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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Monday 16 April 2007

Lundi 16 avril 2007

Speaker
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Président
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Clerk
Deborah Deller

Greffière
Deborah Deller

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**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO**

Monday 16 April 2007

**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO**

Lundi 16 avril 2007

*The House met at 1330.
Prayers.*

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

**ONTARIO LOTTERY
AND GAMING CORP.**

Mr. Ernie Hardeman (Oxford): Premier McGuinty and his government have so far rejected a probe into Lottogate. They have refused to launch an investigation that would give Ontarians answers about government's involvement in the scandal, that would give Ontarians answers about whether Premier McGuinty's office was involved in the cover-up.

We've asked 133 questions so far and received no answers. Dithering, dodging and deflecting have been the only responses forthcoming for three weeks. That indicates a government scared of transparency and accountability. A government that is afraid to answer for its actions is irresponsible and arrogant. The Premier and the minister consistently refuse to account for what they knew, when they knew it and what action they took.

A legislative committee empowered to call witnesses and fully investigate is necessary for the public to get the answers that McGuinty refuses to provide. The investigation could be completed by June if the Premier would only agree. Dalton McGuinty continues to hide behind the Ombudsman investigation and the OPP investigation. The Premier knows neither one will look into the Premier's office or the minister's office. This Premier talked about giving all MPPs a bigger role to play when he was campaigning for election. But now that he has won, he won't even allow a legislative committee of MPPs to examine a scandal with troubling connections to his own office.

Today we will have a motion to launch an inquiry to investigate what really happened. If Dalton McGuinty really has nothing to hide, then he should support the motion and support this inquiry.

TRASH BASH

Mr. Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward–Hastings): I would like to take a moment today to express my thanks to a very special group of volunteers who will be walking the highways and byways of my community over the next few days. I'm referring, of course, to the participants

in our annual Trash Bash event. Trash Bash, for those of you who have not heard the expression before, refers to picking up litter that is along the sides of our roads.

I've taken part myself for many years, and while at times it's hard work, it's also a great deal of fun. The increasing numbers of participants in Prince Edward county, Quinte West and Belleville bear testimony to that.

It's also a very interesting insight into our current society. I now know as a fact the most popular brand of coffee as well as the most popular cigarette in Ontario.

Our family always picks up garbage over the same stretch of road. When I say "our family," I really mean Linda and the kids, folks. The situation is getting better in my area. The first year, we picked up 43 bags of garbage within sight of our house. However, I'm thrilled to report that there is without question less and less garbage every year, and I'm proud of my community for that. People are getting the message.

For those communities that have never organized a Trash Bash, I urge you to. It does wonders to brighten up the rural areas, and you'll meet other great people. In my area, the municipalities take the garbage away and then host a reception to thank the volunteers.

So I want to conclude by saying thank you to the organizations and firms that sponsor these events, to the organizers themselves, and especially to the people who give freely of their time to make our province a better place.

**ONTARIO LOTTERY
AND GAMING CORP.**

Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke): The odds of winning the 6/49 jackpot are one in 14 million; the Super 7, one in 21 million. The odds of this government responsible for the Lottogate scandal being forthcoming about their involvement in trying to cover it up are approximately one in 10 billion.

The reason we need a legislative inquiry into this scandal is because the McGuinty government refuses to answer simple and direct questions. Dodge, deflect, dither and deny is their only plan of action.

How does the Premier justify the presence of Warren Kinsella and other political fixers in meetings with the OLG? The Premier won't tell us.

What discussions took place between the office of the minister and the OLG regarding the issue of suspicious insider wins? What actions did the minister take after

April 11, 2006, when his chief of staff was informed that the CBC was looking into insider wins? He says he wasn't aware.

The people of Ontario need more than evasiveness and dismissals from the McGuinty government. They deserve a full investigation to shine a light on the government's actions. This afternoon our leader, John Tory, will address this issue in an opposition motion calling for a committee of the Legislature to look into this scandal. I hope the government members will support his motion and our ongoing efforts to uncover what Ontarians deserve—the truth—and I'm sure they'll all vote for it.

COMMUNITY LIVING GUELPH WELLINGTON

Mrs. Liz Sandals (Guelph–Wellington): Today I am pleased to recognize Community Living Guelph Wellington, which provides support to those who have an intellectual disability as they live, learn and work in our community.

Adult Rehabilitative Centre, or ARC, is a program of Community Living that provides employment and training to approximately 125 people. During a recent visit to ARC, the participants proudly showed me their skills: skills like building picnic tables, assembling dishwasher wheels, stuffing bulk mailings, and painting and bundling surveyor stakes.

I had the privilege that day of announcing almost \$2.3 million of new funding for Community Living Guelph Wellington from our economic stimulus package. Two million dollars will be spent on expanding and renovating the ARC workshop and building a brand new recreation centre at the ARC site for Community Living's clients. The rest of the funding will be used to renovate Community Living's group homes.

I am proud of the McGuinty government's support for developmental services in my riding of Guelph–Wellington, and I want to congratulate the exceptional team of support workers at ARC who provide a positive approach that facilitates a fun, energetic and effective workplace.

ONTARIO LOTTERY AND GAMING CORP.

Mrs. Julia Munro (York North): Over the course of three weeks, we have asked 133 questions about the involvement of the Premier and the minister responsible for lotteries in the Lottogate scandal. We have received 133 dithering, dodging and deflecting responses from the McGuinty government.

Last Wednesday, the Deputy Premier defended this government's focus on a public relations strategy rather than on corrective action by stating, and I quote, "When someone like The Fifth Estate is involved in doing an exposé, of course the machinery responds. This is appropriate."

It is shameful that this government considers that it is fulfilling its duties and responsibilities by ignoring prob-

lems until the point that an exposé publicly reveals suspicious activities. If everything is above board and the machinery responded appropriately to warning signs that a scandal was occurring under your watch, why won't the Premier support our call for a legislative committee to investigate? A committee would probe into areas outside the purview of the Ombudsman and the OPP. It is the only way the people of Ontario will know with confidence what role was played by the Premier's and minister's offices. I encourage all members of this House to support our PC motion for a legislative investigation.

1340

GWEN LEE

Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East): The Hamilton community lost a legend and a wonderful woman on April 7 with the passing of lifetime NDP and CCF supporter and activist Gwen Lee, at the age of 93. Gwen was an amazing woman who devoted her life to putting her ideals into practice for the benefit of others. This won her many awards and honours throughout her illustrious life. She was named Hamilton's Woman of the Year in 1991, earned a Senior Achievement Award in 1994, and was honoured as Senior of the Year in 1998.

Untold numbers of Hamilton seniors' groups are indebted to the efforts of this spirited and tireless trailblazer. The Gwen Lee Assisted Housing Building in Hamilton, for example, bears her name and pays tribute to Gwen's success in realizing housing for seniors. Sackville Hill Senior Centre has a room named in her honour. She helped prepare a study of transportation needs and services for disabled persons in our community. She was a superb fundraiser for the Salvation Army, the Canadian Cancer Society and many other groups.

Gwendoline Lee will be remembered for always trying to make Hamilton a better place for all. There wasn't a Labour Day Parade, an injured workers' memorial or a social justice rally of some kind where you wouldn't find Gwen Lee.

Last Friday's memorial service celebrating Gwen's life featured words from a verse typifying her inspiring and positive outlook: "If you must bury something, let it be my faults and my weaknesses. If, by chance, you wish to remember me, do it with a kind deed or a word to someone who needs you." That typifies Gwen Lee. She was a wonderful human being. We'll miss her greatly. The spirit of Gwen Lee will remain with us, as will her legacy.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn (Oakville): I rise in the House today to discuss the McGuinty Liberals' green plan and our commitment to making Ontario a cleaner and a greener place to live.

The McGuinty Liberals have passed the Clean Water Act, which will give Ontarians the best-protected drink-

ing water in all of Canada. The McGuinty Liberals have also introduced the Safeguarding and Sustaining Ontario's Water Act, which would strengthen Ontario's ability to protect and conserve the water of the Great Lakes and would allow charges to industrial and commercial water users. The days of giving Ontario's water away for free are now over.

Our commitment also extends to protecting Ontario's endangered species through our species-at-risk legislation. We are even building 28 more provincial parks and conservation reserves.

Our dedication to protecting the environment can also be seen in such initiatives as our greenbelt legislation that is in place to protect 1.8 million acres of ecologically sensitive land. We have also reduced our reliance on coal by one third. That's the equivalent of taking two million cars off the road.

The leader of the official opposition has criticized the McGuinty government's environmental reforms, suggesting that protecting the environment will chase jobs out of the province. We know that's not true. We on this side of the House recognize that Ontario can have both. We're working to ensure a vibrant economy alongside a much cleaner environment.

YORK SUBWAY EXTENSION

Mr. Mario G. Racco (Thornhill): Last week, the leader of the third party spoke against the Spadina-York subway extension. On April 11 he was quoted as saying, "We don't need another subway mega-project ... extending the subway ... into a lightly populated York region." This is a clear betrayal of public transit.

In the days since this disappointing statement, a variety of citizens and politicians from the region have contacted me to voice their support for the Spadina-York subway extension. I have in my possession a 41-page petition from members of my community pledging their support for the Spadina-York subway extension and expressing their disappointment with the comments made by the leader of the third party.

In addition, last week the Spadina-York subway extension committee, which has representatives from the city of Toronto, the city of Barrie, Vaughan, Brampton, the region of York and York University, reiterated their endorsement of the extension.

Today, the council of the city of Vaughan has before it a motion expressing its support for the subway extension. The chairman of the region of York has also indicated to us that the Spadina-York subway extension is an integral component of their long-term growth plan which will ensure the preservation of the greenbelt and the Oak Ridges moraine.

As you can see, there is tremendous support for the Spadina-York subway extension. The leader of the third party should be ashamed of his comments, and he has once again demonstrated that the NDP is stuck in the past without a clear, workable plan to benefit the people of the region of York and Toronto.

NORTHERN ECONOMY

Mr. Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay–Superior North): I rise in the House today to talk our government's commitment to workers and families in northwestern Ontario. Last week, the leader of the third party talked about cancelling the York University subway line, which would have a devastating impact on the workers of Bombardier in Thunder Bay. It is reprehensible that at a time when we are facing tough economic challenges in the northwest, the leader of the NDP would jeopardize good-paying, stable employment in Thunder Bay just to score a couple of cheap political points in Toronto.

The McGuinty Liberals have made a commitment to this Toronto transit project, and we've already put the money on the table. We will continue to move forward with this plan, and we want the people of Thunder Bay and northwestern Ontario to know about it.

Neglectful treatment from the NDP is not a new phenomenon, however. The NDP has a record of abandoning northern Ontario. In 1995, the NDP government sneakily took \$60 million from the northern Ontario heritage fund.

Interjections.

Mr. Gravelle: Oh yes, you did, and you put it into general government revenues, weakening this important resource for the north. For our part, we've revitalized the heritage fund to provide support for economic initiatives in northwestern Ontario, from forestry to genetics to small business.

I also remember that it was the NDP who—

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): The member for Timmins–James Bay, please come to order.

Member for Thunder Bay–Superior North, are you finished?

Mr. Gravelle: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's very difficult for the NDP to hear this, I realize.

I remember it was the NDP who slashed medical school spaces in the early 1990s, leading to a doctor shortage and increased wait times, especially in smaller—

The Deputy Speaker: Okay. Thank you. I think there's been adequate—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, the member for Timmins–James Bay—

Mr. Gravelle: Mr. Speaker, I didn't have enough time.

The Deputy Speaker: I think the member for Thunder Bay–Superior North has had enough time. We'll now move on to reports by committees.

VISITORS

Mr. Phil McNeely (Ottawa–Orléans): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I would like to introduce to you visitors to the members' gallery today: Mr. Kim Allen, CEO and registrar of the Professional Engineers of

Ontario; Mr. Bob Goodings, past president of the PEO; Mr. Walter Bilanski, president-elect of the PEO; Mr. David Adams, president of the Professional Engineers of Ontario for 2008-09; and Mr. Howard Brown, of Brown and Cohen. I'd like all members to give them a good hand.

I would also like to encourage all members of this Legislature to attend their reception this evening, which will take place from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Stop 33 in the Sutton Place Hotel. There are 700 engineers in each riding in Ontario. Let's show our appreciation for these great engineers.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Thank you. Had it not been for an invitation, I would have called that not a point of order.

The member for York South–Weston.

Mr. Paul Ferreira (York South–Weston): I wish to draw attention in this House today to the presence of two distinguished parliamentarians from the Azores: Dr. Carlos Costa Neves, leader of the social democratic party and leader of the official opposition in the Azorean assembly; and his colleague Dr. António Pedro Costa, himself a member of the assembly and his party's critic for immigration. I ask all members to join me in welcoming these fine members.

Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I'd like us to welcome Galina Bajenova and her mother, Elena Bajenova, from Richmond Hill; also George Utsin and his mother, Svetlana Utsin, from Scarborough.

Galina is a 7th-grade student at Trillium Woods Elementary Public School in Richmond Hill. I would ask us all to give her a special welcome, along with her mother and her friends.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

CONSUMER PROTECTION AMENDMENT ACT (PAYDAY LOANS), 2007

LOI DE 2007 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LA PROTECTION DU CONSOMMATEUR (PRÊTS SUR SALAIRE)

Mr. Tascona moved first reading of the following bill:
Bill 205, An Act to amend the Consumer Protection Act, 2002 with respect to payday loans / Projet de loi 205, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2002 sur la protection du consommateur en ce qui a trait aux prêts sur salaire.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Does the member wish to make a short statement?

Mr. Joseph N. Tascona (Barrie–Simcoe–Bradford): The federal government is in the process of divesting responsibility with respect to payday loan legislation, and the province will be responsible for licensing and making

sure that consumers are protected. This bill provides for a regime to deal with the definition of what a loan is, and also puts in some licensing requirements for borrowers and lenders.

MOTIONS

HOUSE SITTINGS

Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader): I move that, notwithstanding any other order of the House, pursuant to standing order 9(c)(i), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Monday, April 16, 2007, and Tuesday, April 17, 2007, for the purpose of considering government business.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): 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 ayes have it.

We will call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1352 to 1357.

The Deputy Speaker: All those in favour will please stand one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Balkissoon, Bas	Dhillon, Vic	Meilleur, Madeleine
Bartolucci, Rick	Dombrowsky, Leona	Mitchell, Carol
Bentley, Christopher	Duguid, Brad	Parsons, Ernie
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Patten, Richard
Bradley, James J.	Gravelle, Michael	Phillips, Gerry
Brotten, Laurel C.	Jeffrey, Linda	Racco, Mario G.
Brownell, Jim	Kular, Kuldip	Ruprecht, Tony
Bryant, Michael	Kwinter, Monte	Sandals, Liz
Cansfield, Donna H.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Sergio, Mario
Caplan, David	Marsales, Judy	Smith, Monique
Chambers, Mary Anne V.	Matthews, Deborah	Smitherman, George
Chan, Michael	Mauro, Bill	Watson, Jim
Colle, Mike	McMeekin, Ted	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Craiton, Kim	McNeely, Phil	Zimmer, David

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed, please stand one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Arnott, Ted	Hudak, Tim	Prue, Michael
Chudleigh, Ted	Klees, Frank	Savoline, Joyce
DiNovo, Cheri	Kormos, Peter	Scott, Laurie
Dunlop, Garfield	Miller, Norm	Tabuns, Peter
Elliott, Christine	Munro, Julia	Tascona, Joseph N.
Ferreira, Paul	Murdoch, Bill	Tory, John
Hardeman, Ernie	O'Toole, John	Witmer, Elizabeth
Horwath, Andrea	Ouellette, Jerry J.	Yakubuski, John

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 42; the nays are 24.

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

1400

COMMODITY FUTURES LAWS REVIEW

Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader): I seek unanimous consent to move a motion respecting the consideration of the January 2007 report of the Ontario Commodity Futures Act advisory committee.

I move that pursuant to subsection 76(5) of the Commodity Futures Act, the standing committee on finance and economic affairs be authorized to review the January 2007 report of the Ontario Commodity Futures Act advisory committee, sessional paper number 417, and that the committee be authorized to report to the House its opinion, observations and recommendations concerning amendments to the Commodity Futures Act.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Is there unanimous consent? Agreed.

The motion has been moved, so I don't think you have to read it again. Is it the pleasure of the House the motion carry? Carried.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY
AND RESPONSES

VOLUNTEERS

Hon. Mike Colle (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration): I rise to recognize National Volunteer Week, which runs from April 15 to April 21. It is a great opportunity for us to applaud the work of thousands of Ontarians who donate their time and energy to volunteer activities in their community.

Each year, more than five million Ontarians volunteer to improve the quality of life for others in their communities. That's why our government is supporting and revitalizing volunteerism and volunteer organizations in Ontario.

Right now, the volunteer service awards are underway across Ontario. By the time the 45 volunteer service award ceremonies are completed in June, over 9,000 Ontarians will have received their pins of recognition this year alone.

Colleagues in this House have been invited to participate in these local events to honour their constituents for their service and commitment. I know that several members of this House accepted that invitation and have participated in the VSA ceremonies to honour their constituents.

This year, the Outstanding Achievement Award for Volunteerism was renamed in honour of June Callwood, one of Canada's most famous social justice activists, who helped create numerous social action organizations. Sadly, June Callwood passed away this weekend, but her memory lives on through the many people that she touched and the many organizations that she founded.

Her passion and her inspiring legacy to give back to our community is an example for all Ontarians.

It was my honour, two weeks ago in London, to present the first June Callwood Outstanding Achievement Award for Volunteerism to the Friends of the Cove Subwatershed Inc., a vibrant local environmental group in London, which works to improve the quality of life in this community through the protection, rehabilitation and wise stewardship of the Coves subwatershed system in London.

And last week in Sarnia, at the volunteer service awards, Harmony for Youth was recognized. Harmony is a non-profit organization that promotes self-esteem in young people through music. The organization averages 700 youth registered in their programs each year and is run entirely by volunteers.

Both of these organizations are a testament to the kind of civic participation and incredible volunteer engagement that is found throughout the province.

Ontarians of all ages and backgrounds volunteer, and there is no area of the province that has not benefited from volunteerism.

In recognition of those who have contributed to our cultural vibrancy, our government has established a new award, called Newcomer Champion Awards, to recognize those who have enriched cultural diversity, facilitated harmony and understanding, or have helped newcomers to settle successfully in our great province.

As we all know, Ontario is the province where more than half of Canada's immigrants choose to live. We know that part of successful integration is being and feeling a part of their new home, and what better way to achieve this than through volunteering?

That is why we are opening doors to the volunteer sector for newcomers by investing more than \$547,000 to expand volunteer opportunities for newcomers through the following initiatives. First, in partnership with the Maytree Foundation, the abcGTA program is expanding to recruit, train and match candidates from diverse backgrounds to volunteer for leadership positions in agencies, boards, commissions and not-for-profit organizations. Second, the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants, OCASI, is developing resources to increase awareness of the importance of volunteering and increase newcomer participation in volunteerism. Third, the Catholic Immigration Centre Ottawa is developing opportunities to engage new retirees and individuals who are approaching retirement to engage in volunteerism with newcomer communities. This is a win-win situation for talented newcomers and for our voluntary organizations. It means that our increasingly diverse communities will be able to benefit from the global experience newcomers bring to volunteering.

Ontario has a rich history of volunteerism. Volunteers established organizations such as the YMCA in 1851 and the St. John Ambulance in 1877. Today's volunteers are continuing this proud tradition of giving through organizations such as Meals on Wheels and thousands of others across the province. Volunteers are compassion-

ate; they are invaluable. They embody commitment, passion and excellence, and they empower others to reach their potential. Like June Callwood, they turn idealism into action. The responsibility that Ontario's volunteers demonstrate for the well-being of their fellow citizens and for the betterment of our province must be continually recognized and nurtured. That is why I urge my colleagues to join with me during National Volunteer Week, and every week, to show Ontario's volunteers we value them greatly.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to all Ontario's incredible volunteers.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

PROTECTION DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT

Hon. Laurel C. Broten (Minister of the Environment): I rise today to share with honourable members an important announcement about the work our government is doing to preserve our province's green spaces.

J'aimerais partager aujourd'hui une nouvelle importante avec les membres de l'Assemblée sur le travail que notre gouvernement fait pour préserver les espaces verts de la province. Je suis très heureuse de faire cette annonce alors que l'Ontario commence sa célébration de la Semaine de la terre dans la semaine qui suit.

I rise today to share with the honourable members an important announcement about the work our government is doing to preserve our province's green spaces, and it gives me great pleasure to make this announcement as Ontario celebrates Earth Week next week.

Thanks to the leadership of Premier McGuinty, this government has an impressive record of protecting the environment. We have introduced tough new laws that protect our drinking water. We are producing more renewable energy and doing more to conserve electricity. And our government's award-winning growth plan for the greater Golden Horseshoe will ensure that growth planning is strategic for one of North America's fastest-growing regions. We are committed to strengthening our economy and fostering new growth and development, but we have made this commitment with the environment in mind. This means that we have protected 1.8 million acres as part of the green belt that stretches across southern Ontario.

Nous préservons les espaces verts de la province afin que les familles ontariennes puissent bénéficier d'un environnement naturel sain, dynamique et magnifique pour de nombreuses générations à venir.

Le gouvernement McGuinty sait qu'il y a encore beaucoup à faire pour l'environnement. Nous devons tous apporter notre contribution.

