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Tuesday 22 November 2005

Mardi 22 novembre 2005

Speaker
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Président
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 22 November 2005

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 22 novembre 2005

The House met at 1845.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ENERGY CONSERVATION
RESPONSIBILITY ACT, 2005

LOI DE 2005 SUR LA RESPONSABILITÉ
EN MATIÈRE DE CONSERVATION
DE L'ÉNERGIE

Mrs. Cansfield moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 21, An Act to enact the Energy Conservation Leadership Act, 2005 and to amend the Electricity Act, 1998, the Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998 and the Conservation Authorities Act / Projet de loi 21, Loi édictant la Loi de 2005 sur le leadership en matière de conservation de l'énergie et apportant des modifications à la Loi de 1998 sur l'électricité, à la Loi de 1998 sur la Commission de l'énergie de l'Ontario et à la Loi sur les offices de protection de la nature.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I am pleased to recognize the Minister of Energy for her leadoff speech.

Hon. Donna H. Cansfield (Minister of Energy): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to stand in this House and speak to the energy conservation act. I'd like to acknowledge that I am going to share my time with my parliamentary assistant, the member for Peterborough.

This evening I would like to tell you how our government is building a greener and more sustainable energy future for Ontario, and about the many opportunities that energy is creating in Ontario: opportunities for a healthier and cleaner environment, opportunities for stronger communities and a stronger economy, and opportunities for everyone who is committed to a greener energy future.

Our plan consists of three key components: building new generation capacity, maximizing our existing generation and transmission assets, and creating a culture of conservation. In two years, we have taken decisive action in these three key areas.

We are working hard to build a brand new energy future for Ontario, one that achieves an important balance between supply and conservation. We are building new generating capacity with a focus on renewable energy

and cleaner power, and a mix of public and private sector participation.

We are maximizing one of our major hydro assets by investing almost \$1 billion in a new tunnel to supply more water from Niagara Falls to the Adam Beck generating complex. This will produce an additional 1.6 billion kilowatt hours of new clean electricity for Ontario by 2009.

We've made a bold commitment to shutting down coal-fired generation in Ontario, a decision we did not take lightly. A report was released earlier this year that clearly demonstrates the relationship between increased air pollution from coal generation and the impact on Ontarians. Here are some of the numbers we all need to consider when we talk about the true costs of coal generation in our province: 668 premature deaths per year, 928 hospital admissions per year, and 1,100 emergency room visits per year, and there is more. The report included a cost-benefit analysis of using coal technology that pegged the annual financial, health and environmental costs of coal-fired generation of power at \$4.4 billion annually.

Recognizing the true costs of coal to our health care system, our choice is clear. We're taking bold action to replace coal-fired generation with cleaner, greener, affordable energy. The effects of coal-fired generation are simply too great to ignore.

The third part of our plan is creating a culture of conservation in Ontario. We have set a goal to reduce Ontario's peak electricity demand by 5% by 2007 and to reduce consumption in our own government operations by 10% by 2007.

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Since the last election, our government has taken decisive action to create a culture of conservation in this province, and some of these actions include, but are not limited to, the following: We passed Bill 100, the Electricity Restructuring Act, in 2004, which implemented the recommendations of the energy supply and conservation task force. We created a conservation bureau within the Ontario Power Authority. We appointed Ontario's first Chief Energy Conservation Officer. We enabled Ontario's electricity distribution companies to invest more than \$160 million for energy conservation measures for Ontarians. Through the Ontario Realty Corp, we have reduced electricity demand in the buildings they manage by as much as 7.8%, well within reach of our target of 10% by 2007. We're creating a net metering program

that allows farmers, small businesses and consumers to reduce their use of electricity from the grid.

That's in addition to the bill we have introduced, Bill 21, the Energy Conservation Responsibility Act, 2005, which contains four schedules. Schedule A contains the Energy Conservation Leadership Act. The next schedule actually amends the Electricity Act, 1998, to support the government's smart metering initiative. Schedule C makes the technical amendments that are required by the Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998, as a consequence of establishing the smart metering initiative as set out. The final schedule repeals a section of the Conservation Authorities Act to permit conservation authorities to market hydroelectric power based and created on lands under their authority.

A notice for proposal for the act was posted for public comment on the Environmental Bill of Rights registry on November 16, 2005—the proposal for the Energy Conservation Responsibility Act—and it was there for a 30-day comment period. The posting was made after the legislation received first reading. Nevertheless, this will also allow members of the public who do not follow events in the Legislature an opportunity to comment on this act. The Environmental Commissioner encourages posting on the registry.

Let's talk a little bit about what this conservation leadership act would actually enable the government to do. It would require conservation plans to be developed and posted by ministries, agencies and designated public sector organizations, such as municipalities, universities, schools and hospitals. It would require ministries and designated public agencies to consider conservation when making procurement and capital investment decisions. It would also enable the removing of barriers to conservation, or to promote opportunities for conservation, by enabling or mandating specific conservation technologies.

I will give you an example. In some jurisdictions, people cannot put out clotheslines. It's against a bylaw. We actually have to put in a piece of legislation that would enable communities to hang a clothesline, so that they could hang their clothes out to dry. I found this amazing when I first looked at it, because I thought there was nothing better than sleeping under a sheet that's been blowing in the sun and the wind for the day. It's so wonderful and fresh.

Interjection.

Hon. Mrs. Cansfield: There are no diesel fumes. We talked about this as one of the barriers in the conservation action team report. I thought it was amazing that it's throughout this province, that we actually have to put in some enabling legislation.

We would also establish the requirement that persons selling or leasing a home would provide prospective purchasers or lessees with information related to the property's energy use so that people would actually know about the insulation that is in the home, the cost and the type of furnace or the type of heating that is there. It

would enable people to monitor and budget, or make a decision around the purchase of that home.

The legislation would also enable the Minister of Energy to establish co-operative agreements between the government and groups such as non-governmental organizations, sector associations or others related to implementing energy conservation. One of the organizations that comes to mind is the Conservation Council of Ontario, which has been a leading force for the last number of years in establishing programs that enable people to look at conservation measures in their homes, in their businesses and in the environment they live in.

When you look at the issue of sustainability from our perspective, it is a balance with your economy, your society and your environment. That concept of sustainability actually comes from Brundtland. If you remember Rio a number of years ago, people actually looked at the footprint they were leaving on the earth in terms of their policy decision-making. They came up with the concept of sustainability: You can't do something unless it's sustainable. That certainly is what we're looking at in terms of the conservation act. We want to enable people to make decisions that are good, sound policy decisions based on that concept of sustainability. It's a decision that will carry them forward into the future.

For example, if you are going to build a school for today, it must last for 20, 30, 40 or 50 years. How do you build that concept into that design process? I have to say that there are a number of boards around this province that, without this legislation, have already embraced that concept. I can give you Sir Sandford Fleming as an example. As a college in Lindsay, when they built their newest wing, they used geothermal. Or you could look at the University of Ontario, the new university in Durham, where their entire structure is based on the concept of sustainability. Even as time goes on and they have more opportunities, they will, for example, be able to put in a living wall. I'll talk a little bit about what a living wall is in a few minutes.

What we were able to do in the first part is actually enable the MUSH sector—municipalities, hospitals, schools, universities and outside agencies—to work together to promote the concept of conservation in all of their thinking. They would design their plans, they would have to post their plans and engage people in the decision-making around those plans. I can't think of a more incredible opportunity to engage young people in what we're doing around conservation than actually involving them in that process.

The second schedule enables the centralization of the functioning around the smart meter initiative. It's related to the collection, storage, management and transfer of consumers' consumption information and data. It would be a new, or possibly an existing, entity that would be designated by the ministry. It would be a smart metering entity. The entity would have various objectives: to plan, implement, oversee and deliver any part of the government's smart metering initiative and to collect and store information and data from a customer or distributor with

regard to the consumption or use of electricity, with exclusive authority, if permitted. It would establish, own or lease and operate one or more of these databases, provide information and promote non-discretionary data and information related to the consumption of electricity.

All too often, we put programs in place where we don't have the opportunity to go into the data and see whether or not these programs are actually working. This is one of the obvious needs within the data collection process. We can look at that consumption, we can look at the progress around the programs we've put in place and we can look at and analyze the data from a delivery, transmission or market perspective, and also for long-term planning. And, obviously, it could engage in procurement activities, as necessary, to carry out its objects. That's part of what we would call a data code. It would be licensed by the board and it would recover its costs through rates approved by the board.

The minister is also going to be given the authority to set the initial base design and the specifications of the meters. Remember, when we talk about smart meters, it's not the meter, it's the functioning within the meter. If you go back and remember, the meter you have now on your home is about 100 years old in terms of its technology. It's been around a long time. Another interesting fact is that when electricity was first designed, it was 12 cents a kilowatt hour, for anybody's information, which was 100 years ago. We've come a long way, haven't we? The design of the meter is simply a storage unit where the electricity goes through it and off to the utility. What the new unit will do is enable that information to be transferred back into the home, either using the Internet or an actual unit that you might be able to view, and it would give people the opportunity, based on time-of-use rates as well as just looking at it—what is working and what is not working in their homes. So it's an enabling tool to allow consumers to do more around their own personal consumption and activities related to conservation.

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I know there have been lots of extremes around what it's going to cost or not going to cost. The interesting part is that when you go to the United Kingdom, Australia, Italy, California, the data are conclusive: It makes a difference. Now, people will say, "That's in another part of the world. What difference does it make here?" What I can tell you is that with some of the pilots we've had here, in fact it's making a significant difference.

I can give you an example of a firm, Stratacon, that worked on an apartment building, a modest-income rental. They have actually had some savings as high as 38%. What they did was engage that community in the whole process of education around smart meters and lighting. I don't know if people know, but if you were to take four compact fluorescents and put them in your home—every home probably has somewhere between 40 and 70 light bulbs, and some have more, and there are about 4.5 million homes or units or apartments in this province. If everybody put in four, we could shut down one 200-megawatt coal-fired plant.

That's the difference in the cost of consumption between the old bulbs and the new bulbs, the compact fluorescents. Homeworks has done some analysis, and they have come up with statistics that are based on empirical evidence that show that over a seven-year period of time, the savings from the old to the new on three bulbs is \$201. So it is amazing. Plus they last 10,000 hours; you don't have to change the light bulbs all the time.

The other is the issue around light-emitting diodes, which are the holiday lights. If you look at them now, they cost somewhere between a quarter of a cent and half a cent per string. The old lights would cost you \$1.98 a string to run, plus the old lights are hot, so there's an issue of safety, whereas the light-emitting diodes are not, and they're brighter—I think they're brighter. So there are those opportunities for people out there to save a significant amount of money through education and by promoting their own conservation measures within their homes.

What we would like to do with this act, obviously, is that we are going to show people by walking our own talk. Within the government, we made the commitment to 10%, and at 7.8% we're almost there, but that's just the beginning of what we can do. Now we need to take those sectors where we have some participation—schools, universities, colleges and hospitals—and work with them to change how they use their energy and their consumption.

Again I give you a story, and it's verified, of a restaurant. That restaurant, simply by changing the behaviour of their employees—they haven't even touched their light fixtures, but just changed the behaviour of their employees—saved \$285 a month in their electricity consumption. It's things like when they cook. They were cooking their sauces at peak time, when they didn't have to. They were leaving the freezer doors open because they were scared that, if they closed, it was dark; they needed a light in it. Just by changing their consumption, how they used their electricity and their water, which was heated by electricity, they managed to save that amount of money. When the firm went in and identified additional savings, you can imagine how happy the owner of that particular restaurant was. But they also took those measures they had learned, that conservation, back into their homes, and that's the difference it makes.

That's why I think it's important for us to lead by example. In working through the different organizations—I can give you a couple of examples of what we've done with those organizations. For example, we met with the Social Housing Services Corp. These are 20 housing complexes and co-operatives right across the province that will lead to a centralized management service for 1,500 social housing providers, representing over 250,000 units of non-profit municipally owned or co-operative housing. We started out this particular program with 5,000 units. It was an extraordinarily successful pilot where we actually went in and worked to discover through audits what things we needed to do,

what things we needed to change and how we could engage that community in those changes. So it wasn't a top-down decision; it was, "How do we work together to make a difference?"

