** As my colleague said, we haven't even included the Hydro debt yet.

He stands there and talks about 10 lost years. In eight years, they've added \$22 billion to the debt—and the health care system had so many deep cuts—and then he stands here and talks about what great plans they've had in the eight years they've been here.

They have attacked the poor, they have attacked the people on welfare—who have paid their money—and then they talk about how proud they are. And they're looking for another mandate. Shame on you.

**Mr Martin:** I appreciate the opportunity for a couple of minutes to put some thoughts on the record following the member opposite's speech on the speech from the throne. He speaks, as was referenced by my good friend Mr Curling, about the 10 lost years, but he doesn't speak at all about the eight years of missed opportunity that this government has had. They've governed in some of the more prosperous times that North America has seen, and they didn't take advantage of that to pay down the debt. They chose instead to single-mindedly give tax breaks to the wealthy and those in the province who didn't really need them. By so doing, they missed an opportunity to actually pay down the debt of this province. Instead of paying down the debt, they drove it up. They missed an opportunity to invest in health care, they missed an opportunity to invest in education, they missed an opportunity to invest in community infrastructure that would have positioned us to take advantage of any new economic possibilities that are out there now to strengthen ourselves so that when there is a downturn in the economy, we can deal with it. Eight years of missed opportunity, eight years of slamming and hurting and attacking those things and people in our province that are most at risk and most vulnerable.

Cynically, in this speech from the throne, they said they were going to increase the pension for people living on ODS. So we waited. Finally we had an announcement the other day that they were going to increase it by 5%, a paltry sum when you consider what these folks are already getting, living in poverty. There's no retroactivity and no tying it to the cost of living. They set these folks up for the expectation that in fact the government was

finally going to deliver, because we pressured them to, and then once again, disappointment—nothing but disappointment for eight years in this province.

**Mr Marcel Beaubien (Lambton-Kent-Middlesex):**

It's a pleasure for me to make comments on the speech of my colleague for Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant. When he talks about being proud of the contents of the throne speech, I have to agree with him.

There's one issue I would like to dwell on, and I know my colleague brought it up; it deals with agriculture. He mentioned that agriculture is very important in his riding. I would agree with him that in my riding of Lambton-Kent-Middlesex agriculture is a very important issue to deal with. There's no doubt that we face many challenges in rural Ontario and certainly with the agricultural sector. When we talk about nutrient management, I think this government understands the challenges, especially for the small farmers who will be facing the implementation of the new regulations. Consequently, we will have to help them out financially in order to make sure that they protect the environment.

There's one issue that I would like to talk about that deals with the farming community. I know there's going to be an election between now and next spring, and I can't wait to debate with my Liberal colleagues across the way with regard to the agricultural policy framework. Why is it that, as the provincial Liberal Party, they support what the federal government is trying to do to the farming community in Ontario and across Canada by taking \$1 billion in support payments away from them? They're completely silent on this issue. Many of them represent agricultural and rural communities. I can't believe that they would support and condone what the federal government is trying to do to the farming community in Ontario and certainly across Canada.

My colleague for Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant also mentioned that the content of the throne speech was formulated by the input of thousands and thousands of Ontarians. That is why we have a good throne speech, and that is why—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Comments and questions.

**Mr Caplan:** I'm very disappointed in some of the comments from my colleague for Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant. He's mistaken in many of the facts which he presented in his speech. Unfortunately, they were so numerous that it would be impossible to correct them all in the very short time that I have available.

The member failed to reference one part of the throne speech. I want to give him a chance to comment on it. I have some friends down in Simcoe county, and they were telling me that Mr Barrett, the member for Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant, has assured the good folks down that way that the Nanticoke coal-fired plant will never be closed. He has been very vocal and very clear about that to the folks who live down there. Now, in the throne speech it says, "Providing additional generation is only half the solution. Ontarians have said they want affordable and practical energy conservation measures and cleaner

sources of power. Starting immediately, your government will phase out coal-fired generating stations no later than 2015."

**1700**

My question to the member for Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant is, given the fact that he has said to his constituents that this will never happen, how can he in good conscience vote in favour of a throne speech which says exactly the opposite? I hope the member will take the time to correct that contradiction. This is very true of the Eves government: they say one thing in one place, then they say something entirely different in another place in the province of Ontario.

*Interjection.*

**Mr Caplan:** I hear the members opposite. They're very wounded by that remark, but it seems very true. Ernie Eves has a penchant for changing his mind, for dithering and for tinkering. I really don't think the man has a backbone.

I want to hear from the member for Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant about this particular contradiction.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member has two minutes to respond.

**Mr Barrett:** I want to recognize the Liberal members from Scarborough-Rouge River and Don Valley East. They did pick up on a discussion of those 10 lost years. I know the member from Don Valley East used the word "disappointment." If I were a Liberal, I would be disappointed if I were to go back into history.

There was an issue of questioning some of the facts. I would like to present, if you will, some additional facts.

When the Liberals were in power 10 or 15 years ago, some of us may recall that the retail sales tax was increased from 7% to 8%. They broadened its application, they jacked up gasoline taxes, they jacked up alcohol taxes and they increased tobacco taxes. In fiscal year 1989-90, we got another \$1.3-billion tax hike by the Liberal government. Economic development obviously suffered in those years, especially when you consider that the Liberals levied a payroll tax to draw another two billion business dollars out of the economy.

