

The Empire Club Presents



**ANDY BYFORD,
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
OFFICER OF THE TORONTO
TRANSIT COMMISSION**

***WITH: REFLECTIONS: THE TEN BIG CALLS OF MY
TTC CAREER***

**Welcome Address, by Barbara Jesson President of Jesson +
Company Communications Inc. and President of the Empire
Club of Canada**

December 4, 2017

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. From the One King West Hotel in downtown Toronto, welcome, to the Empire Club of Canada. For those of you just joining us through either our webcast or our podcast, welcome, to the meeting.

Before our distinguished speaker is introduced today, it gives me great pleasure to introduce our Head Table Guests.

I would ask each Guest to rise for a brief moment and be seated as your name is called. Please, audience, refrain from applauding until all of the Head Table Guests have been introduced.

HEAD TABLE

Distinguished Guest Speaker:

Mr. Andy Byford, Chief Executive Officer, Toronto Transit Commission

Guests:

Mr. Josh Colle, Chair, Toronto Transit Commission

Mr. Michael Kobzar, Director, Sales Ontario, Siemens Canada Ltd.; Director, Empire Club of Canada

Mr. Remi Landry, Vice President, Major Projects Rail and Transit Construction, SNC-Lavalin

Mr. Patrick O'Neil, Vice President, Mobility Division, Siemens Canada Ltd.

Ms. MJ Perry, PhD Candidate, Theology (University of Toronto); Vice President and Owner, Mr. Discount Ltd.; Director, Empire Club of Canada

Mr. Jack Simpson, Director, Generation and Capacity Planning, Toronto Hydro

My name is Barbara Jesson. I am the President of Jesson + Company Communications and the President of the Empire Club of Canada. Ladies and gentlemen, your Head Table Guests.

I was riding the #2 to Bay Station just a few days ago when I overheard a conversation between a young man and a woman. With an increasingly colourful vocabulary, the young man was drawing comparisons between public transit in Toronto and his hometown pointing out the frequent delays and interruptions in Atlanta's service. The young lady he was with, preoccupied as she was with her phone, mumbled with disinterest something like, "Yeah, I hate it when we have delays here, too." The conversation continued to resonate as I thought about our lunch today, and the specific word that stuck out to me was 'when'. She said, "When we have delays." The inconsistency and in-

efficiency that characterizes the commuting experience for so many North Americans has diminished significantly for TTC riders in Toronto. By all metrics, the TTC is excelling. Delays in rider complaints are down. Rider satisfaction and on-time performance are up, and new fare systems and infrastructure have made it easier to get people where they want to go.

From a period of relative infamy in the early 2000s, the TTC has emerged as a global transit leader, recognized only months ago as the best public transit agency in North America. Please, note that when I offer this praise, I am not addressing infrastructure. That is a whole other discussion, but, given the hand he was dealt, our guest today has moved mountains, and he has done it with transparency and commitment.

I organize my morning routine around CBC's Metro Morning, and I am always impressed by the fact that Mr. Byford is there frequently, taking knocks on the chin, explaining delays, offering reassurances and updates, and providing frank, honest responses to criticism.

While Torontonians refuse to abandon the time-honoured tradition of TTC bashing, the reality is that our guest has given us a transit system that is the envy of other major North American centres. The realization of an effective and efficient and, most of all, safe transit system could not be more timely as transit has never been more important in our urban centres.

Our guest today may be leaving the TTC, but, rest assured, his efforts have put a system in place that is well equipped to meet these challenges and carry our city forward into the future. We are privileged to be joined today by Mr. Andy Byford,

CEO of TTC since 2012.

For years, Mr. Byford has led the largest transit agency in Canada, and the third largest in North America, carrying over 540 million riders on an annual basis. Over his time with us, he has been responsible for the delivery of safe, punctual, reliable bus, streetcar, SRT, subway and Wheel-Trans services.