We have also been working on low-income, demand-side management strategies, which in essence are conservation strategies, with the Canadian Environmental Law Association. What we did was develop a set of proposed DSM initiatives that could be undertaken by local distribution companies on the conservation side, again leading by example, engaging that community.

Mr. Speaker, we know what happens in your community and what happens in mine. It's different from northern Ontario, eastern Ontario, southern Ontario and western Ontario. Programs need to be designed to meet those communities' needs.

A good example of that would be what was going on with Hydro One and EnerCan where they actually came together with Canada Mortgage and Housing and put up to \$3,000 in homes, recognizing that, yes, the furnace may need to be replaced, but replacing the furnace didn't deal with windows or doors that needed to be replaced, caulking that needed to be redone or insulation that needed to go in those homes. So for low-income, modest folks, they were putting in \$3,000 per home to qualified folks to actually make a difference on their energy consumption, working with them and teaching them how to sustain that. It had to be sustainable. There's no point in putting in the measures if you can't continue to sustain them all along.

That's the purpose of this bill. One of the things we wish to do, as I said, is to lead by example. We'll be able to put in the smart metering initiative. It will start with 800,000 homes by 2007 and go to 2010. We will work with the condominium owners. We will work with the community. We have pilots that have been extraordinarily successful all across this province with our local distribution companies, our utilities, who bear a very critical part of what we're doing.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's been a pleasure to be able to speak to this bill, and I'd like to ask the parliamentary assistant to continue.

Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough): It is indeed a delight for me to have an opportunity to reflect a bit on Bill 21. I must say what an honour it is for me now to be the parliamentary assistant to the member from Etobicoke Centre, the Minister of Energy, who in a previous life was parliamentary assistant to the then Minister of Energy, who is now Minister of Finance. She did a remarkable job when she helped to pilot through Bill 100, which is now the basis of us moving forward with Bill 21.

I want to chat a little bit about conservation because I happen to think that conservation is one of the keys to Ontario's future. If we reflect a bit, we've got to change the attitude or the mentality of people in Ontario to embrace conservation as a way to help to reduce some of our electricity consumption. I think of the blue box program 10 or 15 years ago. It took a long time, I think, for the general populace in Ontario to embrace the blue box

program. For the longest time we used to just dump garbage into a hole. It was out of sight, out of mind. But we do know how detrimental that was to our communities in which we live.

We launched the blue box program. It took a decade or a decade and a half to make sure that people picked up on that. When I chat about recycling today to my son, who's seven, and my daughter, who's six, it's just second nature for them to look very carefully at packaging, newspapers and all that other material that we have in society, and they make sure they put it into the blue box.

Now we've got to do the same thing with conservation, to make sure that we become very aware of putting in high-efficiency light bulbs at every opportunity we can. As we're approaching the Christmas season, it's time for us to get rid of old lights that many of us have on our homes and install LED lights, which are very energy efficient and use a fraction of the electricity that was formerly used in the old lights that many of us have.

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Interjection.

Mr. Leal: The member from Niagara Centre said we are getting into the holiday season when people are putting up their lights to share in the Christmas spirit.

I just want to go back to the Minister of Energy's leadership. She set up the conservation team that looked at the various activities of ministries within the Ontario government and put in place a series of recommendations to make sure that government would lead by example, to make sure they are using the most energy-efficient activities within the ministries. Lights that didn't have to be on late at night are now shut off and we have the ability to tailor electricity use in many of our offices within the government of Ontario.

Beyond that, we're now seeing many other new public enterprises in Ontario, like new schools and hospitals, that are currently embracing the concept of energy conservation. I know that in my own community of Peterborough, on June 20, 2005, we announced that we were going to build a new hospital. Seven days later, the company that won the successful tender—Ellis-Don out of London, Ontario, is now building the new hospital in Peterborough at a very rapid rate. Inherent in that design is energy conservation so we can reduce dramatically the amount of electricity to be used in that facility when construction is completed in October 2007 and it becomes fully operational in the spring of 2008.

I want to chat briefly about smart meters. But first of all, before I start talking about smart meters, I want to salute the president of Peterborough Utility Services in Peterborough, Mr. Robert G. Lake. Mr. Lake joined Peterborough Utility Services in 1986. He will be retiring in March 2006. He spent 20 years operating the utility services in the riding of Peterborough, and I want to say congratulations to Bob. Bob is a fellow who during his time as president of the PUS in Peterborough was also president of the Ontario Municipal Electric Association. So he's a guy who has shown outstanding leadership in the field of local utility distribution companies and how

that is so important in providing electricity in many of our communities throughout Ontario. Under his leadership, about 15 years ago in Peterborough we introduced the "Wait till 8" program, a municipal initiative to encourage people in the Peterborough area to delay using the dishwasher, the dryer and other appliances until after 8 o'clock to take advantage of lower electricity prices.

Mr. Speaker, I know you're making notes there. Maybe you're going to send Mr. Lake a letter of congratulations next March when he retires as president of PUS. I'm sure he'd be pleased to get a note from you.

Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): Why should he retire? You've got legislation pending.

Mr. Leal: Mr. Speaker, if I could continue on. I've got some interjections here from my good friend the member from Niagara Centre.

Why are we introducing smart meters to the province of Ontario? Smart meters will provide a key tool to allow individuals to shift their electricity use to off-peak hours, and they'll be able to track their electricity use much more accurately. We know that shifting to off-peak times will allow individuals to take advantage of lower costs. We must do that if we are to hit our targets to reduce generation at most of the coal-fired plants by 2007, with the additional operation to come out of use in 2009. The only way we can reach those targets—and we're going to reach those targets—is through a number of approaches. One of them will be through conservation and the other through demand management, which the smart meter allows us to do.

We had an announcement this week of a number of renewables, clean green energy, to provide supply in the province to help us out. Why wind energy is so important in Peterborough is because we have a large GE operation. Part of it is, of course, the nuclear products operation, and there may be some in Ontario who would like to see us lose those high-paying CAW jobs because they don't support nuclear energy. But I know there will be work now that we've gone ahead with the Bruce retrofit project. There will be those good union jobs in the Peterborough division, nuclear products, of GE. Secondly, in the other part of GE in Peterborough, they're actively working to see how they can build the component parts for wind turbine generation. We look forward to that generating new economic opportunities in the riding of Peterborough.

The smart meters will basically replace the current meters we have in place, at a cost of between \$3 and \$4 per month per customer. We do know that in a pilot project in the riding of my friend from Chatham-Kent, when the smart meters were deployed, they actually came in at one third of the estimated cost. So I want to assure individuals out there who are tuning in and watching us at about 7:15 p.m. on this day that while the cost of the smart meters may be between \$3 and \$4 per month, we do have information now that suggests they may come in under that.

There have been other jurisdictions in the world that have brought in smart meters. I think of California; I

think of Italy; I think of Australia. The Ontario government, through the leadership of my good friend the Minister of Energy, is looking at the experience in those other jurisdictions throughout the world to see how we can take advantage of those lessons.

The time-of-use price structure has different price levels, depending on the period of day when electricity is used. We have on-peak, when demand for electricity is at its highest, we have mid-peak, when demand for electricity is moderate, and we have off-peak, when demand for electricity is at its lowest. We believe that, through the smart meter project, with the first 800,000 to be installed in the province of Ontario, people will buy into this technology and look at time-of-use and really turn out and take advantage of those prices for the public that are quite a bit lower.

I know my friend from Durham probably is an advocate of that, and I want to thank my friend from Durham. He sent me a nice congratulatory letter when I became the PA to the Minister of Energy and told me to come by Durham and perhaps visit Bowmanville to meet the member's advisory committee on electricity that he's put together. I certainly indicated to them that at my first available opportunity I will go to Bowmanville and meet with the member's advisory committee. I know they're a very distinguished group of people who are involved in the energy sector.

The other thing about the implementation of the new metering system is that we're certainly looking at bringing new technology to Ontario and to Canada and at the real opportunity to create new jobs that we all want in our communities. We have a company in Peterborough, Carma meters, an exciting new company, a small business. I know my friend from Durham has met with the principals of Carma meters, and I've had the opportunity. It's a very exciting company with new technology. While they don't manufacture meters for the residential side, they are certainly interested in manufacturing meters for multi-residential dwellings and for larger commercial and industrial users. So there's no question in my mind that one of the side benefits of smart meters being introduced in Ontario is the opportunity to develop this new technology and create new jobs.

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I do know that these meters will be mandatory. They will replace the existing meters that we all have in our homes, multi-unit residential buildings, and commercial and manufacturing operations today. I want to assure people that Bill 21 will not create a grandiose and larger bureaucracy to handle this. The Ministry of Energy is a very lean ministry, in order that we can make decisions and provide turnaround as quickly as possible.

Interjections.

Mr. Leal: I hear interjections from my good friend from Durham. I'm sure he'll have the opportunity to speak a little later.

I think it's very important that we hit our targets by getting these 800,000 smart meters in place by 2007, because, as I've said, this is certainly a key component of

our government's plan in energy to phase out coal power in 2007 and 2009 and to really drive home the fact that we need to have a conservation society—that we become more and more conscious of the precious resource that we have, the generation of electricity, and make sure we're using it in a very efficient and effective way.

We do note that implementing the smart meters and increasing energy efficiency will lead to dramatic cost savings for people in the province of Ontario. The return on investment, of course, will depend on individual use, but I can say that individuals will make a very modest investment to achieve, I think, what will be fairly substantial return.

In summing up, I think Bill 21 is a key part in the foundation of bringing about a very stable electricity system in Ontario. I know that businesses, commercial operations and even residential owners certainly depend on having a secure and stable supply of electricity. This government is moving ahead on a number of fronts to make sure that comes about. I'm very excited about Bill 21. I look forward to it going to committee, and I look forward to having quick passage of this very important piece of legislation.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and comments?

Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka): It's my pleasure to add some comments to the speech by the Minister of Energy and the member from Peterborough to do with this new energy bill which is being debated at second reading this evening.

A feature of the bill is, of course, the smart meter initiative. I would ask, and perhaps they can answer in their two-minute response, what the cost will be to the monthly bill of the users who are going to have these smart meters added. If the cost is, as I've seen in some information, \$8 a month, what sort of payback will there be for the single person who has modest electricity use at this time, or will there be, in fact, any payback whatsoever?

I would like to talk a bit about the big picture in the two minutes that I have for this comment, and the energy costs for families and for industry, particularly the forestry sector. We see the news that in the Thunder Bay area, the Cascades paper mill announced today at noon that it's closing: some 550 lost jobs, devastating for the Thunder Bay area. That's the Liberal energy policy at work.

Then we also see in the Thunder Bay area the recent news about the North American Palladium mine, which I had the pleasure of opening a few years back. It's about 85 kilometres north of Thunder Bay. There are about 60 people at the North American Palladium Ltd. Lac des Iles mine who are going to lose their jobs, this article in the Chronicle-Journal says. And what is the reason? "The precious metal industry is being affected by high fuel and electricity prices," just like the forestry sector. The forestry sector is being devastated all across northern Ontario with high energy costs and high delivered-wood costs. That's your energy policy at work in Ontario.

Mr. Kormos: I'm going to be speaking to this bill later on this evening. I'm looking forward to it. But in this brief two minutes, I'm compelled to note that the member from St. Catharines, the Minister of Tourism, Jim Bradley, is still in the chamber. He was here before 1:30 today; he hasn't left. It's now 7:30. I saw his staff smuggle in some Gatorade and one of those protein bars. He truly is dedicated to maintaining his seat in this chamber. He's not about to let anybody take his seat from him. To that end, he's been sitting in it for the last seven and a half hours.

I'm incredibly disappointed that the government, with all the fanfare about this bill, could only muster 40 minutes out of a 60-minute slot for a leadoff statement, and, at that, it took two people to do it. How many Liberals does it take to produce part of a leadoff speech? Obviously, at least two—a good thing for the parliamentary assistant. Once again, we're watching the parliamentary assistant doing all the heavy lifting. It's the member from Peterborough, the parliamentary assistant, who has to carry the ball. Does the minister want to do a one-hour lead? No. It's the parliamentary assistant who gets called upon to sweep up after the fact. But you know what? When this bill fails, the minister is going to be nowhere to be found. She's going to say, "Talk to Mr. Leal. I didn't have anything to do with it." When this bill is revealed over the course of time as nothing but a fraud, the minister is going to say, "Don't look at me; talk to Mr. Leal."