We are preserving our green spaces so that Ontario's families can rely on a healthy, vibrant and beautiful natural environment for generations to come. But the McGuinty government knows that there is more work to be done on the environment. We must all do our part.

I would like to share with the honourable members today yet another example of how we're demonstrating our environmental stewardship. Our government made yet another strong demonstration to the natural and agricultural heritage of one of North America's largest urban green spaces by providing \$2 million to the Rouge Park Alliance. Rouge Park is Canada's premier urban wilderness park. Over 11,500 acres in size, it is a protected parkland in the Rouge River, Petticoat Creek and Duffins Creek watersheds in and near Toronto.

1410

These funds, a significant \$2 million, will be dedicated to restoring lands and historical properties in the park, increasing public awareness of the park's values, and will help to provide an enjoyable and memorable experience for visitors.

Earlier today, my colleague Michael Chan, Ontario's revenue minister and MPP for Markham, made this announcement at the park in his home riding. Mr. Chan, along with our colleagues Brad Duguid and Bas Balkissoon, joined the Rouge Park Alliance and a group of local children for a tree-planting ceremony in the park. I understand that the event was very well attended by residents from the area, and everyone celebrated, despite the rain.

At the announcement this morning, Gord Weeden, chair of the Rouge alliance's board of directors, applauded the McGuinty government for its outstanding support in bringing Rouge Park closer to meeting our natural, cultural and agricultural heritage objectives.

This event at Rouge Park is part of a larger, province-wide series of events and announcements that demonstrate our government's commitment to preserving and expanding Ontario's green spaces. In all, our government has donated more than 400 acres to parks across the province over the past six months, including the Eramosa Karst in Hamilton, Hidden Valley Park in Burlington and Glenorchy Conservation Area in Oakville. In the last year alone, the McGuinty government has dedicated more than 2,000 acres of provincially owned land to Rouge Park and Bob Hunter Memorial Park, bringing the total amount of provincially owned land dedicated by the Ontario government to these parks to more than 5,500 acres.

L'an dernier seulement, le gouvernement McGuinty a offert plus de 2 000 acres de terres appartenant à la province au parc Rouge et au parc commémoratif Bob Hunter, ce qui porte à plus de 5 500 acres la superficie totale de terres appartenant à la province offertes à ces parcs par le gouvernement de l'Ontario.

The Rouge Park family is preserved as part of Ontario's 1.8-million-acre greenbelt and protects natural areas, national historic sites and green spaces that stretch from the Oak Ridges moraine to Lake Ontario. Visitors to the park enjoy hiking, camping, a beach and spectacular views, elements that will be more enjoyable thanks to today's \$2-million investment. Across Ontario we're expanding on our commitment to protect our natural green space, giving Ontarians more opportunities

to enjoy the outdoors for leisure activities, and today's investment of \$2 million in the Rouge Park Alliance strengthens that commitment.

As Ontario's Minister of the Environment I'm proud that the McGuinty government continues to demonstrate our dedication to the environment and to sustainable development. We have not just talked about why it's important to protect the environment; we continue to deliver.

En préservant les parcs et zones naturelles de l'Ontario, nous faisons de notre province un endroit où il fait mieux vivre, travailler et se divertir. L'octroi de 2 \$ millions au parc Rouge annoncé aujourd'hui par le gouvernement McGuinty nous aidera à créer un Ontario plus respectueux de l'environnement, aujourd'hui et pour de nombreuses années.

By preserving Ontario's parks and natural areas, we're making our province a better place to live, work and play. The McGuinty government's investment today of \$2 million for Rouge Park is one way our government is helping create a greener Ontario now and for years to come.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Statements by the ministry? Responses?

VOLUNTEERS

Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges): On behalf of the leader of the official opposition, John Tory, and the PC caucus I would like to acknowledge National Volunteer Week and to pay tribute to the more than 2.5 million Ontarians who freely contribute more than 400 million hours of their personal time each year to community service and to meeting the needs of others.

Volunteering is indeed a lifeblood of our communities that allows us to participate in nurturing our environment, bringing people together in hospital corridors and schools, on playing fields and in boardrooms for good reasons and for common purposes.

Volunteering develops within us an understanding of our communities, of the needs of people, of the needs that they have that sometimes can only be met with a helping hand: people with disabilities, people in financial distress, children with special needs—and sometimes that special need may be that of a Big Brother or a Big Sister in their lives—or the elderly, who may simply need the assurance that they are not alone and that someone cares.

Volunteering allows us to give of ourselves, to share our wealth and to express our human values of community and of caring.

Today I say thank you to our outstanding organizations and their volunteers who are representative of that volunteer spirit. These volunteers mentor our children, feed our hungry, comfort our lonely, beautify our green spaces and fundraise for our charitable organizations. Ontario's volunteers are young, old, members of families, workers, retirees: men and women of all ages and of all backgrounds. They work in our hospitals, our long-term-care facilities and hospices, who give tirelessly

to improve the quality of life of those they serve. They are a part of the many service clubs of our province for their volunteer initiatives through which youth are encouraged to become the best that they can be and our communities are strengthened.

I would also like to pay tribute to one of Canada's foremost examples of the spirit of volunteerism: June Callwood, who passed away this Saturday. Saint June, as she always will be remembered, worked with over 50 social organizations and fought for countless causes throughout her life in which she demonstrated an unwavering capacity for compassion, empathy and understanding. Today, we celebrate her contribution and the contribution of many volunteers in our province.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton–Victoria–Brock): I'm pleased to respond to the Minister of the Environment. We fully support the protection of green spaces so that our children and our grandchildren in urban areas have access to green spaces to enjoy the outdoors and breathe the clean air. But I would also like to note that in the minister's statement she attempted to use "Minister Caplan" and "leadership" in the same sentence, and I think we all know how ridiculous that sounds over here.

The previous PC government established some highly successful and revered policies such as the Living Legacy and the Lands for Life program as well as the Oak Ridges moraine. Extending and protecting Ontario's green spaces by this government reflects no real leadership; it's just finishing up some of the hard work that came before them, which Dalton McGuinty always loves to take credit for.

But the truth of the matter is that this Liberal government under Dalton McGuinty has failed Ontarians when it does come to the environment. It was nearly five years ago when Dalton McGuinty stood on stage after stage and made a bunch of promises to close coal plants with absolutely no plan on how to get there. The Liberals have shown their dedication to something, and that something is nothing more than environmental rhetoric. In fact, keeping up the coal-closing charade just delayed measures that could have made the environment cleaner and Ontarians healthier. Promises broken, promises re-broken and re-broken. Those plants are still spewing out the emissions that Dalton McGuinty said he would stop. Although I do believe someone over there is reading the polls, because in the last three weeks we've seen a small handful of announcements with boatloads of that all-too-familiar Liberal rhetoric on green policies.

The McGuinty solution to broken promises is to delay and defer deadlines—weak leadership. So after four years of delaying and breaking almost every election promise he made on the environment, Dalton McGuinty announces that he is going to come out with yet another plan, and this time the plan is on climate change, thanks to the funding by the federal government.

Our leader, John Tory, today showed real leadership when it comes to the environment. I was pleased to join

in when he announced setting ambitious and measurable targets that a PC government would set for the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions in Ontario. He laid out a concrete plan detailing how he would show real leadership of a government that would play its part in helping to meet that goal.

Ontarians do their best work when they have a competent, accountable leadership with real plans and a real desire to be measured on real results. That's the difference between John Tory as opposed to Dalton McGuinty's lack of leadership, his "Say anything to get elected" and Dalton McGuinty's extreme lack of accountability. We can't believe them to get it right.

VISITORS

Ms. Cheri DiNovo (Parkdale–High Park): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I just wanted to introduce a wonderful group from a wonderful school: Ursula Franklin high school. Welcome.

VOLUNTEERS

Mr. Paul Ferreira (York South–Weston): I'm pleased to respond on behalf of my party to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration's statement on National Volunteer Week. Each and every year more than five million Ontarians give generously of their time to volunteer at more than 45,000 charitable and not-for-profit organizations across the province. We salute these volunteers and the important role they play in improving the quality of life in their communities. Their selfless contributions should be applauded by us all.

This year, we are witnessing the inaugural presentation of the June Callwood Outstanding Achievement Award for Voluntarism in Ontario. June Callwood, sadly, lost her battle with cancer this past weekend.

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Along with being a prolific writer and commentator, she was a tireless crusader for social justice and a passionate volunteer for many worthwhile causes. The positive difference she made over the course of her lifetime is immeasurable. The people of Ontario, especially the poor and disadvantaged, will forever be grateful for June Callwood's long-lasting contribution to the betterment of our province.

In the spirit of Ms. Callwood's rich and powerful legacy, thousands of my constituents, many of them new Canadians, volunteer their time on a variety of important community initiatives. I wish to highlight just three of these which are symbolic of the volunteer spirit that cuts across the age and socio-economic backgrounds of these individuals. The Syme 55-Plus Centre, which provides much-needed recreational and social programming for adults 55 and over, operates with the contribution of hundreds of volunteers each and every year. The For Youth Initiative gives young people an outlet to channel their creative talents in a productive and positive way. FYI's efforts would not be possible if not for the efforts

of a significant number of dedicated and committed volunteers. The Mount Dennis Community Association counts on dozens and dozens of volunteers for community cleanups and other activities that improve the quality of life in one of Toronto's neediest neighbourhoods. Just this past weekend, I joined a couple of dozen of those volunteers for a clean up of the Eglinton Flats ravine.

On behalf of my NDP colleagues, I commend the work of these and all volunteers across this province.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Mr. Peter Tabuns (Toronto–Danforth): I find it ironic to hear the comments from the Minister of the Environment today, given the threat of the big pipe to Bob Hunter Memorial Park. Because the McGuinty Liberal Party approved the big pipe, the Bob Hunter park is now a greenbelt hot spot. That big pipe was approved without a comprehensive environmental assessment. The construction that is going on there of that big pipe is dewatering the Oak Ridges moraine aquifer. That big pipe will support sprawl, and, frankly, if there had been a full environmental assessment, the proposal to put a sewer through an aquifer would have been properly examined and properly rejected. Instead, what we have is a situation where we're putting a sewer through an aquifer, an aquifer that is being drained, resulting in wells going dry, streams going dry.

If we'd had a full environmental assessment, we would have looked at the fact that this big pipe is going to facilitate sprawl across southern Ontario. In the absence of scrutiny, we're now in a situation where the big pipe is going to be tunnelled under Bob Hunter Park. All but one of the proposed routes goes through the heart of Bob's park. Now, I think that tunnelling a giant sewer through a park named after one of Canada's leading environmentalists shows a total lack of respect for the man and the work that he did in this country.

Today, the minister could have made a different announcement. She could have announced that Bob Hunter park would not be subjected to the impact of this pipe. She could have announced that she in fact was reconsidering these matters, but reconsideration, or thorough consideration, does not seem to be part of this government's and this minister's approach. When we look at the environmental assessment process, it was shelved when it came to the Portlands Energy Centre, notwithstanding the concerns of the residents, notwithstanding the concerns of the city of Toronto medical officer of health. When it came to the nuclear mega-scheme, environmental assessment was shelved, notwithstanding the fact that this will be one of the biggest construction projects in Ontario's history, with huge implications for us environmentally and economically, and no environmental assessment for incinerators—that whole process expedited. And in Bath, Ontario, the Canada Cement Lafarge proposal wasn't subject to an environmental assessment. The citizens were left to defend themselves. That shouldn't be the way it is. The minister and the ministry should defend them.

HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY

Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I believe we have unanimous consent for all parties to speak for up to five minutes in recognition of Yom Hashoah.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): The Government House Leader has asked for unanimous consent. Agreed? Agreed.

Hon. Monte Kwinter (Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services): The Holocaust is something we must never forget: the intensity of evil, the twisted ideas, the inhumane behaviour, the suffering of people who were targeted and died simply because they were a people. It seems unthinkable, yet we must think of it. We must remember all that occurred in those terrible times, and we must honour and remember the six million people of Jewish faith who were systemically killed by the Nazis. We must remember so we will never forget.

Yesterday was Yom ha-Shoah V'Hagvurah, the 27th day of Nisan in the Hebrew calendar, and Holocaust Memorial Day. It has become one of the most significant days on the calendar here at Queen's Park and in communities across Ontario and around the world. This Legislature can be proud that Ontario was the first jurisdiction outside of Israel to officially recognize this day—a day of remembrance, one on which we bear witness to the victims of the Holocaust and honour the survivors.

We are privileged that so many survivors call Ontario home, these people of great courage and dignity who brought with them all the richness of their Jewish heritage and who have contributed so much to our province as they built businesses, started families and shared their culture. Today we thank these extraordinary men and women for all they have done and all that they continue to do. It is also our responsibility and our duty to join them in remembering all those who shared their devastating experience in Europe and who lost their lives in those terrible times.

Acceptance, respect and understanding are values that define our province and values that Ontarians hold dear. Our government is diligent in protecting the rights and dignity of every citizen. Yet every year, hatred, racism and intolerance still raise their ugly heads. Last month, the League for Human Rights of B'nai Brith Canada released its 2006 Audit of Anti-Semitic Incidents, an annual study on patterns of prejudice in this country. It found that anti-Semitism reached its highest levels ever reported to the league. Worldwide incidents show a similar rise. Together with the terrible atrocities in Darfur and in other parts of the world, it is clear that we must remain diligent.

Holocaust Memorial Day underscores both our duty to remember the horrors of the past and our shared responsibility in shaping the future so such horrors are never repeated. We must educate our youth about the evils of racism and the value of every culture. We must teach the values of respect and human rights. We must

refuse to be silent when we see an injustice, and stand up and speak out for one another.

We are the last generation who will be able to hear directly from the survivors and the liberators of the Holocaust. Today we hear anew their testimony. Today we remember the innocent victims. We honour the triumph of spirit of those who survived and remember those who stood against the tide of evil and risked all in the name of humanity. Today, on Yom ha-Shoah V'Hagvurah, we remember so we and the world will never forget.

Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition): It's my privilege to join in the comments made by the minister as we commemorate the Holocaust and Holocaust remembrance.

Any event having to do with Holocaust remembrance is always a profoundly moving one. That was true yesterday as I attended the service at Earl Bales Park, which Minister Kwinter and my colleague the member for Halton also attended, among others.

My own visit, I recall very well—and there are others, I'm sure, in this assembly who have visited Yad Vashem in Jerusalem—was profoundly moving, especially the stunning room in which there was a star in the night sky for each of the six million victims of the Holocaust while a voice continuously spoke their names.

At yesterday's service, Irwin Cotler, member of Parliament and a great human rights lawyer, was quoted as saying that the Holocaust was too terrible to be believed but not too terrible to have happened. That is why it is crucially important for us to remember, to commemorate and to continue to teach.

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Herb Goldstein also spoke at yesterday's service at Earl Bales Park here in Toronto. He told his story as a Holocaust survivor in Montreal earlier this year and a young person came up to him after he told the story and said it would be too bad when Mr. Goldstein was gone and there would be no one to tell his story of Holocaust survival. Mr. Goldstein said to the young man, "That's why I told you the story."

The keynote speaker yesterday was Sibylle Niemoeller-von Sell, a remarkable woman who was married to Pastor Martin Niemoeller, who led strong Christian resistance to the Nazis and was personally imprisoned by Adolf Hitler, spending seven years in solitary confinement in concentration camps.

Pastor Niemoeller made the following observation about his own experience: "First they came for the Communists, but I was not a Communist, so I did not speak out. Then they came for the socialists and the trade unionists, but I was neither, so I did not speak out. Then they came for the Jews, but I was not a Jew, so I did not speak out. And when they came for me, there was no one left to speak out for me."

Therein I think lies the key in remembering and commemorating the Holocaust, in that it reminds us of our duty to be ever vigilant in the defence of civility but also steadfast in our opposition to racism and to discrimination and to hate.

We're reminded of the need for this vigilance when we see the still all too frequent acts of anti-Semitism which were just catalogued by the minister a few moments ago. And we're reminded of the need for this vigilance when we see the emergence of things like Islamophobia and anti-Muslim behaviour, which we all know are the result of misunderstanding and misrepresentation and ignorance, and in some cases the teaching of hate.

As people who have had the wonderful blessing that public life brings of getting to know people of all races and creeds and colours and religions, we have the duty to be the storytellers that Mr. Goldstein referred to, to use the horrors of the Holocaust to lead in the fight against racism and anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, and all other forms of hatred and discrimination. It's one of the parts of this job that I take up with the greatest pride and enthusiasm, and I'm sure that is true of every member of this House.

Elie Wiesel perhaps articulated best that sense of determination and vigilance that we have to show in just never, ever forgetting the horrors of the Holocaust but in standing on guard as well for those most precious rights of our fellow citizens. He said the following in 1986: "I swore never to be silent whenever, wherever human beings endure suffering and humiliation. We must take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented. Sometimes we must interfere. When human lives are endangered, when human dignity is in jeopardy, national borders and sensitivities become irrelevant. Wherever men and women are persecuted because of their race, religion, or political views, that place must—at that moment—become the center of the universe."

Words to remind us all how important it is to remember the Holocaust, those who have suffered and those who have died, and to do everything we can to make sure that nothing like it ever happens again.

Mr. Paul Ferreira (York South–Weston): I am very proud to rise on behalf of our leader, Howard Hampton, and the rest of the Ontario NDP caucus to speak in remembrance of the Holocaust.

More than six million, the vast majority of the Jewish faith, lost their lives during the Holocaust. The horror they suffered at the hands of an evil regime is a permanent dark stain on the fabric of humanity. The horrific barbarism of those heinous atrocities must never be forgotten.

Approximately two decades ago, in a moment that will be permanently etched in my memory, I came face to face with a Holocaust survivor. I was among a group of two dozen or so schoolchildren on a visit to a Holocaust exhibit. The man who greeted us was about 70. He was soft-spoken but his words were powerful and poignant. He described in great detail how one day he and his family were herded into a train car at gunpoint and taken to a place that will live forever in infamy—the concentration camp at Auschwitz.

He was at the time a young man full of life and love, full of dreams and aspirations. What he lived through for

the next three years was something so unimaginable as to be a nightmare. But it was a nightmare he endured each and every day. Forced to perform backbreaking labour, he managed to survive in deplorable conditions, surrounded by the stench and taste of death. The fact he survived was a testament to his resiliency and his resolve. Sadly, he was the only member of his family to do so.

At the end of his address to us, in front of wide eyes and open mouths, he rolled up his sleeve and held up his arm, displaying a blue tattoo. It occurred to me many years later that his courageous display was an act of defiance of those who had tried in cowardice to dehumanize by branding him with a mere number.

I don't know what became of this brave man, but the recollection of my encounter with him will forever stay. As the years I go by, fewer and fewer of his fellow Holocaust survivors remain with us. While we lose them gradually, we must continue to remember so that mankind never again goes through what they went through.

To quote Elie Wiesel, a great citizen of the world, "I decided to devote my life to telling the story because I felt that having survived I owe something to the dead ... and anyone who does not remember betrays them again."

Indeed, to forget would be a betrayal to all. It would also be to let our vigilance down.

To this very day, we hear and see the hate-mongers beat their drums of denial and destruction. Too close to home, weak men of small minds use paint and vandalism to spew hatred. Far from home, a powerful man of unsound mind uses the veil of so-called "democracy" to spew venomous words.

These are dangerous men with very dangerous thoughts. To forget the Holocaust would be to give them the opportunity they crave.

That's why it is so important that each and every one of us remember the Holocaust: to ensure that the darkness and wickedness of evil can never again see the light of day.

The Deputy Speaker: Will members please rise and join me in a time of silent remembrance.

The House observed a moment's silence.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

ORAL QUESTIONS

ONTARIO LOTTERY AND GAMING CORP.

Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition): Speaker, originally we were told the Premier was not going to be here today and then he was. Is he going to be here? My first and second questions are for him.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): The Chair has no idea.

Mr. Tory: I can read my notes to the appropriate minister.

My question then is to the minister responsible for lotteries and it concerns the lottery scandal—133 ques-

tions so far and not one single answer. No answer, for example, to the question surrounding the claim by this minister that he did not become aware of a lottery scandal until October 2006, despite an e-mail going to his current chief of staff, dated April 11, 2006; no explanation of the late-August meeting attended by that very same adviser, his own chief of staff; no explanation of the Deputy Premier's comments where he said, "When someone like The Fifth Estate is involved in doing an exposé, of course the machinery responds. This is appropriate," and no explanation of what the Deputy Premier meant by the machinery responding.

I'd like to just quote to you the words of your own leader, the Premier of this province, who said on a previous day, "Given the seriousness of the situation, will you agree here and now for an all-party legislative committee to get to the bottom of this matter?"

The Deputy Speaker: Question?

Mr. Tory: That's what he said on another day. Why won't you agree to a legislative committee to look into this?

Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy Government House Leader): I understand the partisan perspective of the member opposite. He's quite wrong in a number of the things that he stated earlier in his question, and I'm very happy to lay out the facts for him.

We've had a third party investigation by KPMG, the same accounting firm used by yourself in the private sector, used by your party. In fact, all of the recommendations by KPMG are ongoing. I directed Ontario Lottery and Gaming to implement the Ombudsman's recommendations and indeed all of the KPMG recommendations.

We've had the Ombudsman, a non-partisan, unbiased, independent officer of this Legislature, do a very broad and thorough investigation. I've instructed that all of the material that has been reviewed by the Ombudsman be referred to the Ontario Provincial Police for their review. They have subsequently—

The Deputy Speaker: Response?