From 2009 to 2011, Mr. Byford delivered service to a million customers a day on Australia's largest transit network as Chief Operating Officer of Rail Corporation in Sydney. From 2003 to 2009, he held the positions of Operations Director and Operations and Safety Director with UK Railway and South Eastern Railway Limited, UK. Please, join me in welcoming Mr. Byford to our podium.

Mr. Andy Byford

Good afternoon, everyone. The first challenge is to make sure that I say what an honour it is to be standing here at the Empire Club of Canada. For those of you who were not here the last time I was here, when I got up, I said, "It is a great honour to be here at the Canadian Club." I am so glad to have gotten over that first hurdle. It is all these maple leaves they threw me. It is great to be back here at the Empire Club, and not least to be back in this fabulous room where, not so long ago, I was very proud to be awarded the IABC's award for the Communicator of the Year, which my very good friend and colleague, Brad Ross, put me up for, though I think, actually, you were a more worthy recipient of that. That also was in this

beautiful room. Brad, I hope in my few words today I prove worthy of that award. You will notice, I am not standing at the dais today because I just thought what might be more interesting is, rather than me read out a speech, to actually talk about ten seminal phone calls that have really framed my time here at the TTC.

But first just a bit about, in some ways, about how I got to be here on stage, today. MJ, one of the most persuasive people I know, apart from my wife, was saying to me from the start, "We must get you back to the Empire Club." At the time, when I accepted this honour of talking to you again, I did not know that I would be going to New York. In many ways, the coup for you is you get my swan song and in what is going to be a very busy next few weeks. There are ten things I would just talk about. It is great to see so many familiar faces in the room, although I am somewhat thrown by the fact that my boss, Chair Josh Colle, is here, and one of my commissioners—and forgive me if there are any others in the room—Commissioner Joe Mihevc, so I am going to have to revise what I was going to say somewhat radically. Josh and Joe, thanks for coming.

Ten seminal calls, and some of this is probably familiar territory to you, but then I will get on to the more interesting recent stuff. Call number one would have been the call that brought me here in the first place. I was in Sydney enjoying life, trying to avoid being stung or eaten or bitten, and got the call to come to Toronto. I have never regretted that call. Every time I go back to Australia—I have been back a couple

of times. I love the place. As soon as you arrive at the airport in Sydney, you feel like you are back home; it is a great place, but I have been back a few times and do not regret it at all. This has been the most exhilarating, meaningful—at times frustrating—six years of my professional career. Ultimately, I have loved every minute of the past six years.

When I think back to why I took this job—and I took the job for three primary reasons—which, again, I may have mentioned before. Number one: Happy wife [means], happy life. My wife wanted to come back to Canada. She is from Ottawa. She is Canadian. The two primary reasons were: Number one, I really wanted to stretch my own experience. I am a railway man by background, as you heard from the kind introduction. I wanted to expand my knowledge to the five modes that we have here at the TTC. The main reason for coming was because I did see a golden opportunity here. I saw an excellent company that had been run by really illustrious predecessors, other chief general managers before me and who had bequeathed to me a very good legacy. I walked into a position of number two, actually. I was the Chief Operating Officer, if you recall, taking the position to which I was appointed, by Gary Webster, who was the Chief General Manager, at the time.

Gary brought me in because he recognized it was his call, so that is a big call. He knew that something needed to be done about customer service at the TTC. That is what I set about doing as a Chief Operating Officer.

Those first three months were very interesting, as I gauged

what needed to be done, looked at what worked, what did not work, and planned out, really, what I was going to do, if I got the permanent job of Chief General Manager when Gary retired.

That was the plan. That was supposed to be what happened: One year of shadowing Gary and then taking over after that. As you know, that is not exactly how it panned out. After just three months, I was elevated to the top position of Acting Chief General Manager, to begin with, and then subsequently renamed as Chief Executive Officer.

What I have seen, though, in that first three months as the COO was that there was way more to do than the challenge I thought I was coming into. For starters—and I suspect these words will come back to haunt me—I have never been in such a political environment as Toronto. People have already said to me, “Wait until you get to New York. At least politicians get on here, generally.” It is going to be quite the political challenge when I get south of the border. I had seen enough to know that we needed to do way more than the obvious things.