Mr. Khalil Ramal (London–Fanshawe): Thank you for giving me this opportunity, Speaker, to make some comments to the Minister of Energy and the parliamentary assistant to the minister. I think the minister outlined the details of Bill 21 very eloquently. Also, the parliamentary assistant, the member for Peterborough, did a great job. I want to tell the member for Niagara Centre that we divide the time because we believe in sharing. We believe in the democratic process. That's why we share the time.

This is a very important bill, because the engineer of the bill, the Minister of Energy, believes in this cause. When she was the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Energy, I had a chance to attend an energy forum in London on how we educate people, how we talk to schools, how we go to universities, to hospitals, how we go to many different places to convince them about conservation, because it's important and it's the right thing to do. This bill is not about a political agenda; it's about the right thing to do. I hope all parties will support the bill because it's very important—vitaly important—to our communities across Ontario.

We've been talking about smart meters. I hope to get the chance later on to speak about smart meters and what people think about them. I know there's some kind of misreading or misconception or misperception about smart meters, but I want to tell you, this bill is the right thing to do.

I want to commend the minister and her parliamentary assistant for explaining to the people of Ontario the intent

of the bill, what the bill will do if we implement it fully, because it's going to conserve energy. We're going to save our environment. We're going to introduce green energy for the people of Ontario. We cannot do it by ourselves, but by engaging other people. That's why we believe in sharing.

1930

Mr. Toby Barrett (Haldimand–Norfolk–Brant): I note that both the parliamentary assistant and the minister in their discussion of smart meters went into a discussion of their policy of coal-generating-station closures. We heard dates this evening of 2007 and 2009—2009 for Nanticoke and I'm assuming 2007 for the rest of them. I don't know whether that would be done before the election or after the election. The way the dates are being moved around, the new targets may well be for none of the coal plants presently in operation to be closed until after the coming election.

What I want to point out—and I'm not clear on what link they were making between smart meters and closing down 25% of the coal generation in Ontario. Smart meters may assist in a very small way in replacing, through conservation, some of that energy requirement. But I do want to point out to the last main speakers that we have a report from Energy Probe that came out in October. I think everyone would know director Tom Adams. Energy Probe took a look at 403 coal-fired plants across North America. The two Lambton units—these are the units that have both the SCR and the scrubber technology. The SCR technology was relatively recently installed by the previous government. The two Lambton units ranked in the top-10 clean facilities. As we know, Energy Probe has reversed their position on coal. They are not in favour of closing coal because of the import problem.

The Acting Speaker: The member from Peterborough has two minutes to reply.

Mr. Leal: I want to thank the members from Parry Sound–Muskoka, Niagara Centre, London–Fanshawe and Haldimand–Norfolk–Brant for their comments.

One of the questions that was asked of me was, what will be the cost for the new smart meters? It is calculated that the cost of the new smart meters would be between \$1 and \$4 per month, per customer. But I want to reiterate that when the pilot project was introduced in Chatham–Kent, the actual cost of the smart meters was one third of the original estimated cost. So I think it's unwarranted at this time to be spreading panic throughout Ontario in terms of the cost of these smart meters.

We could get into a long discussion about coal and the merits of using coal for generating electricity, but time won't allow me to do it. I just want to make a couple of quick comments, though. If every person in Ontario replaced their existing light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs, we could take one of the coal-fired plants out of operation immediately. When I made my remarks about the blue box mentality in shifting our thinking to go to a conservation society here in Ontario in terms of what we do each and every day, just going to those compact fluor-

escent bulbs would have a tremendous impact on the amount of electricity we're using in Ontario today.

I tell members of this House from all sides that we should be leaders in our respective communities and go out this very day and start buying those compact fluorescent bulbs, to show that we are leaders for energy conservation, and as we go into the holiday season, buy those LED lights, again to reduce the amount of electricity we're using.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr. John O'Toole (Durham): It's my pleasure to comment on Bill 21. I think I'm just using my time here, but first I want to seek unanimous consent to stand down our lead speaker, Mr. Yakabuski.

The Acting Speaker: Mr. O'Toole has sought the unanimous consent of the House to stand down the leadoff speech of Mr. Yakabuski. Agreed? Agreed.

Mr. O'Toole: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Yakabuski unfortunately is tied up. He's in parts of Ontario today—Atikokan, actually, and possibly Thunder Bay and other places. As our energy critic, he's doing an outstanding job trying to nurture back to health those communities that are suffering under the decisions of this government. Atikokan is one of those communities where there is an energy production plant which is being shut down by this government. It's tragic. All of us have heard from the mayor and council and the leaders in that community about the devastating impact. The power workers and others have united to send a strong message to this government that it's simply the wrong thing at the wrong time.

No one in all conscience disagrees with Bill 21 and its ultimate intentions. What is wrong here are the subtleties beneath the policy language. I want to start by saying that it's my impression, from listening over the last two years, that their policy on energy is this: You're going to pay more and you're going to get less.

Bill 100 was mentioned earlier. Bill 100 set up the framework for the changes in the energy sector under the Dalton McGuinty Liberal government. What they did, first of all, was a lot of consultation stuff, but really, quite honestly, they made a couple of reckless commitments. I'm going to hold up for the viewers who may be listening tonight election booklet number two. Election booklet number two—

Interjection.

Mr. O'Toole: I've kept copies of it, yes. I've kept copies of this for members who want to see it. It's obsolete now, but I'll be using it for the next two years, the remaining time they have in office.

It says right here, on page 3—I'm going to read it. Dalton's picture is on it. It's been signed by the now Premier; he wasn't then. You can do a lot of things when you're not the Premier. With your indulgence, I'll just recite one of the promises they made—one of a number of promises. This is under "Clean communities." It's mostly the reverse of that, but it says, "No more coal: We will shut down Ontario's coal-burning power plants by 2007 and replace them with clean sources of energy," a very

laudable objective. I don't think anyone would disagree with that. This is about conservation, so I'm just going to spend a little bit of time on each one of the promises that you made and have broken. Because there is no one in this province, from any ideological perspective—the power workers, Clean Air, Tom Adams, all of them said you simply cannot do it. Yet you went ahead and promised it. You made promises that you can't keep, and that's really the theme that I am trying to keep to tonight.

I am going to break with a bit of tradition here in the speech that I have prepared. I have a prepared speech tonight, which is quite unusual, actually.

The other one is that they also promised to freeze energy prices—you promised that—at 4.3 cents per kilowatt hour.

Mr. Kormos: Whoops.

Mr. O'Toole: Whoops—broken promise number two.
Interjection.

Mr. O'Toole: No, we didn't hold you to that. You made promises that you had no intention of keeping. This is what hurts me and cynicizes the people of Ontario. They become cynical about the continuous litany of broken promises.

Mr. Kormos: What do you call people who make promises they have no intention of keeping?

Mr. O'Toole: They're called Liberals. The member from Niagara Centre asked me, "What do you call people who make promises they don't intend to keep?" I've just said the obvious word; I said, "Liberals."

So the framework here is flawed fundamentally. They promised to have affordable energy, and they promised to have this shutting down of coal plants. Anyone with any expertise in this area realizes that the energy produced from the fossil plants represents more than a third of the total generation capacity. Not only that, it serves as peaking power or baseload power, which can't be replaced quickly or cheaply. Most of the RFPs, more recently the wind generation, those contracts aren't at 4.3 cents per kilowatt; they are coming on market at between eight and 10 cents per kilowatt. That's about a 200% increase, or more, in the price of energy. Consumers and viewers tonight, these promises they made were both irresponsible and reckless, in my view.

1940

When I looked even further at Bill 21, I finally deduced that their conservation plan amounts to this. It may take me longer to say it than I have time. Remember I said at the start here that you're going to pay more and get less? Here is their plan. This may sound a bit—someone who is cynical or jaded might think this, but I'm just reading it from notes here. Their policy on conservation is sort of like this: You're going to have higher prices so that you won't be able to afford to use electricity. They're going to force you to conserve, and then they're going to have these smart meters to say, "Well, look, you should have used the smart meter." These are smart meters being introduced by a bunch of dummies. They used that on us in the Smart Growth plan, when we

introduced it. George Smitherman said that back in about 1998.

For the consumer in Ontario, what this really means is this: When they look at their electricity bills—and I have a copy of mine here tonight, which I'm probably going to disclose to you—the average consumer consumes about 1,000 kilowatt hours a month. Now, in that, you should note that the residential users of electricity consume about 30% to 40% of all the energy in Ontario.

The large consumers are the pulp and paper industry, the petrochemical industry, the steel industry and the auto industry. They consume 60% to 70% of all the energy. So the ones who are really going to be hurt by this are industry and the job creators of this province. This is a failed economic policy, and I'm alarmed that Mr. McGuinty or the current minister, and certainly Mr. Duncan, the previous Minister of Energy, don't get it.

In fact, if I were to look at my notes here earlier tonight, the Energy Conservation and Supply Task Force, which was formed some time ago, told them very clearly in a number of recommendations—an arm's-length consulted body told them—that this was not doable.

I really don't know where to begin, technically, but I look at the evidence on the failed policy, and it's not just me saying it. We have heard from the member from Parry Sound—Muskoka, who's our critic for northern development and mines. He has done a remarkable job in quantifying what this has done to one sector. This is so important that I'm a little upset that some members aren't listening.

What it has done to the pulp and paper sector in this province has cost—he has talked today about one particular thing that he's on about, which is Cascades. This is a press release today from Cascades. It's from the executive assistant, and it says that the job losses are actually 550, including administrative staff previously omitted. Energy is the primary reason for this shutdown. This shutdown will likely occur before Christmas.

The member from Parry Sound—Muskoka is just leading the cause of a litany, a lengthy list. This is the list of job losses in just that one sector.

Now we're hearing about Stelco, Dofasco and, more recently, General Motors. I'm stressed about this, because energy is an economic policy. When Adam Beck invented or developed Hydro One, he used a phrase: "Power at cost." What he meant was cheap power to provide a reliable, affordable base of energy to power the industry of this province, the industry that made this province great. What we're seeing now is just the beginning of a long slide. Remember, the price is moving from four cents to eight cents. That's a huge whack. It's just unbelievable, and consumers—this is not a product like cable television, where you can decide not to use it.

In our home, as I said, we use about 1,000 kilowatt hours. Of that, there's very little discretionary use: about 10%. Yes, they should use energy-efficient appliances. We had a program under our Minister of Energy at the time, which was to rebate them the provincial sales tax on energy-efficient appliances, all rated by a national

standard, which was the EnerStar program. What did they do? They cancelled that plan so that people buying energy-efficient appliances were indeed being penalized.

So when a consumer gets a smart meter, which they say is going to cost \$1 to \$3 a month—most reports say it's going to cost \$8 a month—they're going to be price-takers. It's not price-elastic; it's price-inelastic. In other words, you're a price-taker. You have to light your home, you have to cool or heat your home, you have to cook your food and you have to wash your clothes.

The member from Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant will be speaking later about the impact on agriculture. Dairy farmers have to milk their cows at certain times; chicken producers have to provide heat—any livestock producers. There is all the energy use in those sectors.

We are seeing a cascading effect on the fundamentals of the economy of Ontario. In such an important policy area, I'm astounded that they don't get it. It's not unlike the Premier flying from Toronto to a fundraiser in Hamilton. They don't get it.

This is the economy of Ontario. This is my community. It's not just General Motors; this is Atikokan, this is Thunder Bay, and this is Timmins. I'm looking through here and I'm sort of saying: Tembec in Kapuskasing, Bowater in Thunder Bay, some 100 indefinite layoffs; Smurfit-Stone in Thunder Bay, 100 permanent positions layoffs; Weyerhaeuser in Sturgeon Falls, 125 permanent layoffs; Neenah Paper in Terrace Bay, 140 permanent positions; Cascades in Thunder Bay—this is a few weeks ago—150 positions and another 550 today. I don't want to be part of a doomsday scenario here. What I'm saying is that these are failed policies.

