



Legislative Assembly
of Ontario

Fourth Session, 37th Parliament

Assemblée législative
de l'Ontario

Quatrième session, 37^e législature

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Wednesday 28 May 2003

Mercredi 28 mai 2003

Speaker
Honourable Gary Carr

Président
L'honorable Gary Carr

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers

Hansard on the Internet

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

Index inquiries

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

Copies of Hansard

Information regarding purchase of copies of Hansard may be obtained from Publications Ontario, Management Board Secretariat, 50 Grosvenor Street, Toronto, Ontario, M7A 1N8. Phone 416-326-5310, 326-5311 or toll-free 1-800-668-9938.

Le Journal des débats sur Internet

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

Renseignements sur l'index

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.

Exemplaires du Journal

Pour des exemplaires, veuillez prendre contact avec Publications Ontario, Secrétariat du Conseil de gestion, 50 rue Grosvenor, Toronto (Ontario) M7A 1N8. Par téléphone : 416-326-5310, 326-5311, ou sans frais : 1-800-668-9938.



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 28 May 2003

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 28 mai 2003

*The House met at 1330.
Prayers.*

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

HELICOPTER SERVICES

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): It seems that the government's motto of "Ontario is open for business" doesn't apply in the case of the Ministry of Natural Resources when it comes to providing helicopter services. The northern providers, those providers who operate out of northern Ontario, are tired of this government giving contracts to out-of-province providers. Helicopter companies from Sudbury, Cochrane, Wawa, Longlac and North Bay are tired that this government is not allowing Ontario providers first opportunity. In other provinces, such as Quebec, Alberta, Manitoba and British Columbia, there is a policy in place where you hire in-province providers first; not so in Ontario.

Let me give you the example, the latest bungling by this government when it comes to giving contracts. Gateway Helicopters out of North Bay and Sudbury bid on a contract for a LongRanger. They were overlooked for an out-of-province provider at twice the cost, only because the out-of-province provider happened to be close to the scene.

Let me tell you: this government talks the talk about it being open for business, but it doesn't walk the walk. This government should know that in Ontario, Ontarians deserve first crack at contracts.

DOUG KENNEDY

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): It is with great sadness that I inform this House that Ontario has lost a distinguished former member of provincial Parliament. Doug Kennedy, MPP for Peel South and later Mississauga South, passed away on May 26 in his 87th year.

Doug was a graduate of the Ontario Agricultural College. He also served as a captain in the Canadian army during World War II. Doug was first elected in 1955 to the South Peel Board of Education, and served as its chairman. He was also chairman of the Toronto Township Hydro Commission.

In 1967, Doug was elected to the Ontario Legislature, where he served with honour until his retirement in 1985.

He was parliamentary assistant to the ministers of education and intergovernmental affairs, and also served as chief government whip.

Always a gentleman with a smile on his face, Doug was also a gentle person -- a true gift in politics. Doug excelled as an advocate for his constituents. He was uniquely dedicated to looking after people and could always be counted on to follow through in helping anyone with a problem.

Doug leaves his beloved wife, Kay, their cherished adult children, Sue, John, Pat and Janet, and their families, including 10 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren. One of 10 children in his own family, Doug is also survived by five brothers, Arthur, Ted, Dick, Hal and Don.

Doug and Kay can be very proud of their fine family and his immense contribution to our community, province and country. He leaves a wonderful legacy of compassion and dedication to his people throughout all his years in elected public office. We will miss him greatly.

GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING

Mr Bruce Crozier (Essex): You just can't trust Ernie Eves. Eves paid to have a \$600,000, 30-page brochure included in every issue of Maclean's magazine in Ontario. It makes empty boasts about infrastructure spending, perhaps to distract drivers from crumbling roads and dangerous bridges. On page 9 is a glowing tribute by Terry and Roger Lavergne: "Roger has been a resident since the facility opened," at an Extendicare. "They look after me very well," he says." That's a quote from Roger Lavergne.

Here's what Terry Lavergne wrote to me recently:

"Since that interview, staff has been cut twice. We've been told to expect more cuts in October.... There are nails coming through the floor tiles, large holes in the wall. He just gets one bath per week.

"Over the year that my husband has lived at Extendicare, our opinion of this brand new facility has changed drastically. I'm very, very unhappy to have given any positive publicity to this abysmal situation."

Dalton McGuinty and the Ontario Liberals have a plan to help Roger and Terry Lavergne. We'll set high standards for nursing homes and regularly inspect them to make sure those standards are being met. We will also outlaw self-promotional government advertising. Voters have a choice: they can choose Ernie Eves putting

himself first with a \$400-million binge of government advertising, or they can choose Dalton McGuinty. Choose change, choose government you can trust.

HOSPITAL SERVICES

Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay): And don't choose Liberals without a plan.

Interjection.

Mr Bisson: How's it going in Windsor? Things are going well in Windsor, I see.

I just want to report to the House some good developments that are happening up in our particular part of the province. As some of the members of the House here may know, the federal government now owns but two hospitals across all of Canada, as far as federal hospitals. One of those is in Kingston, Ontario, and, as the good member from Kingston would know, serves much of the way of services for people in the aboriginal community across Ontario. The other one is up in Moose Factory, in my riding.

The federal government is wanting to get out of the hospital business, and quite frankly I couldn't agree more. The federal government in my view does not do as good a job as a province does when it comes to providing hospital services and overall providing a continuum of care that is necessary in our modern health care system.

This week in Timmins, leaders from across the James Bay communities, the Chapleau communities, are coming together in order to discuss where we go from here. If we're going to move from the federal system to provincial system, how do we make sure that at the end of the day a couple of very basic things happen: (1) that treaty and aboriginal rights are respected -- and I believe that can be done in the provincial system -- (2) that the best possible care is offered to the citizens of the James Bay communities so that they are treated on par with citizens across this province when it comes to not only hospital services but long-term care and community mental health as well as substance abuse?

We look forward to the process that will ensue, and we'll make sure that the provincial government does what it has to do to make sure that the people of northern Ontario and James Bay get the best possible hospital system.

1340

ROSS POWLESS

Mr Toby Barrett (Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant): I wish to stand today to recognize the passing of a Canadian legend. Ross Powless, a member of the Canadian Lacrosse Hall of Fame, passed away at the age of 76. His reputation as an all-star lacrosse player, gentleman and mentor will live on forever in the hearts and minds of those who knew him. Ross was from Six Nations.

Ross Powless distinguished himself by treating others with the respect they deserved and making his time and wisdom available to those who would seek it.

Throughout his illustrious career as a player, Ross won four Canadian lacrosse championships with the Peterborough Timbermen from 1951 to 1954, including the MVP award in 1953 and the Tom Longboat award for two separate years as the top Indian athlete in Canada.

Ross also coached the Brantford Warriors to the Canadian Senior B championship in 1968, and the Rochester Chiefs to a Can-Am Lacrosse League championship in 1969.

In 1974, Ross coached six of his sons -- he had 14 children in all with his wife, Margaret -- on the Ontario First Nations team, which captured the All-Indian Nations championship cup.

Ross was committed to his community. He was instrumental in starting Six Nations minor lacrosse and hockey leagues and he also served as a First Nations government councillor for eight years.

ONTARIO BUDGET

Mr Monte Kwinter (York Centre): A number of highly respected experts reviewed the Eves budget in detail and they say that Ernie Eves is running a deficit. The Dominion Bond Rating Service says the Eves Magna budget actually shows a "deficit of \$1.9 billion." The TD Bank found that the Tory budget is hiding a real deficit of \$2 billion this year. Standard and Poor's says that Ernie's inflated asset sales numbers are "inconsistent with" his "stated objective to take the necessary steps to balance the budget."

The experts agree: Ernie Eves is running a deficit and making promises he can't keep. It's hard to trust Ernie Eves to tell you what he will do, because he won't tell you what he'll sell. It could be the LCBO, it could be Hydro One, it could be TV Ontario, it could be, as Christina Blizzard of the Toronto Sun speculated today, the Pickering nuclear reactor. Something is going out the door in a fire sale.

Voters don't need to play guessing games with Dalton McGuinty. He has laid out exactly how he will pay for his plan. Dalton McGuinty has painstakingly shown how we will hire 8,000 more nurses, invest in the auto sector and lower class sizes, without raising taxes or running a deficit.

A forensic auditor and two senior economists reviewed our income and spending projections. They agree that our plan is prudent and fiscally responsible. Warren Jestin of Scotiabank wrote, "Your commitment to balancing the budget is both reassuring and an essential ingredient in long-term fiscal planning."

Economist David Hall wrote, "Your fiscal plan produces at least balanced budgets and a prudent reserve every year."

The voters of Ontario have a choice: they can choose Ernie Eves and return to billion-dollar deficits and broken promises, or they can choose Dalton McGuinty and responsible government you can trust. Choose change.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Mr Marcel Beaubien (Lambton-Kent-Middlesex): I rise today to speak on an issue that is very important to my constituents in Lambton-Kent-Middlesex. Having attended a number of public meetings over the past several months dealing with applications for expansions of landfill sites, the importation of hazardous materials from other jurisdictions and the transportation of Ontario garbage through my riding, my constituents are concerned.

Our government is committed to enhancing environmental protection in Ontario, especially in the area of hazardous waste management. In fact, our hazardous waste regulations are now the toughest in the province's history and imports actually decreased by 31% between 1999 and 2001. But we can do better, and the way to do that is by dealing with these products in a way that reduces the need to landfill in the first place.

More than two years ago, I wrote Toronto city council expressing the concerns of my constituents about exporting their garbage, and yet the trucks continue to roll through my riding. Recently I wrote to my colleague the Minister of the Environment to suggest an examination of alternatives in the management of our waste stream. I believe that as a government we can and should play a more visionary and proactive role in promoting alternatives to landfilling. After all, I do not have to tell anyone in this House that landfilling is 18th-century technology.

I believe our government should demonstrate world-wide leadership by encouraging and developing a 21st-century approach. It is an approach that requires meaningful recycling programs, comprehensive composting initiatives and a thorough examination of producing energy from waste technologies, which by the way are being used right now in many jurisdictions around the world.

PREMIER'S RECORD

Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair): Ernie Eves is Ernie Eves's worst critic. Let's hear what Ernie Eves said about his own platform.

Here's one about how Ontario can't afford mortgage deductibility. Ernie Eves said, "When I presented the cost to the Premier of the day, he asked me what drugs I was on. 'You can't go there.'"

Here's Ernie Eves on banning teachers' strikes. Eves said that this type of "dogmatic approach" is the politics of the past.

How about this one on the private school tax credit? "These tax credits should be available only to parents whose children are in schools that teach the curriculum set out by the Ministry of Education."

What about Ernie Eves on jailing the homeless? Here's what Ernie Eves said, "Homelessness is not a crime."

Frankly, it's impossible to tell what Ernie Eves believes and just what he pretends to believe. As Ernie Eves himself said about the very ideas in his platform, "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." Well, well, well.

Let's contrast that with Dalton McGuinty, who has laid out a plan that he stands behind. It will mean excellence in education, growing strong and safe communities, achieving our economic potential, the health care we need and government that works for all of the people of Ontario for a change. Ontario Liberals believe this. Dalton McGuinty. Choose change. Choose real change. Vote Liberal.

AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE FOR FIGHTING CRIME

Mr Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka): I rise today to publicly honour three organizations and individuals in my riding of Parry Sound-Muskoka who are recipients of the Ontario Crime Control Commission's 2003 Awards of Excellence For Fighting Crime.

First, Muskoka Victim Services was nominated because of their 24-hour-a-day, seven-days-a-week response to emergencies. Working with the OPP, fire departments and emergency health care services, they provide crisis assistance, support and referrals to community services. Led by executive director Ginny Kernohan and program director Maureen Trimble, volunteers responded to 831 calls and served 1,866 victims between 1998 and 2002.

Second, Mr Tom Berry was nominated because of his work with the Alternatives for Youth in Muskoka program, where he has been program coordinator since July 1999. With Mr Barry's determination community justice circles, based on native sentencing circle models, were developed. Between April 2000 and December 2002, 86 youths have been referred to the circles. Only seven have reoffended.

Third, Mr Lyle Cathcart was nominated because of his work as president of Bracebridge Community Policing Committee Inc. Under his leadership, this committee has brought the victim crisis assistance and referral service program to the district of Muskoka to support victims of crime and initiated the inmate volunteer program, which encourages pro-social attitudes and behaviours among volunteer inmates who assist charities in Muskoka and beyond.

I would ask that all members of the House join me in congratulating the three recipients from Parry Sound-Muskoka.

REQUEST FOR OPINION

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): I beg to inform the House that pursuant to section 30 of the Members' Integrity Act, 1994, I have today laid upon the table a

request from the member for Kenora-Rainy River to the Honourable Coulter Osborne, Integrity Commissioner, for an opinion on whether the Honourable Ernie Eves, Premier of Ontario, and the Honourable Tony Clement, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, have contravened the act or a Ontario parliamentary convention.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES

Mr Gerard Kennedy (Parkdale-High Park): Pursuant to standing order 59(a) and 60(a), I beg leave to present a report from the standing committee on estimates on the estimates selected and not selected by the standing committee for consideration.

Clerk at the Table (Mr Todd Decker): The standing committee on estimates presents the committee's report as follows:

Pursuant to standing order 59, your committee has selected the estimates 2003-04 of the following offices and ministries for consideration:

Ministry of Finance: 5 hours;

Ministry of Education: 10 hours;

Ministry of Energy: 15 hours;

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities: 7 hours, 30 minutes;

Ministry of Enterprise, Opportunity and Innovation: 7 hours, 30 minutes;

Ministry of Agriculture and Food: 7 hours, 30 minutes;

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care: 7 hours, 30 minutes;

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing: 7 hours, 30 minutes;

Ministry of Community, Family and Children's Services, 7 hours, 30 minutes;

Ministry of Consumer and Business Services, 7 hours, 30 minutes;

Ministry of Citizenship, 7 hours, 30 minutes.

Pursuant to standing order 60, the estimates, 2003-04, of the following ministries and offices not selected for consideration --

Interjection: Dispense.

The Speaker: Dispense? Dispensed.

Pursuant to standing order 60(b), the report of the committee is deemed to be received, and the estimates of the ministries and offices named therein as not being selected for consideration by the committee are deemed to be concurred in.

1350

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

GRAVESITES OF FORMER PREMIERS ACT, 2003 / LOI DE 2003 SUR LES LIEUX DE SÉPULTURE DES ANCIENS PREMIERS MINISTRES

Mr Peters moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 67, An Act to preserve the gravesites of former premiers of Ontario / Projet de loi 67, Loi visant à conserver les lieux de sépulture des anciens premiers ministres 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 Steve Peters (Elgin-Middlesex-London): This bill permits the Minister of Culture to mark the gravesites of former Premiers of Ontario and permits the minister to make agreements for the care and preservation of such gravesites. In marking the gravesites, the minister shall comply with the bylaws of the cemetery where the gravesite is located and shall respect the wishes of the family of the deceased Premier.

RON MCNEIL

Hon Norman W. Sterling (Attorney General, minister responsible for native affairs): I'd like to seek unanimous consent to make some remarks, and for other members of other parties to make some remarks, about the passing of Ron McNeil from Elgin, a former MPP.

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

Hon Mr Sterling: Ron McNeil was a member of this Legislature for 29 years, from 1958 to 1987. I got to know Ron between 1977 and 1987 when we served co-incidentally here in the legislative chamber, and I gained a tremendous amount of respect for Ron.

Ron was a man of small physical stature but really was a man of great integrity. He was rather quiet -- he didn't speak in the Legislature very often -- but he was really very much respected by all members of the House. When he did speak, he was listened to very, very closely, because at that point in time he not only had the experience but the wisdom of his years of service and was recognized for that.

Ron was parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Agriculture for, I believe, five or six years from, I would guess, about 1977 to 1985. During that period of time, Lorne Henderson, the MPP for Lambton, was the Minister of Agriculture. In a lot of ways, the two were inseparable during that period of time, and they created quite a sight when seen together. Lorne was a very large and very tall man, and was one of those people from our

agricultural community who had developed very, very large hands from milking cows when he was a young lad, and Ron was a very diminutive character. At any rate, Ron had a great sense of humour as well.

He was known in his constituency for doing tremendous work. I could never forget Premier Davis saying during a caucus meeting that there were two members in the caucus who wrote more letters to him as Premier -- five times as many letters I think the number was -- than the other members, and the two were Jack Johnson from Wellington and Ron McNeil. Both of them were known very much as constituency people. Ron was very much tied to the agricultural community and was very well respected for that.

He loved the area he represented around Elgin, where he lived. Ron really surprised us in about 1986 or 1987. He was a bachelor until he was about 65 years of age. One week he came back to the Legislature and let us know he'd gotten married on the weekend. We just didn't picture this as happening that late in his life. Nobody was even aware that Ron was courting Doris, who unfortunately predeceased him in the year 2000, but Ron was very happy during his period of marriage with Doris. We all got to know both of them very well and we loved them both.

One of the other things about Ron was that he had this self-deprecating humour that he engaged in when he was talking about himself and his constituents. If you would bear with me, Mr Speaker, I just want to read a few remarks which I think give the Legislature some idea of Mr McNeil, both from his standpoint and from that of the opposition. I'm going to read from Mr Nixon, who was the finance minister in 1987 when Ron was celebrating his 29th anniversary here in the Legislature. This is from the Hansard:

"The two of us have often participated in debates in this House.... I have the greatest respect for the member for Elgin's experience and his ability to put forward the judgement based on that experience associated with his long-term responsibilities in his local community and particularly in the agricultural community. I have special reason to feel very warm towards our" relationship.

"The member for Bellwoods indicated that the member for Elgin is one of the few Conservatives in southwestern Ontario, but it was not always thus. While I would say he is philosophically established in the right party, in his early days he was quite influenced by the great Mitchell F. Hepburn, who was also a representative from Elgin. He even messed around just slightly with the Liberals until better judgement put him on the straight and narrow, which he has followed ever since.

"I have always had a feeling of some regret that the Liberals were not more aggressive in seeing that the member for Elgin was a candidate for us, but sometimes you miss out on the good ones. Anyway, we have had a long and pleasant association in this House, and I want to congratulate" him.

Then when we go on, Mr Speaker, if you ever read the speech, you would find out a little bit about the history of

the House, how much the members were paid way back in the 1950s. I think it was \$2,300 at that time and \$1,300 in expenses -- just slightly under what we receive today.

The other part of it is that he was congratulated at that time by everyone. I would also say that in 1986, on his 28th anniversary, Premier Peterson said, "The member has the affection of each one of us. He has taught us all that partisanship must be kept in its place in this House and that it should never get in the way of friendship, congeniality and mutual respect."

I think those words really reflect the respect Ron McNeil had in this Legislature and indeed in his community. He lived a long life. After he left this place, I'm told he still participated very much in his community. A road in his community was named after Ron, which he considered very important.

I think Ron McNeil will go down in the history of the Legislature as one of those MPPs who never forgot where he came from, and during all that time he served everyone who came to him for help.

1400

Mr Steve Peters (Elgin-Middlesex-London): Ron McNeil represented the riding for 29 years, seven months and 10 days. Like many members of this Legislature, he began his career on a municipal council, serving first on the municipal council of South Dorchester in 1946. He served as reeve of South Dorchester from 1949 to 1952, and in 1952 he was elected warden of Elgin county, the same year that Elgin county celebrated its 100th anniversary, and he served as one of the honorary chairmen.

He was first elected in a by-election in 1958, and it's very interesting to read some of Mr McNeil's comments from Hansard: "One of the reasons for holding the by-election on a Thursday -- and at that time, the date of the by-election was set by the Premier, not by statute -- was that Mr Frost" -- the Premier -- "did not like to have a by-election or an election on a Monday, because it interfered with the housewives' washing. Wednesday was out because we had half holidays for the businessmen. That left Tuesday and Thursday. Friday was out because otherwise the weekend would be upset."

Mr McNeil went on to be re-elected eight times, serving as the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Agriculture from 1977 to 1985. When he was defeated in the 1987 election, he returned to his farm in the village of Lyons. He said at that time, "I haven't retired, you know, I've just changed jobs."

During his career in this Legislature, he saw it grow from 90 seats to 130, and he served under five Premiers: four Conservative and one Liberal.

It was interesting to read Ron's maiden speech in this Legislature in 1958 and see the issues he brought to this Legislature 45 years ago -- issues where he was very much a visionary and issues that still affect Elgin county today. He spoke about the tourism industry and the important role it played in the local economy. He recognized the need for good roads and that government "should continue to improve our highways and through financial assistance help municipalities build better

county and township roads.” He spoke about tobacco: “We are in a riding that is proud of our tobacco growers and the contribution they’ve made to the economy of this province.” He also made reference to the millions of dollars that the provincial and federal governments derived from tobacco revenue, and we know they continue to derive those dollars today.

