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**Official Report
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**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Monday 7 June 2004

Lundi 7 juin 2004

Speaker
Honourable Alvin Curling

Président
L'honorable Alvin Curling

Clerk
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Monday 7 June 2004

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 7 juin 2004

The House met at 1845.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BUDGET MEASURES ACT, 2004
LOI DE 2004
SUR LES MESURES BUDGÉTAIRES

Resuming the debate adjourned on June 3, 2004, on the motion for second reading of Bill 83, An Act to implement Budget measures / Projet de loi 83, Loi mettant en oeuvre certaines mesures budgétaires.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Joseph N. Tascona): Further debate?

Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: If I could get a clarification on whose turn it is in the rotation? I thought it was six minutes.

The Acting Speaker: It's the NDP's turn. The member for Trinity-Spadina has risen in his seat.

Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina): John, come and sit beside me.

Ms Marilyn Churley (Toronto-Danforth): You've got 10 minutes, so get at it.

Mr Marchese: Please, I've got 10 minutes. It's a pleasure to speak to this bill.

Interjections.

Mr Marchese: Quiet, are you kidding? Supporting my buddies here as they go after you, assaulting you day in and day out? Are you kidding? That's not quiet.

I just want to tell the citizens of Ontario that it's a quarter to 7, more or less, give or take a minute or two, and we are on live and we welcome you to this political channel. What we're discussing tonight, more or less, is a budget bill. I've just got a couple of things to say. All I have, Jim, is just 10 mere minutes. Do you remember that? How we used to—

Mr Mike Colle (Eglinton-Lawrence): Why are they muzzling you?

Mr Marchese: Ten minutes. I need 20 minutes to wind up and a whole hour for a whole speech. But thank God we got status and we now have an hour. We now have a whole hour for our lead bills. I can't wait for Gerard Kennedy to introduce a bill to which I can respond for one whole hour.

Mr Dunlop: He's afraid of you.

Mr Marchese: You never know.

There are a couple of things that this government has done with respect to this budget that I think a lot of people don't like. The Liberals will stand up day in and day out and say how proud they are. They're proud of this budget, right John? John is proud of this budget. And not just John, every Liberal is proud. Some soldiers are more proud than others. It depends on whether you're a real trooper or not. If you are a trooper leaning towards cabinet, you're going to be supporting this budget without restraint, and the others will be a little more silent, a little circumspect, a little worried about their defence of this bill.

Liberals will say they are defending this bill, but they're not. I'm telling you, they're not. You don't see them on the campaign trail. Michael, some of them are there. Some ridings are safer for Liberals than others. But where the campaigns are in trouble, where they are faltering, where the campaigns are falling apart, where Liberals are disappearing, you don't see Liberal MPPs defending this budget. You don't. Sorry, you just don't. And why don't we see Liberal MPPs at the door? Because, man, are they ever afraid.

Hon James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism and Recreation): Who is?

Mr Marchese: You guys and you gals are all afraid to be on that campaign because the federal Liberals are saying, "Please don't do us any favours. Don't come knocking at the doors with us. We just don't want you. We don't need you. You've done enough favours for us." That's what they're saying. Because if you were really proud of this budget, you would say to your federal members, "I'm going to join you on the trail because, man, can we convince people. You've just got to give us some time."

Mr Tony C. Wong (Markham): I just did on Saturday. I knocked on doors on Saturday.

Mr Marchese: Eh, Tony? Tony went. He's a proud member. He's still here.

Interjection: He's still alive.

Mr Marchese: Quite right, he's still standing.

I'm going to tell you, I don't think Markham is a place where you can go and say, "By the way, we just increased your taxes. But don't worry; we can explain it to you. It's progressive."

I love hearing Sorbara. He says to the NDP, "Why is the NDP going after the rich all the time?" Because New Democrats think we should go after those who have money as opposed to those who don't have money. When the Liberals say, "The NDP goes after the rich," does that

mean you go after the poor? That's what your budget has done.

Then they say that those who earn less than 20,000 bucks are excluded. That's progressive. Mercifully, those who earn \$20,000 or less are excluded from getting a whacking. Thank God. Imagine someone earning \$10,000 or \$15,000 getting whacked for 300 bucks with a new expense. If you earn \$20,000 plus one cent, over a period of a couple of years you get whacked for 300 bucks.

Mr Colle: No, it's 60 bucks.

Mr Marchese: Non, mes amis. Over a couple of années, you get whacked for 300 bucks. Now, Jimmy, if you're earning a million bucks, you're safe; you're OK. All you've got to do is pay 900 bucks. That's not bad. That's a sweetheart deal. With the Liberals, if you've got money, you're safe; you don't have to worry. We thought the Tories were bad, but under the Liberals, you've got a progressive health care whacking, so that if you earn \$200,000, \$300,000, \$400,000, \$500,000, \$600,000, \$700,000, \$1 million or \$2 million, you only get whacked for 900 bucks. That's a sweetheart deal in my books.

Mr John Wilkinson (Perth-Middlesex): Plus your surtax.

Ms Churley: Who cares about the surtax?

Mr Wilkinson: The people who pay care about it.

Mr Marchese: John says there's a surtax that hits the millionaires. The millionaires are screaming bloody murder. With that surtax the millionaires are saying, "We're leaving the country because we're overtaxed." The poor bankers: They've got such a weight on their shoulders that they're going to the US. With that surtax and this new health levy, 900 bucks, they're just going to leave the country—"We're leaving the country" Please. A progressive tax—come on.

I need to come back to this, so I want to move adjournment of the debate.

The Acting Speaker: The member for Trinity-Spadina has moved adjournment of the debate.

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

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those against, say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

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

The division bells rang from 1853 to 1923.

The Acting Speaker: All those in favour, please rise and remain standing.

All those opposed, please rise and remain standing.

Thank you. Please take your seats.

Deputy Clerk (Ms Deborah Deller): The ayes are 11; the nays are 31.

The Acting Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

The Chair recognizes the member from Trinity-Spadina.

Mr Marchese: Thank you, Speaker. Welcome back, citizens. It's 7:25, political channel, Queen's Park.

The Liberals are so proud of this budget that they don't want to take it out and debate it. So proud are they

that they're giving the opposition no time to debate the bill. Now, does that seem consistent to you? If I were proud of this bill, I'd be taking it out for weeks and weeks. Why? To persuade the public that this is a great bill, that this bill has nuggets in it and that all people need to do is find them.

But we have no hearings from them. That's why we're here tonight. We're here debating and ringing bells because we're asking Dwight Duncan to give us some time to debate it with the public, so they get to listen to how proud the Liberals are of this bill. I'm trying to do them a favour, because both Sorbara and McGuinty say, "We're proud," and, "I won't back down." McGuinty just said that. I love that. McGuinty said, "I won't back down." I love that. But if you're proud, you have to get out and defend it.

Look, your friends need you. They need you today, not on June 28. They need you today. You have to walk arm in arm with them to explain to the public how good the bill is and pick out every little nugget and show them how good it is, how health will be improved as a result of whacking people who earn \$20,000, \$30,000, \$40,000, \$50,000, and that it's good for them to be whacked because they're going to love it. You have to explain it to them. You have to get out there and do that. For that purpose, I move adjournment of the House.

The Acting Speaker: The member from Trinity-Spadina has moved adjournment of the House.

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

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

I declare that the nays have it.

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

The division bells rang from 1927 to 1957.

The Acting Speaker: All those in favour, please rise and remain standing.

All those opposed, please rise and remain standing.

Deputy Clerk: The ayes are 9; the nays are 31.

The Acting Speaker: I declare the motion lost. Further debate?

Mr Marchese: So the point is this: You need to have hearings, not to give the public any input into the hearings, but for you to defend why you would remove chiropractic services from the public, why you would remove physiotherapy and why you would remove optometrists—the poor optometrists. You've got to go out there and say to the public, "We had to make tough choices. We had to whack some people in order to be able to give them more health care, and they're going to pay for it. But we've got to take some services away. We're going to give you free vaccinations"—tough choice, right?—"but we're going to make you pay for it."

See, you've got to get out there and defend that reasoning, because they'll understand. Those are nuggets, you understand. You've got to get out. There are over 30 members here.

Interjection.

Mr Marchese: Marie, Polkaroo to you, too. Marie, you've got to be out in Hamilton. Your member is in

trouble. There are over 30 Liberal members in this place. You don't need more than 12 or 20—33 members here? I thought you were proud of this budget. Get out there and defend it.

Mr Brad Duguid (Scarborough Centre): I listened very, very carefully to the member from Trinity-Spadina—

Interjection: In between hours.

Mr Duguid: —in between hours. Like the member from Trinity-Spadina, I guess, as I speak to the people in TV land out there—they must be wondering what's going on here. The member usually is really emotional. He usually has a good argument behind him. Today he barely talked about anything to do with the budget. I think, frankly, it was because he was having trouble finding something that he really didn't agree with in this budget. I think that's why he used procedural motions every once in a while. He'd move a motion to adjourn or another motion to take a 30-minute bell because he had to think of other real reasons why he opposes this budget. I know the member from Trinity-Spadina supports the fact that we had to make tough decisions, because I know that if he had to make those tough decisions, he would have agreed with doing that. I know he believes in the need to transform our health care system.