I'd like to switch now to what I consider to be the positive aspects of this. First of all, there's the type of meter they've introduced. According to experts whom I respect and listen to—and I encourage you to contact me, because I will listen—it's my understanding that the meters they have selected are not smart meters; they're time-of-use meters. All they'll do is tell you that at 11 you used 100 kilowatt hours; bang, it costs you so much. And they're going to a new rate system to confuse the consumer even more. They are going to have different times of the day where they're going to charge the consumer more. You almost have to be home to switch on and off the freezer or the air conditioner. Or—

Interjections.

Mr. O'Toole: On the other side, they're commenting. So you are listening and you're an intelligent person.

But here's the deal: First, if you buy the meter, then secondly, you have to buy a piece of technology that will turn certain appliances off and on at certain times, so that may cost you a few hundred dollars. This is another example of no plan and no policy that is going to work. I'm astounded, quite honestly, and I'm not the minister.

I watch and listen as a consumer and as an elected person for the riding of Durham. Durham is the home of the Darlington nuclear generating station. I'm happy to say that I support that as a baseload of energy. I'd like to see another nuclear generation plant in the riding of Dur-

ham. I could talk about that site for a long time. It is well managed, and it's very productive. All energy has its issues; in this case, it's dealing with the nuclear waste energy.

But, there are other leaders in my riding that I feel it's important for me to mention. As the minister said in her comments earlier tonight—and it's up to me to be a voice for my community. In my community, they are leaders in conservation. Gary Polonsky is the president of the newest university in Ontario, which began under the leadership of our government, and more importantly, under Jim Flaherty, the member from Whitby-Ajax, with Gary Polonsky and other persons. UOIT built one of North America's largest geothermal well fields for heating and cooling. They had developed a system, long before Bill 21, back when we started to fund that university, and this was given a reward for excellence, recognized with the Ontario certificate of leadership in sustainable energy practices. This was given to Richard Marceau, the provost of the university, and Ken Bright, the manager of special projects.

So there are innovators in our society, and that's what they should be working with. They should be working with the local distribution companies on how to find good customer tools to shift load and shift peak, and that's really what meters do.

I also want to mention the Veridian Connections, which was recognized by the minister as one of the pilot sites for the implementation of the metering technology in Sunderland, just on the border of my riding. Their president and CEO is Michael Angemeer, Axel Starck is the executive vice-president, and I want to thank the entire team at Veridian publicly for their initiative. A very innovative local distribution company is doing a great job in trying to bring innovation into some of the solutions.

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As I said before, all of us, certainly our leader John Tory, are for innovation and conservation, but we're also for reliable, affordable power in the province. Now that can be achieved by incentive programs, through tax measures, as well as encouraging investment in multi-residential units like condominiums. I support that. I support, where there isn't any meter at all in the house, that they at least know there are tools that can help to shift load.

It's important for me, representing a riding that's very strong, to thank a lot of people who try to help me. I want to thank Pauline Storcks, a utilities commissioner in the riding and a former chair of the Municipal Electrical Association, and Dave Butters, who's president of the Association of Major Power Producers of Ontario. They had a reception here the other night. I respect the work of the major power producers. These are the big consumers, and they are telling me, off the record technically—I wouldn't attribute anything to them except what I'm understanding—that high-cost power is making them less competitive. That, together with a higher dollar, which isn't Dalton's fault, essentially is going to make us less

competitive as a province. The province's economic policies today are playing themselves out, as I've said, in many ways; we're seeing it affect the primary industries in this province.

I also want to pay tribute to some of the work by the Energy Conservation and Supply Task Force. Their report is reading that should be commended to each member here tonight; it should be mandatory reading. The work was done by a number of experts and some of their names are important. If you look at the report, you'll find out that they're leaders in industry: people like Jan Carr, who's now part of the Ontario Power Authority, made representations to that committee; people like Peter Love, the conservation czar in the province of Ontario. I've not heard from Peter, but I know his intentions are good. Whether or not the minister is giving him the latitude to move quickly on providing some of the tools for conservation is yet to be determined.

Ultimately, with the little time I have left, their policy on conservation is this: If you charge them enough, they won't be able to use it. That's the conservation policy. If you complain, what they're going to say is, "Well, you have a smart meter. Why don't you use it?" You only have so much discretionary use in your household. Think of a retired couple on a fixed income. Are we expecting them to freeze in their home or die from heat in their home? Are we expecting them not to cook or prepare their food properly or wash their clothes? How much of the use of the energy—yes, they can put a few light bulbs in and I encourage that. I think any good utility, like Veridian, would provide incentives directly to get them to switch to being aware of energy conservation, but also encourage them to move in that direction.

One last comment that I want to make, and it's about an article from February 23, by David Wojick. It's worth reading; this is a very good article. It refutes the argument that coal and modern coal are not clean. This is simply true. I'm quoting here, and this is the last minute I have:

"Given the Ontario government's reliance on coal-fired power, why does the Dalton McGuinty government now suddenly want to turn it off? The stated reasons are that, first, Ontario has a serious and growing air pollution problem and, second, coal burning is the major cause of problems. Both claims are false." This is written by an expert, not by some politician. They said—

Interjection.

Mr. O'Toole: No, he's not the person at Ford. This person knows of what he speaks. He is an engineer and energy policy analyst in Ontario and writes for *Electricity Daily*.

There you have it—much of the myth of this coal issue. The largest contributor to pollution in the province is the combustion engine, not the coal plants.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and comments?

Mr. Kormos: I listened carefully to the speech by Mr. O'Toole, and I'm going to be speaking in around 10 minutes' time, so I really encourage people, if they're tuned in, to stay with us. But there are options. I was just

taking a look at today's television listings for 8 o'clock. I notice that on CTV there's *Criminal Minds*—that's a documentary about Conrad Black—and on CLT, yet another on *Crime and Punishment*; that's on one Chuck Guité. *CSI, Crime Scene*, is on Spike television, whatever that is; that's obviously a massive photo display of the Hollinger headquarters, where Conrad Black pilfered so many millions of dollars with the aiding and abetting—

The Acting Speaker: I'd ask the member how this makes reference to the member for Durham's presentation.

Mr. Kormos: To talk about conserving energy, had we locked up Conrad Black when we should have, all that energy being expended on prosecuting him and getting him that 40-year jail time in the United States wouldn't be expended. That's how we could have conserved a whole lot of energy, had we put Conrad Black and Barbara Amiel in their place. If Chuck Guité would simply show up at Millhaven and start serving his sentence now, we could not expend all that unnecessary energy on the trial that's inevitably going to find him guilty.

I'm going to be speaking to this bill in a matter of around eight minutes' time. I don't think I'll mention Tubby Black during the course of my comments or his theft of millions or the scoundrel Barbara Amiel, his accomplice and cohort, but Jim Bradley may.

The Acting Speaker: I find the member's comments to be highly objectionable, I must say. I would ask him to withdraw his unparliamentary comments.

Mr. Kormos: I withdraw, Speaker, but I'll have more to say in eight minutes' time. Count on it.

Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader): I always enjoy hearing the speakers when—we're not supposed to make reference to absences or anything, but it's very difficult for Premiers and leaders of political parties to be present at all times; I understand that very much.

I'm thinking of *Pollution Probe* tonight. My bet is that the leader of the Conservative Party will be at the *Pollution Probe* dinner tonight, yet what I hear from the Conservative members is an anti-environment message. As the leader attempts to be the downtown Toronto environmentalist and will kibitz with them this evening and be seen at the *Pollution Probe* dinner, my guess is that the people at that dinner tonight who are environmentalists won't be at the big fundraising dinner that the Conservative Party is having tomorrow night. I suspect it'll be a different crowd there. It will be a crowd that actually agrees with President Bush's view on coal, which we just heard enunciated by my good friend from Durham. In fact, that's exactly what President Bush has been saying, much to the chagrin of people from the Department of Environmental Conservation, people from the environmental movement in the United States and many members of Congress and previous administrations. But that is the view they happen to have.

It must be a dilemma for the leader of the Conservative Party, who portrays himself as a “red” Tory, a new moderate, to be wrestled to the ground so often by a right-wing caucus that still has its heart in the Harris regime, that still would love to have Mike Harris as leader and not John Tory. I’ll be looking for the member’s response.

Mr. Barrett: The last speaker was asking for a response and made mention of Pollution Probe. As I recall, a number of years ago we saw the creation of Energy Probe, and I can’t recall whether Energy Probe was a spin-off from Pollution Probe—

Hon. Mr. Bradley: An environmental group.

Mr. Barrett: Well, Tom Adams and Energy Probe are not an environmental group, is what I’m hearing from across the way. I will point out, and the member may recall this—I quote Tom Adams, the director of Energy Probe. He indicated just last September that he “admired the Premier’s decision to close Ontario’s four remaining coal-fired generation plants rather than gambling with ‘cleaner’ coal.” I think that’s the position you’ve just been suggesting now with respect to coal. But Energy Probe research and Tom Adams conducted a survey of 403 coal-fired plants across North America. Whether Tom Adams is an environmentalist or not—that’s being debated back and forth—

Hon. Mr. Bradley: He’s an expert.

Mr. Barrett: He’s an expert. I agree there. Tom Adams has changed his position based on this evidence.

I have a further quote from a few weeks later, based on new evidence, and referring to the coal-fired generating plants: “From an environmental point of view”—now, he may not be an environmentalist, but he is taking an environmental point of view; I’m not accusing him of flip-flopping—“it makes no sense to shut them down and import large amounts of dirtier coal-fired power from the United States.”

2000

Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins–James Bay): I’m so glad to be among all of my colleagues tonight. I want to say that I’m looking forward to the enlightening discussion we’re going to have, following questions and comments, from my good friend the member from Niagara Centre.

Mr. Kormos: Don’t name any crooks.

Mr. Bisson: Oh, no, I can’t say names. I forgot.

The member for Niagara Centre is next. Don’t change the channel. You’ve been given what’s going to be on television. What’s more important is our friend Peter Kormos.

I want to say a couple of things, however, to this bill. We saw today in Thunder Bay, Ontario, yet another announcement of a mill that’s shutting down in northern Ontario, and we know the big reason is electricity prices. The government this afternoon said it’s not because of electricity prices but has everything to do with the mill not being one whose technology is up to snuff. The Premier is saying, “Oh, it has everything to do with the Canadian dollar.” He blamed everything but his own

responsibility when it comes to what happens with electricity prices.

We have with us tonight two fellow Steelworkers, Guy Bourgouin and Robert, both of whom are Steelworkers from northern Ontario. Robert works for Tembec up in northern Ontario in Hearst. He works in the woodlands operation. Guy’s the president of the local. They know why. They’ve had not one mill shut down in Opatatika, not two mills shut down because of Chapleau, not three mills shut down because of Kirkland Lake, but they’ve had a number of other mills shut down because of what this government’s doing when it comes to energy prices and also the issue of forestry policy in this province.

I’ve got to say to this government, you’d better start taking these people more seriously. I’ll tell you, the wrath you’re going to see in the next provincial election, the voter anger toward this government on the issue of employment, will be something like you’ve never seen before. I caution this government that you’ve got a chance and you’d better take it. If you don’t, you’re going to be in trouble.

The Acting Speaker: The member from Durham has two minutes to reply.

Mr. O’Toole: I thank the members from Niagara Falls, St. Catharines, Haldimand–Norfolk–Brant and Timmins–James Bay.

I want to go on the record by quoting Tom Adams, the executive director of Energy Probe, an energy watchdog. Listen up: “Consumers will end up paying more for the new technology but have little to show for it.” He says, “Right now, most consumers pay about 50 cents a month for their current meters. The new devices will cost \$8, and the price will rise.” He’s an expert. He’s been cited by many speakers.

Dave Martin—members should listen—the energy coordinator for Greenpeace Canada, echoes these concerns. Here’s his quote. “Don’t get me wrong. I think time-of-use hydro rates are a very good thing, and I’m glad these meters are going in, but smart meters are not a substitute for real conservation programs.”

So there you have it from two people who probably would not support Conservatives, because Conservatives deal with the fundamentals, that first of all you have to have a strong economy. That’s what we’re concerned about.

