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Wednesday 30 April 2014

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Mercredi 30 avril 2014

**Standing Committee on
Justice Policy**

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE POLICY

COMITÉ PERMANENT DE LA JUSTICE

Wednesday 30 April 2014

Mercredi 30 avril 2014

The committee met at 1404 in committee room 2.

MEMBERS' PRIVILEGES

MR. JASON LAGERQUIST

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qadri): Chers collègues, j'appelle à l'ordre cette séance du Comité permanent de la justice. Je voudrais accueillir notre prochain présentateur, Jason Lagerquist, policy adviser of the office of Ministry of Agriculture and Food.

Mr. Lagerquist, you will be affirmed by our very able Clerk.

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Tamara Poman-ski): Do you solemnly affirm that the evidence you shall give to this committee touching the subject of the present inquiry shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: I do.

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qadri): Welcome. Your five-minute opening address begins now.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Good afternoon, Chair, members of the committee. My name is Jason Lagerquist, and I currently work as a policy adviser to Premier Kathleen Wynne in her capacity as Minister of Agriculture and Food.

I thought it would be helpful to the committee to first provide a brief history of my employment at Queen's Park. This past Monday, April 28, marked six years since I began work here as a staff member. I began working in MPP Amrit Mangat's office as her legislative assistant, a role I served in for approximately 10 months before I accepted a position to work in the office of the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. I served as special assistant to Ministers Caplan and Matthews for a total of three years, where I performed a variety of roles, most recently as one of the MPP liaisons.

In February 2012, I accepted a position in then-Premier Dalton McGuinty's office in the operations department, reporting directly to deputy chief of staff Dave Gene. My position in the Premier's office was northern regional desk. My responsibilities included working with northern MPPs on identified priority issues, facilitating communication materials and information between their offices and various ministers' offices, tracking northern media coverage and identifying communications opportunities as they presented themselves, working with staff in various ministers' offices to co-

ordinate announcements in northern Ontario, and working with others in the Premier's office in coordinating the Premier's visits to the north.

In February 2013, I accepted my current position as a policy adviser to the Minister of Agriculture and Food. I'd also like to mention that between 2006 and 2007, prior to officially coming to Queen's Park to work as a staff member, I was a member of the Ontario Legislature Internship Programme, where I served as a legislative intern to MPPs Jim Wilson and Dave Levac. My first exposure to provincial politics was actually as an OLIP intern in MPP Wilson's office.

I mention this because I think it was in part my experience in OLIP and later on as a staffer that allowed me to gain a deep understanding and respect for public service, the role of MPPs and the privilege that it is to serve an MPP. I know how hard MPPs and their staff work and the tremendous sacrifices they all make. This is irrespective of political affiliation. I also understand the importance of committees and the role they play, so I'm happy to be here to help answer any questions you might have of me today.

I would also like to take a moment to address the happenings of February 7, 2013, as I believe this will be of particular interest to this committee. At some point between late January and early February of 2013, I was notified by my boss, Dave Gene, that someone would be accessing my computer in preparation for the transition from one Premier to the next. On the morning of the 7th, I was approached by an individual, whom I later believed was Peter Faist, who identified himself as the person who would be working on my machine. I had not previously met Mr. Faist, nor have I seen him again since. I allowed him to access my computer and left the room. Mr. Faist was no longer there when I returned a short time later.

When I attempted to log back onto my computer, I was met with what I recall as a black screen with a white, blinking cursor. I was unable to log back onto my computer as normal, at which point I called Thom Stenson, an IT manager in Cabinet Office, for his assistance. After a short examination of my computer, I recall Mr. Stenson expressing frustration and putting forth his belief that it was Laura Miller's partner who had accessed my computer and computers assigned to others in the Premier's office. After spending some time working on my computer, Mr. Stenson was able to restore it to what I considered to be its normal working condition.

I have no recollection of any emails or information being missing, and I have no recollection of experiencing any difficulties with the general operation of my machine once Mr. Stenson was able to log me back on. I also feel that it is relevant to tell the committee that at no point in time did I ever have anything on my computer, including emails, briefing documents etc., that in any way related to the decision to relocate gas plants in Oakville or Mississauga, nor have I had any discussions with any of my colleagues or superiors about that particular issue.

I suspect that the members of the committee will want to discuss these and other matters with me in greater detail, and I am happy to assist you in answering any questions you might have.

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qadri): Thank you very much, Mr. Lagerquist.

Good afternoon, Mr. Hatfield. The floor is yours.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Good afternoon, Chair. I'm new to this committee. Do you have a sense of humour?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Yeah.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: I'm glad to hear it.

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qadri): Mr. Hatfield, that is not a requirement in public service.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: I say that, Chair, because February 7 was my birthday, and I know what I was doing. Now I've heard what you were doing.

When Mr. Faist came to your office, did somebody bring him in and introduce you to him, or was he on his own?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: He was already inside my office, and he was on his own.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: My buddy Dave Gene from Windsor, Ontario, Canada, didn't make an introduction?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Not to me. No.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Did you see him talking to anybody else in the office?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Not that I recall. No.