Like most reasonable people, he knows that we inherited a very difficult situation, a \$6-billion deficit. He knows that wasn't going to be wished away. So we had to make some tough decisions in order to do things like bring about another 9,000 cataract surgeries each year. The member knows that that's a tough decision we had to make. Do we do that, or do we not do that? Well, we decided we're going to improve the availability of cataract surgeries. We decided we're going to improve the availability of cardiac procedures. It's very tough when you're going through—you need to get an operation, you need to get surgery and you can't get access to it.

Joint replacements: The member knows the pain people go through when they're waiting in line for joint replacements. So I think he knows the tough decision we had to make to ensure that we could deliver on that. Dialysis treatments, \$600 million more going into primary care, 150 family health teams coming up.

As my time winds down, the member knows very—

The Acting Speaker: Thank you. The Chair recognizes the member from Durham.

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): Actually, I was inspired by the member from Trinity-Spadina because—really, it was quite simple. The challenge to you to get your message out, as opposed to the million-dollar radio ads that you're doing now to convince people on the budget, was to simply have public hearings. We're committed to that. Our party whip and House leader have said it publicly. The NDP have said it publicly. In fact, members of your caucus have said that public hearings are the way to go. The debate needs to be held. It's not just a referendum question. Dalton McGuinty promised—and I'm looking at the quote here—to have a

referendum in the event that he was going to raise taxes. That is what this is about: Is it OK to raise taxes on health care; is it OK to delist services? I think it was a fair debate presented by the member from Trinity-Spadina—the man from the trailer park review that I've recently been aware of.

Tonight there was a reception at Queen's Park. Many people would know; it's the naturopathic medicine of Ontario. It draws to my attention that, really, this debate should be about public health and about patient choice. Are you prepared to listen to the people of Ontario and to give them choice? No, you're not. You're going to impose a tax. You're going to privatize chiropractic. You're going to privatize ophthalmology. You're going to privatize physiotherapy.

Mr Speaker, you know that this government refused, in their arrogance, to listen to the people of Ontario. In fact—I can't use unparliamentary terms—they obfuscated this during the election debate. They said, "We wouldn't raise your taxes, and we won't cut them either." I think we need to have public hearings on this. The member from Trinity-Spadina has asked for it. I ask you to support his request.

Mr Michael Prue (Beaches-East York): It is always a pleasure to listen to my friend from Trinity-Spadina. When he speaks, he speaks with passion. He talks with his arms a-flailing. He walks. He talks. He tells it the way it is. He has talked about what the problems are in this budget in a way that no one else in this House can. He talks it because it's the plain truth.

There are problems in this budget that you cannot see, because you have blinkers on, on that side of the House. You have blinkers on because you have not heard what the people are telling you out there. The people are telling you things you do not want to hear, and therefore you're shutting them out. I tell you, you have done a real disservice to—

Hon Marie Bountrogianni (Minister of Children and Youth Services, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration): I like your tie.

Mr Prue: The tie is a great tie. Thank you, Marie. It's a great tie.

Your federal cousins are suffering so badly because of what you have said in this House and what you continue to do in this House. He has alluded to that fact, and I will tell you, it has been a real disaster for your party. It has been a complete disaster, because the honeymoon that usually lasts for six months or a year or even two years for a new party such as yours in this House is long but gone. I will tell you, it is not there anymore. The people are fed up and you should listen to what the member for Trinity-Spadina has to say.

We need committees. We need the people to come out to actually talk to you face to face about what they think about this budget. It's not the same as your hand-picked committees you had before the budget, those secret little things that nobody knew about, that you had to be a good Liberal to get inside. We need real, honest people to come there and say the good things, if there are any, and

the bad things that are in this budget. We need you to be mature politicians to recognize when you're wrong and to change them.

Mr Jeff Leal (Peterborough): I will just take a couple of moments now to reflect on the remarks by the member for Trinity-Spadina. What I'd like to do is lift the veil of doom and gloom that the member for Trinity-Spadina presented.

In the month of May, there were 30,800 new jobs in Ontario—9,200 new jobs in manufacturing. Since this government came to power, there are 70,000 new jobs in the province of Ontario. According to a recent KPMG report, Ontario today is one of the most competitive jurisdictions in the world in which to live, work and play. It's time we got rid of the doom and gloom from the member for Trinity-Spadina.

What are they against over there? Our new free vaccine program for chickenpox, meningitis and pneumonia will save families more than \$600 per child in Ontario. We have invested an additional \$4 million annually to help children from low-income families arrive in class ready to learn through the school-based children's breakfast program. And there is more. Do you want me to keep going? We have all kinds here.

For our farming community: The party opposite brought in the nutrient program but no money. We have a program for \$20 million to help our family farmers in Ontario. And there is more.

Mr Duguid: Some 100,000 new home care—

Mr Leal: We have all kinds of money for new home care, which will keep people out of the hospitals and drive down the budgets that are increasing for our hospitals. All good things in this budget. It's time, as I said, to lift the veil of doom and gloom over there.

The Acting Speaker: Response from the member for Trinity-Spadina.

Mr Marchese: Before the election, we debated many Liberals, including Marie Bountrogianni, where we said to them, "Look, you can't increase services by \$7 billion. Deal with the deficit that's in the order of \$4 billion"—even Marie Bountrogianni knew that—"not increase taxes, and balance the budget."

"You can't do that," we said to them. "That's dissimulation, dissembling. It's manipulation of the facts. You can't do it."

But no, the Liberals said, "Yes, we can." Sure they can. They get into power and they say, "But the Tories left us with a \$6.2-billion deficit. What can we do? We didn't know. We're innocent victims of a plot by the Tories."

Please, you sound so stupid when you do that. You've got to stop it, and tell your Premier to stop it. It sounds bad. I've got to tell you, it sounds bad, including what Sorbara does. They both sound bad. OK, so that's the problem of the past.

As it relates to the present, with this budget, what you are doing is giving socialism for the rich and capitalism for the poor. Marie Bountrogianni, that's what you're doing: extracting money from the poor to give to the poor

bankers who are going to leave for the US because they're really burdened by the tax burden. Please, you sound stupid when you do that, I've got to tell you.

You can't go after the poor the way you are. You can't say, "We're going to give them free vaccinations, but if you're earning \$36,000 you've got to pay 500 bucks." You can't do that. It's not a good choice. You can't give them vaccinations on the one hand and take away physiotherapy, chiropractic services and optometry. You can't do that.

Good Liberals, you are in serious trouble. You need hearings to go and defend yourselves out there. You've got to say, "Look, we've got a budget that's greatly progressive and the NDP has got it all wrong." Just go out there and defend it. Be the brave soldiers that you are. Go out and do it. There are 33 of you here in this House. Get out there and do that job.

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The Acting Speaker: The Chair recognizes the member from Davenport.

Mr Tony Ruprecht (Davenport): I'll be sharing my time with the member from Scarborough Southwest. At the same time I'd like to welcome Dr John Kotowski, who is joining us for this debate. He was one of the founding members of the Polish Canadian community. Welcome to him.

Anyone watching this debate can see quite clearly that the opposition is trying to drown out the position of our party, drown out the positive aspects of this debate and drown out the positive aspects of this budget. While it is true that the opposition's job is to try to point out the weakness in the campaign toward good health care, to try to point out the weakness in the budget, I will tell you, it is also the job of the opposition to point out some of the positive parts of this budget. Have you done that? No; you're like a mad dog after a bone. You're just concentrating solely on the negative parts of it. That's why you've been called the prophet of doom and gloom, and I will stick by it.

Why is the opposition only concentrating on the problem of the health premium? They're saying it's going to cost the majority of Ontarians \$900—

Hon Joseph Cordiano (Minister of Economic Development and Trade): Not true.

Mr Ruprecht: —which is not true, but everywhere we see today—open the paper, and when you open your mouth, it's always the same story: "It's going to cost us \$900." It simply is not true.

I want the public to know that at \$21,000 of income, you pay exactly \$5 a month. That's the premium you pay, and not a penny more. What we're talking about here are two different kinds of visions. We're talking about a different vision from what you had in the past.

I'm not going to stand here and tell you about the broken promises of the Conservative Party. There were a lot of broken promises. I've got them right here. I'm not going to lower myself and read out all the broken promises of that party.

For your information, I also have all the broken promises of the NDP. If you'd like for me to read them all

out—they're right here, but I'm not going to do that. I'm not going to do that.

Hon Mrs Bountrogianni: Do it.

Mr Ruprecht: No, I'm not going to do that. One lie does not create another lie in this kind of atmosphere.

We're talking about a different kind of vision. You know what the vision of the McGuinty government is. It's outlined in this budget. While it is true that no one is perfect, and while it is true that it was tough to make a decision, the question we should ask ourselves—in fact, the question all Ontarians should ask themselves—is: Who do you trust more? Did you trust the former leader of the Conservative Party?

Mr Dunlop: Yes.

Mr Ruprecht: Yeah, right. Did you trust the former leader? We know the policies of the former Conservative government. We've got them all right here. We know all the broken promises.

