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des débats
(Hansard)**

Monday 16 May 2005

Lundi 16 mai 2005

Speaker
Honourable Alvin Curling

Président
L'honorable Alvin Curling

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Monday 16 May 2005

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 16 mai 2005

The House met at 1845.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

EDUCATION AMENDMENT ACT, 2005

LOI DE 2005 MODIFIANT LA LOI
SUR L'ÉDUCATION

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 10, 2005, for second reading of Bill 194, An Act to amend the Education Act.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Michael Prue): As I remember, on the last date, I was in my chair and had just finished making a speech. Since I am not there, I would think that there will be no questions and comments. Therefore, further debate?

The member from Trinity–Spadina.

Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity–Spadina): I was reminded by the minister from Elgin–Middlesex–London to welcome the citizens who are watching this parliamentary channel. We're on live. It's a quarter to seven. It's always a pleasure to get up in this Legislature to speak on bills, and it is no different in terms of the pleasure I have in being able to speak to this particular bill, Bill 194, An Act to amend the Education Act.

There are a number of things that are contained in this bill that some members, like the member from Beaches–East York, raised concerns about, very legitimate concerns that need to be addressed, particularly by the government.

Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism and Recreation): I heard you were speaking, so I came in to listen.

Mr. Marchese: The Minister of Tourism, of course, is very keenly interested, and that's why he joined us. By the way, even if the Minister of Tourism isn't in the assembly, he is always in this place. I know that. Even when he is not sitting here—and that's rare—he is sitting in his office, watching us, all of the time. God bless.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: You're very popular in my riding.

Mr. Marchese: I appreciate that. And that's why you came, so that you could report in person on the things that I have to say with respect to anything, particularly around this particular bill.

Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough): He's got the pulse of the people.

Mr. Marchese: I want to express the pulse of the people to the extent that I can.

This bill, what does it do? Under the existing Education Act, children who are awaiting landed immigrant status can be charged foreign student fees by school boards. We have seen that happen in Hamilton and Windsor. The costs can be extraordinary for individuals, young people and children. Some boards require them to pay and some boards absorb the cost.

Where the boards absorb the cost, they do so at their expense, meaning that they've got to find money from one source or another to be able to fund the education of these particular children—admirable. But I will remind the various members listening to this debate that when we do that, money has to be taken out somewhere else.

Mrs. Carol Mitchell (Huron–Bruce): Yes, we're hanging on your every word.

Mr. Lou Rinaldi (Northumberland): Not necessarily, no. I wouldn't agree with you there.

Mr. Marchese: I will repeat for him, because he was talking to another colleague, whose birthday lands on my birthday as well. It's fascinating.

Mr. Rinaldi: And it's my anniversary today.

Mr. Marchese: God bless you. Joe, let me tell you—

Mr. Rinaldi: It's Lou.

Mr. Marchese: Lou—which riding?

Mr. Rinaldi: Northumberland.

Mr. Marchese: The member from Northumberland explains that it is his anniversary tonight. We wish him well.

And my colleague Carol Mitchell from Huron–Bruce—May 10, the same birthday. Can you believe that?

Mrs. Mitchell: Twins.

Mr. Marchese: It could happen to anybody. New Democrat here, Liberal there, just across the way. There isn't much difference. It could happen to anybody.

As I was saying to my friend Lou, some boards pick up the costs for those students who are not legally accepted here for whatever reason. There is a whole number of reasons.

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Mr. Rinaldi: They do a good job.

Mr. Marchese: That's not the point. The issue is not whether they do a good or a bad job at the moment. At the moment I'm saying that when school boards take on these children, they are paying in one way or the other. You will agree with that.

Interjection: I agree.

Mr. Marchese: That's the point I was making earlier, when you said that that wasn't true. I just wanted to

correct that for the record. If they do that, how does the ministry pay them back? In the past, obviously, ministries, this minister and previous governments, didn't pay for that. That is a cost we need to worry about.

I'm sure the Minister of Education is worried about this all the time, and that's why prior to this election, in pre-election campaigning, he and the Premier of this province promised to have a standing committee on education finance. Do you recall that, Lou? That's what he said. Two years into the mandate, we do not have a standing committee on education finance. That surprises me a little bit from the Minister of Education, who loves transparency, loves accountability. All the Liberal members, of course, talk about transparency and accountability. Yet two years later, we have no standing committee on education finance.