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Mr. Percy Hatfield: Did anyone in the office seem to know him? He just wandered in off the street?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: He didn't wander in off the street. In order to access our office on the second floor of the legislative building, which is where we were at the time, there was a door with a keypad and you had to access a code. He would have either had to have known the code or be granted access by somebody.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: So you don't know if somebody, besides giving him access to the building, gave him access to the code on the door to get in to say hello to you and take over your computer.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: I don't know how he accessed the room.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: All right. What did he say to you when he came over?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: He just identified himself as the individual who had been brought in to access my computer in preparation for the transition.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: So you had no reason to suspect that he was anybody else.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: He was just the guy. Right? Did he explain to you what he was going to do, like, "Get out of here. Come back in 10 minutes" or anything? What did he say?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No, he didn't explain what he was going to do. We really didn't talk much at all. He just identified himself as the person who would be working on my machine, and I vacated the office.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Did he tell you who had asked him to come in and work on your machine?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: He didn't say that, no.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Were you prepped for this testimony in any way? At the end of your opening statement, you said something like, "At no time did I speak to any other colleagues." Did a lawyer or somebody elsewhere tell you what to say and how to piece that little statement together?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No, nobody has told me what to say. I wrote the statement myself. I have met with officials from the government House leader's office in preparation, more about the committee structure and how committees function. This is the first time I've had the pleasure of appearing before a committee. But no, nobody crafted my statement for me. I wrote it.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: You wrote it yourself.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Yes.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: When he was done working on your computer, did he—I'm sorry; were you there then? Or you had left the room and came back later, and he was gone?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: That's correct, yes.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: So you don't know what he did next.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No, I don't.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: When the IT guy came in—what was his name? Stenson?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Yes.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: What was the level of his frustration? You indicated that he was frustrated that Laura Miller's boyfriend had been screwing up his computers. I don't know that you said those words, but he was frustrated. Right? How frustrated was he?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: I don't know how I would gauge his level of frustration. He was definitely frustrated. It wasn't the first—or my impression, based on the conversation, was that mine was not the first computer that he had been asked to come to help with.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Did my buddy Dave Gene from Windsor, Ontario, Canada, tell you that he was Laura Miller's boyfriend?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: I don't recall that conversation taking place with Dave. To the best of my recollection, what Dave said was that someone would be coming in over the next little while to access our computers in preparation for the transition. I don't remember him identifying who that person was.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Did you talk to your colleague Lauren—is it Ramey?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Ramey.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Did you talk to Lauren about this?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: I spoke to Lauren a few days after the ITO became public. Lauren and I have been friends for a number of years, and it was an interesting experience for, I think, both of us to see our names in the newspaper and to see our pictures in the newspaper. Lauren and I spoke very briefly, not about any details with respect to what had happened, but more about the general experience and what we were both going through.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Chair, I have a final question, and then my colleague will take over, if that's okay.

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qadri): Absolutely. You have 16 minutes in total. The floor is yours.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Thank you. After all these things happened with your computer, you talked to Lauren. Who else did you have a conversation with about the day's events?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: I don't recall speaking to anyone about it.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: At any time since then have you had discussions with former colleagues?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Not in any great detail. When I was first notified or first contacted by the Ontario Provincial Police that they wanted to speak to me about this, I acquired legal counsel, and counsel advised me that it was in the interest of the investigation not to speak directly with anyone about it.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Thank you for your time. Thank you, Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qadri): Thank you, Mr. Hatfield. To Mr. Tabuns.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Mr. Lagerquist, you talked to Thom Stenson about this matter. Can you tell us about that discussion?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: It was very brief, and I don't recall him going into any detail in terms of the technicalities with respect to what had happened. He was just frustrated—or he seemed frustrated—that he was being called to work on computers that had been accessed by, as he put it, Laura Miller's partner.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: After Peter Faist had accessed your computer, can you describe again what happened? It was non-functional?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: As I said in my opening statement, when I returned to my office, Mr. Faist was no longer there. I attempted to access my computer again. I remember a black screen and a white, blinking cursor. I was unable to log on to my computer as would be normal, and that's when I called Mr. Stenson for assistance.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I apologize if this question has been asked of you before, but why did you think that Mr. Faist wasn't a technician for the Ontario public service?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Sorry. Can you repeat the question?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: In the ITO, it is noted that you didn't think that he was a technician for the Ontario public service.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: That was, I think, based upon the comments that Mr. Stenson made to me.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Okay. So you didn't think that the moment that he came to your desk.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: I didn't know. I'd never met him before.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Okay. And the comments of Mr. Stenson were that this person was someone who wasn't working in the IT department.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: That was what I took from it, yes.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Were you aware that Rolf Gitt checked the logs to look at who had accessed it?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Were there any other times that you saw Peter Faist in the office?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No. That was the one and only time, that day.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Did you see him accessing other people's computers that day?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: I don't recall seeing him access anyone else's computer, no.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Was it your discussion with Thom Stenson that identified for you that he was in a relationship with Laura Miller?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Yes.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Did you often work with Laura Miller?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No, not particularly. Laura and I worked together on a very small handful of files. She was more on the communication side of things, and I was in the operations department.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Was she a person who got tough assignments given to her?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: I'm not comfortable speculating on the nature of her assignments. I know Laura was a hard worker and very well regarded.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Okay. One of the things that concerned us about her approach was that, in going through emails, it looked to us as though she wanted to put pressure on or even bully the Speaker, Dave Levac, around his ruling. Was that a standard operational thing for her?