Did the public trust the NDP and their policies? No. It was obvious what happened on October 2. But my friends, it is clear. I and my colleagues here and a vast majority of Ontarians trust Dalton McGuinty. Why do they trust Dalton McGuinty? Why do they trust him, essentially, in the end?

Interjection.

Mr Ruprecht: I said that no one was perfect—but in the end it's a question of vision.

What was your vision? What was the vision of your party? What was it? Do you know what it was? I've got the vision right here, full of broken promises that you're accusing us of today. What was your vision? Your vision was one of division. Your vision was one of scapegoating. Your vision was one of setting up one person against another, one group against another group. That was your vision. And do you know what, my friends? That vision was sorely rejected at the polls.

What's the vision over here from the NDP? What's that kind of vision? Some people say it's not a bad vision; it just so happens that the Liberal vision, the vision of Dalton McGuinty, is the best under the circumstances.

I said there was no perfection here, and you know if you had to make the decisions for the benefit of the people of Ontario, you probably would have done the same thing, if you asked yourselves in our own hearts. Ask yourself: Faced with the budget deficit of close to \$6 billion, what could you have done that would have been better? I know what you would have done, and all of us on this side know what you would have done: You would have cut services. True or not? Would you have cut services? That's the question. Because you'd have to cut services.

Interjection.

Mr Ruprecht: And do you know what? Let me tell you something else—

The Acting Speaker: Order. The member from Simcoe North, I don't know what you're showing. What do you have there?

Mr Dunlop: Mr Speaker, I want to show you a picture of Dalton McGuinty.

The Acting Speaker: I think you want to remove that. I don't want to see that. Put it down. I don't want to see that again. Continue, member for Davenport.

Mr Ruprecht: I'll tell you the experience I had in this last campaign. It was the Conservative candidate who in a public meeting looked me straight in the eye and said, "Do you know what? There is no budget deficit." I said, "Yes, there is. There is a budget deficit of \$2 billion." Today, my friends, the truth is different. There is no budget deficit of \$2 billion; no, there's a budget deficit of \$5.6 billion to \$6 billion. That's the legacy.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order. The member from Durham and the member from Simcoe North, I want a little more quiet in here. I want to hear the member. Member from Davenport.

Mr Ruprecht: I'm trying to point out that it's a question of vision. The vision of our party and the vision of our leader, whom we trust, is clear: We are in this boat together. If one member of our crew hurts, we're all affected by it. If you suffer, Garfield, we're affected by it—yes or no? You could shut this whole place down just by yourself. Imagine that. If you suffer, we all suffer. What we're saying simply—because you still don't understand—is that we are one family here. We're one family in one big boat, and that boat is called Ontario.

Interjection.

Mr Ruprecht: What we're saying to you today is that we have a vision that looks after our family members. That was not your vision but that's the vision of Dalton McGuinty. We are a family, and do you know what, Mr Dunlop? Even you belong to our family, you who are shouting right now and trying to shut us down on this side. You belong to us too. You belong to this family.

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The question is simple; it's a vision question: Do we look after the members of the Ontario public or don't we? And if we try to ensure that all of us are part and parcel of this vision, if we look to that, then there's only one conclusion to come to: Dalton McGuinty didn't do this because he wanted to enrich himself. Dalton McGuinty didn't do this because he wanted to hurt somebody. Dalton McGuinty, our party, the Treasurer and the finance minister did this because we wanted to ensure that all of us have a stake in this system. We all have a stake in the system. Even the most poor, the most disenfranchised, have a stake in this system. If one hurts, we all hurt. We know that's true. It sounds corny; yes, it might sound corny, but you remember SARS don't you? You remember SARS and how quickly it spread. We are not only a global community; we're certainly a community right here in Ontario.

We remember. What decision could Dalton McGuinty have made when he was faced with the mess you left behind? You'll remember that Mr Kennedy, who is the Minister of Education today, said to all of us in the opposition, "Garfield, go to your schools and look at the

infrastructure, look the buildings, look at the swimming pools, look at the schools.”

Mr Dunlop: We don't have swimming pools in Simcoe county.

Mr Prue: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I'd just like the Chair to rule. The member for Davenport, at the beginning of his speech, said he was sharing his time with the member for Scarborough Southwest. Does that mean the member for Scarborough Southwest has now exhausted his speaking time?

The Acting Speaker: No, he hasn't.

Questions and comments?

Mr Ruprecht: On a point of order, Mr Speaker—

The Acting Speaker: Yes? What's the point of order?

Mr Ruprecht: The member for Scarborough Southwest indicated—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Come on, now.

Questions and comments?

Mr Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka): I could scarcely believe my ears a minute ago when I heard the member for Davenport talking about, “Trust Dalton McGuinty.” Trust Dalton McGuinty. I'm reading today's newspaper. It says, “Voter Support for McGuinty's Liberals Plummet, says Poll....”

“The poll also found the Premier is bearing the brunt of voter discontent....” Only 9% of the people of Ontario trust Dalton McGuinty.

He's talking about the deficit. The deficit games that the Liberal government is playing with the budget they just brought in are quite interesting, some of the games they're up to.

What about the consultation that went into the decision to take Muskoka out of the north? They talk about being an open and accountable government. It was quite a surprise for the people of Muskoka when they learned, the day after the budget came out, that there was a line on page 96 of the budget papers that removes Muskoka from the north. I think this is very unfair, particularly in light of the fact that they talk about consulting. Well, there was no consultation with the people of Muskoka. They just slid it in there and didn't discuss it with the municipalities, with the people who will be affected by reduced health care, or with the municipalities that won't be receiving northern Ontario heritage funds. It was just slid into the budget without any consultation whatsoever. The people of Muskoka are just now realizing what transpired on May 18, when the provincial budget came down, and the tremendous effect it will be having on the people of Muskoka. That's why I've received about 2,500 petitions to this point, and a few hundred arriving every day, as people mobilize to fight the government on this partisan and unfair move to remove Muskoka from the north that's in the provincial budget.

Ms Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East): I'm very pleased to rise and make comments on the debate by the member for Davenport. One of the first things the member raised was the issue of trust. If he really, truly believes the people of Ontario trust this government, that

it's going to be acting in their best interests, I can tell you he hasn't been reading the papers and he hasn't been knocking on doors. What I'm hearing is exactly the opposite. The people of Ontario—certainly the people of Hamilton East—the people who right now are talking to the federal cousins of the government in this provincial Legislature are saying, “We do not trust Liberals. We will trust anybody but the Liberals.” Why is that? It's because they were betrayed by this budget.

The member talked a little bit about vision. He talked about a shared kind of vision, that we're all one family. I can tell you that when you're in a family, you don't cut the legs off the most vulnerable member; you support the most vulnerable member of the family. You pull together as a family and you say, “We support the most vulnerable members of the family.” You don't cut their legs off; you don't whack them; you support them. You tell them, “We understand that you're vulnerable,” and you provide extra supports for them, not the opposite. You tell them, “We will take your extra burden and share it equally amongst those who are most able to share that burden.” That's what a family does; that's what vision is; that's what teamwork is. That's not what this budget is. This budget is exactly the opposite.

When people in Ontario are asking the question of whom to trust, it's certainly not this government, because this government brought down a budget that broke the trust of the people. After only a few months in office, the trust of the people was broken by this budget. So the member for Davenport needs to get out there and start talking to some of these people to understand exactly where the will of the public is on the issue of the budget.

The Acting Speaker: The Chair recognizes the member from Scarborough Southwest.

Mr Lorenzo Berardinetti (Scarborough Southwest): Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr O'Toole: That's his maiden speech.

Mr Berardinetti: No, I made that earlier today.

I just wanted to make a few remarks. I know that in the rotation, the next speakers will be the Conservatives, and from there we'll go on to the NDP. I would ask, and I guess this is a question to all who are here tonight: Let's debate. We're here till midnight. The member from Davenport, Mr Ruprecht, made a passionate speech for 10 minutes about how he felt about the budget. I would like to hear from each and every member of the Conservative caucus, as well as every member from the NDP caucus here today and other colleagues of mine from the Liberal caucus. So when the time comes, in the next few minutes, and you get your chance to speak, don't ring the bells to adjourn the debate. Don't ring the bells to adjourn the House. Let's debate. We're here. We've decided to stay till midnight. I'm happy to stay here till midnight.

Let's look at the issues: the education issue; the issue of health care. Are we better off today in education, in health care or in the way that cities are operating than we were five years ago or in 1995 when the Tories took power? We weren't, in my view, and I'd like to debate

that with the Conservatives. I want to hear what the Tories have to say on these issues.

I think that in the remarks made by the member from Davenport, he made it clear that he felt the Conservatives and the NDP didn't come through or wouldn't come through with good ideas and good plans. We put our plans on the table, and they should be debated.

So, please. I don't think it's appropriate that you should sit here and ring the bells, as the member from Trinity-Spadina did. We could sit here till midnight. It's only 25 after 8. I'm more than happy to sit here till midnight today. We'll do the same tomorrow. We'll do the same Wednesday. We'll do the same Thursday. Let's spend time in the House here and discuss this matter and not ring the bells, which I know they're going to do. Shame on them.