Hon. Mr. Caplan: They have subsequently brought in the Toronto police force to get to the bottom of the matter, to determine the appropriate next steps. I want you to know that I have full trust and confidence in the OPP and the Toronto Police Service to determine whether and what type of review—

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you. Supplementary?

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Mr. Tory: We're at 134 questions and still zero answers. When you talked about what you've directed the lottery corporation to do, we want to know whether you directed them or didn't direct them to do anything in the period before you got caught. That's really what we want to know.

Here's another quote, from Premier Dalton McGuinty when he was Leader of the Opposition. He said that the privacy commissioner "will not, for instance, consider the issue of ministerial accountability—that does not

come under the jurisdiction of his office—and that's something we're very interested in."

It's exactly the same situation here. The police have no responsibility to look into ministerial accountability, nor does the Ombudsman, nor does KPMG, and you absolutely refuse to deal with the question of ministerial accountability, which could be looked into by a committee of this Legislature.

Here's one more quote from now Premier Dalton McGuinty when he was on this side of the House: "There are many, many more questions that we feel ought to be answered, and for that reason once again I'm asking that you allow this House, through an all-party legislative committee, to subpoena witnesses and have them answer questions under oath."

I agree with what Mr. McGuinty said then. Why won't you agree to do it now? What are you hiding?

Hon. Mr. Caplan: Contrary to my partisan friend opposite and members of his caucus—I understand where they come from. All members of this Legislature have their own partisan perspectives, but of course, an independent officer of this Legislature, the Ombudsman—I would quote, for the member opposite, his report, page 68. The member is so fond of quotes. The Ombudsman says, "I commend the minister and the government for its openness and responsiveness to my report and recommendations and for their immediate and resolute commitment to ensuring change."

This is in stark contrast to the actions that were taken under a previous government, many of its members who sit in Mr. Tory's caucus along the front bench with him. I do note that last week the leader of the official opposition indicated that member from Erie-Lincoln and the member from Lanark-Carleton had some additional information to be able to shed views on these particular matters, yet for some unknown reason the leader of the official opposition will not ask his members to come forward and share what they knew, when they knew it, what actions they did or did not—

The Deputy Speaker: The question has been answered. Final supplementary.

Mr. Tory: That is a completely ridiculous answer, because of course what those two people said—actually, I correct myself: It's a completely ridiculous non-answer. What those two people said was that they were willing to come before a committee and answer any questions anybody had, which is a lot more than what you've been prepared to do. You're not prepared to appear anywhere and answer any questions for anybody, including right here in this House.

Again, let me quote Liberal Premier Dalton McGuinty when he was Leader of the Opposition. He said: "This has everything to do with political standards. It has to do with what this government sees as acceptable and unacceptable behaviour." I'll go on to quote a former Liberal cabinet minister, Elinor Caplan, on a different matter, when she said that "only a legislative committee with the authority to subpoena people under oath can get to the bottom of that."

What are you hiding? All you have to do is say that you'll have a legislative committee. We can bring all the papers forward, bring everybody forward—former ministers, current ministers, Premier's office, your staff—and answer whatever questions the members of the Legislature have. Why won't you do that?

Hon. Mr. Caplan: The Ombudsman is very clear in his March 26 press conference. He said: "I conclude that they"—the OLG—"put profits ahead of public service. I think there was a point, a crossroads, in 2002.... At that point, the OLG could have gone two ways. It could have said, 'We'll apply the law and take the measures to act diligently.' One month later, Bob Edmonds surfaced, and they pretended that binding law from the Supreme Court didn't apply. Then it became a slippery slope."

When Mr. Tory and his party and members of his caucus were at the helm, they looked the other way. They attempted to sweep these matters under the rug.

This government has brought in KPMG. We've welcomed the Ombudsman's investigation. We've referred the appropriate matters to the OPP and subsequently to the Toronto Police Service for their review. This government has taken decisive action. This government is protecting the public interest. Unfortunately, that contrasts—and I understand that the leader of the official opposition is rather sad to hear the record of his party and is ashamed of it. He should stand in his place. He should apologize for the way—

The Deputy Speaker: The question has been answered. Thank you.

New question.

Mr. Tory: My question is for the same minister in charge of lotteries and it concerns the lottery scandal. We're now at 136 questions and still no answers but a lot of hot air and pomposity.

Here is a quote from Hansard: "Our public and our traditions of fairness demand that this matter be reviewed by a committee of this House. The course that the government members of the committee have embarked on the committee upon means that this government has no intention of dealing with this matter publicly and fairly. Government members have accused us of being on a witch hunt. We are on a hunt—a hunt for the facts, and we will pursue those facts relentlessly, rigorously and unfailingly." The speaker was a relatively new member of provincial Parliament for Ottawa South who is now the Premier of this province, Dalton McGuinty. It's remarkable how much sense he made back then and it's remarkable how arrogant it is today for this government to refuse to do the very thing they talked about then and refer this matter to a legislative committee—

The Deputy Speaker: Question?

Mr. Tory:—so that the kind of things that no one has asked about can be asked about.

Once again, I want to ask the minister, does he agree with the sentiments expressed by his leader, now Premier, in 1991, and can we get these matters in front of a legislative committee so we can get to the bottom of it?

Hon. Mr. Caplan: I say to the member opposite that I and the government are doing what is the responsible thing. We're rolling up our sleeves. We're working on behalf of Ontarians to fix the problems. Unfortunately, the members on the other side looked the other way or swept these matters under the rug. We will rebuild the confidence of the public in their corporation. We have begun to act quickly to implement the recommendations of both the Ombudsman and KPMG. Ontario Lottery and Gaming is in the process of implementing many of those recommendations. I will review them for the Leader of the Opposition: 17 have already been acted upon or are already implemented; 25 more will be in place by the end of June; the remaining 18 are ongoing and will be complete as soon as possible. Some of these include self-checking—

The Deputy Speaker: Response?

Hon. Mr. Caplan:—and 8,800 self-checking devices have been made available and will be fully rolled out by the end of June. As of April 10, there are 6,557 ticket-checkers that have been installed at lottery terminals right across the province. There is—

The Deputy Speaker: The question has been answered. Supplementary?

Mr. Tory: I notice how the minister over and over again—that's question 137 and no answers—conveniently ignores the portion of the Ombudsman's report that says that the record pace of insider claims, including the famous \$12.5-million cheque that was just sent out the door with people holding their noses and whatnot, occurred on the watch of this administration. That's what we want to get to the bottom of: what has happened on their watch.

In 1996 the current Premier, Dalton McGuinty, said the following, and I quote from Hansard: "If the Premier is convinced that the minister has nothing to hide, then why not agree to the all-party legislative inquiry? Do the minister a favour. He's going to be hanging under a cloud after the result of this commissioner's inquiry. There's always going to be a lingering doubt. Do the minister a favour. Give him the opportunity to come before a legislative committee."

I find myself again in agreement with those words—

The Deputy Speaker: Question?

Mr. Tory:—and wonder why you don't want to have the opportunity, as Mr. Hudak and Mr. Sterling have said they would, to appear in front of that committee to answer any questions that anyone has so that you can show, for once and for all, that you do have nothing to hide. What are you hiding? Why don't you want to have a legislative inquiry to get to the bottom of ministerial—

The Speaker: The question has been asked. Minister.

Hon. Mr. Caplan: Frankly, nothing. The Ombudsman was interviewed on CH television just this past weekend. I have a quote from his interview. He says, "Well, I'm pleased that the recommendations were accepted. I think the recommendations are very substantial. Key to them: screening of retailers, the secret shopping scheme we recommended, the policing of retailers by an outside

agency, a new adjudicative agency to decide who gets awards in what disputes.”

The Ombudsman goes on: “These are radical changes and I’m happy with the government’s response. Now the government has chosen to move forward to the OPP. It is not a recommendation I made at that time.”

I can assure the members opposite and the leader of the official opposition that I have engaged my colleague the Minister of Government Services in the work as far as setting up the appropriate oversight and regulatory agency.

The Deputy Speaker: Answer?

Hon. Mr. Caplan: He has already engaged, on more than one occasion, Ontario’s Ombudsman in order to get the proper insight and view to make sure that Ontarians’ trust and confidence in their lottery scheme are well placed, making sure—

The Deputy Speaker: The answer has been given. Final supplementary.

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Mr. Tory: Mr. Speaker, 138 questions and no answers. Again, the people would like to see us get to the bottom of this so they will know that they can buy their tickets and that the lottery corporation is being run in a proper manner and that we go back and determine the important matter of who knew what inside the government of Ontario, in the Premier’s office and in the minister’s office, when did they know it and what did they do about it when they found out this information?

What we have going on here is nothing short of a cover-up. It is obvious, when you don’t agree to some kind of an open committee hearing like this, that you must have something to hide. The Premier himself, when he was Leader of the Opposition, said, “There are many, many more questions that ... ought to be answered and that it should be done through an all-party legislative committee which can “subpoena witnesses and have them answer questions under oath.” I’m assuming that the minister disagrees with the statements made then by his own leader, mainly that this is the best place to deal with it. Will you support our motion to have this go to a legislative committee? Will you appear there and support the words of your own leader that this is the best way to get to the bottom of this terrible scandal?

Hon. Mr. Caplan: I can understand the partisan opinion of my friend opposite. It doesn’t make that truthful or factual; it doesn’t make it the facts of the matter as the Ombudsman found them. The Ombudsman is an independent, unbiased, non-partisan officer of this Legislature. I am very heartened when the Ombudsman has commendation for me as a minister and for this government when he says, “I commend the minister and the government for its openness and responsiveness to” my important “recommendations and for their immediate and resolute commitment to ensuring change.”

Regrettably, in 2002, when that crossroads was reached, members to your left and members to your right chose to look the other way, chose not to act to protect the public interest. But this government is different than

the members across the way. We have chosen to take decisive action to protect the public interest, to make sure the right things are done, to ensure that all Ontarians will know that when they put their loonie or toonie down, they are playing a fair game. Would that actions had been taken appropriately when they were—

The Deputy Speaker: The question has been answered. Thank you.

New question?

DISCLOSURE OF TOXINS AND POLLUTANTS

Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River): My question is for the Minister of the Environment. Minister, New Democrats believe that Ontarians have a right to know about the toxins they may be exposed to in consumer products and by industrial operations. Toxic chemicals can be found in many everyday products like household cleaners, beauty products, even children’s toys. The question is this: Do you believe people have the right to know what toxic chemicals they may be exposed to on a daily basis?

Hon. Laurel C. Broten (Minister of the Environment): Certainly as a mother of two small children, I am somebody who reads labels and pays attention to what products I bring into my household, and I know that many Ontarians do that. My primary focus as Minister of the Environment is, though, not about notification but about reduction, what science we have before us and has been developed in the province. We want people to know that the government is taking steps to reduce the amount of toxins in the atmosphere. One of the things that we did very early on in my mandate was update the standards for 40 air pollutants. That was really the biggest move on that single file in more than 25 years. Since that time, we have been tackling another 15 air standards with the most up-to-date scientific information. That is something that is critical to mothers, because they expect that if we have information, we take steps to remove those pollutants from the atmosphere.

Mr. Hampton: Minister, this is about the public’s right to know. The public wants to be able to take action. In beauty products alone, there are 10,000 ingredients that are suspected or confirmed carcinogens, hormone-mimicking chemicals or substances linked to birth defects. The question is, don’t you think people ought to be able to know about this? Don’t you think there ought to be public disclosure so that people can know about this?

Minister, there is a bill before this Legislature. In fact, it’s going to committee. It’s called the Community Right to Know Act, and it would provide that kind of public disclosure. The question is this: Will the McGuinty government bring it forward for third reading and will the McGuinty government vote for it after it is addressed in committee next week?

Hon. Ms. Broten: I want to encourage my friend opposite to look at the new Ministry of the Environment

website, because we already do have a lot of toxic-use reporting and public notification. One of the things that we've tried to do is make some of that information more accessible to the public. The ministry's airborne contaminant discharge monitoring and reporting regulation, which is regulation 127, and Environment Canada's national pollutant release inventory were developed to provide the public with access to information on industrial emissions in their own community. Regulation 127 requires the reporting of some critical substances, and from smaller facilities.

So here in the province we're really doing our part to ensure that that information is made available. We work closely with the federal government, which certainly has a large role to play in providing this information. It is also incumbent upon each of us—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Answer.

Hon. Ms. Broten: —to ensure that we are cautious about the products that we bring into our own homes.

Mr. Hampton: Speaker, you said it when you asked for an answer.

Minister, it's about the public's right to know. Environmentalists will tell you that one of the best ways to clean up the environment and to protect public health is to provide people with information. That's what this is all about. We've got neighbourhoods that are built next to old industrial waste dumps. We've got soccer fields and sports fields that are built on top of old garbage dumps. We have situations in urban neighbourhoods where we've had industrial fires and people have simply been told, "Stay indoors. Keep your windows and doors shut." Really, what it boils down to is that people need to know what kinds of toxic chemicals may be in their neighbourhood, what kinds of toxic chemicals may be in everyday products.

The question is simple: Does the McGuinty government support the Community Right to Know Act? Yes or no?

Hon. Ms. Broten: The McGuinty government and the Ministry of the Environment have state-of-the-art air monitoring technology. We send that technology each and every time there might be an incident in a project to make sure Ontarians are safe.

What I think that folks in Toronto in particular do have a right to know is that the leader of the opposition, the third party—this is a party that has taken a position against an extensive subway expansion that would be something that would improve air pollution and help tackle climate change in our province.

ELECTORAL REFORM

Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River): My question is for the minister responsible for democratic reform. Yesterday, the citizens' assembly recommended proportional representation as the basis for our electoral system. This means that we will now vote on the recommendation in a referendum in October. But the McGuinty

government has already set 60% as the approval rating for the referendum.

New Democrats believe your requirement for a 60% approval rating is both undemocratic and unfair. Minister, will you show respect for democracy and set the referendum approval level at 50% plus one?

Hon. Marie Bountrogianni (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, minister responsible for democratic renewal): I thank the honourable member for the question and for his interest in this process.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the 103 randomly selected Ontarians from across the province who did this work. They got together every second weekend for seven months, away from their families, right here in Toronto to learn and then deliberate about this. They did in fact come up with a recommendation, which is not quite what the honourable said. It's mixed member proportional representation, which means that 70% of the seats will be just the way they are elected now, if this passes, and 30% will be from party lists.

Having said that, to answer the honourable member's question directly with respect to the referendum threshold, we believe that if Ontarians vote for a change, this will be a foundational change. It won't be something easily undone in four years, as an election, if you want to un-elect a government. Therefore, we believe it's a reasonable threshold. It's a good threshold. It's the one that British Columbia and Prince Edward Island also follow.

Mr. Hampton: Minister, if you were to go out there across Ontario and say to people, "Do you believe that a requirement of 60% approval is fair and democratic?" I think I know what you'd get. People would say no. Democracy in our society is 50% plus one, and to require more than that is both undemocratic and unfair.

My question is this: A majority reflects the will of the people. Will you set the referendum approval rating at 50% plus one and genuinely respect the will of the people?

1500

Hon. Mrs. Bountrogianni: Again, I thank the honourable member for the question. I understand his excitement over this proposed change for electoral system reform; I understand that completely. Having said that, we have set 60% as the threshold and we will not change that threshold.

Mr. Hampton: I don't think I need to tell you the reaction of the public in British Columbia, where people there, by a significant majority, voted for electoral reform, but then, even though a significant majority had voted for electoral reform, the Liberal government said, "No, we're not having any electoral reform." It seems to me that you have stacked the deck against democratic electoral reform by requiring a majority of 60%.

Minister, it's about the will of the people. If 50% plus one vote for electoral reform, is the McGuinty government going to stand there and say, "Despite the fact that this is the will of the majority, the McGuinty government says no"?

Hon. Mrs. Bountrogianni: There are some differences between the experience of British Columbia and the experience here. What the assembly has recommended in MMP is quite a bit easier to understand than the STV in British Columbia. One of the criticisms in British Columbia that we are attempting to learn from is that it was a very complicated system for many people to understand. That is the feedback that we received when we were there from a number of people and groups. This will be easier to understand. We're committed to a well-funded public education campaign to explain it to the people of this province. In New Zealand, 80% voted for change. If people want a change, they'll vote for change. If they want to keep the status quo, they'll keep the status quo. That's democracy.

ONTARIO LOTTERY AND GAMING CORP.

Mr. Robert W. Runciman (Leeds–Grenville): My question is for the minister responsible for lotteries, and once again concerns the lottery scandal. I think this is the 139th question to this minister and his Premier. Hopefully, we'll get a response this time.

As the minister is aware, the official opposition has a motion coming before the House today that would refer the scandal to the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly. If the issue goes to committee, we can then have witnesses attend and testify under oath. For example, we could have Wilson Lee, your current chief of staff, testify as to what happened April 11, 2006, when he received an e-mail advising that the CBC was looking into the insider-win scandal. Mr. Lee could testify as to what he told you about it and what he told other people about it.

My question for the minister is this: What are you afraid of? Why don't you want to give Mr. Lee the opportunity to testify before the committee? Why don't you want that to happen?

Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy Government House Leader): First of all, I disagree with the member opposite. The facts are not as he states them. I should tell you that this government has a track record of opening doors where they were previously locked, shining a light on these particular matters.

I understand this member was the former chair of the executive council, the chair of cabinet under the previous government. For eight years, under this minister's watch, not one committee, not one agency was called before the standing committee on government agencies. When this government came into place, we said that wasn't acceptable, that we would allow standing committees to have an opportunity to review various agencies. So this Premier and this government empowered the committee, chaired by a member of your own caucus, to look into government agencies. They subsequently concluded reviews into Ontario Lottery and Gaming, Hydro One and the LCBO—that's three—and they're now in the

process of reviewing the next three: HPARB, WSIB and OPG. That will be six agencies in four years—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): The response has been given. Supplementary?

Mr. Runciman: You know, if there's a light being shone here, it's being shone on the phoniness of the Liberal Party's 2003 election promises. One of them was to give more responsibility to backbenchers and legislative committees, and certainly they're not doing that in this instance.

You have to ask, what is the reason you're not allowing this to happen? You apparently don't want people to know that you were either asleep at the switch or negligent in terms of your own responsibilities. Apparently, you don't want people to know your re-election team apparently participated in a cover-up of this scandal, an effort to sweep it under the rug. This was all about political protection, not public interest.

If none of that is true, I ask the minister: Prove it by voting for our motion this afternoon. Will you do that?

Hon. Mr. Caplan: I think you've got to look at the veracity of the member—who has previously been found in contravention of the Members' Integrity Act—asking these kinds of questions. He sits beside the former minister responsible for the agency when they arrived at the crossroads, as the Ombudsman called it, in the year 2002. The Ombudsman says, "At that point, the OLG could have gone two ways. It could have said, 'We'll apply the law and take the measures to act diligently.' One month later, Bob Edmonds surfaced, and they pretended that binding law from the Supreme Court didn't apply. Then it became a slippery slope."

This member, a former chair of the executive council, chose to look the other way, chose to sweep these matters under the rug, chose not to want to get to the bottom of it. In contrast to this minister and this government, who have rolled up their sleeves, who have called in KPMG, welcomed the Ombudsman, referred these matters to the OPP and on to the Toronto police force, who have begun to implement the recommendations—some 60 in total—about the Ombudsman and KPMG. Seventeen have been implemented already, another 25 by the end of June, and the other 18 are ongoing.

I'll put the record of this government against this member and his colleagues any day of the week.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River): My question is for the Minister of Health. Minister, the McGuinty government has not been straightforward with the taxpayers of Ontario about the true cost of the private, profit-driven hospital deal in North Bay. You say you got an independent assessment, but in a letter dated March 16, PricewaterhouseCoopers admitted they couldn't independently verify the numbers that the McGuinty government gave to them about the cost of the deal.

Minister, will you table the PricewaterhouseCoopers report today so that Ontarians can see for themselves how

the McGuinty government has skewed the numbers regarding the private, profit-driven hospital deal in North Bay?

Hon. George Smitherman (Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): To the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal.

Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy Government House Leader): As I indicated to the member last week, the value-for-money report will be posted very shortly on the Infrastructure Ontario website.

I would invite all Ontarians to take a look at that report and to form their own opinions. We have previously, with the Montfort Hospital, which was under an execution order by a previous government—that hospital is being rebuilt. In fact, Deloitte and Touche took a look, comparing it apples-to-apples versus a traditional method, versus AFP, and have found that Ontarians have saved approximately \$19.5 million when it comes to constructing that hospital.

Better than saving the money, that hospital is being built. Under previous governments, these capital projects were not undertaken. Ontarians had to wait long times to get access to modern, state-of-the-art medical services. It's only because of the actions of members like Monique Smith from Nipissing that the North Bay hospital is even going ahead. I'll be happy in supplementary to share with the leader of the third party many of the other wonderful achievements in the other communities—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Thank you. Supplementary.

Mr. Hampton: The government says that when the cost of a hospital goes from \$200 million to \$1 billion, that's a wonderful achievement. I don't think it is. But I've got the letter from PricewaterhouseCoopers that you cite, and it's very interesting. They say, "We did not audit or attempt to independently verify the accuracy or the completeness of the information or assumptions underlying" the public sector comparator which were provided by Infrastructure Ontario, the McGuinty government—"and/or the successful proponent's final offer, nor have we audited or reviewed the successful proponent's financial model." In other words, your own consultant is saying that the numbers aren't there to verify what the McGuinty government is saying.