We did various things. We undertook a quick wins program, cleaned up the subway, cleaned up the trains so that they did not have garbage going up and down all day; we tidied up the collectors’ booths. We did a lot of work in terms of introducing debit and credit facilities in collector booths, which was kind of crazy, but, up to that point, you could not do that. There was a lot of what I would call ‘quick wins’.

I think what really struck me in that first three months was the fact that the real challenge was way bigger than that, again,

and it was about building on Gary's excellent work and that of people like the legend that is David Gunn and a couple of Chief General Managers before him. It was obvious that what was really needed was a comprehensive, top-to-bottom modernization of the TTC. That would be really call number two.

The first call was coming to Toronto in the first place. The second call, and in somewhat traumatic circumstances, was the call that Gary and I received from a committee room at City Hall saying that Gary was out and that I was going to be put into an acting position. That was a very difficult time, obviously, for poor Gary, but it was a very difficult time for me, also, because I thought I had the luxury of a year shadowing my former boss to get to know who is who, what is where. I did not even really know the system. For Gary, it was the end of a wonderful 37-year career, and it should never have been ended like that. We are where we are.

I was elevated to the top position and set about, with my team, my executive team, and we knew that what we needed was a comprehensive modernization plan because, remarkably, there was no such document. There was no corporate plan. We put it together. It was going to be a five-year plan to deliver a transit system that makes Toronto proud. That was the vision we came up with. We put together a series of key performance indicators to keep you, the customers, apprised of what we were doing on a day-to-day basis, warts and all. Even if we had a bad day, you got to see what the statistics were like. This plan was built around seven key

objectives to tackle every single part of what was a good, but somewhat old-fashioned, company.

Effectively, the way I describe it is we were addressing three key needs. We were upgrading infrastructure, which in many ways was very old-fashioned: There was old 1950s signaling on quite a major part of line one, and there were very old streetcars that were beginning to see the ends of their working lives. Second, the SRT, Scarborough Rapid Transit, was scheduled for replacement—more on that later—and streetcars that were, to a certain extent, held together with duct tape, literally, by what I call my miracle workers. A lot needed to be done, and that plan needed to address an overhaul of infrastructure. Processes were steam driven. They were the most archaic processes behind the scenes. No wonder the company could not have been as dynamic as it wanted to be in terms of offering excellent customer service. The third challenge, the prevailing culture, was a very militaristic top-down hierarchal, white, male-dominated structure that had seen the company well in previous years, but it was by no means fit for purpose back in 2011. That was really what we set out to do in that second call, an absolute focus on modernizing the TTC. In doing so, we were also embracing five megaprojects: We were offering a new streetcar fleet and ATC automatic train control; we were building the Spadina subway extension; we were rolling out Presto; and were embracing that new culture.

That is what we set about doing. As I got into my job, it was obvious to me that this was not going to be as easy as

I thought because, yes, we got the plan; yes, we were starting to make some difference and were getting some positive feedback with the various quick wins that we had undertaken. But, already, I started to fall foul of and encounter the politics of the day.

I guess call three that defined my time at the TTC would be various calls from former Mayor Rob Ford, rest in peace. I got very used to phone calls at 2:00 a.m. and even 3:00 a.m. from the mayor who, to be fair, was advocating for his constituents.

So often my phone would ring. My wife would say, “Don’t tell me, it’s Rob Ford.” Sure enough, he would come on the phone. I will always remember he would always say to me, “Hi, Andy. It is Rob Ford, Mayor of Toronto.” I would say, “I do know who you are. What do you want? It is 3:00 a.m.” Invariably, he would say to me, “Buddy”—because he would always call you buddy—“I am standing at the corner of X and Y, and I have got someone here who wants to know where their bus is. Can I put them on to you?”