The NDP member opposite for Sault Ste Marie also recalled some of the issues in those 10 lost years. The NDP government introduced its first budget in 1991, and we all remember the statement: they told us they were going to spend their way out of the recession. To do this, that government drove the provincial deficit from \$3 billion to \$9.7 billion. That was a record year-over-year increase of 219%.

Again I put this to the members opposite: why on earth would the people in Ontario want to have these characters back at the helm?

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**M. Lalonde:** Je vais partager mon temps avec mon collègue le député de Hamilton-Est.

C'est un plaisir de pouvoir participer au débat sur le discours du trône. Oui, encore une fois ce gouvernement va pouvoir dire, « Nous avons essayé de faire croire à tous les gens que nous avons consulté le public une autre

fois afin de présenter notre dernier discours du trône le 30 avril dernier. »

Oui, c'est vrai. On a voulu consulter le public. On a voulu consulter les Ontariens et Ontariennes. Mais lorsque nous regardons le temps qu'ils ont eu pour répondre à ces questionnaires qui étaient parvenus seulement dans nos bureaux de circonscription, nous avons dû faire paraître des articles dans les journaux demandant aux citoyens et citoyennes d'apporter les points qu'ils aimeraient voir ajouter dans le discours du trône. Le premier ministre, M. Eves, nous dit qu'au-delà de 10 000 personnes ont répondu à ces questionnaires. Mais toute personne dans cette province qui croirait que nous avons pris le temps de regarder ces 10 000 questionnaires, j'aimerais les voir travailler dans tous nos bureaux ici même à Queen's Park, parce qu'il est impossible de passer dans trois ou quatre jours les 10 000 formulaires que l'on nous dit nous avoir fait parvenir.

Donc, encore une fois c'est bien beau de dire, « Nous avons consulté le public », mais consulter le public, c'est du temps perdu, et aussi de l'argent qui est additionné lorsque nous avons fait parvenir ces formulaires au gouvernement, et aussi le coût de l'impression de ces formulaires, ce qui est certainement un montant énorme.

J'ai été désappointé de voir que très peu est mentionné sur le financement ou l'aide financière qui sera apportée aux municipalités. Récemment, 12 conseils de comtés unis se sont rencontrés dans l'est ontarien. Je vais lire ici ce qui est mentionné dans un article qui a paru dans le journal *Le Droit* le 15 mai dernier :

« Les municipalités de l'est de l'Ontario souffrent d'un manque d'argent. En fait, la crise financière est imminente si rien n'est fait.

« Le président des comtés de Prescott et Russell et maire de Casselman, Martial Levac, a fait état de la situation financière des comtés » unis « suite au dépôt du rapport "Directions futures".

« Commandé par les 12 comtés de l'est ontarien, ce rapport parle du besoin urgent pour une coordination stratégique des municipalités auprès » du gouvernement provincial.

« Les problèmes financiers des municipalités découlent, entre autres, du fait que la province a transféré une série de responsabilités au palier municipal. »

C'est bel et bien vrai. Aujourd'hui nous n'avons plus d'argent pour réparer nos routes. D'ici deux ans, les routes ne seront plus carrossables. Nous avons transféré la responsabilité d'au-delà de 21 millions de dollars aux municipalités dans les 12 comtés. Nous avons transféré la responsabilité des ambulances aux municipalités qui, auparavant, étaient payées à 100 % par les municipalités, et aujourd'hui nous savons tous que tous ces corps d'ambulanciers doivent procéder à une convention collective.

Actuellement, nous sommes à négocier pour les nouvelles conventions collectives et le gouvernement autorise seulement une augmentation de 6 %. Et puis, lorsque nous savons toujours que le gouvernement est bel et bien au courant que les conventions collectives qui ont

été signées ont encouru des dépenses additionnelles de 25 % à 30 %, donc, les municipalités seront prises encore à payer ces augmentations. Voilà pourquoi les municipalités ne voulaient pas prendre la responsabilité de ces corps qui sont très importants dans nos communautés.

Nous avons aussi transféré la pleine responsabilité du logement social. Nous savons tous qu'aujourd'hui un logement à 325 \$ par mois—c'est impensable qu'une personne puisse obtenir un logement pour 325 \$ par mois. Les personnes avec déficiences physiques actuellement ont le droit d'avoir un logement à 411 \$ par mois—introuvable dans la région de l'est ontarien aussi bien, encore bien moins dans la région de Toronto. Donc, le gouvernement, rien n'a été fait.

Mais je dois vous dire que lors du discours du trône, on a fait mention qu'ils viendront en aide aux gens qui ont une déficience physique. Mais dans le budget, zéro. Zéro paraît dans le budget pour cette aide. Est-ce que c'est encore un bluff qu'on a voulu faire pour attirer des votes additionnels comme la plate-forme électorale qui a été annoncée vendredi dernier? Il ne paraît même pas dans le budget et n'a même pas été mentionné dans le discours du trône.

Encore une fois nous jouons la politique, comme nous essayons de faire aujourd'hui avec le retour en classe. Nous savons que les trois partis—au moins dans le Parti libéral, dirigé par Dalton McGuinty, nous étions pleinement en faveur du retour en classe des 69 000 étudiants du conseil catholique des écoles de Toronto. Mais encore une fois le gouvernement a voulu jouer une politique sale. Je dis bien une « politique sale » parce que, après que nous avons bel et bien mentionné que nous étions pour apporter un amendement à la loi sur l'éducation, jamais cela n'a été mentionné. Nous sommes toujours intéressés au retour en classe de tous les enfants de la région de Toronto immédiatement, demain. Si le gouvernement aurait voulu coopérer, nous aurions dit au conseil scolaire, « Oui. Vous devez ouvrir vos portes immédiatement, demain, afin d'avoir le retour en classe de tous ces 69 000 étudiants qui sont sur la rue, ou actuellement les parents doivent demeurer à la maison pour les garder.

