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ISSN 1180-4335

**Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario**  
Second Session, 37<sup>th</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario**  
Deuxième session, 37<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Wednesday 8 August 2001**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Mercredi 8 août 2001**

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Clerk: Donna Bryce

Président : James J. Bradley  
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Telephone 416-325-7400; fax 416-325-7430  
Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Service du Journal des débats et d'interprétation  
3330 Édifice Whitney ; 99, rue Wellesley ouest  
Toronto ON M7A 1A2  
Téléphone, 416-325-7400 ; télécopieur, 416-325-7430  
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
GOVERNMENT AGENCIES**

**COMITÉ PERMANENT DES  
ORGANISMES GOUVERNEMENTAUX**

Wednesday 8 August 2001

Mercredi 8 août 2001

*The committee met at 1300 in room 151.*

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

**The Chair (Mr James J. Bradley):** I'm calling the meeting to order today, this meeting of Wednesday, August 8, 2001, of the standing committee on government agencies. We have a number of people who will be appearing before the committee today.

Before that, we have some motions to deal with. The report of the subcommittee on business dated Thursday, June 28, 2001: would someone like to move that?

**Mr Bert Johnson (Perth-Middlesex):** I'll move it.

**The Chair:** Mr Johnson has moved that. Any discussion? If not, all in favour? Opposed? Motion carried.

The report of the subcommittee on committee business dated Thursday, July 5, 2001.

**Mr Johnson:** I'll move that as well.

**The Chair:** Mr Johnson has moved the motion. Any discussion? All in favour? Opposed? Motion carried.

The report of the subcommittee on committee business dated Thursday, July 12, 2001.

**Mr Johnson:** I'll move its adoption.

**The Chair:** Mr Johnson has moved the report. Any discussion? All in favour? Opposed? Motion carried.

The report of the subcommittee on committee business dated Thursday, July 26, 2001.

**Mr Johnson:** I'll move its adoption.

**The Chair:** Mr Johnson has moved the report. Any discussion? All in favour? Opposed? Motion carried.

I would like, first of all, to thank members of the committee for being as accommodating as they have been. I know that some members of committee in particular have onerous responsibilities in terms of the number of committees they are on and other responsibilities, and I must say that as Chair I appreciate the co-operation, first of all, with the meeting times and, second, in extending certain time limitations we have. That kind of co-operation is always appreciated, particularly when I know how challenging it is for some to be able to get to various committees and to also undertake their other responsibilities and their constituency responsibilities.

INTENDED APPOINTMENTS

JACK CALBECK

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Jack Calbeck, intended appointee as member, Brant County Police Services Board.

**The Chair:** Our appointments review begins with Mr Jack Calbeck, who is an intended appointee as member, Brant County Police Services Board. Sir, would you like to come forward, please.

Our procedure, if no one has informed you of it, is that you have the opportunity to make an initial statement, if you'd be pleased to sit down and make that statement. After that, each of the parties represented on this committee has an opportunity to question you and ask questions about your responsibilities for up to 10 minutes each. Fortunately, we subtract any time you take from the government side. We welcome you to the committee, sir, and if you have an initial statement, we'd be happy to hear from you.

**Mr Jack Calbeck:** Good afternoon, gentlemen and lady. I am here, as you know, for the Brant County Police Services Board. I have been a resident of Brant county for nearly 50 years, first in the township of Brantford and then, after amalgamation in 1999, of course it was Brant county.

I feel that I could do a good job on this committee. I've had extensive business experience. I was the president and chief executive officer of a local retail grocery chain. We had seven stores and a distribution centre in and around Brantford with approximately 400 employees and about \$65 million in annual sales. I have served as a president of the chamber of commerce, the golf and country club and several other business-oriented groups. I am semi-retired; I still like to go to my office from time to time. It gives my wife a bit of a break and I find it a reason to get up and shave in the mornings.

I have the willingness to do this job, and I intend to devote as much time to it as necessary. I enjoy excellent health, and I feel I have the energy that would be required. I know it will be a challenge because I know very little about the job, but I think with my business background I could do the job and I feel comfortable that I could do it quite well. My basic philosophy is that a good, sound business decision made on facts and a good mixture of common sense will go a long way in any

endeavour. That's pretty much all I have to say. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, sir. You should know, by the way, that many members come to the Legislature without any knowledge of the intricacies of the job of a legislator and seem to struggle through for anywhere from one term to 11 terms or something like that.

We will begin our questioning with the official opposition.

**Mr Bruce Crozier (Essex):** Good afternoon, sir.

**Mr Calbeck:** Good afternoon to you.

**Mr Crozier:** Thank you for coming into the city of Toronto on this hot, muggy day.

I want to say at the outset, sir, that Dave Levac, the member for Brant, speaks very highly of you.

**Mr Calbeck:** Thank you.

**Mr Crozier:** So you might, then, wonder why the opposition called you to come before this committee. Sometimes it's just the luck of the draw; other times it's because the general public thinks we're on vacation all summer, and we have to prove to them that we're not. In any event, welcome.

**Mr Calbeck:** Thank you.

**Mr Crozier:** I noticed in some background information you gave that you were on the committee that dealt with municipal restructuring in the area.

**Mr Calbeck:** Yes.

**Mr Crozier:** You were a member of the restructuring committee.

**Mr Calbeck:** I was a citizens' appointee, or the city's appointee as a citizen, on an ad hoc committee when Brantford restructured many years ago.

**Mr Crozier:** As part of that committee, did you have any role to play in recommending the police services that the new amalgamated area would contract or would hire, ie, OPP, or have your own police service?

**Mr Calbeck:** I'm not quite sure I follow you, Mr Crozier, because in the city of Brantford it wasn't an amalgamation, it was a restructuring of the city council and the method in which they operated, and that was the introduction of a chief administrative officer as opposed to various committees of council that reported each week to the mayor. It was basically a change of procedure and hopefully a streamlining and modernization of the system. At that time, there was no amalgamation with Brant county.

**Mr Crozier:** Perhaps I don't understand. That's a good point. In other words, you're going to be on the Brant County Police Services Board, but you were on the city of Brantford's municipal restructuring.

**Mr Calbeck:** That's right, but it was only the restructuring of the procedures, not the city.

**Mr Crozier:** OK. Where do you live, though?

**Mr Calbeck:** I live in Brant county and have done for most of my life. I lived formerly in the township of Brantford, which was one of the five municipalities that amalgamated.

**Mr Crozier:** It's suggested to us in some of the background information we have that at the time of amalga-

mation in the county, the OPP as the service the county would have was narrowly accepted over having your own police service and that maybe it was because of some of the back and forth, the jockeying, the disagreement that goes on during amalgamation. Do you know that to be the case?

**Mr Calbeck:** All I know is that the town of Paris was a good-sized municipality that had its own municipal police force. The rest of us in Brant county always had OPP policing. When the council was formed, Paris had good representation, and I think their members were pushing for a municipal force. It was narrowly defeated because obviously the majority of the councillors felt that the OPP could do a better job for the entire county than expanding the Paris municipal force.

**Mr Crozier:** From your point of view as a citizen, are you happy with the OPP service?

**Mr Calbeck:** I'm not totally unhappy with it, but I think there's room for improvement. I quite strongly believe there is room for improvement. One of the reasons that I think I'd like this job is that I'd like to bring some things to the table.

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**Mr Crozier:** That's the point to which my questioning was leading. You can express to us, then, your interest in being on the police services board.

**Mr Calbeck:** Yes. I think I'd enjoy it very much. I've always had an interest with police and am very good friends with most of the ones who haven't retired in Brantford. The chief and deputy chief are both personal friends and I'd be very interested to serve on this board.

**Mr Crozier:** You may be aware, and please tell us if you are already aware, that it's a little bit different with contracting the OPP than being on a police services board where you have municipal employees, because you will only be in an advisory capacity.

**Mr Calbeck:** Yes, I understand that.

**Mr Crozier:** Someone might suggest, and it was my experience being on a police services board where we had our own municipal police service, that you may have to work a little harder to get your advice accepted than you would if it were a municipal police service.

**Mr Calbeck:** Yes, I'm quite aware of that. I think the role was described to me as more of a liaison between the detachment commander for Brant county and the municipality of Brant county.

**Mr Crozier:** I wish you well. That's pretty much what I wanted to hear you say in this instance. Thank you, sir.

**The Chair:** We now go to the third party.

**Mr Tony Martin (Sault Ste Marie):** I just wanted to maybe follow up a little bit on the questioning that Mr Crozier was doing. You mentioned that you had some things you wanted to bring to the table in view of some of the concerns that you have re the present experience with the Ontario Provincial Police and some improvement that might be brought about. What might some of those things be?

**Mr Calbeck:** It's strictly a personal thing at this point because I can only speak to what I've witnessed, but I

live in a 50-kilometre zone just on the outskirts of Brantford. Just a few metres past my house it increases to 60 and it stays that way until you get to the village of Mount Pleasant, which is approximately five miles. Cars go past there at anything up to 90 klicks, passing on a double line. I have yet to see a cruiser in my area, and I think that's something that should be addressed. We've got many new homes on the road as the lots are being sold off. We've got young children moving into the neighbourhood, and I don't think we're getting the coverage that we should in my neighbourhood.

Then I hear of stories of people from Paris phoning the OPP and they say, "If you want us you've got to phone London and get our dispatcher." What sense does that make? If Paris is being policed and the OPP office is in Paris—you can go from one side of Paris to the other in five minutes. Why would you want to phone London? I'd like to find out why these things are happening.

I spoke to a friend of mine, and unfortunately he's been off injured for a long time, and I said, "Rick, when you come back you're perfectly welcome to use my driveway, but we've got to get some control of this traffic on Mount Pleasant Road. It's ridiculous." That's just a conversation at a golf tournament. This chap was injured in a very serious car accident. He's still not back to work. I'm convinced that there's a shortage of manpower in Brant county.

**Mr Martin:** With that in mind, and the contribution that you obviously want to make to this board and your background, as you've stated and as we've noted in your resumé, as being a very successful business person in your area, what would you do to resolve what I'm sure was a bit of a surprise: to come to realize that when it actually comes to the biggest part of the budget that this board oversees in terms of providing policing it is in staff wages and salaries and that that in fact is negotiated by the province—it's no longer negotiated by the local police board—and the increase of 10% as opposed to what they were expecting would be 2%?

In my own area, where some of the rural communities have entered into contracts with the Ontario Provincial Police, the cost has escalated and it seems to be not within their control to manage. Do you have any thoughts or notions about how you might bring your business acumen to the table when in fact a lot of those decisions are really, for all intents and purposes, out of your hands?

**Mr Calbeck:** I recognize what you're saying as far as the wage settlements and that being out of our control and would be out of our control if I was on the commission. But if we sat down and looked at where the officers are being deployed, when they're being deployed, and had an understanding with the detachment commander: what does it take to police X number of people? Where are we in comparison to that? Where are these men at 7 o'clock on Saturday night when they should be on the road? Are they back at the offices, at coffee break? Is that lunchtime? How many men have you got on Saturday night, when there's a good chance that there's going to be a problem? I think I'd have to find out what's happening

now and see if I could see some way that it could be improved, not necessarily by spending more money, but perhaps a better utilization of the resources.

**Mr Martin:** I note in your resumé as well that you've been made an honorary member of the police association.

**Mr Calbeck:** Yes.

**Mr Martin:** How did that come about?

**Mr Calbeck:** I was asked if I'd support the golf tournament, because they'd lost a major sponsor. We've always been community-minded. When we were in the grocery business, we were much more community-minded than we are now, because we were dealing at retail. I said, "Sure, fellows. If it'll help you out, I'll be glad to do it." I donated some money and became a major sponsor. I was quite surprised. After the first tournament, they presented me with a beautiful painting and an honorary membership in the association. I think it allows me to go to the annual picnic.

**Mr Martin:** You don't think that that will in any way create a conflict of interest for you in making decisions?

**Mr Calbeck:** I can't see how it could. In fact, I phoned the chief and asked him. He said, "Jack, myself and my deputy are both members. You've got to remember, you're applying for the Brant county board. So what would the OPP care whether you were a member of our association or not?" This was the Brantford police, and of course we're Brant county.

**Mr Martin:** You also mentioned having a personal relationship with some of the senior officials in the policing.

**Mr Calbeck:** Yes.

**Mr Martin:** That won't create any difficulty for you either?

**Mr Calbeck:** I don't know why. I'm not going to be dealing with them. In fact, the city nomination became open back in, I think it was, last fall. Both the chief and deputy phoned and asked me if I'd consider running. They said they'd like to have businessmen on that commission because they felt it would help.

**Mr Martin:** Thank you. Those are all the questions I have.

**Mr Frank Mazzilli (London-Fanshawe):** Thank you, sir, for attending. I certainly think that you've applied for this position for all the right reasons. You've also indicated that, certainly with your business background, one of the components of this is to ensure that your county is getting the value they're paying for. As a citizen, you will be charged with that obligation. The other part on the police services board is to pass on the concerns of citizens, which you have also indicated—it may be in some cases speeding; it may be some other problem—to the command of the police agency.