I'm sure the member from Sault Ste. Marie is looking forward to that education finance committee because, as a teacher, he is obviously keen on getting to the heart of the matter, knowing what the numbers are, how the money is being spent. He wants transparency and accountability, and so does the Premier.

Mr. Rinaldi: And stability.

Mr. Marchese: And peace and stability.

He anxiously waits, as do I. As a critic for elementary, secondary and post-secondary education, I can't understand why the Minister of Education simply has not gotten around to the idea of convincing the Premier that we need a standing committee on education finance. When will it come? When will that promise be delivered? When are we going to have a curriculum, a council that's going to review some of the errors of the previous government? We know that while some curriculum changes were good, there were a whole lot of problems because it caused, as the former critic who now is minister used to say, it created, a lot of curriculum casualties. We had a whole lot of curriculum casualties at the secondary level and they persist to this day. The dropout rate for this group of people is phenomenal. Students who study at what used to be the basic level, general level, now applied, are falling through the cracks. In spite of what the Minister of Education is saying, students are in trouble. These are the ones who are vulnerable, these are the same students who were curriculum casualties under a regime when the Tories were there, when you were critics, and they are still curriculum casualties while you are in government.

Nothing has changed two years later. How long can kids wait? I remember the Minister of Education saying, "Kids can't wait." If kids couldn't wait two years ago, can they wait today for that long, to get the systemic changes they need so they can have the opportunities they need?

Every change we make costs money. This bill will cost money. I happen to think that students, no matter their status in this country, are victims in one form or another and they ought not to be further victimized by an educational system that either shuts them out or tells them that they have to pay fees they cannot afford. I

understand that. We cannot and should not victimize children. They ought to have educational opportunities. Yes, it costs money. The question I have, and the question the member from Beaches—East York had, is, where is this money coming from, and is it coming? You see, we haven't seen it in special education.

I have attacked the Minister of Education relentlessly in this place, in all of the speeches I make around issues of education, because here is the same minister, saying, "We care about special ed. We care about those vulnerable students who are in the system, who desperately need special education," those 43,000 students waiting for an IPRC, meaning the identification, placement and review committee, that assesses a problem a child might have and then delivers a program so that the problem the child has can be remedied.

When this government and this minister were in opposition, they said, "My God, 43,000 vulnerable students are waiting in line. They shouldn't have to wait. Just wait for a Liberal government and that list will disappear." I'll tell you, that list has not disappeared. The minister never speaks about it. That's perhaps why in his mind the list might have disappeared. But 43,000 students, that number, waiting for special-ed services are still waiting. I am saying that that list is no longer 43,000, it's bigger, and I'll tell you why.

Last July, when the school year was over, the Minister of Education announced \$100 million for special ed. Remember, school boards were waiting for 10 months for special education dollars and they got nothing for that year. The Minister of Education announced, at the end of the school year, \$100 million. In August, he announced that he was taking away \$100 million from the school boards that he claims were reserves that were not being spent, reserves for special education purposes that were not being spent.

I said these boards put money aside to spend in the September past because they couldn't quite trust a Liberal government that had not delivered on the money for special education. They couldn't trust them, that the money would come some day, so they put some money aside. The minister came along 10 months later, at the end of the school year, and announced the money that never flowed for the previous year and never flowed for this year either—because \$100 million was given in July and \$100 million was taken away, clawed back, in August. So for two years special education kids had no money, the most vulnerable kids in the system, kids who have some psychological or physiological problem, a disability of one form or another, physical or mental, needing services, and not one cent last year and not one cent this year flowed for special ed—this from a government that claims to have a big, big heart for education, this from a minister who claims to have a bigger heart for education, this from a government that can make these claims and then play chess or checkers with numbers.

The Minister of Education said, "We are going to make \$50 million available," of that \$100 million they clawed back, that they stole. "We're going to make \$50

million available,” and they have to reapply for the money they should have legitimately gotten from all of the scrutiny and processes they have to do to be eligible for the special-ed money. He said they had to reapply for that money, and only \$50 million is available.