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qadri): Mr. Tabuns, just with respect, as you know, the idea of the Speaker's influence is not material and has been ruled on by the Chair etc. Bring it back to the scope, please. Go ahead.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Well, I'm trying to go to the nature of a person's operating style. I'm not asking questions about what was said to the Speaker at any point.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Sorry. Can you repeat the question?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Was the application of pressure on people part of her operating style?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: I wouldn't describe it as such. I never experienced pressure.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Did you observe it being applied to others?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No, I wouldn't say that I observed it.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Okay. Where was your computer located in the office?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: It was in the second floor of the main legislative building. I can't remember the exact number.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: That's okay. So were you in your own office with a separate door? Were you in a cubicle? Were you in an open space?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: The way the office was structured, when you first came in the main door to my office, there was a couple of desks and then a doorway that led to another office that led to a single desk and then another small hallway that led to another series of desks.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: So you were in the middle of all of this? Or were you in a separate space from anyone else's computer or workstation?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: There would have been one other workstation in the room where I was.

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Mr. Peter Tabuns: Do you believe that others saw Peter Faist working on your computer?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: On my computer?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Yes.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: I can't speculate as to what other people may have seen.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Was there anyone else in the room that day?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No, not that I recall.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: When you were engaged in your discussion with the police, where did the discussion take place?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: The discussion took place at the office of legal counsel.

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qadri): Mr. Tabuns, once again: You're aware that the subject of the OPP investigation is not material to this committee. But please, continue.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Thank you, Chair. Did you tell your managers that you were being interviewed?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: I told my chief of staff in the agriculture and food minister's office.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: And who was that chief of staff again?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: His name was Michael Keegan.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Michael Keegan. Okay. And can you tell us where you work now?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: I continue to work in the office of the Minister of Agriculture and Food.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: And your minister is?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Kathleen Wynne.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Before your name appeared in the ITO, did anyone ask you about Peter Faist or about wiping of computer records?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: It didn't come up at all in any of the discussions in your office?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: There might have been a couple of discussions in the days immediately afterwards,

just that it was Peter who had access to computers, but they didn't go into any detail.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: So no one from the Premier's office ever came to see you about computers having their hard drives wiped clean?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: The current Premier's office?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Yes.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: And no one from the previous Premier's office?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Okay. And this happened on or about February 7, and from that date forward until the police came to see you, no one discussed this matter with you? No one inquired?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: That's correct.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: All right. After the ITO was released, have you discussed the fact that your name was in the ITO with any of your colleagues? Any of your supervisors?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Once it reached the public domain, people were asking me frequently.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: And did you engage in discussions with supervisors at that time?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Not about any specifics in terms of what happened that day.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: If it wasn't about specifics about what happened that day, what was it about?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Just about—

Mr. Bob Delaney: Point of order.

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qadri): Mr. Tabuns—Mr. Delaney, if you'll allow, I'll anticipate your point of order.

As has been mentioned, Mr. Tabuns—with respect, repeatedly—the ITO, the OPP etc. is getting into a forbidden zone. But, in any case, the floor is yours.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: May I say, Mr. Chair—if you'd stop the clock for a second, because you're speaking to a point of order—I'm not asking about what he said to the police. I'm asking about the reality after this became a public matter—what sort of discussions went on. I have no interest in probing—

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qadri): Thank you, Mr. Tabuns. Give us a moment.

With due respect to your inquiry about reality, it's not material, so I'd invite you to please continue.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I suspect that at some point, Chair, it may become highly material, but—

Interjections.

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qadri): We're fine.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Let's just establish, then: Prior to the ITO coming out, no one made any inquiries of you.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: And this was after the IT department was aware that someone had come and wiped your computer, and had had to restore it. Is that correct?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No, I don't recall anyone making any inquiries of me.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Not a single person?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Okay. Minister Milloy said that the Liberal Party of Ontario conducted an internal investigation into Peter Faist, but they wouldn't allow the results to be made public. Were you asked any questions in the course of that investigation?

Mr. Bob Delaney: Chair, I don't know what that has to do with the subject of this inquiry.

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qaadri): Mr. Delaney: A point of order. I'll have to consider this.

Mr. Tabuns, please continue. We'll allow the question for now, but we are listening intently. Go ahead.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: As am I.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Sorry. Could you repeat the question for me?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Yes. We've been told by Minister Milloy that the Liberal Party conducted an internal investigation into Peter Faist. Did anyone from the Ontario Liberal Party come to talk to you about Peter Faist?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No, they did not.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Okay. Have you had any other debriefs about him and his performance or his behaviour with regard to this matter?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: What do you mean by debrief?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Have you been approached by any other official on this matter?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No, I have not.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Okay. Was there anyone that you spoke to in preparation for today's appearance?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Yes. As I indicated earlier, I spoke to folks in the government House leader's office to go over the committee structure and how committees work. I mentioned earlier that this is the first time that I've appeared before a committee. That's who I spoke to, yes.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: How much time do I have left?