J'ai regardé dans le discours du trône ainsi que dans le budget, et très peu est mentionné pour les soins à domicile. Je dois dire qu'une bonne dame de St-Eugène, M<sup>me</sup> Brunet, qui actuellement a 88 ans, allait demander seulement deux heures de service à domicile par semaine—encore refusé. Nous n'avons pas les fonds nécessaires en place pour rendre le service à cette dame. Si cette dame décide d'aller demeurer dans une résidence de soins de longue durée ou dans une maison de retraite, cela va devenir très coûteux au gouvernement. Mais le gouvernement ne s'arrête pas pour dire dans le secteur rural, « Parfois nous avons des demandes qui diffèrent de celles du secteur urbain. » Je regarde mon ami le député de Lambton. Il est certainement au courant, parce qu'il a une grande région du secteur rural, que les besoins diffèrent de beaucoup du secteur urbain. Mais encore là, le gouvernement a omis de regarder l'importance.

1710

Récemment, je plaçais un appel au bureau de santé de la région de Cornwall concernant le Nil. Le Nil, ça va être une maladie, un virus qui va être même plus important que le SRAS. Mais actuellement, avons-nous un programme en place? Le gouvernement va annoncer des millions et des millions de dollars pour venir en aide et pour s'assurer que nous avons un produit nécessaire pour répondre aux besoins.

La réponse que j'ai eue le 28 avril dernier—j'avais reçu un appel qu'une personne avait trouvé une corneille morte dans sa cour et j'ai placé l'appel. La réponse que j'ai eue : « Bien, notre programme n'est pas en place. On est rendu à la fin d'avril. Si vous avez trouvé une corneille, attendez le 5 mai et nous allons envoyer une personne pour la ramasser le 5 mai », six jours après. Un chat ou un chien aurait pu la prendre et puis l'amener dans une maison. Ensuite, nous avons continué nos recherches et nous avons finalement eu un appel du bureau de Cornwall nous disant les restrictions du collège de Guelph, où on doit faire parvenir ces oiseaux : pour les cinq comtés de l'est, seulement quatre oiseaux peuvent être envoyés au laboratoire par semaine—seulement quatre oiseaux. « Si vous en avez six, appelez votre municipalité. » J'ai pris la peine d'appeler toutes les municipalités et personne, personne n'était au courant du programme qu'il devait mettre en place.

Ce qui m'inquiète de plus en plus, avec tous les programmes ou les argents que nous venons dumper—c'est comme on me disait dernièrement. Le truck, le camion de Brinks s'en allait dans l'est ontarien. Il faisait la livraison d'argent. Je l'ai arrêté pour lui demander s'il n'avait pas de headlight. Tout d'un coup je me suis aperçu qui était au volant : nul autre que Ernie Eves. Il m'a dit, « Jean-Marc, nous sommes en difficulté, le Parti conservateur de l'Ontario. Je dois livrer l'argent le plus tôt possible. » J'ai dit, « Est-ce que je peux t'aider? » Il m'a dit, « Je dois avoir de l'aide. » J'ai pris le téléphone. J'ai appelé le camion-remorque : « Viens chercher Ernie Eves. Il n'est pas capable de livrer l'argent. Il est pris. Il est dans le trouble. »

Mais une chose qui m'inquiète beaucoup avec tout ce downloading, ce délestage, c'est le transport scolaire. Est-ce que ça va devenir la responsabilité telle qu'était l'intention en 1996? Le transport scolaire, deviendrait-il une responsabilité aux municipalités pour venir au bout de boucler le budget du gouvernement Ernie Eves?

**Mr Dominic Agostino (Hamilton East):** I'm certainly happy to join the debate on the throne speech. The first thought that came to mind when I looked at it was "underwhelming." It was clearly the throne speech of a government that has run out of ideas, that has run out of steam, the throne speech of a government that frankly is bankrupt intellectually, fiscally and morally across this province. It's a government that is desperately trying to cling to power.

It's clearly the government of a Premier who has no values or principles, a Premier who will shift his position every hour if he has to, if he thinks it's politically

expedient. Whether one agreed or disagreed with Mike Harris, one had a sense that Mike Harris really believed in the platform, really believed in what he wanted to do and where he wanted to take the PC Party. With Ernie Eves, if you don't like his position, just wait an hour and it'll change. He will listen to whatever the polls tell him to do. Look at the positions he has taken. Look at the throne speech. First of all, there was nothing in there at all in there that is any different from what has really been eight years of a government that is adrift. The only good things in that throne speech are ideas he stole from the Liberal platform. I'm glad he accepted our idea of public school choice. I'm glad he accepted our idea of a maximum waiting time for surgery. I'm glad he accepted our idea of more police on the street. But Ontarians are looking for real change. They're not looking for a Premier who has no principles, no values and doesn't really believe in what he stands for.

We're now at a point where I believe this government is out of its mandate. The four years are up, and I am happy to contrast our platform and the values and principles and commitment of Dalton McGuinty against Ernie Eves any day of the week. I can't wait for the Premier to muster up the courage to send Ontarians to the polls, because I think Ontarians have made up their minds that they're looking for real change, not fake change, not some pretend wannabe Liberal. Ernie Eves is now a Flaherty Conservative; a few months ago he was on the other side of the spectrum. Depending on whom you talk to, it seems as if in the last few weeks the right wing of the party has taken over again. I guess the moderates in the party have lost the fight about where to take the province of Ontario. The only real vehicle for change in Ontario is Dalton McGuinty and the Liberal Party. People want positive change, and we are going to be that agent of change here in Ontario.