Minister, when is the McGuinty government going to come clean? When are you going to table the PricewaterhouseCoopers report? When are you going to put the numbers on the table so that people across Ontario will see how much more they're going to pay on these private, profit-driven hospital deals?

1510

Hon. Mr. Caplan: In fact, the price of the hospital is \$551 million. That's very well known. The financing for the hospital will be spread out over a 25- to 30-year period of time, making it affordable. I think most Ontarians are familiar with the concept of a mortgage, where you do not pay everything all up front, but spread out the cost over a period of time and pay less. In fact,

this is one of the ways in which we are able to ensure that hospitals, whether they happen to be in Sudbury, in Barrie, in St. Catharines, Sarnia, Sault Ste. Marie or indeed North Bay—

Hon. George Smitherman (Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): Sioux Lookout.

Hon. Mr. Caplan: —and I hear the Minister of Health say in Sioux Lookout, in the member's own riding—that we've been able to get these projects going, which languished under your government and under a previous government. In fact, posted on the Infrastructure Ontario website are the details, the project milestones, the other project announcements, and the value for money report is no different. This government sets a hallmark for transparency where that did not—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): The question has been answered.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mrs. Carol Mitchell (Huron—Bruce): My question is for Minister Broten. Minister, there seems to be a considerable buzz around the word "green." Over the past few months, green or environmental issues have skyrocketed to the top of the agenda for industry and politicians alike. Al Gore is touring around, his movie is winning Oscars, and everyone is talking about the environment.

My constituents are very concerned about global warming. While I understand the government will be coming forward with a climate change plan this spring, can you outline for this House the measures the government has taken to date to tackle this very critical issue?

Hon. Laurel C. Broten (Minister of the Environment): I want to thank my colleague for talking and raising this important challenge and critical issue. Absolutely, yes, we have our sleeves rolled up and are working very diligently on a comprehensive plan that will be released later this spring.

But what I can tell this House is that that plan will be established on our record of action, steps that we have taken that we will build upon when we release that comprehensive plan. Those actions include the fact that carbon dioxide emissions from Ontario's coal-fired power plants are now down 29%, below 1990 levels. Our ethanol-in-gasoline regulation, which puts 5% ethanol in all gas sold in Ontario, reduces our greenhouse gas emissions by 800,000 tonnes. We've invested \$838 million to expand and modernize public transit in the GTA. We are supportive of a subway to move that forward and that will see 35 million fewer car trips on Ontario roads. And those are only a few of the accomplishments.

Mrs. Mitchell: Thank you, Minister. I'm very proud of what this government has accomplished. There is a lot of support from buzz.

Last week, this House debated a private member's bill from the member from James Bay that would exempt

land use planning and forestry from emissions reductions. Today I read with interest a press release from John Tory with his climate change plan, this plan from a party that opposed measures like the Clean Water Act and greenbelt legislation, a party that absolutely gutted the funding to the Ministry of the Environment.

Ernie Eves, John Tory's immediate predecessor, called the environmental agreement the "so-called—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Stop the clock.

Mr. Norman W. Sterling (Lanark–Carleton): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I believe this question is out of order. It is not asking the minister a question about his or her duty.

The Deputy Speaker: It's not a point of order. Member for Huron–Bruce.

Mrs. Mitchell: —"the so-called Kyoto accord." And in June—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Stop the clock again, please. Order. The member for Durham.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker: The Minister of Health, come to order so we can all listen to the member for Huron–Bruce ask the question.

Mrs. Mitchell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In June 2001, the Sierra Club of Canada said that the Harris–Eves Tories were the worst in Canada on climate change. They gave the government of the day an F-minus. They failed with flying colours. Minister, can you shine some lights on our climate plan?

Hon. Ms. Broten: I'm waiting for my microphone to start working here. I'm not surprised that there is some tension on the other side of the House.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: No, your microphone is working; I just can't hear you above what's going on.

Please, listen to the response of the minister. Minister?

Hon. Ms. Broten: I know that there's some tension on the other side of the House and some concern that some of us might look at some of the proposals being put forward by the opposition, a plan that seems to have been cobbled together by reading our "already done" list. Mr. Tory advocates raising the standards of the building code. We've already done that. The opposition advocates putting in energy-efficient standards. We've already done that. The opposition advocates energy-efficient appliances for government. We passed a law that sets energy-efficient standards for a wide range of projects and the Energy Conservation Responsibility Act, not just for the government, so that all Ontarians can save money on their electricity bill. The opposition and Mr. Tory voted against those measures. Their plan also says we should sit on our hands until 2012 and study things from 2012 until 2016, five years from now. That's not leadership—

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you. The response has been given. New question?

ONTARIO LOTTERY AND GAMING CORP.

Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie–Lincoln): I have a question for the minister responsible for lotteries in light of the ongoing lottery scandal. Minister, in March 2005, some 60 or more news articles and significant television and radio coverage blew the lid off the scandal at the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp. when it came to insider wins. Minister, when you became minister, were you briefed on insider wins, and if so, when?

Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy Government House Leader): We now have an opportunity from the former minister responsible for OLG. The Ombudsman indicates that there was a crossroads in 2002. At that point, the OLG could have gone one of two ways. They could have said, "We will apply the law and take the measures to act diligently." But a month later, Bob Edmonds surfaced, and they pretended the binding law from Superior Court didn't apply. Then it became a slippery slope. The real question here is: What did this member know? Why didn't he act? Why did he cover up these matters? Why did he sweep them under the rug?

I hear members of his caucus say that he wants to talk, that he wants to tell what he knew. Come forward. Tell us what you knew. Tell us what you did or did not do. Don't let the leader of the official opposition gag you. Don't allow him to keep these matters in the dark, just like it was previously. Do what this government does: Be transparent, shine a light on these matters.

Mr. Hudak: With all due respect, what a load of horse feathers coming from the minister across the way—again, a simple question that he won't answer. He won't answer what happened with the April 11 e-mail to his staff and his senior staff. He won't answer a simple question about the triumvirate of Liberal spin doctors: Mr. Warren, Mr. Kinsella and campaign manger Don Guy, the Who's Who of the Liberal campaign that appeared to participate in the cover-up of this issue—simple questions the minister refuses to answer.

Minister, why won't you go to committee, swear an oath and answer these questions? I said I will; I know my colleague from Lanark–Carleton would. I'll bet you Joe Cordiano from York South–Weston would come before the committee. Listen, I'll hold your hand. I'll rub your back. I'll pour you a warm tea. It ain't going to be so bad. Minister, come clean, come before the committee.

Hon. Mr. Caplan: I don't need a special date to be able to provide answers and insight.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Order. Keep the clock going. The opposition, I cannot hear the minister's reply, and now I can't hear it from the government side. Please, listen to the minister's response. Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal.

Hon. Mr. Caplan: The member says he has something to offer. He has some insight to provide. He has some information that he is feeling perhaps guilty about

not providing at an earlier time. I'm sure that his colleague from Lanark–Carleton too feels the same way. Then the question is: Why not be open? Why not provide the information to this House, indeed, to all Ontarians? Currently, the Ontario Provincial Police and the Toronto police department are reviewing these matters. If the member has some information, I don't know why he wouldn't want to provide it.

Hon. Mr. Caplan: The only reason I can assume is that some information was known, that the appropriate actions were not taken at that time, that the member does not want these matters to come to light and that—

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you. The question has been answered. New question?

1520

WASTE DIVERSION

Mr. Peter Tabuns (Toronto–Danforth): My question is for the Minister of the Environment. Minister, for some years people have been calling for reform of funding for blue box here in Ontario. Today, the front page of the Toronto Star talked about the shaky financial ground that Toronto's blue box system is on. Will you immediately order Waste Diversion Ontario to pay the full cost of all blue box programs?

Hon. Laurel C. Broten (Minister of the Environment): I am very proud of the actions that our government has taken. We have responded to a call made by AMO, made by municipalities, for so many years to see that our waste is properly diverted from landfill and to no longer have broken glass ending up in a landfill. That's what the deposit return program has put in place: a sustainable future here in this province. I am very proud of that action and we will continue to move to divert more waste from landfill every step of the way.

Mr. Tabuns: Minister, you have no diversion plan. You broke your promise on diversion. You broke your promise on banning organics going into landfill. You stand up and you take credit. You've got problems with the financing of blue box here in Ontario. You've got municipalities in trouble. When are you going to actually take action and help municipalities divert that waste? When are you going to direct the waste diversion office to fund those blue box programs?

Hon. Ms. Broten: My friend needs to do a bit more research. Municipalities support the action that we have taken because they were losing money with respect to that structure of the blue box program. We were the first government that funded the blue box program. So now I guess Ontarians are to believe that the opposition is against the blue box and against the subway. What a shameful record.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Mario Sergio (York West): My question is for the minister responsible for transportation. Minister, recently the three levels of government came together to

make a long-standing, much-awaited announcement that finally the Spadina subway extension to York University is now a reality. From a transportation point of view, it's an historic move. York University is in the heart of my riding of York West and, in my view, the subway extension to York University will open up accessibility not just to those 51,000 students who commute every day to York but also the entire region of York and the municipality of Vaughan as well.

Minister, given the significance of this project, can you tell the members of this House why it is so important that we move forward in making the subway extension to York University a reality sooner rather than later?

Hon. Donna H. Cansfield (Minister of Transportation): I'd like to thank the member for York West for his steadfast encouragement around the subway extension. Unfortunately, I can't say the same thing about the NDP caucus. They voted against it and they actually voted against funding for it as well.

Every day 65,000 people travel to York University. We also know that within the greater Toronto region the numbers are going to increase substantially. What we're doing for the first time ever is actually planning ahead as opposed to behind. We're looking at how we in fact provide for the future, not only for those students but ultimately we're talking about 36 million transit trips. That will eliminate 30 million car trips, which means that 250,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions will be reduced. That's the difference between the NDP and their particular perspective of cancelling something, whereas we know it's—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Sergio: Minister, I can appreciate the importance of the subway extension to York University. It brings much-needed relief to students, staff and all commuters who travel between York region and Toronto. I am sure that, beyond this, the local business community will also see enormous benefits. They will have more opportunity by creating much-needed jobs and an easier commute for all those involved.

Minister, on Wednesday, April 11, 2007, in this House the leader of the third party said that we don't need another subway mega-project, a shocking admission by the leader of the NDP.

Minister, for the benefit of the people of York West and the benefit of this House—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr. Sergio: —can you tell us where this government stands on the issue of public transit and the need for sustainable transportation systems in Ontario?

The Deputy Speaker: I don't know how the Minister of Transportation heard the question, but we'll see if she can answer it. Minister of Transportation?

Hon. Mrs. Cansfield: I did hear, however, when the leader of the third party, Mr. Hampton, indicated—

Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie–Lincoln): What did he say?

Hon. Mrs. Cansfield: He said, “We don’t need another subway mega-project ... extending the subway ... into a lightly populated York region”—which has a mere 870,000 people. Obviously the member can’t count, either.

There is no question that since being in government, we’ve put \$3.6 billion into public transit in this province, and we’ve done it for a reason. We know that the greater Toronto area is growing, and it’s growing at an exponential rate. We know that we need to do some strategic planning today for tomorrow. Part of that has to be how we deal with gridlock issues, and one of the best ways, of course, is making sure that public transit plays just as pivotal a role as air, rail, marine, land and bridges do.

It makes a difference when you’ve got that kind of investment. That’s why you need a subway—we need a subway—going into areas like York region. It’s the first time we’re actually looking at an interjurisdictional transit program of this nature. And it means jobs.

ONTARIO LOTTERY AND GAMING CORP.

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener–Waterloo): My question is for the minister responsible for gaming. Fully 144 questions have now been asked on the lottery scandal, and you and your government have not answered a single one. This stonewalling, this cover-up is why we need to get the scandal to a standing committee on the Legislative Assembly so that we can have people testify under oath about matters that have not been investigated by the Ombudsman or by the police. You would agree I’m sure, Minister, that this is the right thing to do, because so far we have seen only a cover-up. There has been no attempt to get to the bottom of this situation.

Your Premier once said this about something similar: “It becomes more obvious why only a public, all-party inquiry can find out what really happened.” This applies to this scandal. Will you and your government support our request that this go to a standing committee?

Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy Government House Leader): I don’t share the partisan political views of my friend opposite or her speculation, innuendo or opinion. In fact, what Ontarians support as well is action being taken where she and her colleagues sat around the cabinet table, looked the other way or swept these matters under the rug.

This government, in contrast, has taken action. We’ve called in KPMG—the accounting firm of your party, I would say—and we are implementing all of their recommendations. I’ve directed Ontario Lottery and Gaming that the recommendations of the Ombudsman be implemented as well. We’ve had the Ombudsman, an independent officer of this Legislature who doesn’t have the partisan bias of any member—and the government in fact is implementing his recommendations. We’ve laid the material the Ombudsman reviewed in front of the Ontario Provincial Police, who certainly do not have a partisan

bias, as do members here. The Ombudsman has indicated that we should separate the functions, eliminate that culture he said so badly needs changing that was nurtured under your government—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): The answer has been given. Thank you. Supplementary?

1530

Mrs. Witmer: I would say to the minister that it’s obvious that your government is showing no leadership on this issue once again. When your leader sat on this side of the House, this is what he had to say about things: “You’ve got a chance to show some leadership here. You can refer this to a legislative inquiry and we’ll get to the bottom of this affair once and for all, or you can stonewall and you can sweep things under the rug and you can hide.” So far, your government and your Premier have chosen to stonewall; you’ve chosen to sweep things under the rug; you’ve chosen a course that, in the words of Murray Campbell, is “too patronizing for words.” Why won’t you finally do the honourable thing today and support our motion to get this to a standing committee so we can put this whole scandal behind us? Show some leadership, you and your government.

Hon. Mr. Caplan: I disagree with the member opposite. She’s entitled to her views and her opinions. I understand they’re clouded by her partisan perceptions. But the only ones who swept these matters under the rug were her and her colleagues when they were sitting in cabinet. In fact, the opposite is true. This government has shone a light on these matters. We’re rolling up our sleeves to fix a problem and a culture of an organization that, unfortunately, members opposite left.

We made a commitment to act quickly to implement the recommendations. In fact, I would share with the member opposite that, of the total 60 recommendations from KPMG and the Ombudsman, 17 have already been implemented, 25 will be implemented by the end of June, and the remaining 18 are ongoing. Some of those include implementing self-check machines; 8,800 self-check devices will be made available and fully rolled out by the end of June. As of April 10, there were 6,557 of these machines. We have lowered the threshold at OLG from a \$50,000 to a \$10,000 level when an investigation—

The Deputy Speaker: A response has been given. Thank you. New question.

MINING INDUSTRY

Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins–James Bay): My question is to the Minister of Northern Development and Mines. Minister, your government in the last budget singled out the diamond mining industry by almost tripling royalties paid by diamond mines. This change in tax policy not only treats diamond mines differently than any other mining jurisdiction but also moves Ontario from one of the most competitive mining sectors in the world to one of the least competitive mining sectors in the world and, as a result, will curtail future investment in this province by the mining industry.

My question's a simple one, Minister. You're the minister of mines. Do you think this won't hurt the mining investment that's coming to Ontario, tripling the royalties on diamond mining?

Hon. Rick Bartolucci (Minister of Northern Development and Mines): I know one thing: Our very, very proactive approach to mining has ensured that more new mines were opened in 2004 than in any other year. We look at the opportunity of mining as an economic pillar: \$9.4 billion to the Ontario economy. Then we compare that against the NDP record when they were in power: 13 mines closed and six mills connected to mining closed. I will match our record in mining against their record in mining any time.

Mr. Bisson: Last week, the head of De Beers Canada stood in this Legislature downstairs and said, "Look in the back. Here's the first diamond mine to be opened in Ontario, and it will be the last diamond mine to open in Ontario because of your fiscal policies."

So I ask you again—you were standing there—you will do what is right as the minister of mines: stand up for the mining industry, northern Ontarians and workers within that industry and the communities they live in, and beat back this attempt by your government to triple diamond royalties in this province, killing future investment in the province of Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Bartolucci: I don't mind the fact that we try to play partisanship, but when it comes to our natural resources, we should all be on the same page, trying to maximize opportunity.

Let's be honest here. If we look at the Ontario mining association report, we will see that of minerals produced in Ontario, nickel led the Canadian ranking; gold led the Canadian ranking; the platinum group led the Canadian ranking; cobalt led the Canadian ranking. When we look at capital investment, Ontario led the Canadian ranking. Why? Because we have set the table for future development in the mining industry in Ontario. I am proud of our record. I continue to be proud of our record. We're creating real jobs, real sustainability, not like their record of abuse, neglect and closure.

EASTERN ONTARIO DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry–Prescott–Russell): My question is for the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Minister, I was pleased to learn that your parliamentary assistant and our colleague the hard-working member for Northumberland made an important rural economic development announcement this morning in Perth, Ontario. I understand that this is just one of the ways the McGuinty government is working on the side of businesses and families to strengthen Ontario's economy and build prosperity. I can appreciate how important these announcements are for eastern Ontario. Just last September, I announced funding support on your behalf which will help the eastern Ontario agri-food business sector and potentially lead to more jobs and new opportunities for our communities.

Minister, can you please inform the House how this morning's announcement will build economic prosperity for the eastern Ontario region?

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs): I'm happy that the hard-working member from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell brought this question to the floor of the Legislature, because I think it's very important. People in the province of Ontario and members of this House appreciate the investments that our government is making in rural communities.

As he indicated, this morning there was an announcement in Perth providing \$500,000 to Code's Mill Inn and Spa in the beautiful village of Perth. Code's Mill Inn and Spa is currently working to establish an accredited college-level training program for hospitality and restaurant management in that community. They put together a very compelling application, and our government is happy to support partnership arrangements like the one that has been identified for the Perth community.

In addition to investments in RED, our government is investing in rural Ontario through COMRIF: \$84 million—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Thank you. Supplementary.

Mr. Lalonde: Minister, the people of eastern Ontario are extremely pleased by your dedication to rural Ontario.

Interjections.

Mr. Lalonde: I'm glad that our government has committed to working with small towns and rural communities to develop well-qualified workers, better jobs and an innovative economy. This is an important announcement and will be welcome news in eastern Ontario.

Our government's commitment to rural and eastern Ontario has not always been shared by previous governments. The former Conservative government, as you are well aware, was neglectful of rural Ontario, especially eastern Ontario. Can you please share with this House their record of neglect and mismanagement?

Hon. Mrs. Dombrowsky: I could barely hear the honourable member because the NDP weren't paying very much attention to this very good question. That is regrettable and I think reflects the fact that they don't care about rural Ontario, or they would have been listening to this honourable member.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: We're not going to get as many questions in today, because you have been a bit rowdy.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Member for Niagara Centre.

Interjection: He's not in his seat.

The Deputy Speaker: It doesn't matter whether you're in your seat or not; heckling isn't allowed.

Minister.

Hon. Mrs. Dombrowsky: Thank you, Speaker. Again, I think it's unfortunate that the leader of the third party would say that this was not an important question.

Certainly for people in eastern Ontario it's a very important question.

There is no question—and this has been the problem—that governments before have neglected eastern Ontario; certainly the previous government did. It's unfortunate that the previous government cut \$164 million from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food budget. They closed—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Stop the clock. Minister?

Hon. Mrs. Dombrowsky: The previous government collapsed the Eastern Ontario Development Corp. The previous government downloaded 40% of provincial highways in eastern Ontario, a burden that the communities in eastern Ontario are still reeling from. That is the sorry record of the previous government. They closed OMAFRA offices in rural Ontario. Also, they have voted against our government's initiatives to invest in eastern Ontario. They—

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you. The time for oral questions has expired.

1540

PETITIONS

MULTIPLE LEGAL PARENTS

Mr. Bill Murdoch (Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the appeal court of Ontario on January 2, 2007, ruled that ‘a child may have more than two legal parents’;

“Whereas that sets a precedent and leaves many unanswered questions which could result in possible multiple legal parents and unknown devastating ramifications to children and families of Ontario;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to appeal the Ontario Court decision, so that various levels of government may thoroughly study the personal, societal and legal implications of allowing more than two legal parents.”

I've signed this also.

REGULATION OF ZOOS

Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches–East York): I have a petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly that reads as follows:

“Regulate Zoos to Protect Animals and Communities

“Whereas Ontario has the weakest zoo laws in the country; and

“Whereas existing zoo regulations are vague, unenforceable and only apply to native wildlife; and

“Whereas there are no mandatory standards to ensure adequate care and housing for zoo animals or the health and safety of animals, zoo staff, the visiting public or neighbouring communities; and

“Whereas several people have been injured by captive wildlife and zoo escapes are frequent in Ontario; and

“Whereas these same regulatory gaps were affirmed recently by the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario in his annual report;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly ... to support MPP David Zimmer's bill, the Regulation of Zoos Act.”

I am in agreement with that and will send it down with page Craig.

GRAVESITES OF FORMER PREMIERS

Mr. Jim Brownell (Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh): I have a petition signed by a number of members of the Cornwall Township Historical Society, and it reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Premiers of Ontario have made enormous contributions over the years in shaping the Ontario of today; and

“Whereas, as a result, the final resting places of the 18 deceased Premiers are among the most historically significant sites in the province, but have yet to be officially recognized; and

“Whereas, were these gravesites to be properly maintained and marked with an historical plaque and a flag of Ontario, these locations would be a source of pride to the communities where these former Premiers lie buried, and provide potential points of interest for visitors;

“Now therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“Enact Bill 25, an act that will preserve the gravesites of the former Premiers of Ontario.”