Mr John Yakabuski (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke): I am pleased to respond to the member from Davenport, but I also wanted to respond to the member from Scarborough Southwest. He says we shouldn't be ringing the bells in here. If we had our druthers, we wouldn't be ringing them. But I'll tell you, the people in Ontario sure had their bell rung on May 18. That was quite a blow.

The members of the government are saying that we're being unfair, that we're being vicious, that we're saying all these bad things about this budget. But I think the people of Ontario have said something about the budget: 9%—that's single digits—say the Premier's doing a good job. Dalton McGuinty's latest poll from Osprey news service—9% of Ontarians say Dalton McGuinty's doing a good job. He is sinking like a rock and like an anchor, and he's dragging down the Prime Minister with him.

So are we hard on the budget? We're only reflecting what the people of the province of Ontario are telling us to do. They took a body blow on May 18, and they're trying to respond in the only way they know how. They're asking us as members of the loyal opposition to stand for them and say, "We've got to get a message across to the government." They can't take it. Their pockets have been picked, and there's nothing left.

They need some relief. Relief could come in the form of proper public hearings to deal with this budget matter. Let's go back to the people and ask them, "How do you really feel about this budget?" That sham of a consultation process that was stocked and stacked with whoever the government wanted to bring to give them the message they wanted and come out with a budget that they did in the end anyway—sorry, Mr Speaker, I've run out of time.

2030

The Acting Speaker: Response?

Mr Ruprecht: To the member for Parry Sound-Muskoka: Thank you very much for your comments. But I just wanted to remind you, when you say that people have not been consulted: Do you remember what happened when the government that you had was downloading on the municipalities? "Downloading" means providing the services and giving them to the municipalities for their responsibility. The suffering that that caused was tremendous. Do you remember that?

I remember the member from Hamilton East saying we're not looking after the most vulnerable. I just want to remind you: Which party was it that increased for the first time, after at least 12 years, the minimum wage? Which party was it? It wasn't your party; it was the Liberal Party.

The member from Scarborough Southwest had a good idea. He said: "Stop making the circus here. Don't start ringing the bells." You want to debate this budget? Point at some of the good points in the budget as well, and let me just tell you about some of the good points in the budget, which you don't want to show to the people of Ontario. The good points are shorter waiting lists for radiation and chemotherapy, nine new MRI sites, improvements in home care for 95,000 more Ontarians, from one bath to two, meningitis vaccination for children, 8,000 new full-time nursing positions.

It is very clear that people out there need to be informed and not to be misinformed. You are solely misinforming the people. You're trying to shout us down, as you are trying to shout me down right now. The point is basically this: There are many items in this budget which are very positive, and I'm asking you today to stop your negativity and gloom and bloom and whatever. Point out to us what is the best part of this budget. Point out the good parts, because that is part of the opposition as well.

Mr O'Toole: It is indeed my distinct pleasure, on behalf of the opposition, to bring some dignity and some content to the debate on the budget. I'm going to start with quite a shocking statement of the testimony of the integrity of the government. I'm reading an official document, signed by the Premier of Ontario, I might say.

Interjection: Which Premier?

Mr O'Toole: Well, it's Greg Sorbara—no, pardon me. It's actually Dalton who? No, pardon me, McGuinty. In all respect, it is signed. I'll retract that, because it is respect for the Premier—

The Acting Speaker: Member for Durham, can you withdraw that? Are you going to withdraw?

Mr O'Toole: Yes.

The Acting Speaker: OK.

Mr O'Toole: I'm going to read it. It says: "I, Dalton McGuinty, leader of the Liberal Party of Ontario, promise, if my party is elected as the next government, that I will not raise taxes or implement new taxes without the explicit consent of Ontario voters, and not run deficits. I promise to abide by the Taxpayer Protection and Balanced Budget Act." It was signed by the now Premier of Ontario. It's dated September 11.

What struck me on this was the date: September 11; the twin towers. Does it ring a bell with you? The gloom around that event, echoed by this statement here by the now Premier, signed and witnessed in a testimonial document, should convince the people of Ontario that they're—unfortunately, some of my wording might be too strong—not to be trusted. It's not new to the Liberal Party. We're hearing all sorts of promises. We heard 230-plus promises—Mr Speaker, you know that full well—many of which have been reneged upon, to the dis-

appointment of all members of the House, many, I might say, members of the government. I'm going to reach into my testimonial bag here and recite some of those to draw to their attention that you can do the right thing for the people, your constituents, the people who placed their trust in you. Do the right thing. Really, all I'm calling for is, not to reverse the budget—I understand that; there's a whole debate about that—it's to have public hearings. I ask, with all the humbleness that I can muster—

Interjection: Humility.

Mr O'Toole:—and humility, to have public hearings. We, as the feeble, well, not feeble, but certainly the limited opposition—with the limited resources, now that the NDP have all the resources—will be positive. We will work toward three critical things that I want you to do, three critical things that I humbly urge you to do on behalf of the people:

Rescind the tax on health care. What a deception. Is that permissible? It's obfuscation. You said, "I will not raise your taxes once cent." I can remember those ads, the million-dollar American ads. You saw them. It's that sort of language that actually diminishes the importance—each member here should be insulted by those artificial promises because our integrity here, collectively, is at stake.

There are some members on the other side who do have the courage to speak with integrity—and at some risk, I might say, because they'll never see the light of cabinet. They'll never know the inside of the padded door of the secret room. But you will get re-elected because your constituents know you're listening and responding.

Some of the members of cabinet, I'm surprised—I know their integrity. But, you know, Dalton and Finance Minister Sorbara are running it via those little minions in the Premier's office. I sense it in the hallways. The ministers don't have any say. I'm hearing it myself. But I'm going to mention just a few of the members who I think should be saved from the great sinking of the Titanic, the 9% in the polls. One of the members is already smiling. He knows that he's on the right track. The member for Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh said he wasn't happy with everything in the budget. He spoke out. I give him a vote of confidence. I hope he's returned in their demise. And Phil McNeely, the member for Ottawa-Orléans called the budget "brutal." You can almost feel the gravity of that word, "brutal." He knew. He may have been talking about the chiropractors, because they know how brutal this really is.

But Kim Craitor has been on every side of every issue since he started. I don't know where he is. He demands that McGuinty restore the coverage for health care services slashed. This was on the Niagara Falls—actually, the opening of the casino, the big bank-robbery event, is happening tomorrow in Niagara Falls, so button up your back pocket and attend the event.

Tonight here, I must say this. The Liberal whip told chiropractors—I have thousands of petitions. I was not allowed to read them today, for the record. I intend to

read every single one. The Liberal whip told chiropractors that he felt their pain—he should have had an adjustment right then and there—and suggested McGuinty would revisit the decision. I offer him the opportunity tonight to stand in his place and simply call for public hearings—more real consultation. It's not that hard. Take your time. We're here to listen. We care. We feel the pain too.

Our constituents are outraged. I met with them on Friday night. I listened to chiropractors, about 30 were there, and they worked all day. Many of them were men and women from a very professional background. I could tell by the sensitivity with which they spoke how they care about their patients. They really do. And they're now concerned that they're going to have to lower their fees. I'm concerned. Marie Bountrogianni, who's now a minister, will be fighting to lower the premiums. She's here tonight and she feels the pain. It's in that sentiment that I, reluctantly, because they won't listen to us, move adjournment of debate.

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

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Call in the members. This is a 30-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 2039 to 2109.

The Acting Speaker: All those in favour of the motion, please rise and remain standing.

All those opposed, please rise and remain standing.

Deputy Clerk: The ayes are 11; the nays are 30.

The Acting Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

Further debate?

Mr O'Toole: Once again, there's evidence here that they are bullying the opposition. They've tried to stifle the comments I've made, but this speaks on behalf of Dr James Hadden, bachelor of science, doctor of chiropractic. I met with him on Friday, June 4. They're outraged by the delisting of access to public health care.

Mr Yakabuski: Their patients are outraged, John.

Mr O'Toole: The patients are just the victims of this whole circumstance. But in the very limited time, while I've been stifled, I want to indicate three parts of their budget that are clearly evidence of questionable accounting practices.

I refer to their budget, page 70: \$1.6 billion in health tax; the unusual treatment of the \$4 billion in the CHST transfer from the federal government, not in-year; and the more tragic tax treatment of the electricity, which the consumers of Ontario will soon see arrive in their bill.

I am outraged that they won't listen. They won't listen. They've refused to have the referendum. Now they're refusing to have public hearings. We've heard from the member for Trinity-Spadina, and it's in this spirit of outrage that I move adjournment of the House.

The Acting Speaker: The member from Durham has moved the adjournment of the House.

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

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say “nay.”

I declare that the nays have it.

Call in the members; a 30-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 2112 to 2142.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Bruce Crozier): Mr O’Toole has moved adjournment of the House.

All those in favour will stand and remain standing.

All those opposed will stand and remain standing.

Deputy Clerk: The ayes are 9; the nays are 31.

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

The member for Durham.