Like the member from Timmins–James Bay and the member from Parry Sound–Muskoka, I’m most concerned about yesterday’s announcement of almost 4,000 jobs lost and the announcement from weeks ago of almost 1,500 jobs plus 550 more from Cascades today. This is about families and their jobs.

Yes, it’s about the economy, and yes, it’s about the environment. There are ways to clean technology. I’ve referred to an expert panel’s report that said the main contributor to pollution is not the coal plants but the combustion engine. There was a report issued in 1994 and another one in 1996, which I have, that said they’re not dealing with the real problem. This is a smokescreen.

This conservation plan isn't a plan at all. I'm disappointed, and I'm surprised that there aren't government members smart enough to have figured it out.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate? The member for Niagara Centre.

Mr. Kormos: Look, Speaker, you frightened me with your intervention a little while ago. I have some trepidation. I just want you to know, Speaker, that should you feel inclined to give me guidance at any point during the next 20 minutes, feel free. I appreciate your counsel.

Interjection.

Mr. Kormos: My apologies. We need, of course, unanimous consent to stand down Mr. Hampton's lead, because he can't be here tonight.

The Acting Speaker: Is there unanimous consent to stand down the NDP leader's lead? Agreed.

The member for Niagara Centre has the floor.

Mr. Kormos: See what happened? You rattled me. I was supposed to ask for that unanimous consent at the beginning, but I was distracted. Now I'm suffering anxiety about making sure that I please you, that I don't run afoul of the rules. I understand now that I can't talk about crooks during the course of my debate. I can't refer to any member of the Canadian Senate. I can't refer to Conrad Black, who is alleged to have ripped off millions of dollars from the shareholders of Hollinger.

This bill is truly remarkable. I tell you, I have never seen a piece of legislation that bears the fascinating—this is a Ripley's Believe It or Not moment. This is something that those guys from down in Niagara region—multi-millionaires; the inventors of Trivial Pursuit—may well want to include in their politics version of Trivial Pursuit. Legislation, laws, tend to either prohibit doing something or require the doing of something. Do you understand what I'm saying? "It is forbidden to exceed the speed limit." "You are required to stop at stop signs." That's law. In all of the bills that we've considered here, over the course of three different governments that I've had the opportunity to serve, that's what legislation does. But Bill 21—consider.

I turn to schedule A. Does the bill say that there "shall" be regulations requiring persons etc., etc. "to provide such information" in the interests of conservation? It says "may." That's section 2. Next section, section 3: "may." Section 4: "may." Section 5: "may." Section 6: "may." Section 7: "may." Section 9: "may." Section 10: "may."

We move to schedule B: "To accomplish the government's policies in relation to its smart metering initiative, the minister, (a) may...; (b) may...; (c) may...; (d) may..." There's not a "shall" or a "shall not" in this book. "The minister may direct the smart metering entity..." "The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations..." If this government had written the 10 commandments, it would say, "Maybe you want to honour your father and your mother." It would say, "Maybe you shouldn't covet your neighbour's ass."

Mind you, there are going to be people who love this kind of legislation. Can you imagine an income tax act

that was prepared by this government? "Citizens may pay income tax." It's sort of the honour system: "You may."

2010

This is remarkable. Read the bill. It's not a long bill. There's not a "shall," not a "shall"—I think there's one "shall." That's like your House leader saying, "You may vote for this bill," when it comes to a vote on second reading. "You may do House duty tonight." This is incredible. This is a plan?

If these were directions to Peterborough, parliamentary assistant, you'd be up near Sudbury, because it would say, "You may turn right, but then again, you may turn left," or "You may decide to put the Hudson in reverse."

If MapQuest wrote directions like this, there would be tourists climbing all over each other's backs in Niagara Falls, thinking they were in Orlando, and people all over Whistler, B.C., thinking that they were in Montreal.

What an irresponsible thing to do. What an incredibly ineffective position for this government to take.

Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina): Talk about Conrad Black again, because that's more interesting.

Mr. Kormos: Rosario Marchese wants me to talk about Conrad Black. His interjection is now on the record, as Mr. Marchese says. I responded to him; hence, he's now on the record. It's more like, "My Lord, Babs, I think I might go to jail."

I'm sorry. It's unfair, because he's only alleged to have committed a crime, right, Speaker? He's only alleged to have stolen millions and millions of dollars. Barbara Amiel is only alleged to have bought millions of dollars worth of Louis Vuitton purses down on Park Avenue in New York City. And my Lord Black is only alleged to have spent how many hundreds of thousands of dollars of Hollinger money on Babs' birthday party? Did Alan Eagleson only allegedly rip off all of those hockey players?

Mr. Marchese: But he went somewhere.

Mr. Kormos: Well, no, I think not. He did time.

John Roth from Nortel only allegedly drove Nortel into the ground, taking with him millions upon millions upon millions of dollars, leaving so many senior citizens, your parents perhaps, with their investment plans bankrupt.

Tubby Black may or may not show up at his Chicago court hearing.

Mr. Tony Ruprecht (Davenport): Did he show up or not today?

Mr. Kormos: No. He was a no-show.

Where I come from—

The Acting Speaker: I'm wondering how it pertains to Bill 21.

Mr. Kormos: Speaker, you're right. You're 100% right. I allowed myself to get distracted, and I apologize to you, Speaker, because I know that that's a very troubling thing for you. I appreciate your mentoring. You have this avuncular attitude toward me, and look, I'm so grateful to you for it.

Let me tell you this: Down where I come from, the skyrocketing, out-of-control, upward-spiralling electricity prices are what concern people. As Howard Hampton has had occasion to say so many times, the utilization of electricity is increasingly inelastic. Smart meters—what do you do? You give your spouse a nudge at 2 in the morning and say, “Honey, it’s time to plug in the fridge”? Do we tell people living in homes that are forced-air heated, with the electric fan—a major electricity consumer; after the fridge that furnace fan is the second-largest single electricity consumer—“I know it’s February and it’s minus whatever outdoors, but what the heck, turn the furnace off for a day”? Or, once again, nudge, nudge, 2 a.m. in the morning, “Honey, do you want to go and turn that furnace switch back on?”

People are already incredibly cautious about how they use electricity. But to talk about this “maybe, maybe not” bill, which has no substance—there is nothing in here that talks about what kind of conservation programs this government is proposing.

Mr. Marchese: Smart meters—that’s it.

Mr. Kormos: Smart meters, which aren’t so smart and which I predict will probably not be made in Canada, never mind Ontario. There is a fortune that’s going to be made in the installation of them.

I tell you that the concern out there on behalf of folks is, one, meaningful standards in this—let me give you but one example; instead of this disgusting, pathetic, embarrassing, hollow, “maybe, maybe not” bill, a building code amendment as simple as this. Hear me out. I live in a 100-year-old house. So I’m crawling up in the attic, because to install a ceiling fan you need an electrical box and bracket that will support the weight of the fan. If you as a government amend the building code so that every new house has to have ceiling light fixtures that are of the type and style that can support the weight of a ceiling fan, you will have done far more in one sentence than this whole bill will do in months and years—as simple as that. We all know, of course, that a ceiling fan takes far less electrical energy than does air conditioning. Quite frankly, in most of Ontario, for most of the summer, a ceiling fan is adequate and will provide the comfort and relief that people want.

Those electricity prices that the government promised it was going to contain, that the Liberals promised they were going to contain—as Mr. O’Toole has said, what do you call somebody who purposely makes a promise they have no intention of ever keeping? You don’t call them people who are misleading. No, you don’t have to call them that. You don’t have to call them liars. You don’t have to call them prevaricators. You don’t have to call them mendacious. What do you call people who make promises they don’t intend to keep? As Mr. O’Toole said, you call them Liberals.

Let’s take a look at the impact of the Liberal ever-rising hydroelectricity prices in this province on the welfare of folks, their families and our communities, like our communities in St. Catharines, Niagara and Oshawa. Make no mistake about it. The thousands of jobs that

were announced—finished—gone today, in Dalton McGuinty’s Ontario, at GM plants in St. Catharines and Oshawa, are in no small part due to, among other things, the monumental increases in electricity costs. I, for the life of me, cannot understand why the Premier of this province does not regard that as a crisis.

Do you know what it means in small- and smaller-town Ontario to lose even 25 or 30 jobs, never mind 100 or 1,000 or 3,000-plus like in Oshawa? It is devastating. Within days, small business begins to feel the impact. The little shops, the little restaurants, the little delis and the little furniture stores—within days. When you take away those jobs—and don’t give me this garbage about attrition. We’re talking about jobs being stolen. Those jobs are probably never going to be restored.

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Let’s take a look at the multiplier effect. We know that for every auto job, there are seven other jobs—and I say to you that’s in addition to the auto parts industry, which, notwithstanding what some may well have said, is reeling in this province.

I’ll tell you what it means. I want to tell you about a fellow down in St. Catharines, Michael Andrade. If you’re ever in St. Catharines, you’ve got to stop by his restaurant, the Cool Runnings Eatery. It’s at 109 Welland Avenue, right across from the Beer Store on Welland Avenue. Mr. Bradley, is it the Rice Bowl? Is that the restaurant in that same plaza? The Rice Bowl is still there? Right across from the Rice Bowl, where the Rice Bowl plaza and the Beer Store are, on the other side, at 109 Welland Avenue, is Michael Andrade’s restaurant, Cool Runnings Eatery. He used to have a much smaller place up by the synagogue, just up the road from there in St. Catharines, and it was just a little two-table place in the back of a small Caribbean grocery store.

I’ve got to tell you, Cool Runnings Eatery, on Welland Avenue in St. Catharines, has some of the best Caribbean food I’ve ever tasted, and I eat a lot. I’m a big fan of food. I think that’s reasonably obvious to a whole lot of people. But the food is just outstanding. From the small little two-table operation he had up by the synagogue, he’s now moved into this new operation. There’s beautiful parking in front; not on-street parking, but off-road parking. I was in there just a couple of weekends ago. Jim Bradley, in whose riding Michael Andrade’s restaurant, the Cool Runnings Eatery, is located, is eager to get there. I particularly am a fan of the oxtail and the curried goat. I just think they’re delightful. They also have other things that I’ve tasted on the menu: the red snapper, the kingfish, the classic rice and beans, of course an array of hot sauces, ranging from hot to hotter and hotter, and Caribbean beer and Caribbean soft drinks. And there’s Michael Andrade, working hard—working real hard. He works long days. They’re open till 10 every night, the Cool Runnings Eatery.

With his girlfriend, Yvette Cousins, and his daughters, Dalia and Isabelle, these people serve some of the best food you’re going to find in Ontario. They do. And the prices are embarrassingly cheap. You’re not going to get

fed less expensively. It's all quality food; everything is prepared on the premises. There's none of this stuff where it's prepared by some food supplier and then frozen and delivered to the restaurant.

I'm a big fan, as you may well be able to tell, of Michael Andrade and the Cool Runnings Eatery, which I commend to anybody, at 109 Welland Avenue in St. Catharines. I urge people who have never had Caribbean food to drop by, and for those who have had Caribbean food, Michael Andrade at the Cool Runnings Eatery is going to top anything you've ever eaten anywhere else: jerk food, and every once in a while a special, something unique, and for somebody like me, something entirely novel, but inevitably good.

Here's a small restaurateur who has worked real hard producing the finest food product that anybody could ever be asked to produce. He's Jamaican-born; he's an immigrant—hard-working, like immigrants tend to be, sacrificing. The elimination of GM jobs in St. Catharines, smaller-town Ontario that it is, the elimination of a few hundred jobs at that west-side plant, is the equivalent of the elimination of 10,000 jobs, I say to you, in a huge metropolitan place like Toronto; it is. The impact is immediate. I just hope that small businesses, small entrepreneurs, those hard-working folks like Michael Andrade and his business, the Cool Runnings Eatery, which suffer from the high electricity prices in their own right—they have to keep coolers. You can't let food go bad. The smart meter is of no use. It's not a matter of saying, "Well, today's Tuesday. We'll let the meat go bad and turn the cooler off, but on Wednesday we'll plug it back in." It doesn't work that way. Sorry. It simply doesn't work that way when you're a restaurateur or running a deli. A place like Celi and Presti, down in Welland: I've talked about those good folks, the Ramundo family, so many times. You can't plug and unplug the freezer. You've got customers coming in. You can't decide, "Oh, well, we'll not air condition the joint today," even though it means that customers on a hot, sweltering summer day are not going to sit in and enjoy your services.