As I agree with this petition, I shall sign it and send it to the clerks' table with Ashley.

LANDFILL

Mr. Norman W. Sterling (Lanark–Carleton): This is a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas there is currently a proposal to more than triple the size of the Carp landfill in west Ottawa; and

“Whereas this site has been in operation for some 30 years and had been expected to close in 2010; and

“Whereas this landfill sits on porous fractured limestone, the worst possible substratum for a landfill; and

“Whereas the dump is in direct conflict with the exploding residential and commercial growth, soon to be 150,000 plus in Ottawa's west end; and

“Whereas the municipal councillors representing this area—Eli El-Chantiry, Shad Qadri and Peggy Feltmate—and the MPP, Norm Sterling, all oppose this expansion;

“We, the undersigned, support our local representatives and petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to ensure the Minister of the Environment does not

approve the expansion of the Carp landfill and instead seeks other waste management alternatives.”

And I sign that.

YORK SUBWAY EXTENSION

Mr. Mario G. Racco (Thornhill): I have a petition in relation to the subway:

“Whereas York region and the city of Toronto have witnessed a substantial increase in traffic gridlock over the last several years; and

“Whereas these two regions continue to face traffic gridlock, which is an overwhelming economic and environmental problem; and

“Whereas we are significantly disappointed with the position of the leader of the NDP who wants to cancel the Spadina-York subway extension;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That all York region and Toronto MPPs do their utmost to have the Spadina-York subway extension construction start during the year 2007.”

STEVENSON MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Mr. Jim Wilson (Simcoe–Grey): “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Stevenson Memorial Hospital needs \$1.4 million in new funding over the next three years to get its birthing unit reopened and to ensure that they can recruit enough obstetricians and health care providers to supply a stable and ongoing service for expectant mothers in our area; and

“Whereas forcing expectant mothers to drive to Newmarket, Barrie or Orangeville to give birth is not only unacceptable, it is a potential safety hazard; and

“Whereas Stevenson Memorial Hospital cannot reopen the unit under its current budget and the McGuinty government has been unresponsive to repeated requests for new funding;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the McGuinty Liberal government immediately provide the required \$1.4 million in new funding to Stevenson Memorial Hospital so that the local birthing unit can reopen and so that mothers can give birth in Alliston.”

I agree, and I’ve signed that petition.

CHILD CUSTODY

Mr. Kim Craiton (Niagara Falls): My petition reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the people of the province of Ontario deserve and have the right to request an amendment to the Children’s Law Reform Act to emphasize the importance of children’s relationships with their parents and their grandparents; and

“Whereas subsection 20(2.1) requires parents and others with custody of children to refrain from unreasonably placing obstacles to personal relations between the children and their grandparents; and

“Whereas subsection 24(2) contains a list of matters that a court must consider when determining the best interests of a child. The bill amends that subsection to include a specific reference to the importance of maintaining emotional ties between children and grandparents; and

“Whereas subsection 24(2.1) requires a court that is considering custody of or access to a child to give effect to the principle that a child should have as much contact with each parent and grandparent as is consistent with the best interests of the child; and

“Subsection 24(2.2) requires a court that is considering custody of a child to take into consideration each applicant’s willingness to facilitate as much contact between the child and each parent and grandparent as is consistent with the best interests of the child; and

“Whereas we support Bill 8 as introduced by” the member for Niagara Falls;

“We, the undersigned, hereby petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to amend the Children’s Law Reform Act to emphasize the importance of children’s relationships with their parents and grandparents.”

I’m pleased to sign my signature in support of this bill.

CORMORANTS

Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka): I have a petition to do with cormorants. It reads:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas recent scientific studies have conclusively demonstrated that double-crested cormorants consume more fish than commercial fishing, sport fishing and poaching combined;

“Whereas double-crested cormorants are devastating nesting areas for other birds;

“Whereas double-crested cormorants are fouling water and making beaches unusable;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, support the private member’s Bill 156 of Ernie Parsons, MPP Prince Edward–Hastings, to reclassify the double-crested cormorant into the same family as American crows, brown-headed cowbirds and the common grackle. This will allow for greatly increased opportunities for the culling of cormorants, in addition to other steps being taken to control cormorant populations and protect the environment.”

I support this petition.

PENSION PLANS

Ms. Cheri DiNovo (Parkdale–High Park): I’m happy to share this petition.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the seniors of Ontario request full access and control of their locked-in pension funds at age 55,

without the current restriction imposed by government regulation;

“Whereas the current government regulation restricts what seniors and pensioners are able to do with their own savings and limits their options for an affordable and comfortable retirement;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislature of Ontario as follows:

“That the Ontario Pension Benefits Act be amended to give seniors of Ontario the option to transfer their locked-in pension funds into an RRSP at the age of 55, as is the case for seniors in the province of Saskatchewan.”

I agree with this petition and affix my signature hereto and give it to David.

YORK SUBWAY EXTENSION

Mrs. Liz Sandals (Guelph–Wellington): “Whereas York region and the city of Toronto have witnessed a substantial increase in traffic gridlock over the last several years; and

“Whereas these two regions continue to face traffic gridlock, which is an overwhelming economic and environmental problem; and

“Whereas we are significantly disappointed with the position of the leader of the NDP who wants to cancel the Spadina-York subway extension;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That all York region and Toronto MPPs do their utmost to have the Spadina-York subway extension construction start during the year 2007.”

I will affix my signature to that.

1550

ONTARIO LOTTERY AND GAMING CORP.

Mrs. Joyce Savoline (Burlington): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Dalton McGuinty and David Caplan ignored stories of millions in rip-offs within Ontario’s lottery system for months, if not years;

“Whereas they acted only after they were caught and their first attempt was to ‘spin the scandal’ rather than fix the problems;

“Whereas Ontarians have every right to expect leadership from their government; and

“Whereas Dalton McGuinty and David Caplan have failed to protect the integrity of the lottery system in Ontario;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That Dalton McGuinty start upholding the standards of integrity, responsibility and accountability, make the protection of the interests of all Ontarians a priority, and demand the resignation of David Caplan, the minister currently responsible for the lottery system.”

I agree with this and I will give it to page Alanna, and I sign my name.

BRIDGE REPLACEMENT

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel (Lambton–Kent–Middlesex): I present this petition for Mike Brown, MPP for Algoma–Manitoulin.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Shewfelt bridge, which crosses the Goulais River, has been declared unsafe by the Ministry of Transportation;

“Whereas the bridge has united the community of Goulais River for decades;

“Whereas the closure divides the community by stopping emergency vehicles such as fire department and ambulance services, as well as pedestrian, bicycle, recreational vehicle and vehicle traffic;

“Whereas the bridge provides an alternative crossing to the river in case of a closure of the Highway 17 bridge;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, request the Ministry of Transportation proceed with the rebuilding or replacement of this important infrastructure.”

I give this petition to Craig.

ONTARIO LOTTERY AND GAMING CORP.

Mr. John O’Toole (Durham): I present a petition on behalf of my constituents in Durham which reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Dalton McGuinty and David Caplan ignored stories of millions in rip-offs within Ontario’s lottery system for months, if not years;

“Whereas they acted only after they were caught and their first attempt was to ‘spin the scandal’ rather than fix the problems;

“Whereas Ontarians have every right to expect leadership from their government; and

“Whereas Dalton McGuinty and David Caplan have failed to protect the integrity of the lottery system in Ontario;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That Dalton McGuinty start upholding the standards of integrity, responsibility and accountability, make the protection of the interests of all Ontarians a priority, and demand the resignation of David Caplan, the minister currently responsible for the lottery system.”

I support this petition and present it to Ashley.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr. John Milloy (Kitchener Centre): I have a petition concerning long-term care.

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to increase long-term-care operating funding by \$390 million in 2007 and \$214

million in 2008 to provide an additional 30 minutes of resident care, enhance programs and meal menus and address other operating cost pressures, and introduce a capital renewal and retrofit program for all B and C homes, beginning with committing to provide \$9.5 million this year to renew the first 2,500 beds.”

LAKERIDGE HEALTH

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette (Oshawa): Before I begin, I just want to acknowledge a good friend and colleague, Mr. Murray Monk, from Nipigon, who came down to see us.

I have a petition that reads:

”To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Lakeridge Health should receive full funding to properly implement patient services in the community; and

“Whereas Lakeridge Health is currently facing an \$8-million shortfall as a result of government directives; and

“Whereas Lakeridge Health ranks among the best 25% of hospitals in efficiency performance even when compared to single-site hospitals; and

“Whereas this shortfall would negatively affect many vital programs, including mental health programs, crisis intervention services and addiction treatment services at Lakeridge Health;

“Therefore, be it resolved that we, the undersigned, respectfully petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to provide long-term fair funding for the important health care services of Lakeridge Health and immediately fully fund the \$8-million shortfall.”

I affix my name in full support.

YORK SUBWAY EXTENSION

Mr. Mario Sergio (York West): I have received another petition with thousands of signatures. It is addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, and reads:

“Whereas York region and the city of Toronto have witnessed a substantial increase in traffic gridlock over the last several years; and

“Whereas these two regions continue to face traffic gridlock, which is an overwhelming economic and environmental problem; and

“Whereas we are significantly disappointed with the position of the leader of the NDP who wants to cancel the Spadina-York subway extension;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That all York region and Toronto MPPs do their utmost to have the Spadina-York subway extension construction start during the year 2007.”

I concur with the petitioners and I will affix my name to it.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): The time for petitions has expired.

OPPOSITION DAY

ONTARIO LOTTERY
AND GAMING CORP.

SOCIÉTÉ DES LOTERIES
ET DES JEUX DE L'ONTARIO

Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition): I move that the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly shall meet for the purposes of an inquiry. The terms of reference of this inquiry include but are not limited to: an investigation into the flow of information between the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp., the Minister and Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal and the Premier's office regarding the issues of fraud and other irregularities within Ontario's provincial lottery system, including documentary and viva voce evidence, and a review of the actions taken and the actions which might more appropriately have been taken to protect the interests of the citizens of Ontario and restore their faith and confidence in the integrity of Ontario's lottery system;

That the committee for the purpose of this referral is to be chaired by a member of the official opposition;

That the subcommittee of the committee be composed of one representative from each party plus the Chair;

That the subcommittee shall have the ultimate decision-making power with respect to the calling of witnesses and any other procedural aspects of the proceedings and all matters arising relevant to the execution of the terms of reference of the committee. A minimum list of witnesses will be determined by the House leaders; additional witnesses to be determined by the subcommittee;

That there shall be a committee counsel hired and directed by the subcommittee paid for by the Legislative Assembly;

That the subcommittee can, through Speaker's warrant, compel the attendance of any person to attend and give evidence;

That the subcommittee can, through Speaker's warrant, require any person to produce in evidence such documents and things as the subcommittee may specify;

That the members of the committee and/or their counsel shall be permitted to obtain production and review of any document or thing and disclosure of any viva voce evidence necessary and ancillary to the purpose of this investigation;

That, prior to the commencement of the committee hearings, the subcommittee may require the attendance of any person or production of any document for the purpose of a preliminary examination for discovery;

That the Legislative Assembly committee has priority over all other committees with respect to its sitting time, and in any event, the committee shall not sit as a committee for the purposes of this matter prior to the first day of May, 2007. The committee shall complete its investi-

gation and file its report on this matter no later than the 30th day of June 2007;

That the Legislative Assembly committee be authorized to meet at the call of the Chair and notwithstanding prorogation;

That any witness compelled to appear before the committee may attend with counsel and shall be required to give testimony upon oath pursuant to section 59 of the Legislative Assembly Act; and

That the committee may, if requested, permit any portion of its proceedings to occur in camera.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Mr. Tory has moved opposition day number 3. Mr. Tory.

Mr. Tory: I believe that this particular request that we have made for a legislative committee is very important within the context of the two key responsibilities I think that we have here on this and any other matter. The first thing I think that we have an obligation to do as members of this assembly, whether we be on the government side or the opposition side, regardless of who we are, is to do the right thing—to do the right thing in the eyes of the public with respect to whatever public policy decision or whatever expenditure of government money that we might be overseeing. That's what we're sent here to do. I think above and beyond all else the public would say that we are sent here to do the right thing.

The second thing I think we're sent here to do is, in the way we conduct ourselves, to maintain and to enhance public confidence: public confidence in us, public confidence in democratic institutions generally, in the government of Ontario, in the Legislature of Ontario.

I think that what we have here is a repeated instance, I will confess, of the people on the government side of the House saying over and over again that they have done the right thing. They've done everything that was right—they've asked for every inquiry, every investigation, every body that possibly you could name to look into these matters concerning this terrible lottery scandal—and that they have, indeed, done the right thing. They use quotes of the Ombudsman, I would argue, wildly out of context in trying to pretend that he at any time, in any way, in any words at all ever rendered any opinion whatsoever with respect to anything that went on, particularly in 2004, 2005 and 2006, with the exception of the relatively limited numbers of instances that he actually reported on.

1600

We have 2004, for example; we have the wrap-up of complaints. If you look at the Ombudsman's report itself, it says—and I quote at page 21—“It appears that 2004 was a banner year for controversial insider prize claims.” That year, 2004, was actually the second year of the McGuinty government, and he has not in any way opined on, commented on or even indicated he ever investigated anything the McGuinty government, its ministers, the Premier's office, the staff of the minister's office did or did not do. That's because he didn't investigate those things. As a result, we don't have anything in the Ombudsman's report, for example, that deals with what the

government knew, what it did, what it did when it found out about these things in 2004, the so-called “banner year,” according to the Ombudsman, for insider prize claims. He didn't look into that because he wasn't asked to, and I would think that maybe he would think that might be outside of his purview.

In 2005, as the member for Erie–Lincoln pointed out in his question today, there were some 60 newspaper, television and radio items concerning the fraud and the disservice that was done to Mr. Edmonds. It defies credibility to think that a minister would have come into his office and that nobody from the bureaucracy, nobody from the lottery corporation, nobody from his own office ever asked him a question, nobody ever offered a briefing, nobody ever offered any advice, nobody gave him any clippings to do with any of this, when there were 60 items taking place in the news. And yet that's the position of the minister and his staff: see nothing, saw nothing, heard nothing, spoke nothing, asked nothing, did nothing. We certainly know the latter one is true, that he sat on his can in his office and did nothing during that period of time. But we want to know. Beyond the fact we know he did nothing, what did he know? What did anybody tell him? Why did he do nothing when he clearly must have known what was going on here?

In 2006, we had Mr. Lee sending and receiving e-mails about this very subject back and forth between the minister's office. Who is Mr. Lee? Well, he was a very senior adviser to the minister, now his chief of staff. On August 30, we have a meeting that took place in the Premier's office involving top people, the who's who, as the member for Erie–Lincoln said today, of the Premier's political circle, having a meeting to discuss what to do later on in the fall. All these people were involved, talking about this as a communications issue and trying to spin their way out of it.

And so we have all these things going on and no investigation has taken place by anybody into any of this. These people across the way know that there has been no investigation of any of these matters by the Ombudsman, there has been no investigation of any of these matters by the police—nor will there be, because it's not something the police will be investigating, the subject of ministerial accountability.

I only ask this question, and I think it goes to the heart of why we moved this motion today: If the people on the government side, as we hear from these repeated answers from the minister and from the Premier, believe they did the right thing, which is our duty here to do on this and every other matter, then why wouldn't they want the air to be cleared so that when there are these questions that remain unanswered with respect to who knew what and who did what and so on, that they wouldn't allow the air to be cleared and for all the facts to be on the table?

It's interesting how history repeats itself. We had in December 1996 an instance in which a minister who was called into question for the release of some information actually in that case had already submitted his resignation. He did the honourable thing and submitted his

resignation because there was a cloud, there was some uncertainty and he thought it best for the system, best for that number two responsibility we have here—to maintain confidence in this place and in the people here and in the process here—to submit his resignation. But Mr. McGuinty, the Premier, then the Leader of the Opposition, still felt it important to have an all-party committee to look into who knew what and when did they know it and how did they come to know it and what did they do about it when they knew. He believed it was important, because I think he understood then that important duty to maintain public confidence.

He pointed out then exactly the same point that we make now, namely, that ministerial and public accountability was not something that was in that case the subject of the examination by the privacy commissioner. It wasn't something that the privacy commissioner could or did investigate, and Mr. McGuinty was saying then that it's something that should be looked into and that it could only be looked into by a legislative committee. We had him saying then that when there was no one clearing the air, he felt that it was—in fact, it was Ms. Caplan, a member of the assembly of the day, who said, “only a legislative committee with the authority to subpoena people under oath can get to the bottom of that, as my leader has suggested.” That followed on the quote of Mr. McGuinty himself, who said on December 9, 1996—and I'm going to put it in the Hansard again, as we did earlier today—“I am convinced, as I'm sure the minister is, that the Information and Privacy Commissioner will not, for instance, consider the issue of ministerial accountability—that does not come under the jurisdiction of his office—and that's something we're very interested in.” He went on to say, “There are many, many more questions that we feel ought to be answered, and for that reason once again I'm asking that you allow this House, through an all-party legislative committee, to subpoena witnesses and have them answer questions under oath.”

Isn't it interesting that in almost exactly the same situation, where here we have the Ombudsman, who did not have the authority and certainly did not conduct any investigation as to who knew what in the minister's office and in the Premier's office, and what they did based on what they knew, that the Premier now, then the opposition leader, thought it was just right to appoint a legislative committee to look into that matter, as did then MPP Caplan, who subsequently went on to become a minister, and yet today, somehow, there is something wrong with this?

I would argue the result has been that confidence has been eroded. Confidence has been eroded we know for sure in the lottery corporation. You could see from the streeters last night on the television news. It was CTV. They went and asked; not me, not anybody else. Here are just two of the answers they got when they went out and said, “Do you think there should be some sort of an independent investigation into the lottery corporation?” One woman, who's not identified, says, “Definitely. It's something that should be looked into, absolutely. It's not

fair and it's not right.” A second man said, “Just to protect my rights as a consumer.” He agreed there should be some kind of an investigation.

The confidence in the lottery corporation has been eroded. The confidence in the government, I would argue, has been eroded. Confidence in the minister has most certainly been eroded, and every day that he gets up and gives these ridiculous, terrible answers that defy any sense of accountability at all, I think it's further eroded. Confidence in the Premier has been eroded, especially when we look at the fact that it seemed okay to stand up for these standards of accountability, transparency and references to legislative committees when he was Leader of the Opposition, sitting in this chair which I assure you I am keeping warm for him, because he will be sitting in it again in less than six months from now.

What happens with his eroding confidence in himself is his business. It's sad for the process of government. What I do take some objection to is that when they do this kind of thing and they stonewall, cover up and refuse to have a legislative committee—which they advocated time and time again when they were in opposition—they erode confidence in this Legislature. To that, I think all of us have the right to take some objection, because it's not fair that through their stonewalling and through their covering up they should erode confidence in this Legislature.

There could only be two explanations for this, and I want to finish on this note because I think it is really the most important note of all. There are only two reasons why they would not have this legislative committee when Mr. McGuinty, the Premier, then opposition leader, stood so many times and articulated so well, I would say, the reasons why you need an independent inquiry to get to the bottom of these kinds of things. The first is that he never believed any of that to begin with. There are words you could use that I would not be allowed to use by you, Mr. Speaker, in this chamber to describe anyone who stood up and said all of those things so many times, supported by so many of his colleagues who now form part of the front bench of this government. I would say that couldn't have been the reason, although we know from the broken promises that there's always that possibility. But having said that, let's put the best spin on it we possibly can and say that it wasn't that reason that was responsible for this.

So what's the other reason? The only other explanation as to why they would not stand up in their place and say, “Yes, we will have the kind of open inquiry this resolution calls for,” is because they have something to hide.

Let me again quote Mr. McGuinty from Hansard. It's certainly in December 1996. He says: “If the Premier is convinced that the minister has nothing to hide, then why not agree to the all-party legislative inquiry? Do the minister a favour. He's going to be hanging under a cloud after the result of this commissioner's inquiry. There's always going to be a lingering doubt. Do the minister a favour. Give him the opportunity to come before a

legislative committee.” Dalton McGuinty, now Premier, went on to say to the then Premier, “Premier, you’ve got a chance to show some leadership here. You can refer this to a legislative inquiry and we’ll get to the bottom of this affair once and for all, or you can stonewall and you can sweep things under the rug and you can hide.” That’s what Dalton McGuinty said back then.

I think that says it all. There must be something to hide here. Why else would they refuse to have this inquiry? The resolution we put forward today is timely, for which I hope many of the Liberal members might actually feel they have a shred of independence left in them and that they will do the right—

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs): On a point of order, Speaker: I’m referring to standing order 23(b)—

Interjections.

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The Deputy Speaker: Let’s hear the point of order.

Hon. Mrs. Dombrowsky: No, I’m sorry, 23(g): “where it is shown to the satisfaction of the Speaker that further reference would create a real and substantial danger of prejudice to the proceeding” and “[i]mputes false or unavowed motive to another member.”

The Deputy Speaker: No, that’s not a point of order.

Mr. Tory: That took about a minute or more of time that the clock was running, and I don’t think it’s appropriate the clock should have been running, if I could ask you to restore that time.

The Deputy Speaker: Frankly, in an opposition day where the time is divided, I have no choice. The floor is yours.

Mr. Tory: That’s interesting. So we can get up when the government people are speaking and use up all their time on points of orders, then?

The Deputy Speaker: If you have a point of order, you will be allowed to have that point of order heard.