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qaadri): About four minutes, Mr. Tabuns.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Mr. Lagerquist, prior to your computer being wiped, did you have any involvement whatsoever with the gas plants file?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No, absolutely not. As I said in my opening statement, at no point in my time in the Premier's office, or before, for that matter, did I have any involvement with decisions relating to gas plant relocations. I at no point had any emails on my computer, briefing documents or anything related to that file.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: And had you done any extensive work with the former chief of staff?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Which chief of staff?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Mr. Livingston.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No, no extensive work. I met Mr. Livingston once briefly, I recall. It was a very short conversation. I remember he asked me what I did. I told him, and he thanked me for my hard work and that was it. So, no, I have not spoken with David Livingston about that.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: My colleague may have a few questions.

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qaadri): Mr. Hatfield.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Thank you, Chair. Good afternoon again. Sir, in your work, prior to your computer being wiped, were you ever working on any sensitive files of any kind that may have proved embarrassing to an incoming Premier of the same party as opposed to the former boss that was there?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No. There's nothing that I can recall that I ever would have had on my computer that would have shown to be embarrassing, to the best of my recollection.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: I guess I'm somewhat befuddled, in the sense that you're not, with all due respect—you weren't that high up in the food chain in the office.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: That's correct.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: And I don't mean that with any disrespect. I really don't.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: None taken.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: I'm just trying to figure out why they would want to wipe your computer when someone from the same party is taking over, but they should all be on the same page. I just don't get it.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: As best as I can recollect, it was described as a normal part of the transition process.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: And Mr. Gene told you that?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Yes.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: You had no reason to doubt his word?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: He's your boss. Was there anyone else with Mr. Gene when he approached you about this and what was going to happen? Did he have an office meeting and tell everybody or did he go individually?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No. I don't think it was an office meeting. I think there was—

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qaadri): One minute.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: As best as I can recall, keeping in mind that this happened well over a year ago now, I believe it was in the context of a discussion that took place between a few individuals, including myself and Mr. Gene.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: So there were others there at the time when he said, "This is what we're going to do"?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: That's my recollection, yes.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: As I recall, you've given testimony this afternoon that you had not seen Peter Faist before and you haven't seen him since?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: That's correct.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Ever visit Vancouver?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Pardon me?

Mr. Percy Hatfield: I'm kidding. No, I'm sorry. Thank you, Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qaadri): Thank you, colleagues. Thanks to you, Mr. Hatfield and Mr. Tabuns. I appreciate your abiding by the various rulings that we're hurling at you. It's the Chair's aspiration that he'll get similar co-operation in subsequent testimony.

To the government side: Mr. Delaney.

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Mr. Bob Delaney: Thank you, Chair. I will be sharing this time with my colleague Mr. Del Duca.

I think, before we begin, there was mention of an “internal investigation,” and it would be worth clarifying again on the record here that this “internal investigation”—its scope was entirely to determine if there was any contractual relationship between Mr. Faist and either the government or the Liberal caucus, and it would be worth noting that Mr. Milloy, the House leader, did state this in the House.

I believe Mr. Del Duca will pick it up from here.

Mr. Steven Del Duca: Thank you for being with us here today, Jason. In my first couple of questions, I may go over a tiny bit of territory that you may have already referenced in your opening statement, or you may have in the course of responding to members from the NDP caucus.

As we know from the ITO and also from what we’ve heard by your testimony today, your computer was one of the so-called 24 that were accessed, and as a result of that, the OPP requested an interview with you. Is that correct?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: That is correct.

Mr. Steven Del Duca: And when you received the request from the OPP, did you agree to speak with them?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: I did.

Mr. Steven Del Duca: And when you did speak with the OPP, did you answer their questions honestly, and did you provide them with all of the relevant information that you knew at the time?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: I did.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Point of order.

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qadri): Mr. Tabuns, point of order.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: When I ask about the OPP, I get told I am getting in deep water—

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qadri): Thank you, Mr. Tabuns. You are absolutely right. Your point of order is well taken, and I will now have to advise my honourable colleague to please observe the mandate, subject to further reprimand.

Mr. Steven Del Duca: Thank you for that advice, Mr. Chair.

I will move on to discuss record-keeping. I do want to ask you a few questions about this topic of record-keeping. Were you ever directed by any of your chiefs of staff or other colleagues to delete all of your emails?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No.

Mr. Steven Del Duca: Okay. When former Premier McGuinty testified here at committee, he agreed that there had been a lack of adequate training for staff in this particular area. Specifically, in his June 7 response to the IPC’s report, he stated:

“I agree with the commissioner that despite some efforts, we did not devote adequate resources and attention to ensuring all government staff in all ministries and in the Premier’s office were fully informed of their responsibilities. This inadequate training made it difficult

for staff government-wide to both understand their responsibilities regarding the preservation of public records and to exercise sound judgment in determining which records must be kept as public records and which can be eliminated.”

Would you agree with the former Premier that there was a lack of formal training with respect to how to properly manage such records?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Yes, I would certainly agree that the level of understanding in terms of record-keeping—what we as political staff are required to keep and what is permissible to be deleted was not as clear at that time as it is now.

Mr. Steven Del Duca: Thank you for that answer. That being said, I’m sure it was probably apparent to most staff that they were not required to keep every single record, and as I’m sure you’re aware, our government has taken a number of initiatives to improve the system and to ensure that all staff are better trained regarding record-keeping and document retention practices.