Mr O’Toole: It’s with sadness that I speak because I feel bullied, humbled and bullied, by the Liberals, who promised one thing during the election and after the election—we know the rest of the story. We know that Tony Ruprecht and his friends will ram this through and silence the voice of the people of Ontario.

Dr James Hadden said it best when he said that denying access is downloading to their patients. You should be ashamed of yourselves.

The Deputy Speaker: The member’s time has expired. It’s time for questions and comments.

Mr Marchese: I just want to congratulate the member from Durham. And I’ve got to say to him, we have a lot in common—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr Marchese: And let me tell you what we have in common, and it might not be a lot, but what he’s requesting and what we’re requesting are hearings. We have that in common.

I remember Jim Bradley, Dwight Duncan, now the Minister of Energy, and all of the others—you remember, Dwight? We would never allow the Conservatives to get away with not having hearings, and we would be obstructionist, you and us together. So what we’re asking of you is what we asked of them.

This is a budget.

Hon Mrs Bountrogianni: Do you miss us over there?

Mr Marchese: This is a budget, Marie, and you want the budget to get out there and be debated, and not for the public to tell you what they think so much as for you to tell them what you think. It’s about you. I am doing this to help you out so that you can defend your budget so eloquently, as you’re doing in this House, out there with the public, so you can tell them how they will have vaccinations and so many other good things. Yes, between hard choices, you had to get rid of a couple of things, but it’s not so bad; good heavens. Taking away physiotherapy, chiropractic services, optometry: It’s not so bad. You can defend it. I know that you can, because you are so, so articulate and so eloquent. Please, don’t refuse yourselves the thrill, the pleasure, of defending yourself in public, with public hearings.

That’s what we’re asking. That’s why we’re ringing bells, together with the Tories, ringing bells in protest, because you refuse to have public meetings. That we have in common.

Hon Dwight Duncan (Minister of Energy, Government House Leader): I am pleased to respond to this. Let’s look at some history. The Harris-Eves government had 16 budget bills. How many of them had public hearings? None. Harris-Eves time-allocated 13 out of 16 budget bills. No committee hearings. No third reading debate.

The Harris-Eves government used time allocation more than any government in the history of this province or this country. In the case of the Eves government, 92% of the time they used time allocation. Under Mr Harris, it was 86%. Has the McGuinty government used it yet? No.

Who says we’re not going to have committee hearings on the budget bill before us? You’ve been saying that; we’ve never said that at all, and we had an extensive consultation before the budget. You don’t want to talk about the budget because you don’t want to talk about a government that’s dealing with the \$5.6-billion deficit you left, with the 39 hospitals you closed, with the doctors you let go.

To my friend Mr Marchese, you time-allocated the social contract. You’re a phony. You’re full of hot air. You’re so full of hot air, you could float around the world in 89 days, not 90 days. You time-allocated the Rae Days. You didn’t consult when you didn’t keep any of your election promises. You broke your auto insurance policy. Hydro rates went up 43% under your government. You cut medical school enrolment 10%, and we’re feeling the impact of that today.

It’s good to see the two of you getting along together. You know why? Because you were both failed governments. We had 13 lost years with those governments. We’re cleaning up your mess, we’re doing away with your hot air and we’re fixing health care and education, more than you ever could do.

Mr Yakabuski: It’s good to see the Minister of Energy so animated and worked up this evening. He must have been hooked up to one of the generating units at Nanticoke this afternoon.

One of the very significant points that needs to be made is that this party said things were going to change, things were going to be different: “We’re going to usher in a new era of democratic renewal.” Well, that’s just another broken promise.

But do you know what’s happened with those broken promises? The people in Ontario are not very happy. They’re not very happy. Nine per cent of the people think Dalton McGuinty’s doing a good job but, in fact, a Toronto Sun-Decima poll says that 4% of the people in Ontario say they’re happy with the budget. Mind you, that same 4% said they enjoy a bout with kidney stones.

However, where did these people get their advice? Where did they get their advice?

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, Minister.

Mr Yakabuski: Who told them this is what the people wanted? Four per cent are happy with the budget; 52% feel the budget is from bad to terrible. That’s quite a

range to be in: bad to terrible. That's really encouraging, isn't it?

2150

So this is what we get now, the Minister of Energy talking about history when this party said they were going to change history: "We're going to do things differently. We're going to give MPPs an enhanced role." Look at the MPPs over there. They're here in the Legislature because it's safer. They don't want to go to their ridings and try to sell this budget, because the people are on—

The Deputy Speaker: Questions and comments?

Mr Prue: I'm going to try to tone it down just a little bit, and I'm probably going to make the Tories angry for the first one minute here. I have to tell you, part of the reason I first ran in the by-election when I came to this House was because we couldn't take it any more. The people of Toronto couldn't take it any more about the downloading. We couldn't take it any more about the amalgamations. We couldn't take it any more about the schools or the hospitals. We couldn't take it any more about what this government was doing. I will tell you, I came here to fight them with all my heart.

Now, for the last minute, I have to tell you that what disappoints me is that many of you are acting exactly the same way that these guys did. They would not hold public hearings. They time-allocated everything. They did stuff that would not allow this Legislature to act in a proper fashion.

All that is being asked here today is a very simple thing, and all I am hoping that this new government will do is to be different from the Tories. Be different from them. Just go out and ask the real people the real questions. Just go out to committee, even if it's only for a week, even if you don't travel outside this building. Actually listen to what real people have to say about this budget and do the unthinkable, do the absolutely politically unthinkable, that is, make some changes in this budget if you, after consulting the people, think those changes ought to be made.

Hon Mr Duncan: How many days of committee hearings did you have on the social contract?

Mr Prue: I don't know what you're talking about, Dwight. I never know what you're talking about. You are so irrelevant to this place, so irrelevant that no one ever knows what you're talking about. You stand up and you bluster. Well, I'm going to tell you, do the right thing that a party should do, and we will remember it. Be like the Tories and you'll end up like the Tories: out of here.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Durham has two minutes to reply.

Mr O'Toole: It is a sad, sad day for democracy.

Interjections.

Mr O'Toole: Actually, Mr Speaker, I feel bullied. I feel intimidated because I'm being bullied; they're attempting to be intimidating.

I'd like to thank the member from Trinity-Spadina because he had it right. He said it in his own remarks. He said we could solve this amicably and peacefully simply

by having real public hearings. Many members on the government side know you've done the wrong thing. You've acted hastily.

The member from Windsor-St Clair, as the House leader, knows you're time-allocating, in any language, this budget bill, this draconian piece of legislation.

As to the member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke, you have to get a copy of his remarks. It's worth repeating.

To the member from Beaches-East York: In all sincerity, I know their hearts are in the right place, even though they had to time-allocate the social contract. I know that.

Mr Prue: I wasn't here.

Mr O'Toole: He was the mayor of East York at the time, but he was behind it in spirit.

My humble submission tonight, and I mean this most sincerely, is that you listen to the people who are knocking on your doors and e-mailing you. Some of you have stood on principle. Some of you should recognize that we're all here to make a difference. Stand and ask—all we ask for is public hearings. You promised a referendum. You promised many things, 230 promises, but what you've failed to deliver is real democracy, real change.

I appeal to you tonight to listen to the chiropractors, not just from Durham. You've denied people access to health care, optometry—the list is endless, and I'm going to be against this budget.

The Deputy Speaker: Further debate?

Ms Churley: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am going to bring the level and the tone of the debate way down.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

Ms Churley: Of course, people expect me not to yell or be partisan in any way.

Interjections.

Ms Churley: Do you see what's happened already, just to say it like it is?

I don't know if I've ever quoted my daughter in this place before, because I know what people will say.

Interjection: Because she lives in Newfoundland.

Ms Churley: No, she lives here in Toronto. She's the mother of three kids and she stays at home with the kids. Her partner is a renovator, a very skilled renovator and carpenter. She's an at-home mom. They decided that it made more sense for her to stay at home with the kids than to pay for child care for three of them. We all know what that's like. They're having a pretty tough time.

I'm using my daughter, and I know it's a bit risky because you will expect that she's going to be somewhat partisan. But I have to say this to you: My daughter is not all that involved in politics. She pays attention and she's there for me on election day, but she doesn't have a great deal of comment about it overall.

I checked my voice mail on my cellphone the other day. It was my daughter and she sounded very agitated. I'm going to quote her because I think it reflects what a lot of people in her family's position are feeling these days. I'm going to leave out some of the more, shall I say,

descriptive words in her quote—they're probably unparliamentary—but here's what she said:

"I was watching the legislative channel," and there was a great deal of passion and anger in her voice. "You get those"—fill in the blank there. "It so pisses me off. The PCs screwed me over as a single mother"—

The Deputy Speaker: No, no. I don't think you should quote something that you wouldn't normally say in this place.

Ms Churley: I say "pissed off" all the time.

The Deputy Speaker: Well, member from Toronto-Danforth, I happen not to appreciate it, so I'd ask that you use more—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Minister, order.

I'd ask that you use more temperate language.

Ms Churley: I must tell you that that's the way I'm feeling. She went on to say: "The PCs screwed me over as a single mother struggling to make it, and now the Liberals are screwing me and my family over"—

The Deputy Speaker: Member for Toronto-Danforth, you're pushing the envelope. I'm asking you to use parliamentary language.