He also recognized the diversity that existed in the agricultural industry and that the province needed to provide research and extension services to agriculture. “A healthy agriculture is the backbone of the economy of this province,” Mr McNeil said.

It’s interesting as well that in 1959 he highlighted another issue that is still very much present and affects those of us who represent ridings on the north shore of Lake Erie today, and that is erosion: “I appeal to this government for assistance in the control of this very serious problem. Each year acres of valuable farmland are slipping into the lake -- land, of course, that is lost from agricultural production forever.” He advocated for that in 1959, and it’s an issue that I know Mr McNeil would still be advocating for today.

It was interesting as well that when he first arrived here in 1958, most of the members in this Legislature stayed at the Royal York Hotel, and the cost was \$5 a night. The salary at that time was \$2,600 a year, but you also received \$1,300 for expenses. But some things have changed. At that time there were no offices for members. Many of us have seen the little coat racks around the building that once served as offices for members. Members had no staff at the time. Ron recalled, in one of the tributes in the Legislature, that “Mr Frost said that every member was entitled to a desk, and that desk was right here. It was not anything unusual to come into the House in the morning and see various members of all political parties dictating to ... secretaries, who belonged to a pool. I do not recall ever having any filing system. I guess if a member had a filing system, he had to take it home, because there was no office space here for files.”

I got an opportunity to know Ron over the years. I would stop in and visit him or run into him at various functions in the county because, as the honourable member said earlier, he was very dedicated to people, and he continued to serve his community in various capacities over the years. He talked about some of the days before the advent of constituency offices, something that we all take for granted here, but constituency offices weren’t always here. Ron talked about the fact that you worked from your home or your car and you were expected to make house calls regularly, many things that we still do today, but again, you were responsible for that at your home.

In reading Hansard and speaking with individuals, he was described as one of the real grassroots Ontarians in this Legislature. Ron McNeil certainly served with honour, integrity, distinction and dignity. He recognized - - and I think this is most important -- the importance of representing the people of his riding and ensuring that their views were expressed, either here in the Legislature

or directly to ministers, and of treating each of his constituents equally and not judging anybody by any party colour.

One thing he spoke of was something that I’ve not experienced, unfortunately. There’s a bit of this camaraderie that exists, but I don’t think it exists like it used to. He talked about the assembly at the time and the non-partisan friendship and camaraderie that did exist in this building. You were partisan in the Legislature and you were partisan at a committee meeting, but when you walked out the door, you were friends and you spoke to one another. It was not uncommon that members of all political parties would spend time and have dinner together, or sit down and play some cards here in the building. That was very common.

I think his pride and joy, and probably one of his biggest legacies -- and Ron left many legacies -- was the establishment of the Ontario Police College in Aylmer in 1971. Ron was always proud of that facility, a facility we know continues to serve police services across this province.

Ron was not a tall man. But it was very common at functions for the emcee to ask, “Ron McNeil, please stand up and be recognized.” He would always come back with the line -- and he used it in the Legislature -- “But I am standing.”

Ron was predeceased by his wife, Doris, whom he married in 1985. He’s survived by his brother Alex, his sister Dora and numerous nieces and nephews.

He was always active in a wide variety of organizations. He had been awarded the Queen’s jubilee medal in 2002 and was inducted into the Elgin County Agricultural Hall of Fame in 2003. In a tribute, Larry Grossman told the Legislature at the time, “If Ontario and Canada ever had a Will Rogers of their own, I would want to nominate the member from Elgin as our own Will Rogers.”

Ron McNeil put people first. He was a tireless representative of all his constituents, and this is a trait that each one of us should bear in mind every day.

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): New Democrats join others in this Legislature in paying tribute to Ronald Keith McNeil, and indeed mourning his loss and his passing. For almost 30 years he was here in this Legislature, from his first by-election in 1958 until 1987, and even before that, at the age of 26, being elected locally in 1946 in township politics in his own community, down there in the riding of Essex.

He has been described as self-deprecating, and indeed the reference by Grossman to him as a Will Rogers character is illustrated perhaps back in 1985, when after almost three decades of being part of government, albeit as a backbencher, he found himself in opposition ranks. An article by Nick Martin in the London Free Press from June 1985 quotes Ron McNeil as saying, “It’s not impossible to adjust. I’m just fortunate to be here after I’ve seen what happened to some of my colleagues in southwestern Ontario.” The article goes on, “McNeil, a career backbencher who has never sat in cabinet, said he

has placed questions to Conservative ministers during question period in his 27 years in the Legislature. 'But I can't recall right offhand what they were.'"

He was here certainly when the manner of doing business was far different than it has been in the recent past.

1410

Mr Peters made references to card games here in the building. I understand there were a few down at the Royal York Hotel, that indeed Queen's Park and the precinct was not the only venue for government business to be conducted. That in and of itself isn't a bad thing, because as I recall what so many veterans of that period have been able to tell me and my colleagues, there were ways of getting things done and achieving goals in a far more civil and collegial manner than what many of us have witnessed in the recent past.

Mr Peters made references to Mr McNeil's having to be here for almost 30 years before he saw and served with five Premiers. Heck, I was only here but seven years and I had already seen three Premiers. Times certainly have changed. Mr McNeil had to wait almost 30 years to see five, and by the time I had been here seven years -- I've been here 15 now -- I had seen three, and some suggest I may well see yet more before my parliamentary career is over.

Mr McNeil was undoubtedly held in the highest regard by his community, not only as a young man and then as the representative for his community, but also in his senior years. Undoubtedly, as press reports confirm, he kept touch with his community and his community kept in touch with him.

As it has been noted, he married late. He and his wife were married at a point in their lives when children were most unlikely, and indeed there weren't any. I say to the people of the riding of Elgin, to Mr McNeil's extended family, to his friends, his neighbours and his community, that they can be proud of having had amongst their friends and neighbours, and as their political representative, a person with the character, commitment and passion for public service that Mr McNeil had. New Democrats join others in this Legislature in extending our regrets to extended family, friends and his community and acknowledging his significant and profound contribution to politics here in the province of Ontario.

The Speaker: I thank all members for their kind words and will ensure copies of Hansard are sent to family and friends.

PHILIP SHRIVE

Hon Robert W. Runciman (Minister of Public Safety and Security): I believe we have unanimous consent for all parties to say a few words on the passing of OPP Senior Constable Philip Shrive in the line of duty.

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

Hon Mr Runciman: There are 215 names on the Ontario Police Memorial that's just a few steps from this

chamber. It is with the greatest of sadness that I rise in the House today to say that next year another name will be added to that growing list.

As many members of the House know, Senior Constable Philip Ray Shrive died last Friday of injuries he sustained in the line of duty. Premier Eves, official opposition leader Mr McGuinty and I attended the funeral in Renfrew yesterday and extended the condolences of the people of Ontario and this House to Constable Shrive's family.

Phil Shrive proudly served the Ontario Provincial Police and the people of the province proudly and well for 30 years. He was a family man who leaves behind a wife and four children. He was a dedicated officer who was respected by his peers and members of the community. He was committed to the welfare of his fellow officers, serving as a branch president of the Ontario Provincial Police Association. These are the simple facts of Constable Shrive's life. We are left to fill in the details of what those 30 years of service have meant to the communities where he served.

Phil Shrive wanted to be a police officer. He knew the challenges and sacrifices the job would demand. In 1973, he joined the OPP family as a civilian radio operator, helping officers on the front lines. In September 1974, Phil took a momentous step when he donned the uniform of the OPP, a uniform he would wear proudly for the next 29 years. It must have been a momentous day for everyone in the Shrive family as his older brother Paul presented him with his badge and warrant card.

This was the beginning of a career that would see Phil Shrive posted to a variety of detachments across the province, beginning in Sioux Lookout. As he was transferred to different detachments, Constable Shrive performed a variety of duties in the service of many communities. When he was in Downsview, he worked in motorcycle traffic enforcement. In Oak Ridges and Shelburne, he continued doing general patrol duties. In 1989, he went to South Porcupine, where he worked as an ident officer. In 1996, he transferred to the West Carleton detachment, where he worked as a community services officer in schools. He also had a stint as a media relations officer. As well, he found special joy in his time as a marine officer helping to keep Ontario's waterways safe.

Constable Shrive worked long and hard to make the communities where he served safer for everyone. He was on traffic duty with the Renfrew detachment on May 16 when he was in a collision while performing his duties. The injuries in that accident claimed his life last Friday.

Phil Shrive gave everything in the performance of his duties, but his contribution reached beyond the demands of the job. He served for 10 years, until his death, as a branch president of the Ontario Provincial Police Association, working diligently on behalf of his fellow officers.

I knew Phil through his association activities, and I can personally vouch for his willingness to put forward the best interests of his brother and sister OPP officers.

Perhaps "enthusiasm" is a better word when it came to letting me know his views. Phil was not a shy man.

His brother Paul, who is a retired OPP chief superintendent and currently the chief of police in Port Moody, BC, said, "His work with the OPPA was his proudest accomplishment. He was deeply concerned about the welfare of his fellow officers. I think that will be his legacy."

Constable Shrive was also a licensed fixed-wing pilot and an enthusiastic builder of radio control model aircraft.

He leaves behind his much-loved wife, Karen, and four children, Neil, Karen, Graham and Rebecca, and his mother and father. His family was by his side when he passed away.

As much as the communities Constable Shrive served and his fellow officers feel his loss, we can barely conceive of the void his family must feel at his passing.

I know everyone in this House joins me in extending our most sincere condolences and respect to everyone in the Shrive family.

Senior Constable Phil Shrive was the embodiment of the motto engraved on the Ontario Police Memorial. He was truly a hero in life, not death.

Mr Dave Levac (Brant): Having met and known Phil, it is with great sadness and respect that I rise today on behalf of Dalton McGuinty and the Liberal caucus to pay tribute to Senior Constable Phil Shrive.

Constable Shrive died on May 23, 2003, succumbing to injuries he suffered in a two-vehicle collision on Highway 17 on May 16, 2003, while in the line of duty. A member of the Ontario Provincial Police family since 1972-73, Constable Shrive also served as branch president in the Ontario Provincial Police Association from 1993 to 2003. This tells us a story of leadership, dedication and compassion for his fellow officers, not to mention the personal sacrifice one makes in leadership.

As a police officer, Constable Shrive gave the ultimate sacrifice in service to the province of Ontario, and in particular to his community of Renfrew. My colleague and friend Sean Conway, the member representing this area, along with the Premier, Minister Runciman and my leader, Dalton McGuinty, and others, attended the funeral services for Constable Shrive.

Ladies and gentlemen, the presence and acknowledgements from members of all three parties were an act of goodwill and respect, and all of us in this House thank you for representing the Legislature, as I am sure it was appreciated by the Shrive family and his colleagues. We all offer our personal heartfelt sympathies to the family and friends of constable Shrive. A dutiful son, a good brother and a loving husband, Constable Shrive leaves his grieving wife Karen and four children, Neil, Karen, Graham and Rebecca. To the Shrive family, relatives and friends, we offer our deepest sympathies and prayers as you continue your journey in life.

1420

Today, as we honour and celebrate the triumph of the special life of Constable Phil Shrive, let us be reminded

of the special and important job all our public safety personnel do for us day in and day out. I offer words of reflection for all of us:

Take time to think -- thoughts are the source of power.

Take time to play -- play is the secret of perpetual youth.

Take time to read -- reading is the fountain of wisdom.

Take time to pray -- prayer can be a rock of strength in a time of trouble.

Take time to love -- loving is what makes living worthwhile.

Take time to be friendly -- friendships give life a precious flavour.

Take time to laugh -- laughter is the music of the soul.

Take time to give -- any day of the year is too short for selfishness.

Take time to do your work well -- pride in your work, no matter what it is, nourishes the ego and the spirit.

Finally, take time to appreciate -- thanks is the frosting on the cake of life.

Speaker, he and others are heroes in life, not in death.

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): Howard Hampton and every member of this NDP caucus express our sincere condolences to Phil Shrive's wife Karen and to his four children, as well as to Phil Shrive's colleagues in the detachment in which he most recently served and colleagues in detachments in which he served across this province, from Downsview to South Porcupine, in a variety of roles, and as well to members of those communities whose lives were undoubtedly touched by Senior Constable Phil Shrive in the course of his performance of those duties. He will truly be missed by oh so many.

He truly was not just a talented police officer but a multi-talented police officer. The diversity of positions he held and the incredible range of skills he acquired and perfected in performing those diverse roles speak of an incredibly competent and also committed police officer. In the motorcycle detachment out of Downsview -- and I put to you that those of us who know police officers who are in the motorcycle detachments know they have a passion for their motorcycles. In Senior Constable Shrive's case, it was compounded by his passion for flying, because people don't fly without a passion for flying, and people don't ride motorcycles without a passion for motorcycles.

He clearly had a passion for his job and for his fellow police officers. Not only was he an association activist, but he took on the responsibilities of leadership in the OPPA. So he served his community -- those Ontarians who were the beneficiaries of his OPP service -- but he also served his fellow officers. He undoubtedly wanted to make the province a better and safer place for all Ontarians, and he undoubtedly wanted to make policing a better and safer place for all police officers.

So we join in the tribute being paid to him today. We acknowledge the risk that police officers and other emergency personnel undertake every time they embark on their jobs. The tragedy of an active-duty police officer

having to give his life in the course of performing his job is difficult to parallel. There will be a tribute to him, of course, in the monument here at Queen's Park, but more importantly, the legacy he has left behind in terms of his service to his communities, his service to his province, his service to his colleagues, his fellow police officers, will survive decades and generations. New Democrats hope that the regard with which Senior Constable Phil Shrive is held, not only in this Legislature but in communities across this province, will provide some modest comfort to his children, his wife, his family, his friends, his neighbours and his fellow police officers.

The Speaker: I'd like to thank members for their kind comments, and I will ensure that they get sent to the family as well.

Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: We were informed that the Premier would be in attendance at question period.

The Speaker: As you know, the Speaker can't do anything about that. He may be in the back and coming. We don't seem to be able to rag the puck in this instance.

ORAL QUESTIONS

EDUCATION LABOUR DISPUTE

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): My question, then, is to the Minister of Education. Now that the Premier has decided not to call an election, we're wondering if, over there on that side of the House, you're going to stop playing political games with the 69,000 Toronto schoolchildren who are not able to attend their classes. We believe that those kids belong in the classroom, and we've introduced a bill that would accomplish just that.

I know that you wanted to feed this crisis because you believed it would help your political fortunes. But the election is off, and we're wondering if you might at the same time call off the political gamesmanship. Why not support our bill to get kids back to school as soon as possible?

Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Deputy Premier, Minister of Education): The Leader of the Opposition talks about political gamesmanship. The leader and his party have had the opportunity since we introduced the back-to-school legislation last week to ensure that the students could go back into the classroom. If he really believes in putting students first, he and his party should support our bill and get the kids back into the classroom. What is it that you have against putting our students first?

Mr McGuinty: Why can't we be honest about this? It takes a lot of work to get all three parties to agree on any kind of legislation in this House, but you have to be especially careful if you want to introduce back-to-work legislation. It has to be clean, it has to be honest and it has to be straightforward. It can't have anything that is controversial inside of it.

That's what we've introduced. We've introduced a clean, straightforward, honest bill. You've been playing games. You've introduced an element that you know only too well would be controversial. It seems to me that if you genuinely wanted to get those kids back to the classroom, you would support our bill because it's a genuine effort to ensure that we put forward something that's based on the kinds of models that have been used by all three parties in the past. It's clean, it's honest, it's straightforward and it accomplishes nothing more than getting kids back in the classroom. Why won't you support our bill?

Hon Mrs Witmer: Does the Leader of the Opposition not agree that allowing teachers to complete report cards, particularly at this time of the year, is something that teachers should be doing? Does he not agree that they should be administering EQAO tests? Does he not support, particularly at the end of the school year, meetings between teachers, parents and students? Does he not support teachers being involved in co-op placements? Does he not agree that there should be an opportunity for teachers and students to participate in graduation ceremonies?

This member doesn't put students first. He's putting political opportunism first.

1430

Mr McGuinty: Madam Minister, you may not be able to distinguish between a campaign promise that you want to run on and the urgent matter before us, which is to get 69,000 kids back in their classrooms. That's what we're trying to do here today. That's all we're trying to do, just get 69,000 kids back in the classroom, and that's all that our bill does -- nothing less and nothing more. It is purposely and deliberately clean, honest and straightforward.

I want to raise something else with you, Madam Minister. In addition to our concern about 69,000 kids in the Catholic board being locked out of the classroom, there is a very real fear now that something untoward is going to happen at Toronto's public board. Your own supervisor has now said that he has a deadline for ending negotiations for this Sunday. He's not just playing hardball with teachers; he's playing hardball with students.

I think this is getting out of hand, and I have a question for you on behalf of the parents of those 200,000 kids going to the public board at the elementary level. Will you guarantee parents and students that the Toronto public board, now under your control, will not proceed with a lockout?

Hon Mrs Witmer: The member opposite knows full well that this government has worked hard this past year in order to create a stable environment for teachers and for students. We have invested \$680 million to ensure that settlements can be arrived at, and it is our hope that today the Leader of the Opposition would encourage his members to pass our bill in order that we can avoid strikes and lockouts and work-to-rule, and put our students first.

NURSES

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): I didn't get an answer on that one, Speaker. I'll try another minister now, the Minister of Health.

Minister, SARS, as you well know, continues to devastate us. Front-line workers, as you know, are doing their very best, but your failure to hire full-time nurses is making things worse. There are at least 12,000 registered nurses in Ontario working at two or more jobs in two or more health care settings. That means that nurses can and are in fact becoming suspected carriers of SARS from one health care setting to another.

You may be aware that there was a nurse at North York General who is suspected to have contracted SARS there. She also happens to work at the Toronto Rehab. Not only is the North York General now closed but the Toronto Rehab, as a result of this nurse working in both locations, has now closed two wings and quarantined a total of five nurses at home.

Since the outbreak, you have done absolutely nothing to hire more full-time nurses in Ontario. Why not, Minister?

Hon Tony Clement (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): I want to assure the honourable member and members of this Legislature that it is a top priority of this government to hire more nurses -- full-time nurses, part-time nurses, nurses who want to make that choice. The fact is that in the last five years there have been 12,833 new nursing positions as a result of a direct infusion of \$800 million by the provincial government, and 8,555 of those are full-time positions. Indeed, there are more full-time nursing positions in Ontario than at any time since statistics have been kept, at least in the last 18 years, and they are the highest-paid nurses in the Dominion of Canada.

Of course, there is more to do, and I certainly indicate to the honourable member that that's why we want to graduate 8,000 new nurses over the next three years. That's why we'll pay the tuition for those who want to work in underserved areas. That is our plan for more nurses in Ontario.

Mr McGuinty: Here's the truth on this score, Minister. First of all, you've done absolutely nothing to hire more full-time nurses since the first outbreak of SARS. Second, we have the second-fewest nurses per capita in comparison to all the other provinces right across the country.

We now learn that instead of hiring full-time nurses in our public hospitals, you're bringing in part-time, private emergency nurses at a cost two to three times what it would take to hire a full-time nurse, fully employed inside the public health care system. We learned last night that North York General Hospital brought in 10 nurses from the private firm Med-Emerg, at a cost of between \$70 and \$100 an hour. That money could and should have been spent to hire full-time nurses.

Minister, I ask again: why are you not hiring full-time nurses in Ontario, especially since the first outbreak of SARS?

Hon Mr Clement: I don't think we should make apologies for ensuring that as a result of quarantine and sickness we have the right nurses, doctors and other medical practitioners to deal with SARS cases or with the other 99% of what occurs in our health care system. That, I think, is prudent and wise to do. It's the right thing to do from a clinical perspective and from a public policy perspective.

If the honourable member was interested in solving this problem, his point should be that we need long-term strategies. That's why we are graduating 8,000 nurses from our post-secondary system, that's why we're ensuring they have free tuition if they want to practise in underserved areas, that's why we're the first province in Canada to invest substantially in nurse practitioners -- all part of our comprehensive, long-term nursing strategy -- and that's why those strategies are going to work.

I would say to any prospective nurse in Ontario, throughout Canada or anywhere in the world, "You are welcome in Ontario. We have an excellent health care system. We have the highest remuneration" --

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

Mr McGuinty: Minister, you've had eight long years to develop a long-term strategy. We're not in the position today where we can capably cope with these kinds of medical emergencies. Your strategy with respect to nurses has been to fire them by the thousands. You cost Ontario taxpayers \$400 million in severance costs to fire nurses. Nurses by the thousands now working outside Ontario said they would love to come back to our province. Seventy per cent said they would come back to our province on condition that they had full-time work. They're not here. We don't have enough here because you're not giving them full-time work.