This government, with its head in the sand, pretends there's no crisis. And I say to you, Speaker, New Democrats know there is. I'm afraid. I'm fearful. We don't need this kind of fluff from these guys, this "maybe, maybe not" bill. We need real plans. Let's see them, Liberals.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and comments?

Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West): It's always a pleasure to follow my colleague from Niagara Centre. After all, when you follow the member from Niagara Centre, who needs cop shows like CSI? Who needs hockey games with recycled stars? The real-life drama is right here in the Ontario Legislature.

We're talking about energy conservation here, just in case anybody has forgotten. Now, most of us, as baby boomers, became familiar with energy conservation as children. How did we become familiar? When we left the room as children, our parents probably yelled at us,

"Turn out the light." It turns out that that Depression-era mentality, that frugality that we grew up with, was also a far-sighted conservation measure. So what started out as an admonition from our parents became a necessary science.

Our newer appliances in our homes allow such things as dishwashers to be turned on so that you can set them to come on after you go to bed. Programmable thermostats allow homeowners to reduce their energy consumption during peak hours. You let your home get cooler in the fall and the winter and maybe a little warmer in the spring and the summer when you're not in it. New compact fluorescent bulbs last for years. They light a room with the same intensity; they consume a small fraction of the energy.

My home has had a programmable thermostat for more than 10 years. I've used compact fluorescent bulbs for several years and I upgraded most of my appliances. You know what, Speaker? It really works. My energy consumption has dropped. By the way, my home in Churchill Meadows in Mississauga was the first in Churchill Meadows to have a new Enersource smart meter. Energy costs may be going up, but a little bit of good sense can keep your costs down.

Mr. Robert W. Runciman (Leeds–Grenville): So much of what this Liberal government does is public relations fluff, and we see it in so many areas. You know, Mr. Speaker, when you get up and express concern, as my colleagues have and as the NDP House leader has put his concerns on the record, we get accusations from the Liberal government. We heard the Minister of Tourism, and this is so typical of Liberal reaction to any kind of criticism from the opposition or others in the public. They try to tar you. They suggest that you're against the environment, in this situation. We're talking about the implications of this legislation and whether or not it is going to have any meaningful impact in terms of energy conservation. They try to suggest, "You are against the environment if you are against our legislation."

We see it in crime legislation or crime initiatives. If we suggest something with respect to what we believe could be helpful in terms of alleviating crime, we get accused of being a certain type of individual. The same thing happens when legitimate questions are asked about language policy: Those kinds of accusations are made by Liberals and some of their fellow travellers in the media. It's regrettable and certainly it's offensive to most Canadians and most Ontarians. But that is a feature of liberalism in this country, I'm afraid.

You know, affordable and reliable electricity has been a hallmark of economic development policy in this province by governments of all political stripes. That is now in jeopardy. We know it. We see it every day with the plant closure announcements that are coming forward, even though the Premier gets up and says, "Smile. Be happy. Nothing's wrong. It's just a minor adjustment. Forget about the families and the people who are going to lose their jobs." This is a major concern. We should all

be concerned about it and the Liberal government should be responding in an appropriate way.

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Mr. Marchese: I congratulate the member for Niagara Centre for pointing out the obvious, because he's read the bill. Most of the Liberal members, I'd wager, have not, and that's why they applaud any Liberal speaker who stands up.

Just by the mere title, it ought to make people suspicious. It enacts the Energy Conservation Leadership Act. This is reminiscent of so many bills that the Tories used to introduce when they were in power. I always used to say beware of the title, because what it contains on the outside belies what's really inside. That's what the member from Niagara Centre has done.

This bill permits, by regulation, cabinet to remove barriers to energy conservation, goods, services and technologies—permits. By regulation, cabinet can require public agencies to develop energy conservation plans in accordance with criteria set out in the regulations. By regulation, cabinet can require government agencies to consider energy conservation and energy efficiency as they procure goods and services and when making capital investments. All of the language speaks to “can” and “may,” as the member from Niagara Centre indicated, and it doesn't require anybody to do anything.

So when the Liberals stand and say how revolutionary this bill is and how far advanced they are by way of energy efficiency and energy conservation, they're not doing one thing. They're not dealing with the building code at all, to amend it to require R2000, the Canadian building improvement program or equivalent energy efficiency program. The Planning Act should be amended to permit municipalities to make energy efficiency design requirements a condition of planning and site approvals for new development. And we're not doing anything that they're doing in Quebec, where they're retrofitting so many buildings that are using inefficient energy such as hydro. This is the kind of stuff we need to be talking about, and this bill does nothing of it, which is what the member for Niagara Centre said.

The Acting Speaker: I believe we have time for one more question or comment.

Mr. Mario G. Racco (Thornhill): I wish to speak in favour of Bill 21. Contrary to the member from Niagara Centre, I see merit in the language that the bill is using. The word “may” applies to regulations and that is proper; that is the intent. In fact, this bill, when second reading is voted on, will be sent to committee. Surely the opposition will have an opportunity to change wording if they see merit. I would offer that the opposition parties would see merit in the minister using that language so that they have a better opportunity to make changes.

Having said that, though, what this bill really does is allow the creation of a new culture of conservation in Ontario. This is what we really need. For instance, there is nothing better that we can do than to reduce consumption of energy. In addition to that, as the member from

Spadina will appreciate, if we use energy at a specific time, it also helps us reduce consumption.

Of course, talking about smart meters, I am pleased to tell the member from Spadina that one of those companies that will be producing smart meters happens to be located on Racco Parkway in Thornhill, and I am very, very pleased that they will be able to create jobs—jobs that the opposition keeps speaking of. Yet when we try to create clean jobs, high-technology jobs, jobs that will pay good salaries, jobs that will stimulate the economy in Ontario and pay taxes, the opposition disagrees. I'm lost on this one.

The Acting Speaker: The member for Niagara Centre has two minutes to reply.

Mr. Kormos: First, I want to say to the member for Thornhill, Mr. Racco, who acknowledges that he's lost, that we understand, and if we can be of any help, you just call, just let us know. Look, it's late in the evening, and I appreciate that when you say you're lost, we'll be more than pleased to light some candles for you and lead you out of the darkness, which is where this province is going to be plunged, into darkness.

Let's make this clear observation: Nothing, nothing, zip, zero, nada, nothing in this bill talks about building code amendments. Some of them are so obvious, and that would be, quite frankly, such an interesting proposal and debate. We talked about the requirement that all new home building have electrical light sockets in the ceiling of the type that are designed to support ceiling fans as well. We had a fascinating article just recently, in terms of house design and the phenomenon of what's called thermal bridging, about the over-utilization of two-by-fours or two-by-sixes, because every time you've got a stud, you don't have insulation, and that literally transmits the heat out and the cold in. I have read fascinating stuff about basement construction and design: the new requirement that all new home construction be two-by-six, rather than even permitting two-by-four, which is certainly no more expensive, as I read in these articles, when you talk about the fact that you can have wider spaces between your vertical studs on a two-by-six framing rather than two-by-fours. You end up at least with the same cost, probably cheaper.

That would be a plan, but that's not what the government is proposing. This is an embarrassment from Dalton McGuinty's Liberals.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr. Ramal: Thank you for giving me the opportunity again to speak. This time I have more time to speak about Bill 21, the Energy Conservation Responsibility Act. I was privileged and honoured to listen to the Minister of Energy for almost half an hour and also to listen to her parliamentary assistant, the member from Peterborough, talking about the bill, about the important elements of the bill. I was totally convinced of the importance of this bill, unlike the opposition, who don't care about conservation, who don't believe we have a duty, a responsibility to educate the public, to create some kind of culture, a culture to conserve hydro, conserve electricity, because

we know the demand is huge and we don't have enough capacity to fill that demand.

That shortage of capacity was created by the negligence of the past government, who for eight years didn't pay attention to creating more energy and electricity in the province of Ontario. That's why our target now in this bill is trying to educate the people of this province to conserve, to give us the chance and ability to create more and build more facilities to fill our demand in this province.

I'm not just talking about the past government. When I go back to the NDP time, the members standing up tonight speaking about this bill, speaking about conservation, they don't care about conserving energy in this province. When in government back then, instead of connecting us with Manitoba electricity, they diverted money to invest in the rain forest in—what do you call it?

Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti (Scarborough Southwest): Costa Rica.

Mr. Ramal: In Costa Rica. Investing in our own forests was important, but we don't have energy today. Later on, 15 years later, we don't have energy. That's why we had the blackout in 2003.

This bill, and this minister, believe in conservation because it's the right thing to do in this province, because it puts us in the right direction to protect our environment, gives us a chance to participate. All of us as Canadians, as Ontarians, have a duty to help, to be a part of this task force to conserve hydro.

I had the chance, as I mentioned before, to attend an energy forum with the minister, and she was excellent. She travelled the province of Ontario when she was a parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Energy to educate people, stakeholders, schools, universities. She went to the malls, talked to all the people who entered the malls about the importance of conserving energy and explained which lighting we have to use. She explained about the technology, important technology to help us to reduce our consumption of hydro.

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Mr. Berardinetti: The Christmas lights.

Mr. Ramal: For instance, the Christmas lights. If we use LED, it will give us the same lighting and the costs will be about 1.5%; only 1.5%. They also don't create any heat, which might cause a fire. They're safe and also give us enough light, maybe more light, and the cost will be 1.5% only. Creating a culture of conservation is important.

I want to give you an example about London—Fanshawe, about London in general. The Thames Valley board, by following in the direction of the Minister of Energy, was able to save \$2 million on energy by changing light bulbs, boilers, weatherstripping in the doors, ceilings—many different elements that gave them the ability to save \$2 million, which went back into the budget so they can use it for different things. It's a very important step.

I know many people tonight, especially the opposition—the Conservatives and the NDP—are talking about

smart meters. I believe many people are listening tonight. Many people listened to them, and that's why many people out there are confused; they confuse them by sending a wrong message about the smart meters. The intent of the smart meters is not to create jobs for some company, not to favour some group of people or some technological people. The smart meter is important for this era, the technological era. The meter we have right now is 100 years old. It cannot do the job. The smart meter can read 24 hours, the timing of the consumption, and then separate the pricing, because every time has different pricing. I heard many speakers from the opposition speaking about forcing people and that people cannot afford it. The cost is going to be very minimum, and people are not going to feel it; they are going to save more. If they choose to follow the steps and they read the smart meter and take advantage of lower prices at lower-peak times, they're going to save more.

The member from Niagara Centre was talking about the guy who has the restaurant, with a freezer, a walk-in cooler, who has so much energy-using equipment. But you know, you don't have to turn it off and on. The smart meter will give them the reading night and day, and then this restaurant will definitely save more time and more money as we go on a daily basis.

I know many people are confused because of the messages coming from the opposition not telling them the right things. The right thing is about conserving energy, conserving hydro. The smart meter will give us that chance. As I mentioned, if you want to do it more, you can monitor it. You can take advantage of the time and use your laundry, use your iron, use your vacuum whenever you want to. If you don't want, automatically you get the discount too.

I think our government is on the right track. We keep investing in energy, producing more energy, unlike the past governments.

I want to tell you, we invested more than \$1 billion in the Niagara station in order to produce 1.6 billion kilowatts. It's an important step, and all of it is green energy, clean energy. It's very important.

I also heard many speakers talking about coal energy. All the statistics show us and all the experts in that field couldn't give us directions on how we can have clean energy that comes from coal generation. They must be closed, because it's important to protect the health of our people in this province. It's very important to protect our health, the health of the people who trusted us and put us in government. That's what we promised the people we would do, and we are going to deliver.

It's important to talk about the green energy. Clean energy comes from clean sources, like wind generation, wind turbines, water, nuclear. Our investment in the Bruce nuclear station is \$4.6 billion to create more than 2,500 megawatts, which is important to feed the demand of the people of this province. That is our direction. We are investing in our stations to create more energy to fill the demand that the people of Ontario are looking for.