Ms Churley: Mr Speaker, this is—

The Deputy Speaker: I'm not here to debate you.

Ms Churley: I'm not saying it any more, Mr Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: I'm warning the member from Toronto-Danforth.

Ms Churley: Excuse me, but this is the way people are feeling out there, Mr Speaker. What my daughter said—and she doesn't normally talk like that—is reflective of how angry and upset people are feeling out there after eight years of these guys. She was a single mother, who felt every day the impact of those policies on her, and now she's with a family and she's struggling to make it.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker: Minister, you're not helping.

Ms Churley: She's describing how she feels. Let me tell you, that is the tone of most of the people, and worse.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. We're going to tone it down or we're going to take a little break. One or the other, OK? The member for Toronto-Danforth.

Ms Churley: Thank you, Mr Speaker. That is the tone, and you should listen carefully to this. You think it's unparliamentary language. Well, perhaps it's—

The Deputy Speaker: Member, you don't have to yell at me. I told you, we're going to have to tone this down just a hair. You said you were going to tone it down; I'm asking you to do that.

Ms Churley: Mr Speaker, I am speaking in my style.

The Deputy Speaker: Well, I'll take that under consideration.

Ms Churley: We'll all be watching carefully. Mr Speaker, the tone of the rest of the debate and how that goes.

I am trying to tell the Liberals here, using my daughter as an example. She is the mother of three, with a family

that is struggling, thinking that here we have a new government and that things were going to be better for them. If I sound angry, I am angry, and I have a right to express that in this place. I most certainly do.

What I'm trying to demonstrate here, as graphically as possible, is that my daughter, her partner and the three kids are struggling to make it on one salary. He's self-employed and doesn't have benefits. They struggle. They're making do. They get by from month to month. It was quite a shock for them to have this government come forward with a budget that actually—let me use a more parliamentary word—whacks them once again, if that is parliamentary enough for this place.

Let me go back to why I am so angry. I remember that before the election, Janet Ecker, the then Tory Minister of Finance, held a press conference in this place because there were a lot of rumours and discussions out there about a large Tory deficit, which we all knew about. I remember going to that press conference. I'm no accountant, but even I, looking between the lines of that budget, could see that there was at least a \$5-billion hidden deficit, and I went out and said that to the press.

Now, let me tell you something. If I could figure out, by reading between the lines, that it was at least a \$5-billion deficit, I would imagine that the finance critic and others from the Liberal Party could figure it out. I'm going to quote to you here:

"Before the election, McGuinty Liberals predicted Ontario would ring up big budget and structural deficits. On June 3, 2003, then Liberal finance critic Gerry Phillips told the standing committee on estimates, 'We're adding up the risks associated with this [2003-04] budget, and we've come to ... \$5 billion.'

"Phillips also forecasted Ontario's structural deficit. 'Billions of dollars of off-book debt are piling up on school boards, hospitals, universities, colleges and nursing home owners,' he wrote in the June 7, 2002, edition of his Treasury Watch newsletter. 'The province has guaranteed to pay the principal and interest, but there is at least \$5 billion of fairly new debt that does not show up on the province's books.'"

Mr Speaker, that is why I'm so angry. New Democrats, in the election, told the truth. We said there was going to be an at least \$5-billion deficit and that the only way to start reinvesting in the programs that we in this party all support, reinvesting in the programs of this province—we made it clear that we knew there had to be some tax increases. We said the truth in the election, and that it should come off the higher-income people, who, after all, got over a 30% tax decrease from the previous government. There were a number of things we said we would do that wouldn't whack people like my daughter and her family and the middle-income and poor people of this province.

Having said all of that, on behalf of my daughter, Astra, and her partner, Chris, and the three kids, Savanna, James, and Kerin, I'm now going to move that we adjourn the debate.

The Deputy Speaker: Ms Churley has moved adjournment of the debate. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

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

The division bells rang from 2203 to 2233.

The Deputy Speaker: Ms Churley has moved adjournment of the debate.

All those in favour will stand and remain standing, please.

All those opposed will stand and remain standing.

Deputy Clerk: The ayes are 9; the nays are 29.

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion defeated. The member for Toronto-Danforth.

Ms Churley: Speaker, you wanted me to reflect on some of my earlier comments, and I did that. But I think I need a little bit more time to reflect. So therefore, I move adjournment of the House.

Interjections.

Ms Churley: Thank me. Get out there quick. Five minutes.

The Deputy Speaker: Ms Churley has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

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

The division bells rang from 2235 to 2305.

The Deputy Speaker: Ms Churley has moved adjournment of the House.

All those in favour will please stand and remain standing.

All those opposed will stand and remain standing.

Deputy Clerk: The ayes are 9; the nays are 27.

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

Is there time? The member for Toronto-Danforth

Ms Churley: While I was reflecting on my earlier comments, I was watching the end of the hockey game. I have to say that we're very sad. Calgary just lost. I don't know, Speaker, if you had an opportunity to leave the chair and see, but they lost. But we do want to congratulate both teams on games well played. It was a pleasure to see all the great hockey being played up until tonight. Again, I just want to congratulate Calgary—yay, team—for playing a good game. There you go.

I'm looking forward now to getting into baseball, which for me is more of a spring-summer kind of game anyway. It's kind of weird playing hockey in the middle of summer, with the weather in Florida, what, over 80 degrees or something.

Mr Speaker, I will have an opportunity to have a few more comments about the bill before us in my two-minute summary.

The Deputy Speaker: Questions and comments?

Ms Caroline Di Cocco (Sarnia-Lambton): It is sad that Calgary didn't bring home the cup, as they say.

There is another point I must make in this debate. I heard the member from Toronto-Danforth as she spoke and began the debate on this bill, and I have to say that her use of unparliamentary language, as a grandmother, I found quite offensive. In my opinion, this is not a place where we use that type of language. Dramatics is what it's used for, not to really debate the issues, unfortunately.

The rhetoric, that kind of conduct in this place has to change. If we want to make this place more relevant, it's time we stop the theatrics and start dealing with facts, and we should debate based on facts. We can agree to disagree, but we don't have to use those kinds of theatrics. I think the public is sick and tired of that, and I think it debases all of us in this place. I would suggest that we reflect on the way we behave in this House and not use theatrics and that kind of language here. I believe there's a reason it's called unparliamentary language. If you are in this place and you've been elected to represent your constituents, you should behave that way. I was really disappointed to hear the member from Toronto-Danforth use that kind of language.

Mr Dunlop: I'm pleased to rise and make a few comments on the comments of the member for Toronto-Danforth.

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The member for Sarnia-Lambton mentioned that people are sick and tired of unparliamentary language or whatever, but I'll tell you what they're really sick and tired of. They're sick and tired of broken promises. We've set a record in this province, in this country, for Liberal broken promises since October 2 of last year.

We're ringing these bells tonight, and I know the people of the province probably aren't happy with the bells ringing, but we could quit ringing the bells right now if we could agree to have committee hearings this summer. That's all we're asking for. This government talks about their consultation process talking to all the people in the province. Now, no one in the province of Ontario heard anything about a health premium, other than Paul Martin in his secret calls to Dalton McGuinty. The fact of the matter is, let's go on the road and see what the people of Ontario think about the health premium, what they think about the delisting of health care services. That's all we're asking for. The people in Kenora, Timmins, Toronto, Ottawa, Kitchener, wherever, all want to hear more and want to comment on the health care premiums, not in one day downstairs.

That's what the people of Ontario are sick and tired of: broken promises. If you can't have the committee hearings, what should we have? I think we should go back to the Taxpayer Protection Act and have a referendum. I wonder how well the Liberals would do in a referendum. If Dalton McGuinty is doing 9%, it would fail and the government would come down.

Ms Horwath: It's been a week now since I was sworn in, and I have to say that I really appreciate very much the comments raised by my colleague Marilyn Churley. I was quite surprised, actually. I'm trying to get a handle, a

grip on exactly what is and what isn't unparliamentary language. I've heard a lot of language in this Legislature, Mr Speaker, and I'm trying to figure out where the rules are. I'm learning. I'm a bit of a newbie here, and I'll admit that. But I have to tell you that I've heard many, many people quoting others and reading from statements, many other people who happen to be of a different gender than the speaker who spoke earlier. I can't quite figure it out. I can't quite figure out how the comments of my colleague were not parliamentary when I've heard other language that was far worse. I just need to understand that. Perhaps I will ask the Clerk's office to help clarify that for me, because quite frankly, it seems a little bit of a bias in terms of how people are interpreting whether something is or isn't appropriate language. Nonetheless, I'll leave that and I'll get some clarification on that myself at another time, Mr Speaker.

But the anger reflected in the comments made by my colleague is quite clearly what's being spoken and felt and what's being dealt with, actually, by the federal cousins of this government on the campaign trail. That anger and frustration is out there. It's loud and clear. It's ticking people off left, right and centre. The taxes in this budget are brutal. They're hurting those most unable to afford these taxes, and it's totally inappropriate. Ms Churley was right on the mark.