Unlike the throne speech, our plan includes a strategy for jobs and economic growth. We have a commitment to a medicare act that will make two-tier, pay-your-way-to-the-front-of-the-line health care illegal. We understand the Tories like that. We understand Tony Clement and the Premier like two-tier health care. They like a system where their friends can buy their way to the front of the line. We think that's wrong. We think that's not what this country and this province are all about. That will be a real contrast. Ontarians will get a chance to choose between a health care system that benefits the wealthy and powerful in Ontario and one that allows full access for Ontarians.

We're going to create 150 family health teams. We're going to increase medical school space by 15%. We're going to hire 8,000 new nurses and reopen 1,600 hospital beds. That is real, substantial change from what Ernie Eves is offering.

When it comes to education, rather than the cynical, cheap political stunt that was offered by the Tories today, we're going to bring some real change. We're going to put a cap on class size in the early grades of no more than

20. We're going to allow mentor learning till 18. We think 16 is too early to quit school.

I think what happened today with the bill about the Toronto Catholic school board showed most Ontarians what this government is all about. They're not interested in kids. They're not interested in getting the kids back in the classroom. What they're interested in is playing cheap political games at the expense of those kids. They could have brought in a simple, clean bill. If they were really, truly interested in sending those kids back to school, they could have brought in a very clean, simple bill that would simply have ended the lockout. Understand that it was not a strike. The board chose deliberately to lock out those teachers. A simple bill would have ended that, but instead they've stretched it.

This bill says that volunteer work by teachers is no longer volunteering. This bill says that teachers must now volunteer to do that work. It's absurd. It is absolutely absurd to say to a teacher—and an insult to most teachers who have spent years and years, hours every day, helping kids in extracurricular activities—that now they must do it. That's what this bill is all about.

This is a bill trying to implement the Tory election platform. I say to my colleagues across the floor that if you want to implement your platform, call an election and let's go to the people of Ontario and see if you can get that mandate. Don't do it through the back door. Don't try to exploit kids and the situation in Toronto, because it's simply cheap political games at the expense of those kids. That is wrong, immoral and unethical and not befitting the government of the province of Ontario.

Let me tell you, we believe in the collective bargaining process I thought Ernie Eves believed in it.

*Interjection.*

**Mr Agostino:** Don't take my word for it. You see, what Ernie Eves believes—let me quote the Parry Sound Beacon: "This isn't Alice in Wonderland. We don't live in a dictatorship. I'm adamant about not trampling on people's rights. There's no democracy if people can't strike." That's not me saying it; that's Ernie Eves saying it.

1720

**The Deputy Speaker:** We usually refer to members by their position or their riding.

**Mr Agostino:** The Premier is saying that.

The National Post in February 2002 said, "Mr Eves put the cost of binding arbitration, the only solution when strikes are outlawed, at \$700 million." I'm not interested in, or in favour of, taking \$700 million out of the classroom and putting it into teachers' salaries. That's what this is all about.

Ernie Eves, the Premier, has said again, "I think that it is time to bury the hatchet and talk to teachers to see what they want in the education system. You can legislate anything you want, but you can't legislate goodwill and respect. You have to earn that." That was the Premier, March 6, 2002.

The list goes on and on. The Minister of Finance: "Banning strikes doesn't necessarily get you where you

want to go. It's not a magic solution. You can still have disruptions."

This is not a case you have to make. You have made the case against your own legislation. You have made the case very clear. In January 2002 the government House leader said, "It's bad, it's awful." It goes on and on.

This is a government that has no principles, no values. You will do whatever it takes to desperately cling on to power in Ontario, and this is another perfect example of that. These are not my quotes. These are quotes of the Premier, these are the quotes of the Minister of Finance, these are the quotes of the government House leader, who railed away about how bad an idea it is to ban teachers' strikes in Ontario.

We believe you can have peace in the classroom by treating teachers with respect and dignity, by ensuring there's a fair collective bargaining process, by ensuring that school boards have sufficient funding to deal with all the needs they have. You can't force peace in the classroom. You can't force goodwill and respect. I agree with the Premier: you have to earn it. But this government certainly has not earned it.

When I look at the throne speech, it is clearly one that, if Ontarians are looking for a change in direction from this government, if Ontarians are looking for a government that is more than a one-trick pony, that believes all this is about is more tax cuts—as Liberals we're not opposed to tax cuts, but we believe there is a time and place for them, and we believe it's a question of priorities. We believe at this point in Ontario that the priority is to put more money into health care, more money into education, more money into clean water and clean air. Those are the priorities of Dalton McGuinty and the Liberals, unlike the government across the floor, which continues to think the only priority is to put money into the pockets of its rich, powerful friends.

Those are not the priorities of Ontarians, and I challenge this government. Your four years are up, you're out of ideas, you're out of steam, you're out of time. Do the right thing, do the honourable thing and go to the polls, call the election today and let the people of Ontario decide where they want the government to go and where we're going as a province.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Comments and questions?

**Ms Martel:** Something the member from Hamilton East said today surprised me—and I heard his leader say this when we had the throne speech, and there has been some other commentary as well—and that is the claim that the Conservatives stole Liberal ideas for the throne speech.