“Yes, Mr. Mayor, put them on.” The person would say, “I have been standing here for 10 minutes, and my bus still has not got here.” How the hell am I supposed to know where that bus is? One thing I have learned in 28 years of working in transit is the art of winging it. What you would do is just say, “We have just had a bit of a problem on that route. There is traffic accident. It will be with you in five minutes.”

The person would then say, “Oh, thanks so much. Thank you. I really appreciate that.” Of course, the mayor was very

happy with me because I bothered to take the call.

Of course, the other big call from the mayor was about a football game. We all remember that there was all the big controversy about taking the bus from the football field where there had been a big punch-up between the mayor’s team and another team, and we were ordered to get a couple of buses to take the football team back to Don Bosco Catholic Secondary School, which, of course, then caused a massive political row. I remember thinking that I had only been here a short time, and I remember thinking when, initially, I had no idea what the mayor was talking about when he asked me where the bus had got to, “How the hell have I got caught up in this big row about a football team and a bus?” To be fair, he did not ask for it; it was the police that had asked for it. Anyway, I just remember struggling somewhat with how I was going to answer that to the media who obviously wanted to know whether I was complicit in ordering that bus, which I was not. That is call number three.

Call number four is a type of call, and these are the calls that you never want to get. They are among certain calls that I got from Transit Control. And one of the things I was just saying to my lunch guests was that, when I finish at the TTC, I will have a brief period—it will be a wonderful period—of four weeks before I go to New York, with no phone. That is going to be so nice, not least because you are not getting calls about this and that, but also because, as a transit CEO, you never forget that you are the person, ultimately, with that accountability, and you dread certain calls. In my time at the

TTC, I have taken very difficult and disturbing and tragic calls.

Just a week into my tenure, if you remember, one week into my tenure, I got a call from Transit Control saying a collector has just been shot through the window at Dupont Station. That is the kind of call you do not want to get. What do you do? You mobilize straight away. I was straight off to Dupont for a quick check to see what was happening, to find out the facts. And then I was straight off to the hospital. The good news is that the collector survived, and he is well on the road to recovery.

Another call of this type was, remember, from Transit Control concerned the infamous poonami down at Union Station where a wall of foul water hit the contractors because they managed to go and break a water main, and that flooded Union Station. Since then, we have had two further calls, again—the kind of calls you do not want to take—involving colleagues of mine at Yorkdale and then, subsequently, at McCowan Station. Ultimately, they are the calls you do not want to take, but, certainly, I would see them as also being calls that define my time here. What that did do for me more than ever—and I say this as an ex-safety director at one of my former companies—was it reinforced more than ever the need to never, ever relax. Peter Sloly there knows, as a former senior police officer, that you can never relax on that kind of thing. I know, certainly, going to New York, the specter of the worst possible call and a major incident or some kind of terrorist attack is something you never forget about. You are always

mindful of the need to exercise due diligence.

The next calls—there are two of them—under what I call ‘call five’, would be big calls that we made. The first one is very topical because, in just 13 days, the Toronto–York Spadina Subway Extension will open, the Line 1 extension up to York University and to York Region. It is no exaggeration to say that is just stunning. Wait until you see it: Six new stations, 8.6 kilometres of track, and not any old stations; these are Wi-Fi-, Presto-, cell-equipped stations. The train service itself will be of the new automatic train signaling system that we have been progressively installing on the west side of the Yonge-University-Spadina line. Even now, today, we have got ghost trains running, and the trains are being driven by the press of a button. You wait until you see that TYSSE. It is just stunning.

The big call was, of course, back in 2015, when I had to take the very difficult decision to remove the project management team and bring in Bechtel, who are an American construction company. That will prove to be the best decision of my professional career because, without that change, the TYSSE was headed for, at best, quarter four of 2018—more likely quarter one of 2019. Bringing Bechtel to work with the existing management team and to really focus on getting a 2017 finish, which to me, was the only acceptable alternative, will stand the test of time and, again, you wait until you see it. Come along and have a look December 17th, 2017.