Mrs Linda Jeffrey (Brampton Centre): I'm happy to speak tonight, at this very late hour, in favour of our budget. I ran last October because I was a municipal politician who had lost faith in our provincial government. I was disillusioned and so disappointed with my representation that it forced me to run.

I am pleased today to say that I'm supporting our budget because it does what I tried to do as a municipal councillor. It speaks to a four-year plan. This is a novel way of doing budgeting in this House, I gather, to have a long-term plan, a vision, to have plans that incorporate all sectors and that have thoughtful, measured steps in place to ensure that our health care and education are protected for the future.

I ran because I felt that the past government didn't care about the things I care about. I feel comfortable with this budget, and I know that when I had my budget open house after Mr Sorbara launched his budget, a lot of people came in and said to me, "I know why you did this, and I'm pleased with the choices you've made. They're tough choices, but I believe in them." Many people were relieved just to actually talk to their member of Parliament. It's clear that in the past, provincial members weren't available, didn't make themselves accessible.

We are a different kind of government. Our budget shows that. We're transparent, we're accountable, and I'm proud of this budget. It's a tough choice, but I'm not here to make popular choices; I'm here to make the right choices for the province to ensure its strength for the future. I'm pleased to support it here today at this very late hour.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Toronto-Danforth has two minutes to reply.

Ms Churley: I want to thank all those who gave comments in response to my incendiary comments from before. Quite frankly, I was surprised and didn't mean to offend. I guess I talk like that. Those who know me—mother, grandmother, MPP—know I'm a fighter and I tell it like it is and I use strong language from time to time. Frankly, I didn't think that was very strong language, and I have to say you've heard worse.

What I'm doing is standing up for my daughter and her family and all those others out there who need people like me to stand up and speak clearly and strongly to reflect how angry and how upset they really are about what's happened to them, because they really can't afford this extra cost. Liberals stand up, Mr Speaker—I know you're one too and have to struggle with this as well—and say, "We had to make a choice. It was a tough choice, but it was the right choice." It was the wrong choice. That's what's really bothering me. We recognized and said in the election campaign that there needed to be a reinvestment, but why saddle the lower- and middle-income people, who can't afford it, with this extra cost?

If the Liberals are so proud of their budget, as they have said tonight time and time again, why not take it out to public hearings and give people an opportunity to tell them directly what they think? And if the Liberals are so proud of parts of their budget that they say they're not getting out there and communicating very well, what an opportunity to get out there and communicate. Clearly, they are afraid to go out and communicate this budget.

The Deputy Speaker: Further debate?

Mr Leal: I rise in the House tonight to address Bill 83. I stand in support of this legislation for many reasons, reasons that I see every day in my riding of Peterborough.

I can say with confidence that this legislation will improve the quality of life for the residents of my riding. This legislation will invest in and sustain Ontario's infrastructure.

I look forward to the day when the 20,000 Peterborough residents who don't have a family doctor will have access to a physician. I look forward to the day that those people won't have to rely on Peterborough Regional Health Centre's emergency department for primary care. I look forward to the very near future when Peterborough residents won't have to wait for cardiac procedures and cancer care.

Peterborough has the third-largest senior population in Ontario. I look forward to seeing the seniors of Peterborough get better access to home care. I also look forward to seeing conditions in our long-term-care facilities improve.

All of these things and much more will be accomplished under this budget. It's a grand vision, but it's a necessary vision. It's one that can be achieved.

I am proud to say that part of this vision has been developed in my riding. As I mentioned before, Peterborough has faced a doctor shortage for some time now. Until now, there was a lot of talk but not much action

from politicians and government. I am pleased to see that this government is not sitting idly by. It is taking action. It is stepping up to the plate.

In the Romanow report, it was suggested that primary care undergo major reform. In Peterborough we're fortunate to have a group of enterprising physicians and health care stakeholders who have taken a proactive approach, putting together a primary care reform model. This model is being used to help develop family health teams. These teams will provide Ontarians with access to a number of health care professionals in one location. One hundred and fifty family health teams will be established within four years. This will allow round-the-clock access for Ontarians who don't have a family doctor.

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I know health care is a number one priority for Ontarians, but we can't lose sight of the other initiatives this budget presents.

My riding is made up of a fairly even split between urban and rural constituents. I have heard from rural residents who often feel disconnected and overlooked because of the focus on urban centres. This legislation recognizes farmers' needs. Twenty million dollars in funding will help farmers comply with Nutrient Management Act requirements. I am also pleased to see that this bill will move forward with the government's pledge to set up a \$900-million rural infrastructure fund in partnership with municipalities and the federal government. These investments will help small towns and rural communities comply with drinking water standards, improve sewage treatment and waste management, fix local roads and repair bridges, as well as help address other health and safety priorities. The province will work closely with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario to implement the program, as well as ensure it meets local priorities.

All together, Bill 83 would allow for \$3 billion in improvements to Ontario's infrastructure. In partnership with this is the commitment to put two cents a litre of the gas tax toward public transit in urban areas. Getting people out of their cars and on to buses and rail links will improve air quality for all of us.

Nearly 10,000 of my constituents commute to the greater Toronto area on a daily basis. Developing inter-urban transit that keeps our roads free from traffic jams is of great importance. People are spending between three and four hours a day in their vehicles. This is time that would be better spent at home with their family and friends.

This legislation brings with it a commitment to create a GO bus link from Peterborough to Oshawa. I can't convey enough the importance of this vital transportation link. As I mentioned before, this will lend itself to improving our air quality. As we head into summer, we're all well aware of the number of smog days we experience. It will also lessen the stress levels of those who must sit in slow traffic every day.

I have only touched briefly on a number of items within this budget bill. I'll reiterate my support for this bill and the many benefits for Ontarians and Peterborough residents it will produce. I think it's a forward-looking budget document, a document that addresses both the fiscal deficit and the social deficit we've seen over the last eight and five years, 13 years in total, in the province of Ontario. This budget document will see this province move ahead with steady, sustained progress.

I'm sharing my time with the member from Ottawa Centre, Mr Patten.

Mr Richard Patten (Ottawa Centre): In the few minutes I have to comment on our Liberal budget—because that's what it is when you examine the way in which governments spend money: Look at where they spend money and look at where they emphasize the allocation of their resources.

Before this budget was presented—there's a history to all this. I want to remind my colleagues of the context of North America, this evangelical fanaticism and ideological position on cutting taxes: "We will cut taxes and improve services," and it never happens. You see this out of the Republican Party in the last three successive governments. In each case, it has been the Democratic Party that has been able to refocus and deal with that particular budget.

At the federal level, we had the same thing with Mulroney, a massive debt that Paul Martin had to deal with, and he did, in seven successive budgets. I hope people recognize that.

Then we had here the Harris-Eves group, who said the same thing. At the end of the day, what did we find? It wasn't the same thing, and as a government we faced dealing with a fiscal burden.

It's in that context—and you're right: They were very hard, very difficult choices. But I want to point out that this particular budget, which I'm very proud to be associated with, recognizes—here are some of the important things:

It recognizes for the first time and allows 115,000 additional senior Ontarians to have home care. It stops the closing of hospitals. It stops the cutting of welfare rates and actually adds a sum, a humble sum, mind you, but it's moving in the direction of recognizing that people were living with poor resources. It deals with the not giving of an increase for ODSP or those on disability pensions, even by an inflation factor, for eight or nine years, and this budget begins to do that.

Responsible government deals with the tough issues at hand by making difficult choices. When you're faced with the kinds of choices we have, it seems to me, in my vernacular, do you want to spend four years claiming you balanced the budget while you literally had to decrease services in every single area? We've already flatlined 15 ministries for the next four years. We would literally have had to cut health care and we would have had to cut education. That's not why we chose to run individually or collectively. We wanted to fix some of those things that were in sorry shape.

So we chose to do what I believe is the right thing, and that was to say, you know what? If we're going to be booted out, I'd rather be booted out saying we stood for trying to deal with the frail people in our society, the people who have special needs in our society, the people who haven't had a break in our society, strengthening our health care and strengthening our education.

Education has got to be the most important investment we make in the future of our society, given the nature of how economies are moving and looking at what happened: a 40% increase in the last eight years or five years in private school education openings and a drop in attendance in the public school systems. Why? Because people lost faith and trust in the quality of that. They could see the government was not supporting public education.

Our number one, number two priority is public education. We stand for it, we'll put the bucks behind it and we'll make sure our kids do a heck of a lot better. We'll make sure, by doing what? By supporting smaller classes, by supporting more teachers, by making sure we do away with the crumbling schools we have. There was an announcement made last week that provided \$200 million and that levers \$2.1 billion to try and put back into shape an infrastructure that was completely ignored by the previous government.

I say shame on you for that. We're going to re-strengthen education, health care, the environment and a whole variety of other things. I believe that, at the end of day, the people of Ontario will see that it turned out to be the right decision because it was good for the people of Ontario, it was good for our children and good for all of us.

The Deputy Speaker: The member's time has expired. Questions and comments?

Mr Tim Hudak (Erie-Lincoln): Give me a break. There is not a single tough decision in this entire budget. There's nothing difficult about increasing spending precipitously. It's raining money out there. Every kind of spending commitment you could make, you've made it and then some.