I think you've handled yourself quite well through this process, and I'm sure that you will do a great job. Thank you for appearing.

**Mr Calbeck:** Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Any other member of the government caucus?

**Mr Johnson:** We'd reserve the remainder of our time.

**The Chair:** That completes the questioning. We appreciate your coming before the committee. We wish you well in your deliberations, if the committee confirms your appointment.

**Mr Calbeck:** Thank you very much. I'm certainly looking forward to it.

**The Chair:** Thank you, sir.

#### MEL JONES

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Mel L. Jones, intended appointee as member, Council of the Ontario College of Pharmacists.

**The Chair:** Our next individual to appear before us is an intended appointee as a member, Council of the Ontario College of Pharmacists, Mel L. Jones. Mr Jones, you may come forward, sir. I know you were in the audience before, so you know the procedure we go through of an initial statement, if you see fit, and subsequent to that there will be questioning. Welcome, sir.

**Mr Mel Jones:** Thank you, Mr Chairman. Good afternoon. Thank you for inviting me to participate in the interview process concerning my potential public appointment as a member of the Council of the Ontario College of Pharmacists. My name is Mel Jones. As you no doubt have noticed in my resumé, I have no experience in the pharmaceutical field. I do, however, possess considerable expertise and diversification in areas of management, organization, volunteering and training, abilities that have been enhanced as a direct result of involvement over a period of some 50 years.

As for today, my understanding is that this standing committee on government agencies has the onerous task of not only trying to get to know me the person in the very short period of half an hour, but also making the best possible decision for the benefit of the people of Ontario and the government, all of which must be done on the basis of very limited information. With that in mind, I will try to tell you a little about myself.

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On the personal side, I was born and raised many, many years ago in the Beaches neighbourhood of Toronto. After a 14-year tour of duty in the armed forces, which I voluntarily joined as many young men did in the 1940s, I put my roots down in Montreal, Quebec. This came about for two reasons: I had spent time in St Hubert and had fallen in love with not only the Quebec nightlife but also the vast array of spectacular restaurants, and I had heard a new oil refinery was being built. I had no experience in the oil industry; it was primarily because the profession not only paid well but also appeared stable and, as such, I felt it would be able to provide personal growth opportunities and it would be around for a long time.

I started in the oil industry as an oil operations utility man, working for BP Oil, and found the profession fascinating in that little goes to waste. Over time I moved up the ladder through varying degrees of promotion. At the onset, however, the company participated in mandatory

union membership, via the Rand formula. I became involved because I wanted to know what was going on and, by election of peers, was almost immediately voted into the positions of secretary, treasurer and finally president as the years went by.

Shortly after a particularly challenging but successful contract negotiation that ended in a settlement rather than a strike, the company decided they would prefer I sat on their side of the fence, a situation that to the best of my knowledge had never been done before. That is when I became a member of the management team as training officer. In this position, I not only presented contract negotiation opinions; I was also responsible for recruitment and employee training.

Later I was transferred to the Oakville refinery, into another position of stimulating challenge, the mandate being to improve and streamline the warehouse operations at the Petro-Canada refinery.

I had started to volunteer with the chamber of commerce about 1981 and in 1984 left Petro-Canada with a retirement package in order to join my wife in her small business. Although I had no experience in visitor and convention bureaus, or the UIC, people were needed to assist in a volunteer capacity. Being involved, keeping busy and staying active not only benefits the mind; it's a health stimulant against rapid aging.

It was also through the chamber that I became more aware of the political environment, one that provided the opportunity of working with and meeting a number of politicians from all levels of government and all political affiliations. Mostly, however, I enjoyed the volunteering. I've always liked to keep busy and love meeting people in new walks of life.

As for personal political interests, I have never run for any political position; I admire those who do, because I believe it's the ultimate dedication in pursuit of creating a better world in which to live. It takes a special kind of person to enjoy that much limelight. It's like being on stage 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with an audience of thousands.

Most of my involvement, although exceptionally necessary, has been behind the scenes, and even though a president, treasurer or a committee chairman is highly visible and accountable, it's not quite the same. In positions such as these, you usually have sufficient time for adequate research and you usually have breathing space for a personal life in between. Therefore, my political involvement has been supportive in nature, and for 15 years I've assisted in every way possible throughout political campaigns in Burlington: the PCs provincially and the Canadian Alliance federally. Prior to the Canadian Alliance, I was a 12-year volunteer for Reform. I've equally worked on almost every one of the local Burlington food drives.

I'm married to a working wife who was born and raised in Montreal. As mentioned previously, I'm retired and therefore feel it only fair to look after all the housework myself. My wife and I have an exceptional relationship in that I consider her to be my best friend. We have

a total of six children—four girls and two boys—the youngest being 35. Our family is very close. We laugh a lot, talk on the phone and get together as frequently as time permits. Our grandchildren total 12, and we have four great-grandchildren, most living in the province of Quebec.

To this committee I offer a diversified background. I have extensive committee experience and over the years have served in numerous capacities. I'm an honest, dedicated worker, have always done what I say I will do, and I always will. I have never, nor will I ever, taken on a responsibility unless I feel I can perform above the call of duty.

I do not offer this committee expertise in pharmaceuticals, but in my evaluation, this is not what you expect of me. I believe that for this position you are looking for someone who will be able to review topical information as presented, look at all the pros and cons surrounding pertinent issues or subjects, then be able to provide a fair and unbiased analysis, including direction, of discussion topics.

As for specifics relating to the pharmacist industry, I do have a sincere interest in learning more than I have been able to acquire over the past few weeks but expect all this will come about within my first few months of committee involvement.

Regarding preparation for today's meeting, I have reviewed the list of committees of the Council of the Ontario College of Pharmacists. I have also looked over the names of people involved in these committees and know none of them, that I am aware of. Since the list of names only includes initials plus the last name, with no reflection on where these people are from, it is entirely possible that I may know someone. I have also reviewed three months of committee reports; most, but not all, are relatively basic within the structure of any committee. Topics discussed are pertinent to the industry and finances are involved.

I have equally reviewed a very brief summary of the laws regarding narcotic drugs and the filling of prescriptions. Another interesting article contained background information on the college, a copy of which I brought with me.

Finally, I decided to talk briefly to one doctor and two pharmacists in order to find out what they personally considered their primary concerns. I was actually surprised at what their concerns were.

Other than that, I've had little time to explore in a more thorough manner but can assure you that if I am appointed to this prestigious group, I will work diligently to become more knowledgeable in all of the subjects in which I will require input. Thank you for your time.

**The Chair:** We'll begin our questioning this time with the third party.

**Mr Martin:** Thank you very much, and thanks for coming today and being interested in public service. Looking at your resumé, you certainly have a wide variety, an impressive resumé of public service.

Given that and also the varied opportunities that are out there to serve on public boards and commissions—and you explained to some degree in your opening why—why this particular college? Why would you choose this, and how did you find out about it?

**Mr Jones:** Well, this was a surprise to me. In December 1998, I was on the election readiness committee of Cam Jackson in Burlington, and at that time he had indicated to those on the committee that if they would present their resumé, there were some openings on various committees that he might be able to assist in their getting on.

I gave my resumé, which you have, and I got one call from the labour relations board thanking me for the resumé, and that's as far as it went. The first I heard of this particular appointment was when I got a call from Jacquie Seaver about July 10, and as I said, I was quite surprised at it. I was quite pointed in querying her as to what my job would be and so on. I heard about it roughly four weeks ago, so I'm presuming that someone passed it on through and felt that I would be able to contribute.

**Mr Martin:** Do you know of the Regulated Health Professions Act?

**Mr Jones:** Four weeks ago, I didn't know such a thing existed. But yesterday I got some information on it, and I scanned it yesterday. I know very little about it. I presume you're referring to two of them. One is an act that was done in 1991. Is that the one that you're referring to? And the other one was the Pharmacy Act?

1330

**Mr Martin:** No. A large, almost omnibus bill came through that governed the regulating of all the health professions in Ontario. One of them was the profession of pharmacy.

**Mr Jones:** I have one here that I brought, which is the Health and Long-term Care Council of the Ontario College of Pharmacists. Is that what you're referring to?

**Mr Martin:** Yes.

**Mr Jones:** Yes, I have read that.

**Mr Martin:** What, then, is the role of the College of Pharmacists?

**Mr Jones:** The College of Pharmacists is to regulate the pharmacist industry in such things as qualifications and certification—I'm predominantly talking about the various committees they have—and ensuring that those individuals who wish to become pharmacists are adequately qualified through training.

**Mr Martin:** If that's what it's about, why would it be helpful to have somebody on that committee who really has no experience, or has limited knowledge of any of that?

**Mr Jones:** Well, as I understand it, I am supposed to be representing the citizens of Ontario, who certainly have no idea what the College of Pharmacists actually does. In the last few weeks, I guess I've learned more about the College of Pharmacists than I would ever have thought I would ever know. We are not talking about a product here, such as drugs. We're talking about people, people who need to be trained, people who have to be

certified, people who are going to be dealing with the public and prescribing drugs. I think my experience in being able to analyze individuals will be of value.

**Mr Martin:** OK. Is there anything else you think you might be able to bring to this particular position?

**Mr Jones:** As I mentioned, I have met with a doctor and with two pharmacists just to get a feeling of what they might have on the top of their heads as their concerns. Both the doctor and the two pharmacists had training on their minds, and the doctor particularly was concerned with the shortage of pharmacists. The two pharmacists themselves were talking about training, predominantly of those individuals who are coming to Ontario with degrees from countries other than the United States or Canada, and that their readiness or their ability and experience are not up to the Ontario education system. The other pharmacist indicated that she felt they should require more time dealing with the public, out with a qualified pharmacist, that their people skills perhaps were not adequate. So that was what they were concerned with.

**Mr Martin:** You realize that, according to some of the analyses and studies that have been done, we're looking at a major shortage in pharmacists over the next few years?

**Mr Jones:** Yes, I understand that. I read an excerpt of that report, and as I understand it, in 2000 there was a shortage of almost 1,000 pharmacists. Very shortly they expect to have twice that many. According to what I read, the Ontario education system graduates about 120 per year, and they are trying to get 20 more and perhaps get up to 240. If we are losing pharmacists to aggressive recruiting, I can't see how 240 will even keep pace with what we have available. We might perhaps get higher than the 2000.

**Mr Martin:** One of the approaches in the past has been to admit, as we have here in the information that was provided to us, qualified pharmacists from English-speaking countries. I'm not sure if you're aware or not, but there's certainly some activity in the province at the moment, and there has been for quite some time, to try to recognize the qualifications of many professionals who come to Canada, particularly in the medical field right now, because there's a shortage all over the map.

It seems to me to be limiting in a very serious way, when you consider the makeup of Canada now and the various places around the world that people come from to live here and the training they bring with them, to limit it to, as it says here, English-speaking countries. What would your view be on that?

**Mr Jones:** The level of training, as I understand it, is very, very different than what we do here in Ontario. Ontario apparently has one of the highest training criteria almost in the world, and their graduates are in demand and are very aggressively recruited. So there are a number of concerns that these two pharmacists I talked to had: one was the people skills of people coming in from, say, the Far East or Middle East or perhaps the Russian bloc; and that with their master's degree in pharmacy,

they would not even come up as far as our bachelor's degree here in Ontario. They have in many cases a language problem. One of the pharmacists was actually alarmed at what he had encountered in a situation. So, yes, it is a concern; there is no doubt about it.

**Mr Martin:** I think you'll find there will be a lot of people out there, including myself, who would challenge your view on that, and your pharmacist friends. In fact, in many of the professions, when the analysis is actually done, large numbers of these professionals coming from other countries have qualifications that far supersede anything that we might have. In fact, there is one person, a Yugoslavian immigrant, who says that although he passed the evaluation and qualifying exams given by the pharmacy examining board of Canada, he was denied acceptance into the profession by the Ontario college, even though we're short. Why do you think that would be?

**Mr Jones:** I read that as well. I have no idea why that would be. They said he was more than qualified.

**Mr Martin:** What would your position be in that case, where somebody actually has the qualifications, has passed the exams in the English language and is still denied? What would your position on that be?

**Mr Jones:** If I was involved in that qualification situation, I possibly would have supported that he should have been certified.

**Mr Martin:** There's also a concern raised by some of the professional colleges that non-professionals appointed don't take their jobs seriously enough and in some instances don't even show up for meetings. What's your opinion on that?

**Mr Jones:** As I said, I don't take on a job unless I'm going to do it, and that would be the same case if I was confirmed as a member of the council. I'm retired, my time is my own, and whatever it takes, I'll do it.

**The Chair:** Mr Martin, your time has expired. Mr O'Toole.

**Mr John O'Toole (Durham):** Thank you, Mr Chair, and thank you, Mr Jones, for putting your name forward and for volunteering, as you appear to have done in many cases on your resumé. It's quite varied, and you have risen to those challenges as you described.

Mr Martin does bring up an important issue. There are lots of issues in the whole health care debate. It's an important area. Certainly the colleges will be challenged, whether it's the prior learning assessment and looking at foreign, but also in the Ontario Pharmacists' Association's concerted lobby now with respect to listed drugs and how much they're compensated for. Are you familiar with the current campaign they have to educate all elected members, opposition and third party as well as government, about how much they're being paid, how much the pharmaceutical companies are actually charging for the drugs and what they're actually getting? It's a pretty rigorous and onerous challenge. Are you familiar with that issue at all? This isn't a trick question.