Then, on that same vein, another big call was actually made by one of my chief officers, Mike Palmer, who is the

COO, and that was a call to say time out, time out on the signaling system that was being installed, which was hopelessly overcomplicated in the way that it had been set up some years back with far too many contractors and far too many complex interfaces. That again, was a project that was heading for big trouble, was not going to deliver the scope. And it was not going to deliver on time, on budget. We simplified things. We simplified the contracts, and Alstom, who are now our basically primary contractor, will deliver that signaling system to TYSSE on time and on budget. And then we will finish the job off by going around to Finch by the end of 2019. I think that is a real achievement because that project, again, was in big trouble. Also, this will be the first major brownfield installation of this system anywhere in Canada. It is a real triumph to do that and to overlay that on an existing railway—never easy.

Those were big calls we made. The next one was a call I made. This was somewhat controversial because probably the most complex and enduring and controversial issue I have dealt with is guess what? The Scarborough subway. That has been a bit of an albatross around my neck in many ways because everyone has such a polarized view. Should it be an LRT? Should it be a subway? I found myself, in my tenure, accused of having misled council, which is a very, very serious accusation to be made against a public servant and one that cut to the quick of everything I believe in and wounded me terribly because that is just not who I am. I would never, ever set out to mislead council. What we did was we prepared for a council debate where it was obvious there was going to

be a resurrection of a discussion about whether it should be a subway or an LRT. What I am going to say is this, for the record—absolutely and funnily enough, my Chief of Staff is here in the room with us: People, still, to this day, say that the briefing note was prepared for the mayor. No, it was not. The briefing note was prepared for me by my Chief of Staff period. There were problems with the way the note was subsequently disseminated, but that was not in any way Machiavellian or conspiratorial. We have learnt the lesson from that, but that was probably the low point of my TTC career. I could not believe it when I read the paper and found that I was being accused of misleading council. My big call, that big call, was that day of reading that in the paper. I called the Ombudsman, which is unprecedented, because I was phoning her, the person you do not want to mess with. I was phoning the Ombudsman to say, “I would like you to investigate me.” Why? Because I was super-confident, totally confident that not only would I be personally vindicated and exonerated, but that the TTC had absolutely nothing to hide.

That request of the Ombudsman was not agreed to because she felt it was outside her jurisdiction, and you know the rest. The AG (Attorney General) subsequently got involved. The AG investigated it and did, indeed, duly exonerate the TTC. Yes, we made some mistakes, but there was no malicious intent, and I am glad to say that I can leave this city and head off to New York with that having been cleared.

We are on to call seven, then. There have been lots of these calls. Anyone here from Bombardier? No, okay, but

I am aware that the cameras are rolling. We have had lots of phone calls, as you might imagine, with Bombardier on the much-vexed subject of our streetcar order. We currently have 51 of these wonderful beasts running up and down through town, particularly, going very well through King St., actually. Thank you, Jeff, for your support and leadership on that.

The Scarborough subway was probably the most concerning and troubling time of my tenure. Without question, the new streetcar order has been the most frustrating because the sad thing is they are fabulous vehicles. The customers love them. They do a great job. They carry the masses. They are Presto equipped. They are air conditioned. They are low floor, so they are accessible, but we just cannot seem to get them built to the right quality level, and we cannot seem to get them built to the right quantity. Anyway, we will get there. By the end of the year, we are supposed to have 65. We will see about that. I will be talking to my board next week about what we think the end-of-year figure will be, but, ultimately, the one thing I am proud of is the fact that we have never let Bombardier off the end date. By the end of 2019, all 204 vehicles will be introduced into service. Obviously, the challenge for Bombardier is it gets ever harder as you are running out of time on a fixed timeframe.