Interjections.

Mr. Tory: That’s just another example of why we need parliamentary reform.

The Deputy Speaker: It is my responsibility to apply the rules and that’s what I’m doing exactly: applying the rules.

Mr. Tory: With respect, Mr. Speaker, I understand you’re doing your job. The rules need to be changed, then.

We can have a report that’s timely. We’ve set a deadline in the resolution of June 30. It will be inexpensive compared to other alternatives that might look into this. It will clear the air and it will address issues not yet investigated.

I want to just finish with this note. Mr. Ezrin said—and he was so right when he said it on the Agenda television program—the standard is set by the boss. The standard is set by the boss. At the end of the day here, the Premier of this province has obviously decided a standard in which we don’t have access to all the facts, in which people are not called forward to explain themselves, in which people are not in any way held account-

able for their actions as ministers, staff members and others is acceptable to him. It’s not to me. That will not be the standard applied when we form the government of this province, and I think it is not a standard that is acceptable to the people of this province.

I urge some of the Liberal members who are here, show a shred of independence, do the right thing, vote in favour of this resolution, show some courage, show that that promise made in 2003 meant something in terms of the role of MPPs. Stand up for what the people know is right: to have a legislative inquiry into this matter so we can get to the bottom of it and reassure people that their games are not fixed and that we’re going to find out exactly who knew what and what they did about it.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo (Parkdale–High Park): It is my honour to speak to this motion. I’m going to support it. And I wanted to speak a little bit about honour and responsibility. Presumably honour and responsibility are the hallmarks of all of us here—that, I hope, is a non-partisan statement—but particularly should be the hallmarks of those who carry cabinet ministry responsibilities and who are responsible for others and responsible for acting and answering for the actions of others.

I wanted to speak about the standing committee on government agencies and our review. I was vice-chair of that committee on the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp., and I’ll get to that, but I also wanted to just highlight some of the examples of what has been said in the press over this.

I start back on March 27. This is in the *Globe and Mail*, where they say, “‘Ontario government officials initially became aware of questions about retailers winning a disproportionate share of jackpots six months before the scandal at its lottery corporation became public last October,’ according to documents obtained by *The Globe and Mail*.”

It goes on to say, “‘OLG has turned a blind eye to crime for many years’”—a quote from Mr. Marin himself, who said at a news conference that “his probe concluded that about \$15 million in lottery winnings was paid to ‘internal fraudsters.’”

“In 2003 and 2004 alone, the lottery corporation identified five major suspicious wins by insiders but turned down only one.”

That’s going back many, many years. Then we move along.

Again, this is back in March, and here we are reading from the *Toronto Star*: “In just 90 days, Marin’s investigators were able to piece together five cases where retailers claiming tickets were liars, Marin said. These cases alone add up to \$15 million being paid to ‘internal fraudsters.’”

“This kind of activity didn’t go unnoticed by those running the lottery but they didn’t do much about it. The concerns of one official about suspect claims by retailers in 2003 and 2004”—again, back many years—“including a \$12.5 million prize—were dismissed by the corporation’s CEO, Duncan Brown.” You remember Brown? As they reported, “Brown stepped down on Friday”—this

was back in March—and “he was given a severance package in accordance with his contract of two years’ salary—\$720,000.” I am sure that those people out there buying lottery tickets think it was Duncan Brown who won the lottery, not themselves.

Again, the *Star*, the *Globe*—let’s continue on to the *Toronto Sun*. This is a *Toronto Sun* article of March 28. Here he goes, “‘As soon as the “insider win” scandal was exposed, the (OLG) took action—but instead of investigating what went wrong ... it reacted like a business facing a public relations nightmare, it hired experts to dispute the CBC’s findings, even though as our investigators discovered, it knew full well that Mr. Edmonds was far from alone,’ Marin said.

“At the meeting were: Kinsella, a top Grit strategist—I know of Mr. Kinsella’s work; he was at work during my by-election, certainly to the detriment of my congregation and my family—“Warren, a lottery corporation executive formerly with Premier Dalton McGuinty’s office, and reps of two large public relations firms.”

So that was the reaction to the findings. And remember, these are instances of fraudulent behaviour that go back years. So it’s not just the CBC’s report that brought this to light. Presumably, if the minister knew what was happening in his ministry, he would have known about these for years—ever since he got there, in fact.

Then we go to our own Murray Campbell, again in the *Globe*, back in March. He actually showed where the government got their strategy from. Certainly, they learned from the investigation, the Gomery commission. He said, “It could emulate the former Prime Minister who, when he received the critical Gomery report on Ottawa’s \$250-million national unity initiative, embarked on a high-profile tour that fanned public anger. Or it could try to contain the controversy with a communications plan that sought to reassure lottery ticket buyers that things were being fixed.” So obviously, we know that they decided to go with that latter strategy.

Also, again, this is not just the press, who are of course exponents of what the public thinks as well as being proponents of what they think: “The Consumers’ Association of Canada also called for a judicial inquiry to ‘clear the air’ given questions that remain after Marin’s investigation.” So there is a huge and honourable organization that has called for exactly what we are calling for here.

I’ll give the last word again to our own Murray Campbell. This was an article that was in the *Globe* on April 5. He said, “You watch Dalton McGuinty and David Caplan long enough and you understand why they call it question period and not answer period.” He goes on to conclude, “It’s too patronizing for words. The performance by Mr. McGuinty and his minister suggest they care more about spinning their way out of the OLG controversy than they do about the people who were defrauded of jackpots after the lottery corporation knew the CBC had it in its sights. It is a dangerous game”—a dangerous game indeed.

Certainly, I would like to remember Bob Edmonds, as I talk about this controversy and what might be the honourable reaction to it. Here was a senior citizen who took this organization to court, who lost thousands and thousands of dollars of his own money, never mind the purported winnings, who died before ever getting an answer from the people across the aisle, who died without ever hearing, aside from a spoken apology, an actual real apology, which would have involved, as we’re calling for, the stepping aside of this minister, the honourable act that anybody would expect someone to do when this is discovered on their watch, a watch that goes back years and years.

It was Edmund Burke who said, “All that it takes for evil to prevail is for good people to do nothing.” This government is doing nothing about this and about their own implication in the fraud that we’ve seen so eloquently discussed in the press—by all the press, by the way.

1620

But what is really most distressing of all is that we had an opportunity and we could have done something about this. This is why we convene these committees. The standing committee on government agencies actually reviewed the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp. It was already underway in its review when I was elected in mid-September. That was a place where we could have looked at the OLG, we could have brought them to task. We could have actually had a chance to ask Mr. Caplan to step up to the plate, to answer for his actions, to answer for the actions of his commission and his agency. We could have done something before Mr. Edmonds passed away to actually address his concerns and the concerns of all of those people who suspect and don’t know whether they’ve lost money fraudulently because of the inaction of the OLG.

Whom did we have deputing? First of all, what’s interesting to know is who was on that committee. I want to just pull out the names of those who served on the review of the OLG. These are Mr. Gravelle, Mr. Milloy, Mr. Parsons, Ms. Smith and Mr. Wilkinson. Surely one might ask: Were these MPPs not made aware by the minister and his staff of what the OLG was struggling with all of those years? Why did he not inform his own members as to what was going on so that we could call deputants who actually might be able to shed some light? Instead of having to ask for a government committee now, why weren’t we allowed to do our job back then? We met for weeks and weeks. They were weeks and weeks that predated, then post-dated, the CBC exposé of October 25, and still nothing. One might ask: Were this minister and the caucus not keeping the members of the committee informed? That’s a legitimate question to ask. Or was he deliberately obfuscating with this committee so that they couldn’t do their job? Who knows? We don’t know, but there was a chance to find out and there was a chance to have even those who were working with Edmonds and others come before the committee and talk about it. We could have investigated.

There were two of us on that committee who realized that this might be the venue to conduct such an investigation: myself and also a member of the official opposition, Mr. Joe Tascona, MPP for Barrie–Simcoe–Bradford. I'm going to read our dissenting opinions that are in there, that make it very clear that at least two members of that committee wanted that committee to do what that committee should have been doing, and that is to investigate the OLG.

Here's what I said:

"To be included in the report on the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp. as a dissenting opinion:

"In light of the serious allegations brought against the OLG of possible vendor misconduct and corporate complicity currently before our Ombudsman and also subject of internal review, we would be remiss on the government agency review committee if we did not call for a re-opening of hearings.

"On November 29, 2006, Mr. Tascona, Ms. Scott and myself, Cheri DiNovo, voted to re-open hearings. We were voted down by the government members, Mr. Gravelle, Mr. Milloy, Mr. Parsons, Ms. Smith and Mr. Wilkinson. I then suggested that a front-page or lengthy paragraph insert be included explaining that this was a "snapshot" report based on hearings held before the recent allegations came to light. That too was voted down." A front page, an explanation—not even that was allowed.

"On behalf of all Ontarians who need assurance that the OGLC lotteries are administered with due diligence.

"Yours sincerely," myself.

This was before the Ombudsman's report. We all knew at least in part what was going to come in that report, and yet this government did nothing, and they had the opportunity. That was the opportunity; that was the committee. This government did nothing. The members of that committee did nothing. In fact, they did worse than nothing; they voted against re-opening that committee so that we could have done something.

You know, it's interesting, again, to look at the Ombudsman's report that came out after that committee sat and then rose. It's interesting to read some of the statements in it—not the infamous page 68, but the rest of the report. I'm just quoting here from page 3 of the executive summary. He says, "We learned during our investigation that there was enough information within the corporation about insider fraud to cause a meeting to be held in August 2004 on the subject, and we found an executive brief that identified five outstanding win claims that were suspicious. The CEO's response to one of his officials' concerns about all of this was discouraging: 'Sometimes you hold your nose.'"

That was back in August 2004. We're talking about systemic issues, systemic problems that were making the round of the courts way back, years and years back. People knew. Those involved knew. Those who had been potential subjects of fraud knew. Yet we hear from across the aisle that again—well, we actually don't hear anything. We don't hear that they didn't know; we hear

nothing. We hear a government stonewalling. We hear the minister who is responsible stonewalling and not giving answers. And more importantly, I think, through all of this what we see is somebody who's taking the role of cabinet minister, of minister responsible for a portfolio, responsible for a corporation that is entrusted with our dollars and with Ontarians' dollars, entrusted to not only collect but also to administer—there are many, many questions that need answering here.

As the leader of the official opposition said, sending in the Ontario Provincial Police—they're not going to investigate the minister's office itself and what he knew and what he didn't know and what the spin doctors knew or what they didn't know, their reaction to this. Really, what are we asking for? We're asking for simply an investigation that could have been done, that wasn't done when we met for the review of government agencies. We're simply asking for another chance, another kick at that can, another chance to do what this government is supposed to do with its committee system, and that is to investigate the actions of some of the crown corporations and certainly the actions of the cabinet ministers.

I'm going to leave some time for my colleague. Certainly, I would love to go on and expand, but mostly I want to remember those—many of those—who are still fighting their way through the courts, still struggling against the heritage that this egregious situation has left. Yet somehow we see the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal standing here day after day, and he doesn't seem in any way to be bearing the burden that ordinary Ontarians, hard-working families, are bearing in all of this. He comes to work every day. It's not costing him money in legal fees. It's not costing him money on lost earnings or possible winnings. In fact, as we saw with the—not dismissal, but the resignation of the CEO of the OLG, you actually gain. You gain from wrongdoing here. You walk away with \$720,000. I wish we could say the same thing for the Edmonds family, that they walked away with at least \$250,000. They didn't. I wish we could say the same thing for all of those who have cases before the courts right now who are possibly missing millions of dollars in lost winnings. I wish we could say the same for them, that they benefited in any way by this scandal.

Again, what are we asking? Not much. We're asking simply for the honourable action, for the responsible action: for this minister to step aside and also for this government to hold a real inquiry, a real committee into the actions of its own crown corporation. We're asking for what should have happened with the review of government agencies, which this government prevented from having acted upon and prevented from happening, much to the chagrin of two of the members of that committee who saw what was happening. We all saw what was happening. Two of us did something about it; the rest of them did not. Again, those who are watching should know there was this opportunity. It was missed. Let's not miss it again. Let's act now to give answers where answers are dramatically needed, dramatically needed, by

all of those out there in the community who are putting down a dollar or two dollars or five dollars every week and want to know that this is not a mug's game, that there's some integrity to the system, and all of those who gain from the system at the other end, all of those charities who gain millions and millions of dollars who want to know that this money that is being entrusted with the OLG is actually being accurately used and spent, and that this minister is responsible and so are his staff for what happens under their watch.

1630

Mrs. Carol Mitchell (Huron–Bruce): I like to be straightforward so that you're not second-guessing what I'm going to do, so I just want to let you know that I won't be supporting this motion.

Now we're going to get to why. One of the things that I would like to get straight right from the very beginning is that there's a bit of possible misinformation from the member for Parkdale–High Park when we talk about taking responsibility. Being a new member, maybe she's not aware of this. The agencies committee that she is a new member on in fact did not meet during the previous government at all. So when we talk about the review that was happening, it's a point of clarification and I feel that it's something that needs to come forward. But that's just a part of what I'd like to talk about.

One of the things that the member from Dufferin–Peel–Wellington–Grey made comment on was about public confidence. In his opinion, confidence has been eroded. I have some old news clippings from a rural paper, so I know that the member, since he represents a rural riding, would be quite interested. These are from shortly after we took over government. When we talk about public confidence and we talk about fiscal accountability and we talk about transparency, I just want to take a snapshot in time of what it was like when we became government, because I feel it's very important to talk about one's actions and not one's words, or, as we say in my riding, the proof is the pudding.

I'm just going to start off with this: "Much of the blame can be put on the previous Progressive Conservative government of Ernie Eves and Mike Harris, because it was the Tories who ran up a huge annual budgetary deficit (which we were only going to find out about after the election)." So now we know that that number is \$5.5 billion. So when we see someone stand up—the official Leader of the Opposition—and his comments are, "Said nothing, heard nothing, did nothing, sat on their cans"—I'm borrowing the phrases from the Leader of the Opposition—one would have to wonder what one did from the opposite side of the House when one knew that one was racking up that type of deficit. Did one say nothing, hear nothing, do nothing and sit on their can? When we talk about confidence and fiscal accountability, in the riding I represent that's what it's all about: Is your house in order?

The type of service that one can provide from a house that is in good order—that's what we can do. How do we begin to build on our public services and the services that

the people of Ontario expect from us if one has no confidence? When I hear the official Leader of the Opposition stand up and say that, I do have to question, did he say nothing, hear nothing, do nothing and sit on his can? Or there's certainly a number of members who were part of the cabinet. So where do accountability and transparency begin, after one becomes the official opposition?

I put it to the members from across the way, I believe that what one can do is to build the services that the people of Ontario want today. One of the things we did as the McGuinty government—which, I might add, the official opposition voted against—was freedom of information and fiscal accountability. It was legislation that was passed to ensure the Auditor General signs off on the province's books six months before an election, so that no one can hide a deficit again. How did the members from the opposite side vote? They voted against it. Why did they vote against it? I have to say, how can they expect the public to have confidence in their actions? It goes back to, the proof is in the pudding. Another comment, if I could just borrow from the member from Dufferin–Peel–Wellington–Grey, is that the standards are set by the boss. So I can only assume from that comment that he supports the position that, being the head of the party, he sets the standards. Therefore, I can only assume that fiscal accountability is still a position that is not supported by the opposition. You are not in favour of it and you aren't prepared to do the right thing. You must take responsibility in order for public confidence to be in place. I can only assume you're going to say nothing, hear nothing, do nothing and sit on your cans.

Now I'm just going to talk about when you said nothing, heard nothing, did nothing and sat on your cans. What happened in rural Ontario? What do you think happened in rural Ontario while you were doing that? I can tell you that one of the things that happened was a massive downloading experience and hospital closures—the Tory health record. I'm pleased to be able to stand up and remind people again this week of when we talk about confidence, accountability, transparency—and I do want to remind people. I can remember this because I was in an elected position when you took over government. I can remember the leader of the party at that time saying, "I will not cut health care. I will not cut education." And I say to the members across the way, the Tory health record cut \$557 million from hospitals over two years, ordered 28 hospitals closed. You closed 5,000 hospital beds, fired thousands of nurses, failed to address the shortage of medical school spaces after the NDP cutbacks, and you refused to collect wait-times data. So I say to the members from across the way: When one talks about accountability and transparency, if one doesn't use the data that one can use as a comparison, what then do you want to compare? The only thing we can do is actually compare the numbers, which we've just stated.

I do know that there's a certain pride in the voice of the opposition members about how the previous leader always did what he said, but he did not. He said he would not cut health care and he would not cut education, but,

given half the chance, I'm telling you, he did it. When we talk about accountability and transparency and doing the right thing, I wonder where it was.

I really do question when they talk about freedom of information. We, the McGuinty government, expanded it to include Hydro One, OPG, universities, etc. Our response rate within the 30-day time frame is over 80%; within 60 days it's 94%. Let's compare that to the Tory record. What do you think happened in 1996? What percentage were they at? They were at 39% of on-time response rate. Then they got a little better by 2000. They got all the way up to 50%, but nowhere near the 94%.

I go back to accountability and public confidence. People want to know from their government, they want to be able to see and understand, where the government is headed. One must ensure that our fiscal accountability and transparency are always in place. I know the Leader of the Opposition has a motion on the floor today, but I say, as from a rural riding, the proof is in the pudding. Repeatedly, the leader—not only the leader but the members continue to vote against what they stand up and talk about day after day in this House. So I would challenge them to rethink their position. If you're going to go down this road, then you need to think not only about what you did in the past, but what you speak of in the future. If in fact you are prepared to support accountability and transparency, then you need to start voting in that manner. So when I hear, "Saw nothing, heard nothing, did nothing and sat on their cans," I wonder if the Leader of the Opposition is inferring that it was members on that side of the House.

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I know that there are many more speakers who want to speak. I want to give them the opportunity, because this is something where we take a great deal of consultation and the ability to listen to our constituents throughout this great province of Ontario, and not only do we hear all of that; we then bring it forward in legislation, as the people expect. We understand that that is part of the process.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to vote against this motion.

Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie–Lincoln): I'm pleased to rise in support of the motion standing in the name of the leader of the official opposition. It's interesting, when you look at the non-answers by the minister responsible for lotteries, how he fails to talk about what's really in the Ombudsman's report. In my comments I'll refer you to page 18, beginning where the Ombudsman says, "In 2003 and 2004 ... a series of problematic insider claims set in motion a tug-of-war over the way the corporation viewed and handled insider wins." He references an Orillia man who came forward in April 2003 with a claim of \$250,000. It was found out that that was fraudulent. The Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp., in April 2004, under the McGuinty government, issued a press release, so it entered the public sphere that there was a concern over an insider win, at least in that case.

Similarly, in 2003, a corner store owner in Keswick presented a ticket he said was his. Then he finally

admitted that his wife had found the ticket behind a refrigerator in the store. Nonetheless, the corporation still paid the owner.

The Ombudsman goes on to talk about a number of other cases, including two Toronto retailers who presented themselves as winners of \$250,000—a quarter of a million dollars—through 6/49, but the details they gave of when or where they purchased the tickets "were very murky" and the corporation had evidence to contradict it. Nonetheless, these two individuals were still paid a quarter of a million dollars.

The most shocking of all, of course, happened under the watch of the McGuinty government as well: a Super 7 ticket of \$12.5 million in Burlington, a contrived story by the owner, who could not provide any information about where she purchased the ticket and denied a connection to a retailer. The corporation then discovered that she had the same last name as the retailer who had generated the free-play ticket and confirmed she was his sister. Confronted with this, she again said that she was trying to protect her privacy. Incredibly, despite the stream of evidence, the corporation paid out \$12.5 million after the ticket expired.

The minister talks about 2002. In fact, what the Ombudsman said, to correct the record, was that 2004 was "a banner year" under the McGuinty government. The Ombudsman says that 2004 "was a banner year for controversial insider prize claims." Inside the OLG, one official started citing concerns on these irregularities, and it went all the way at least to the CEO's office, if not to the office of the minister himself. Sadly, this was not pursued.

The Ombudsman, on page 22, goes on to say that in August 2004 there was a review of the process where in fact protections were watered down, as opposed to strengthened. The corporation began to justify the process of "doing even less" for security.

In August 2005, two internal memos were prepared about the insider-win problems. In fact, it was suggested that the insider-win policy would be further watered down, and it was recommended that they be dealt with as a public perception issue as opposed to a security issue. That was on March 21, 2006.

So this really got going under the McGuinty government. There was an incredible number of internal e-mails. This entered the public sphere, as we well know, in March 2005, when 60-plus print articles, and in addition significant electronic coverage, covered the issue of the Edmonds case. I really believe that the minister of the day, who was Minister Cordiano, if not the minister who took over shortly thereafter, Minister Caplan, were likely briefed on this. I asked a very direct, plain question to the minister today as to whether he'd ever been briefed on the insider-win question. He didn't even come close to responding to my question, I think, signalling that the minister was likely briefed about this.

A committee would enable us to understand if any of these memos inside the OLG had reached the minister's office. Had they reached the Premier's office? The in-

volvement of not only the three top spin doctors—they are the who's who of the Liberal Party campaign; they were the spin surgeons, as a matter of fact—begs the question of what degree of contact the Premier himself and his own staff had on this file in an attempt to cover it up. We certainly will not know the facts unless the committee has the opportunity to question the minister. I've said I would come forward and my colleague from Lanark–Carleton would come forward. I suspect that the member for York South–Weston, Mr. Cordiano, the former minister, would come forward. The only one holding out is the current minister, and the Premier is blocking that access to the committee, which makes you wonder what that minister had to hide, exactly what he knew about these internal e-mails on the acceleration of insider wins in 2005 and 2006 having reached his office, his senior staff or any of his staff.