**Mr Jones:** No. I have not been involved with anything like that.

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**Mr O'Toole:** You'll probably hear a lot about that one. Another one too is that the demand line for access to drugs—or prescribed medicines, I'd prefer to say—is growing and escalating at an almost unmanageable pace, some 15% a year, the cost, and it represents one of the biggest struggles. The federal government talked about having a national pharmacare plan and then realized they could never afford it in a thousand years. It's handled somewhat transparently through the transfer payment process, but it's a very difficult challenge.

As we look at stays in hospitals and there's more pressure on therapy and medications to be able to keep people on their own for longer periods of time, and with an aging population, it's going to be a very big part of the health solution. I've said publicly, and I want to say it here on the record, that I believe what they should do is—the whole health care debate, which we heard from the first ministers last week, the pressures on health care expenditures everywhere from BC to Newfoundland, and Nova Scotia is experiencing some difficulties right now too, is that the costs to keep stability in providing those expected services are just unsustainable.

I'm almost 59 years old, and as you look forward, I'm one of those people in the statistics who is going to need those, because we live longer. But I want to put on the record here that I think the federal government, in the Canada Health Act, should take over all the pharmacy stuff, pay for it all, whatever level, listing the drugs, checking them out and certifying them, and the provinces should look after the institutional part of the model.

If there were a national strategy of who approves what drugs, who lists what drugs, and the process to test those drugs and shorten up those timelines, would you be interested in carrying that kind of idea forward at the college level if the opportunity came up?

**Mr Jones:** It's an interesting concept, I have to say.

**Mr O'Toole:** People are retiring and going to other provinces, maybe going back down east, and they're on blood pressure pills and all these very expensive medications. If they don't have a plan, forget it. Ontario has a larger plan than most provinces now.

**Mr Jones:** With what you propose in that scenario, I'd be the devil's advocate. Knowing the federal government's penchant to constantly reduce their transfer payments, let's say, as an example, somehow they'd push it back on to the provinces and then you'd have to pay for it anyway. I remember in the 1960s, when the federal government browbeat the provinces into medicare to start with, with their 50-50 deal. As we all know, at this point in time it's nowhere near that, and that is part of the problem.

**Mr O'Toole:** It's hurting other provinces that are less wealthy. I appreciate your insights into that. It appears, from what I've seen in your resumé and what you commented on to Mr Martin and others, that you genuinely have the time and interest in a very important policy area.

I think you'll find that in the Ontario College of Pharmacists there will be more debate on the whole issue of

medications than on any other piece. Alzheimer's, osteoporosis, all those growing ailments, and with the population aging, the demographic bulge, are all treated with very expensive medication, and it's only getting more expensive. And yet the federal government regulates which drugs are covered through patent law for 15 or 20 years. So the costs of the medications are pretty much a federal discussion.

I appreciate your submission. It appears to me that you're genuinely interested. It's an exciting area. I wish you luck in that, if that turns out to be the case.

**The Chair:** Your questions are completed. Thank you very much for your contribution, Mr O'Toole. Thanks very much, Mr Jones, for appearing with us today. Certainly, the pharmaceutical field is a very interesting field to be looking at in the future.

**Mr Crozier:** What about me, Chair?

**The Chair:** Oh, I'm sorry. I almost didn't allow the member of the official opposition, who probably has some good questions to ask.

**Mr Crozier:** And other than Tony, I travelled the furthest to get here too.

**The Chair:** So, Mr O'Toole, I have yet another person after you. I thought we were ending on such a nice note.

**Mr O'Toole:** Especially with you ending it.

**Mr Crozier:** Good afternoon, Mr Jones. I want to say that certainly your honesty is without question and your forthrightness is commendable. We don't often get witnesses before this committee who outline their political affiliations so completely as you have.

**Mr Jones:** What you see is what you get.

**Mr Crozier:** That's fine, and I will only say that those of us who aren't of the same political persuasion certainly find the Reform-Alliance—I'm even having trouble finding the word.

**Mr O'Toole:** Conundrum.

**Mr Crozier:** Conundrum?

**Mr Jones:** Yes, there's a short form.

**Mr Crozier:** Over the last year it's been interesting to watch the Reform and the Alliance. Someone who's involved and interested in it like you are must find it even more interesting. But we'll save that and the medical debate for another day, because there are others of us who have suggestions for both the provincial and the federal governments.

You mentioned that over the last few weeks you had reviewed three reports that were, I take it, either minutes or reports from the council?

**Mr Jones:** Not from the council; the Hansard reports for meetings here.

**Mr Crozier:** On the pharmacy issue or just on this committee?

**Mr Jones:** Just on the interviewing, to give me an idea of what to expect.

**Mr Crozier:** The interview process.

**Mr Jones:** Yes. There is another one of two meetings of the council in which I read some of the things that went on in there. Having said that, I've read more in the

last three and a half weeks on pharmacy and so on, and it's frankly getting quite muddled. I think I'm getting information overload or something.

**Mr Crozier:** Reference was made to the information that we have here, which is a report prepared by research and information services. It's just the order-in-council appointment of Mel Jones to the Council of the College of Pharmacists. Did you have a copy of that?

**Mr Jones:** I got that yesterday afternoon.

**Mr Crozier:** And who gave you that, sir?

**Mr Jones:** It came from Jacque Seaver. She's from the secretariat on the—

**Mr Crozier:** OK, fine. So that would give you some idea of what we might ask as well.

**Mr Jones:** Possibly. There are some questions on that but, having read the Hansard reports and having talked a bit about it, I was not necessarily prepared for the specific questions but had an idea of what was going to—

**Mr Crozier:** In that information you would have seen that, according to the Ministry of Health, the public members appointed to governing councils of self-regulated health professions are expected to bring a non-health-professional citizen's perspective to the management of the health profession. Has it been suggested to you, though, that you will have any additional training, any additional introduction to the college and its objectives?

**Mr Jones:** No, it had not been said. However, in some of the Hansard that I read of the interviews, it had been intimated in the various committees these people were going to be appointed to that they were expecting some sort of training. In this particular position, because it's quite complicated and it's a new industry, I don't think I'm going to be thrown into the deep end of the pool.

**Mr Crozier:** Not immediately.

**Mr Jones:** I would anticipate there would be some assistance in learning, whether it's documentation or whatever.

**Mr Crozier:** There are some professionals in the pharmaceutical field as well as some in the other side, the medical field, the treatment side, who suggest that there's an overprescribing of prescription drugs, particularly to our seniors. When a prescription is given to a pharmacist, rather than just filling the prescription and, as they do very well, giving some advice to the patient on how it should be used, do you see where there should be any collaboration on behalf of the professional pharmacist with the doctor, or do you see that as two distinct areas?

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**Mr Jones:** No. I certainly would welcome hearing that there would be some interplay between the medical and pharmacist professions. The doctor I talked to was concerned, first, about the shortage of pharmacists, but he was also indicating that the pharmacists, when they give out prescriptions to the patient, also provide them with a list of possible side effects. The doctor indicated to me that he felt the list perhaps in many cases was too long and too intimidating to patients. He had had reports back

that the patients themselves had not taken the prescriptions for fear of the side effects.

I mentioned this to one of the pharmacists—not the other—and the reply was that one of the things the public does not realize is the actual role of the pharmacist. Therefore, they come into the drug store and see the pharmacist sitting behind a counter counting out pills and basically I guess they feel all they have to do is reach into a cupboard and count out 100 pills and they're going to get \$100 for it. They don't really understand the degree of training these individuals require. He indicated that as far as he was concerned, he would certainly welcome contact between the doctors because they approach the same topic from different ends, and if they don't meet somewhere in the middle there are difficulties right now.

**Mr Crozier:** This may happen in some instances, depending on the particular doctor and/or pharmacist, but I think that's an area in which there should be more communication. If patients simply don't take their prescribed medicines, it may be a breakdown in communications. The loop isn't completed. In other words, one would think the patient should go back to the doctor and say, "Now I've been warned about this. What do you have to say?" I suspect we have a lot to learn and do in that area.

**Mr Jones:** Maybe a liaison committee between the two on a constant basis, meeting monthly or quarterly, might assist in that.

**Mr Crozier:** When you brought up the question, having discussed it with a pharmacist, about the foreign-trained pharmacists, I see again in the information we were given that there is an instance where there might be a suggestion that it was some sort of prejudice that enters into the decision whether somebody is licensed or not. Would you have any prejudice that would affect your decision when it comes to licensing of pharmacists?

**Mr Jones:** No. I'm straight facts-oriented. I am not prejudiced that way at all. As far as I'm concerned, the best person should get it.

**Mr Crozier:** Good.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Jones. If you can find a solution to the problem of pharmaceutical companies stealing employees from the government of Ontario to go into the lucrative private sector, you will have made a major mark in Ontario, although that's not within the realm of your responsibilities. I understand that. Thanks for being with us, sir.

DENNIS MCKAIG

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Dennis McKaig, intended appointee as member, Ontario Rental Housing Tribunal.

**The Chair:** The next intended appointee is a member of the Ontario Rental Housing Tribunal, Dennis McKaig. Mr McKaig, you may come forward, sir. I think you're familiar with the fact that you have an opportunity, should you see fit, to make an initial statement, and then each of the parties represented has an opportunity to question you, in the case of the two opposition parties,

for 10 minutes, and for the government party, whatever time you leave.

**Mr Dennis McKaig:** I have prepared some notes. Good afternoon and thank you for allowing me the opportunity to appear before this committee today. I hope to provide you with some background information to assist you in your decision later today respecting my suitability as an appointee to the Ontario Rental Housing Tribunal. I trust you have had access to and the opportunity to review my resumé. I'd like to put before you as many of my life experiences and educational accomplishments as possible, but I want to leave time for your questions as well.

The tribunal has issued a document outlining the selection criteria. I feel it's a good guide, so I'll try to fit my experiences into that template. The eight points outlined in the tribunal criteria are: (1) judicial and decision-making skills; (2) legal, technical and program knowledge; (3) highly developed interpersonal skills; (4) demonstrated communication skills; (5) ability to determine priorities and work under pressure; (6) conformity with conflict-of-interest guidelines; (7) ability and willingness to work flexible hours and travel; and (8) participation in ongoing performance review, evaluation and improvement programs.

With respect to the first issue, judicial and decision-making skills, I've had no formal training in the legal profession with the exception of my high school law course many years ago back in Dresden, Ontario—a course, I might add, that I aced. However, I have had exposure to quasi-judicial proceedings, namely the grievance settlement board, as both a witness and representing agent for parties before the board. I've also appeared as a witness for the crown in my course of employment with the Ministry of Health.

For the last nine years, I've been president of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union, local 147, representing paramedics and emergency medical communicators in southwestern Ontario. This position of responsibility has given me a great deal of experience in mediation and adjudication. Representing members on grievances has provided me with the ability to deduct relevant facts and apply legal and contractual concepts to complicated cases.

The selection criteria stresses the ability to use common sense and the concepts of natural justice to make decisions in an expeditious manner. I truly believe I possess those qualities.

Regarding number 2, the legal, technical and program knowledge: when I was notified about the upcoming interview with the chair and the two vice-chairs of the tribunal, I was sent a large package of relevant background information. Included were all current landlord-tenant legislation, the Statutory Powers Procedure Act, and other ancillary regulations, guidelines and forms. I've read this information as thoroughly as possible and have familiarized myself with the principles and the spirit of the legislation. I feel I have a good understanding of how this tribunal operates.

My dad, Mel McKaig, taught me respect for tenants when I was growing up. My father had three or four rental units over his furniture store in Dresden. He was always fair to his tenants, and I learned from his practices.

However, my background, specifically with respect to landlord-tenant matters, is predominantly on the tenant side. In the early 1990s, I had the privilege of serving as president of the London Towers Tenants Association. As an executive, our greatest accomplishment was obtaining 75-year leases for existing tenants. This was at a time when the stability of residency was threatened by condominium conversions in London. Originally, a lifetime lease was sought by our group, but at that time the courts ruled in favour of a quantifiable term; hence the 75-year lease. There are still tenants enjoying this protection today. It was during my term as president that I learned the most about the principles of landlord-tenant law. I felt it very rewarding to help fellow tenants in this and other matters respecting tenant rights.

Highly developed interpersonal skills and demonstrated communication skills: I have worked over the past 22 years in what I refer to as caring professions. My career path started as a licensed funeral director and later as a part-time paramedic and full-time communications officer with the Ministry of Health. In all these positions, I have had the opportunity to deal with individuals in crisis at the most difficult times in their lives. These are the times when diplomacy, tact, discretion and sensitivity must be exercised. If it takes a little longer to ensure that a grieving family or a patient fully understands the circumstances and choices available to them, then so be it. These are the same traits that I envision being helpful with those appearing before the tribunal.

