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39th Parliament

JOHN YAKABUSKI, M.P.P. - RENFREW-NIPISSING-PEMBROKE

Legislative Debate

November 17, 2009

Opposition Day Electric Health Information

Mr. John Yakabuski: I share the thoughts of Madame Gélinas from Nickel Belt, that it is in fact sad that we're here today at all debating this motion. Did we have to take it to this extent to try to get to the bottom of an issue that the Premier of Ontario refuses to do? It is regrettable that in spite of his posturing about accountability, transparency, a new way and his insistence on public inquiries and the like when he was in opposition, when he got the keys to the Premier's office, Dalton McGuinty changed. That is sad.

What we're asking for is that Alan Hudson and Sarah Kramer be called before the public accounts committee to testify as to what they know about what went wrong with \$1 billion of money that was spent, and much of it misspent, at eHealth.

The member for Thunder Bay-Atikokan wants to say that a lot of good things happen. Well, he'd better read and listen to the whole report of the auditor. For much of that money-in fact, most of that money-there are no results. We didn't say they did absolutely nothing for the six years they've been in government; it's been close-the auditor says it's been close to nothing.

Here we are, reaching this point in the Legislature today where we have to bring it to the House to try to get the Premier to do what the committee could have done only if he allowed them to do it. But the trained seals who man those committees-and you've got to understand the committee makeup here in the province as opposed to the federal government. We don't have the power, we don't have the majority in opposition to try to force the committee or to win a vote on committee. Only the government can do that.

You know, the other day I was talking to a senior member of staff here who was explaining the murals. The murals up in the corner of that ceiling that are somewhat exposed-they have been working on trying to remove the covering. You see, what happened was Premier Mitchell Hepburn, a Liberal Premier, had them covered over. He had the whole place whitewashed. The Premier of today is trying to repeat history. He wants to whitewash what the public accounts committee is doing. He wants to eviscerate the committee so that Sarah Kramer and Alan Hudson cannot testify.

The people of the province of Ontario want the facts. They want the truth and they deserve no less. I would say to the member for Thunder Bay-Atikokan and every other Liberal backbencher, I hope you're prepared. I hope you're prepared in 2011 to talk to

your constituents. The member for Thunder Bay-Atikokan talked about explaining to his constituents. Well, I hope they're prepared to explain to their constituents why the Premier of Ontario refused to allow the people access to the facts about what happened to \$1 billion and the role they played as legislators in blocking that access and that information for the people of Ontario.

We've asked for Sarah Kramer and Alan Hudson to come before that committee. I share the belief, unfortunately, that Madame Gélinas does, that they will not accept this motion and they will not support it. In fact, we're more likely to be able to get Stanley Kramer and Henry Hudson before this committee than Sarah Kramer and Alan Hudson, because the Liberal people on that side are going to block it. Shame on them.

This is your last chance to stand up for the truth, to stand up as backbenchers for your constituents and help us find out what happened to \$1 billion. If you're not afraid of the truth, then you have nothing to hide.