The Archives and Recordkeeping Act explains, for example, that transitory records are not required to be kept, and the common record series defines these records as “records of temporary usefulness in any format or medium, created or received by a public body in carrying out its activities, having no ongoing value beyond an immediate and minor transaction or the preparation of a subsequent record.”

So, according to the act, there are many types of records that would fall into this transitory category: for example, duplicates, records of short-term value, intermediate records and draft documents. Archives Ontario, in fact, even has a factsheet entitled *The Fine Art of Destruction: Weeding Out Transitory Records*.

Did you participate in the mandatory staff training that took place this past fall regarding records retention?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Yes, I did.

Mr. Steven Del Duca: Would you say that you now have a better understanding, because of that training, with respect to the record retention requirements, since the training?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Absolutely, I would say I do.

Mr. Steven Del Duca: I want to take a moment to move on and discuss a little bit of the impact of the changes that have been implemented under Premier Wynne.

The release of the Information and Privacy Commissioner’s report has prompted some significant changes across government—the IPC’s report, this summer, on document retention practices by the government, another item the Premier moved quickly to lead the way on. For example, she specifically gave direction to all political staff on the need to be responsible and diligent regarding retaining documents pertaining to government business and ensured the new training processes we mentioned a second ago were put into place.

As I’m sure you’re aware, our government has implemented the mandatory record-keeping rules. We talked about this a second ago. Can you talk to us a little bit

more about what that training has meant to you? You've been here for a little while. You mentioned in your opening you've been here for six years. Can you talk about what that difference in the training has meant to you?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: I think it's absolutely led to an increased level of understanding in terms of the types of records that we are required to keep and the types of records that are permissible to be deleted. The difference between permanent records—those would be, for example, emails directing government policy, directing operations, those types of things. It's very clear now those are the types of things that should be kept, whereas other transitory records—I'm trying to think of an example of a transitory record. In OMAF, for example, we get dozens of emails a day that are a synopsis of various media stories. There's no government direction in something like that. That's just an update to staff as to what's going on in the press. I think that would be a pretty clear example of a transitory record that could be deleted.

Mr. Steven Del Duca: Thanks very much for that answer. Is there anything else you'd like to add in this first round of questioning?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No, I'm good.

Mr. Steven Del Duca: Okay. Thanks, Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qadri): Thank you, Mr. Del Duca. To the PC side: Ms. Thompson.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Welcome today.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Thank you.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Jason, I'd like to start out by going back to your various roles that you've had over those six years. It's six years you've been with government now?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: As of Monday, yes.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: As of Monday. Very good. In your opening statement, you went through the different roles that you had to where you find yourself currently in a position—policy and stakeholder adviser with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. What is it that you do in those particular roles now?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Currently, you mean?

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Currently.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Currently, I advise the Minister of Agriculture and Food on policy related to her ministerial portfolio, maintain relationships with agri-food stakeholders, leadership within those groups. I write briefing notes for the Premier when she attends—for the minister, excuse me—events related to the agri-food portfolio, review correspondence that comes in to OMAF, to our office, and direct responses, those types of things.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Where do you spend most of your time—here in Toronto or on Stone Road?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: I would say I spend most of my time in Toronto, particularly when the Legislature's sitting. I do try to make it to the office in Stone Road as much as possible. It's actually a little bit shorter commute for me to drive out to Guelph. So whenever possible, I do try to make it to the OMAF office.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Okay. Very good. What in your previous experience would cause people to take a look at you to say, "Hey, you know what? When it comes to agriculture and food, Jason's our guy to work in policy and stakeholder relations"?"

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: I don't think it was so much my direct experience in the agri-food sector. I think it was the experience that I built up over the years at Queen's Park and my ability to work with stakeholders.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Okay. Fair enough. I apologize in advance if I ask questions that have already been asked, but—

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No, that's fine.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: —we'll work through this. The ITO mentioned that your computer was one of the 24 accessed by Peter Faist. When did you first realize, "Hey, what the heck has this guy done to my computer?"

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: When I first returned to the office and I was unable to log on as I was accustomed to doing. Even at that point, I didn't really have a sense that anything was dramatically wrong. It was during my conversation with Thom Stenson where it became apparent—I just sensed his frustration. I sensed that there was something out of the ordinary.

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Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: There was something out of the ordinary then. Okay. When you first came in and your screen had gone to black, what was your natural instinct? What was your gut instinct? What did you do right away?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: I did not think that there was anything significantly wrong. I played with the keyboard a little bit to try to see if I could—to try to get it to work on my own. My computer literacy is basically non-existent. So even when I called Mr. Stenson, I did not think that there was anything significantly wrong with my computer. And to be fair, after Mr. Stenson allowed me to regain access to my computer, I didn't experience any—it was business as usual in terms of the operation of the machine.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: But you didn't go, "Who the heck was that stranger working on my computer, and why was my screen black?" You didn't look where he went or if he was still in the area?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No, I did not.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Interesting. Okay. Interesting.

