

# Comment

## It's a vanilla budget

Finance Minister Ralph Goodale delivered his first federal budget last Tuesday afternoon, a document that's sure to be remembered for one thing — its blandness.

If the budget was a flavour it would have been vanilla. If it had been a play it would have been a one-man show about the many purposes of lint.

This budget was boring — times 10.

Goodale opted to forgo tax cuts or, surprisingly, expensive spending goodies. Considering the fact a federal election is expected this year, it was downright stupefying the Liberals didn't choose to buy voters with a taxpayer-friendly budget. Obviously, some Liberal deep thinkers managed to correctly realize that offering up tax breaks and spending some of the enormous surplus would be seen by Canadians as blatant vote buying and a feeble attempt to wash away the smell of the sponsorship scandal.

In mentioning the sponsorship scandal, the finance minister tried to convince

Canadians the Liberals have taken steps to watch every dollar Ottawa spends through a series of internal audits, department comptrollers and a comptroller-general. In other words, "forget about how we wasted billions for the past 10 years, we've learned our lesson."

Sorry, that's asking too much.

While he chose not to offer an "election budget," Goodale also didn't give Canadians a budget that improved health care, the environment or cities.

His biggest new initiative in this budget was a \$913 million investment in "communities" across the nation. However, this feeble bit of funding will do little to assist ailing cities such as Toronto in dealing with its major problems. Major cash infusions are needed, but Goodale decided to allocate an amount of cash that will serve as little more than a Band-Aid.

Shakespeare perhaps could have summed up this Liberal budget best: 'Twas much ado about nothing.



## Our Readers Write

### Adding fluoride to town's water will do more harm than good, says chiropractor

Dear Editor:

I've read in The Champion recently that the water fluoridation issue has raised its unwanted head yet again.

How many times do the people of Milton need to turn this thing down?

Perhaps the health officials at Halton Region have too much time on their hands.

In my opinion, public health authorities will be hard-pressed to prove that adding this chemical to our water will do even a particle of good.

Having raised three children in Milton

— all of whose teeth are as good or better than others I know from neighbouring municipalities — I would like to see some facts on the benefits of fluoridated water.

I do know that it's of no benefit to those past the age of 12, so — as far as I'm concerned — putting it into our drinking water is tantamount to mass medication. Who needs to be consuming more chemicals? Isn't our air, food and water suspect enough?

**Dr. David Phillips, chiropractor  
Milton**

### Reader says she questions if fluoridation of Milton's drinking water is a wise move

Dear Editor:

This letter is about the proposed fluoridation of Milton's water — an issue we should all be concerned about.

It would be good if our children could have teeth without cavities. Some people think that adding fluoride to the public water supply is a way to achieve this, but is this really the best way?

As I understand, if fluoride is added to the water, only a tiny amount will be ingested by children

but all of us will have to drink it, bathe in it, use it for laundry and other household uses.

I was told by someone who works at a Toronto water treatment site that fluoride is highly corrosive and that the shovels used to add it to water disintegrate quickly and must be replaced frequently.

No doubt the corrosion continues all through the system and into the water pipes in our homes.

Perhaps it would be more efficient to provide fluoride pills for

parents who want to add it to their children's diet.

It's already added to almost every brand of toothpaste. And if you choose toothpaste without fluoride, be prepared to pay about \$5 a tube for it. That seems strange when toothpaste with fluoride costs as little as 67 cents a tube.

I ask, why should we have to have fluoride added to our drinking water?

**Grace Munnings  
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### Letters welcomed

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### Pud

by Steve Nease