I hope the local Liberal candidate in my riding says just that in an all-candidates debate, because my response is going to be, "You're exactly right; there's no difference between the two. If you really want a change in vision, you've got to vote for New Democrats and for public power." So I hope every Liberal candidate in this campaign makes that statement. Dom, I don't know why you raised that again. I thought you guys would have figured that out and got off that trick by now. But that's

what I'm going to say if the Liberal candidate in Nickel Belt says it during the election campaign.

Let me get back to something more local, because of course all politics are local. I've got to go at this government again with respect to our Sudbury Regional Hospital. I was at an event two Saturdays ago; it was the opening of Dynamic Earth. The mayor of the city of Sudbury, Mr Gordon, who of course is a former Conservative member and a former Conservative cabinet minister, said to the crowd that was there, "This government is going to do something about this hospital." Maybe he knows something I don't; I hope he does. But the fact remains that I'm still waiting for the government to make an announcement about what is going to happen to the Sudbury Regional Hospital, because there has been no construction on phase 2 at that site for well over 12 months. The whole project is stalled. We have a huge cost overrun, and we have a government that's done nothing. We've had an operating review, a capital review, recommendations, a supervisor and more recommendations, and still no construction on this site.

I remind you that this site is supposed to be the teaching hospital for the new medical school, which, rumour has it, is also now going to have its start delayed for another year.

I say to the government: finish the hospital now. We need quality care in our community. Do the right thing. Put your money on the table and get the job done.

**Hon Mr Baird:** I'm pleased to comment on the speech by my friend from Hamilton East. I respect the member for Hamilton East. I often respect his views. I just think that sometimes he's in the wrong party. I think he cannot always agree with Dalton McGuinty. I know the head of the local of OECTA, the Catholic teachers' union, was out in the hall after Dalton McGuinty came in and patted himself on the back on all the work that—

**The Deputy Speaker:** You cannot refer to members by name.

**Hon Mr Baird:** OK. The Leader of the Opposition came patting himself on the back for practically bringing peace in our time by his efforts to intervene. The local OECTA head never talked to him and doesn't know what he's talking about out in the hallway. Dalton McGuinty had a bad day.

**Interjection:** He called the Chair names.

**Hon Mr Baird:** He called the Chair names. That's right. The education critic said, "Oh, he's a Tory hack." In fact, he's vice-president of a Liberal riding association.

The member opposite talked about Ernie Eves. What did Ernie Eves do when he was elected? He gave \$500 million more for education, and \$1 billion since that announcement. He offered 3%, which seems pretty fair to me. But that's not fair enough for the Liberals. They want huge increases. There's not enough money to solve their problems.

He's in favour of tax cuts, but he thinks we should put more money in health care. How about \$10 billion, I say to the member for Hamilton East? Is \$10 billion enough?

In fact, if you look at the platform of the last election, this government promised to spend more money on health care than his own leader promised. That is quite interesting.

The member opposite also spoke about allowing work-to-rule. Does he think that preparing report cards is some sort of a volunteer activity, and that it's just goodwill that teachers actually meet with students? That's part of the job.

We want to see these students back in the classroom. I am very disappointed in the honourable member that he wouldn't support the reasonable bill brought forward by the Premier today.

**M<sup>me</sup> Claudette Boyer (Ottawa-Vanier):** Je suis vraiment heureuse d'avoir l'occasion de m'exprimer sur certains points du discours du trône.

In the throne speech, it was said that "every child in Ontario deserves an excellent education and an equal opportunity for success in life, regardless of ... geographic location, ethnic background or religious belief."

This government prides itself on having taking seriously many recommendations of Dr Rozanski's report.

Toutefois, le gouvernement n'a encore rien fait pour donner suite à la recommandation 14 de ce rapport.

Recommendation 14 was asking this government to revise the funding formula to be able to look at the special needs of the francophone schools of the province. We don't have our fair share of the funding formula because our schools are smaller and our population is scattered everywhere.

Although his report recognized the lack of adequate funding for French schools, nothing was mentioned in the throne speech as to how he will address this issue and give the Franco-Ontarian schools the necessary resources so that they may respect the requirements of the different programs and offer the services they are entitled to.

Tout au long de la lecture du discours du trône, j'étais anxieuse de voir comment ce gouvernement allait respecter ses obligations constitutionnelles à l'endroit de sa communauté francophone.

You owe something to the francophone community, even if it is constitutional rights—another disappointment in recognition of the value of the francophone community from this government.

**1730**

**Mr Martin:** I too found it interesting that the Liberals are now claiming that their campaign promises reflect very clearly the Conservative campaign promises. In particular, I wanted to focus on this issue of school choice that both the Conservatives and the Liberals seem to be trumpeting as the be-all and the end-all for the improvement of schools and education for children across this province.

I don't understand that. I don't understand why they don't see that making sure every school in the province is a centre of excellence for each child who goes there for an education should not be a priority, why you wouldn't be willing to look at every school in every neighbourhood and every community across this province as an

opportunity to invest in the future of children and, in turn, the future of that community.