You have got to build even more, even more quickly. That is their problem. That is their challenge. What we have been pushing for is now that they are not building LRT vehicles for Metrolinx, now that they are not building—thank goodness—subway cars for New York City transit, they will have plenty

of spare—that is going to get me into trouble right? Scrub that. They will have spare capacity at Kingston. We have already said, “Why can you not put on an extra production line at Kingston?” We will see. To be fair to Bombardier, once they get it right, they really get it right. We also have Bombardier trains. The rocket trains on Line 1 are delivering Asian standards of reliability. They can get it right. I just need them to do it more often. Three more calls. Next one is a set of calls from the union about things that we have done that are controversial, but they were the right things to do. We did bring in new work practices. Remember, I said the artwork practices were somewhat archaic. We brought in a one-person train operation on our Line 4, Sheppard. We brought in contracting out.

We have contracted out cleaning of washrooms, garbage collection, bus service lines. Again, these are highly controversial, but I felt they were the right things to do. The most controversial of all: Random drugs and alcohol testing, which is the norm in the UK, in Australia, and where I am going in the U.S., but that is highly contentious, but I stand by what we have done. It was the right thing to do. Again, back to that former safety director in me: If you know that there is something going on, and you do not act on it, that is guilty knowledge. If you do not take a duly diligent approach to things, that is a go-to-jail card. We knew that there were issues—only a tiny, tiny percentage of staff. Most of them are good as gold, but we could not ignore that. I am proud of the fact that we did tackle those and other difficult issues

during my tenure.

Call number nine was a call that I kind of dreamt of for five years. When we launched the corporate plan—and there was a bit of kid psychology involved because what we said at the time was that if we cut out the silly stuff and if we up our game and if we pull together as one team, we could get the TTC back to being number one in North America. This was to 83 employee town halls, so it was a somewhat skeptical workforce who, initially, thought, “Who is this guy? What does he know? He has only just got here.” What we said was if you do those three things—cut out the silly stuff; up our game and improve performance; pull together as one team—we can get the TTC back to being number one in North America. That is the prize. We came very close, actually, to winning that in 2016. Minneapolis won. I have to say, I said to my exec—I am not being funny—“If Minneapolis can win it, we can win it. It is a way bigger property.”

The day we got the call from APTA to say we have won the Outstanding Transit of the Year Award was the absolute highlight of my time at the TTC, not for personal satisfaction, but I wanted it for the frontline staff, the much maligned TTC staff who work day in and day out and against whom the criticism is just relentless. We wanted it for them. I am so proud that we won that award for them. There was a lot of scoffing in various parts of the media and parts of the city, and, to be fair, some skepticism on the parts of our traveling public, but as Brad rightly pointed out, APTA do not award for perfection; they award for action. What they said was, “Over the last

five years, you and your team have performed sterling work in tackling all of these various issues and in modernizing the TTC.” That is why we won it.

I sent a note to my staff to say do not be demoralized by the reaction. Are our customers happier? Yes, record customer satisfaction. Are the staff more engaged? Yes, because we measure that, too. Do our peers think we are doing a good job? Clearly, yes, because they voted for it. I said, “Ignore the scoffing. Let them scoff away. We deserve that award.” The best thing, for me, was the fact that we also did a Vox pop up of all of a load of our employees—not top managers, not senior top brass, but janitors and collectors and operators and mechanics—and we asked them one simple question: “How did you feel when you heard that TTC had won the APTA Outstanding Transit of the Year Award?” Without a single exception, they said they were just puffed up with pride, that finally the TTC was getting some recognition and finally someone was appreciating the job that they do, day in and day out, which is why when I went down to Atlanta, I dedicated that award to them. It is their award.

Then, that takes me full circle. Call number ten is the call from New York. I am truly poignant about leaving. I have loved every minute of working here in Toronto.

It has been an honour to lead the TTC, and it has been an honour to serve you, the people of Toronto. I have been lucky in that I have got a great team. A number of my executives are here today. The TTC is a phenomenal organization.

It is a much-maligned organization and a much-misunder-

stood organization. I am also lucky in that I have had supportive board members. I have also had three chairs who have always backed me: Karen Stintz, Maria Augimeri and, now, Josh Colle, on whose watch this company has introduced something like 1,000 new vehicles. We are really making progress. Josh, thank you, and, to Commissioner Mihevc, thank you for all the support.

