

Theresa McClenaghan

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To: "Theresa McClenaghan" <mcclenaghan@execulink.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 15, 2005 5:41 PM
Subject: McGuinty on the EA

Hi Theresa,

Colin forwarded me the Blues from the Hansard. Howard is pushing McGuinty to the advice to an EA. McGuinty is alluding to some 'conversation' and rightfully saying that the OPA report is just advice. Any thoughts?

Nuclear Energy

Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): My question is for the Premier. Premier, people are demanding that you keep your promise to have a thorough consultation with the people of Ontario regarding your \$40-billion scheme to build new nuclear plants and refurbish old ones. This can only be done by submitting the recently-released ...

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(Mr. Hampton)

..Ontario regarding your \$40-billion scheme to build new nuclear plants and refurbish old ones. This can only be done by submitting the recently released Ontario Power Authority report to a full environmental assessment under the province's Environmental Assessment Act. The question is, Premier: Will you submit the Ontario Power Authority's plan to a full environmental assessment under the province's Environmental Assessment Act?

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Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation): We look forward to engaging all Ontarians in a very important conversation about the kind of supply mix that we need to ensure that we have a reliable supply of energy long into the future. To that end, we will have a full, open and public consultation, but I'll leave it to the Minister of Energy to describe that in more detail in the new year. I will certainly take the advice from the leader of the NDP in that regard, but I'm open to advice from others as well.

Mr. Hampton: Premier, one minute you talk about a 60-day consultation on the Web site. The next day you talk about a conversation. I want to be clear. This is a huge undertaking for Ontario. It has huge environmental implications and it has huge health and safety implications, not to mention the financial implications.

A real environmental assessment would subject the Ontario Power Authority's plan to a public hearing before a joint board of the Ontario Energy Board and the Environmental Review Tribunal. That was the approach of your predecessor, David Peterson, when he was presented with a similar plan by Ontario Hydro in 1989.

Premier, given the huge economic, environmental and health and safety issues associated with your \$40-billion scheme, will you do the same thing that David Peterson did? It was the right thing to do then; it's the right thing to do now.

Will you do it?

Hon. Mr. McGuinty: I know that the leader of the NDP has a real interest in these issues. I can provide him with the assurance that first of all, we intend

to learn-I don't know where you came up with the \$40-billion figure. If there's some specific proposal that he's had, for which he's prepared an accounting, then I'd ask him to table that. But if he doesn't have facts in that regard, I ask him to keep somewhat of an open mind as we engage Ontarians in a very important discussion.

The issue at hand is whether or not we should make decisions now and what kind of decisions those should be to ensure that we have a reliable supply of electricity into the future; what kind of a supply mix that we should have; how much effort should we put into conservation; how much effort should we put into renewables, for example, and how much into gas fired, and how much into nuclear. Those are important kinds of questions. We think that we should take the time to talk to Ontarians and in due course, the Minister of Energy will-

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Thank you.

Mr. Hampton: Premier, that's why we need a full environmental assessment as I've called for-not a conversation, not a discussion somewhere-a full environmental assessment.

Where did the \$40-billion figure come from? People looked at the OPA report and went out and talked with some people who were experienced. They said this will be at least \$40 billion. If you look at the Darlington experience, it may in fact be an \$80-billion financial cost, which boils down to about \$26,000 for every family of four in the province.

Premier, a full environmental assessment is the only way that we can ensure a full economic and environmental review of this plan happens before it proceeds any further. Will you submit the Ontario Power Authority electricity plan to a full environmental assessment? What are you afraid of, Premier? Your predecessor did it. It was the right thing to do then. Will you do the right thing now and submit it to a full environmental assessment?

Hon. Mr. McGuinty: If the leader of the NDP thought the full environmental assessment process that then Premier Peterson did was the right way to go, why did they cancel it? It's just kind of a basic question I would ask him to answer.

Just so we're clear, to the leader of the NDP: I don't consider the Ontario Power Authority's advice to us to be a hard and fast plan that we're somehow going to turn over to an environmental assessment process. I think what we need to do now is...

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(Hon. Mr. McGuinty)

.. I don't consider the Ontario Power Authority's advice to us to be a hard-and-fast plan that we are somehow going to turn over to an environmental assessment process. I think what we need to do now is work with Ontarians, building on that advice, to come up with a specific proposal that would be worthy of sending off to an environmental assessment process. So I'm not going to take the advice that we've just received, which is nothing more than advice-very important advice, worthy of attaching considerable weight to-and send that particular advice off to an assessment. Let's talk to Ontarians. Let's then develop a specific proposal and make that the subject of an environmental assessment process.