I ask you again, Minister: why is it that after eight years we find ourselves in a position where we can barely cope with these medical emergencies? Why have we ended up with the second-fewest nurses per capita in the country? Why are we hiring private, part-time nurses at a cost of \$70 to \$100 an hour? Why have you failed to ensure that we have enough full-time nurses on the job in Ontario to help us manage SARS?

Hon Mr Clement: I can only tell you --

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. Thank you.

Sorry, Minister.

Hon Mr Clement: I think the honourable member should have a reality check on his own party's record when they were in government. In Hansard, it was indicated on May 16, 1990, that 80 placements were cut down to 35 placements "as a direct result of Liberal policies for funding."

The Toronto Star headline for May 9, 1989: "30-year Nurse Blames Dad's Death on Nursing Shortages at Hospital."

The Windsor Star, January 25, 1989: "Most nurses are disillusioned. They want more money, more respect and more say in decision-making."

Those were the headlines in the province of Ontario under a Liberal government. We can't afford a Liberal government for reasons of taxes, we can't afford a Liberal government with respect to reckless spending and we certainly can't afford a Liberal government because of their prior attitude and their record when it comes to supporting the nursing profession in Ontario. We need a government that cares, and we care.

SARS

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): My question is to the Minister of Health. In reference to SARS, you now talk about a "new normal," but it looks like the same old thing. On May 20, nurses at two hospitals raised concerns about possible SARS cases. They worried about their safety and urged precautions. That was two days before you closed St John's and three days before a quarantine order.

We now have experts saying your government let the guard against SARS down too early. They say you've been playing with semantics and classifications about what constitutes a SARS case when you should have been putting the safety of our health care workers and our patients first.

Minister, why did it take three days to put in place a quarantine order after nurses told you they suspected SARS?

1440

Hon Tony Clement (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): I will answer factually, despite the fact that the question was not factual.

The simple answer is that as soon as the public health branch of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and I, as the minister, learned of this, we swung into action. That occurred Thursday afternoon and Thursday evening. We had a press conference to let the world know what was going on by Thursday evening. So the answer to your question is, as soon as we learned of a situation that we were not aware of before, we acted.

Mr Hampton: One would think that with such a very serious disease, it shouldn't take three days to put in place a quarantine. These are the very hospital workers who worked themselves virtually to exhaustion in the first place.

We found out something else that is disturbing. We're told now that it's all hands on deck, that screening is to be put in place, but at the very time this is supposedly happening, hospital workers at Humber River Regional Hospital, Finch and Church Street sites, were told today they are being laid off. Minister, if it's all hands on deck, if this is truly a case of making sure that this is contained, does it make any sense that hospital workers who are on the front line are being told they are now going to take layoffs?

Hon Mr Clement: Forgive me if I don't take your word on it, but I will look into the matter, of course. The short answer to your question is, of course not. We want our health care system to function properly. We want it to function with the most available personnel. So assuming there is a scintilla or a granule of truth in what you said, I'll certainly look into it.

Mr Hampton: I'll make it easy for you. The head of the hospital is Dr Reuben Devlin, who is the president of the Ontario Conservative Party. What is even more alarming is that --

Interjection: No, he's not.

Mr Hampton: Well, the former president, then.

What is even more alarming is that the very hospital workers who are being laid off in this situation constitute 50% of the outpatient care at Humber River. These are the very people who conduct the screening at the hospital. They are the very people who, when someone comes into the hospital, take the temperature. They do the SARS screening.

Minister, you didn't listen to those nurses, or you didn't listen very quickly to those nurses, who on May 20 said they suspected new SARS cases. Why are you now laying off the very hospital workers at Humber River who just this morning would have been conducting the SARS screening at that hospital when people came into work?

Hon Mr Clement: I take exception to your accusation that we did not act quickly. That is false. That is without merit. It is, quite frankly, beneath you, sir, to make that accusation. And don't make faces at me, because this is a serious chamber. If the honourable member has some evidence or information that is real, I suggest he share it with me. I'd be happy to look into it. And if the honourable member has any information about Humber River Regional that I should know about, certainly I will look into that, but forgive me, given the nature of your question and the nature of your torquing of the question, if I don't take your word for it.

AUTISM TREATMENT

Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): I have a question to the Minister of Community, Family and Children's Services. Yesterday, Judge Lane dismissed your government's attempt to appeal the ruling by Justice Gans which forces your government to pay for IBI treatment for six-year-old Andrew Lowrey. In his decision, Judge Lane said, "This case is about one six-year-old boy who will suffer irreparable harm if he does not receive this treatment." Hundreds of other autistic children like Andrew also face irreparable harm because your government cuts them off from IBI treatment when they turn age six, because they languish on a waiting list and never receive treatment at all, or because their parents face financial ruin as they try to pay for this costly treatment themselves.

Minister, when is your government going to do the right thing and fund IBI treatment for all autistic children who need it?

Hon Brenda Elliott (Minister of Community, Family and Children's Services): On this side, we are aware of the decision that was made yesterday. What that means is our commitment to helping those children and families who struggle with autism remains very strong. I say to the person in the third party across the way, who criticizes us on a regular basis for our autism programs, that under her government not one cent was ever given to autism. Under our government in 1999, we started a program that has now grown to \$100 million, which responds to the research that says very intensive therapy to those children at the very critical early years is the right way to go. That is the expert advice we are following. We are supplementing that with a number of new programs, all aimed in one direction, and that is to help the children and the families who are struggling with autism.

Ms Martel: May I remind you, Minister, with respect to your commitment, that it was your government that was in court trying to appeal a ruling forcing you to pay for treatment for Andrew. That's the level of your commitment to these kids. May I also remind you that right now we have 29 Ontario families taking your government to court because you have arbitrarily cut off treatment for their children at age six; we have another 80 families who have filed complaints before the Ontario Human Rights Commission, arguing your government discriminates against their children on the basis of age; we have the Ombudsman, who is doing a special investigation because of the waiting lists for IBI treatments; and yesterday, Justice Lane dismissed your government's blatant attempt to try and undermine a court ruling that said Andrew's treatment should be paid for? I ask you again, Minister, when is your government going to do the right thing and pay for IBI treatment for every autistic child who needs it?

Hon Mrs Elliott: Our government understands that autism is a disorder of which the incidence appears to be growing. Researchers all around the world are trying to find a solution to help the children and families who are struggling with this disorder. That is why it is our government that has instituted not only the intensive behavioural intervention-type program that responds to the research that says it is the most effective provided at an early age, but we are moving forward with new programs, transition programs from those early year programs into school age and, for the first time in the history of Ontario, introducing out-of-school programs for children with autism who are of school age, in addition to the special education programs already offered in the province of Ontario. Why? Because we know that helping children is the right thing to do. That is why this government has \$2.2 billion invested in programs for children.

PUBLIC HEALTH

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition):

My question is to the Minister of Health. Minister, it was just about a month ago that the Premier announced "next steps," as he called them. I'm looking at your news release here on the SARS recovery strategy. Included among the specific commitments, it says here, "The province will assist municipalities to cover SARS-related staffing.... A priority is to reinforce the public health care system to continue the battle against SARS. The government will immediately expand staffing in public health."

That was back on April 29, nearly a month ago. Can you tell us how much money has now flowed to public health units across the province, but especially here in Toronto, which is struggling with the throes of another outbreak of SARS?

Hon Tony Clement (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): I can tell you that I had a conversation with Mayor Lastman about this just late last week, and indicated to him that we were very mindful of the Premier's commitment, which was a commitment as a leader in the fight against SARS -- which the Premier is, incidentally.

The fact of the matter is that that is still our commitment as a government. It still is, in fact, our intention, and there will be more details in the very near future. The fact of the matter is, as well, that we have an outstanding commitment from the federal Liberal government with respect to the same issue, and I would encourage the member -- I've sent several letters to the Minister of Health Canada; my colleague the Honourable David Young has sent several letters to the Honourable Minister McCallum. If he wants to add his name to those letters, perhaps we can get them to move, because they haven't moved to date.

1450

Mr McGuinty: Can you ever deal with a health care issue, especially a health care emergency, and not point the finger of blame at the federal government? Can you ever provide real leadership? I want to remind you, this is your government's press release that was put out on April 29. You said you were going to "assist municipalities to cover SARS-related staffing." You said a priority is to reinforce the public health care system to continue the battle against SARS: "The government will immediately expand staffing in public health." Well, today we spoke to Joe Mihevc. You will know that he's the chair of the Toronto Board of Health. They say that you haven't sent a single penny to cover the costs of SARS, not since this announcement was made just over a month ago. You have broken your promise. I ask you again, why is it that you are great when it comes to putting out press releases, but you have yet to move forward and make sure that you actually send money to those people who need it to cope with SARS?

Hon Mr Clement: I'm sorry the honourable member feels that way. I think he might not feel that way at the

end of the day. I can definitely assure you that I had a very fruitful conversation with the mayor of the city of Toronto, who did understand that our commitment was still a commitment that we are going to keep. He was much more concerned about the lack of follow-through by the federal government of their commitments, their lack of understanding about Toronto and their lack of concern about Ontario and Toronto issues. That is the more important issue. If you want to be of help to the people of Ontario, you will help us to make sure that Jean Chrétien keeps his word.

RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Mr Wayne Wettlaufer (Kitchener Centre): I have a question for the Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, responsible for Rural Affairs. You lead our government's rural programs, which help meet the economic and infrastructure needs of the good people who call rural Ontario home. They're designed that way. Many Ontario communities can attest to the effectiveness of your ministry's business retention and expansion program, the resource jump teams program, and OSTAR infrastructure programs. Through these programs, your ministry has improved the quality of life for tens of thousands of rural families all across Ontario.

Recently you visited Kitchener-Waterloo to make an OSTAR rural economic development program announcement. I didn't know you were coming. Can you tell my constituents and the members of this House a little bit more about the OSTAR RED program?

Hon Ernie Hardeman (Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing): I want to thank the member for Kitchener Centre for his question and to commend him for his excellent work on behalf of his constituents. I know the member is aware that my priority and the stated priority of the Ernie Eves government is to ensure that rural and small-town Ontario communities remain viable, healthy and vibrant places in which to live, work and invest.

The OSTAR RED program stimulates economic growth in Ontario. It's part of the Ernie Eves government's commitment to breaking down economic barriers and creating new opportunities for existing rural businesses. To date, we have invested more than \$74 million in 82 approved OSTAR RED projects. These investments have already generated more than \$427 million in new economic activity in rural Ontario. This translates into more jobs for rural Ontario and a diversified, healthier business climate in which to explore new products and new markets.

Mr Wettlaufer: It's good to hear that our programs are working, stimulating economic growth and creating jobs in small-town and rural Ontario. I congratulate you for your excellent work, but with respect to your recent trip to Kitchener-Waterloo, I wonder if you can provide us with some highlights on the OSTAR RED investment and how it's going to benefit my riding.

Hon Mr Hardeman: I want to assure the member that it was a great pleasure to be in the Kitchener-Waterloo area. In fact I was in the riding just north of the honourable member's. It was a very pleasant visit. On that visit we made an announcement that we've invested \$314,183 to support the development and growth of the artisan bakery industry in Ontario through Project M.O.R.E. B.R.E.A.D. This funding, together with equal private sector investment from the project partners, the Artisan Bakers' Quality Alliance, is creating a partnership between five independently owned artisan bakeries across Ontario. This project addresses removing economic barriers to small artisan bakeries to grow sales, including purchasing state-of-the-art bread packaging equipment, expanding existing markets and gaining access to new ones. It's an expensive process, but the project partners are on target, not just to preserve artisan bread-making as a craft in Ontario, but also to grow the brand, achieving \$10 million in annual sales under the ABQA brand designation by 2004 and \$50 million by 2008. This is exciting news for --

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

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Mrs Leona Dombrowsky (Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington): My question is for the Minister of Community, Family and Children's Services. Last night when I asked you to clarify why you are withholding rights information for children in care, you said this issue is not so important. There were no questionable deaths of children in care for 20 years. Now, on your watch, seven children have died. Maybe that's not important to you, but it is important to me.

The office of the child advocate told me that rights information for children in care had not been provided because it has not been available for three years.

Matthew Geigen-Miller heard your irresponsible statement last night, and this was his reaction: "The issue of meaningful access to rights and advocacy is very important. It is literally a life-and-death issue for some children in care."

Minister, why are these kids in care not important to you?

Hon Brenda Elliott (Minister of Community, Family and Children's Services): I find the tone and the content of that question quite frankly offensive.

I was asked to speak last night in the House with regard to a question that was asked of me in the House a couple of days ago. As I said in my remarks last night, I thought the questioner was going into a more substantive issue. It ended up being a question about brochures and policies.

I have my notes, and I'll read those out. I indicated last night, and I assured the member opposite, that residential services do have posters and brochures, and I indicated we're working on new ones. And this is most important, I think, to what the question is about today:

for a children's residential service to receive their licence, there are rules for them to follow regarding notification of children's rights. When a child enters a residential facility, one of the things they must do is notify the child of his or her rights. They have to document that, and if they do not, their licence can be revoked.

I am offended that someone across the way --

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

Mrs Dombrowsky: Well, Minister, you should do your homework. If you did, you would know that it's the very licensing agents who have been calling the children's advocate and asking that that information be placed in the homes. They're not revoking licences, because they've been told that information is not available. For three years they've been told this. The Jobin inquest identified this.

Minister, when your government can spend millions of dollars on partisan advertising, why is it that essential rights information is not available for these children? This isn't a frill. It isn't a luxury. It's for children in care, and it is their right to have it.

Minister, kids in care are important, and I ask you, I implore you, to act today to provide this rights information, provide them with a Web site and make sure they get what they deserve.

Hon Mrs Elliott: When I get up to go to work in the morning, the first thing I think about is what I need to do to make the world of children better in the province of Ontario. I'm offended by this kind of talk. I'm offended by someone who stands in the House and says that I prevented someone from making an annual report, when there's no requirement for an annual report. There has never been an annual report.

1500

If information was incorrect on a poster, then obviously we would be concerned and would be moving very quickly to change it. But I pointed out last night what is wrong on the poster. It is true that the office hours of the child advocate have been extended by 15 minutes, and it is true that there has been a change in the name of my ministry. All the other information on these posters is absolutely accurate. It is available. We are making changes to make new ones because that has been requested, and we are responding. But to suggest for one moment that I or anybody in my ministry doesn't work extremely hard, diligently and passionately to care about the kids in this province troubles me greatly, that you would even countenance those words in this House.

Interjections.

SARS

Mr R. Gary Stewart (Peterborough): I can't understand that group there. This happens to be a fairly important question that I appreciate the opposition doesn't want to listen to. It's to the Minister of Health.

I understand that the leader of the third party asked a question regarding layoffs of front-line health care workers at Humber River Regional Hospital. Can you give us an update on what you understand the situation to be?

Hon Tony Clement (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): I thank the honourable member for the question. There were some details of which perhaps the leader of the third party was unaware. In fact, there are fewer than 10 health care workers affected by a recent decision to lower the number of people working in the chiropody foot care unit of the hospital. I can inform this House that they never did any SARS work whatsoever in the foot care unit, nor will it affect the hospital's SARS screening. So it looks like the honourable leader of the third party has managed to combine feet and his mouth in his question.

Mr Stewart: It kind of amazes me that every time we talk about health care issues, the opposition starts to heckle. I guess they don't have much faith in or don't really want to know much about health care in this province.

Minister, would you please update us on any new initiatives or programs that have been put in place in the last few days to address the SARS crisis?

Hon Mr Clement: In all seriousness, there was an important announcement made yesterday about an interim alliance among four Toronto-area hospitals -- the William Osler Health Centre, Etobicoke campus; the General site of the Scarborough Hospital; the North York General Hospital; and St Mike's Hospital as a tertiary unit -- all working together to have a comprehensive, integrated and coordinated approach when it comes to administering care to any SARS patients.

This is unprecedented in the hospital system. It came about as a result of the voluntary efforts of the hospitals in question. We believe that, having learned something from the first go-round with SARS, this will better assist us in dealing with SARS patients and making sure they get better quicker, and at the same time ensure that the other 99% of health care that occurs in our hospital system is done efficiently and safely for patients and health care workers combined.

This is an important step in our ongoing battle against SARS. It does not mean that we can let down our guard, but it's a step --

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

ONTARIO DISABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM

Mr Tony Martin (Sault Ste Marie): My question is for the Minister of Community, Family and Children's Services. There are 269,000 people in this province who rely on ODSP to survive. They haven't had an increase in their payments in 10 years, while the cost of living has gone up nearly 20%. You're forcing people with disabilities to live in poverty.

Thousands of others are even worse off because your red tape makes it too hard for them to even apply. You and the Liberals are content with a feeble promise to provide a one-time increase to their rates. What people with disabilities really need is dignity and a stable income that provides an annual cost of living increase. Will you commit today to adopting the NDP Public Power proposal of linking ODSP payments to the cost of living?

Hon Brenda Elliott (Minister of Community, Family and Children's Services): I find it interesting that a person from the third party would question me about ODSP rates, completely forgetting that when they were in power, they put this province into something like \$42 billion worth of additional debt in five short years, completely forgetting that all of the money that causes in interest payments is now spent on interest payments and could have gone to programs like disability or for children's programs.

They talk a compassionate talk but when it actually came to acting, they were certainly not compassionate in their actions, not for those who are presently receiving services, or even when you look at the policies of the day. This is a member of a government who left the disabled on the welfare system to languish. Their benefits had to be renewed every year. It is our government that said it's time to do something meaningful for the disabled in the province. So we took them out of the welfare system and, for the first time in the province of Ontario, created an Ontario disability support plan.

Mr Martin: This minister either doesn't understand the question, doesn't have an answer for the question or doesn't want to understand the question. However, she's also the minister who slept through Walkerton, if you remember.

Yesterday, my colleague Peter Kormos had the Burke family in to Queen's Park. For 10 years, they have had no increase in support payments to care for their severely disabled daughter. Like people on ODSP, those caring for disabled children deserve supports that meet their needs. Unfortunately, you and the Liberals continue to ignore these calls for justice and offer a feeble one-time increase.

Minister, I've made your job even easier by introducing yesterday my Fairness in Disability Income Support Payments Act. Will you pass my bill today and index ODSP payments to the cost of living?

Hon Mrs Elliott: Again, I return to my comments that we are the first government to take those who are disabled off of welfare, putting them in a program --

Interjection: Blah, blah, blah.

Hon Mrs Elliott: My colleague across the way says, "Blah, blah, blah." Did you know that those who are disabled think that the changes are very important? They're no longer considered permanently unemployable. We've changed that program so there are special benefits, new asset limits, all sorts of things that the disabled community found very effective and helpful.

Then it was our government that introduced the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, the first time in the

history of Canada we've had an act just for those who are disabled. Then we decided that there's more to do. That's why we have a plan. Our plan, "The Road Ahead," says, and in the throne speech we noted that we understand that people with disabilities have special needs that make it difficult for them to work. That's why we will increase the Ontario disability support program payments to help people with disabilities lead happier, more productive and dignified lives. That is why --

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

GOVERNMENT ASSETS

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): My question is to the Minister of Finance. The fiscal plans this year depend on you selling \$2.2 billion worth of provincial assets. Just so the public realizes it, normally the number might be \$300 million a year, but it's \$2.2 billion. Without it, your numbers show you will run a very significant deficit. You're making campaign promises that are going to be paid for by selling \$2.2 billion of Ontario assets. It is like selling the family home to buy groceries. Ontarians deserve to know which of their assets you are planning to sell to meet your campaign promises. Will you today tell the people of Ontario which of their assets you are selling to raise the \$2.2 billion?

Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Finance): The honourable member should well know that every year we put together a budget that includes revenue forecasts and expenditure forecasts. We build flexibility into it because we know that through the year there are likely to be changes. Every year the goal is to be a balanced budget, and we have done that five years in a row, plus paid down \$5 billion in debt.

You want to look at the Liberal record? They increased the debt by 33%. That's not a very sound fiscal management record whatsoever.

1510

Mr Phillips: Let me again be extremely specific and direct to you. It's \$2.2 billion of major assets that you're selling. Ontarians have a right. This isn't some private little Ernie Eves company; this is the province of Ontario. You are selling their assets; not Ernie Eves's assets -- their assets. And \$2.2 billion is an incredible amount of money; we will have a significant deficit without it. They have a right to know the answer to this, Minister. You can't hide behind this. This isn't some private little company on Bay Street; this is the public's money. Tell us today, now, what is the \$2.2 billion worth of assets you're selling? Tell the people of Ontario today. They are entitled to know the answer to that question.