I know many people were talking about closing factories here and closing places there. I heard the Premier this morning talking about it too, after the Leader of the Opposition asked that question. One of the elements is the cost, but not all of it, not all the facts; it's a part of it. The strategy of our government, our ministry, is to work with those factories, those industries, to see how we can maintain the jobs, preserve the jobs, with our support, with our investment. That's exactly why we are investing in the auto industry: to maintain many jobs in this province.

I know the question of GM is being talked about on a daily basis. That's not our fault; it's not because of our government. If it was our government, if it was Ontario, you wouldn't see the Toyota plant opening in Woodstock, you wouldn't see the CAMI expansion in Woodstock. You would not see Honda thinking about coming to Ontario.

According to all the statistics and studies, many companies want to come to Ontario. Ontario is the right place to open, the right place to invest, because Ontario offers good health care, good education and sustainable energy. You see, this government invested in energy, invested in health care, invested in education. Those elements bring all the companies, all the factories, all the industries to this province to invest.

Bill 21 is important. It's not going to be forced and we're not choking people with it. We said from the beginning that we're trying to create a culture of conservation by educating people. Education is the only way we can proceed. Our government, our ministry, is taking the right direction. We can see it.

I was in my constituency office the other day. We have a restaurant beside the office. One gentleman stopped me and he was upset about smart meters, because he had been listening to the Leader of the Opposition talk about it: "It's going to cost more to install." He came and asked me. When I explained to him, he was happy about it. He thanks our government, because we believe in the future, we believe in the technology. Technology is the right way. That's why we believe in the people of this province, that's why we're investing in universities and colleges, that's why we're investing in research and innovation, that's why we're investing in post-secondary education: because we want to create some kind of technological society to lead us for the next century.

I know the member from Trinity-Spadina doesn't believe in technology. They don't believe in updating our economy.

Interjection: Candles.

Mr. Ramal: Well, candles don't work any more. If you want to have a factory, you have to have energy. If you want to have technology, you have to create some kind of energy—sustainable energy, affordable energy. Many people are afraid about the cost. We said, yes, the cost is a great element. That's why we're bringing the smart meters into effect: to help us, to help the people who want to conserve.

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I think we're going in the right direction. We can see that when we go to events, when we talk to people, when we engage in talk. Many people came to us to ask for good government: "For a long time, we didn't have a government that listened to us." When we go to schools, people are happy because we've created stability among the teachers, the parents and the administration. Everybody is happy. Everybody is working together.

When we go to universities and colleges, they've told us many times that they are happy to be in that system, because for a long time they didn't have a government working with them, listening to them, investing in their situation.

The McGuinty government is investing in the community, but in a different way. I believe that Bill 21 is part of our vision, part of our strategy to build this province in a sustainable method.

Mr. Marchese: In a sustainable method?

Mr. Ramal: Yes, sustainable.

Mr. Marchese: Keep holding that candle.

Mr. Ramal: People many times talk about—

Mr. Marchese: Candles.

Mr. Ramal: You want to talk about candles? I used to work in a grocery store, and when the Conservative government was in power, we sold a lot of candles, my friend, because a blackout was expected every minute, every day. Since we've come to power, the candle doesn't exist. Now the candle is just being bought for special occasions, happy occasions, not a sad occasion. That's because we have a vision about electricity in this province. We're investing in this area.

I'm happy to support this bill, and I hope my colleague across the way will support us in our strategy, because we believe we're on the right track.

Mr. Marchese: You've got five more minutes. Don't give up your time. Don't give up.

Mr. Ramal: I'm not going to give up, because I believe in this cause. I believe in conservation. Do you know what? I'm going to keep talking because, hopefully, one time you are going to be convinced.

I know many people listen to us. I want to tell you something. Hopefully, they now understand the function of a smart meter, not how you've confused them for the last couple of hours. Smart meters are the right way to go.

We don't just depend on the smart meter. We also depend on continued education, on holding energy forums in the malls, the schools—wherever we go.

Mr. Marchese: Are you going to be spending money for education?

Mr. Ramal: I want to tell you something. That's why we were elected: to give our time and tell people what we think, tell them about our strategy. That doesn't cost money; it costs our energy, because we believe in this cause. That's why we're going to do it, not because we're looking for money. We're looking to the future of this province, to maintain the future of the province. The only way you can maintain it is by conserving energy.

Mr. Marchese: But you've got to educate the public.

Mr. Ramal: Definitely. But you know what? We wouldn't have to do this stuff if we had a government in the past that invested money in energy, but they didn't. They didn't do that. That's very important.

Also, when the NDP government was in power, and Mr. Hampton was the Minister of Energy back then, instead of connecting us with Manitoba, with a lower cost of energy, they went and bought land in a rain forest. Now we have a rain forest, but we don't have energy in Ontario. When you stand up, you should explain to the people of this province why, 14 years later, we don't have energy.

The member for Trinity-Spadina had a chance, but he's just trying to confuse the public. They have no vision. They don't believe in technology. They don't believe in clean energy. They're talking about closure, talking about this and this, but when they talk about a plan, I don't see a plan. What's your plan?

Mr. Marchese: But your bill has a plan, right?

Mr. Ramal: I believe we have a plan. It's a step in the right direction. That's why we're going to continue to be a great advocate in this government in terms of creating clean energy, green energy. We're going to continue educating the public about the importance—

Mr. Marchese: How are you going to do that?

Mr. Ramal: By talking today, by going to visit many locations, to stakeholders, by introducing special light bulbs, LED lighting, many things. Also, as I was listening to it the other day, our government and the federal government will invest money, will give you rebate money, if you change your windows.

Mr. Marchese: Are you guys doing that?

Mr. Ramal: I believe so. Yes, we do. I don't have it here, but it's already in a plan, my friend. You can go back and ask for it and you'll get it. You have to have an assessment of your house before you change your windows and doors. Then, when you change them, you'll monitor how much energy you save, and you get rebates from the government. It's just a plan. It's not in the bill that's before us; it's before this time. Anyway, it's in place. You can go back to it and check it and you can get a discount if you're going to change your windows and doors.

We are trying to educate people in this way. We have to—

Mrs. Julia Munro (York North): How much is it going to cost to change the windows and doors?

Mr. Ramal: Well, many people are doing it. Sometimes the door is falling apart and you have to do it anyway. If you have to change it anyway, it's a chance you have to take advantage of. I'm not telling people to go change them. If they have to change them, they have a chance to save some money. I'm not forcing people to change, but there's a way to save energy and also to save some money.

I'm going to go back to commend the minister for her hard work, for her conviction and her leadership in this cause, her leadership because she believes in it and is not

just doing it for political reasons. Before, when she was a parliamentary assistant, she travelled the province, and now I believe her parliamentary assistant, the great member from Peterborough, follows in her steps to continue the message to the people of Ontario, to continue educating people. I believe by educating we are going to create that culture we're looking for—the parliamentary assistant, the minister and our government.

Therefore, I believe we're on the right track. Before I finish, I wish that the Conservatives and the NDP would support this initiative and show leadership once on change, vote to support the bill and show the people of Ontario that Conservatives and NDP care about energy, care about conservation, care about the vision we have for this province to create more clean energy.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and comments?

Mrs. Munro: I found the previous speaker to be quite informative except for a couple of key issues that I think need clarification.

One of the things about the smart meters that I don't think he commented on was the fact that this is only for households, which represent about a third of the total usage in the province. While we're talking about the kind of personal cost that Ontarians would have to undertake, it's estimated to be initially in the area of 800,000 homes, which would be somewhere between \$350 million and \$400 million. People need to understand that that translates into about \$8 a month. When you start to look at the investment of the \$8 a month, and the speaker also referred to the fact that you now have the choice of undertaking certain household functions during the night to take advantage of the changes in the pricing structure—I think people need to look at the \$8 a month, the fact that they're going to have to adopt a nocturnal domestic lifestyle and the fact that they're going to have to invest in household appliances that have timers so they don't have to have that nocturnal lifestyle. I think it's really important to understand that a smart meter is only going to be effective if you're prepared to pay for all of those changes, both financially and otherwise. When you look at that kind of investment vis-à-vis the savings you're going to get, I think it bears a great deal more reflection.

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Mr. Marchese: I thank the member from London-Fanshawe for shedding some light on this bill. I remind him and his party that this bill is called the Energy Conservation Leadership Act, and I dare to venture that anyone who calls a bill the Energy Conservation Leadership Act—it suggests to me there is nothing in it, that it is anything but leadership, because if indeed there was leadership, they wouldn't have to say it or name it. Because there's nothing in it to suggest there's leadership in any conservation measures, they have to pretend there is, and that's why they call it the Energy Conservation Leadership Act.

There is potential for energy conservation plans to be developed for public sector agencies, but no details about when and no details about what the plans would require.

The provisions tying conservation and energy efficiency to government procurement are weak or non-existent. Furthermore, requiring public agencies to consider energy efficiency and conservation in making capital investments is hardly prescriptive. There is nothing in this bill that requires anybody to do anything. It's hard to believe we're going to send this to committee to discuss what the bill may or may not do, given that we're not debating anything concrete. There is nothing in the bill. There is nothing that says—for example, in Quebec, another province that is not short of electricity, Quebec engaged in a strategy to start retrofitting literally dozens of apartment buildings in downtown Montreal this summer. Why? Because like apartment buildings in Ontario that were built in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, they don't have very good insulation. Bring something like that.

Talk to us about how you're changing the building code to keep heat in and to keep the cold out. Talk to us about those concrete suggestions and we could say, "Yeah, there's something," good or bad, but you've got nothing, absolutely nothing, in this bill. It's not leadership.

Mr. Ruprecht: I found the comments by the member from London–Fanshawe very interesting. He was clear on one thing: He said Bill 21 is a major step, it's a major building block in Ontario's comprehensive plan to build a conservation culture in Ontario. The question that he answered to my satisfaction was, will Ontario benefit from smart metering? I think this is the major question that we would ask ourselves this evening. Will we benefit from Bill 21? Will we benefit from smart metering? The answer that the member from London–Fanshawe gave us tonight was very clear: a resounding yes.

I know he discussed the matter of the savings. He said that every dollar invested in smart metering will return \$1.50 in benefits. That's just the beginning. That doesn't even address the issue of a comprehensive energy conservation culture. He talked about the energy forum. Every member in this Legislature has been asked by the Minister of Energy—we are ready to come to every riding and support you in your determination to help every Ontarian to conserve energy. The member from Trinity–Spadina had the opportunity to meet with the Minister of Energy, he had the opportunity to have a conservation energy forum in his riding. Do you know what he said? Did he say yes to it? No; he said no. He said no. I want to tell you something interesting. I will tell you the reason why this member from Trinity–Spadina said no to the energy forum: because he thought politically that was not a smart thing to do. I hope you will change your mind.

Mr. Miller: I think I finally figured out the Liberal energy policy, and that is they're going to wait for enough businesses to close and then they'll be able to shut down those coal-fired electric generating stations because the demand will be reduced so significantly. Today we heard of the tragic closing of the Cascades paper mill in Thunder Bay, a loss of some 550 jobs. The primary reason for the shutdown was the cost of energy. Since January of this year, we see that some 10 paper and

pulp production mills have closed in Ontario, with the loss of some 2,300 jobs, primarily in northern Ontario, with a warning that another 12 mills are at risk of closing, which could mean another 7,500 lost full-time jobs in northern Ontario.

I understand why the member from London–Fanshawe was talking so much about—he seemed to be referring a lot to candles, because people are probably going to need candles if the government keeps following this electricity plan that they're on.

I note that the reason our energy critic, the member from Nipissing–Pembroke, is not here to do his leadoff speech is that he is in the community of Atikokan and in Thunder Bay, where I'm sure he's hearing and talking to the people about their energy concerns. Thunder Bay is very much concerned. I know that the town of Atikokan was not happy about the past Minister of Energy's comments referring to them as neanderthals; I've seen a number of e-mails regarding that comment.

One part of this bill that has been talked about a lot is the smart meters. I can see I only have 10 seconds, so I'll have to save that for another hit.

The Acting Speaker: The member for London–Fanshawe has two minutes to respond.

Mr. Ramal: I want to thank the members from York North, Trinity–Spadina, Davenport and Parry Sound–Muskoka for their comments.