It has been interesting seeing what people say when they hear I am going to New York. The general reaction is either congratulations or, “Are you completely nuts? Are you sure you know what you are doing?” I am going really for two reasons: Number one, because it is nice to end on a high record of Outstanding Transit of the Year and the soon-to-be open Spadina extension, which really will be such a triumph when we get that thing open. Also, number two is that any transit professional really aspires to do one of the big three jobs, which are, I would say, Hong Kong, London or New York. New York are not going to ask twice.

In closing, I am looking forward to it. We will see how it goes. The way I look at it is that someone has got to do it. It is the biggest, toughest challenge in transit right now. Someone has got to give it a go. Hopefully, it is the guy with the funny accent who is going to go in.

I do not know what they are going to think of having a Limey tell them what to do, but I am quite looking forward to it. It has been my honour and a privilege. Madam President, it has been an absolute honour to once again speak before this august institution. Thank you.

Questions & Answers

Q: Mr. Byford, the TTC is a unique organization that still does not contract out a lot of their work. You still have a lot of your own carpenters, your tile setters, gardeners. A lot of organizations would find it strange that you would employ people to do that rather than contract it out. Maybe you could talk about the culture or the theory behind the decision to do it that way.

AB: We have contractors and things. Again, it was highly controversial. Actually, it was in the run-up to the 2014 CBA, collective bargaining agreement. At the time, I took the view that there are some things that are core business, which are clearly moving people from A to B on safe, reliable, well-maintained infrastructure and vehicles. And some things just, to me, are not core business—cleaning washrooms is not exactly our core business, or picking up garbage. Probably the most controversial item was we certainly contracted out what are called the bus service lines where the buses are brought in at the end of the day, and they are fueled, and they are swept out, and then they are washed and lined up ready for the next day.

That is actually contracted out. I do not know. At the end of the day, it may seem like an odd model.

There are advantages to being able to call upon your own in-house resource. What I would also say is a lot of these people are highly motivated and very capable at what they do. I think it is a challenge for the future, maybe for my successors to, again, look at what you might call a make or buy decision. What I would say is we have got people in different sections of the TTC who truly excel at what they do, so I certainly do not think contracting out en masse is a panacea. I think it is the kind of thing you do on a one-for-one basis. You look to see what the individual case is.

Q: What would be your recommendation to your successor, and the city in general? Where do you see the TTC and transit in the GTA moving in the next five, ten years?

AB: On specific advice to my successor, whoever that may be, would definitely be to maintain the course that we pursued as an executive. I think you have failed as a leader if when you leave, the culture slides back to how it used to be. We have really put a lot of work into culture change, into focusing on good people, not letting bad people off the hook—the errant few. We have worked at recognizing and rewarding quality people, of whom there are many. We have tackled a lot of issues around diversity. We have now got six women on our executive. There would never have been a woman on the executive five years ago. It is now six and six on merit. I definitely hope that the change, the

culture change where you look to catch people doing things right rather than catch them doing things wrong is maintained because there is only one way to deliver world-class service, and that is through motivated people who want to do a good job, not through coercion, which has often been tried in various transit companies where I have worked—that is the big-stick way of managing. It does not work. It does short term. That is not how you get sustained improvement. I definitely advocate, whoever takes over, please, maintain that approach because I think it is working. That is one of the reasons we have very high levels of customer satisfaction.

Secondly, keep the pressure on about two things. One, relentless attention to detail and relentless work on improving the underlying infrastructure. This means keep maintaining track; keep renewing drains; keep renewing HVAC. As Josh once said, these are sort of the unsexy stuff that does not get a photo op, but you have got to do it. You have got to modernize the TTC in that respect. Secondly, keep advocating for expansion. We need a waterfront LRT. We need to get a solution for Scarborough. The Scarborough subway is being taken to the 30% design mark. The SRT will not be able to keep going forever. Then, finally, keep advocating for a relief line, which, as I have said since the day I got here, is a priority for the TTC. That has got to happen, or, even with rocket trains and ATC signaling, even with

the additional capacity that brings, by 2031, Yonge and Bloor will be unable to cope.