Moving along. Your previous record of employment states that you worked for the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and specifically for Minister Matthews, who was also Kathleen Wynne's chair—campaign manager. So, given Minister Matthews's relationship with Kathleen Wynne at that time, did you inadvertently do any work on Kathleen Wynne's leadership campaign?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: I appreciate the question, because I think it gives me the opportunity to be clear. After Premier McGuinty announced his resignation, those of us that stayed in the Premier's office were required to remain neutral throughout the leadership pro-

cess. There are some folks that took a leave of absence and worked actively on the various campaigns that were going on. But those of us, like myself, that were in the Premier's office were neutral.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Okay, so you were neutral.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Correct.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: But then, with respect to your work with Minister Matthews, did you work on any campaign correspondence or manage her schedule or anything like that? Just to go cycle back around.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Can you clarify?

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: So we talked about the Premier and now we're talking about Minister Matthews. Did you work on her schedule at all or anything like that?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: When I worked in her office?

Mr. Bob Delaney: Chair?

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qadri): Mr. Delaney, point of order.

Mr. Bob Delaney: I believe this isn't even remotely close to the scope of the committee's mandate.

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qadri): Thank you, Mr. Delaney. We tend to agree with you. The point is mostly well taken. There's sort of a fine line between probing background responsibilities and so on, but at least if it could be made relevant to the mandate of the committee.

Please, Ms. Thompson, continue.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Sure. Okay, that's fine. Let's go back to the day that you found your computer with a black screen. Aside from Thom Stenson, did you talk to anybody else? Did you go home or did you go out for a lager and say, "Hey, something bizarre happened to me today"? Typically, somebody would, when you recap and reflect on your day.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No. I don't recall discussing it with anyone. As I said, once Mr. Stenson spent some time on my machine, he was able to restore it to the normal working order. To the very best of my recollection, there was no information missing; there were no documents missing; there were no emails missing. Everything appeared, at least, to be in normal working order, as far as I was concerned.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Okay. All right. In terms of doing due diligence, though, in your transition, did you feel behooved to tell anyone on your new boss's transition team—that is, the transition team of Kathleen Wynne—that documents or confidential information was accessed by a stranger?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No, I did not have that conversation.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Why not?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: It didn't come up.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Okay. All right. Going back to some other information that we have, you just reinforced the fact of something you said in your opening statement. You said that you have no recollection of docs or emails being missing. When we did some research, there was an article in the Ottawa Citizen, March 27, 2014, by Vito Piliēci, and there's a quote here that involves you. I'll just read it to you.

"It was clear that files have been deleted, system files," said a government staffer named Jason Lagerquist, whose computer was accessed, according to the police filing. "You've ... basically mucked with a computer to the point where it's no longer functioning and the only way to fix that uh is to do what we call a reimage which is basically build the thing from scratch."

Do you recall that? Do you remember seeing that anywhere, that particular quote?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Just to be clear, Ms. Thompson, are you attributing that quote to me?

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Yes, I'll reread it.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Please.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: "'It was clear that files have been deleted, system files,' said a government staffer named Jason Lagerquist...." This was an article in the Ottawa Citizen, dated March 27, 2014, by Vito Piliēci—and I apologize if I'm not saying his last name right.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: I think there might be an error in that story. I never made such a remark. I have very limited computer knowledge, and much of what you just said went over my head. I believe that quote might be attributed to Mr. Stenson, because I've seen it elsewhere. I'm not sure about that.

Again, in terms of what I was able to observe after Mr. Stenson got me back onto my computer, I noticed no difference in the operation of my computer. I didn't notice that anything was missing. I did not notice that any files had been deleted.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: I accept what you said there, Jason—thank you—because, to your point, there was an article published on the same day, March 27, 2014, by Toronto Star reporter Rob Ferguson: "Police Allege Breach of Trust by Former McGuinty Staffer over Computer Access." Essentially, it notes that Ramey's colleague, Jason Lagerquist, "had a similar experience and also called Thom Stenson of the government's IT service.

"There were a few, maybe a couple, in which it was clear that files have been deleted ... you've just basically mucked with a computer to the point where it's no longer functioning ... we were not sure exactly what system files might have been damaged," Stenson told police early in their investigation last July."

It's fair to say that Rob Ferguson, through his article, agrees with you, but—

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qadri): Ms. Thompson, time has stopped, but just to advise you: However reluctant I would be to not let you quote Mr. Rob Ferguson, the quote is itself from the OPP ITO, so we're on a little bit of shaky ground. But I allow you to continue, please.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Okay. Moving forward, clearly Thom Stenson recognized there were files damaged or deleted. What did you do while Thom Stenson was recovering your data on your computer?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: I don't remember doing anything in particular. I think I remained in the office while he did his work.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: So he never once said, "Holy smokes, email files have been deleted or damaged on your computer"?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: He never said anything to me at that time about anything being deleted or damaged. He was frustrated, but he didn't go into any specifics with me, that I recall.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Interesting. Okay. Moving on in this particular article, it goes on to say: Another IT staffer said that "a Dell 'software tool' had been left on both Ramey and Lagerquist's computers, which Duval suspects might be to 'disguise' data on a hard drive."