Hon Mrs Ecker: Every year -- again, we are very open about this -- we review the public assets that we manage on behalf of taxpayers. When there are changes required, we make those changes. For example, last year we divested ourselves of the provincial savings office, at significant benefit to the consumers, the employees and

the communities where those banks reside. There was an example of where we looked at it, we reviewed it. It made better sense for taxpayers and consumers to divest ourselves of that bank. We will continue to review all public assets, as required, if required. If changes are needed, we'll make them.

The honourable member likes to stand up there and talk about their fiscal record. Not only did they increase the debt by 33%, not only did they increase taxes 33 times, but the same advisers who told David Peterson to increase your debt, to increase your taxes, are those same advisers whom Dalton McGuinty is now relying upon for his new economic agenda.

SMART GROWTH

Mr AL McDonald (Nipissing): My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Minister, you were in North Bay yesterday to receive the final report of the Smart Growth committee for northeastern Ontario. Unfortunately --

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): We'll put the clock back and you can start over. I apologize. The member for Nipissing has the floor, please. Sorry, member. You may start over.

Mr McDonald: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Minister, you were in North Bay yesterday to receive the final report of the Smart Growth committee for northeastern Ontario. Unfortunately, I wasn't able to be there with you due to my commitments here at Queen's Park, but I did hear from several of my constituents that you were well received and that you have a good understanding of the issues and concerns we face in the north.

Minister, in the report local, municipal, business and community leaders shared with you their advice on how to make sure that our part of the province can enjoy the many opportunities for growth while protecting --

Interjections.

The Speaker: The member for Windsor-St Clair, this is his last warning, and to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. I'm not going to have you arguing back and forth. If you want to talk about it, go outside. The member for Nipissing has the floor. He's asking an important question. If you want to continue the conversation and argue, go outside.

The member for Nipissing has the floor. Sorry to interrupt again.

Mr McDonald: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

In the report, Minister, local, municipal, business and community leaders shared with you their advice on how to make sure our part of the province enjoys many opportunities for growth while protecting the environment and the quality of life that we cherish. I'm hoping that the minister can share with this House some of the advice in the report and also his thoughts on what the next steps should be.

Hon David Young (Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing): I thank the honourable member for his question and for his support over the last number of months. He indeed is a great advocate for his community. His insight and understanding of some of the challenges that North Bay and the area around North Bay face are of great assistance to me and to other members of the government.

Yesterday I had an opportunity to travel to North Bay, and I received the northeastern panel's report; that's the Smart Growth report. You will remember of course that there are five different panels that exist. This government decided that five panels were necessary in order to reflect the diverseness and richness of this province. There are different challenges in different parts of the province. Clearly in southern Ontario, an area that has had exponential growth over the last short while, we are going to have to do different things to accommodate and encourage orderly growth.

For other regions of the province, like the area that my friend hails from, there are different challenges. We must find a way of ensuring that young people will be able to stay in the communities they grew up in, that there will be opportunities there and that the services will be there when and where they need them.

Mr McDonald: I agree with you that we cannot apply the same solutions to northern Ontario as we do to the issues in southern Ontario. Our challenges and priorities are very different, as you know, and that's why it's so important that Smart Growth panels rely on advice of local leaders.

Minister, I know that both you and Premier Eves have demonstrated your commitment to moving forward with Smart Growth principles, economic growth, better transportation and a clean and healthy environment. This government has taken the important steps when it comes to supporting economic development and improved medical services in northern Ontario. Minister, how will this report help build upon this government's vision for a stronger and more prosperous northern Ontario?

Hon Mr Young: Premier Eves has already begun what is a very important task. You will undoubtedly be aware that the Premier has announced both capital funding and operating funds for the first northern Ontario medical school. That's something that is very important to the honourable member who posed the question and very important for the people of northern Ontario.

When I was in North Bay yesterday I also heard a great deal of talk about the first and largest tax incentive zone announcement, and of course that is an announcement that Premier Eves made in relation to all of northern Ontario. The results of that have already materialized. We have seen companies from across Canada and from the United States inquiring of northern mayors and business leaders about the prospect of moving to northern Ontario.

Before I sit down, I do want to mention the fact that Premier Eves has announced \$370 million to expand Highway 11 and Highway 69. The report we got yester-

day will assist us to provide even more resources and opportunities in northern Ontario.

EDUCATION FUNDING /
FINANCEMENT DE L'ÉDUCATION

M^{me} Claudette Boyer (Ottawa-Vanier): My question is to the Minister of Education. Madame la ministre, votre gouvernement, dans son discours du trône, a bien dit que tous les enfants de l'Ontario méritaient une éducation de qualité et des chances de succès égales, indépendamment de leur situation économique, de leur lieu de résidence, de leur origine ethnique ou de leur croyance religieuse.

This government prides itself on having taken seriously many recommendations of Dr Rozanski's report. Nevertheless, your government has done nothing to follow up recommendation 14 of the Rozanski report, urging your government to revise the funding formula so as to seriously look into the particular needs of the francophone schools in the province, although the report did recognize that the funding for francophone schools was inadequate.

Madam Minister, when will you address this issue and give Franco-Ontarian schools the financial resources they need so that they may respect the requirements of the different curricula and offer Franco-Ontarian students the full range of courses and services they are entitled to?

Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Deputy Premier, Minister of Education): I appreciate the question regarding the funding for our French schools in Ontario. I would just begin by saying to the member opposite that I've had the opportunity to visit some of the French schools throughout Ontario and I've been extremely impressed by the quality of education, the enthusiasm of the students and the hard work of the teachers, administrators and trustees.

In response to your question regarding funding: you may or may not know that immediately after Dr Rozanski issued his report, made his recommendations, we set up a team of stakeholders from the French-language community in order to address the unique needs and the additional costs which we would agree are there. I would just let you know that they are in the process now of determining how they can best follow through on Dr Rozanski's recommendation.

1520

Mrs Boyer: Madam Minister, I understand what you are saying. The francophone community was waiting for something in the throne speech. We all know you really think that the per pupil funding principle makes sense. We realize that the actual funding formula relies solely on the number of pupils and therefore obviously penalizes the Franco-Ontarian schools, which are mostly smaller in number. When will you guarantee the Franco-Ontarian schools the minimum vital funding required so that they may respect the requirements of your own ministry? When will your government respect its constitutional obligations toward the francophone community?

Hon Mrs Witmer: I'll just make a couple of points regarding the French-language funding. First of all, in 2001-02, we increased funding by \$29.7 million, or 4.3%, over the previous year. In 2002-03, we increased the funding 7.4%, despite the fact that enrolment decreased by about 1%. And this year, 2003-04, we are increasing the funding by almost \$64 million. That's an increase of 8.5% while the enrolment is decreasing about 2.5%.

I'd also mention to the member opposite that we have recently signed the Canada-Ontario special agreement for the implementation of French-language school governance. That was signed on June 17, 1998, by Canadian Heritage and the Ontario Ministry of Education. It's a cost-sharing agreement for a period of five years, and each level of government provided \$90 million.

We're going to continue to make sure that we provide funding --

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

TIRE DUMPS

Mr Steve Peters (Elgin-Middlesex-London): My question is to the Minister of Health. Minister, there is a very serious public health threat in Norwich township: an illegal tire dump with 350,000 tires piled two storeys high. I toured this site and it's truly unbelievable -- a cesspool of mosquito larvae, a breeding ground for West Nile virus. Local health unit officials have indicated that there is no way they can larvicide the tires because of the way they are piled up.

Officials from the Ministry of the Environment have indicated that the \$1 million announced for tire cleanup is not guaranteed to go to cleanup of this site. The local fire chief estimates it will cost the entire \$1 million to clean up that site alone. That doesn't include the 15 to 20 other sites that exist around the province.

Minister, two days ago in this House you spoke of the commitment of the Premier to ensure that the resources are there to deal with the very real dangers to the public health from West Nile virus. Will you commit today to ensure the necessary funding and immediate cleanup of this West Nile breeding ground?

Hon Tony Clement (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): I'll refer this to the Minister of the Environment.

Hon Chris Stockwell (Minister of the Environment, Government House Leader): We have taken steps, as a matter of fact, to ensure that those tire dumps around the province are sprayed with larvicide. We understand it's a situation that could be a breeding ground for West Nile, and the Ministry of the Environment has moved proactively and quickly to ensure that those tire dumps will in fact be dealt with.

With respect to the tire dumps themselves, we have struck a WDO. One of the first orders I did was to deal with the tire situations and the tire dumps in Ontario. I've had a number of conversations with my caucus members.

A few of them, including the Minister of Agriculture, have met with me personally, and every single time they have come to me, I've addressed the concerns. We have the WDO and we're moving forward in the very near future on the very serious tire dumps -- I would say the very unsafe and most dramatic problems in the province.

I heard what you said. We are larviciding. We are spraying those tire dumps for West Nile virus and we're moving forward in the very near future to begin the cleanup of some of the worst tire dumps in the province.

Mr Peters: I recognize that the Minister of the Environment answered the question, but this is an extremely important health issue.

Local businessman Ron Heleniak, who lives next door to this site, has three small children and he's very concerned about the health and safety of his family. West Nile poses a very real threat to his family and to local citizens in that area, and it becomes more urgent daily.

This has been brought to your attention. The minister talks about addressing concerns, but this issue has been out there since 1996. CBC's Disclosure has undertaken a program, the Toronto Star has written an article, and The New PL has covered it. Mr Heleniak has written to you, to Minister Stockwell, to former Minister Witmer and to Minister Hardeman. Yet since 1996, seven years later, nothing has happened. Ron Heleniak described the situation best by saying, "This thing has been nothing but a ring-around-the-rosie farce, with one jurisdiction passing the buck to another." We saw that today, where health passes it to environment, and environment will pass it back to health.

Minister, you're responsible for safeguarding the health of our citizens. You've said you would do what it takes to protect us from the West Nile virus. This is a disaster waiting to happen. I'm asking again, will the Minister of Health take the leadership role that you promised and commit to having this site cleaned up now?

Hon Mr Stockwell: Mr Speaker, I gave him the answer, and I think it was a fair answer and a fair response. We understand there is an issue. But to be fair to you and your side of the House, when we introduced legislation to strike the WDO, to in fact do just that -- clean up the tire dumps around the province -- what did you do? You voted against the legislation. You voted against the very legislation that we were putting in place to go about cleaning up the tire dumps, to put the blue box recycling on the front burner for glass returns, and so on and so forth.

So I ask you, why would you stand in your place and tell me about tire dumps when you voted against the very legislation we put forward that will deal with the tire dumps? I'm not blaming you. We took leadership, we made a decision, and even with your silly response, which was opposing the legislation, we said, "We've got to provide leadership; we've got to clean up these tire dumps," and we're doing just that in spite of you.

VISITORS

Hon Jim Wilson (Minister of Northern Development and Mines): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I know members will want to join with me in welcoming Mr Blake Roberts, president of the Alberta PC youth association, and Andrew Highfield, who is a member of that association. They're in the west gallery. I know they are accompanied, or they were accompanied, today by Mr Dave Priscoe, who is the vice-president, English youth, for the national PC association of Canada. Welcome.

Interjections.

PETITIONS

ALUMINUM SMELTER

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): In the din of this House, I have a very important petition to present.

"Regarding cleanup of the abandoned smelter site in Georgina:

"Whereas the abandoned aluminum smelter located on Warden Avenue in the town of Georgina has been deemed to have heavy metals exceeding the Ministry of the Environment guidelines; and

"Whereas the site is adjacent to a wetland that leads to the Maskinonge River feeding into Lake Simcoe;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to direct the Ministry of the Environment to conduct a full environmental assessment of this site, followed by a cleanup of the full smelter site."

I affix my signature. I'm in complete agreement with this.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Petitions? Further petitions? There are no more petitions? I'm actually shocked. Do you have one there?

Mr Bradley: I have another set of petitions here.

The Speaker: OK, the member for St Catharines.

Mr Bradley: I have a set of petitions that are similar to the last ones but have a different stamp on them. They once again read the following -- I wish my staff had brought down all the petitions I have up in my office, so I could read them.

"Regarding cleanup of the abandoned smelter site in Georgina:

"Whereas the abandoned aluminum smelter located on Warden Avenue in the town of Georgina has been deemed to have heavy metals exceeding the Ministry of the Environment guidelines; and

"Whereas the site is adjacent to a wetland that leads to the Maskinonge River feeding into Lake Simcoe;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to direct the Ministry of the Environment to conduct a full environmental assessment of this site, followed by a cleanup of the full smelter site."

That's another raft of these petitions.

SCHOOL BUS SAFETY

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

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

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

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

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

“That the measures contained in private member’s Bill 112, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act to protect children while on school buses, presented by Pat Hoy, MPP, Chatham-Kent-Essex, be immediately enacted....

“Bill 112 imposed liability on the owner of a vehicle that fails to stop for a school bus that has its overhead red signal lights flashing and....

“We ask for the support of all members of the Legislature.”

The signatures on this petition are from residents of Windsor, and I too have signed it.

1530

Hon Chris Stockwell (Minister of the Environment, Government House Leader): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I would just like to be certain that Mr Bradley’s office got the message that they should bring down all the petitions in his office now so he may deal with them now.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Now we’ve got an influx.

GARDE D’ENFANTS

M. Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina): J’ai une pétition en français à l’Assemblée législative de l’Ontario, appuyant les garderies à 10 \$ par jour.

« Attendu que 70% des femmes de l’Ontario ayant des enfants de moins de 12 ans sont sur le marché du travail;

« Attendu que, elles et leurs familles ont absolument besoin de services de garde de qualité, sûrs et abordables;

« Attendu que l’étude sur la petite enfance réalisée pour le gouvernement conservateur par le D^r Fraser Mustard et l’honorable Margaret McCain a conclu que les services de garde de qualité favorisent un développement harmonieux des enfants; et

« Attendu que le gouvernement a réduit le financement pour les garderies réglementées plutôt que d’appuyer les familles ontariennes en investissant dans l’apprentissage et les soins offerts aux jeunes enfants;

« Pour ces motifs nous, soussignés, demandons que le gouvernement de l’Ontario adopte le plan du NPD pour

des espaces de garderie à 10 \$ par jour, et qu’il commence par réduire la totalité des frais de garde pour les enfants de deux ans à cinq ans actuellement inscrits dans des garderies réglementées; que le gouvernement alloue des capitaux permanents pour agrandir les garderies existantes et pour en construire de nouvelles; que le gouvernement finance l’équité salariale pour le personnel, et qu’il crée de nouveaux espaces de garderies à 10 \$ par jour dans cette province. »

J’appuie cette pétition.

AUDIOLOGY SERVICES

Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands): I have a petition addressed to the Legislature of Ontario.

“Whereas services delisted by the Harris government now exceed \$100 million in total;

“Whereas Ontarians depend on audiologists for the provision of qualified hearing assessments and hearing aid prescriptions;

“Whereas the new Harris government policy will virtually eliminate access to publicly funded audiology assessments across vast regions of Ontario;

“Whereas this new Harris government policy is virtually impossible to implement in underserved areas across Ontario;

“Whereas this policy will lengthen waiting lists for patients and therefore have a detrimental effect on the health of these Ontarians;

“Therefore, be it resolved that we, the undersigned, petition the Ontario Legislature to demand the Harris government move immediately to permanently fund audiologists directly for the provision of audiology services.”

It’s signed by about 12 individuals. I agree with the petition and sign it accordingly.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay): It’s Shirley Crispin day again. Shirley Crispin went out again knocking on doors and got about 2,000 signatures on the following petition. It says, “We deserve better: it’s time for a raise.” I’ve got to wear my glasses because I’m getting to the point where I can’t read without them.

“To the Ontario Provincial Legislature:

“Because social assistance rates were slashed by 21.6% in 1995, and with the increases to the cost of living that cut is worth about 34.4% today; and

“Because current social assistance rates do not allow recipients to meet their cost of living; and

“Because the people of Ontario deserve an adequate standard of living and are guaranteed such by the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; and

“Because the jury at the inquest into the death of Kimberly Rogers recommended that social assistance rates be reviewed so that they reflect actual costs of living;

“We demand that the Ontario government immediately increase the shelter portion of Ontario Works and Ontario disability support program benefits to the average Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp rent levels and index social assistance to the cost of living.”

I have signed this petition.

MORTGAGE INTEREST DEDUCTIBILITY

Mr Dominic Agostino (Hamilton East): A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas in a recently released Tory platform entitled *The Road Ahead*, Ernie Eves promised to implement mortgage interest deductibility if his government is re-elected; and

“Whereas countless economists and tax specialists have pronounced mortgage interest deductibility to be unaffordable and bad public policy; and

“Whereas in a Toronto Star article published on April 16, 2003, Ernie Eves was quoted as saying, while in his role as finance minister to the former Premier, Mike Harris, referring to this scheme, ‘When I presented the cost to the Premier of the day, he asked me what drugs I was on. ‘You can’t go there,’ he said’;

“Whereas the people of Ontario recognize that the Tories’ proposal to implement mortgage interest deductibility is unaffordable, irresponsible and reckless public policy;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to determine, when crafting the Progressive Conservative platform, the answer to Premier Mike Harris’s question, that time, when he was asked in his role as finance minister.”

I agree with that and I sign my name to the petition.

NATIONAL CHILD BENEFIT SUPPLEMENT

Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay): I have yet another petition. This one says, “Stop the Clawback! Give the Children Back their Money.

“Whereas one in five children in Ontario lives in poverty;

“Whereas, as part of the national child tax benefit program the federal government gives a supplement to low-income families across the country to begin to address child poverty;

“Whereas that money, up to approximately \$100 per month per child, is meant to give our poorest and most vulnerable children a better chance in life;

“Whereas in Ontario, the Conservative government deducts the child benefit supplement dollar for dollar from those living on social assistance;

“Whereas this is leaving our province’s neediest children without the extra money they desperately need to begin to climb out of poverty;

“Whereas all children are entitled to a fair chance at life;

“Therefore be it resolved that we, the undersigned, call on the provincial government of Ontario stop the

clawback of the national child tax benefit supplement and ensure this federal money reaches all low-income families in Ontario.”

I’ve signed that petition.

AUDIOLOGY SERVICES

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough-Rouge River): I have some petitions here coming in in numbers.

“Whereas services delisted by the Harris-Eves government now exceed \$100 million in total; and

“Whereas Ontarians depend on audiologists for the provision of qualified hearing assessments and hearing aid prescriptions; and

“Whereas the new Harris-Eves government policy will virtually eliminate access to publicly funded audiology assessments across vast regions of Ontario; and

“Whereas this new Harris-Eves government policy is virtually impossible to implement in underserved areas across Ontario; and

“Whereas this policy will lengthen waiting lists for patients and therefore have a detrimental effect on the health of these Ontarians;

“Therefore, be it resolved that we, the undersigned, petition the Ontario Legislature to demand that the Harris-Eves government move immediately to permanently fund audiologists directly for the provision of audiology services.”

I am going to affix my signature in total agreement with this petition.

GARDE D’ENFANTS

M. Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay): I have many petitions and I’m trying to present most of them today, this one from les gens de Timmins qui écrivent:

« Appuyons des garderies à \$10 par jour: pétition à l’Assemblée législative de l’Ontario:

« Attendu que 70% des femmes de l’Ontario ayant des enfants de moins de 12 ans sont sur le marché du travail;

« Attendu que, elles et leurs familles ont absolument besoin de services de garde de qualité, sûrs et abordables;

« Attendu que l’étude sur la petite enfance réalisée pour le gouvernement conservateur par le D^r Fraser Mustard et l’honorable Margaret McCain a conclu que les services de garde de qualité favorisent un développement harmonieux des enfants; et

« Attendu que le gouvernement a réduit le financement pour les garderies réglementées plutôt que d’appuyer les familles ontariennes en investissant dans l’apprentissage et les soins offerts aux jeunes enfants;

« Pour ces motifs nous, soussignés, demandons que le gouvernement de l’Ontario adopte le plan du NPD pour des espaces de garderie à 10 \$ par jour, et qu’il commence par réduire la totalité des frais de garde pour les enfants de deux ans à cinq ans actuellement inscrits dans des garderies réglementées; que le gouvernement alloue des capitaux permanents pour agrandir les garderies existantes et pour en construire de nouvelles;

que le gouvernement finance l'équité salariale pour le personnel, et qu'il crée de nouveaux espaces de garderies à 10 \$ par jour dans cette province. »

J'ai soussigné cette pétition.

1540

AUDIOLOGY SERVICES

Mr Steve Peters (Elgin-Middlesex-London): A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Listen: Our Hearing is Important!