I don't know how you provide school choice, for example, to children in Gogama if you don't invest in the school that's in Gogama, Foleyet or Hornepayne. What choices do they have if you're not, as a government, willing to ensure and guarantee that every school, no matter where they exist in this province, whether it be in downtown Toronto in some of the poorer neighbourhoods or in places like Moosonee, Sault Ste Marie or Gogama—if you're not willing to commit to making sure those schools have everything they need, from libraries to principals to textbooks to opportunities for travel to other parts of the province to learn and to experience, then what is it you're saying? Are you saying that those who can either afford or have the luxury of having access to these new schools or centres of excellence that you will put money into because now you're giving students the opportunity to choose what school they will go to are somehow more important than the schools that children who don't have any choice will have to go to are more important? I don't understand that. I don't know where you're going with that. I don't know how that in any way is going to improve the opportunity for children in this province to get an education.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Hamilton East has two minutes to respond.

**Mr Agostino:** First of all, let me make it clear: I understand the NDP is opposed to more public school choice. I understand the NDP is opposed to maximum waiting time for surgery. I understand the NDP is opposed to hiring more nurses. I know that the NDP is opposed to hiring more police officers to keep the streets safe in Ontario. We understand that. That's a debate we're looking to have with our friends to the left during the campaign.

Let me tell you, here are the NDP and the Tories working together. It's nice to see it again. They're getting warmed up for the election campaign. I want to talk about the Tories' plan, because frankly these folks to my left are going to be irrelevant during the campaign.

Ernie Eves is offering you more tax cuts. He's offering you more corporate tax cuts. He's offering you mortgage eligibility, private school tax breaks, more money for health, education, environment, more nurses and more police officers. He's going to balance the budget and not raise your taxes. You know what? Most Ontarians are sophisticated enough and intelligent enough. They understand that if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

This plan has now been costed out. They don't have a balanced budget today. It's not us saying it; it's the bond rating agencies who have said, "They were wrong when they said they've balanced the budget." We're talking a \$1-billion to a \$2-billion deficit. This is the government that increased the accumulated debt in Ontario by \$20 billion. There's only been one government that's been worse than that, and that's the NDP. The NDP had been \$45 billion in their five years in office. You're second to

the NDP in increasing the debt in Ontario. We understand that.

Ontarians, as I said earlier, are going to have a real choice. We've costed out our plan. We have a solid platform. It's a plan that is doable. It's a plan that's not going to raise taxes to the people of Ontario. We've released our platform. The government has released theirs. There's the four-year period. I say to the Premier and to the government members, let's get the game on the road. Let's get the show going. Let's call the election and let's give Ontarians a real choice as to where they want to take this province.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Ms Marilyn Mushinski (Scarborough Centre):** I will attempt, in speaking to the speech from the throne, to try to tone down the rhetoric we've been hearing and hopefully bring a little more common sense back to the discussion.

I'm particularly proud to rise to speak about the speech from the throne read by the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, the Honourable James Bartleman. I was especially privileged to see the landau move up to the front steps. It was really nice to see a restoration of that particular tradition. In speaking about tradition and history, we really do need to analyze to a degree how far we have come since those dark and gloomy days between 1985 and 1995.

If you look at the number of jobs that have been created over the past eight years, we have probably created more jobs in eight years in this province than all of the rest of the provinces put together. I am really proud to say today that it was because we ended the practices of Liberal and NDP governments. We've actually stopped the raid of the taxpayers' pockets. They picked taxpayers' pockets; no question about it. In those 10 lost years we witnessed a veritable competition between the Liberals and the NDP. The race was very close as to who could raise taxes more often. Actually, the Liberals won that race. Liberals increased taxes 33 times, whereas, to the NDP's credit, they only increased them 32 times. I have to admit, that's not the kind of race that I would like to lay claim to winning. No, this competition between the Liberals and the NDP to slow down the economy by increasing taxes is not a game that we on this side of the House like to play.

The speech from the throne, called the Promise of Ontario, clearly outlines how different we are from our friends in the opposition—extremely different. I think it's important to highlight those today. What this speech from the throne suggests is it will provide an additional 17 tax cuts for seniors, for businesses and for hard-working wage-earners, many of whom live in my great riding of Scarborough Centre—you know, the great unwashed, the middle class, the ones who work hard, come home and all they're interested in doing is working hard to raise their families and put bread on the table for those families. Those 17 tax cuts include the proposal to allow senior citizens to deduct the education portion of their property taxes, regardless of whether they own or

whether they rent. They do that, of course, through filing their income tax at the end of April every year.

I need to tell you that this particular initiative in the throne speech is very popular with seniors in my riding of Scarborough Centre. I expect it would be pretty popular in Ontario ridings like Lambton-Kent-Middlesex, Scarborough-Agincourt and I'm sure in Scarborough-Rouge River. I really don't think it's a huge request to my good friends on the opposition benches to urge them to change their opposition to this proposal that we know is going to assist seniors, especially those who are on fixed incomes. I'm not holding my breath, but I really do lay down that challenge to them today.

Something else that this Promise of Ontario contains is our government's plan to give seniors the choice of continuing to work after the age of 65. A lot of people don't know how old I am, but I'm getting close to 65. I know there are some in this House who are actually older than 65, including my good friend Mr Kwinter. I know Mr Kwinter is. He's a very wise man. I have huge respect for him. I know my friend Mrs Marland may not wish me to say this, but I think she may be pushing 65. I'm not quite sure.

1740

But really, it's not an issue in this place, because every one of us feels—and I have huge regard for every single member in this place, because I know that they are motivated by the desire to serve their constituents and their constituencies. First and foremost, that is their desire and their responsibility in this House, and that's why I have such huge respect for every single member in this House, notwithstanding that some may be a little younger than 65; some may be a little older than 65. I think what is important is that while it may not necessarily be the desire of all seniors to retire at age 65, I'm particularly pleased that this government has listened to the recommendations of the Ontario Human Rights Commission and given people the choice of deciding for themselves, just as, in my constituency of Scarborough Centre, the members of my particular party had the choice of deciding who they would nominate to run for the next election.