After Thom Stenson worked on your computer, did any other glitches or peculiar things happen?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No, not that I can recall.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: All right. Let's cycle back to when you went over to the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. When Faist accessed your computer, did you already know you were going over to OMAF or did this appointment happen afterwards?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: I was hired into the office of the Minister of Agriculture and Food at the end of February, so it was afterwards.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Afterwards. Okay. And to the best of your knowledge, you don't think you were moved into that particular role just to kind of keep you close and make sure that they took care of you?

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Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No. I think, in my opening statement, Ms. Thompson, I went over my history at Queen's Park, and I think it shows a pretty steady evolution. I've worked very hard. I'm proud of the work I've done and what I've been able to accomplish and the jobs that I've been able to achieve. In my opinion, and I don't think that there's anything to suggest the contrary, that's merit-based.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Okay. All right. You know a number of the staffers at the PO office as well as the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, right?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Yes.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Okay. To your recollection, do you recall when Brianna Ames started in the Premier's office?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: I don't want to speculate on exact dates. I don't know. I can't say for sure.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Do you have a ballpark? Just give us a ballpark.

Mr. Bob Delaney: Chair, I don't think it's fair—

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qadri): Mr. Delaney, point of order.

Mr. Bob Delaney: The witness has responded that he doesn't wish to speculate, and I don't think asking the witness to speculate is fair in the circumstances.

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qadri): Both points are correct. You are allowed to ask, and you are allowed to answer, which is currently what's happening. Please continue.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: I'll go back and revisit that. Do you recall, ballparkish, when Brianna Ames started in the Premier's office?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: I don't recall.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: All right. Was it before or after you went to OMAF?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: I don't know the timeline to be able to make that assessment.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Okay. That's fine. Why do you feel your computer was one of the 24 accessed by the super-password that Peter Faist had been given to use?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: I don't know. At the time, I assumed it was a natural part of the transition process. Apart from that, I don't know.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Do you think anybody else used your computer when you weren't there?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Not that I'm aware of.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Not that you're aware of. Okay. All right. I think we'll leave it at that for now. Thank you, Jason.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qadri): Thank you, Ms. Thompson. The PC side cedes its time? You're done?

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Yes, we're done.

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qadri): Fair enough. Mr. Tabuns, 10 minutes.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Thank you, Chair. Mr. Lagerquist, did you provide any records to the archivist when you left your role in the Premier's office?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No, I did not.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Okay. As a ministerial adviser, are 100% of your records transitory?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Are 100% of my records transitory?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: And thus deleted.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No, no. There are permanent records that should be archived, yes.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Prior to the training that was asked about earlier, did you have records that you recognized as significant that should be saved?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: There was less clarity around the rules, I would say. But I probably had too many emails, if anything.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: So in fact, if we had been doing a search on your emails and your records, we would have found a lot of material, as far as I can tell, likely irrelevant to the gas plant matter. But as a ministerial or Premier's adviser, you actually had a lot of substantive records on your computer.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: I would say, yes.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Okay. I ask in part because consistently, we've been getting the story that, "Well, so much of this is transitory; one shouldn't be surprised if nothing is left at the end of the day." But my sense is, you have substantial records when you advise the Premier and when you advise a minister. You'll have material on your computer.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Yes, I would say that's absolutely correct.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Okay. You talked to Thom Stenson about your computer. Did you also talk to your supervisor, Dave Gene, to say, "You sent this guy in, and he messed up my computer"?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No, I did not.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Why didn't you?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Well, it had been Dave that had said that someone would be coming in to look at the computers. After Mr. Stenson performed his analysis and whatever it is to allow me to log back onto my computer, as I've said, I didn't notice there was anything wrong, anything missing. So, no, I did not speak to Dave.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: And he never came to you and said, "So how did things go with that guy who worked on your computer?"

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Not that I recall, no.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: He was your supervisor. What was his role in issues management?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Dave's?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Yes.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: I shouldn't speculate. I don't know.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: He was your supervisor and you didn't know what his job was?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: I know what his job was with respect to my role.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Why don't you tell us what that was.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: He oversaw me as the northern regional desk.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: And so he would ask you for reports?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Yes.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: And for briefings?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: With Dave it was never—not always—formal briefings, but we would chat about issues in the region, absolutely.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Did he have any role in the transition from one Premier to the next?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Not to the best of my knowledge.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Was it clear to you who had leadership in the transition period, who was actually running things to move from one state to another?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Can you describe the timeline in terms of your—

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Well, let's say that from the end of January to the end of February, there were people moving in and people moving out. Who was overseeing this process, as far as you could tell?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: From my perspective as a staff member in the Premier's office, until February 11, I reported to Dave Gene, and Dalton McGuinty was still the Premier. I can honestly not recall any interaction—for me, personally.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Yes, that's all I want to know.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: I can't recall any interaction with anyone who would have been part of the current Premier's transition team. It was very clear that Dalton McGuinty was still the Premier and I reported to Dave.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: And Laura Miller—did she have any role in the transition, that you were aware of?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Not that I'm aware of.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Had the IT department ever done any damage to your computer or cause it to malfunction in the way that it did after Mr. Faist had his opportunity with it?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No, I can't say that I recall that happening.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: When Thom Stenson told you that other computers had been messed with, did he say whose computers?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No, he didn't specify at that time.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: And no one else in your office talked about Peter Faist, although approximately 24 other people have had the same experience as you.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: I can recall a couple of conversations where it was discussed that Peter had been in, but I never discussed any of the specifics in terms of what I had experienced or what had been done. I had no reason to suspect that there was anything other than the normal transition process.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: If you didn't have anything to say, did others have things to say to you?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Nothing directly relating to what was done or wasn't done to our computers.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Nothing related to Peter Faist?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: As I recall, the discussions might have been that this was Peter, Laura's partner. That was the extent of it.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Were you aware of what work he was doing for the Liberal Party at the time?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No, I was not.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Did anyone else talk to you about the transition, besides Dave Gene?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: What type of conversation would we have had?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: A conversation about what was going to be happening over the next few weeks. Dave Gene comes and says, "Someone is going to be going at your computer as part of the transition process." Did anyone else talk to you about the transition?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No, not that I can recall.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Mr. Hatfield, you had some questions?