I reference it in James Wallace's column today, where he talks about the incredible increase in spending under Dalton McGuinty in his first—there's not a tough decision in that. Raising taxes on middle-class families: That's the coward's way out; that's the easy way out. Twelve hundred bucks for working families in the province of Ontario because you can't set priorities, you can't make a decision.

Dalton McGuinty couldn't make a tough decision if his life depended on it. The guy can't decide if he wants sunny side up or over easy. It takes him months to make that decision. It took him, what, seven, eight months before he decided what his fiscal approach was going to be.

Witness the Oak Ridges moraine. He said, "I'm making a tough decision. I'm drawing a line in the sand." He said that two or three times. A week later, he flip-flopped. He backed down. Dalton McGuinty came for-

ward and said, "We're putting a line in the sand," when it comes to negotiating with the unions. They talked about Dalton Days. Then Sid Ryan and OPSEU came forward and Dalton McGuinty went into the fetal position and backed down as fast as he could.

There is not a single tough decision in this budget. If you want to make a tough decision, I say to my colleagues across the floor, if you want to stand up for what I know your constituents are saying, come by tomorrow, vote in support of Mrs Witmer's resolution. Stand up for your constituents who support chiropractic care, who support physiotherapy, who support eye exams. It's a simple question. It's not a confidence motion. Yes or no, where do you stand? Do you stand behind your promises, behind your constituents or are you going to be whipped in line by Andrew Steele and his troops in the Premier's office. Let's find out tomorrow.

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The Deputy Speaker: Questions and comments? The member for Beaches-East York.

Interjection.

Mr Prue: Yes, it could be.

To the members from Peterborough and Ottawa Centre, I listened quite carefully to what you had to say, and quite frankly, some of what you started out to say makes sense. Everyone needs to look at the allocation of resources. You had to look at the allocation of resources and you found them wanting. There is no question you would find them wanting after eight years of Tory government, absolutely none.

You talked about the history of other places around North America, the history of Republicans in the United States. Yes, we know it took Democratic governments, and I agree with you, to come to the rescue of the people of that country. You also talked about the history of Mulroney. One cannot fault you on your historical analysis of Mulroney or the history of Harris-Eves.

But what you forgot to say—and here's where I come to the point. You forgot to talk about the whole Paul Martin government or era of federal politics in Canada. You forgot to talk about the cutbacks he made to health care, which have been disastrous in Ontario. You forgot to talk about the cutbacks to child care, which have been disastrous in Ontario. You forgot to talk about all the cutbacks he made in order to balance the budget and run huge budget surpluses for all those years. He has been part of the problem as well, and if you're going to talk about the history, you cannot talk about the history without naming him.

The most important thing you have forgotten is that you signed the taxpayers' protection pledge in front of thousands and millions of people. You made that pledge, and you should never have made that pledge. If you're here today because of this, you're hoist with your own petard, because you got too greedy and because you wanted to promise something you knew you could never, ever deliver.

Ms Jennifer F. Mossop (Stoney Creek): I want to say off the top that I'm not going to move to adjourn the debate or the House, even if I could, so there we go.

Mr O'Toole: Do it.

Ms Mossop: No, I couldn't. I'm not going to do it. If we're here to debate this until midnight, then we're going to get on with it and debate it. We're not going to sit around and listen to bells any more. Besides, the hockey game is over anyway, so there we go. We're stuck here.

One of the things I want to point out is that the good thing that's coming out of all this is we know for absolute sure and certain that we're not going to ever have to go through all this process again in Ontario, because we're making sure we don't have to do that.

We have already passed new legislation that gives the Provincial Auditor sweeping new powers to look into every corner of the government, including crown corporations. They will open those books to the public, to the voters, before the next election. In addition to that, we know when that next election is going to be. It's going to be on October 4, 2007.

So the voters, the people who hire and fire the people in this room, will have the full story before they go to the polls, and they won't have some big surprise. They won't have a politician saying, "Are the political winds blowing in my direction, should we go for an election now or later?" and then go, "Oh goodness, there's a Provincial Auditor's report coming. We better call the election before that. How about a month before that?" The voters go blindly into it, thinking everything is peachy keen. However, those voters were a pretty wise lot and they turfed the Tories out anyway. They kind of had a sixth sense about that.

The point is that the Tories weren't turfed out because they couldn't balance a budget—even though they couldn't balance a budget—but they were turfed out because they did such a horrendous job of running this government and this province. It's as simple as that. They decimated public services. They destroyed health care. They created an era of uncertainty. People couldn't rely on anything, including the water coming out of their taps. That's why they got turfed out.

Mr O'Toole: I was surprised and somewhat bewildered by the member for Peterborough. He should stand and acknowledge the work done by Gary Stewart. He should acknowledge it. Get over it. We understand you won.

The member for Ottawa Centre, whom I have the greatest respect for because he didn't even vote for the last motion, was a member of cabinet in the Peterson government. I'm disappointed more than he is—well, not more than he is—that he's not in cabinet today. But I'm more interested in what the member for Stoney Creek has to say because she brings the reason of the media to it all, but other things as well.

I think what's being avoided here is the real debate about the—Mr Speaker, may I use the term "obfuscation," "deception"? Which one of them? During the election, I remember the member in my riding standing in his place with a million-dollar ad saying "We'll not raise your taxes." I can never get over that. It's sort of like when Chrétien and Sheila Copps were saying, "We'll cancel the GST and free trade."

I've come to believe this: If you say "Liberal," you say—I can't say it in the House. But the people in the riding of Durham know full well that all we're asking for, in a reasonable tone, a respectful tone, is to have public hearings. The people want a voice. You've deprived them of access to government.

Interjection.

Mr O'Toole: Well, I understand, but I'm sending a copy to them, member from Niagara, the Minister of Tourism.

I respect the work he's done. When he was in opposition, he was always on our back, but I could always trust him to have a petition every single day. He usually wrote it.

Have hearings on the issue—

The Deputy Speaker: Will the member take his seat. Thank you.

The member for Toronto-Danforth has two minutes to reply.

Interjection.

Ms Churley: Yes, again. I'm still reflecting.

The people of Ontario are in a fury, and no matter how much you try to bury your heads in the sand and say, "No, no, it's not that bad," they understand. They're in a fury because people who make \$30,000 a year are going to see their provincial taxes go up by some 24%, and those making about \$200,000 are seeing their taxes going up only 3%. You don't have to be a rocket scientist to figure out why people are upset.

Interjection: She's got a point.

Ms Churley: I do have a very good point.

The other thing I want to point out to the Liberal members who just spoke is that nobody is talking about certain other aspects of the budget. But people should be aware—and this is why we need public hearings—that certain aspects of the budget aren't being discussed. It's really, really scary.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker: How about I give the member for Toronto-Danforth an extra opportunity to speak? We'll have the reply from either the member from Ottawa Centre or the member from Peterborough.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The member for Peterborough.

Mr Leal: I want to thank the members for Ottawa Centre, Erie-Lincoln, Beaches-East York, Stoney Creek and my good friend the member for Durham for their delightful insights in terms of our budget.

But let me say this. We're using the health care premiums to create targets in Ontario, to reduce waiting lists for joint replacements, cardiac care and cancer care. It's the first time, I think, in a very long time in this province that a government has actually set out a framework with targets to achieve those goals. I think it's a very important thing to do for many people who are looking for leadership to establish targets in these particular areas.

I recall my good friend from Simcoe North, who made a very eloquent address a short time ago, supporting the

apprenticeship training component of our budget. He was positive, he was enthusiastic and thought it was a great thing. We're looking for his support when we come to the final budget debate, because I know he likes that part of the budget.

But the economy is telling the tale on how well this budget has been accepted. In the month of May—I'm going to repeat; I hope they're listening: 30,800 new jobs: 30,000 full-time, 800 part-time, 9,200 in the key area of manufacturing. That shows that there's confidence in this budget, confidence in the province of Ontario and that people have confidence that we're moving forward with a positive program for Peterborough and for the whole province.

But I want to look at a couple of things. It's the first time in many years that we're starting to help the disabled and the disadvantaged in the province of Ontario. I remember in 1993 when the government of Bob Rae said to people on ODSP, "Zap, you're frozen." We're fixing that—

The Deputy Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Further debate?

Mr Dunlop: I'm pleased to rise to speak on the second reading of Bill 83. I think it's important that we

point out again to the government what's very important to our caucus, and I'm pretty sure to the NDP caucus as well: that the citizens of Ontario are expecting, and we're expecting, committee hearings throughout the summer on this piece of legislation. We think public hearings are a necessity.

With that, Mr Speaker, I'd like to move adjournment of the debate of the House.

The Deputy Speaker: Adjournment of the debate? Now, which? Adjournment of the debate?

Mr Dunlop: Yes.

The Deputy Speaker: Mr Dunlop has moved adjournment of the debate.

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

Orders of the day. No?

Hon Mr Duncan: I move adjournment of the House.

The Deputy Speaker: The government House leader has moved adjournment of the House.

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

This House stands adjourned until 1:30 of the clock Tuesday, June 8.

The House adjourned at 2342.

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