"Whereas services delisted by the Ontario provincial government now exceed \$100 million in total;

"Whereas Ontarians depend on audiologists for the provision of qualified hearing assessments and hearing aid prescriptions;

"Whereas the new provincial government policy will virtually eliminate access to publicly funded audiology assessments across vast regions of Ontario;

"Whereas this provincial government policy is virtually impossible to implement in underserved areas across Ontario; and

"Whereas this policy will lengthen waiting lists for patients and therefore have a detrimental effect on the health of these Ontarians;

"Therefore, be it resolved that we, the undersigned 550 residents from across Ontario, petition the Ontario Legislature to demand that the Ernie Eves government move immediately to permanently fund audiologists directly for the provision of audiology services."

I'm in full agreement and have affixed my signature hereto.

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I have yet another petition, thanks to the government House leader, that has been brought in. It is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas long-term-care facilities in this province are understaffed, underfunded and ignored by the current government;

"Whereas many residents of St Catharines and other communities in Ontario are unable to find a family doctor as a result of the growing doctor shortage we have experienced during the tenure of the Harris-Eves governments;

"Whereas cancer patients in Ontario requiring radiation treatment face unacceptable delays and are often forced to travel to other jurisdictions to receive medical attention;

"Whereas many prescription drugs which would help patients with a variety of medical conditions such as macular degeneration, multiple sclerosis, arthritis, diabetes and heart failure are inadequately covered by OHIP;

"Whereas long waiting lists for diagnostic tests such as MRIs, CT scans and ultrasounds are jeopardizing the health of many individuals already facing serious illness;

"Whereas the Harris-Eves government has now spent over \$401 million" -- I might add "and rising," but that's not in the petition -- "on blatantly partisan government advertising in the form of glossy brochures and television and radio ads;

"We, the undersigned, call upon the Conservative government of Ernie Eves to immediately end their abuse of public office and terminate any further expenditure on political advertising and to invest this money in health and long-term care in the province of Ontario."

I affix my signature as I'm in vehement and complete agreement with this petition.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 27, 2003, on the motion for second reading of 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): The member for Trinity-Spadina had the floor.

Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina): I want to welcome the citizens of Ontario who are watching this political debate we're having. I'm happy to be the New Democratic Party critic for educational matters -- elementary, secondary and post-secondary -- and happy to debate as long as I can this odious Bill 28 entitled 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.

This bill is about forcing teachers back to school. The Minister of Labour, who spoke at length to this bill yesterday, didn't say as much, and the title pretends to

assuage the back-to-work legislation. When they say, "An Act to resolve a labour dispute," it's designed to kick the teachers back into the schoolrooms, where I'm assuming John Baird would say they belong.

Hon John R. Baird (Minister of Energy, Minister responsible for francophone affairs): That's where they want to be.

Mr Marchese: That's where the teachers would want to be. So says the Minister of Energy.

I'm going to speak to why this bill is odious, and I will speak later on to my disagreement with Liberal Bill 61, which they speak of as the clear bill, but it too is back-to-work legislation for teachers. I will have an opportunity to speak to both of those bills as time goes on.

But, Speaker, I want to tell you and those citizens watching that this government has beaten up on teachers since 1995. This is not about resolving disputes between teachers and the boards of education because they're such nice people on the other side; this is about beating up on teachers because it's politically convenient to do so. As they beat up on welfare recipients for seven, eight years, they are doing the same thing with teachers day in and day out. I will show you how they've done that for the last seven years and how they would hope to continue doing that for the next four years -- before this election gets called.

Yesterday, the Minister of Labour stood up on his feet and said, with some humour and irony, that it's "time for a new maturity" to solve problems between teachers and boards -- a new maturity. I'm assuming by the "new maturity" he's referring to odious Bill 28, which would force teachers back into the classroom. That, as I read it, is how he classifies a new, mature relationship between teachers and boards of education. He would kick them back into the classroom without allowing for any collective bargaining to take place, and feels happy about it -- a tradition we've had for a long time in this country.

Last week, the Minister of Labour, the Premier and the Minister of Education, all three of them, stood up to introduce Bill 28, as if it took more than one minister to kick teachers back. They needed the Premier as well to help them out. It's an easy bill. Any one of those ministers could have done it, but they colluded together to give each other strength, presumably to get the teachers back into the classroom. Why would you need the massive strength of three people to beat up on teachers when one would do? They want to say to the public that there is a great deal of collaboration in the cabinet and in the caucus, when they in that caucus and cabinet are quite happy to rule that teachers should be back in their classrooms. Happily, they do it.

The Minister of Labour talks about this bill protecting students from harmful work-to-rule, as if we've never had work-to-rule before. Why, these Catholic teachers, some of whom are here today, were on work-to-rule for a mere eight days while they were doing their duties as teachers in the classrooms. This government stands up and says they want to protect students. How so? If teachers are in their classrooms teaching their students,

how is it harming those students? They are doing their duty to teach and, through the collective bargaining process, are working to rule and not withdrawing their teaching services.

The Minister of Labour says we need a new framework for labour peace, and by that I'm assuming he's referring to his interest, and the interest of this Premier, in abolishing teacher strikes, which I will speak to a little later. Is that the kind of framework that he wants to establish labour peace? How do you achieve labour peace with teachers when you're about to tell them you are going to avoid and prevent lockouts from now on, and will prevent and eliminate the right to strike from now on, should you get re-elected? How does that establish labour peace? I don't see it, but Ernie Eves, the Premier, seems to see it as a good solution. The Minister of Labour talks about this as being a new framework for labour peace. It will bring no peace to our teachers. It will bring little peace to the relationship between teachers and this government and the relationship between teachers and boards. It will do nothing of the kind.

1550

The Minister of Labour says, "Unfortunately the bill is caught up in politics." As if the odious nature of this bill wasn't evident to him or the public, he speaks of opposition parties presumably playing politics with a highly political bill. This is why I say he does this with some humour and irony when he says, "It's the opposition playing politics, but the bill is not about politics at all." Do you see how dumb this kind of politics is when ministers can stand up and say those things?

He accuses the Liberals, of course, of being in collusion -- no, he made reference to the fact that the Tories were in collusion with the school board and the school board was in collusion with the Tories. I found that amusing too, although I must admit that if I did agree with the Minister of Labour, it's on this point. I have to admit that when the Liberals were attacking Joe Carnevale, the chair of the separate school board, I thought, "Hmm, this is interesting. Why would the Liberals attack a Liberal? One of their own, who has been a member of the Liberal Party," so he claims. I'm sure that is the truth, and I know this because I know they were trying to recruit him to run against me as a Liberal but he declined, and that was nice of him.

Hon Robert W. Runciman (Minister of Public Safety and Security): Mike Colle's daughter is on that board.

Mr Marchese: Mike Colle's son, I believe, is a trustee on that board, but that's a different matter.

They accuse the board of being in collusion, and by that I assume they mean Conservative collusion, as if Joe Carnevale is a Conservative, and presumably the board. But the point is that the majority of those trustees are Liberals.

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): What? Do you mean Liberals are locking out teachers?

Mr Marchese: Liberals locked out these Catholic teachers. After eight days of a work-to-rule, the board,

dominated by Liberals, decided to lock out the teachers. I say, "How could Liberals do that?" This is why Gerard Kennedy, the critic, immediately had to protect himself and to say, "He's a Tory," or, "The board is Tory-inclined." He has to, as a way of diverting attention from the fact that the chair is a Liberal and so many board members are Liberals.

I found that equally amusing to see because of the duplicitous nature of the tactics of the Liberals, to be fair.

Mr Kormos: It's of some real concern.

Mr Marchese: It ought to be of concern to the teachers, because many teachers like Liberals because they see them as the party that would support and promote their interests as a union. But I'm telling you that Liberals don't like unions. In spite of what the Tories say about the Liberals being in bed, so to speak, with the unions, it isn't true. Not once in this place have Liberals supported a labour initiative -- not once that I'm aware of.

Mr Kormos: What about the anti-scab legislation?

Mr Marchese: In fact, when we introduced anti-scab legislation when we were in government, the Liberals were there to vote against.

Mr Kormos: What about the right of farm workers to organize?

Mr Marchese: The right of farm workers to organize: New Democrats were there saying farm workers ought to have the right to organize. Where were the Liberals? Against, of course.

You see, teachers don't know that, and it saddens me. They should know the clear position of Liberals.

Interjections.

Mr Marchese: And so, Monsieur Beaubien, mon ami, monsieur le Président, people need to know. I know it hurts you a little bit, un petit peu. But I have to put it on the record -- I do -- because it hurts me too. It was unconscionable, I said, when this board locked out the teachers after a mere eight days of work-to-rule. I said, "How could they do that?" How could a Liberal-dominated board do that? It was incomprehensible and politically unacceptable. You would never dream that Liberals could be capable of such a thing. But they carried the day on that board. How? It's a question teachers need to ask.

I am convinced a lot of teachers are not happy with that board after what it's done to them. I'm convinced of it. I believe that in the course of these events of the last week and a half they've been able to see the politics playing out within the union, within the membership, or the position of the Liberal Party, to which I will come in a short moment --

Mr Kormos: This is a remarkable revelation.

Mr Marchese: It's a revelation for those who don't know; this is true. For those of us who know it, it's something that we say in passing, and yes, we say it and it hurts us, but for those who didn't know where the Liberals stood here today and yesterday and last week, and in that board, they certainly will be surprised as more and more information comes out.

Interjection.

Mr Marchese: You have to give me some time, Peter. I've got to get through this material. You understand.

Mr Kormos: Where is Dalton on the right of teachers to strike?

Mr Marchese: I need you in this discussion. Well, Dalton is coming. It's all here, laid out. It's coming.

The Tories have a very, very dirty history as it relates to allowing unions -- yes, we call them unions -- the right to collectively bargain. It is a right not easily come by. It is a right that workers had to fight for. The Tories, if they have their way in the next election, will get rid of the right to strike for teachers. Why? Because it's politically expedient to do so. Because about 40% or 50% of the public says, "Yes, they shouldn't be able to strike."

Ms Marilyn Mushinski (Scarborough Centre): You didn't read the legislation, Rosie.

Mr Marchese: I will get to that.

This legislation does not eliminate the right to strike -- no, no. It does two things. One, it says teachers will go back to school; it's back-to-work legislation. Secondly, part II of the bill redefines the duties of a teacher and redefines them in this manner: by allowing for regulations to happen where changes can be made by regulation, do not have to come here in the form of a bill to the scrutiny of the opposition or teachers or others to see what those regulatory changes are. Part II changes the nature of the duties of a teacher, and it doesn't do it today as much as it will do it tomorrow. Why it would do this is beyond me.

Why not just simply do what the Liberals have done and say, "We have back-to-work legislation"? Do that, part I, like the Liberals, and get it out of the way. Why do you need part II? You can achieve part II if you get re-elected. If you don't get re-elected, it doesn't really matter. So why put yourself through the ringer when you don't have to? The Liberals said, "If you just have part I," which they call the clean bill, "and send teachers back to the classroom, we will support it. It's not a problem." So why have a part II when you could easily have the collusion of the Liberals to support you? This, to me, is a bit incomprehensible.

I ask myself, do they want this bill to go through? Do they not want it to go through? Was it deliberately done in such a way as to extend this out there so the public would love them for having a bill that forces them back to work? Is this the politics of it? Remember that Brad Clark, the Minister of Labour, said, "There's no politics on our side." That's what he said yesterday. It was a bit comical.

What's the game? What is the strategy? I'm trying to understand it. I've been around for a while. What is the strategy of part II of the bill, which redefines the duties of a teacher in the future in the form of regulations? What's the point of that? Because if you form the government, you can do that any time.

We say that teachers need to be allowed the time and the right to negotiate a fair agreement with their boards. The Catholic board did not permit that to happen. They

locked the teachers out eight days after a work-to-rule. What does this government do immediately after? They introduce back-to-work legislation. No sooner did the Catholic board say, "Locked out" than Eves was there saying, "Back-to-work legislation." It was in lockstep. One led to the other.

1600

I don't see this as collusion between a Liberal board and a Conservative government. I see it as collusion of interests; that is, the Catholic board said, "How beautifully convenient it is that this government, in its platform on a Friday afternoon or evening," whatever time it was, "announced their interest in, should they be re-elected, ending the right to strike." The government said, "It is convenient for us to introduce back-to-work legislation"; the Catholic board decided, "This is the time to lock them out," because the Catholic board probably suspected or thought, "They will do the dirty job for us," and they said, "We're only too happy to oblige because we want to introduce such legislation that kicks them back to the classroom, because it suits our interests." So you see how the commonality of interests comes together, the convergence of political interests. One, a Liberal Party-dominated board, and the other a wonderfully Conservative government that wants to beat up on teachers at every point imaginable, because they love to beat you up.

To be fair, it's not because they like to beat you up or because they don't like you; I don't think that's the case. Mr Guzzo, I don't think that's the case, because I think you like them. It's political expediency. They beat you up and 50% of the public says, "Right on," because they promote the idea that you simply are overpaid and underworked.

Interjection.

Mr Marchese: Say it again.

Hon Mr Baird: They're not being paid. They need to be paid. They want to be in the classroom --

Mr Marchese: So the Minister of Energy says they need to be paid, want to be paid and deserve a good salary. So I ask the Minister of Energy, who wasn't here earlier on, why is it that the Minister of Energy has such a keen interest on bringing a bill immediately after the separate school board locks them out?

Interjection.

Mr Marchese: John Baird, listen to me. Normally, Minister of Energy, you understand this. John, look at me. John, you have to look at me for me to talk to you. Normally --

The Acting Speaker (Mr Michael A. Brown): Order.

Mr Marchese: OK, Speaker, through you.

Normally, you have teachers and boards negotiating. It takes time. You understand that, right? How much time did you give the teachers and the board to negotiate? You gave them no time. You absolutely gave them no time.

Mr Garry J. Guzzo (Ottawa West-Nepean): That was Bob Rae. That wasn't you; that was Bob Rae.

Mr Marchese: Mr Guzzo is right when he says -- mea culpa -- I was a part of that; probably quite right.

Here's a social contract problem. I will admit it was a serious issue. When we say, "They cut this, they cut that, they cut that when they were in government," Liberals at the same time say, "They had a high deficit, high deficit. They should have poured more money into this. Oh, no, high deficit into that." With Liberals you can't have it any which way because whatever way you turn you're going to get hurt, because they say they'd cut in this area when they're in government in a recession, and then they say, "But they caused the recession. In addition, they caused deficits as well." Poor NDPers. It's hard to work under those kinds of restrictions, isn't it?

Interjections.

Mr Marchese: The social contract, through you, Speaker, to my good buddy David Caplan, was designed to save jobs. It was designed to save jobs, and teachers had Rae days, of course. I think a lot of teachers said, "Better to have nine Rae days than to be kicked out." I believe that's true.

Mr David Caplan (Don Valley East): I don't think so.

Mr Marchese: Some people didn't like it, it's true, and some unions even said that maybe we should have fired workers instead of doing the social contract. That was a choice we had.

I put this to you, good citizens: if in a good economy Tories could devastate health, education, post-secondary education, social services, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Natural Resources, what would the Tories have done in a recession? If they could take billions out of our services now, in a good economy, what would the Tories have done? And I put it to you, good citizens, what would the Liberals have done in a recession?

Mr Tony Martin (Sault Ste Marie): They would have hid.

Mr Marchese: Who knows what they would have done? They would have been running from one end of the room to the other. But I can tell you, they would have devastated the services that we tried to protect. And we tried to protect the most vulnerable. John Baird, you would not have protected the vulnerable. The most vulnerable citizens, people on ODSP, those who have a disability -- if you could beat them up today in a good economy, imagine what you would have done in a bad economy, where there was no money. If you could beat up on tenants in a good economy, what would you have done in a bad economy?

Mr Martin: It's hard to imagine.

Mr Marchese: I can't.

If you beat up on the homeless in a good economy, what would you have done in a bad economy? If we have no money in a good economy for women who are abused, what would they have done in a bad economy? What would the Liberals have done? Think about those questions as you reflect on this upcoming election: what would Liberals and Tories have done in a bad economy? Because I tell you -- and I don't wish it -- economies go around like this, and there is a bad one coming every eight years or so, give or take a year. Recessions come,

and neither Tories nor Liberals nor New Democrats can prevent them. When they come, and there are no jobs, you will be in deep doo-doo, good citizens, because the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party will hurt you a lot more than you think they could.

Yes, in 1990-95, the NDP had some strikes. The Liberals remind us of this and the Tories remind us of this, but New Democrats remember 45 days that teachers were out on strike. And another one wasn't 45 days but it was close.

Interjections.

Mr Marchese: What does it constitute for you, David? How many days would you give --

Mr Caplan: No finding of jeopardy?

Mr Marchese: Let me get to that in a moment. How many days would you give? Your bill sends them back to work today. It would have sent them back to work last week, but I'll get back to that in a moment. When we had strikes, teachers were out for 45 days in two strikes and the other one was 30 or 35 days. Think about it. Under this government, the John Baird government, you're out there in no time at all, in barely two weeks, and in this bill that we're dealing with, you were out right away. As soon as the Catholic board locked you out, they had a bill ready to go. They gave no time for negotiations to happen.

The Liberals are saying, "We have a clean bill." They call it a clean bill, the clean bill to get students back into the classroom. Yesterday, Mario Sergio spoke, as well as Gerard Kennedy, and they all have the same line: getting kids back; the clean bill. The Liberal clean bill would legislate teachers back to the classroom today. We don't support that. We believe teachers need to have the time and the right to negotiate.

Mr Caplan: Not when you were in government, Rosario.

Mr Marchese: When we were in government, David, as I already pointed out, teachers were on strike for 45 days. How many days do you want?

Interjection.

Mr Marchese: There was a jeopardy ruling on two of them, this is true; and on the other one, over 30, 35 days. Let me explain the jeopardy ruling to you if you don't understand it, but I'm sure you do. The Education Relations Commission rules when there is jeopardy, meaning students are threatened by losing their year, and you've got to respond. As a government you have a tough choice to make. After 45 days, what do you do? How many days would the Liberals give? Two? One? Three? Four? Five? What's the number?

1610

Mr Martin: What is it now, seven?

Mr Marchese: On average it's about 10, 15 days, but it's been less and less every time. Have you noticed the pattern? It was about two weeks in the first few strikes that we experienced with this government, and then it was less, maybe 12 days. This time around, it's very few days, to the point where they want to abolish the right to strike.

But I want to tell you, from 1998 to 1999, there were 30 disruptions -- the same figures David has; these figures, David; you have others -- in the form of strikes, work-to-rule or lockouts, and in 1996-97, 14 disruptions in the form of strikes, work-to-rule or lockouts.

This is a government that typifies battle, that enjoys battle, that is pugilistic in its very nature, that is combative, because it needs to divide societies. It wants societies to attack each other. That's why it creates an enemy -- welfare recipients, teachers -- so the other half of the population can say, "Here are our enemies. We know who they are and we will attack them." That's what they've done.

I remind you Conservative young types behind the Speaker's bench -- some of you may or may not have been here -- Snobelen said he was going to create a crisis. Mercifully, he has left us to tend to his cattle in Oklahoma, but when he was the minister, he designed a crisis in order to fix an educational system that needed not to be fixed. He deliberately caused a crisis in order to injure it, and he's done that. Mike Harris has done that. This cabinet has done that. This government has done that from the beginning.

Remember when they attacked the trustees? They went after the trustees and they said, "Oh, trustees are so political." Mike Harris wasn't political. Every Minister of Education who followed wasn't political. The other Minister of Education, David -- help me --

Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Deputy Premier, Minister of Education): Johnson.

Mr Marchese: -- Johnson wasn't political. Janet Ecker wasn't political. Elizabeth is not political; she's just a gentle lady who's just a good soul. They are not political. But trustees? Ah, they needed to be fixed, neutered, because they were ideo, they were political. If you get elected as trustees, you shouldn't be political. It's an election to political office, but you shouldn't be political. But the education ministers and Harris and Eves, they're not political. Oh, no, they wouldn't do that.

They said, "Trustees are overpaid. MPPs are not, but trustees are overpaid, so we are going to reduce their salaries to \$5,000 a year."

Hon Mr Baird: How much did you used to make as a trustee?

Mr Marchese: Better still, John, how much do you think they deserve? And how much do you think you deserve?

Hon Mr Baird: What did you make? That's the question.

Mr Marchese: But what do you deserve as an MPP, John, is the question.

Hon Mr Baird: I don't think I should decide on this issue.

Mr Marchese: But you have no problem deciding for trustees how much they should earn. What about you? You have no problem deciding for yourselves, but you have a difficulty with trustees who are overpaid and political, so you reduce their salaries to a measly \$5,000 a year.