My post-secondary education at Humber College and the University of Western Ontario has instilled in me the importance of communications. Additionally, I've taken a course in communicating in a diverse workplace dealing with cultural and ethnic communication issues. When I was contacted by the minister's office regarding this appointment, I was attending a human rights symposium in Vancouver sponsored by the Canadian Labour Congress.

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The ability to determine priorities and work under pressure and the ability and willingness to travel and work flexible hours: I hope it is evident to the members of this committee that as an employee in emergency health services for over a decade, I would be proficient in determining priorities and working under pressure. Ambulance communications is a high-profile, stress-filled workplace where life-and-death decisions are made several times during a shift. Recently I filled a supervisory role for a communications centre with a seven-county catchment area.

Additionally, I was fortunate enough to have been elected to the OPSEU/OPS bargaining team for the last round of negotiations in 1998-99. This too was a high-pressure work environment requiring proper prioritiza-

tion and multitasking. The bargaining unit often extended past midnight in the meetings.

My work with the union has required extensive travel, especially to Toronto. I have no hesitation in continuing this practice as required. After many, many years of shift work, the only difficulty I can foresee is adapting to a business hours work schedule, but I'm certain that I can adapt.

Conformity with conflict-of-interest guidelines, number 7: I have thoroughly read and understand the conflict-of-interest guidelines. These are similar to the conditions of my employment as a public servant. I know of no conflict of interest, real or perceived.

Finally, participation in ongoing performance review: last month I participated in a performance development plan course. This initiative of Management Board applies to all public servants up to and including senior management group level and deals with ongoing performance issues, evaluations and improvement programs. I'm willing to participate in this type of program as it relates to the position of adjudicator with the Ontario Rental Housing Tribunal.

In closing, I want to thank the members for their time today. I hope the information that I have provided answers many of the questions you have, and I welcome any further questions at this time.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, sir. We begin with the government caucus.

**Mr Mazzilli:** Thank you, Mr McKaig, for coming today. Certainly, I believe that you will do a good job on this tribunal. On your first point, about the adjudicating role of this tribunal, often people without certain experiences will bring their own perspectives into the interpretation of legislation, and obviously any decisions that you make can be appealed. So often again we see tribunals at times that will be influenced by their own thought processes as opposed to the legislation itself. Would you ever allow that to happen?

**Mr McKaig:** I would look at a case before the tribunal based on the evidence, based on the facts that are presented and based on case law that has transpired before as it relates to the act predominantly. There is always going to be a twist and a kink that may require a member to go out on a limb, but I don't think I would do that without conferring with other members on the tribunal.

**Mr Mazzilli:** Very good. That's my only question.

**Mr O'Toole:** Thank you very much for bringing your name forward. It's a pleasure to meet you and review what you've done. Looking at some of the comments you've made with respect to the role of the tribunal in adjudicating disputes, you did indicate very clearly an advocate kind of role throughout life—that's the way you've kind of put it—as a funeral director, ambulance attendant and currently president of your local of CUPE. Those also indicate strong leadership abilities. Dispute resolution is really, I suppose, part of the tribunal process, but it's to hear the evidence as presented. The advocate role may not be the most important role other than to be fair and impartial. As you know, there are always

other parts to the story, even in the official court issues where who interprets the information becomes more the issue. So you don't think you'd have a problem with the objectivity in the role at all?

**Mr McKaig:** None whatsoever. I take it on a per-case basis and deal with the evidence that's presented.

**Mr O'Toole:** We hear at the constituency level—I know it isn't unique to any party—lots of problems from landlords and tenants. There's such a low vacancy rate pretty well, it's a huge issue. People move for whatever reason and there is rent control. Despite what people say, there are guidelines. It's 2.9% or 2.6% or whatever it is this year. When the press says there's no rent control, that's completely a communications gap, as you said before, because there is rent control; there are clear guidelines.

What would your sympathies be with a case where they haven't paid rent for five months and they're trying to get an eviction? I have one case now where the sheriff has up to 10 days in addition before they actually execute the order. Do you think the landlord should continue to pay the utilities and continue to pay the rent?

**Mr McKaig:** No. The tribunal is there to protect both sides. Certainly as a businessman—and I came from a business background. My father was in business, a small businessman. These people's livelihoods depend on the income.

**Mr O'Toole:** That's why rental properties are not being built. That's why they're only building condos in Toronto. Nobody wants the onerous oversight. There has to be fairness, no question about that. Again, it's important, like you say, to review each case.

How about the time commitment? Are you a full-time union president?

**Mr McKaig:** No, I work full-time for the Ministry of Health.

**Mr O'Toole:** Yes, I know, but you're also the president of the local. Is that full-time?

**Mr McKaig:** No. It's just a volunteer—

**Mr O'Toole:** What they call off-time?

**Mr McKaig:** That's right, yes.

**Mr O'Toole:** How much more time do you actually have?

**Mr McKaig:** Actually, I'll be resigning from that position.

**Mr O'Toole:** Because this could be, in fact—is this full-time?

**Mr McKaig:** It's a full-time position, sir.

**Mr O'Toole:** So you would be resigning. Would it be a leave of absence?

**Mr McKaig:** A leave of absence from the ministry for the term of the appointment.

**Mr O'Toole:** This pays more, or what?

**Mr McKaig:** Yes, it does.

**Mr O'Toole:** That's good. Thanks.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr O'Toole. The time has expired, because we subtract from the government caucus the amount of time that the applicant takes. I was going to say something but Mr Mazzilli reminded

me that I was the Chair of the committee. Thank you, Mr Mazzilli, for your kind reminder.

**Mr Mazzilli:** Always willing to help, Mr Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you. Now we go to Mr Crozier for the official opposition.

**Mr Crozier:** Thank you and welcome, Mr McKaig. How much does this position pay?

**Mr McKaig:** It's \$68,000 per annum.

**Mr Crozier:** What does your current position pay?

**Mr McKaig:** With overtime, last year about \$49,000, by the time I had my overtime calculated in.

**Mr Crozier:** That's great. Who did you approach to get this appointment?

**Mr McKaig:** I sent a resumé to Bob Wood several years ago after seeing the ad from the secretariat on the government Web site. I gave it to Bob Wood's office, to the board on my behalf.

**Mr Crozier:** Do you think it helped that Bob Wood put it forward, like a former witness before the committee for whom Cam Jackson did it?

**Mr McKaig:** I can't speak on the former witness.

**Mr Crozier:** Or the one immediately before, who was a provincial PC? Do you think that helps?

**Mr McKaig:** I approached Bob as my member of provincial Parliament. I was a constituent of Bob's at that time. I didn't work on Bob's campaign, but I did submit the resumé to Bob. Did it help? I don't know. I've waited three years for an opportunity.

**Mr Crozier:** That's a long time.

**Mr McKaig:** It is.

**Mr Crozier:** You said that you have a meeting scheduled with the chair and the vice-chair. When is that meeting going to be?

**Mr McKaig:** No. When I had my interview back in May, I was interviewed by the chair and two vice-chairs on my suitability as a candidate.

**Mr Crozier:** Do you know how many others they interviewed?

**Mr McKaig:** No, I don't.

**Mr Crozier:** No idea?

**Mr McKaig:** No.

**Mr Crozier:** In an article in the Toronto Star just yesterday it said, "In Toronto, families and couples are now the fastest growing groups of emergency shelter users, according to the city's 2001 report card on homelessness." It was in a broader article that talked about the difficulty specifically in the city of Toronto, but also across the province, when it comes to affordable rental housing. I emphasize that I'm not saying "subsidized," but just simply affordable. What do you see as government's role, if any, in seeing that there is affordable housing in Ontario?

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**Mr McKaig:** I think it's a role that all three levels of government must participate in: municipal, provincial and federal government. It's not solely or even primarily the jurisdiction of the tribunal to make that type of housing available or to guarantee that.

**Mr Crozier:** No, nor did I suggest that. I'm just asking your opinion.

**Mr McKaig:** I agree that the three levels of government should play a concerted role in providing affordable housing.

**Mr Crozier:** What role should the municipality play?

**Mr McKaig:** Currently there's a municipal housing stock, and I think they need to maintain that and, where possible, expand it.

**Mr Crozier:** But that's subsidized housing.

**Mr McKaig:** Yes.

**Mr Crozier:** The municipality has total responsibility for that now. So where do you see the province and the feds playing a role?

**Mr McKaig:** I suppose on municipal taxes. I suppose there could be changes in municipal taxes that would allow for encouragement of building and things like that.

**Mr Crozier:** Again, any allowance in municipal taxes would affect the municipality more directly.

**Mr McKaig:** Yes, and that's why I said "the municipal role." You're asking about the provincial and federal roles?

**Mr Crozier:** Yes.

**Mr McKaig:** I suppose tax credits and things like that as well.

**Mr Crozier:** The federal government, after having moved away from this issue, is now suggesting that it should get back into it. Do you think the province should play a role in that as well? Well, you've said the province should play a role.

**Mr McKaig:** I agree. I think, as I said, all three levels of government need to be involved in maintaining this.

**Mr Crozier:** So you wouldn't agree with the current position of the province, where it's not going to participate in that?

**Mr McKaig:** I don't know.

**Mr Crozier:** Well, you said the province should play a role, but you won't say that you disagree with the province in not playing a role.

**Mr Mazzilli:** Mr Chairman?

**The Chair:** Yes, sir?

**Mr Mazzilli:** We go through this continually. These are general opinions.

**Mr Crozier:** I hope the clock is stopped.

**Mr Mazzilli:** It's not the proper line of questioning for a witness, on broader views of what one may think about a specific issue. The witness has answered the question to the best of his ability.

**The Chair:** Actually, I like to use as much flexibility as possible, just as I did with Mr O'Toole when he was asking a number of questions that some on the committee might have said were a bit off the beaten track. I thought it was interesting for him to be able to ask those questions and get a reaction from the individual. So I'll try to watch that carefully, but it is good to hear some of the views when they're making judgments.

**Mr Crozier:** We've gone through this before, Chair. Mr Mazzilli thinks he's the conscience of the committee. He has even reminded people who have come before the

committee that they don't have to answer any questions. You're not sworn to anything here. You can tell me to stick it, if you want. But I do like to know, generally speaking, how people feel about these things, because it affects some of the decision-making process. It isn't black and white, straight and narrow, if I might say. Our life experience, for gosh sakes, may have some influence on how we make decisions. So if there's anybody I don't need any suggestion from on how I should have my line of questioning, it's from you, Mr Mazzilli, thank you very much.

Now, sir, now that we've gotten rid of that tension between the two of us, I'd like to get back to you, because you're going to be performing a very important role, and I think you realize that and acknowledge that. Various governments have tried to bring in legislation that's fair to both landlord and tenant, and it's not easy. That's where I'm going to depend on people like you to take those laws and interpret them in a fair way. It was suggested earlier that a decision of the tribunal can be appealed, and you may have seen me check with our research. I'm told it can be appealed on a point of law but not on fact, and you're going to deal with a lot of facts that are not going to be easy to deal with.

So I wish you well in your appointment. I hope you're able to take the legislation that's there, that's intended to be fair but always seems, one way or another, to get slanted, and use it in a fair and judicious way, notwithstanding what Mr Mazzilli may have thought I was trying to get at.

**The Chair:** We now move to the third party. Mr Martin.

**Mr McKaig:** Good afternoon.

**Mr Martin:** The government changed the act that governs this relationship in the province in 1997. Why do you think they did that?

**Mr McKaig:** That's an interesting question. I think they responded to the public. The public had asked for a government to set policy, generally, and I think the government took the feelings of the constituents at that time and changed the legislation.

**Mr Martin:** They were certainly contentious, and there were groups who felt very strongly that the government was caving in to a group in the province who wanted more freedom to make more money. Of course the other side argued that with the very restrictive regime that was in place, no new housing units would be built because there was no opportunity for a return on investment. What side of that pendulum would you fall on, in terms of your view of where we should be, where we were and perhaps where we are now?

**Mr McKaig:** I think it's a little premature at this point to say this legislation is good or bad. It's been a few years, and I don't think all the statistics are in at this point. However, my position is not to comment on whether a piece of legislation is good or bad, or to come down on one side or another of the philosophy of the legislation. My position, should I be successful as a candidate, would be to adjudicate based on the law.

**Mr Martin:** I guess what I want to get is a sense of your attitude, what view you would bring to that decision. We're all affected in many ways by our experience, by our understanding, by our view of a particular circumstance and situation.

There has in fact been some review or study done of the impact of the changes since 1997, which indicates that where it was projected there would be more affordable, low-rent housing stock, it's not happening. The report that was referred to by Mr Crozier a few minutes ago, which was in the paper just yesterday and which we all saw on television last night if we were watching the news, indicated that people living in rental units are now spending more of their income on housing than those who own their homes, and that's primarily because the cost of housing has gone up for renters. In your capacity, as somebody who will make decisions that will affect that very reality for a whole whack of people in this province, does that cause you any reason for thought?

**Mr McKaig:** I haven't seen the study from yesterday that you referred to, and it would be interesting to see that. I think you made reference to the percentage of your income that you are moving into the housing side of your personal budget, that it's going up at higher rate for renters than for homeowners. Of course I don't have any facts, but I know that my expenses as a homeowner are going up as well—my utilities, my upkeep and things like that. So it is taking a bigger bite out of the disposable income of people. But again, I don't think it's the purview of the tribunal to deal with that.

