

OPINION

Dumb and dumber?

Former Premier Dalton McGuinty says he had no idea how much it would cost to cancel power plants in Mississauga and Oakville before the 2011 election.

He also apparently didn't know *where* the plants were to be built as he now claims they were axed because they were too close to residential areas and could cause respiratory problems.

Current Premier Kathleen Wynne says she only learned from media reports that the 2011 Liberal re-election campaign had decided to cancel the plants—a campaign team of which she was vice-chair.

Equally amazing is the fact the neither premier seemed to be able to pin down the Ontario Power Authority (OPA) on the cost of cancelling the plants—costs we heard last week are \$310 million for scrapping Oakville and \$275 million for Mississauga. That \$585M tab is still just an estimate until the Auditor-General releases his full report in September—it could be higher.

The Liberals pegged the cost of the Oakville plant cancellation at \$40 million and Wynne claims it was only on March 20 when she learned it would be between \$33 and \$136 million (that's quite a gap). She never discussed the higher figures publicly and now “regrets the situation has come to this”—\$585 million to relocate the plants to Sarnia and Napanee.

The recent testimony from McGuinty and Wynne before a legislative committee investigating the controversial cancellations leaves us to one of two conclusions:

That the premiers were so inept on this matter that they didn't know where the plants were to be built, anything about the plan to cancel them or how to get cancellation costs from the OPA.

Or, it was a blatant political move to protect Liberal seats that has left Ontarians with a \$585 million tab to pay.

Incompetence or shady politics? Quite the choice.

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Steve Nease

Plant cancellations cost all Ontarians

Dear editor,

Now that the Ontario Auditor-General has released a report that has determined that the actual cost of cancelling the Mississauga gas plant to be \$275 million, let me put this number into what it actually cost you.

Based on the total Ontario population of 13.5 million, that works out to be \$20.37 for every man, woman and child in Ontario. That is \$20 and change that the Ontario Liberal Party pilfered from your pocket, whether you supported them or not, to ensure that they retain a single seat in the Ontario Legislature in the last election.

If you have a family of four, that means \$80 that you could have used to buy groceries, heat your home, pay part of your growing electrical bill or support local charities.

But, no, the Ontario Liberal Party deemed it more important that you use that money to save a seat for them in the legislature.

Make no mistake about it. Premier Kathleen Wynne, as co-chair of the Ontario Liberal election team at the time, was fully aware of what was happening here.

Bill Roest, Georgetown

Two sets of rules?

Dear editor,

Re: Exchange Hotel demolition request.

In spring/summer 2012, Halton Hills Council reasoned that an 1870s Georgian home could be demolished to make room for residential “intensification”.

This stately home was owned by a Town councillor (www.theifp.ca Sept 10, 2012). Now, council is deciding whether the Hillock family should be encumbered with a “heritage designation” to save a derelict uninhabitable shack (700 sq. ft.) on a small urban property, adjacent to

the Georgetown GO station that is also ripe for “intensification”.

If council could hand out a demolition permit to a council member to maximize her property value by demolishing a perfectly sound, habitable, historic brick home to make way for a greater number of townhouses, then the Hillock family should be also be granted the same indulgence to demolish a ramshackle building, that has been derelict and unsuitable for any purpose for the past 15 years.

Sally Stull, Georgetown

'Community unity'

Dear editor,

A sincere thank you to “community unity”.

On Earth Day volunteers from local churches arrived with benevolence, smiles and rakes. In no time my yard was ready for spring. These folks, working together, make a difference in our community. “Only in Georgetown.”

Rita Christensen, Georgetown

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Letters to the editor