Minister of Tourism, not one cent has been made available. There is no application process, and not one nickel of that \$100 million that was stolen, taken away, clawed back, has been given back—not a nickel. But the Liberals will stand up in the House and say, “Oh, God, millions of dollars have flowed to the educational system on a daily basis.” That’s why we need a standing committee on education finance. I plead with the minister to keep that promise. Two years into the mandate, let’s have the standing committee so we can debate, discuss, explore and dig the numbers out from the minister’s closet, so we know exactly what’s happening on education finance. We need that committee. I know the member from Sault Ste. Marie is waiting patiently for that committee. I know he’s lobbying him on a regular basis for that committee, because he wants to be on it, as a former teacher, and so do I.

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Let’s talk about the transportation fund. We waited so anxiously for a new transportation fund and we didn’t get one last year. What we got from the government was not a funding formula but a draft, which he called—I’ll get the name for the good citizens watching—the Equitable Allocation Through a New Funding Model for Student Transportation in Ontario. This is how clever the Liberals are. They gave a 2% increase to all boards: Catholic, public, French. Every board got a 2% increase. So every time a Tory or a New Democrat would ask a question, they would smugly say, “Oh, no, all boards got a 2% increase.” They could smugly sit down at the end of that answer and pretend there was no problem with that statement.

Here’s the problemo with that statement: Over 40 boards are getting more money and 31 boards are getting less money. Some 40 boards or so are getting more money, beyond the 2% increase this year, and come September, they will get the next instalment. Remember, this minister said that this is a draft. For all these busy Liberals reading their e-mails on their BlackBerries, the minister said that this is a draft. If this were a draft, Minister of Tourism, why would the minister give an allocation to 40 boards or more this year and the balance this coming September? It cannot be a draft and it cannot be equitable.

I remind you that when the Liberals use language such as “Equitable Allocation Through a New Funding Model for Student Transportation,” it is reminiscent of what the Tories used to do. The Tories used to do that on every bill, and the Liberals are following suit in the same way.

Interjection.

Mr. Marchese: Don’t provoke me. You guys are supposed to be quiet so we can get out of here quick. Read your e-mails on your BlackBerry and read your papers. Your House leader rep is saying to you, “Please

sit down and be quiet so we can get out quick.” Right, David Levac? Exactly. But I’m going to keep you active in this place for as long as I can.

The Tories used to have these unique ways of naming bills that belied the content of the bill. The Liberals, not to be outdone, are imitating the model, and they’re imitating it so perfectly that they’re indistinguishable. God bless them. They don’t mind being indistinguishable from the Tories from time to time.

Mr. Leal: Oh, no.

Mr. Marchese: Oh, yes. You don’t mind.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): Tory wannabes.

Mr. Marchese: Tories in a hurry sometimes, and New Democrats in a hurry at other times. They can dance that song both ways. They have no problem twisting both ways: NDP in a hurry, Tory in a hurry. “Whatever we’ve got to do, we do it,” and God bless Paul Martin, he’s doing it now. Paul Martin, that wonderful fiscal conservative, has become a social—

Interjection.

Mr. Marchese: A socialist, he’s trying to say—a socially-minded person. It’s hard to say “socialist.” He can’t do it. But he’s one of the most fiscally conservative guys I have ever known up there at Parliament.

Mr. Leal: Who?

Mr. Marchese: Your friend Paul Martin. Your friend, buddy, leader of your federal Liberal Party. This is the guy who’s got a few bucks; no problem with that. Anybody can be rich and be a Prime Minister, no problemo. He’s got about 250 million bucks from his steamship lines. God bless him. Not a problem. Berlusconi is the president of Italy and he’s got \$17 billion. No problemo.

The beauty about working people is that they think if you’re rich, you won’t steal. They think if you’re rich, you cannot be influenced by anyone, if you know what I mean. It’s beautiful to see that. Working people ought to know better. Are you saying Berlusconi is uninfluencable by corruption? It makes you laugh. I heard it when I was there, many years ago. I’m not saying there is anything wrong with being wealthy; that’s not a problem. Paul Martin is a wealthy man, a fiscally conservative guy all of a sudden in trouble here in Canada, and he has turned into—dare I say it?—a socialist type. I know it’s hard to get the words out of your mouth, and Liberals cringe when they hear that, but when you see that money flowing for all those social programs—the fiscal conservatives in the Liberal Party are saying: “Paul, please, get a hold of yourself, get a grip. You’ve got to worry about the Tories. Don’t worry about New Democrats; you’ve got to worry about the Tories.” So it’s beautiful to have Jack Layton up there saying to Paul: “Paul, we’ve got to work on this. We’ve got to pass that budget because there are so many good things we have to do. You and me, Paul, we socialist types have got to work together,” and Paul said OK. Paul has no problem doing that. It’s beautiful to see.