**Mr Martin:** If you note that decisions made by the tribunal—because that's ultimately where this comes. If somebody wants to take forward an undue increase in rent, to appeal it, it comes to you, and you have to decide, at the end of the day, which way that will go. Don't you think it would be helpful to you in your work to be looking at the trends being set, where we are going and what patterns decisions are taking as they are being meted out?

**Mr McKaig:** There is a ceiling, as you're aware, and then there's an appealable level beyond that for capital repairs and things like that. I think I would have to look at the facts that are brought forward and judge it solely on the evidence that's presented to the tribunal.

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**Mr Martin:** It's also been pointed out by some of the folks who take an active role in trying to monitor the availability and the circumstance for people who find themselves in need of low-rent or affordable housing that decisions that are now being made by the tribunal you are looking to be appointed to are being made much more quickly when it comes to the landlord bringing forward a complaint than a tenant bringing forward a complaint. Do you have any thoughts on why that might be?

**Mr McKaig:** I have seen that. I don't know why that is, if in fact it is. I understand there is a tremendous backlog of cases before the tribunal. I would hope to attack that in a vigorous manner, notwithstanding who filed the complaint, landlord or tenant.

**Mr Martin:** I assume you've noted that we have a huge problem, particularly in Toronto, in the area of homelessness and people not having homes, and that has increased substantially in the last five or six years, in this city in particular. It's concluded by a lot of people who know that that's due to a lack of available affordable housing and the rising rents that are now being imposed, particularly since the change in the act in 1997. Will that reality have any impact on any of the decisions you will have to make in this role?

**Mr McKaig:** No, I don't think so. I'll be appointed to the southwestern Ontario area. While I understand there are issues that are of greater frequency in Toronto, I think the issues are the same across Ontario, perhaps in smaller numbers in the smaller centres, but maybe the percentages are the same.

**Mr Martin:** I suppose that is a view; however, we read recently that Toronto is now beginning to ship its homeless population out to some of those regions. In fact, I was in Elliot Lake in June, presiding over a forum on poverty, where it was indicated to us that a number of people are arriving in that community, because it's setting itself up as a retirement community because it has low-cost housing. But of course the support services aren't there to provide the help these people need to settle in, and there's no work to speak of in those areas. It seems to me that on one hand it's convenient, I guess, to say it's a Toronto problem. I suggest to you that initially the Toronto problem is one of trying to deal with people who have left these other communities because they can't find affordable housing there. They're now being sent back, and I would guess that what Toronto is experiencing now, if that's the trend and the pattern, other communities will begin to experience as well.

Do you have any thoughts on how we might deal with or resolve that very difficult issue?

**Mr McKaig:** I think you made reference to the supports in these communities. Are you talking infrastructure: hospitals, police, fire, ambulance, that type of thing?

**Mr Martin:** Yes, all the above.

**Mr McKaig:** I don't really have a position on that that's relevant to the tribunal.

**Mr Martin:** You don't see the tribunal, in its decision-making, affecting or having an impact in any way on that phenomenon?

**Mr McKaig:** No.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. If I had a chance to ask a question, I would have asked—and it's something you'll have to deal with, so you don't have to answer mine, of course. I think the challenge all of us who represent particularly urban areas would see is the conversion to condominiums, which is taking away a lot of the rental accommodation and converting it to condominiums. As a result, we're not seeing the same amount of rental housing. But that's something you'll have to deal with when you're there perhaps. It's always a challenge for everybody who has to deal with it. Some of us who served municipally probably had to deal with

that before, and now it may be dealt with at various levels.

Thank you very much for coming before the committee.

PETER NIKIC

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Peter Nikic, intended appointee as member, Early Years Steering Committee of the Ottawa-Carleton Regional Health Unit.

**The Chair:** Our next intended appointee, as a member of the Early Years Steering Committee of the Ottawa-Carleton Regional Health Unit, is Peter Nikic. Welcome to the committee. You have had to come some distance. Whatever mode of travel it was, it wouldn't necessarily be cool.

**Mr Peter Nikic:** Well, I drove with the air conditioning on.

**The Chair:** Everyone would forgive you for that today. Even the most ardent environmentalists would forgive you for that today.

As you know, you have an opportunity, if you choose to do so, to make an initial statement to the committee. Subsequent to that, each of the political parties represented has up to 10 minutes to ask you questions they deem appropriate, and you may give whatever answer you deem appropriate.

**Mr Nikic:** I would like to introduce myself. My name is Peter Nikic. I'd like to thank all of you for giving me this opportunity to tell you a little bit about myself and why I feel I would be a good nominee to sit on Ottawa-Carleton's Early Years Steering Committee.

I grew up in St Thomas, Ontario, and after high school I left St Thomas to attend the University of Ottawa. After graduation I worked for several members of Parliament in various capacities over several years. Finally I decided that the political life was up and down and helter-skelter, so I decided to settle down and get married in September 1996 to my wife, Jeanne.

After getting married, I started up a small consulting business, and one of my principal clients over the last close to five years has been an industry association. One of the most valuable lessons I've learned working with the association is working with its national advisory panel. This panel sits about three times a year and comments, critiques and commends various industry initiatives. It's comprised of people from all walks of life who are concerned about their communities and care about how industries act. Seeing how these folks work with industry has taught me how stakeholders need to work together, which leads to less confrontation and more progress.

Last December my wife, Jeanne, and I had our first baby, a baby boy named Marko, and it's been a whirlwind ever since. Parenthood can be pretty overwhelming. We've been fortunate enough to have great families who have helped us tremendously over the last eight months.

However, I understand there are many people who do not have the same level of support.

A couple of months ago I was contacted by the office of the Honourable John Baird and asked if I would be interested in sitting on the Early Years Steering Committee. I looked over the Web site and went through some of the literature, discussed it with Jeanne and thought this was a worthwhile initiative and one I would be proud to participate in. I hope I can bring some of my experiences—past, present and future—to the table and give a parent's perspective. Thank you.

**The Chair:** We will begin in this case with the official opposition, and that will be none other than Mr Crozier.

**Mr Crozier:** I referred earlier that besides Mr Martin, I had driven the farthest to get here today, but perhaps you've beaten me by a little bit. Sorry to bring you into Toronto on such a hot day, but we didn't know it was going to be like this when we first set up the committee.

I want to acknowledge that before coming to the committee this afternoon I was going to refer to what you had put down as your interests and ask why early childhood doesn't appear as one of those interests, but I think you've answered it in that you and your wife have a young child. Obviously, the effect this committee is going to have in the not-too-distant future is going to be not only of general interest to you, but you'll have a vested interest in it. Have you had an opportunity to look at the responsibilities of the Early Years Steering Committee and what its responsibilities are and what its mandate is?

1430

**Mr Nikic:** I've had a look at them, yes.

**Mr Crozier:** Is there any part of that mandate that is of particular interest to you?

**Mr Nikic:** If I could go back to my interests, I think on my resumé, basketball is pointed out as one of my interests. I have coached senior boys' high school basketball for about three years. The last couple of years I have not, due to work circumstances and my wife's pregnancy last year; it wouldn't have been fair for me to be at the gym shooting hoops with kids.

**Mr Crozier:** What do you think of those Raptors these days and some of their acquisitions?

**Mr Nikic:** If I knew \$94 million was in the offing, I would have kept in better shape over the years.

With the responsibilities of the committee, I think a steering committee can do a good job of assessing some of the projects that come forward. Mine is one of 10 perspectives that can be put forward. It's important to have community buy-in to any project that comes along, so I think this is a good forum for any community to have.

**Mr Crozier:** Part of this committee's responsibility is going to be as a kind of outreach to the community, to get the community involved in the process as well. I'm just curious and I'm not expecting that you should have a knowledge of all of this, but do you have any sense of the need for daycare, for example, in the Ottawa-Carleton area? Is it a significant issue?

**Mr Nikic:** Just from what I've heard and read over the last few years. My brother has a four-year-old boy here in Toronto and they went through the daycare route. They had to look for a daycare centre, and I believe Matthew was in daycare at a local school close to the mother's house. Our son is in a home setting right now because my wife works and we were fortunate enough to know of a woman who takes in about three or four children at a time and she can give some good-quality care. We've known these people for several years. So we've been lucky in that sense. I haven't had to go out and look for daycare centres for our son, not this time around, but possibly in the future I will have to.

But I do understand there is a shortage of daycare. I don't know the reasons for that. There could be licensing reasons, there could be space reasons, there could be money issues, but I'm not familiar to a great degree.

**Mr Crozier:** It's painfully obvious that I haven't had to go out and look for daycare for some years, either. In fact, I'm almost getting as decrepit as Mr O'Toole, by the sounds of things. My recent experience is with a grandchild, and my daughter and son-in-law have said—and it's regulated daycare that they're interested in—that having applied a year ahead of time in the city of Toronto, they are not going to be able to get regulated daycare. So there is a significant shortage, probably for all the reasons that you mentioned—funding, licensing, usually a number of issues.

Certainly this is an area of responsibility that you're going to have to look at very carefully. I have to admit that normally in this line of questioning my colleague, Ms Dombrowsky, is far better versed than I, but she wasn't able to attend the committee today. The best I can tell you is, keep an open mind and keep the kids in mind. I wish you well in your appointment.

**The Chair:** We will now go to the third party.

**Mr Martin:** Good afternoon and thanks for coming. You're certainly looking for appointment to a very important body in your community, particularly if it's going to live up to the expectation that I think some have out there when you look at some of the communications that have gone along with the establishment of this initiative.

You've mentioned that you have a child of your own, a child who has taken advantage of some of the services that are available out there to make sure that children get a good start. The Education Improvement Commission released its final report last year and recommended a program of universal daycare and full-day junior and senior kindergarten across the province, something that's happening in some other provinces in the country. The present government in Ontario is fairly cool to that. What would your position be on that?

**Mr Nikic:** I'm not an expert on educational programs, but I think children's education always starts at home. I believe the mother and the father ultimately are the ones who help the child make it or break it.

My mother once said to me, when we were having an argument over which high school I should attend, "It

doesn't matter which high school you attend, it's you as a student who makes the difference." I don't know whether or not sending a child to school at the age of three and a half or four for a full day is the best thing to do, but I'm sure there are countries that do it and they say it's a good thing to do. It's something we should look at and not dismiss out of hand.

**Mr Martin:** There are certainly experts out there, including Fraser Mustard, who was commissioned by this government to report back on where they should be going in this area, who suggested that all of the studies say that those who start school early usually do better later on. So if we're interested in making that investment in our future, and our children are our future, I would suggest it would make sense that they be given every opportunity. Particularly in today's world, where in many instances both parents work and come home from work every day fairly tired, it seems to me that we should be doing everything we can to provide that support for children in those families.

It also says here that in some provinces there is particular support given to full-time junior kindergarten and kindergarten to students with special needs. Would that be an area that you think this government should be looking at and perhaps investing in?

**Mr Nikic:** I definitely think there's a reason we say, "students with special needs." I can recall from high school that we had students with special needs. Some people were trying to put them in with the regular kids and one of the things I found was they weren't getting the attention they needed. I think it's important that students with special needs get special attention, whether it's longer in school, over more years, or more classroom time or more help from teachers. It's important that students with special needs get those services.

**Mr Martin:** I also have a concern where the issue of poverty of children is concerned. It's been pointed out in some of the studies that have been done that with the reduced amount of money in social assistance going to some of our poorer and more at-risk families by some 21% very early on in the mandate of this government, and then as we read in the news yesterday and last night, the continued pressure on some of our poorer families—those who rent their home—to provide more and more of their income for housing, that we have a serious problem of poverty on our hands. You mentioned just a few minutes ago that the most important place of learning and support for children is at home. It seems to me we should be looking at the kind of supports that we give to families to look after themselves and their children.

1440

I was over in Ottawa about a month ago doing a forum on poverty, and I suggest that it's there. But if it becomes obvious to you that poverty is an issue in your community, would you be willing to recommend with your group that this government look at the question of the income of some of our poorer and more vulnerable families?

**Mr Nikic:** I think it's absolutely important to look at how we help those who don't have the same opportunities that we may have. I think that raising income levels across the board or raising assistance levels across the board is not necessarily the way to go, but I think that's a separate topic that we could debate for hours.

Going back to your question about poverty, we're all facing difficult times. Poverty hits all of us in different ways. You define it in terms of income. I look at poverty and what my child doesn't have in terms of how much time we get to spend with our baby, the activities that we can do. We're all working harder, longer days with less time off, and I think that's affecting the next generation. It's having an impact on them. What I would like to do in my future is to help or try to make things better so that people can spend more time with their kids, whether it's a block of time or coming home at an earlier hour, because it's important to spend time with your children.