I want to go back again to talk about the smart meter. You know, it's very important. I was part of the Bill 100 committee that travelled the province of Ontario listening to the people. Bill 100 opened up the partnership between the government and private industry to help us to create more energy in this province. I think that bill was a great step toward creating more energy. Today, we're talking about smart meters.

The member for Trinity–Spadina was talking about clotheslines. Some bylaws don't allow you to do many things, because the clothesline—I'm referring to what you said a few minutes ago. I just want to remind you about this issue.

The member from York North was asking about why we have to invest money: Why do we have to have a smart meter? Why? Because we live in 2005, a technological time. We have to update the technology. The old meters don't read anymore, don't work anymore. It's old technology. Smart meters have been used in Europe for the last 20 years. We're talking about important things about this issue. You can read the meter from your headquarters. You can price every hour from your headquarters. This is technology. I don't know why the opposition is still talking about it. You're talking about our initiative. We said we want to do it. We're not just going to talk. By 2007, we can install 800,000 smart meters, and hopefully by 2010 we'll install the whole province of Ontario. This is our commitment. We're acting, not just talking, because we believe in it. We want to work toward it by action.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr. Barrett: I'll speak to Bill 21. As we've heard, it's been titled the Energy Conservation Leadership Act. I'd like to address the importance of conservation as part of any responsible energy plan, a plan that reduces the impact on the environment. We have to recognize the importance of maintaining strong domestic supply, and of course any plan has to deal with the management of electricity costs. We've heard the debate this evening, and as yet I don't see much of a plan; I don't see much of a macro plan, certainly a plan that one would expect from the government of the province of Ontario.

I'd like to perhaps focus on the micro planning. I want to put it partly in the context of farming. The minister and a number of speakers have talked about what I consider this government's misguided coal closure program. If I have time, I would like to address that.

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Clearly, conservation is an important part of any energy plan, particularly in this day and age of dwindling supply, and not only the dwindling supply of electricity in Ontario. In North America, we have a dwindling supply of natural gas, and diesel and gasoline are threatened. Hence, in part, we see the headlines. I see the headlines in the House today about businesses closing, paper mills closing.

The problem is that after more than two years of talking, this government still has no energy plan to speak of, save for the direction toward shutting down 25% of the electricity in the province. That would be done in—we hear different dates—2007 or 2009, the closing down of coal-fired electricity generation. Meanwhile, we have a bill before us tonight, Bill 21, the main plank of which reannounces, for the umpteenth time, the imposition of smart meters on electricity consumers. It has me puzzled.

We've had two years of talking about this now, the imposition of mandatory smart meters. I didn't hear any figures tonight. We still really have no answers on how much this will cost and what the foreseeable results will be if this is implemented. I understand the initial cost will be high. I wish the government had worked this out and told people about it. Obviously, the cost will be transferred to the consumer, and that's a consumer who is already struggling to pay current bills, bills that are only heading higher as this government continues to cut off the supply of electricity.

I do raise the issue of our farm communities and rural residents. This bill is another example of how this government manages to continue to ignore the challenges—the needs, if you will—of rural residents and our farmers. It's well known that Ontario farmers are already having difficulty financing capital expenditures with the permission of the banks, let alone affording capital expenditures, due to very low commodity prices and soaring input costs like electricity, for example. Obviously, smart meters, in the short run, impose added costs on these people, who already cannot afford to pay their bills.

I'd like us to take a look at the situation with dairy farmers. A couple of years ago it was estimated that electricity costs run at about \$450 per cow per year. Margins

are very slim. Increases in costs for electricity will continue, and this can only add to the burden on this particular sector. Along comes the McGuinty government, telling our dairy producers, "We can help you manage your electricity costs with these handy mandatory smart meters that will be added to your monthly bill."

I don't know whether any members of the House have recently visited a dairy operation. You have to understand that dairy cattle cannot wait for the smart meter off-peak hours to be milked. Our former energy critic posed this question last spring: "How can a dairy farmer in Ontario shift demand to those off-peak times you talked about?" "The cows have to be milked and you're putting them out of business."

I will point out, however, that in a submission to the Ontario Energy Board just a few years ago, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture raised the issue of smart meters. I'd like to quote the OFA.

"Farms tend to use electricity more at off-peak times than other users." They divided farms into three categories: low-volume users, high-volume users and average users. "Low-volume farm electricity users will not be able to recoup costs of the change to smart meters. Higher-volume farm users may achieve substantial savings using technical methods that do not require smart meters. For most farms the residual savings after non-meter-driven changes will not warrant the cost of smart meters."

The submission goes on, and again quoting from that particular organization, "OFA believes that smart meters should only be required on accounts where the electricity use is so large that the residual potential conservation and load shifting gains after non-meter-driven savings have been implemented are sufficient to cover the costs of new meters and"—the accompanying—"billing systems."

There are other approaches; there are other ways. There's information I picked up this morning, actually, at the Ontario Federation of Agriculture annual meeting. This is a brochure from Hydro One. Again, in going through this, obviously we all realize how important it is for agriculture to remain competitive, just as it is with our auto industry and with our pulp and paper mills.

"Supply and price changes are coming to the electricity market that could affect farm energy input costs," and I think that's a bit of an understatement. I do advise anyone involved in agriculture that there are some videos—I understand they're very good—that give some helpful hints for on-farm energy conservation. I also know Hydro One itself has some excellent information. I make mention of this particular brochure. I would suggest to anyone who has an interest, there's a Web site, www.hydroone.com.

I would like to give a few examples of alternatives that are available for the more efficient use of energy, things that should be considered: obviously, replacing old equipment, renovating existing equipment or constructing a new facility if need be. There are energy-efficient alternatives. They do save money down the road, and we know down the road the cost of energy will continue to rise. It's so important for all involved in the business to

be involved. Any uninformed decisions today, especially given what we're seeing coming from the McGuinty government as far as rising electricity costs, and probably just a serious unpredictable energy cost—it's very important to be made aware of some of these helpful hints. There are a lot of things that can be done beyond relying solely on smart meters or on a piece of legislation like this to bring in smart meters.

Other considerations: There are two categories, load reduction and load shifting techniques. Load reduction gets a little technical, but that refers to replacing a piece of equipment such as lighting. I look at the lights in this particular room. I don't know whether many people watching this debate on television would realize just how many light bulbs there are in this particular room. I know there are four chandeliers. I might ask members opposite to join with me in counting the light bulbs. There are four very large chandeliers, as we in the Legislature would know. Each chandelier has, gosh, something like 32 lights, as I recall. There are four of them. There are 128 light bulbs right there. They're not the twisty light bulbs. I don't know whether these are energy-efficient light bulbs or not. I offer a challenge to this government: If these four chandeliers and these 128 light bulbs are not efficient, and we have speaker after speaker admonishing, lecturing and suggesting to the public how important it is for them to change their light bulbs to something a little more energy-efficient, they might take a look 40 feet up and decide whether those light bulbs have been changed or not.

That's only four chandeliers. There are a number of smaller chandeliers in this room, and this is one room in the Ontario Legislature, albeit a very large room. This room is actually as high as my barn, and granted, it will take a fair bit of electricity, if this is old-fashioned technology, to light this particular room.

Speaker, as you will know, and if anyone's counting, there are another 10 chandeliers in this room, smaller chandeliers. If you add up all the light bulbs, there are another 130 light bulbs. I look at the members' gallery and I look at the gallery behind the Speaker's chair; perhaps 40 or 50 other lights. We have something like 200 light bulbs here. I do ask this government, I ask the Legislative Assembly to determine whether this government is actually putting its money where its mouth is with respect to the particular room where—

Hon. Mr. Bradley: Talk to the Legislative Assembly, not the government.

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Mr. Barrett: As I've indicated, I challenge this government and the Legislative Assembly. Certainly we took the bull by the horns several years ago with respect to the well-lit bureaucratic office towers on Bay and Wellesley owned by the Ontario government, leased by the Ontario government, and measures were taken to eliminate those lights in the evening when people were not using those facilities. Again, I've left the challenge before the Legislature.

It's a challenge that we offer to our farmers. Essentially, given the direction of this debate and the intention of this bill, by changing light bulbs you save energy, you save electricity and you save money. I use that example to try to better explain what I consider a fairly technical term, load reduction. For example, all told, I guess there are about 200 light bulbs in this room. Maybe to make it easier, if you take 100 light bulbs, 60-watt incandescent bulbs, operating 12 hours a day, and replace them with 14 fluorescent fixtures—these would be 69-watt tubes; two lamps and a ballast—this replacement reduces the peak load by 5,000 watts. That's five kilowatts. So, if we have old-fashioned bulbs here, perhaps installed by Edison himself—who knows? I look at some of the paperweights. Mine says 1901. I know the member for Halton has a paperweight, a clamp, that says 1870. Whether the lighting goes back that far, I doubt it, but I do offer this. I'm in opposition. Our role is to raise issues and to present some ideas and information. I leave that with those who are responsible. In this room alone, according to this load reduction formula, we could replace the bulbs and reduce the energy consumption by 10 kilowatts.

The other very important concept, and this is a concept that is being communicated to farmers in Ontario, is load shifting. Essentially, load shifting involves operating non-essential equipment like feed preparation systems, for example, when very little or no other equipment is operating. Running feed systems when you're milking at the same time, and you've got all the lights and all the fans on in a barn, means that you have electrical demand at its peak. Obviously, this will result in a significantly larger demand charge than could be achieved by shifting the operation of the feed system to times when less equipment is operating. This will reduce the total peak demand for that month and obviously the associated charge.

This is some of the information. This was put together for farmers by Hydro One. I think there are some good ideas, some great ways for farmers to save some energy.

Replacement of equipment: Obviously, so many modern farm buildings have electrical motors, they have fans. If they're not up to date, replace them. I use the dairy example. There are some statistics here as far as energy savings. I'll just go down the list: milk heat reclaimer, 20% to 50% savings; well water pre-cooler or plate cooler, 25% savings; variable speed drive vacuum pump, 50% savings. If you put a timer on your water heater, you can save 15%, and with an energy-efficient water bowl or a water bowl that doesn't require any energy at all, the savings can be 10% up to 100%.

Greenhouses: I visited a number of very large greenhouse operations a few weekends ago down in the Leamington area. Again, savings in electricity of 10% to 50% can be achieved with modern refrigeration systems and controls. Natural and dual ventilation—natural and fan—can achieve savings of 80% to 100%. Any modern greenhouse, as opposed to a hothouse, has a boiler system. Again, with efficiencies, with more modern instrumen-

tation and controls, with heat recovery systems, you can achieve energy savings of 5% to 25%.

Within our farm economy, there remains a very serious potential for energy generation through renewable fuels, obviously wind turbines, something that is moving along quite vigorously down in the Houghton area. In my particular riding, you really can't drive around down there without seeing very large gravel trucks and cement trucks building these pads, which are something like 15 feet deep, to hold the turbines. As opposed to wind power, which is used to generate just electricity, solar can be used for electricity, heat and hot water. There are also biogas, biomass, and in some cases, flowing water.

Another point I want to make, and it's something that's completely ignored in this legislation, with its focus, really a rifle-shot focus, on smart meters is that there's no mention of net metering systems. Net metering is required for independent operators to produce electricity through wind or solar. Without net meters, they have no way of tapping into the grid and selling their electricity.

I would be remiss if I did not voice the question that many may be asking: Why is this government closing down energy supply when there is so much talk by this government about an energy shortage and ever-present and looming increasing energy costs? The province of Ontario is the only jurisdiction in North America that is actually reducing its generation of electricity. Conservation is crucial when you're operating in a challenging environment like that, where the powers that be are actually reducing the generation and hence the supply of energy—hardly a balanced or credible energy plan. Demand reduction is even more important when you've got a government like that running the place. Demand reduction, like conservation measures that I've heard others talk about this evening, is important, but so is supply, and as every householder knows, so is demand, and most importantly, so is price. It's simple economics.

The Acting Speaker: It being 9:30, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.

The House adjourned at 2130.

ERRATUM

No.	Page	Column	Line	Should read:
20	985	1	50	our highways. We are moving ahead with our fare card

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A list arranged by members' surnames and including all responsibilities of each member appears in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month.

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

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