I do hope enough members will rise in support of this motion today so that we can get to the bottom of this and get some justice for not only the Edmonds family but all those others who were ripped off in the cases described in the Ombudsman's report.

Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins–James Bay): I'm so excited; it's my turn. I've been looking forward to this all afternoon. No, no, I'm just joking.

I want to come at this from a bit of a different perspective in regard to some of the issues that are before us in this particular issue of the Lotterygate, as we can call it, in regard to the OLG. First of all, I will say that I will support this motion up front because I do think we do need to shine a light, as the minister responsible for gaming says—he talks about him shining a light on the issues and making sure we can get to the bottom of it. But we know that the batteries in that flashlight died a long time ago and they are not shining a light when it comes to what the issue is here.

I want to just put a couple of things on the record quickly. First of all, I really find interesting the tack that the government has taken, and specifically the Premier, in trying to argue their way around this particular thing. One of the things that they said was that these agencies are third party, and because they're third party the government can't interfere. That's the reason that we have to give them the confidence to resolve these issues themselves. That's more or less what he's saying. But if they are a third party, I'd ask myself the question, why then were the minister's staff and the Premier's staff meeting with the OLG? If you look at who was there, it was all the people who do the spin stuff. It was all the communications people.

The government is trying to have its cake and eat it too. They're trying to, on the one hand, say, "Oh, this is a third party kind of thing. It's not proper for us as a government to interfere in the running of the OLG," but on the other hand they're sending their top political staffers in to meet with the OLG because clearly they understood there was a problem.

It has probably happened to all of us, where we've walked into the corner store—you know that corner store

you go to all the time for milk and cookies for your Saturday night at the movies? You want to buy popcorn. Or you walk to the corner store and buy yourself a lottery ticket—not you young pages, because we know you don't play lotteries; you can't. But we do, we adults. You spend your three bucks and you buy your lottery ticket—and I wish I had one with me, because it's another loser, I'm sure. They've never sold me a winning ticket yet.

Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader): I don't buy them.

Mr. Bisson: I don't buy them very often, but every now and then I do.

My point is this: You buy the lottery ticket and you go, "Oh, gee, I remember I've got one in my wallet from three months ago," right? Hang on, Mr. Bradley. Come back; you've got to hear this. You give them the ticket and the machine sings, and all of a sudden they say, "Here's your five bucks." We're trustful that the clerk is not going to do anything wrong, and you walk away and you say, "Was that a different song than the one I heard before?"

Interjection.

Mr. Bisson: Ah, you know what I mean. My friend who has never bought a ticket knows exactly what I'm talking about. This has happened to all of us because Canadians are trusting souls. We're people who believe in the apparatus of government and people being honest. We give our tickets, sometimes, honestly thinking that the clerk is going to make sure that everything is okay. It has happened to all of us. I know it has happened to me, where I've walked in and I've given my ticket and the machine made a different sound and they gave me 10 bucks. I went, "Jeez, I remember that the last time I won a free ticket it didn't make that funny noise. What does that mean? Was that \$500? Was that \$5,000? Was it \$5 million?" I don't know. Clearly, there's an issue here and the issue is, there isn't the kind of transparency in the system that we need to make sure those who are buying tickets are feeling totally comfortable that what they're getting in return as far as winnings is what they're entitled to.

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First of all, there's a problem, and I would just say that the OLG, in fairness to them, has tried to address some of that by taking measures such as turning the machines in such a way so that you can see the display, that your winnings or your non-winnings are worth or not worth so much. Clearly, you can go to all kinds of stores across Ontario today—gas stations, grocery stores, corner stores—and get to places where they still have old machines that only the vendor, the businessperson or the person behind the counter can read. More has to be done. The first point I'm trying to make is that the government has not made sure that the OLG has taken the steps necessary to create the kind of transparency we need in the system.

The second thing is, it's clear there's a problem here. The Ombudsman only looked at one period of time. They

didn't look at 10 or 20 years of time. They looked for a short period of time. The Ombudsman, Monsieur Marin, looked at it and said, "Here's what I found. There are cases where people won money and the clerks kept the money," or, "There are people who won money and it looks like it was internal to OLG." It's a pretty easy thing to do, right? When you stop and think about it, if a person has a winning ticket, you give the person 10 bucks and you say, "Here's the 10 bucks you won," and you give the winning ticket to somebody else—it doesn't even have to be the clerk or the store owner; it could be somebody interior to the OLG as well—and share the prize. How do we know that's not been done more times? Clearly, there's a problem.

The Ombudsman is being pretty clear about this, contrary to what the minister says. "Oh, Mr. Marin, the Ombudsman, says we've done a great job." Wow, I don't know what report he was reading because that's not what he said. There has to be a day of reckoning on this particular issue. It's important that a standing committee of this Legislature takes a look at the issues of what's happening at the OLG, for a couple of reasons: One is so we can learn from the mistakes of the past. You don't go nowhere in the future unless you understand your mistakes of the past. If you're not prepared to accept that you made a mistake, you will never learn.

I say to the minister across the way, you stand here and don't answer questions for the 160th time. We know you're good at not answering questions. But at the end of the day, the people of Ontario want to know if there was a problem, what it was, what do we learn from that and how do we stop it from happening again? That's the second part of what the committee's got to do other than just trying to find out exactly what happened: to assess and look at what needs to be done to stop those things from happening again.

I am clear about one thing. There are many people in my constituency whom I've talked to over the past number of weeks and almost months now who are quite frankly very uncomfortable about lottery sales. We heard the story where they pulled out of the lottery system—what was it? Was it the bingos or the scratch tickets? It was bingos or crossword or something like that. There's one particular draw—I was in a store just the other day, picking up some cookies and milk again. I don't eat cookies and milk, but I thought the pages would like that. Anyway, I was in a store the other day actually getting my wife a pack of cigarettes—she still smokes, believe it or not. They were saying—

Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke): Murielle.

Mr. Bisson: Yes, Murielle smokes. She's trying to quit. It's tough. Maybe if she goes—anyway, let's just not go there. I'm going to get in trouble with my wife, and God knows, you don't want me getting in trouble with my wife.

The story is, I'm in the store the other day and the clerk says to me that they pulled a whole raft of tickets because they found out that certain people were able to

read the codes on the tickets to find out which were winning tickets and which were losing scratch tickets before anybody was ever able to scratch and win.

The system is not completely infallible. We need to make sure that if there is going to be gaming in the province of Ontario, at least it be fair. That's one of the things that this motion is trying to get at: Let's assess what the problem is, find out what went wrong, correct it so it doesn't happen again and make those recommendations that give the system some clarity.

I think this is a reasonable motion on the part of the official opposition. I say to the government, if you don't vote for this motion, then clearly you've got something to hide. It's as simple as that. This is an up-and-down issue. If the government has nothing to hide, call it into committee and let's do what has to be done. At the end of the day, the government controls the committees. We all know that the government will have a majority on the committee and you will be able to control what happens as far as agenda to a great degree. I just say to the—

Interjection.

Mr. Bisson: Well, that's probably a good thing. But anyways, the point is that the government should try to show the public they've got nothing to hide.

I want to talk about the OLG in regards to a couple of other issues. My good friends in the opposition aren't going to get too mad at me for taking my time to talk about a couple of other issues related to the OLG.

Interjection.

Mr. Bisson: You are, but it's my time.

There is something that frustrates me and probably frustrates many members out here, and that is the difficulty that good, honest, hard-working business people have in being able to get the support they need out of the OLG. If you own a small store in your community and you and your husband just invested all of your hard-earned money to start up that corner store, and you want to be able to get a machine in order to sell the Lotto 6/49 and the rest of it, you've got to go on a waiting list for almost two years to get one, right?

So you say, you know, if everybody was treated the same, that would be one thing. I wouldn't like it, but I'd understand. But if you're Petro-Canada, the A&P or any large corporation, they give you a machine—snap—like that. When I found out that was part of the policy in the province of Ontario, I shook my head. The government is there for what? It's there to make sure the small business people of this province are supported properly. How does it make any sense that the government, by way of its policies at the OLG, says, "If Petro Canada walks through the door, we're going to give them a lottery terminal—snap—like that," but if mom or pop, who walks in through the door, says, "I have invested my hard-working dollars in order to start up my own business," they've got to go on a waiting list for two years? You're saying there's a rule for the big and there's a rule for the small: Stick it to the small guy, give it to the big guy. I'm just saying that Liberals are supposed to be the ones who care about the little guy. But I'll tell you, in

practice, they're not. I say to the minister across the way, you should do what is right.

I have a case right now: Mountjoy Variety in the city of Timmins. There are others in my riding I've had to deal with in the past, but this is the last one—no, it's actually Commercial Variety; Mountjoy was another one. They basically started up a store that was closed down. It was one that was defunct. So we knew there was a terminal there before, and it was a good sales area; they did really well. The store had gone bankrupt because of the people before, not because of the volume of business; they just had a hard time running a business. They basically closed it down. These people bought the business and they can't get themselves a terminal.

I say to the minister across the way, wake up and smell the coffee. Help the little guy every now and then. Those are hard-working people trying to make a living, and you're saying that you're going to give Petro-Canada and the A&P carte blanche when it comes to treatment, but when it comes to helping the small mom-and-pops of this world, you're not going to help them. I just say that is a wrong part of policy.

The other thing I want to get to in this particular debate is what this means to people. Ce qui est clair est que, quand on a la chance de parler aux citoyens à travers la province sur cette question, on voit parfois les discussions qui se passent aux cafés ou dans n'importe quelle place où le monde se rencontre. Le monde trouve ça vraiment un peu dégueulasse dans le sens que le gouvernement essaie de nous dire qu'il n'y a rien de mal avec le système tel quel.

Tout ce que je peux vous dire est que le monde à la maison, chez nous comme chez vous, les autres députés de l'Assemblée, ne l'accepte pas. Ce qui est très clair est qu'il y a un problème. Le public ne sait pas exactement où est le problème, mais ils savent qu'il y a quelque chose de mal parce qu'ils ont tous eu l'expérience. Ils sont tous rentrés chez un dépanneur à un point, et comme ils ont vu la machine chanter, on leur a donné un beau 10 \$, puis ils ont dit qu'ils ont peut-être gagné un billet gratuit, et ils sont sortis de l'établissement ne sachant jamais s'ils ont gagné l'argent. Il y a beaucoup de monde qui m'ont téléphoné et qui m'ont dit, « Gilles, on a besoin de la transparence. »

Une dame—je ne me rappelle pas son nom de famille—m'a téléphoné juste la semaine passée. Elle était en colère complète, et elle a dit que ça fait depuis le début de ces loteries qu'elle joue les mêmes chiffres chaque semaine. Elle joue toujours les mêmes chiffres depuis 10, 12, 15 ou 20 ans. Je ne sais pas depuis quand ces loteries-là sont en place, mais elle a dit qu'elle joue depuis le début. Et elle a dit, « Moi, j'ai peur d'acheter mon billet parce que ça fait longtemps que j'attends pour gagner. Je me demande, premièrement, est-ce que mon numéro a déjà gagné? S'il a gagné, c'est possible que je ne le sais pas et que j'ai été volé. Numéro deux, si quelque chose arrive dans le futur, comment est-ce que je peux savoir que les affaires vont être claires que j'ai gagné, oui ou non? » Donc, elle a fait une suggestion très

simple. Elle a dit, « Pourquoi ne pas faire ce qu'on faisait dans le passé où chaque semaine, avec le vieux Wintario, on faisait publiquement à la télévision le tirage lui-même? » Elle a dit, « Au moins là, je peux m'asseoir avec mon billet à la maison et je peux regarder : le numéro trois, le numéro cinq, le numéro 26, etc. » Et elle pourrait apprendre si elle est gagnante ou non en regardant la télévision.

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J'ai trouvé que c'était une solution simple. Ce n'est pas dur à faire. On peut le faire sur Internet. Ce n'est pas un gros investissement pour être capable de le faire sur Internet. Même, on pourrait utiliser les postes du parlement ici. Nous autres, on a un poste de télévision; on pourrait le montrer là-dessus, peut-être. Mais j'ai trouvé que c'était une solution qui était demandée, qui est assez simple et quelque chose, peut-être, qui pourrait être fait pour faire de la transparence.

Je vais arrêter mon débat à ce point-là parce que je sais qu'il y a une députée qui veut parler pour une couple de minutes là-dessus. Je vous remercie beaucoup, mes amis à l'opposition, pour cette motion. Sachez que le parti NPD va vous supporter sur cette motion parce qu'il est important qu'il y ait une transparence dans cette question et qu'on vient au bout de la question une fois pour toutes.

Hon. Jim Watson (Minister of Health Promotion):

I'm not going to support this motion for a number of reasons. First of all, I don't know if members remember the old movie Groundhog Day, where Bill Murray wakes up every day and it's the same old, same old thing. That's exactly what's happening with John Tory. It's rather a sad indictment of his leadership and of the Conservative Party that they have ignored the great issues that face our province: health care, education, economic prosperity, jobs. They haven't asked one single question about any of those issues in the last several weeks, and they boast and brag about the fact that they've asked 130 questions. Well, they've got 130 answers. They've been consistent answers, and they've been consistent with the fact that we believe, on this side of the House—we have greater confidence in the Ombudsman, an independent officer of this Parliament, KPMG and the Ontario Provincial Police. We're not interested in the partisan sideshow that Mr. Tory seems to be grasping on to, and, quite frankly, it's not resonating with the public.

I've had a grand total of one call in my constituency office. My colleague for Ottawa-Vanier has had no calls on this issue. I have a booth every month with my federal counterpart, Mr. Baird, at Carlingwood Mall. We were at Carlingwood Mall last month. We had probably 500 or 600 people come by our booth. Not one single person asked me about this lottery issue, but right in front of me was the lotto booth at Carlingwood Mall. They were lined up around the corner buying their tickets.

The public has confidence in the system because we have taken action to address the problems that we inherited when Mr. Hudak was the minister responsible for the OLG. We have already accepted the Ombuds-

man's 60 recommendations, along with the KPMG. Seventeen have been implemented, 25 will be in place by the end of June, and the remaining 18 will be in place as soon as possible.

The fact of the matter is that we on this side of the House have a different set of priorities. We're interested, as was evident in our budget, in continuing our quest to improve health care.

Let me talk just for a moment about our situation in Ottawa. The previous government, as we all know, closed the Riverside hospital; they closed the Grace Hospital; they tried to close the Montfort Hospital; they tried to close the CHEO cardiac unit. That is their legacy. We, on the other side, believe, as opposed to asking 130 or 140 questions—the same question, time and time again, by the leader and his party—our priorities remain: improving the health care situation. For instance, in my riding, the Queensway Carleton Hospital is going through a massive renaissance and expansion.

I am so proud that in Minister Sorbara's budget we have increased the health care budget to allow a satellite operation for the regional cancer centre at the Queensway Carleton Hospital and the General site of the hospital. That is going to cut in half wait times for those individuals in our community who need chemotherapy, radiation and cancer surgery.

Yet on April 10 of this year, the Conservative caucus and those members from eastern Ontario voted against funding the regional cancer centre expansion which was included in Minister Sorbara's budget, and that is a real shame. We've got to put these kinds of things, such as partisanship, aside and recognize that for far too long we've not had the capacity to properly deal with cancer patients. They're under enough stress without having to wait long periods of time.

Dr. Hartley Stern and others have said, "The wait time issue is directly as a result of not enough capacity in Ottawa," and we're dealing with that in this budget. Have we had any questions on that particular aspect of the budget from the Conservative Party? Not one single one.

We've also, I think, been very fair and generous with the city of Ottawa: \$60 million going to the city of Ottawa; \$47 million going to transit funding; we're putting money into community centres throughout the city; we're putting money into housing; and we're putting money into those kinds of projects that are going to have a meaningful impact on the residents of the city of Ottawa that I so proudly represent.

Finally, one of the things I want to say in defence of the OLG is how proud we have been to work with them on the Quest for Gold program, which is a lottery program designed to help amateur athletes in the province of Ontario.

Mr. Yakabuski: Are you proud of the minister's conduct in this?

Hon. Mr. Watson: The member from Pembroke may laugh at amateur athletes and sportspeople in this province, but we are very proud—

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker: I think the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke might want to consider withdrawing a certain word that he used.

Mr. Yakabuski: I withdraw that.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you. Minister?

Hon. Mr. Watson: I'm sure the amateur athletes would be very impressed with that kind of vulgarity in the Legislature.

The fact of the matter is that program is helping amateur athletes more than any other program that the government of Ontario has brought forward. Literally thousands of athletes have been assisted by that program and it's something that we're particularly proud of.

The fact of the matter is that there are more important and pressing issues facing the Legislature, facing the people of this province, than asking question after question, basically repeating themselves time and time again, on an issue that we have dealt with. We inherited a mess from the previous government. They didn't have the decency to apologize to Mr. Edmonds, the gentleman who first brought this issue to light back under the watch of Mr. Hudak. We have not only apologized, we've also brought about sensible and responsible reforms to ensure that these kinds of problems do not happen again.

I am proud of our government's response and Mr. Caplan's response. I ask the opposition to start dealing with the priorities of the people—health care, education, job creation. These are the kinds of priorities of the people who come to my constituency office time and time again, not the kinds of issues that Mr. Tory and his party seem to think are on the front burner of the constituents of this great province. Let's deal with some of these issues, because we don't have all the answers. We welcome some input on how we can continue to improve health care and education in the province of Ontario. Let's get back to the substance of the issues at hand, as opposed to simply bringing this issue up time and time again and, quite frankly, turning their backs on the Ombudsman, turning their backs on KPMG and simply saying, "We don't have confidence in the OPP." This side of the House does have confidence in the Ombudsman, does have confidence in the recommendations of KPMG and we think the right place for this issue to be dealt with, if there are any illegal improprieties, is with the OPP.

Mrs. Christine Elliott (Whitby–Ajax): I'm happy to rise today to discuss the standards of integrity, accountability and responsibility, which, despite the comments made by the Minister of Health Promotion, are issues that are important to Ontarians and that they rightfully expect their government to adhere to.

It goes without saying that in any profession—and, I would argue, possibly most importantly in government—people should be held to account for their actions. So it's incredibly ironic to me that in a role intended purely to serve the people, a role in which these standards of integrity, accountability and responsibility should apply to the strictest degree, this government has decided that closing its doors to public scrutiny and taking teeth out of

measures to hold it directly to account is somehow an acceptable practice.

Of course, when we feel these standards slipping, the role of the opposition is to do everything it can to ensure that people such as Mr. Edmonds of Coboconk and all constituents across the province are given a voice to be heard by their government. That is why, over the past weeks, we have given Premier McGuinty and the minister responsible for the lottery over 140 chances to answer these voices, notwithstanding their repeated attempts to dodge our efforts.

Despite our efforts, this government has continually refused to come clean to the people of Ontario regarding the detail of the OLG scandal and what the Premier and his minister responsible for lotteries knew and when they knew it, and that is what has led us to file this opposition day motion today.

By tabling this motion, we are giving the Premier and his minister yet another chance to do the right thing. They've had 140 chances to do it. This is an opportunity for them to do it now. By voting in favour of this motion, the Premier would be showing an actual willingness to be transparent and accountable with respect to what goes on in his office and in his minister's office. It would—I'm quoting from Ian Urquhart's column, published April 11 in the *Toronto Star*—"be in keeping with a Liberal election promise to re-empower the Legislature and restore meaning to the role of backbench MPPs."

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There are additional reasons why an inquiry led by a committee of the Legislative Assembly makes sense as the best possible way to move forward on this issue. Among them is the fact that there's certainly a precedent for this matter; there have been committees that have led inquiries in the past. But this is also a matter that could be carried out at much less cost than a judicial inquiry, and I think that would be something of importance to the government in fulfilling its responsibility to all Ontarians. The average cost of a committee of the Legislative Assembly to conduct an inquiry is approximately \$175,000, which is a mere fraction of what judicial inquiries would cost, some of which cost many millions. Some have cost upwards of \$25 million.

However, the single most important argument for an inquiry by a standing committee of this assembly, ironically, has been one of the government's own making. Ontarians will simply not tolerate cover-ups by their government. This message has been heard loud and clear, but it is also clear that Dalton McGuinty's government completely ignored suspicions of fraudulent lottery claims until the Ombudsman's report was made public. As recently as the fall of 2006, the McGuinty Liberals downplayed the problem and were content to let the OLG simply investigate itself. This egregious behaviour is simply unacceptable. The fact is that it is evident to Ontarians all across the province that this government is trying to spin its way out of this mess by covering up their complete abdication of responsibility for the public trust.

We began our questioning weeks ago. However, with every question come three more. The further we dig, it becomes more and more obvious that we cannot ignore our responsibility to further investigate this matter. The only responses we've received from the Premier and his minister are facts that have already been related to us by the Ombudsman. Although we're grateful for the Ombudsman's investigation into this scandal, the fact of the matter is that the very report the minister uses as a shield to deflect our inquiries is only the beginning.

It's our duty to uphold the standards of integrity, accountability and responsibility in this Legislature. I would suggest that the ministers and all the members of the McGuinty government take this responsibility seriously and support this motion.