Anyway, back to Ontario. On this transportation funding, this is the Equitable Allocation Through a New

Funding Model for Student Transportation. The Tories must love this. They're saying, "Man, oh man, the Liberals are really good." But what I say is, there's a Tory imprint in this whole thing. We are still using a Conservative funding formula model. McGuinty is using it and Gerard Kennedy, the Minister of Education, is using it. It's the same Conservative funding formula, David Levac, used in 1997 by the Tories, and you haven't changed it. It doesn't matter what you say as a former teacher, it doesn't matter what Kennedy says, what any of these guys say, it's the same formula. Are you with me, Minister of Tourism?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I'm just worried about the social contract.

Mr. Marchese: Are you worried about that? You shouldn't worry about the social contract. That was so long ago. You know what I say to you? Maybe you'll learn from that. But I don't see you learning. Jim, the Minister of Tourism said, "Oh, social contract." He always says that. He's got these books, he shows them, but now it's getting more difficult because the Speaker is getting a bit upset at him for doing that. You remember; we attack a promise the Liberals made, and the Minister of Tourism and others say, "Ah, social contract." I say, why don't you learn from our mistakes? If indeed you disagree, why did you make so many promises before the election that you knew you couldn't keep? Why would you do that? If you learned from our mistakes, Jim, why wouldn't you say, "New Democrats committed that error and got into deep doo-doo; we can't let that happen to us"? Why would you just jump into the same mess, dung? Why would you do that and hurt yourself in the process? All those promises you made, surely you would learn—or are you capable of learning? I just don't think you are. You made so many billions of dollars of promises that you knew you couldn't keep.

They were supposed to bring a new transportation funding formula; not a reallocation, moving dollars around, but a new formula. What they did was steal from 31 boards to give to the other boards, and then they call that fair. How can you be whacking 31 boards and call that fair? You think the 31 boards out there are happy to say, "Yeah, whack me some more"? Thirty-one boards are getting whacked by this government, by Premier McGuinty and Minister Kennedy, and the members of the Liberal Party in this room, and others, reading and not reading, say it's fair. I don't think it's fair.

What about small schools? We need money for small schools. This bill will have some consequences. It costs pecunia. Small schools—

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Hon. Mr. Bradley: Dave Cooke's looking after that.

Mr. Marchese: No, Dave Cooke isn't looking at whether or not small schools should close. He is looking at whether or not boards have followed due process, and if they have not followed due process in Thunder Bay, where I was at—Fourway school is one example—the board could do so again. The board could simply start the process again, and that school could close. Dave Cooke is

not there to say, "This school will close," or not. That's not his job. He's getting paid good bucks not to do that, but to simply determine whether boards are following due process, i.e., based on whatever guidelines they think the minister has and/or will put out there in the next little while, because we don't have guidelines yet.

Small schools will close. In spite of all the research done by People for Education, something this minister claimed to respect when he was in opposition, research he supported when he was in opposition—a group, People for Education, that he respects and supports—then. Now where is he on the issue of small schools? He put a moratorium so schools would not be closed, but did not give the money, did not give the pecunia for school boards to keep those schools open. Without the pecunia, i.e., money, small schools inevitably have to close, and they are closing.

Let me give you some statistics, because People for Education have put together some interesting stuff.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: One hundred and fifty-nine schools closed under the NDP. You were in cabinet.

Mr. Marchese: Let me understand this, Minister of Tourism. Are you saying that small schools closed under the NDP, and small schools closed under the Tories, and small schools will close under the Liberals because that's just the way it is, even though you said in opposition that you would not let that happen?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: One hundred and fifty-nine schools closed under the NDP.

Mr. Marchese: I know. I'm trying to create an argument, though. Follow the argument.

NDP closed small schools, Tories closed small schools, and Liberals will inevitably close small schools, even though when you were in opposition and in your pre-election campaign you claimed small schools would not close?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: According to the existing funding formula.