While the speech from the throne is sensitive to our citizens, it also demonstrates that this government has been listening to others in communities across Ontario. That is why our government plans to increase the Ontario disability support payments. I have to say that I held a series of consultations with my constituents in my riding as we went through this very extensive consultation process leading up to the throne speech, and I did hear a lot of requests for us to review the Ontario disability support payments. They were very happy. Most of my constituents are particularly happy with our welfare reforms, which we know have led to the creation of well over a million jobs in this province. We have always maintained that the best social program in this province is a good job, and that's what we've been creating, certainly since 1995.

We have actually introduced well over 200 tax cuts over eight years. I can tell you today that the Liberals

have voted against every single one of those tax cuts—every single one—and guess what? I bet you they'll be voting against the throne speech. They will be voting against that. I'm going to give them a challenge today. I'm going to give them the opportunity to actually help people with disabilities to lead happier and more productive and dignified lives by supporting the throne speech. I would hope you will do that when it comes time to vote.

This government's efforts to return our economy to a position of strength I believe have borne significant fruit. We know that lower taxes, which the Liberals don't agree with, have led directly to a boost in job creation. This means that more taxpayers are able to offset the government revenue that was returned, through tax cuts, to families across Ontario.

The facts are plain. As President John F. Kennedy in the United States discovered—John F. Kennedy. Can you remember that man? A good Democrat in the United States; President of the United States. He said in the early 1960s that tax cuts create jobs and boost government revenues. Well, guess what? We've proved him right. A good liberal Democrat in the United States of America. Oh, surprise, surprise.

We know that this is the Ontario experience. We cut taxes by \$16 billion, yet our revenues increased by \$16 billion. Should it come as any surprise? John F. Kennedy—I know he's probably a hero to many of my Liberal friends across the way—said that that's actually what happens. We created one million net new jobs that have created \$16 billion in revenues. Surprise, surprise.

I don't know about those people across there, but I know that my colleagues on this side of the House are proud of this accomplishment. It's a solid achievement. I worry that the combined policies of the two opposition parties would return us to those bad old days of high tax cuts—do you remember 65 tax cuts?—high unemployment—we lost 10,000 jobs; you have to admit, Peter, we lost 10,000 jobs—and high welfare rates. Yes, OK, everybody was being paid 10% higher than the average across the country, but did it create jobs? No, it contributed to huge job losses—and not only that, but an admission, certainly, coming from the former Premier, Mr Rae, that he was this close to declaring this province bankrupt.

There are many reasons not to turn the clock back to the tax-and-spend policies of past Liberal and NDP governments. Thanks to the growth in government revenue, we know that the product of the government's tax-cutting policies—the government is today spending more on quality health care than at any other time in our province's history. We've gone from \$17.4 billion to over \$28 billion that is being spent. What is it being spent on? Well, you know, I've said this more than once. When I was a councillor in Scarborough I happened to sit on our local hospital board for nine years, and for every one of those nine years, I begged, I pleaded with my local members—first the NDP, Mr Warner, for whom I had the greatest respect, and then the Liberal government. We

were begging and pleading for renal dialysis. Did we get renal dialysis? No. All we got were floors that were dark. The rooms were being kept warm, but they were actually laying off nurses. I can remember all of this: laying off nurses, keeping the rooms dark, but still keeping certain floors warm. Actually, the whole hospital was kept warm, but the hospital was half-empty. That was a pretty inefficient way of running a health care centre like the hospital in my riding.

Now what do we have? We have renal dialysis. Not only that, we also have a satellite renal dialysis. And guess what? That satellite renal dialysis is serving 400 additional patients in my riding of Scarborough Centre, and it's in a private building. It is run in a private building. It's not even run in the hospital. It's a satellite. Who pays for the medical services? The province of Ontario, through OHIP. Everybody has access. There is far more access. There are 800 patients in Scarborough who are receiving renal dialysis today who had to go to Oshawa and downtown because neither the NDP government nor the Liberal government put those services in the communities where they were needed. Shame on them.

I only wish, when we talk about education, that the Liberals across the floor were more effective at persuading their colleagues in Ottawa to fulfill the recommendations of—I'm sorry; we're continuing to talk about health care. I only wish that the Liberals across the floor were more effective in persuading their colleagues in Ottawa to fulfill the recommendations of the Romanow royal commission. We don't hear them say very much about that, do we? Instead, we still experience the malaise of chronic underfunding of the health care system by the federal Liberals. They continue to underfund the health care system, and I would just challenge my colleagues across the way, who probably are a little closer to the Liberals in Ottawa than we are, to challenge their federal cousins about the funding shortfall and what priority it is for the constituents in their own ridings.

Alvin, I see you actually nodding your head as if you agree with me. I'm sure you would join with me in continuing to urge the federal government to at least address the recommendations in the Romanow commission, if nothing else, and start giving us our fair share of health care funding in this province.

**1750**

There is actually more good news in the throne speech. The Eves government will launch an aggressive nurse recruitment and retention program as well as breaking down barriers faced by nurse practitioners to expand their numbers and the range of services they're able to provide. The Eves government will also improve access to doctors by increasing the number of international medical graduates—

**Mr Curling:** What about those right here?

**Ms Mushinski:**—something that of course you know, Alvin, is very close to my heart. Furthermore, the government will provide free tuition for current and future medical school students who agree to practise in underserved areas, to join family health networks. A lot of

my colleagues who are from rural and remote areas in this province welcome that. I'm delighted that nearly \$6.5 million will be invested to support the electronic Child Health Network north and that the government will dedicate \$1 billion to the new Cancer Research Institute of Ontario.