Mr. John Milloy (Kitchener Centre): It's an honour for me to stand here this afternoon and participate in this debate. I just want to echo what I think a number of my colleagues said about what has been put forward today: that not only are we on this side of the House not going to be supporting the motion, but at the same time I think we're actually very disappointed in the activity and what has been going on in the House over the past few weeks. A lot of it, unfortunately, has become almost personal towards the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal.

Before getting to the substance of the motion, I just want to say what an honourable member of the Legislature I think Mr. Caplan is in all he has done as the minister. I think of my own riding and his support for a lot of the planning that has gone on, his support for infrastructure programs like the light rail transit, the rapid transit system in Waterloo region. I think of what he's done across this province in terms of \$30 billion in infrastructure, addressing a deficit that unfortunately we inherited from the previous government.

At the core of what we're talking about today is the very simple fact that the people of Ontario want to make sure that the problems that exist within the Ontario gaming system, within the Ontario lottery system, are addressed. That's what the bottom line is. They're sick and tired of the partisan catcalling that they're hearing from across the way. The simple fact is, as other members have pointed out, that we inherited the mess from the previous government and we've taken action, as has been brought to our attention by the Ombudsman, to address that. We ordered third-party investigations by KPMG, and we will be instituting all of their recommendations.

We've had the Ombudsman, as an independent officer of this Legislature, investigate. I read a quote here from the Ombudsman: "I commend the minister and the government for its openness and responsiveness to my report and recommendations and for their immediate and resolute commitment to ensuring change."

The simple fact is, the people of Ontario want to make sure that the concerns and problems that were raised are being addressed and under the leadership of the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, they are being addressed. If this opposition wants to talk about trans-

parency, if they want to talk about accountability, I only ask them to look back on their own record on the \$5.6-billion deficit which we inherited that they hid from the people of Ontario. I also look at the measures we brought forward to make sure that the Auditor General takes a look at the books and in the process of the next election all the people of Ontario know the current state. That's accountability; that's transparency.

I'm ashamed that the opposition party that brings forward this motion today voted against that particular piece of legislation. I will have no problem standing in this House and voting against this motion. It's a waste of this Legislature's time and it's an attack upon the integrity of a very fine parliamentarian, the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal.

Mr. Yakabuski: It's an honour to speak to this motion brought forward by our leader John Tory, as well.

What does this McGuinty Liberal government have against the truth? That's the whole premise behind this motion, to refer this issue to a legislative committee so that we no longer have 130, 140, 150, 160 questions go unanswered on the part of the minister. The Ombudsman's authority does not go into the minister's office; it only goes to a certain extent. That is what we're asking, that this Legislature, which would be totally consistent with the positions that Dalton McGuinty took when he was Leader of the Opposition—he demanded that items like this be referred to a legislative committee. All of a sudden, now that he's the Premier, he does not want to shed the light of day. Why the inconsistency? Why the change of heart? It is only a matter of human nature that people must believe that if you don't want to follow your own beliefs with regard to a situation today relative to a situation yesterday, then you must have something to hide. That is the concern of this party and this Legislature.

We don't have the power to compel the minister to answer questions in the House but a legislative committee would be able to get to the bottom of this so that we could move on. For the sake of the people of the province of Ontario, it is important that we do move on; for the integrity of the system; for the belief that the lottery system is set up in this province to support many important charities; and also to give people an opportunity to perhaps strike it rich or, in some smaller degree, win some money as a result of a lottery win. We have to be able to believe in the integrity of that system. The first step in order to get there—accepting the fact that we called for the minister's resignation; we're obviously not going to get that. We need to have this inquiry so that the Legislature can get to the bottom of it.

My colleague from Lanark—Carleton and my colleague from Erie—Lincoln have already said they're more than willing to come before this committee to answer any and all questions put before them. Why is the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal refusing to do so? I think it is imperative. If this House is supposed to work the way the people believe it should work, then this motion should be supported not just by the people on this side of

the House but by the people on both sides of the House so that we can put this matter behind us and Ontarians can again begin to trust the lottery system.

The Deputy Speaker: Further debate? The member for Sault Ste. Marie—excuse me, Thunder Bay—Atikokan.

Mr. Bill Mauro (Thunder Bay—Atikokan): You're not going to say next that Thunder Bay is North Bay, are you, Mr. Speaker? Then you'll get me really excited.

The Deputy Speaker: I apologize.

Mr. Mauro: That's okay. You don't have to apologize.

I'm happy to speak to this issue and support the comments of others who have spoken on this issue already this evening. We don't have a lot of time left and I will be leaving some time on the clock for one of our other members to do a wrap-up for our party.

A very important issue; happy to be here and be part of the debate on what at its very core, I think, is an issue of public trust in public institutions, institutions that bring in about \$6 billion in revenues for the government of the day, that leave them with net money of about \$2 billion or \$3 billion, I guess, depending on how you look at it. So it is a large issue and at the core of it, it's about public trust and public institutions. I'm happy to speak to that today. I have no problem with that and I have no problem with people bringing it up and wanting to discuss it.

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However, I think the problem with the opposition day motion is that, in fact, that's not what we're doing here today. I don't see that what we're discussing here today is about restoring public trust at all. If you view what's gone on since this issue first came to light, I think it's very easy to make the case that that's not what we're doing here today. That's not what the opposition motion is intending to do. It has been stated in the Legislature often and many times that ticket sales are not lagging. There is no evidence from the public that by what has happened in the last little while they have lost trust in this situation, and certainly they haven't lost trust in the government. If you look at what we've done on our side of the House, as has been stated often with the KPMG report, with the Ombudsman report and with the OPP, to suggest that there's been a lack of effort and movement on this issue from us on this side of the House is, I would say, not putting out there the facts as most people seem to see them.

This is purported to be about restoring faith and confidence in the integrity of Ontario's lottery system. Unfortunately, I don't see that at all as what this resolution is doing. What I think it's doing is playing that tired old game of "gotcha" politics that has existed, I suppose, down here for a lot of years. I haven't been here for many—three and a half. I often see, bleeding through the discussion, history—the history that individual members have with other members. That's what I see at the root of a lot of this. I wasn't here during those days, and I can tell you as a first-time MPP with three and a half years in here now, it becomes more apparent the longer

you're around this place why some things happen, as they say, the way they do.

When the leader of the official opposition came to this House, I remember listening very carefully, as I'm sure others did, that it was his full intention that he was going to do things in a different way, that he was not going to conduct business as it had been previously conducted, that there would be a different expectation from his caucus and that he hoped that would bleed over into the other caucuses that are represented in this Legislature. I don't see it here today. I paid close attention to those words and I respected those words because I hoped and felt that that was necessary in this Legislature as well.

Unfortunately, as I see it, people can't put the history behind them. I don't think there are enough people in this place who are able to let the past go. When they see an issue like this, and with an election only six months away, suddenly there seems to be an opportunity here for those words that were often repeated in the Legislature by the Leader of the Opposition to no longer be as important as they were when he first arrived here as a fresh face bringing new ideas and excitement and enthusiasm. But it appears to me that the reality of an election has somewhat changed his approach to how this is going to occur.

I read the Ombudsman's report. I saw what it said about Mr. Rutherford in 1993. Who was the government in 1993? The NDP. That happened 14 years ago. I read it; it's in there. It shouldn't be news to anybody. What changed as a result of the Rutherford experience? Nothing, as far as I can tell. I read the Ombudsman's report and saw what he detailed about Mr. Edmonds. What changed as a result of the experience of Mr. Edmonds? Nothing, as far as I can see. In fact, the member for Erie-Lincoln, when asked by the press what he did about it, said, "I did nothing." When they asked him why, he said because he didn't know about it. Fair enough. But apparently there's a different expectation on us than there was on them. They are having a hard time understanding or believing that our minister and our government didn't know about it, and he says he didn't. Mr. Edmonds's case was splashed all over the place. The Rutherford case was splashed all over the place. So going back 14 or 15 years, two high-profile cases, and we're expected to believe that they didn't know anything about it and that in 15 years they didn't have an opportunity to react to it. Clearly, not the case.

They put the Edmonds and Rutherford questions aside. Why didn't they act on it? They chose not to do it. They knew about it and they chose not to do it, and now they want to put a different expectation on us in the House. I'm sorry; the members opposite who bring this forward, many of them who are normally loquacious, who are normally verbose—if I can put it as politely as possible—have been conspicuous by their silence on this issue and have tried to place a different standard on our members than the one that they undertook when they were in government for eight or nine years.

Those are the facts; it's clear. I guess this is about the first rule of advertising: You continue to try to repeat the same message as often as you can and you hope that it sinks into the consciousness of the people that are listening. Well, it's not working. There's no traction on this issue where I live, and if you talk to most people around the province, there's not a lot of traction where they live either. But they'll continue to try. There's an election six months away and they're looking for issues. I don't blame them for that, but I see this one a little bit differently. We all need issues as we go into campaigns. This is a little different. This is about public trust and public institutions. I have no problem debating that, but there's ample evidence to suggest that, historically, both opposition parties had issues that would have brought this to the forefront, that they should have known about it and acted upon, and they did not. They did not.

I had a lot of respect for the people in this place when I came here—I still do—but the hypocrisy of this situation cannot be left unaddressed. I'm happy to speak to it.

Interjection.

Mr. Mauro: Yes, the hypocrisy of the situation—

The Deputy Speaker: Perhaps the member can choose another word. Just by way of explanation, I don't think that he was saying anybody was hypocritical, it was the situation, but a less severe word would be helpful.

Mr. Mauro: I will respond to that, Speaker. It wasn't pointed at any individual but at the situation. But I will retract the phrase "hypocrisy of the situation" and suggest that perhaps there seems to be a different way of approaching it for us when we're in government than they did when they were in government.

Speaker, I have much more I'd love to say. I will yield the floor. We have at least one other member who's willing to speak.

Mr. Toby Barrett (Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant): I continue to advocate for a legislative committee. We have to track the flow of information between the OLG, Minister Caplan's office and Dalton McGuinty with respect to this lottery scandal and the attempt at a cover-up. It really is unfortunate that Ontario has reached this point. It used to be that a scandal would be a shocking incident, something that would surprise, but in Dalton McGuinty's Ontario suddenly it's no big deal. It's almost as if it's business as usual.

We all remember last year Dalton McGuinty entered uncharted waters. He allowed Transportation Minister Takhar to remain in cabinet despite violating the integrity act. Now, with Lottogate, lottery minister Caplan has been allowed to remain in cabinet in the wake of a \$100-million scandal and this attempt at a cover-up.

I'm not sure what is worse, turning a blind eye to the theft of up to \$100 million or covering up once you find out. Either way, it's clear to me the Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal can't clean house. They can't deal with this under the current leadership. How could they deal with this? Minister Caplan appears to me to be part of the problem.

It is telling that Dalton McGuinty is adamantly opposed to an investigation. If there's nothing to hide, as he claims, why would they not welcome an investigation? If anything, we would want a committee to clear the air, to exonerate the minister, to exonerate the Premier.

Just a brief word about the money that was stolen under Minister Caplan's watch, up to \$100 million. That's the same amount of gambling money that's guaranteed annually to charities through the Ontario Trillium Foundation. Again, I guess that's the way it goes in Dalton McGuinty's Ontario: one gambling dollar for charity, one gambling dollar for a scandal, \$2 for charity, \$2 for a scandal. And that does not include the money spent on legal fees so that this McGuinty government can take victims to court.

Let's get to the bottom of this. Let's have an investigation. Strike a committee.

Mr. Brad Duguid (Scarborough Centre): I have to tell you that people watching at home today, people who have been watching this Legislature over the last two or three weeks are going to be very disappointed in the fact that somebody who strode into this Legislature with a holier-than-thou attitude, saying he was better than all of us, was going to bring civility to this place, has lowered himself so far down now that he would be making innuendoes, putting forward information that's simply not true and suggesting that a minister who has been verified—

1730

Mr. Yakabuski: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I believe the standing orders provide that you cannot say anything indirectly that you wouldn't be allowed to say directly. I think the member has made a comment that implies something that would never be allowed directly.

The Deputy Speaker: You're correct about the standing orders. I didn't hear anything that was in that way.

The member for Scarborough Centre.

Mr. Duguid: Mr. Speaker, if I said anything that offended the member, I'll withdraw it. I don't recall saying anything that would have.

The fact of the matter is, when Mr. Tory came to this place, he said—and I remember the day. I remember picking up the Toronto Star and seeing an opinion piece. He said this: "It's time for a new approach to proceedings in the Ontario Legislature, one that puts substance ahead of style, truth ahead of theatre, accountability ahead of blame." Let me repeat that: "Substance ahead of style." What have we seen here over the last three weeks? From the Leader of the Opposition we've seen the exact opposite. "Truth ahead of theatre." My goodness, over the last three weeks what have we seen here? Nothing but theatre, ignoring the facts, ignoring the fact that the Ombudsman said the following: "I commend the minister and the government for its openness and responsiveness to my report and recommendations and for their immediate"—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Okay folks, let's keep going. We're getting near the end. I'd like a little order.

The member for Scarborough Centre.

Mr. Duguid: The facts have been put forward very coherently by the Ombudsman, who said: "I commend the minister and the government for its openness and responsiveness to my report and recommendations and for their immediate and resolute commitment to ensuring change." He also said, "I'm happy to see that both the government and the OLG appear to be headed in the right direction." Those are facts. That's a third-party assessment of what's been going on here over the last little while, totally ignored by the Leader of the Opposition, when he'd get up and talk as though these things were never said. That is not an appropriate way to do politics.

There are people out there—

Interjection.

Mr. Duguid: I know. I'm from Scarborough Centre. I can tell you that the people in my area know, when they see people behaving in that manner—they believe that when somebody says they're going to do something, when somebody preaches to everybody else that we're not as good as them, that they're better than us and they're going to bring civility to this place, and then they come here and do the exact opposite—there is a word for those kinds of people and it is unparliamentary. I'm not going to say it, Mr. Speaker, but there's certainly a word for it. You look comfortable there; I don't want you to have to get up again, so I won't say it, Mr. Speaker, but you've got to know what I'm thinking; you've got to know what the people of Ontario are thinking and you've got to know what everybody in this place is thinking when they see that kind of behaviour from the Leader of the Opposition.

When I think about it, what's going on here? Is it that John Tory is recognizing that things aren't going so well for him? Is he recognizing that the people of Ontario like the direction this government is going in in health care, like the direction this government is going in in education, like the investment we're making in infrastructure, like the things we're doing to make this a safer province, like the fact that we've balanced their budget, like the fact that we're investing in programs that are assisting those who are more vulnerable and he can't get any traction for anything he's trying to do, so he's changing his tactics? Some might think that's the case, that the guy who came here and preached civility is going in the opposite direction because he's changing his tactics. That could be true.

I would suggest that may not be the case. I would suggest that what's happening here is that the Leader of the Opposition's true colours are coming out. I can remember back—how many years ago was it when Kim Campbell was running to be Prime Minister of this country? What was it that brought her down? Do you remember that negative ad that made fun of Jean Chrétien's facial disability? Do you remember who had to approve that ad? The Leader of the Opposition. Maybe what's happening here is that his true colours are coming out. The heat is on, we're close to an election campaign, so he feels he has to smear the Minister of Public Infra-

structure Renewal to try to score some cheap political points. He has tried to smear that minister and he has had no success doing it, and we can see right through him—

Mr. Yakabuski: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: The member for Scarborough Centre has plainly stated that the Leader of the Opposition has tried to smear the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal. I do not believe that that would be parliamentary.

The Deputy Speaker: There's a lot that's being said in here that borders on not being parliamentary, so I think all of us should pay very close attention to the use of the English language in the best way that we can and in respect for the other members.

Mr. Duguid: In the 30 seconds that I have left—obviously I am partisan in this issue, as we all are here, so I'm going to put forward my views in my words. But let me quote from somebody who's non-partisan, who's respected, who has been here a lot longer than I've been here: Ian Urquhart, a very well-respected reporter with the Toronto Star. This is what he said: "This is 'gotcha' politics at its worst.

"First of all, the lottery corporation is an arm's-length agency, deliberately established to be remote from political control.

"Secondly, if" the minister had "known about the problem earlier, then so should have his Conservative predecessors.

"After all"—

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you. Further debate?

Mr. Norman W. Sterling (Lanark-Carleton): I hesitate to follow a member who showed such integrity in his remarks. This is a very, very serious issue because it is about the integrity of a system that affects many Ontarians. The government seems to be bound and determined that they're going to stonewall this issue into the ground.

I think it's important to trace the history with regard to this particular issue. The issue really came to public knowledge—and therefore to political knowledge, I would imagine—in March 2005, at least as far as this side of the House was concerned. I would say that as a former minister who was responsible for the Alcohol and Gaming Commission, which is the regulatory part and doesn't run the lottery corporation, and I would say that as the minister responsible for the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp. for eight short months in 2003, when none of this litigation was active. The real point of when this would have come to the knowledge of the politicians would have been in March 2005, when 81 news stories hit down in the press. It is inconceivable that a minister would not be notified of this political storm out there. The stonewalling that we have received from the minister and the Premier on this issue is unbelievable. We cannot believe that their positioning that they didn't hear about it until October 2006 is credible.

I'm also aware of a lot of the facts around this particular case. I understand, for instance, that in 2004 the OPP were ready to go into the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp. There was a 100-page affidavit drafted by

the OPP. The team was put together, ready to go into the OLG, the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp. Then, all of the sudden, it stopped dead in its tracks. Why? Why did it stop? Did the minister who was responsible for the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp. stop it at that time? Did the Premier's political staff, who seem to have known about this particular issue for a lot longer than the minister, stop the investigation in 2004? What happened? I think it's incumbent on us in the Legislature to tell the public exactly why this happened, because if the rot had stopped in the OLG in 2004, all of these frauds that took away millions of dollars from Ontario citizens would not have happened. We need, at the very least, a committee of this Legislature to look into this.

I also want to point out that I've been trying to get the memorandum of understanding between the minister of infrastructure, Mr. Caplan, and the OLG for over two weeks now. I know that in September of last year there was no memorandum of understanding. That was told to the committee that was investigating at that time.

I have been stonewalled even today by the minister to give me a copy of what is a public document, according to his deputy minister, Ms. Layton, who told the public accounts committee on March 29 that these were public documents. I cannot get a copy of the up-to-date memorandum of understanding between the minister and the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp. I suspect, notwithstanding a Management Board directive requiring such a document, that there is no document.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): Of course, with just a minute left, I'll be supporting this opposition day motion by our leader, a man whom I respect a tremendous amount. I was very disappointed to hear the member for Scarborough Centre try to smear him in this House. As somebody who's trying to bring integrity to this Legislature by looking at an opposition day motion to look at it in the Legislative Assembly—and he gets smeared because he wants integrity. There's something awful with that. Do you know what it reminds me of? It reminds me of Jean Chrétien holding that golf ball and making fun of Gomery. That's what it reminds me of. That's the same level we're at.

They don't know what integrity is all about; they don't know what honesty is all about. They think this is okay. They really believe that this is proper conduct. This minister is overseeing a scandal and he should step aside and resign, and at the very least this House should vote in support of this opposition day motion. It's needed by the people of Ontario, it's called for by the people of Ontario, and I'd be extremely disappointed if you folks would not support this.

You know what? This is not going away. Remember that, ladies and gentlemen: It's not going away. Remember, you'll hear about it in October.

I will sit down, but remember, it's not going away.

The Deputy Speaker: Further debate? There being no further debate, Mr. Tory has moved opposition day number 3. 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 will be a 10-minute bell.
The division bells rang from 1742 to 1752.

The Deputy Speaker: Members, please take your seats. All those in favour, please stand one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Arnott, Ted	Hudak, Tim	Prue, Michael
Barrett, Toby	Klees, Frank	Runciman, Robert W.
Bisson, Gilles	Kormos, Peter	Savoline, Joyce
Chudleigh, Ted	Marchese, Rosario	Scott, Laurie
DiNovo, Cheri	Martiniuk, Gerry	Sterling, Norman W.
Dunlop, Garfield	Miller, Norm	Tory, John
Elliott, Christine	Munro, Julia	Wilson, Jim
Ferreira, Paul	Murdoch, Bill	Witmer, Elizabeth
Hardeman, Ernie	O'Toole, John	Yakabuski, John
Horwath, Andrea	Ouellette, Jerry J.	

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed, please stand one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Balkissoon, Bas	Gerretsen, John	Oraziotti, David
Bartolucci, Rick	Gravelle, Michael	Patten, Richard
Bentley, Christopher	Jeffrey, Linda	Peters, Steve
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Kular, Kuldeep	Phillips, Gerry
Bountrogianni, Marie	Kwinter, Monte	Racco, Mario G.
Bradley, James J.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Ramal, Khalil
Brownell, Jim	Leal, Jeff	Ramsay, David
Bryant, Michael	Levac, Dave	Sandals, Liz
Caplan, David	Marsales, Judy	Sergio, Mario
Chan, Michael	Matthews, Deborah	Smith, Monique
Craitor, Kim	Mauro, Bill	Smitherman, George
Dhillon, Vic	McMeekin, Ted	Takhar, Harinder S.
Dombrowsky, Leona	Meilleur, Madeleine	Van Bommel, Maria
Duguid, Brad	Milloy, John	Watson, Jim
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Mitchell, Carol	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Fonseca, Peter	Mossop, Jennifer F.	Zimmer, David

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):
 The ayes are 29; the nays are 48.

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

This House is adjourned. We'll return at 6:45 of the clock.

The House adjourned at 1755.

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