**Mr Martin:** OK. You make the comment that giving people more support financially so that they can pay for the things they need to make sure that their children aren't living in poverty is not necessarily the way to go. I'd be interested in knowing what is your idea of the way to go. What should we be doing? Because we have children in this province—and this is reinforced by some of the children's services organizations who spoke to the McCain-Mustard commission, saying that they're seeing more children who are going hungry. I think that's something that we can measure very readily. I would hope that you would see and believe that children hungry is not something that should be acceptable, and it's certainly an indicator of some degree of poverty in a home or in a community. There is an increase in the number of children being taken into the care of the children's aid societies.

I was meeting with the executive director of our own society in Sault Ste Marie yesterday, and he's indicating that they're going to be well over \$1 million in deficit this year, just trying to deal with the increasing numbers of people they're having to deal with now. Does that not indicate to you that we have a problem?

**Mr Nikic:** There's a problem, and there are different ways to solve it or to address it. I think one way could be to look at the people who are getting social assistance, because I believe there are people out there getting social assistance who do not need it or should not get it. The people who do need social assistance should be given more money so that they can survive, because it is tough out there. Inflation is everywhere. We read in the newspapers it's at point this or point that, but in reality, our dollars are doing less and less, so it's affecting all of us.

**Mr Martin:** I guess I'm happy to hear you agree that there are some families out there who need more and who should get it. Many of us have been saying that for quite some time. The problem is they're not getting it. This government seems to have the mindset that if you're poor, it makes sense to have somebody else making decisions about where the money you need should be spent, and so we have a proliferation of breakfast pro-

grams and food distribution operations because they're needed. But it doesn't seem to be acceptable that if a family is poor, you give them the money they need to feed themselves. What would your position be on that? Is it more important to give a family the money they require to feed their children at home or should we be feeding their children someplace else?

**Mr Nikic:** I think we should be helping them to feed their children at home and not taking over their responsibilities. How do you do that? Is it through more social assistance? Is it through work programs? Is it through education programs? I think there are a lot of things that all governments should be doing to help people try to get onto that same level playing field. I go back to saying that the playing field is not level for any of us; it's difficult for everybody out there.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Martin. Your time has expired. Anyone from the government caucus?

**Mr O'Toole:** Thank you, Peter. I always like to pay respect to people who come forward to serve the public, whether elected or in this capacity that you're applying for here. Also, with respect to the members of the committee, Mr Ouellette has, I believe, two young children, Mr Mazzilli has one older child and, just recently, twins, I am a parent of five and Bert is the parent of three children.

With this whole issue of where the resources are spent and how they're spent, we've got to make sure they get to the children. That's the most important thing. I think this whole concept—I'd like you to comment on these resource centres as they're described—is really to build the resources in a community that help families through a number of different strategies, as you've responded to Mr Martin, this government-giving thing. It's a community helping themselves. It's the whole community, as I see it.

Do you support the kind of concept that the Mustard-McCain report advocated? This is a step that Minister Baird is taking, to set up these resource centres for families from a variety of needs, those wishing to volunteer, those needing help, those who may be single, those who may be lacking all sorts of parenting skills. That's not unique to poverty; it's probably just a surprise for some. But I know families today do need supports and they vary by community. I just think of the way you've presented yourself here as being a coach previously and I see other community involvement things here. How important do you think these resource centres really are for keeping the family strong?

**Mr Nikic:** I think they're a great tool for families to have. When Jeanne came back from the hospital, I was woken up at about 2:30 in the morning by a crying baby and a crying mother. She was in some pain and she had some difficulties. I was on the telephone frantically screaming at some poor nurse at the hospital, begging for help. I didn't know who to turn to.

I think it doesn't matter what government programs or centres or anything like that you've put together. One of the important things I'd like to work on in this committee is to make sure that people know about them so they

know who to contact—the public health nurses, other organizations that are out there. This could be a good resource for people who are new to parenting or new to the country to contact and have someone there they can turn to.

As I said, not everyone is as fortunate as we are to have grandparents close by or a brother who's gone through it or a sister who's gone through it or a friend, to pick up the phone and call up and ask them, "What did you do when this happened?" A lot of people don't have that. So I think these centres are important, as is communicating that they're there as a resource for people, regardless of whether it's a phone call or some assistance or a helping hand, just to point out where to go to get some help.

**Mr O'Toole:** I appreciate that response, because our needs and resources for a variety of reasons—I sort of think back as I describe us. I know we all come from a generation, perhaps, I could say in my case, where I'm wondering, with five kids—I mean, we did it. I know it's changed. Do you understand? People like to know why what you've just described as young, new Canadians, perhaps single—the world has changed. I was accused of being Ward Cleaver some years ago and I'm sort of out of it, I guess.

Anyway, I see in your resumé here—and I just want you to comment—that you did say the importance is to educate the people and communicate with people. You have a radio show. Do you still have that radio show?

1450

**Mr Nikic:** Yes, my wife and I do.

**Mr O'Toole:** You produce it? What is it? Is it an ethnically based show?

**Mr Nikic:** It's a Croatian radio program that we started two years ago.

**Mr O'Toole:** Good for you.

**Mr Nikic:** We do it once a week at Carleton University. It's a non-profit radio facility.

**Mr O'Toole:** Excellent. That would be an important part of this role, I would think, the communications component. Do you see it that way?

**Mr Nikic:** Communications in most circles is always looked at as sort of the last thing to check off on a project checklist. From my background, it's always the most important thing because if you can't communicate what you're doing and what you've done and what's there, you could have the best program set up, but if no one knows about it, they won't use it.

**Mr O'Toole:** Good luck to you, Peter. Thanks.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Cleaver—sorry, Mr O'Toole.

Thank you very much, sir, for being with us today. We know that it was a major trip in. We always like to see people come before the committee. We hope you got enough lead time to be able to know what the committee is about and so on. We appreciate your appearance. We will deliberate on this later on in the day and make a decision.

## RENÉ ROBERGE

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: René Roberge, intended appointee as member, Ontario Parole and Earned Release Board, Eastern Region.

**The Chair:** Our next intended appointee is René Roberge, who is an intended appointee as member, Ontario Parole and Earned Release Board. This was formerly known as the Board of Parole of Ontario.

Welcome to the committee, Mr Roberge. As you are aware probably from watching previously, you have an opportunity to make an initial statement, if you see fit, and then you will be questioned by members of the committee and they will ask almost whatever question they wish and you can give almost whatever answer you want. Thank you very much, sir, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr René Roberge:** Thank you, Mr Chair, and members of the standing committee. I'd like to introduce my wife, Laura, who is here to support me today.

I'm happy to be here and have the opportunity to appear before this committee. In fact, it's an honour and a privilege. My name is René Roberge. I'm 63 years young and live in a beautiful town one hour east of Toronto called Cobourg.

I suppose this appointment came as a result of my involvement with the ex-chief of police of Cobourg, Mr Dan McDougall, who is, I might say, a part-time member of this board. Both of us have been involved in some private investigation and security work. I have a private investigator's licence. He and others may have been instrumental in initiating this appointment.

My wife and I have been involved in the community for some years. My wife is a survivor, a member of Survivor-Thrivers, an organization dedicated to raising funds for cancer research. She is president of the Cobourg-Port Hope Real Estate Board. We are chair of the Northumberland United Way and members of the Cobourg Rotary Club. I served as president of Mississauga Rotary in 1988-89.

My business career includes working for the Americans as a marketing director for Brunswick International, which is today Mercury Marine in Mississauga. I moved to running trade shows and special publications for Maclean Hunter and finally served as executive director for the Canadian Sporting Arms and Ammunition Association for over 10 years. This involved a number of properties, including the very successful trade show and magazine publications. I retired from that position over two years ago.

In all of this and over time I have found that I enjoy and am successful at interaction with people. I am efficient, organized and detail-oriented and I believe in thorough follow-up. Part of my responsibilities include supporting my wife's successful career in real estate by maintaining her Web site and her marketing programs. My languages include French but my language of choice is English. Je parle français, mais ma langue préférée,

c'est l'anglais. I am also computer-literate. My background is from the school of hard knocks in business and personal challenges. I am confident that my experience and abilities can make an immediate and valuable contribution to the parole board. I would be happy to answer any question that the committee may have.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, sir. I believe we start with the third party this time.

**Mr Martin:** Good afternoon, Mr Roberge. Thanks for coming today. Why would you be interested in an appointment of this sort at this time?

**Mr Roberge:** I've always been somewhat interested in the criminal justice system and at times I have criticized it but have never been in a position to really do anything about it. I don't know that much about it but I always felt that some additional programs may be considered. So being involved with Mr McDougall, who is a part-time member, although it's a confidential matter, he has indicated to me that it is an interesting appointment and that he felt I would do a very good job in it. That's how my interest came about.

**Mr Martin:** You've indicated in your answer that you've been critical of the system but have never been able to do anything about it. Do you see this as an opportunity for you to act on some of the criticisms that you have of the system?

**Mr Roberge:** Yes, to a certain extent. I might add that I'm not a member yet and only realized that my appointment came through a couple of weeks ago. I received a lot of information which I haven't been able to digest completely, but I would look forward to the training program to find out exactly what is involved and see if my criticism is justified.

**Mr Martin:** Do you understand the difference in role from, say, somebody like ourselves who act at a legislative level to set rules and regulations, and the role of somebody on a board such as this who has to work within very strict and limited parameters? Do you understand the difference between those two functions?

**Mr Roberge:** Between strict parameters that I have to work within?

**Mr Martin:** Yes. What is your understanding of the role of the board?

**Mr Roberge:** The parole board?

**Mr Martin:** Yes.

**Mr Roberge:** As I understand it, the offenders who have served their term have an opportunity to appeal or to receive parole. The parole board is designated to investigate the information that has been provided on that offender, what that offender has done in order to improve himself over the course of his incarceration, and evaluate whether this person is qualified to go back or to be paroled.

**Mr Martin:** I'm suggesting that maybe your criticism that you first indicated of the system might be that you thought in the past parole boards were perhaps too lenient?

**Mr Roberge:** To be green about it, I think everybody thinks that way, particularly with the type of media that

surrounds those offenders who reoffend. They become rather sensationalized and the public only hears about that kind of thing. But having read some of the information that's been provided for me, I tend to think that maybe my criticism was not totally justified at this point, only because the reoffenders are really limited in numbers compared to the number of offenders who go on parole, in my opinion.

**Mr Martin:** So are you seeing this appointment, maybe before you read the material that you just indicated you did, as an opportunity for you to correct what you saw as a soft, too lenient system? Would I be correct in assuming that's your reason for wanting to be on this board?

1500

**Mr Roberge:** I'm not sure whether I indicated that the system was soft. I don't know. I just don't know, and I feel that the training, hopefully, will indicate to me where the system actually stands. I would welcome that kind of information, if only to satisfy my own curiosity.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much for your questions, Mr Martin. We will move now to Mr Mazzilli.

**Mr Mazzilli:** Thank you very much for appearing, sir. I think this is certainly a very important role, one where you'll certainly have to listen to the facts and make a case-by-case study of each hearing.

But the one thing Mr Martin brought up is the role of government. There have been different perspectives over the years as to the rights of the incarcerated person and the rights of the community or citizens. Many people will say that you have to be able to integrate people back into the system. Certainly you must, but you must do so safely. Some people will say that people who do reoffend, at some point you have to release them. My argument is that at some point you have to earn those rights, and I very firmly believe that.

Some of the cases that we've heard in the media are not sensationalized; they're real. These are people who have reoffended over and over and over again, and then of course you hear that they've murdered someone again. So I don't believe they're oversensationalized. I believe they're very real and I believe that, in most of those cases, the evidence was there for the person not to be granted parole and somehow, through different philosophies, it was granted anyway.

I, through the justice committee, have often been involved in the debates, where some people will come before the committee and insist that the proper thing to do is to release people as soon as possible, under any circumstances, and they'll provide all kinds of statistics to show their argument. I remember one person coming before a committee and saying that in a certain state, where they had a very difficult parole system, the reoffending rate was the same as the system that was much more lenient, shall we say. So their argument was, if your reoffending rate is the same, by taking the tough stance or the lenient stance, there's no difference.

When I asked that person, "How many crimes were prevented in the ones that took a much harsher ap-

proach?" they couldn't answer that: the argument that if you're incarcerated and you are reoffending, then obviously you're going to prevent some crime by doing that, by keeping the person incarcerated. Whether you're preventing a sexual assault on a young child or whether you're preventing a murder is all very real. Of course, they couldn't answer that question, because they had, I will say, rigged their argument on strictly the reoffending rate.

I would ask you on the parole board to think of those things. To me, if you have a reoffending rate that's the same, whether you have a tougher system or a more lenient system, and you have the same reoffending rate, that tells me that some people just can't be helped, no matter what system is in place. I just throw those suggestions out and ask you to keep an open mind on all the different debates that you'll be hearing if this appointment is confirmed at the end of this committee hearing. Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Mazzilli. We appreciate your questions. Now we go to the official opposition.

**Mr Crozier:** Good afternoon, Mr Roberge. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Roberge:** Good afternoon.

**Mr Crozier:** Do you believe in the parole system?

**Mr Roberge:** Yes, I do.

**Mr Crozier:** Good. Would you be interested to know, and perhaps you've read this figure, that the recidivism rate for parolees of reoffending—by its very description—is much lower, in fact more than 50% lower, than the rate for non-parolees? I think you mentioned just a few minutes ago that you thought maybe those who were not paroled—that their history for repeating crime—is not much greater than those who are on parole. Did I hear you correctly?