Mr Speaker, my time is getting short. There's a whole bunch of stuff I would love to speak about, because there's so much good stuff contained in this document, stuff like creating more than 135,000 new post-secondary student places, the largest single capital investment in Ontario universities and colleges since the 1960s.

That's not all. We're also providing \$1.6 billion for special education in 2002-03. There's more good news, like the government providing tools and resources to ensure phonics are available to all schools and encouraging higher achievement in math by offering elementary school teachers scholarships to become math specialists. These are all good things that I believe will help kids like my own six-year-old, going on seven, grandson.

**Mr Beaubien:** She's a young grandmother.

**Ms Mushinski:** Yes, I'm a young grandmother.

His name is Cameron, and he's got a great teacher, by the way.

Any fair-minded observer of the economic growth of our province and the resulting record investments in health and education would have to concede that we are providing good government to the people of this province. Despite the tough economic times when we came into office, we resisted taking the easy route that was taken by the Liberals in Ottawa of slashing health and education funding.

As the throne speech makes clear, there is more work to be done in providing good government for the people of the province, and there continues to be good stuff in here that will provide that good government.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Member for Scarborough-Rouge river, if there are two of us standing, one of us is out of order, and it's not me.

Pursuant to standing order 41(a), six sessional days have been allotted to the reply to the throne speech.

On May 1, 2003, Mr Dunlop moved, seconded by Mr Gill, that an humble address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor as follows:

“To the Honourable James K. Bartleman, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario:

“We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario, now assembled, beg leave to thank Your Honour for the gracious speech Your Honour has addressed to us.”

On Tuesday, May 14, 2003, Mr McGuinty moved, “That the address in reply to the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of this session be amended by striking out all the words after, ‘We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario,’ and substitute the following:

“Whereas Ontarians want a real and positive change;

“Whereas Ontarians want a government that will fix the vital public services that we all need while keeping the budget in balance and holding the line on taxes;

“Whereas Ontarians want a government that will cancel the \$3.2-billion tax giveaway to large corporations and put that money toward improved health care, with more doctors and nurses and shorter waiting lists;

“Whereas Ontarians want a government that will cancel the private school tax credit and put that money back into improving our public schools through smaller class sizes;

“Whereas Ontarians want a government that will end taxpayer-funded self-serving partisan advertising and put that money toward improving our water quality monitoring system and improving our air by closing coal-fired plants and mandating cleaner gasoline;

“Whereas the speech from the throne proved that the Eves government has been dithering, continues to support two-tier health care, private school tax credits, giveaways to large corporations, taxpayer-funded self-serving advertising and compromised environmental protection;

“Therefore, this House profoundly regrets that nothing has changed. The Eves government is tired, cynical, out of touch, out of steam and out of ideas, and instead of providing the real and positive change Ontarians demand, are only looking out for themselves and their friends.”

On Wednesday, May 7, 2003, Mr Hampton moved, “That the amendment to the motion be amended by striking out all the words after, ‘Whereas Ontarians’ and substitute the following:

“have felt the impact of bad Conservative privatization policies where it hurts—in the pocketbook;

“Whereas the Conservatives ignore evidence from around the world that privatization of public necessities—such as water, hydro, health, education—doesn’t work and costs more;

“Whereas Ontarians are looking for practical solutions that would:

“Stop hydro privatization and deregulation and ensure clean, reliable public power at cost.

“Extend public home care, create 100 new community health centres and cut long-term-care user fees. Cancel plans for private MRI/CT clinics and privately built hospitals and put funds back into public health care.”

“Keep our drinking water”—

*Interjection.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Excuse me.

*Interjection.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** No, I will not excuse you. I don’t want to be interrupted. I will not warn the member for Sault Ste Marie again.

“Keep our drinking water public and protect water from source to tap.

“Ensure every student has the opportunity to excel, guaranteed by a dedicated education excellence fund that takes the politics out of education funding. No public funds for private schools.

“Immediately increase the minimum wage to \$8 an hour, prohibit scabs and treat injured workers fairly.”

*Interjection.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order. I’ll not warn the member for Scarborough Centre again.

“Freeze rents for two years, build at least 32,000 units of affordable housing and increase shelter allowances.

“Cut tuition by 10% and ensure that no student is denied a quality education or training for financial reasons.

“Lower transit fares, shorten waits and reduce gridlock with a dedicated transportation trust fund.

“Reduce child care fees to \$10 a day for 18-month-olds to five-year-olds in non-profit, regulated child care and create 20,000 new child care spaces.

“Protect your pension from inflation and let you take it with you from job to job.

“Therefore, this House endorses an agenda of public power.”

The first question to be decided is Mr Hampton’s amendment to the amendment to the motion.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the amendment to the amendment carry?

All those in favour say “aye.”

All those opposed say “nay.”

In my opinion, the nays have it.

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

Pursuant to standing order 28(h), the Honourable Doug Galt, MPP, chief government whip, writes: “I would like to request that the vote on government order number 1 be deferred until May 22, 2003.”

Thank you for assistance in this matter. So be it.

It being 6 o’clock, this House stands adjourned until 6:45 tonight.

*The House adjourned at 1800.*

*Evening meeting reported in volume B.*

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