Q: Andy, I wonder if you would care to comment on the recent Toronto Board of Trade proposal that there should be one giant transit agency covering all of the GTA. Do you think it is practical, and what would the advantages/disadvantages be as far as you are concerned?

AB: Do not forget, my background is London Underground, and the Tube comes under what is called Transport for London, so the concept is familiar to me. Actually, where I am going, New York City Transit is one of five agencies that come under the MTA, which is the Metropolitan Transit Authority. I think there are models for that, and there are some advantages to that because you can get economies of scale and look to have standard ticketing, standard scheduling, common standards in terms of quality of service to be offered, common standards in terms of signage. All those things can be achieved with one overarching organization. Certainly, I think, Transport for London has done a really good job in that respect because it truly does pull together all of the constituent parts of a transportation system—i.e. not just transit—and it does so well. However, I do not think people should be fooled by such as promise as, “Well, that is the answer to all of the problems,” because, as I said on Metro Morning this morning, to me, the issue right now for the TTC is not really about gov-

ernance; it is about funding and long-term sustainable funding. Bear in mind, the TTC, for all of the stuff we have talked about here today, remains by far the lowest funded major transit system in North America which—back to that Transit of the Year—is why I felt so strongly about it. A lot of the scoffers missed the point. We have achieved all of that in spite of being the lowest funded transit. To me, that is the real question that needs to be answered—not tinkering with governance. Maybe that is the right way to go in the future, but you still have got to get the funding right, or you will just have the TTC as part of a bigger organization still struggling hand to mouth, year over year for OpEx and CapEx funding.

**Note of Appreciation, by Michael Kobzar,
Director, Sales Ontario, Siemens Canada Ltd.;
Director, Empire Club of Canada**

Andy, we can really tell that you still love and care for this city very, very much. I think when you say you love every minute of it, you truly mean that. We can sense your enthusiasm about that.

I have to tell you, I was so impressed the very first time I saw you. I never thought I would ever sit at the same table, but I simply saw you on TV when you took on this job. You were being interviewed by a reporter. One of the profound observations you had made, at that time, was that the TTC did

not seem to have a customer service culture at all, and you wanted to impart one on the organization, for which we are very, very happy that you did. I do not think Torontonians expected an essential service to have to have a customer service culture, but we can certainly see the changes. Often I will have American colleagues come to Toronto, and I always take them on the TTC. They are quick to notice these little pleasantries like the greeter at the Yonge-Bloor subway station who is so polite, and he tells people when the next train is coming and thank them for coming to the TTC. They find it just so Canadian to have somebody like that.

If there is one thing that really demonstrates who you are, I think it is what you had said earlier, that you requested your own investigation on yourself. What an incredible demonstration of leadership and integrity, which is very comforting for everybody to know.

Andy, on behalf of the Empire Club of Canada, everybody here, and I think I can say the entire city of Toronto, thank you very much for your time and comments.

Concluding Remarks, by Barbara Jesson

You come back anytime for a standing ovation. I would like to offer a sincere thank you to our generous sponsor, Siemens Canada Ltd. I cannot emphasize enough that these lunches, which I think are so important to our public dialogue, just would not be possible without sponsors like Siemens. A very, very sincere thank you.

I would also like to thank mediaevents.ca, Canada's online event space for webcasting today's event for thousands of viewers around the world, so that those New Yorkers will know what to expect from you, Andy, when you arrive there. Although our club has been around since 1903, we have moved into the 21st century, and we are active on social media. Please, follow us on Twitter @Empire_Club and visit us online at www.empireclub.org. You can also follow us on Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram.

Finally, please, join us again soon at our next event on December 6th with the Honourable Paul Martin, former prime minister of Canada, right here in this very location.

This meeting is now adjourned.