**Mr Roberge:** I might have said that.

**Mr Crozier:** Yes, and yet there are statistics that show that parolees are much less likely to reoffend than are those who are not released on parole. Isn't that an interesting statistic? In fact, it says here that paroled offenders are closely supervised in the community after they're released while offenders who are released at the end of their sentence are not, and I'd never given that much thought before. It perhaps makes sense, then, that those who are on parole are less likely to reoffend than are those who are simply kept in for the total of their sentence and then just simply let go without supervision.

Would you agree that there's no way to be sure that someone released on parole wouldn't reoffend?

**Mr Roberge:** I'm not sure if I can answer that. I would think that during incarceration if an offender spends his time participating in all the programs that would make him a better person after he has completed his term, that would assist his introduction back into the community. Maybe what we should be looking at is a community involvement with this person coming back into the community and have a second, if you will, phase of parole, where this person might have to go through a

particular program in order to be reintroduced back into the community; maybe not as severe as a parole since that person has already served his term and is recognized as that and has the right to move back into a community.

The position or the appointment that is being offered to me, or I'm invited to attend, really only works at the provincial level. I'm not dealing with the bad offenders, if you will, the murderers, the child-abusive-type person, so fortunately at this point in time I don't have to deal with that. What I have to deal with are those folks who have served two years or less and in my opinion have not done something terribly wrong. To be fair and honest—I'm a Libra—I would listen and look at all the information before I would make any decision as to whether this person is capable of going back into the community, keeping in mind that the public safety is paramount in releasing this person.

**Mr Crozier:** I'm sure that when you made those several references to "him," you meant "her" too?

**Mr Roberge:** I'm not sure whether I'd be dealing with the female gender at this point in time, Mr Crozier.

**Mr Crozier:** Is that right?

**Mr Roberge:** Perhaps I will; I'm not sure. Nothing in my information tells me that.

**Mr Crozier:** I suppose that's a good question. I don't think there's a female parole board and a male parole board, so I suspect you will.

**Mr Roberge:** OK. There was nothing in the documentation to indicate that.

**Mr Crozier:** No.

1510

**Mr Roberge:** But honestly, I would say 80% of the folks I would be looking at would probably be male, or maybe more.

**Mr Crozier:** I don't doubt that.

One of the things the current government announced after assuming office and outlined in their reforms from 1995 through 2001 is that "Conservative appointments to the board are expected to share the government's commitment to public safety." What is that commitment to public safety that you are going to have to share, or do you know what it is at this point? I'll help you. I'm not trying to—

**Mr Roberge:** Other than reading the mission statements and the vision and things of that nature in the brochures I've received, I think it makes common sense to make sure that public safety is paramount, and that should be kept in mind when dealing with offenders, whether they've served their term or whether they are looking for parole.

**Mr Crozier:** That's why I asked you at the outset if you believe in the parole system. I don't know how I would deal with the appointment that you're going to receive.

**Mr Roberge:** Mr Crozier, with all due respect, I don't know either.

**Mr Crozier:** There are a lot of important jobs in this province, some elected, some hired, some appointed. This is right up there among them. The responsibility that

will be on your shoulders and on other board members' shoulders is, in my view, awesome, notwithstanding the fact that they may be considered provincially lesser crimes. Any crime is, I suppose, serious in the eye of the victim, so in many ways the decisions you will make are just as important as those that are made by another parole board at the federal level. That's why I had to ask if you believe in the parole system. Do you imagine there are going to be times when, having made that decision, you're going to sit back and kind of hold your breath to hope that it's the right decision?

**Mr Roberge:** Of course.

**Mr Crozier:** Therein is going to lie the—

**Mr Roberge:** That's being human.

**Mr Crozier:** We're interviewing you today to see if we agree with the government appointing you to this position. It's one of those jobs where the only way we'll really know is after you have been there for a while. "Does Mr Roberge make those correct decisions?"

How do you imagine you would feel if you made the decision to parole someone for an assault—they went before a court, perhaps before a jury of their peers, and were convicted on an assault charge. How do you suppose you would feel if then this person comes before you for parole, you look at all the information that can possibly be given to you, you give them the opportunity for parole and they reoffend? Will you feel personally responsible for that? I'm shaking my head because I don't want you to.

**Mr Roberge:** Having reviewed all of the information that would be provided to me on that offender, if it called for a release, for parole, and the offender reoffended, I would think I can't hold myself responsible for it, only because the information was there. It may be the exception to the rule that this offender reoffends. I might be a tad more sensitive to someone who assaulted someone, if violence was involved in the information that's provided. It would all depend on what the offence is, how much information I can get from the police. We have victims' rights and information from that level, behaviour while incarcerated. All that information, to me, would be adequate to make a decision. If the decision was, "Yes, he's entitled to parole," and he reoffended, then I would have to live with it. But it will happen.

**Mr Crozier:** It probably will.

**Mr Roberge:** It probably will happen.

**Mr Crozier:** Because I think I understand how difficult your job is going to be, I hope, on the other hand, that it wouldn't affect your decision when the next person came before you, or another person came before you in similar circumstances who still needed to have that fair look.

**Mr Roberge:** Yes. I hope there would be some consultation that would make that process easier to live with if that happened. I suppose there is.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Crozier. Your time has expired, and all time with this applicant has expired. Thank you very much, Mr Roberge, for being with us. The committee will complete its deliberations

some time this afternoon, and I know you'll be notified of the result.

#### BILL KING

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Bill King, intended appointee as member and vice-chair of the McMichael Canadian Art Collection board of trustees.

**The Chair:** Our next intended appointee, as member and vice-chair of the McMichael Canadian Art Collection board of trustees, is Mr Bill King.

Welcome back to the precinct, Mr King. As you are aware, you have an opportunity to make an initial statement, should you choose to do so. Subsequent to that, there will be questions from each of the three parties represented on the committee. You may commence, sir.

**Mr Bill King:** Thank you, Mr Chairman. I have a brief opening statement. I'd like to begin by thanking the committee for its interest in my proposed appointment to the McMichael Canadian Art Foundation. I'm very honoured by this nomination and believe I can make a substantial contribution as a McMichael trustee.

For those of you who do not know me, I was employed by the Legislative Assembly for 17 years. During that time I held a number of senior positions in support of Premier Mike Harris's legislative responsibilities. I left the Premier's office in December 1997 to join Hill and Knowlton, Canada. Hill and Knowlton is an international multi-specialist public relations/public affairs agency and is regarded by many as Canada's leader in the business of strategic communications. At Hill and Knowlton, I lead our company's public affairs division, where I'm responsible for our national offering in six offices across the country.

A writer by vocation, I have had a long and personal interest in Canadian arts and culture. Before I got involved in politics and government, and now business, I was a journalist in northern Ontario. At that time, I had an opportunity to profile and write about a number of Canadian artists, including T.C. Cummings, Ernie Taylor—who also happened to be my art teacher in high school, growing up in North Bay—as well as Josh Kakegamic, whose work is currently on display at the McMichael collection.

Since then, I've had the good fortune to be able to acquire some modest pieces of work by each of these artists for my personal collection, along with other accomplished Canadian artists, including Gordon Dufoe, Arto Yusbazyan and Jack Lockhart. I was proud that two of my paintings by Ernie Taylor were recently in a commemorative exhibition of his work at the Capitol Centre in North Bay, in a retrospective of his work in northern Ontario.

In addition to fine arts and music, I have also been active in community, non-profit theatre for many years, both as a performer and a patron. I currently serve and sit on the board of directors of Toronto's internationally acclaimed Hummingbird Centre for the Performing Arts,

which is the former O'Keefe Centre. I feel that my volunteer experience at the Hummingbird has prepared me very well for my new role at the McMichael.

Beyond my interest and involvement in the arts, I have served on the boards of several sports and recreation organizations, most recently on the Toronto 2008 Olympic bid committee, and also on the board of Fishing Forever, a non-profit organization that raises and donates money for community-based fishery and education projects.

All in all, I believe my background, experience and interests have prepared me to make a real and positive contribution to the McMichael. I thank you for your consideration and look forward to any questions you might have.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr King. We will commence our questioning with the Conservative caucus.

**Mr O'Toole:** It's nice to see you again, Mr King—that would be Bill. Just from what you've described in the profile, you're eminently qualified to make a valued contribution, as you've described it.

I've always had one puzzling question. It's not a trick question by any stretch, but do you know the names of all the members of the Group of Seven? It's always a bit fuzzy.

**1520**

**Mr King:** I actually brought my cheat sheet, but I'll see if I can do it from memory. The answer is yes. In fact, there are actually 10 of them.

**Mr O'Toole:** Was Tom Thomson a member of the Group of Seven?

**Mr King:** No, he died in 1917. The Group of Seven was formed in 1920.

**Mr O'Toole:** But was he a member of the Group of Seven?

**Mr King:** He was considered to be the spiritual driver behind the eventual formation of the Group of Seven.

**Mr O'Toole:** That's the trick part of the question. It doesn't get any deeper than that.

I appreciate and admire the purpose of the discussion we had in the House of the original intent of the McMichael collection, to which I'm always proud to bring visitors to Canada. I will be bringing visitors from Australia in the latter part of August to the McMichael. I always think it best represents Canadian art, as Emily Carr and others would be classic representations there.

What do you think is the most important challenge the fund faces today, as we speak? What do you think is the most important foundation challenge?

**Mr King:** I think there are a couple of issues. One is the financial integrity of the gallery, and I understand steps have been taken through some audits and some special assistance from the government. I guess related to the second issue, it is the reorientation of the gallery back to its original mandate, with a view to focusing attention on the original merits of the collection. So it would be twofold: financial and also a resolution to solve the conflict that's been going on at the gallery for many years.

**Mr O'Toole:** I don't have any other questions, unless other members have.

**Mr Johnson:** We reserve the rest of our time.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Johnson, and Mr O'Toole for your questions. Now we move to Mr Crozier.

**Mr Crozier:** One thing I did notice, because that was one of my questions, was that you didn't name the Group of Seven. Could you do that now?

**Mr King:** Lawren Harris—

**Mr Crozier:** Wait now, you have to go slowly so I can check this off. Yes?

**Mr King:** Franklin Carmichael, Frank or Franz Johnston, J.E.H. MacDonald, A.Y. Jackson, Arthur Lismer. How many is that?

**Mr Crozier:** That's six. You're doing well.

**Mr King:** I always have to get them in the right order.

**Mr Crozier:** I know you can do it, but no, I'm not going to press any further.

**Mr King:** Frederick Varley. I should have remembered that. I used to work with a Varley.

**Mr Crozier:** Fred Varley. So you did have it written down there.

**Mr King:** There are actually three others: Edwin Holgate, Lionel LeMoine FitzGerald and A.J. Casson.

**Mr Crozier:** Who joined in 1926.

**Mr King:** Right.

**Mr Crozier:** I really asked those for a reason. I would have been surprised had you not known them, but on the other hand, I may not have been surprised if you hadn't. I would think if I had gone out on the street—and I would have been one of them—had somebody walked up to me last week and asked me to name the Group of Seven, I admittedly could not have done it, and I suspect that the vast majority of Canadians could not. What can we do here in Ontario to make them better known, or do you think they need to be? Is there an education we need in the arts?

**Mr King:** I've been out of the school system for many years, but certainly when I grew up—and it may have been the fact that Ernie Taylor was our teacher at the time—this was something we actually learned in school. I think the first time I ever went to McMichael would have been on a bus trip. I'm not even sure that was high school; it may have been pre-high school.

One of the things the gallery is doing right now that I was very impressed with—I went up last week and there is a special exhibit, interestingly not of a Group of Seven member, but a place of their own exhibit with Emily Carr and Georgia O'Keeffe and Kahlo from Mexico. There has been some good publicity about that exhibit. I went up specifically to see that exhibit, but you can't help but take in the whole gallery while you're there. I understand, from talking to some of the staff who were working there, it's been very, very busy and well attended. I think just having creative exhibits that fit in with the mandate of the McMichael collection draws people. I first read about it, for example, before I ever went to it;

there was a nice review in one of the newspapers. I think that spreads the word as well.

I don't know from a societal point of view whether there needs to be intervention in the school system. It would be nice. I'm a big believer in students learning lots about Canada. But I think there's a role for the gallery itself in terms of its exhibitions and the events it puts on that will help draw attention, both in person and also through the media.

**Mr Crozier:** This might involve some resources, and the gallery's resources may or may not be limited, but do you think that too would include some outside-the-gallery exhibits—in other words, some outreach, where an exhibit from the gallery could tour schools, that sort of thing?

**Mr King:** I don't see why it might not. My first instinct, from a fiscal point of view, would be maybe there's a way to find some type of community sponsorship for that type of thing, maybe share some of the cost with boards of education, private sponsors, that type of thing. There are Group of Seven works in many other galleries in the country as well. I was reading some material that there's an art gallery dedicated to Tom Thomson in Owen Sound. The national art gallery in Ottawa I think has the largest holdings of Tom Thomson and, presumably, other Group of Seven paintings as well, and so does the AGO. So it may not be up to the McMichael gallery alone. There are lots of others. Maybe that's a way to bring the various disparate exhibits in the various institutions together for that type of thing. But I think that would not be a bad idea and is something the board ought to take a look at.