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qaadri): Mr. Hatfield.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Like you, Jason, I guess I'm somewhat computer-illiterate. When I heard that files were deleted and computers were wiped, I figured you'd sign back on and there would be a blank screen and all of your contacts would be gone and all of your emails would be gone. But you're saying that once you got up and running, everything was there.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: After Mr. Stenson—

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Yes, but I'm just curious. What could have been the specialized deletion, the targeted deletion? Why would they want to get into your computer, to get at what, if all your emails were back up and you signed back on after the IT guy fixed it for you?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: As it was described to me, it was a normal part of the transition. In terms of anyone

trying to access my computer to get at anything, I can honestly say, I would not have had anything on my computer that, frankly, would have interested anyone.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: What time did you leave the office, on a regular basis?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: It depended on the day, but typically between 6 and 7.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: So in the evening, if anyone had a password, could they access your computer and have an email exchange, so that if I ever go after an FOI and say Dave Gene's name on there but I don't put your name on there—so if Dave Gene, for example, used your computer at night, would you ever know about it? Maybe that's what was targeted. Maybe they came in specifically because they were trying to get—

Mr. Steven Del Duca: This is speculation.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Yes, I know it's speculation. I'm just asking. I'm trying to figure out why they would go into your computer in some kind of specialized, targeted deletion and then all your information would be there afterwards.

Mr. Bob Delaney: Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qaadri): Mr. Hatfield, I do, once again—Mr. Delaney, perhaps to anticipate your point of order. Mr. Hatfield, there's a fine line between probing and sort of going down absolutely speculative routes. I'd just like you to be aware of that. But please continue.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Thank you. Delete Dave Gene's name and just anybody—did you ever come into the office in the morning, turn on your computer and say, "That's not what I remember being there last night"? Or anything in your desk moved and you say, "I don't remember doing that"?

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: No, not that I can recall.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: All right. You've had this training now on deletion, so the next time, if there's ever a transition in Ontario and you're still working in the Premier's office, if that's not speculation, what would you do if somebody came up to you and said, "I'm here to delete your computer emails"? What would you do? What would you say? Who would you say it to?

Mr. Bob Delaney: Chair?

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qaadri): Mr. Delaney.

Mr. Bob Delaney: The assumption here is that emails were deleted, and nowhere in the testimony has Mr. Lagerquist suggested that such a thing has happened.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Thank you, Chair. Let me move on—

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qaadri): Mr. Delaney, your point is—just a moment, Mr. Hatfield. The point and the direction is well taken. Mr. Hatfield, in terms of protocol of committee, we usually are advising our members to ask factual questions.

Please continue. One minute.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Thank you. I have one minute. I'll close off with the question—you raised the issue of merit. Your occupation, your employment is merit. What are you currently earning, and how does that compare to what you were earning in your previous job—

Mr. Bob Delaney: Chair, that has no relationship with our—

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qaadri): Mr. Hatfield, with respect not only—thank you, Mr. Delaney. With respect to the witness, (a) the question is not particularly material to the mandate; and (b) if you would allow us to protect the witness's privacy, I think that would be in order. So I'm not going to allow that question.

Please continue. You have 45 seconds left.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Okay. I mean, it was raised earlier: Why are you around? Were they keeping you close to home, sort of thing, because of this thing coming up? The witness testified that he was merit-based. I was just trying to figure out if there's any evidence to that effect. But if that's the case, that's the case.

Thank you for coming today, Jason. I thought you answered to the best of your ability the questions that were posed to you. Thank you very much.

Mr. Jason Lagerquist: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qaadri): Thank you, Mr. Hatfield. Back to the government side. Just for, perhaps, the committee's edification, salaries over \$100,000 annually are public domain, just to let you know. In any case, go ahead, Mr. Delaney.

Mr. Bob Delaney: Chair, I think we have exhausted this witness's contribution to our committee, and the government has no further questions.

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qaadri): Thank you, Mr. Delaney. To the PC side: Ms. Thompson, 10 minutes.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: No, we're done as well. We concur with Mr. Delaney.

The Chair (Mr. Shafiq Qaadri): Thank you, Ms. Thompson. Thanks to you, Mr. Lagerquist, for your presence. You are officially dismissed.

We have a subcommittee meeting, but committee is officially adjourned. Thank you, colleagues.

The committee adjourned at 1504.

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