It's a tough job. I've been there. I quit teaching to be able to do that full-time. I believe being a trustee is a good thing. It's an important job. Some of us were good; some of us were not so good. Some of us people liked; some of us people didn't like. It just depends on your point of view, and there are many points of view, but I believe the job of a trustee is an important one. That's why I quit teaching and did it full-time. That could have been a period of political naïveté on my part, to think I could believe in it so much that I would give up my teacher's salary just to be a trustee for \$7,000. And now the very same people are doing it for \$5,000, because John Baird and Elizabeth Witmer, the minister, deign that their job should be paid only \$5,000 because it's not important and because they were too highly political.

Remember the attacks on the bureaucracy? Tories love to use that word. We're going to cut the bureaucracy because, boy, could we save millions by cutting there. If only we could cut into Eves's bureaucracy office, we would probably save billions there. But to stock up and stuff up Ernie Eves's office is OK; that's not bureaucracy. To stuff up and beef up the Education Quality and Accountability Office in the order of \$50 million to test kids, that's OK; that's not a bureaucracy. But everything else that boards do is bureaucracy. If you ask the minister or the Minister of Energy what is bureaucracy, they won't be able to tell you. Maybe they will in their two-minute retort, but I don't believe they will. I don't believe they know. They just have to say "bureaucracy," because the public hates bureaucracy. Whatever it is, they hate it. So the Tories went after bureaucracy, bureaucrats.

Then they said, "We're going to amalgamate because all these little boards" -- imagine amalgamating the city of Toronto Board of Education, a huge board, with all of the other metro cities in the one borough. Imagine that. People were having a difficult time getting into 155 College St here, the board of education, to reach their trustees. Imagine having to now reach trustees from all over the old metro, now Toronto. There were no savings. It was designed to create a huge bureaucracy, which they did, all in the name of, presumably, facilitating board business.

This has been the most interventionist government that I have ever witnessed in this place. This has been the most centralist government that I have ever seen in this place. These are the Tories who decry bigness, normally. These are the Tories that like small, because small is better, yet they have created the biggest bureaucracy ever imaginable.

Talk about centralization of educational services. They took into their power education financing, took the power away from local boards to raise money so they could manage the dollars. And do you know why? They took money out of the board. It was designed to get their dirty little hands into the money the boards of education were getting from their local property taxes so they could claim they were increasing dollars as opposed to stealing

from each and every one of the boards, Catholic and public, across Ontario.

They are the most centralist, bureaucratic government micromanagers that I have ever, ever, ever seen. How do they get away with it? What is it about Ontarians that they can't see these things? I don't get it. They stole \$2 billion out of our educational system -- \$2.1 billion. How did they do that, while all along mocking Marchese when he would say, "You stole \$2 billion," by saying, "Ha ha ha. No, we put \$2 billion in, we didn't take \$2 billion out"? They would mock us each and every day as we did that.

They took educational assistants out of our school system. They took social workers. We lost guidance teachers, we lost music teachers, we lost physical education teachers, we lost gym teachers. We lost the community use of schools. Remember, people could go into their schools and use them for relatively free.

Mr Kormos: Air cadets, Boy Scouts, Girl Guides.

Mr Marchese: Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts are not able to get into those schools. Why? Because unless you have money to be able to rent now, you can't get in. Schools should open their doors as they did prior to 1997 when people -- ordinary people, basketball associations, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, senior citizens programs, child care programs, family programs, whoever or whatever it is. They should have those doors open, because schools belong to us, because schools are paid for by you, taxpayers and citizens -- by you. They've closed, shut the doors, barred them. Unless you're wealthy -- I don't think many of you watching this program are wealthy -- those doors are shut to you and to most of us.

They have underfunded the collective agreements line that would allow teachers to negotiate some fairer agreements by close to \$1 billion. Then they announced that they put \$300 million in, and then they said, "Now we've done it. Everybody should be home and happy, teachers should be home, happy, and teaching, and they shouldn't be unhappy about possibly not having the fair wage they are entitled to." Why? Because they put in \$325 million and that ought to do it. "So we haven't adequately funded the line that deals with teachers and boards for several years, and then we give you some money back and we say, 'You shouldn't be whining. You should go back into your classroom and the kids should be able to go,' and they all should be happy."

1620

Interjection.

Mr Marchese: Say it louder so people can hear you.

Mr Kormos: It's like a mugger wanting credit for returning your empty wallet.

Mr Marchese: You see? People can hear that. I know people heard that. Can you believe it?

We have a problem on our hands. We do. We have a government that's unfriendly, pugilistic and mean to teachers, and I use that word "mean" politely. "Pugilistic" is a better word, don't you think? Antagonistic.

Mr Kormos: Outright hostile.

Mr Marchese: Outright hostile. Anything more? Think about it. Even vindictive; they've been vindictive, and not just with teachers but with everybody in this province. You don't dare play with the Tories. If you play with the Tories, they punish you. Talking about "deliberately hostile," what did they do to the teachers again? They said to the teachers, "You're not qualified. We need to test you," and they put together 14 courses, seven obligatory, seven voluntary. With those courses that don't apply to the teachers whatsoever, now they'll be competent. I dare not mention your name. Is that the way you do it? The way you accomplish your goal, and your minister knows, is to simply say to the public, "We're testing them." That's all that matters.

Do the tests work? It's irrelevant because it doesn't matter. All this government wants is for the public to believe that the teachers are being tested. That's all that matters. Is it effective? No. Is there such a tool anywhere in the universe, where there is a test designed that works? No. It's not the relevancy of the issue. It's politics. This is about politics and it's raw. It's so raw that you could just open up the skin.

It was funny to hear Mr Clark talk about how this bill unfortunately is caught up in politics. It makes it appear that somebody else is playing politics and not this government. It introduces changes to the curriculum in such haste, without preparation, in the beginning without books and no teacher development because, I guess, you're not ready. Once they've tested you, I guess you're ready, right? You don't need development.

Hasty curriculum changes that the students couldn't cope with -- was my good, charming Minister Elizabeth Witmer there when people were falling through the cracks and when students were falling through the cracks, those who otherwise would be studying at a basic level, those who otherwise would be leaving in grade 10 or 11, those who are in a general program and those who would attempt to go the technical-commercial schools, by and large? They were falling through the cracks because of the new curriculum changes that were introduced in haste, with no professional development or support for teachers, and, best of all, no support for students.

Only in the last little while, in the last two months, has Minister Witmer gone to some school and said, "We're announcing \$50 million to help students at risk" -- in the last two months. They introduced curriculum changes decades ago, and in just a couple of months they introduced a couple of million dollars to help students at risk. As if this minister, previous ministers and this government did not know that under this new curriculum, students would fall through the cracks. They take pride in saying, "Our curriculum changes are the best in the world. Kids either shape up or they ship out." How do you help those students that need help? Where is this government to say to those kids who need help, "We're here for you. We've got a hand for you," as opposed to saying, "We've got tests for you. If you don't pass, you're out, and if you pass them you're OK"? Those student tests are designed to test failure, not to help

students but to test failure. This government has never been there for students who are struggling.

How do they deal with the issue of lack of funds? They introduce a tax credit for private schools. They say, "This tax credit is not going to affect public education whatsoever." I say \$10 billion is taken out because of the income tax cuts to rich guys, not to me. I'm in the high category, and I happily pay my fair share -- by the way, I want to. I'm in a good income category. I get a break, as opposed to someone earning \$40,000, \$50,000 or \$60,000. They get a couple of hundred dollars at the end of that tax break. Are you helping them, or are you helping people like me and you and those who are richer than you, like bankers who earn \$1.5 million and get \$120,000 at the end of the year? Rich people getting money back -- can you believe it? It's just nuts: a tax credit for the rich.

Yesterday Mr Kennedy said -- and I made a note of it because I was a bit surprised by it -- the tax credit is only for secular schools. It's not true. While it is true that it goes to secular, independent schools such as Upper Canada College -- do you know how much Upper Canada College students pay in tuition fees, Tony?

Mr Martin: No.

Mr Marchese: They pay \$15,000. If you shack up, it costs -- who knows -- probably \$20,000. Could you afford \$20,000 a year to send your kid there, even if you wanted to, with your income?

Mr Martin: No.

Mr Marchese: Who sends kids to Upper Canada College? People you know?

Mr Martin: No.

Mr Marchese: It's not people I know. They have incomes beyond imagination to afford to send little boys to Upper Canada College for \$15,000, and you are going to give them a tax credit up to \$7,000? You've got be nuts. You've got to be a nutty government to do that kind of stuff.

It goes to secular schools of that kind, but it also goes to other religious schools. Make no mistake about it, Mr Kennedy: while you're saying it goes to secular schools, it goes to other religious schools as well. They are sucking money out of our public system to give to rich people. Already \$60 million, give or take a couple of million, has been taken out in the first instalment. They just announced the second instalment, which will mean another \$60 million will go out this year -- \$120 million, last year with this year once it gets announced, sucked out of our public system to feed whom? Banker types who make \$1.5 million. How can you justify that? How can you citizens watching this program, some of whom I know are Tories, tolerate this government doing that? How can you do that, and why wouldn't you punish this government? Hopefully, I venture to say, you will. I'm hearing more and more of you disenchanted with this government, and I'm happy to see that.

We need to restore sanity. We need to restore guidance teachers. We need to make sure small schools are in place, because they benefit communities. We need

to make sure educational assistants are back in the classrooms to help with special education needs, to help in the primary grades, to help teachers who are running after little kiddies, who can't teach because they've got to look after other little kiddies at the same time. We need educational assistants in those classrooms. We need youth counsellors in this Toronto board to help children at risk. Mr Christie fired them. Remember, Christie was the campaign manager for my good buddy Stockwell?

Mr Kormos: Is he your friend?

Mr Marchese: He's a friend.

Mr Kormos: Rosie, people are known by their friends.

1630

Mr Marchese: That's bad.

Christie was the campaign manager for Stockwell. Christie was hired by this government to depose the duly elected trustees of the Toronto public board.

Interjections.

Mr Marchese: I've got to make a speech, Peter, please. He had supervisors replace the duly elected board --

Interjections.

Mr Marchese: No, wait; I've got more to say. Hold on.

Three supervisors -- Hamilton, Ottawa and Toronto taken over by supervisors. Why were supervisors appointed? Because boards refused to accept the fact that if they made the cuts they had to make to balance their budgets, they would be hurting students and they would be hurting the educational system. This government and this minister -- gentle minister -- deposed the elected trustees and imposed supervisors.

I remind you citizens and taxpayers watching, one and the same, that Rozanski was appointed by this government to review our education finances. He determined, after thousands of interviews, that this public Catholic system was underfunded in the order of \$2 billion. The minister and her government would mock the NDP when we said that, but Rozanski became the hope for me and the parents who said, "You've got to restore \$2 billion."

I say to the Minister of Education, Elizabeth Witmer, who is present today, that if she implemented the policies of Rozanski, boards of education, and in this instance the Toronto board, would have enough money to deal with their own problems. I suggest only one example: Rozanski made the recommendation that 5% be applied to the foundation grant, the per pupil grant. If you did that, Elizabeth, the Toronto board would have enough money to deal with the problem of underfunding that you have caused. You refuse to implement that particular policy. Why? She wants the supervisor, Christie, who is a Tory, to be there in charge of this public board because she and this government want to silence the Toronto public board so they do not, as we near an election, speak against this government, or have the power or the right to speak against this government. This is deliberate and highly political, designed to keep the Toronto board silenced to the bitter end. We could restore democracy,

ie, getting the trustees back in charge, by making sure that gentle Elizabeth Witmer would implement one of Rozanski's recommendations: to apply 5% of the foundation grant, which would give \$120 million -- you know that -- to the Toronto board and it would be able to deal with all of its problems. But our kind Elizabeth Witmer, Minister of Education, refuses to implement that particular initiative of Dr Rozanski, the man they appointed.

You've got to wonder, taxpayers and citizens -- those of you who want to refer to yourselves as taxpayers -- why this minister continues to do that. Because she wants to silence trustees as much as she wants to silence teachers. She, the Minister of Education, and Eves, the Premier, do not want teachers to have any rights to negotiate. They do not want them to negotiate a collective agreement in a fair manner. They want them to return to work by way of legislation, and so do the Liberals. The Liberals yesterday, in a motion presented by Kennedy, their education critic, introduced Bill 61, which Kennedy calls An Act to promote stability and goodwill in Toronto Catholic elementary schools. That bill forces you, teachers, to get back to school. It's not about getting kids in the classroom; it's about getting you into the schools, you teachers. It's forcing back-to-work legislation on you, except the problem is, teachers don't know that because they call it a goodwill kind of bill -- a clean bill, they call it. It's the same thing as the Tories, except the Tories go further with their part II, which redefines duties of a teacher.

Just today, to support the New Democratic position that we are for fair, negotiated collective agreements, we want to say --

Mr Caplan: Not during the social contract.

Mr Marchese: What?

Mr Caplan: Not during the social contract.

Mr Marchese: I see. David wants to dig back, eh? Dig, David, dig.

Mr Caplan: It's true.

Mr Marchese: What is true to me is that, unlike you and Mr Kennedy -- when I debated Mr Kennedy the other day on TVO, it was laughable, most humorous, to hear him say that it's the NDP that collapses when it comes to the issues of strikes. I couldn't believe it. He said, "After a day or two, the NDP collapses." I said, "Kennedy, you've got to be kidding." That he could so boldly be so mendacious was beyond me.

Interjections.

Mr Marchese: It's the Liberal government --

Interjection.

Mr Marchese: You have to define what it means for me before you --

The Acting Speaker: I don't have to define anything. You'll just withdraw.

Mr Marchese: Withdraw which word, Speaker?

The Acting Speaker: "Mendacious."

Mr Marchese: I withdraw that word. Ooh, I get by with a little help from my friends.

So you had Kennedy on TVO saying the NDP collapses when it comes to back-to-work legislation. The Liberals, when they spoke to you the other day, were the ones who were saying, "We want you to negotiate fairly." They're the ones who said yesterday, "We have an amendment." They didn't have an amendment; they had a bill that gets you back to work. They're the ones who, as soon as back-to-work legislation gets into this assembly, kick you out as quickly as they can. You just don't know it. But that's the politics, and you know it, of what happens in this place. Liberals are not there for you. They are there for you when they talk to you privately outside, in the classroom, wherever they are, but in this place they support back-to-work legislation. You just need to know that.

Interjection.

Mr Marchese: David denies it. But please, for those of you who accept the denial of David Caplan, send me a message, a little note saying, "Give us the speeches of past bills that we dealt with," when we were dealing with the garbage strikers, when we were dealing with Catholic teachers in Simcoe. You know where they were? They were ready to kick you in the teeth as fast as the Tories were.

Just today we received a press release from OECTA, which says, "OECTA seeks voluntary arbitration" to end the lockout:

"Toronto's Catholic elementary students may be back in school as early as tomorrow if the board agrees to voluntary arbitration this afternoon, says Kathy McVean, president of the Ontario English Catholic Teachers Association." OECTA is seeking agreement from the Toronto Catholic District School Board to begin "voluntary arbitration as defined under the Ontario Labour Relations Act. This would trigger an immediate end to the lockout of teachers and students in Toronto's Catholic elementary schools...."

"The board's agreement to accept voluntary arbitration would also make any government intervention in the current impasse unnecessary...."

"While OECTA is opposed to arbitration in all but the most difficult of negotiations, McVean says voluntary arbitration is preferable to the form of mandatory arbitration imposed by legislation. 'With voluntary arbitration, the arbitrator is mutually agreed upon by both parties, and the terms of arbitration are not directed by government regulation.'"

1640

We support this kind of an arrangement where unions and boards try to settle their differences. OECTA, the union, said, "We submit to voluntary arbitration. We're asking the board to do the same." If they do that, they say the teachers will be back. They're saying that voluntary arbitration means that there would be an agreed-upon arbitrator, which is critical because in the past the Tories, no less the Liberals, would be happy to have an arbitrator that would make a ruling. But if an arbitrator is picked by the Conservative government, and not agreed upon by you, you're never going to know what the result is.

Voluntary arbitration means the union and the board have to agree on the arbitrator. That's better than forcing them back to work. It's better than the odious Bill 28. It's better than the odious Liberal Bill 61 that would force teachers back to work.

We are happy, as New Democrats, to make sure this debate happens in this Legislature. We would not force the teachers back. We believe they need time, both the board and the teachers, to settle their differences. The Catholic board did not give them that time, and this government did not give them any time at all to negotiate because they had a bill ready to go. The Liberals have a bill ready to go too, if you'll permit it.

New Democrats believe there should indeed be peace restored with our teachers, but we're not going to get it with the kind of bill that Dalton McGuinty introduced in 1992, which would end strikes. Some of you don't know it, but I have Bill 14 in my hands, where Dalton McGuinty would have ended strikes for teachers. This Conservative government has conveniently taken on that bill and said, "We're going to abolish strikes as well." Why? To put the Liberals on the spot, to put the leader, Dalton McGuinty, on the spot, to say to Dalton, "You had a bill in 1992 that would end strikes. What do you say now?" It's to wedge him against a hard place.

We think Dalton McGuinty's bill in 1992 was wrong and we think the Tory initiative to end strikes for teachers is wrong, too, because it will not restore peace. Peace is restored by a peaceful government not waging war against teachers. It is not restored by ending the right to strike.

New Democrats would respect that right, and we would bring money to the educational system by taxing individuals who earn over \$100,000, \$150,000 and whatever. Some of you don't like it, but they have been the biggest beneficiaries of the Tory tax cuts. We say we would put \$1.5 billion into our beleaguered educational system immediately to help them out. Neither the Liberals nor the Tories can do it with existing dollars. They're bankrupt, and so are the Liberals.

I am sorry. If the Liberals get elected, you won't get the help you need to restore sanity and health to our educational system. If the Tories get re-elected, you're going to get the same level of pugilism you've gotten since 1995. Neither of these two parties can give you the peace, teachers, that you're looking for, except through New Democrats. We hope Catholic teachers will do the right thing when the election comes.

The Acting Speaker: Questions or comments?

Mr Joseph Spina (Brampton Centre): It is always a pleasurable to listen to our honourable colleague from Toronto. If nothing else, he and his party are extremely consistent, and I compliment him on that particular perspective. I disagree with some elements, of course, of his speech. He very conveniently forgets the dictatorial social contract that his government passed, by order in council I believe, back in 1992, which severely encroached upon the bargaining rights of all public service workers, but particularly teachers.

It's interesting also that the tax he proposes would clearly indicate that most principals in the system would be paying the tax that he proposes to people earning over \$100,000.

Mr Caplan: I agree with the member on one particular point. I would say to the people of Ontario, how do you like your crisis in education so far? You were promised by the then-minister, John Snobelen, by Mike Harris and by his Minister of Finance Ernie Eves that they would create a crisis in Ontario schools, and they've done just that. Year after year after long year our kids have had over 25 million lost days to learning: work-to-rule, strike -- attacks on the teaching profession -- and it must end. We have to change.

The government of the day is telling you, "We have a cure for the crisis that we've created." The true cure is to change the government, is a change in the approach that we take toward education. We just cannot continue in this direction.

I've been reading the Ontario Legislative Assembly first session, 36th Parliament debates, 1997, from October and November, the time when the infamous Bill 160 was introduced into this House. Many of the predictions that members on this side of the House made about what was going to happen as a result are in fact coming to pass. What Mike Harris, Ernie Eves, John Snobelen, Dave Johnson, Liz Witmer and many others said would never happen, we are seeing the manifestation of today, and it will go on and it will continue.

Just one other comment to my friend from Trinity-Spadina. Many of the things he says are quite political. I would say this: there has only ever been one party that has suspended collective bargaining, that has suspended the right to strike, that has stripped contracts. That was the New Democratic Party when they were in government, under their social contract, supported, by the way, by Mike Harris, by the members opposite. The Liberal Party is the only consistent one in this House.

Mr Martin: It is always a pleasure to speak after my eloquent and articulate friend from Trinity-Spadina. He makes a case today, as he always does, that is airtight: that this is not about good labour relations, trying to resolve a conflict between two parties negotiating a return on investment of their effort, their work, their professional commitment to the job they do; it's more a case of political expediency.

We are on the eve of an election, whenever the government has the courage to call it, that is obviously going to play out in a manner not dissimilar from the previous two elections that this Conservative Party has taken us into where they poll the province to find out who the general populace is upset with or angry with or can build up a bit of a mad against if they're given the appropriate stimulus, and then you target them. In this instance, it's the teachers.