Mr. Marchese: According to the existing Conservative funding formula, you keep on closing small schools. Why haven't you changed that? Why haven't you changed the funding formula?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I trust Dave Cooke.

Mr. Marchese: Dave Cooke won't be unhappy to get a few bucks so that he can advise you on the issue of small schools—no problemo. He will be happy to help you.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: You saw what Bob Rae did.

Mr. Marchese: Yes. I'm looking forward to seeing what else you're going to do in the next year or two in that report, because I wager to tell you that tuition fees are going to skyrocket next year.

Interjection: Frozen.

Mr. Leal: Frozen in 2006.

Mr. Marchese: No, no. This September, you promised to freeze them—no problemo. I agree. The following year, tuition fees are going to go up.

Mr. Dave Levac (Brant): You said "tremendously."

Mr. Marchese: They will, tremendously. My friend from Brant, I guarantee you this: After this September, where you promise to freeze them, God bless you, tuition fees are going to skyrocket the year after.

Mr. Rae and his group said that tuition fees should go up. I don't agree with him on that. I know you do. I don't. We think students are paying high tuition fees at the moment. You know how much they're paying at the moment? It might surprise those of you who don't know. Students are paying 44% of their education through tuition fees. That's a whole lot, Dave. Don't you think that's a lot—44%?

Mr. Rae and his group said, "Tuition fees should go up." Mr. McGuinty agreed with him, and he said, "Yes, they will." The question is, how much?

Interjection.

Mr. Marchese: No. I'll rephrase it. He said, "All tuition fees will go up." The question is, by how much? What it means is that they will go up.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: How much under the NDP—52%.

Mr. Marchese: Let me tell you what there was when I was there. In 1990, 1991 and 1992, students were paying about 1,800 bucks. Today, my daughter and my son, and my other daughter who just left university a year and a half ago, are paying \$5,000 each. They're paying \$5,000 each.

All I am questioning with you, fine Liberals, whom I like from time to time and sometimes respect, is that 44% of their education is paid through tuition fees. Do you think it's a lot: yes, no? Dave agrees with me that it's a lot. I'm telling you, tuition fees are going to shoot through the roof and McGuinty is going to make that happen. How is he going to do that? McGuinty is going to say to the universities, "You can deregulate your programs in whatever manner you deem fit," and then McGuinty will say, "We didn't raise tuition fees. It was the universities and colleges."

Mr. Levac: Are we on for breakfast or not?

Mr. Marchese: In the event that tuition fees go up?

The Acting Speaker: There cannot be wagering in this House, please. There will be no wagering taking place in this House.

The member from Trinity-Spadina has the floor. I would remind you to direct the comments through the Chair and not get involved in debates.

Mr. Marchese: I appreciate your role, Speaker. I've got to tell you that there's never an exchange of money. It's for coffee or cappuccino, and the member from Brant even said breakfast. That's hardly wagering; that's hardly like putting out 10,000 bucks for a dinner, right, or 2,000 bucks for a dinner. A cappuccino is hardly a big deal, right? Dave from Brant and I are on for a cappuccino.

I assume that you're claiming tuition fees will not go up in 2007.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: Not hugely.

Mr. Marchese: "Not hugely." That's beautiful.

Interjection: Tremendous.

Mr. Marchese: So it will be a definition of "tremendous," and how "tremendous" will be defined. Is 500

bucks or 200 bucks tremendous? That's beautiful, Dave. I've got to tell you, he can't lose because "tremendous" can be, what: two bucks, 10 bucks, 200, 2,000?

Mr. Levac: I stepped back. The Speaker ruled.

Mr. Marchese: Yes, but you and I were not betting for anything except cappuccino or breakfast, and you're on, by the way. You're on.

I want to let the good citizens of Ontario know that the member for Brant and I are on. Tuition fees will go up, and the Liberals are agreeing with me that they will.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: Just because Bob Rae recommended it, that doesn't mean it's happening.

Mr. Marchese: You've got to love the Liberals, right? They always appoint a couple of New Democrats. It's beautiful. They appoint a couple of New Democrats so as to, let us say, disarm, if they could, defang, New Democrats. They think they're so clever. They actually think they're clever in doing that.

Mr. John O'Toole (Durham): Don't be so hard on yourself.