**Mr Crozier:** I just have one more question, in view of the fact that it's the end of a hot, muggy day in Toronto and we appreciate you being here. I do have a trick question: did you jump or were you really pushed into that bush?

**Mr King:** I was pushed.

**Mr Crozier:** OK, thank you.

*Interjection.*

**Mr Crozier:** You missed that.

**The Chair:** I'm just recoiling from that question.

**Mr Crozier:** Oh, sure.

**The Chair:** I've noticed the astuteness of Mr King again. There was a good advertisement there for Hill and Knowlton in the midst of his initial statement, which is very good.

**Mr King:** I've been fortunate to have a number of wonderful employers.

**The Chair:** Mr Martin, you have an opportunity to ask questions now, sir.

**Mr Martin:** As you know and as we all know, this whole business has been quite contentious over a number of years, and around here I'm often surprised at issues that become contentious and those that don't. It often doesn't make sense to me and I try to get a handle on just what's driving it; who's driving it is often a lesson as well. I don't pretend to have any real knowledge or affinity for the issue, but in reading some of the material that I

did and listening to some of the debate in the House, there are certainly some strongly held views here. I was wondering if you might help me understand, briefly, what the issue really is.

**Mr King:** My understanding is that the issue goes back to the time of the donation by the McMichael family to the province in the late 1960s and at least three pieces of legislation that have ensued since then, sort of defining and redefining the mandate of the gallery. I actually was working with the Legislative Assembly back in the early 1980s the first time it came up under the Bill Davis government. You're right. People had strongly held views. It seems to me, chronologically, that when the government took the initiative through legislation to clarify the issue or to come down on one side or the other, that seemed to generate the debate at that time.

1530

**Mr Martin:** Just looking at it from a distance, the consistent thorn presents anyway as being the McMichaels themselves and their view of what is consistent with the original mandate. When you get groups like the Ontario Association of Art Galleries and the Canadian Museums Association vehemently opposed to a direction, it would present, to me anyway, that perhaps we really need to be careful about what we're doing here.

From the debate in the House, if I remember it correctly, this piece of legislation that has changed the way this collection is going to be governed in such a dramatic fashion as to generate the resistance that mounted seemed to be driven by the McMichaels and their concern that the collection was drifting from its original mandate, and also the Premier's office. Would that be a correct assumption?

**Mr King:** I wouldn't know. I wasn't here at the time of the last piece of legislation and I've never met the McMichaels, so I haven't had a discussion with them about that. I really don't know. I couldn't answer that.

What I think is interesting is that if you look at the history of the Group of Seven, they were extremely controversial in their work. Even at the time when they first came on the Canadian art scene back in the teens and the 1920s, there was a fair bit of debate in the arts community at that time. Actually, that's been my experience on the Hummingbird board. There are very strong views in many quarters about the shape and fabric of the cultural experience that these various institutions are involved in, and the arts community does not speak as one on any issues that I've been a part of.

My personal view is that there is a place for everything and that the central focus here is the appropriate role of the McMichael gallery vis-à-vis the AGO, vis-à-vis the National Gallery, vis-à-vis the Tom Thomson gallery and all of the wonderful community galleries, and I'm sure I'm missing a whole bunch. My view is there's a place for everything.

**The Chair:** Rodman Hall in St Catharines. That's the one you were trying to think of.

**Mr King:** Absolutely. I was struggling with that. Actually I think that was mentioned in the debate.

Yes, there's a place for everything. It's not that this art is good, this art is bad; it's finding the proper venue for all of our experiences, for all of us to enjoy what we like.

**Mr Martin:** How did your appointment not only to the board but as vice-chair, given that the vice-chair is also on the advisory panel, which is a very important small group of people who will make decisions that again are being watched very carefully by all of the groups who are concerned about this move, how did that appointment evolve?

**Mr King:** As I said, I've had a long, very personal interest in the arts. I have a very modest collection of my own, primarily people who, even though I've recited their names, are probably not widely known. About a year or eight months ago, I was thinking of things I might like to do. I was really enjoying my experience on the Hummingbird board and I had been asked to join by that board itself. It's actually under municipal governance. I had a good experience there and I was looking around for other things that I could contribute to. I wrote a letter to the Public Appointments Secretariat and said that if there was a vacancy or an opening—I purposely chose one, because of my background, that was a volunteer position, that was not paying or being compensated in any way. I wrote and said, "If you're looking for somebody with my background, I'd be happy to serve." A few months went by, and around the end of last year or early this year I got a phone call from Mr David Braley, who is the chair of the McMichael collection, and we had a discussion. I got a sense it was a little bit of an interview by phone. I indicated I would be very thrilled to be asked to serve, and I got a phone call a number of weeks ago saying that I had been appointed and I would be hearing from this committee likely. So that's sort of the way in which it came about.

**Mr Martin:** Given that, I would assume, there are some people on that board who have had some pretty lengthy experience or some experience with the board itself and have some understanding of the interrelationship between people, how did you end up being appointed to the vice-chair position, given the very important role that then gives you as a member of the advisory committee?

**Mr King:** I don't know. Presumably, that's part of the Public Appointments Secretariat process when they're reviewing candidates, and that may have been the position that was available. I wasn't involved in that discussion; I simply indicated my desire to serve in any role.

**Mr Martin:** And then they just told you that you were given the position of vice-chair. How do you think you're going to get along with the McMichaels?

**Mr King:** I hope well. As I say, I haven't had the pleasure of meeting them. I admire their role in this in the sense of their passion and their desire to have their collection shared with the public and with the province of Ontario. I certainly respect that, and I think I'm able to work with lots of different people of different backgrounds. In my current position, my private sector job, I deal a lot with governments and I deal with, even in my

own staff, governments of all stripes and all parties across the country. So it's very important to be able to work with people who come at things from many different directions.

**Mr Martin:** What's your position on the fear that many raised that under the new regulatory regime there would be a fire sale of art works that were collected over the years?

**Mr King:** I honestly don't know all the other members of the board. I've read some of the testimony of a couple of people who were appointed in the last year. When I knew I was coming to this committee, I went back to Hansard to see the types of things that the members were asking the appointees about. Nobody seems to have any desire for a fire sale, nor do they feel that's the reason they're there. I think the role of the board members is to do our homework and do our research, consult, take good advice and make good decisions on behalf of the gallery and the people of Ontario, whether they're acquiring art or disposing or whatever.

I know that question has been raised a lot, and I don't see any requirement for that under the legislation. I see that as an enabling provision, that if something, for whatever reason, was deemed to be more suitable at a different venue, that gives the board that flexibility to make that decision. But I don't see any desire, from what I can read or certainly in my conversations with Mr Braley, to embark on that course.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. That is the completion of your time, Mr Martin. Thank you, Mr King, for being with the committee today. You may step down.

Members of the committee, we are going to deal with the various appointments now in terms of voting and any discussion that would go with the voting. I'll begin, first of all, with Mr Jack Calbeck, intended appointee as member, Brant County Police Services Board.

**Mr Johnson:** Mr Chair, I move concurrence.

**The Chair:** Mr Johnson has moved concurrence. Is there any discussion? If not, I'll call the vote. All in favour? Opposed? That is carried.

Second will be Mr Mel L. Jones, intended appointee as member, Council of the Ontario College of Pharmacists.

1540

**Mr Johnson:** Mr Chair, I move concurrence.

**The Chair:** Mr Johnson has moved concurrence. Any discussion? Mr Martin.

**Mr Martin:** I've got some concern re this interview in that the profession of pharmacy is, as are so many of the medical professions in the province, experiencing or going to experience a real need for new people into that trade and I think we have to be open to the possibility of a significant number of people who come to this country trained in other jurisdictions. Some of the answers to the questions that were put to Mr Jones, and conversations that he related that he had with other pharmacists, indicate to me that there may be some difficulty or hesitation in recognizing or accepting the qualifications

of people who aren't of English background. That's presented as a problem already and I don't think we want to in any way, shape or form exacerbate that problem and so I won't be supporting this appointment this afternoon.

**The Chair:** Any further discussion? If not, I'll call the vote. All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

The next appointee is Dennis McKaig, intended appointee as member, Ontario Rental Housing Tribunal.

**Mr Johnson:** Mr Chairman, I move concurrence.

**The Chair:** Mr Johnson moves concurrence. Any discussion? If not, I'll call the vote. All in favour? Opposed? Motion is carried.

The next is the intended appointee as member, the Early Years Steering Committee of the Ottawa-Carleton Regional Health Unit, Mr Peter Nikic.

**Mr Johnson:** Mr Chair, I move concurrence.

**The Chair:** Mr Johnson has moved concurrence. Any discussion? Mr Martin.

**Mr Martin:** Again, I had an uneasiness around some of the responses and what I consider sort of dancing around the question of poverty and how you deal with that. Poverty is evolving in this province as a very serious issue—if perhaps not the most serious, certainly right up there near the top—that I think we all need to be grappling with. This committee in particular, if it's going to deal with establishing some strong and healthy foundations for young people, needs to be a lot more aware and willing to take strong action than I sense is present in Mr Nikic and so I won't be supporting this one either.

**The Chair:** Any further discussion?

**Mr Crozier:** Chair, just a couple of comments. I share some of the concerns of my colleague, Mr Martin, and as well I have some concern around the whole issue of the Early Years Steering Committees that are being appointed across the province. I don't know whether there were other appointees recommended for that position that Mr Nikic was selected from nor in fact do I know what particular riding he was from. I understand there are some instances where names are being put forward and none of them are being selected, but the minister or the government selects certain names. So just because I have some concern with the whole issue of the Early Year Steering Committees, I'll be opposed to this appointment.

**The Chair:** Any other comment? I'll call the motion. All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

The next is Mr René Roberge, intended appointee as member, Ontario Parole and Earned-Release Board.

**Mr Ouellette:** Mr Chair, I move concurrence.

**The Chair:** Concurrence is moved by Mr Ouellette. Any comments? Mr Martin.

**Mr Martin:** I initially had some uneasiness with this appointment, particularly when I heard Mr Roberge speak of his criticism of the system and his seeing this as an opportunity for him to come in and make the necessary changes. I don't personally believe that's the role of the board. I think the board is mandated very clearly to do certain things. It's governed by a set of regulations that have evolved over a period of time and changed,

depending on the approach of government as that evolves as well.

I have to say, though, that I was heartened by some of his obvious study into this, having been apprised of the possibility of being appointed to the board, to understand that it wasn't as black and white or as cut and dried as I think he had initially assumed, and in that presented to me to be a person who was certainly open to information and to listening to all of the arguments that are put in front of him, and in that would probably be able and willing to make a decision that, yes, was concerned about, first of all and primarily, the safety of the community, but also understood, as Mr Crozier put to him, that there are also other factors considered here. One is the rehabilitation of those folks and the fact that if we don't get them out into the community under supervision, eventually they'll end up in the community anyway, with no supervision. I would guess that if you look at the statistics, you'll probably find that the latter is more problematic than the former.

So, having said all that, I will be supporting the appointment of Mr Roberge.

**The Chair:** Any further comment? If not, I'll call the vote.

All in favour? Opposed? Motion is carried.

The next concurrence will be Mr Bill King, intended appointee as member and vice-chair, McMichael Canadian Art Collection Board of Trustees.

**Mr O'Toole:** I move concurrence in the appointment of Mr Bill King.

**The Chair:** Mr O'Toole moves concurrence. Comment?

**Mr Martin:** Given the very contentious and sensitive nature of this whole piece of work that is evolving before us, it seems to me that we really have to be careful at least, from our perspective and given the responsibility

that we have, that we not load the board in any way that might present even as throwing oil on the fire.

I would guess from listening to the debate in the House and some of what we've heard here in this place at this committee over the last year or so as we've made appointments and certainly some of what I've read in various mediums over the last while, that this change was driven primarily by two offices: one, the office of the McMichaels and the other the Office of the Premier.

The appointment today before us, even though a very experienced and knowledgeable and probably good appointment, is, in my view, too directly linked to the Premier's office in the not-too-distant past. The fact that the appointment is not only an appointment to the board but an appointment to the position of vice-chair, which carries with it the added responsibility of being on the advisory committee, indicates to me that there's a whole lot more to this than perhaps we're seeing at the moment in terms of, in the end, decision-making and control and power and balance of power, where this very important institution to the history and cultural life of this province is concerned.

So for those reasons, I won't be supporting this appointment this afternoon.

**The Chair:** Any further comment? If not, I'll call the vote. All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

We have concluded our concurrences. The next scheduled meeting of the standing committee on government agencies is Wednesday, August 22, 2001, at 10 am. I believe it will be in this committee room, but you'll be notified specifically. Having concluded our business, I'll ask for a motion of adjournment.

**Mr Ouellette:** So moved.

**The Chair:** Mr Ouellette has moved adjournment. All in favour? The motion is carried. Thank you.

*The committee adjourned at 1551.*



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