Over and over again, we have seen this government target groups of people. In most cases, they're very vulnerable and at-risk people who simply want to either work for a living and get duly rewarded or put bread on

the table for their children and themselves. They put them into a big bag, they shake them up, they turn them into criminals, they roll them out, and then people are asked to vote accordingly. They put out policies that will damage, hurt and diminish those folks even further. There are some out there in the general populace who think that this perhaps is a good idea and they support that kind of agenda going into an election. I find it unfortunate, because it really isn't in keeping, in my view, with how Ontario has grown over the last number of years, how we govern and how we resolve labour issues in this province.

The Acting Speaker: Questions or comments? Response, the member for Trinity-Spadina.

Mr Marchese: I remind the citizens watching that if Tories could cut so much from our essential services in good economic times, what will they do, what would they have done in bad economic times?

The same question applies to the Liberals. The Liberals, under Monsieur Chrétien, hated deficits, although when they were in opposition I don't know what they said. When they got into government at the federal level, man, did they devastate unemployment insurance, by 40%. They made up their deficit by cutting back on unemployment insurance: 40% of deficit reduction was due to the cuts they made to unemployment insurance.

Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): On the backs of workers.

Mr Marchese: On the backs of workers -- these are the Liberals for you, federally, and they would do it provincially.

They make reference to the social contract. They could do that, and they'll do that forever.

1650

You now have a Tory legacy to think about. They have a big legacy. They have a Hydro legacy, where \$1.5 billion is being passed on to our children. Remember that, the deficit, and what we're passing on to our kids? Now they've got a Hydro deficit, \$1.5 billion today, passing it on to my kids and your kids, and they say, "That's OK."

Bill 28 is odious because it's back-to-work legislation. Bill 61, the Liberal bill, is odious because it's back-to-work legislation. We urge the government to withdraw both bills, although the government bill is what matters. Why? Because OECTA has submitted to voluntary arbitration and we are assuming the Catholic board will do the same. We are assuming the deputy House leader and the other ministers who are here are going to say, "This is a good thing. Our bills are not necessary." We hope both parties will do that and allow you to negotiate openly, as you are entitled to do.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Hon Mrs Witmer: It's my pleasure to join in the debate about the government's Back to School (Toronto Catholic Elementary) and Education and Provincial Schools Negotiations Amendment Act. I would just begin my remarks by saying it has always been our first

desire that the two sides would negotiate and be able to put the students first and reach a fair agreement. It continues to be our hope that that indeed will happen.

Since that has not yet happened, I now want to encourage the two opposition parties -- the Liberals and the NDP -- to support us, support our bill and make sure we are putting the students first, and I hope you'll help us to pass this bill. In fact, you could give it unanimous consent today. We could end this strike and have the students back in the classroom tomorrow. However, we are seeing the two parties in opposition -- the Liberals and the NDP -- unfortunately stalling and preventing the 69,000 boys and girls in the board's care from participating in their regular classroom activities.

I think we have to pose some very fundamental questions that speak to the principles of education when we think about what is happening today and the fact that those students are not able to return to their classrooms. We all agree that students belong in the classroom, with a qualified teacher, in a safe and stable learning environment. I think we would all agree that most teachers want to be in the classroom. I have met many dedicated, hard-working teachers since becoming Minister of Education -- and before -- and I have to tell you, they work so hard on behalf of their students, to help those students achieve success. I know they want to be in the classroom.

We also have to remember that education is not about unions and boards, it's not about unions and government, it's not about boards and government; it is about our children. As a former teacher and a former trustee, I think sometimes we lose sight of what education is all about. Education is all about the student in the classroom. It's all about helping those young people achieve their maximum potential. It's all about helping them achieve success. If that's the case, if it is about our students, if it is about helping them achieve success and their maximum potential, the question then becomes a little bit different. I think we would all agree that students should have the opportunity to be in the classroom, should have the opportunity to achieve success and should have the opportunity to achieve their maximum potential.

Some of the outstanding questions that we are attempting to address in our bill are the following: do the members in this House agree that teachers should be able to complete report cards that include comments and grades? Do the members in this House believe that teachers should be able to administer the EQAO tests that help us to identify how well our students are doing? When we know how well they're doing, we can give them the appropriate support and remedial help if they need more support and assistance. Do the members in this House believe that teachers should have the opportunity to meet with parents at parent-teacher meetings to discuss the progress of their children? Do members in this House agree that maintaining co-operative education placements should be allowed to take place? If a student has decided that's going to be part of their educational experience, if that's going to be part of allowing them to move from school to job, do they believe that teachers

should be able to participate in that process? Finally, do the members of this House agree that teachers should be able to support, encourage and participate in graduation ceremonies in the schools throughout the province and particularly in the schools of the Catholic board?

These are the fundamental questions that the Liberals and NDP need to answer. They need to ask themselves which one of these concepts they do not support, do not think is important to the success of our students. They are all important. These are concepts that parents throughout this province feel are important and that I can tell you most of the teachers in the province feel are important.

Let's go back to what our government has attempted to do since 1995. In 1995, we made a commitment to provide quality education to our students. We promised to reform and improve Ontario's education system. We wanted to make sure that every student in this province, no matter where they lived, had access to equitable education. We wanted to make sure that the education system was more responsive to the needs of our students. Our students today in this province have diverse needs. We wanted to make sure that there was accountability, to parents, to teachers, to taxpayers. We have done all of that. We've made it more equitable, we've made it more responsive to student needs and we've made it more accountable.

We have always been committed to ensuring that all young people in Ontario receive a quality education and that they have the tools they need to achieve success. Indeed, we asked Dr Rozanski to take a look at the funding formula that we put in place as part of our reforms, because there were concerns that came to our attention that questioned the funding formula. So we said, "Let's hire an expert. Let's hire someone who has a knowledge of education, who is committed to the young people in this province."

Dr Rozanski travelled the province. He met with educational stakeholders and at the conclusion of his tour, his consultation, he came back and validated the funding formula. He told us that this is providing equal funding to the students in Ontario. He also told us that there is a need, over the next three years, to invest an additional \$1.8 billion. I can tell you, our government accepted every one of his recommendations. In fact, three days later, we had already announced \$610 million of the \$1.8 billion. We provided more money for salaries, for transportation and for special education. We responded, we listened and we acted.

1700

I have to tell you, if you take a look at the investments our government has made in the budget this year, we have committed \$1.1 billion more in the budget this year compared to last year. This is money that is going to enhance and protect the classroom services for our students. In fact, one of the unprecedented steps that our government took, in order to ensure that there would be stability in our classrooms, which we believe is so important to student learning and student success, was to invest almost \$700 million in teachers' salaries. On two

different occasions we added 3% to the salary benchmarks. We did this because we have been, this past year, building bridges with our educational stakeholders, looking to ensure that there is stability for our students, and that's why we provided the almost \$700 million for teachers' salaries. We wanted to make sure that every student in this province had access to a stable learning environment that would not be disrupted by labour disputes.

What else have we done? Since 1995, we have established a new curriculum, from kindergarten to the end of high school. It sets high standards for student achievement and excellence. We've introduced province-wide testing that reports regularly to teachers, students and parents. It lets us know how well our students are doing. But it also allows us to learn what type of support and assistance and programs our students need when they're not doing as well as they could be. As a result, we've been able to develop strategies that respond to the test results, such as the early reading strategy from grades 1 to 6 and the early math strategy, grades 1 to 6. These strategies are helping our students gain the fundamentals for success in future learning.

Just recently, we set up another task force, because we recognized that there were students who were at risk. That task force reported. I was very proud to move forward with the recommendations of the director of education from the Limestone board. They recommended that we introduce a GOALS strategy which would provide remedial assistance for students in grades 7 to 12. The strategy also included the introduction of a literacy course for students in grade 12 who have been identified as needing extra help in reading and writing. It will also provide a course in grade 9 to prepare students for the writing of the literacy test. We've also provided funding in order that students in grades 7 to 12 can get the remedial help that they need and deserve. In fact, I am very, very pleased to say that this strategy to help our students in grades 7 to 12 means that we have now invested an additional \$50 million to help our students achieve success.

We've also put in place a comprehensive program to support teaching excellence. It's important that our teachers remain up to date in their skills and their knowledge. It's important that they have the ability to apply these skills in the classroom and so, again, we are moving forward in that regard.

I'm very pleased to say that the reforms, the hard work of our teachers, our students and all those in education are paying dividends for our students. They are achieving success. Results from provincial, national and international tests continue to provide evidence that Ontario students are doing well. The 2001 Progress In International Reading Literacy Study shows that Ontario grade 4 students ranked fifth out of 36 jurisdictions around the world. In fact, they were ahead of the United States and Germany.

On the 2000 program for international assessment, Ontario's 15-year-olds ranked second among 32 jurisdictions in the world.

I'm proud to tell the House that yesterday, when the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, released the latest results of the school achievement indicators program writing assessment scores, our 13-year-old English-language students didn't come second, and they didn't come third. They ranked first in Canada.

Our reforms, our standards, are paying dividends. We need to thank our hard-working students, our teachers, our principals and our partners, our parents.

We are supporting our teachers. We recognize they are the backbone of the education system. Well-trained teachers instill in our students a love of learning, strong values and confidence. They provide our children with the solid educational grounding they need to become productive, contributing citizens. Our government will continue to support our teachers and teaching excellence, for we know this is critical to further student achievement.

If passed, this act will continue to support our teachers and students by ensuring a stable educational environment where our teachers can do what they do best, and that is teach our young people so our students can learn. It would ensure that the education of the children in the Toronto Catholic District School Board would not be further disrupted by a labour dispute that is keeping teachers away from the students in the classroom.

Teaching is a noble profession. When a person chooses to become a teacher, they are committing themselves to a higher calling. That is why passing this bill is so important. Not only will it benefit the 69,000 students; it will also send a message of stability. As such, the stability will create an environment where teacher recruitment can thrive and deal with the larger societal issue of attracting the best men and women to the prestigious and trusted position of teacher.

Our government is committed to working with our educational stakeholders to ensure that Ontario continues to attract well-qualified teachers in all subject areas, because we know that is critical to the success of our young people. This recruitment is best done in an environment of stability, where neither the students nor the front-line teachers are locked out or prevented from being in the classroom.

Our government has been working hard to ensure that we have the teachers we need. We've increased student spaces at Ontario's education faculties in the past five years; 6,000 new spaces have been created, a 24% increase over the previous five years.

So we continue to move forward. We continue to focus on attracting people to the math, science, technological studies and French areas, where we know the priorities are greatest. I'm pleased to tell you that as a result of our efforts, technological studies graduates are up more than 50% since 1999, science and French language graduates are both up more than 40% and math graduates are up over 20%. There are many young people

in this province who are responding to the call to enter the teaching profession.

We've also invested \$1 million toward initiatives to promote teaching as a professional career opportunity and to develop innovative programs for our new teachers. Together with our educational partners, we recently launched a very aggressive campaign called "Be The Spark," which is specifically geared to attracting university math and science students to teaching.

Our government is committed to our children. We are working hard to ensure that our children have the best teachers and that they are ready and able to teach.

We fully recognize the importance of teachers to our students and to our province. We thank the many dedicated, hard-working teachers in the province for going beyond the call of duty on many occasions.

1710

But we need to remain focused on making sure we have in this province a strong public school system that serves all our children. We are seeing improved achievement in the past seven years. We cannot now allow labour disruptions to take away from the gains we have made. It's important that we move forward. It is important that the opposition parties -- the Liberals and the NDP -- support this bill that we have in the House today. In fact, you could give your unanimous support. You could put the politics aside and you could put the kids first. We need to make sure that our teachers and our students are back in the classroom. We need to provide our students and our teachers with access to a safe and stable learning environment. We need to make sure that our students can continue to gain an excellent education.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and comments?

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

I'm proud to give my comments on the minister's speech. On May 21, the Liberal caucus met to discuss the proposed bill that the government was coming up with. All the members of the Liberal caucus were ready to support the back-to-school legislation, Bill 28, until we got into the House and found out that the government was coming up with 54 amendments to the Education Act.

We do believe in the education of our kids. The minister just mentioned that Ontario students are doing well. Why are we trying to destroy what we have done up to now? We have good teachers and good students, but we're trying to spoil what has been done for so many years.

Yes, we believe in teachers being involved in school activities. They have always been involved in after-school activities, no matter if it is sports, no matter if it is graduation. They are really proud to get involved in graduations, because they are proud of all the kids. But today we're trying to spoil whatever was done in the past.

The minister said many times that we are recognized as having a good school system in place. At the present time, I have a lot of respect for the minister, but she was forced to come up with Bill 28 because they want to pick up points during the election, which is coming up, and at

this point they haven't gained any points. This is why the election has been called off. The government is trying to get more points.

Ms Martel: I heard the Minister of Education say that education is all about the student in the classroom. I agree. The point I want to drive home today is, isn't it too bad that the Conservatives are not committed to those students?

What Rozanski demonstrated very clearly was that there have been huge cuts by this government to the education system that have left our system reeling in the last number of years. Tell me, how does it help students when so many schools have no libraries and no librarians? How does it help students when so many schools have no music teachers and no music programs? How does it help students when so many schools have no art programs? How does it help students when so many schools don't have full-time principals or full-time secretaries? How does it help students when so many schools don't have enough custodial staff to keep the schools clean and the property safe? How does it help students when we have a huge waiting list for special education in this province? How does it help students when they don't have enough textbooks in their classrooms? How does it help students when the Minister of Community, Family and Children's Services can't get out money for support for autistic students even though she announced that money last November? How does it help students like the one who was outside the grocery store I was at on Sunday night fundraising for her school, selling chocolate bars? How does it help students when they have to do that because of the cuts this government has made to education?

This government has a lot to answer for, because this government has cut over \$2 billion from our education system and made a sustained and concerted attack on teachers over the last eight years. How does it help students? This government is not committed to students.

Mr Marcel Beaubien (Lambton-Kent-Middlesex): I would like to remind the member across the way that I sold chocolate bars when I was 16 and in high school. Do you know how long ago that was? What I want is to do the right thing, the right thing for students.

There's a woman here, Mrs Rebecca Gordon, who has two children in the system. She spent the afternoon here because she's concerned about her children. That is what it's all about. Teaching is a profession. It's a professional profession.

What is working to rule? I can understand working to rule when you're fabricating cars, making furniture and that type of thing. But when you're dealing with human beings and you're a professional person, how can you sleep at night and say, "I'm going to work to rule. I'm going to work to rule because this is my right and I don't care what impact it has on a child who's going to spend seven or eight years at the elementary level"? What kind of profession would condone that? Can you explain that to me? I have an awful lot of difficulty understanding this.

What is wrong with a teacher completing report cards? After all, the parents do fund the school system; they do fund the teachers' wages and their benefits. I think they deserve the right to know how the student is performing and what the student is doing.

What is wrong with a teacher attending parent-teacher night so that the parents know exactly what is wrong and what remedial work the teacher or the school system could provide to the student to make sure the student will be functional in life?

Isn't that what it's all about: to do the right thing for the student? Isn't that what we want to do? So why don't you give us unanimous consent right now in this House?

Mr Caplan: I want to know what happened to the Liz Witmer who used to support public education in this province. I want to know what happened to people like Dianne Cunningham or David Young or Tina Molinari, people who used to support public education. I want to know what happened.

I think what happens is like out of an Anthony Burgess novel: they make these folks sit and watch these misleading advertising commercials over and over again, and then they spew it out here like it's the gospel truth come down from heaven itself.

Well, nobody's fooled. This is the result of eight long years of an attack on public education, and the government members now reap what they sow. Having found themselves in this position, they try to dig themselves out, they try to find some other way, but unfortunately they only get deeper and deeper, and it's our kids -- my kids, the kids across this province -- who are paying the price.

Remember the advertising campaign, the famous clock ad? "Our teachers aren't working hard enough," said Liz Witmer and John Snobelen and Mike Harris and Ernie Eves. "We have to teach them a lesson. We have to show them who's in control."

1720

Well, welcome to your crisis in education. You can pass whatever legislation you want. Until we have a change in the approach that we take in this province, until we have real and lasting change, it is not going to matter one bit what you put in a piece of legislation, because you have the same underlying attack on public education which began in 1995 and continues to this very day. That change has to happen. I can't wait for the opportunity for the people of the province to pass judgment --

The Acting Speaker: Thank you.

Mr Caplan: -- on Liz Witmer, Mike Harris --

The Acting Speaker: Thank you.

Response?

Hon Mrs Witmer: I appreciate those on both sides of the House who gave their response.

I want to come back to what I said at the start. Education shouldn't be about politics. It's not about government and unions and trustees. It's about students.

I'd just like to conclude by saying that there are more students in this province than ever before who have special needs. As a result, our government has moved

forward in a way that the funding that now flows to school boards is enveloped. It is protected. It goes exclusively to help those students with special needs. We will continue to provide the funding that is required. We're now providing about \$1.6 billion. I would remind people as well that it was our government that actually was the first government in the history of this province to identify that there was a need to give special support to special-needs students. I know, because I was a trustee on the board when it became the reality. But we were also the first government to envelope the funding and make sure that it flowed there.

What we have been doing for seven years is making sure that we do everything we can to help our students achieve success. We have a new curriculum. We have new standards. We are providing support to our teachers.

If any further proof is needed as to the initiatives that we have undertaken and our commitment to helping our students achieve success, I want to read to you the headline from the Toronto Star today: "Ontario 13-Year-Olds Tops in Reading Test ... New Curriculum Given Credit for the Difference."

Ladies and gentlemen, congratulations --

The Acting Speaker: Thank you.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order. Further debate?

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough-Rouge River): I stand today in addressing Bill 28. I also have the opportunity to speak after the minister. I want to say some kind words about the minister, because she's a person I do respect. She brought about a bit of calm to education when she assumed the role of Minister of Education.

I think I should make some general comments about this government and what they've done to education. As you know, in 1995, when they assumed government, one would say that hell seemed to have broken loose. I think at that time they had a Mr Johnson. By the time he was finished with education, the entire education environment was poisoned. The teachers were in turmoil. The education system was so confusing, the fact is we thought there was a war on, and it wasn't getting anywhere. Of course the revolution, this Common Sense Revolution that Mike Harris had brought about, tells someone, "We're going to target. We're going to pick winners and losers." In that sense, I think the teachers got the brunt of it all. Who suffered in the process? The students. The education system has never been the same since.

Then comes, to think they would have a solution to all this, Mr Create-a-Crisis-in-Order-to-Solve-Anything, John Snobelen. He came in and, my golly, you can see what happened in that time. "To create a crisis," he said, "is the only way to solve anything." By the time he was out too, the place was worse off. That's number two.

Number three came around: Janet Ecker, this nonsense, take-no-hostages minister. She came in and she was tough as nails. She was going to go about and straighten this system out. But, funnily enough, under all of that hardness she supported public education. I don't

know what happened along the way, but she changed somehow. As you can remember, Mr Speaker, when she wrote a letter to the United Nations defending public education, I put her down as a defender of public education. But all of a sudden the government turned around and changed all of that and started to fund private schools, to almost water down what public education is all about in Ontario. The place was in a mess. Here we had three ministers who had a frontal attack on education. The teachers were abused, and I'll come to that later on. I know the kind of work teachers have done in the classroom and how students have responded to those teachers.

Then came Mrs Witmer, who brought about a calmness -- a kinder, gentler individual who said that we cannot operate in this turmoil and fighting that's going on in the education system. Somehow she caught my attention, and I said that now we were going to get somewhere. Teachers are going to get some respect and students, at last, would then work in an environment where they would be able to learn in safety, in an environment where they could interact, in an environment where they could stimulate their minds and not have Queen's Park and the Legislature biting at them.

Last September, when the Toronto Catholic District School Board had been negotiating their contract, nothing was done. Then, at long last, come May 15 or somewhere around there, eight days into negotiations, I presume, they were at work and students were in the classroom, having their lessons taught to them. Of course, regardless of what they wanted to say out there, you know the teachers were marking papers and making report cards. But the way the government has laid this new legislation down is to say that they weren't doing that; they were going to refuse to do that. That wasn't the case at all. I think people should know that that was not the case. None of the teachers had refused to do all that, but they locked them out. The board decided, after eight days of talking, to lock them out, and then they said the teachers were on strike. They weren't on strike; they were locked out.

Funnily enough, a coincidental situation happened. By mere coincidence the government launched its platform. They launched their political platform to go into an election talking about the fact that they were going to end all strikes by teachers.

Interjection.

Mr Curling: The fact is, although Mr Baird will heckle, they were not focusing rightly that they themselves, touting all this campaign literature at a time when teachers and students need interaction, launched a political game to lock 69,000 students out -- not the teachers; they locked out the students. The teachers were willing to work and that didn't happen.