Mr. Marchese: I've got no problem disagreeing with one of our former members when they produce a report that we don't agree with 100%. I agree with the commission that was commissioned to do this report when they say \$1.3 billion has to be spent in order to get to the national average. We don't have \$1.3 billion. They're going to be spending \$578 million and they boast about that big amount. But I've got to tell you that for a system that's been starved and underfunded for so long, if you put in \$578 million, you can hardly say, "Oh, we're going to fix all the problems in the world and, by the way, in the next five years we're going to fix it." By then you'll be going through a second election, not even the first.

So this multi-year funding Liberal approach is just beautiful. I see it through Paul Martin. They announce money for 10 years and they say, "In the next 10 years we will give so-and-so." By that time, people will be dead. Nobody will even remember what Martin said by way of a promise. It's a new Liberal strategy. You promise multi-year funding, and if you get re-elected, you can then say, "Given the circumstances, we don't have much money, so we have to adjust the 10-year funding to maybe 20-year funding," and so on. You get my point, right? Mr. Gravelle, you get my point, right?

1920

The Liberals have invented this new funding mechanism of long-term, multi-year funding. The people are supposed to say, "Oh, my God, the post-secondary education system is getting six billion bucks." Right? That's the Liberal message. All they're getting is what I know: It's \$578 million this year. What they're going to give next year, I don't have a clue. Nor should the good citizens of Ontario trust that the Liberals, given their track record, are going to come through on this next year or after the election. And after the election, we could have the Tories again and things could change all over again. What matters to me is what you put in now. I'll be

waiting anxiously to see what you put in next year, because I don't think you're going to give much.

What have you done? You whack 15 ministries with less money, so we don't have all the ministries moving up by way of services. We have a couple of ministries getting a few bucks at the expense of many other ministries.

Mrs. Julia Munro (York North): At the end of their term.

Mr. Marchese: And it starts now; the freeze starts now. The Ministry of Culture is getting a 6% cut, for example—the Minister of Culture, a 6% cut. To be unfriendly to the few Tories who are here—and I like them; they cut the funding for the Ontario Arts Council from \$44 million to \$27 million. They whacked the Ontario Arts Council. Understand that for eight years—

Mrs. Munro: Rosario, it went up.

Mr. Marchese: Non, Madame, s'il te plaît. They went from \$44 million when I was there in 1990-91 to \$27 million when you left. Now the Liberals are saying they've got to sustain a 6% cut? They're going to get whacked.

The Ministry of Agriculture gets a 23% whacking. I've got to tell you, when farmers come to Queen's Park, it should tell you there's a problemo, and a big one. Farmers don't come to Queen's Park unless there's a problem, and when they come, it should make you tremble a little bit. I'm surprised: The Liberals who want to support their seats have given a 23% cut to agriculture.

Mr. Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay-Superior North): No, they haven't.

Mr. Marchese: It doesn't matter what I say; it's what they say and what they think and what they believe is going to happen to them based on the chart, based on page 19. I don't have it with me and I apologize, but page 19 clearly states there's a 23% cut. It's not what I said; it's what the Liberals said. The Liberals will define it and redefine it in whatever way they want, but they're getting a shellacking, a whacking.

Many other ministries are going to get whacked. Municipal affairs still exists, in a very feeble form. They're all getting cuts. Aboriginal financing, I believe, is getting another cut. I forget whether it's 6% or—I wish I had the list. If somebody has that list, they could share it with me. Sorry. I think it's page 19. Is it page 19 there, Julia?

Mrs. Munro: Carry on.

Mr. Marchese: So 15 ministries are getting flat-lined—meaning no growth, zero increases—and some ministries are getting reductions. How can you defend that? How can you do that? How can you defend the fact that we have a clawback? We have money coming from child benefits for a whole lot of poor people in this province, and you're clawing back 97% of that federal money that should be going to poor families. How can you defend that? Of the 100% of the money that comes from the federal government, all you are giving is 3%, and this year there's a freeze. The poorest of the poorest people—Liberals with a heart, is that what it means, that

you whack even the most vulnerable in the way that you did in spite of the promises you made when you were in opposition and prior to the election that they would face increases as a way of dealing with the cutbacks sustained under the Tories? How can Liberals with a heart do that?

So a couple of ministries are getting some money, and 15 ministries are going to get cuts. Do you think that's fair? When your services are not available, you'll know why, because this government has deemed that many of you are undeserving. This government says, "There is no more money. Sorry, we are unwilling to tax the very wealthy, unwilling to tax those very individuals who strongly benefited from the income tax cuts instituted by the Tories, unwilling to touch that," thus living with a Conservative formula, an economic Conservative formula that is no different.

And they say it's OK. "No new taxes," they say. They say that with pride, with great élan: "We're not going to raise any taxes." I just think the people who've got money should give some money back so that we can redistribute the money that was given to them oh, yes, so very easily by the Tories. We'd take some of it back. Liberals refuse to do that.

Who has to pay the penalty for that? People who should be getting their family benefit, the child benefit from the federal government. It should flow to these families. The Liberals say, "Sorry. Too bad, so sad." Two hundred and thirty million dollars that should be going to these families who are in such desperate need is not going because they need it to give away where they believe it's important to give away.

Fifteen ministries flatlined or getting reductions. Don't be surprised, good citizens, when you go and find that some service is lost, disappeared, not available. Oh, and by the way, you've got to wait in line just a little longer than you did under the Tories. "That's OK. We don't have the money. You have to be tough." You have no problem being tough against individuals who get Ontario disability pay. You have no problem being tough on them. A 3% increase; and that's OK. How can you think that's OK?

Perhaps I am carrying on a bit too long; I don't know.

This bill is going to cost a few bucks; the member from Beaches-East York said so. His worry, a legitimate one, is that if it's going to cost money, where is this money coming from and is it going to be taken away from something else or someone else? We're talking about children here. All children ought to have the educational opportunities they deserve. We shouldn't punish children. But if it costs some money—and it will—where is the money going to come from?

If we are operating under a Conservative funding formula, it means we are not giving enough money to our educational system. It means we still don't have guidance counsellors, which have been drastically cut, in our high school system. It means we still don't have caretakers in our high schools and elementary systems. I urge Mr. Kennedy—because he talks so beautifully about, "Please go to your local school and check things out"—I urge the Minister of Education to go to our high schools and

check out how many caretakers we have left in our system. Because under the Tories, half of them disappeared in each and every high school across Ontario. Half of the principals—so if you had seven in one school, you now have three or three and a half.

We are missing music teachers—laid off by the Conservative government. They are still not available in our educational system.

We still don't have gym teachers, expert types of people whom we need in our system to be able to deal with the very issues you talk about. If we have obesity in our school system, how are we dealing with it? Where are our gym teachers and do we have enough of them? We don't. We're still suffering from the lack of having expert teachers like that.

Educational assistants: hundreds of them fired across Ontario. And we're still laying people off, when we know we need those human eyes and people and faces in our school system, as opposed to cameras, to deal with the issues of safety. We still have not replaced the people we have lost under the Tories.

We need money—not less money. This bill, yes, has a cost, and I don't believe the government is putting the money in that was recommended by Rozanski, that has been confirmed by the numbers from Hugh Mackenzie, an economist who said that Rozanski and his recommendations have still not been met and are not likely to be met. We are still underfunding the system to the tune of close to \$1 billion. Unless we bring that money back, some problems will have been fixed by this minister and this government but many will still linger.

We support this bill. It's the right thing to do. Children need to have the services, and this bill will provide the services equally across Ontario so that no one child will suffer from not being able to pay the fee to get into a school. This is a good thing, but we warn the government that unless we have adequate dollars, dollars that were promised by this government when they were in opposition, inequity will still exist, curriculum casualties will still exist and people will continue to have the literacy problems that many Canadians suffer from, in this country and in this province.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and comments? Further debate? Seeing none, and the minister who moved the bill not being here, we will proceed to the vote.

Mr. Bruce Crozier (Essex): Do you need my glasses?

The Acting Speaker: Yes, I need my glasses.

Ms. Wynne has moved second reading of Bill 194, An Act to amend the Education Act. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Shall the bill be ordered for third reading? Agreed.

Hon. Steve Peters (Minister of Agriculture and Food): Speaker, I move adjournment of the House.

The Acting Speaker: A motion for adjournment. All those in agreement? Carried.

This House stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow.

The House adjourned at 1933.

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

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