I heard all the members over there talking about putting students first. If the government were serious about putting students first, they would not have locked out 69,000 students, and that's what they did. They

locked the students out, and then said that they locked the teachers out.

Who here is putting students first? Not the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario. As soon as students get a good grade, I'll see the minister waving the fact that, "Look at what we have done. We have students who are coming first," and yet they've locked 69,000 students out. They say they put students first. If they were putting students first, why would they have taken \$2.1 billion out of the education system? It affects students. But of course they're all honourable people, and they lock students out. As a matter of fact, with all the negotiation they feel they have no right at all in a democratic society to strike. Yet in the legislation they do have the right to do that.

1730

I think that the people of Ontario, the students, were cheated out of good democracy and good management. What they have done here is decide to bring education back into the seats of the Conservative Party, to manage it right here, and they're doing a terrible job. You can see that with the number of ministers they had who did just an awful job in education. Leave education to the school boards, leave education to the teachers -- leave it there. They'll do a much better job.

Of course, they are the government and they have a right to bring in whatever legislation they want, and Dalton McGuinty and my good House leader have been trying very hard to get people together so we can continue to put students first, back into the classroom, and to have teachers there; in other words, talking to people, getting together so this can happen.

Ernie Eves and the minister did not take up the phone one time to say, "Let's sit down and talk about it." It wouldn't fit their political agenda and their platform that they will deny people their democratic right to strike, and they said, "We will do that."

We on this side, Dalton McGuinty and the Liberals, agreed they should be back in the classroom. So we decided we would support a bill to get those students and teachers from the Toronto Catholic school board back. What have they done? Sneakily, in a deceiving way, what they've done is sneak this in --

Hon Mr Baird: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I would ask your ruling on the word "deceiving."

The Acting Speaker: The member might --

Mr Curling: Let me try other wording. They have changed the words. They have changed the direction altogether, when we had agreed to put the teachers back into the classroom with the kind of legislation that only called for that for the Toronto Catholic District School Board. But they sneaked it in to do the entire province and then to put other things in it, so that with one sweep they would do this legislation.

To find words other than "deceiving" -- the fact is that they did not do what they should have done. We can't support that; we will not support that. But we don't sit idly saying we would not support that. We put forward a bill. We gave you a real bill, a clean bill, a bill that does not play games or support your political agenda for your

campaign, hoping to get some points in the campaign in the coming election -- a clean bill so we could focus on students first, not on the campaign of Ernie Eves, which is not going anywhere, down the road of destruction.

The Road Ahead that they have is a road where they would like to wipe out all those who are in their way. As a matter of fact, I don't think they like students. I think they just like themselves. I think it's all about themselves governing. But in their hearts I know many of them are parents and many of them are former teachers, and of course they do a wonderful job when they are in that category. But as politicians it seems that somehow their political agenda changed in a dramatic way.

I want, in the short time, to also speak about teachers, and not just teachers in general but teachers in our society especially in Toronto, teachers I know of in the Catholic school system, teachers I have visited, like at Prince of Peace Catholic School in my riding, St Bede Catholic School, St Ignatius Catholic school, which I have visited every Friday for the last 15 years or more, to see what's happening, to interact with them, to understand some of the challenges they have. What I see there are teachers who are so dedicated, interacting with classrooms that are oversized; teachers who because of lack of funding from this government are buying things out of their own pockets, to make sure the students themselves get a proper education; teachers who are interacting with people who speak 25 or 30 different languages in the classroom; teachers who are doing social work; teachers who are staying back in the evenings; teachers who are doing extracurricular activities; teachers who are in the dining room, monitoring kids at lunchtime; teachers out in the yard supervising; teachers doing things beyond the classroom, which we call extracurricular activities. They're doing that without being legislated. They're doing it out of the goodness of their hearts and out of goodwill.

Even Ernie Eves admitted that. He said, "If we ever try to legislate goodwill, it won't work; to legislate love won't work." But when they see the opportunity of an election coming and find things not going their way, maybe they could legislate goodwill, maybe they could legislate love. But it's not going to work because those teachers -- whom I've seen in my 18 years in this Parliament, visiting them quite regularly on Fridays -- are people who are completely engaged in enriching those wonderful and beautiful minds, enriching the minds of the individuals who the Minister of Education talked about coming first. In spite of the lack of funding and the cuts in funding to education, in spite of all the bullying that went on with these ministers, in spite of the way they're trying to take away a democratic right, in spite of all that, the teachers are there each day. And the principals too are part of it all. We must not forget them. I'd like many of you folks to go to those schools, where principals are leaving their schools sometimes at 9 o'clock and 10 o'clock at night, working from 8 o'clock in the morning almost every day, and this government would see fit to legislate them.

We have tried our best to say, "Let's put pure legislation in to get them back talking." If they supported the bill put forward by Gerard Kennedy of the Liberal Party, I would say to you that those students and teachers would be back in class by Friday. Today being Wednesday, they would be back in the classroom in a day or two. But no, this government is adamant in trying to win the next election at all costs. It's not working at all. As a matter of fact -- I don't know if you know, Mr Speaker -- they say the Catholic school board and the Toronto Catholic elementary students could be back in school as early as tomorrow, because they are saying, "We are prepared to go back and talk." I will read a media release that came out: "'Toronto's Catholic elementary students may be back in school as early as tomorrow if the board agrees to voluntary arbitration this afternoon,' says Cathy McVean, president of the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association."

The fact is that these people see students first, but not this government. They see power first. They will do everything in their power to form the next government. But this province and the people and parents around here have seen through this government -- this government that has had those students locked out for all this time, this government that has parents going to work wondering where their children are when they could be in the classroom. But what has happened? This government is insisting on their political agenda and has decided to keep them out to make sure they can get some points in this regard.

1740

It is unfortunate. The headlines are showing, and I tend not to believe it, "We have to postpone this election because we're not good in the polls yet. We're waiting to work on that." But I will tell them, as the people see more of this Progressive Conservative government, their platform and what they are doing, they will be just like Kim Campbell: they will be out and have maybe two seats over there. They'll see through you all. They will vote for true democracy. They'll vote for people who put students first.

Hon Mr Baird: Vote for true democracy.

Mr Curling: That's right. True democracy, as Mr Baird echoed over there, the things that Dalton McGuinty and the Liberals believe in. Transparency -- we don't have to hide this kind of stuff, sneaking legislation in like they're trying to do here, to control unions and the boards. We believe in that kind of democracy. One minute they talk about this aspect of things and the next minute they don't believe in it. What they do and what they say are two different things.

In summary, let me say that it is unfortunate, on the eve of the time when students should be getting their grades, that this government continues to play politics. I hope the many teachers who want to put their students first are realizing this government is in the way. It did not start overnight. It started a long time ago. It started with all those ministers who were creating a crisis, who were

putting the screws to all the students and teachers in the past, and today they have reached a crossroad.

The Road Ahead, I'm telling you, for this government is a road that will put them out of power, a road that will replace them with a much better government that understands students and will put students first. I hope that they will come to their senses and support the bill the Liberal Party has put forward. It is a clean bill, a bill that is not in any way trying to hide any form of getting control of the education system, but trying to get the Toronto Catholic school board back to the table for any kind of negotiation and settlement.

The Acting Speaker: Questions or comments?

Ms Martel: I want to follow up on a press release that was partially read by the member from Scarborough-Rouge River because I think it points out why we shouldn't be dealing with the government bill, why we shouldn't be dealing with the Liberal bill, why we should be calling on the Catholic school board here in Toronto to actually deal with voluntary arbitration as a mechanism to get this resolved.

We have a press release that came out from OECTA this afternoon. The member read the first paragraph from it, and I want to deal with the rest of it. It says very clearly that OECTA is seeking agreement from the Toronto Catholic District School Board to begin voluntary arbitration as defined under the Ontario Labour Relations Act. This would trigger an immediate end to the lockout of teachers and students in Toronto's Catholic elementary schools.

"The board's agreement to accept voluntary arbitration would also make any government intervention in the current impasse unnecessary," McVean says.

While OECTA is opposed to arbitration in all but the most difficult of negotiations, McVean says voluntary arbitration is preferable to the form of mandatory arbitration imposed by legislation. "With voluntary arbitration, the arbitrator" will be "mutually agreed upon by both parties, and the terms of arbitration" will not be "directed by government" legislation.

I think this is a very good solution to the situation that we have at hand. I think that if the Catholic school board could be called upon, or have it impressed upon them, that they should be agreeing to this, then there wouldn't be a need for government legislation that we're dealing with here in the form of Bill 28, or the Liberal legislation that they are talking about here this afternoon. It seems to me that it is incumbent on the board to meet the union and deal with this in this satisfactory way.

Hon David Young (Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing): I appreciate you providing me with this opportunity to respond to the comments made by the member from Scarborough-Rouge River. I listened intently to his remarks today and I must tell you they don't accord with things I've heard in my riding over the last little while.

I've had an opportunity to speak to many parents who have indicated to me that they want their children back in school. They have also indicated to me that they want to

ensure that when their children are back in school, their teachers will have an opportunity to do what the teachers do best, and that is teach. Of course, as part of their teaching responsibilities there should be comments on report cards, and he knows that well.

The member's comments intrigued me partly because he went so far as to say, and I hope I am quoting him accurately, "This government had these students locked out." What a remarkable thing to say. How fanciful. The board of education, a duly elected body, had the teachers locked out because they were not performing what that board believed were essential services. But what's even more to the point -- and I'd ask you, if you would, to pay attention to the next comment because it's particularly important -- is that the chair of the board that locked out the teachers is the vice-president of a Liberal riding association. So the allegation from the opposition, fanciful as it is, is that somehow or another this gentleman, who is an executive member of a Liberal riding association, is conspiring with the government. That's ridiculous. Mr Speaker, you know that's ridiculous. You know that not only is the chair of the board the vice-president of a Liberal riding association, another trustee on the board is the son of --

The Acting Speaker: Thank you. Questions or comments?

Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair): The Ontario Liberal Party does not support the lockout, does not support Mr Carnevale, does not support any board member who supported the lockout. The only thing you didn't answer is, do you support the lockout? If you don't support it, why don't you do the right thing? You were afraid to answer the question. Do you support the lockout? You want the lockout because you want this to be about part II of the bill. I say to the government --

Interjections.

Mr Duncan: They are all exercised now.

My colleague from Scarborough is absolutely correct. "Take the clause out of the bill, put it into your campaign platform and let's go out and let's have an election on that part." I don't agree with you. I believe that teachers should have the right to strike. This party believes in free and collective bargaining.

Let me tell you something else. We believe in reasonable restrictions on that, as does the current Minister of Education. At least that's what she used to believe. That's what the Premier used to believe, but he flipped and he flopped. Why? Because they're desperate.

I don't buy this stuff that they didn't call the election because of SARS. They didn't call the election because they know they're going to go down if they call the election, and because they're afraid to face a party that has a clear and consistent message of change, change that people in this province can trust.

So I say to the member for Willowdale, Mr Young, do you support the lockout? You didn't answer that question. You have the power to put those kids back to school today. Do it instead of playing games, and they're playing games with these children. I agree with my

colleague opposite. OECTA has now talked about voluntary arbitration, and I say to Mr Carnevale and any other Liberal who supports this lockout, give it up and get the kids back to school.

Mr Martin: I think we now have the Liberals' position on this, which is the right to strike with reasonable restrictions. I'm not quite sure what that means.

Anyway, this is no more than political grandstanding by both the Tories and the Liberals in front of a very difficult labour relations situation that we've all faced at one point or another as government in this place and --

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: The member for Windsor-St Clair will withdraw that.

Mr Duncan: I withdraw that for the moment.

The Acting Speaker: You will withdraw.

Mr Duncan: I withdraw.

Mr Martin: I didn't hear what the member from Windsor said, but nevertheless --

Interjection: You can get your time back, Tony.

1750

Mr Martin: No, it's OK. Well, the right to strike with reasonable restrictions -- we'll hear more about that, I'm sure, over the next few days here as that position is rolled out.

This is no more than political grandstanding by a government that intends to run this election again on the backs of some targeted groups of people in the province that it has decided are vulnerable and that the public will support it in. I find it regrettable. It's not the politics of hope and renewal, which this province needs at the moment. It's not the politics of community and working together to better the lot of everybody. It's the politics of division, of divide and blame. I don't think it serves us well. It hasn't served us well over the last eight years and won't be what will give us the potential that we need to take our place in the world out there, with everybody on board looking after those who are vulnerable and at risk.

Teachers -- my God, I've got four kids in the system. I know teachers who are there at 7 o'clock every morning preparing for class. I know teachers who work overtime till 10 or 11 o'clock at night coaching teams, looking after children. I don't understand this targeting of teachers. I don't think it's going to --

The Acting Speaker: Thank you. Response?

Mr Curling: I don't want to get into who to blame, and who at one time didn't support the social contract or supported the social contract and things like that. I don't want to get into that at all. Neither do I want at all to get into, "We didn't really lock them out with any locks but we support the fact that they should lock them out and we support the fact that we are going to have legislation to do so."

Let's go back to what they all say, "We put students first," meaning we're going to have legislation to have this kind of a poisoned environment. Then when the students get back there's a poisoned environment. This government, the Conservative government, has poisoned the education environment all along with their five

ministers who have created crises and run roughshod over students and teachers for the last eight years. They are the ones that don't put students first. We, as I said, believe that of course students belong inside the classroom and at school, but not under the environment you are creating.

I know the good member from Scarborough Centre, Ms Mushinski, believes that. She believes that the environment is poisoned today. What we're trying to do is make a clean environment, the bill that the Liberal Party has put forward.

Put aside all those bills. Here is what the Toronto school board is saying now, "Let's get the voluntary arbitration. Let's get all these redundant bills that are going around. Let's get the students back in the classroom." I then ask them, why don't you pick the phone up and say to them, "Yes, I think this is a wonderful idea. I think you all should be back there talking." That's what we're all about. That's what we're about. Let us do that. Let's put students first. We, as the Liberals, put students first.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr Spina: It's interesting to listen to the political haranguing that goes on in here. I think almost every politician, every critic, in every comment that's been made over the past few years, few months, few days, has zeroed in on a common statement that says, "Well, we just want to do it for the kids and put students first." The interesting thing is that very few of these people have the credibility that the teachers claim should be there. When I hear comments from the member from Trinity-Spadina, I have some confidence in that member's comments because he has been a teacher. I would have confidence in the member for Sudbury's comments, if he spoke on this issue. He has been a teacher. The Minister of Education has been a teacher.

Interjection: And a trustee.

Mr Spina: And a trustee. I myself was in a classroom for 12 years. My wife has had a 29-year career as a public high school teacher.

Mr Duncan: If she married you, I'll have to question her judgment.

Mr Spina: Well, at least I'm still married to her.

In any case, what I'm saying is that the people who have been involved in the education system, whether they agree or disagree, at least have been in the classroom. They've had to walk the talk. They've had to be there with the children, from the little ones with the sniffing noses to the bigger ones who have other problems in the high school system.

I'm very pleased that, for example, this morning, I spent two and a half hours at Heart Lake Secondary with the former Canadian heavyweight boxing champion George Chuvalo. We spoke at Heart Lake Secondary School, two blocks from my house. I have to say that we had 600 grade 9 students in the auditorium -- well, cafeteria actually. We had to clear out of there because it was lunchtime at 10:30 -- first lunch. Big school.

In any case, we were very pleased that Principal Moreash was very receptive to have George Chuvalo come into the school and talk to kids about drugs. We were told from the people from the crime commission that on this particular visit he received the longest ovation of any school that Mr Chuvalo has visited in this province. I'm very proud of that because the kids from Heart Lake Secondary are good students. It was interesting that, when I asked them if they knew where I lived, many hands shot up. Some people thought that was a threat. For me it was not. These are good students, they're good kids and they come from good families. This is an event that might have been deemed to be extra-curricular. But I don't think it was. I think it was a necessary element of being part of the school environment where we learn about life, we learn about problems and we learn about social issues and how to protect ourselves and keep them away from it.

We have to emphasize that we're talking about back-to-school legislation, that the act that will put the kids back in the classroom, where they do belong. I have

heard often, during the 1995 campaign, during Bill 160 arguments, during the 1999 campaign, and since then -- I have a large number of personal friends who are teachers, and we have been friends for many years. We all went through university together. There are 10 of them in my personal social group who are teachers. We are also personal friends with our neighbours and my wife's friends from their high school that are, of course, teachers and spouses. We've socialized with them for a long time, for many years. We've had political discussions. Yes, you're never going to get complete agreement on every issue, but I will say --

Mr Caplan: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Do we have quorum present?

Deputy Clerk (Ms Deborah Deller): Quorum is present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: Quorum is present, but this may be a good opportunity to say, it being 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until 10 of the clock tomorrow morning.

The House adjourned at 1759.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon / L'hon James K. Bartleman

Speaker / Président: Hon / L'hon Gary Carr

Clerk / Greffier: Claude L. DesRosiers

Deputy Clerk / Sous-greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks at the Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Lisa Freedman

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

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

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

A list arranged by members' surnames and including all responsibilities of each member appears in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month.

Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et le premier lundi de chaque mois.

CONTENTS

Wednesday 28 May 2003

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Helicopter services	
Mr Bartolucci.....	661
Doug Kennedy	
Mrs Marland.....	661
Government advertising	
Mr Crozier.....	661
Hospital services	
Mr Bisson.....	662
Ross Powless	
Mr Barrett.....	662
Ontario budget	
Mr Kwinter.....	662
Waste management	
Mr Beaubien.....	663
Premier's record	
Mr Duncan.....	663
Awards of Excellence for Fighting Crime	
Mr Miller.....	663

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

Standing committee on estimates	
Mr Kennedy.....	664
Report deemed received.....	664

FIRST READINGS

Gravesites of Former Premiers Act, 2003, Bill 67, Mr Peters	
Agreed to.....	664
Mr Peters.....	664

ORAL QUESTIONS

Education labour dispute	
Mr McGuinty.....	669
Mrs Witmer.....	669
Nurses	
Mr McGuinty.....	670
Mr Clement.....	670
SARS	
Mr Hampton.....	671
Mr Clement.....	671, 674
Mr Stewart.....	674
Autism treatment	
Ms Martel.....	671
Mrs Elliott.....	672
Public health	
Mr McGuinty.....	672
Mr Clement.....	672
Rural economic development	
Mr Wettlaufer.....	673
Mr Hardeman.....	673

Children's services

Mrs Dombrowsky.....	673
Mrs Elliott.....	673
Ontario disability support program	
Mr Martin.....	674
Mrs Elliott.....	675
Government assets	
Mr Phillips.....	675
Mrs Ecker.....	675
Smart Growth	
Mr McDonald.....	676
Mr Young.....	676
Education funding	
Mrs Boyer.....	677
Mrs Witmer.....	677
Tire dumps	
Mr Peters.....	677
Mr Stockwell.....	677

PETITIONS

Aluminum smelter	
Mr Bradley.....	678
School bus safety	
Mr Hoy.....	679
Audiology services	
Mr Gerretsen.....	679
Mr Curling.....	680
Mr Peters.....	681
Social assistance	
Mr Bisson.....	679
Mortgage interest deductibility	
Mr Agostino.....	680
National child benefit supplement	
Mr Bisson.....	680
Health care funding	
Mr Bradley.....	681

SECOND READINGS

Back To School (Toronto Catholic Elementary) and Education and Provincial Schools Negotiations Amendment Act, 2003, Bill 28, Mr Eves	
Mr Marchese.....	681, 690
Mr Spina.....	689, 698
Mr Caplan.....	690, 694
Mr Martin.....	690, 698
Mrs Witmer.....	690, 694
Mr Lalonde.....	693
Ms Martel.....	693, 697
Mr Beaubien.....	693
Mr Curling.....	694, 698
Mr Young.....	697
Mr Duncan.....	697
Debate deemed adjourned.....	699

OTHER BUSINESS

Request for opinion	
The Speaker.....	663
Ron McNeil	
Mr Sterling.....	664
Mr Peters.....	665
Mr Kormos.....	666
Philip Shrive	
Mr Runciman.....	667
Mr Levac.....	668
Mr Kormos.....	668
Visitors	
Mr Wilson.....	678

TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Mercredi 28 mai 2003

PREMIÈRE LECTURE

Loi de 2003 sur les lieux de sépulture des anciens premiers ministres, projet de loi 67, M. Peters	
Adoptée.....	664

QUESTIONS ORALES

Financement de l'éducation	
M ^{me} Boyer.....	677
Mrs Witmer.....	677

PÉTITIONS

Garde d'enfants	
M. Marchese.....	679
M. Bisson.....	680

DEUXIÈME LECTURE

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, projet de loi 28, M. Eves	
Débat présumé ajourné.....	699