



BRIDAL SHOW
February 21st
11-4

*Offers the perfect setting
for a Country Wedding*

(905) 852-6212 ext. 230
1-800-465-8633 Durham Rd. 8 Uxbridge

As the architect of your Financial Future, you'll need BluePrints.

Merrill Lynch Financial BluePrints can help you design a comprehensive strategy to build your RRSP investments, and to accomplish your financial security.

For a free, no-obligation BluePrint call:
Christina Lam, FCSI, CFP, Financial Consultant
at Bus. (905) 305-1875 Hotline: (416) 457-8882



Christina.lam@ca.ml.com
www.canada.ml.com

Merrill Lynch Canada Inc. is a member - CIPF

POLITICS: Government launched \$115-million media blitz

Ad campaign costs defended by Tories

BY JENNIFER BROWN
STAFF WRITER

By now, you probably know the scripts by heart.

Two little girls moving into a new neighbourhood are going to be happier because the province has a new common school curriculum; a young boy winces as he weighs the pain of ripping a Band-Aid off his knee — an analogy to making tough changes in health care.

In others this past fall, a clock was used to show those 25 extra minutes that high school teachers are being asked to spend in the classroom.

Critics call them weapons of mass distraction — a \$115-million ad campaign that has been nothing more than misleading and early electioneering.

At a launch of the province's new Drive Clean campaign in Newmarket Tuesday, Environment Minister Norm Sterling admitted the government hired an outside firm to create a campaign that will cost \$4 million to explain the emissions testing program.

"It's quite small in terms of the overall program. The state of Georgia spent \$8 million for the Atlanta area only," he said. "The people have to understand why the program is necessary. Programs that have failed in the U.S. have failed to communicate how people participate and the requirements."

Tory politicians say they are simply doing what taxpayers have asked them to do — explain their actions over the past three years. And they say they still haven't topped the previous NDP government's spending on ads, which

amounted to \$227 million.

The NDP disputes that figure, stating that from 1990 to 1995, the Bob Rae government spent \$171 million.

It also claims the Tories have spent \$144.3 million from 1995 to December 1998, not \$115 million as the government claims.

Sheila White, special advisor to NDP leader Howard Hampton, said the New Democrats cut advertising expenditures in half compared to the Liberals before them.

The Liberals spent \$95 million during their final two years in office.

That said, it's the current Tory government that vowed not to overspend in unnecessary areas.

In the more prominent campaigns, \$7 million has been spent on education and \$10 million in health-care advertising since 1995.

And last week, the government paid \$900,000 for pamphlets mailed to every household, applauding crime-fighting initiatives in the province.

Funded from each ministry's communications budgets — ultimately Ontario tax dollars — the ads have flooded television and radio airwaves, newspapers and residential mailboxes.

York Mackenzie MPP Frank Klees said it's the ruling party's job to explain to taxpayers what the government is doing in each sector and charges governments before his have done their share of advertising.

"Like shareholders in a company, the people deserve to know what's going on," Klees said.

THE YORK CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

INVITES REGISTRATIONS


INTO ITS ACADEMY/FOCUS SCHOOLS

REGISTRATIONS FOR CLASSES BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 1999
WILL BE ACCEPTED IN EACH OF THE ACADEMIES UNTIL
FEBRUARY 27, 1999

LIMITED REGISTRATION OPPORTUNITIES

School	Focus
St. Michael Catholic Academy 41 Simonston Blvd. Thornhill L3P 4R6 905-889-4816 Catherine von Zuben, Principal	The Arts Grades 4-8
St. Gregory the Great Catholic Academy 140 Greenpark Blvd. Woodbridge L4L 6Z6 905-856-0955 Domenic Naccarato, Principal	Math, Science, Technology Grades JK-8
Fr. Michael McGivney Catholic Academy 5300 14th Avenue Markham L3S 3K8 905-472-4961 Paul Walsh, Principal	Math, Science, Technology Grades 9-OAC
Holy Cross Catholic Academy 7501 Martin Grove Rd. Woodbridge L4L 1A5 905-851-6699 Cosimo Modafferi, Principal	Math, Science, Technology Grades 9-OAC

Please note that Transportation will **NOT** be provided by the Board
For More Information contact the Principal



YORK REGION CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY

Your local Children's Aid Society has a legal responsibility to protect children from abuse and abandonment but we need your help. As a foster parent, a volunteer or a member you can make a positive difference in the life of a child. Call today and help York Region Children's Aid Society to protect children throughout our community.

This message brought to you as a community service of The Economist/Tribune. 1-800-718-3850



Please recycle

Ads 'distasteful'

Some people who work in health and education say the province's recent advertising blitz has kept them busy correcting false impressions created by the commercials.

"Every time I saw one of those commercials, I was changing the channel," said Markham high school teacher Cindi Seligman. "The ads are being paid for with taxpayers' money. It's in your face every 10 minutes."

To date, the Mike Harris government says it has spent \$7 million on advertising targeting education and \$10 million in health-care advertising since 1995.

Seligman said the ad showing the clock ticking down to depict the 25 extra minutes high school teachers are being asked to spend in the classroom forced her to launch her own information campaign last fall.

"Once parents had it explained to them, I think they got the picture. But many thought their child was going to be taking another class," she said.

The Middlefield Collegiate teacher said her opposition to the government ads didn't cease when the Tories stopped aiming them at her profession — she finds the ones targeting health care equally distasteful.

"You hear about ambulances being turned away from hospitals all the time. And when you hear the ones about the car emission testing and money for Hep C survivors, it's just so obvious they are getting ready for an election."

Seligman, who co-chairs the Markham Political Action Committee — a group working to oust the Tories in the next election — agrees Ontarians can learn both sides of the government's policies in the media but questions whether everyone takes the time to do so.

"I'm all for things like secondary school reform and amalgamation of school boards but they are trying to do everything so quickly," she said.

The ads also frustrate Dr. Chris Gannage, chief of York County Hospital's emergency department.

"York County has been in a growth area and really does need to see funding to see the permanent opening of these overflow beds. The ministry has been good to honour our request for emergency funding, but often it takes time and it has not happened as fast as we would like," said Gannage. "Four million dollars in advertising could go a long way to solve some of problems in the health-care system."

SHOP EARLY



GRANDMA'S TREASURES
HISTORIC UNIONVILLE

SEMI-ANNUAL CLEARANCE
STARTS THURS. FEB. 4TH 8:00 A.M.
EVERYTHING IN STORE

UP TO
70% OFF

HUGE SAVINGS ON FASHIONS
SEAGULL PEWTER, LEATHER GOODS ...
AND MORE

SHOP BETWEEN 8:00 A.M. AND NOON ON FEB. 4th
AND RECEIVE AN ADDITIONAL 10% OFF
OUR DRASTICALLY REDUCED PRICES (TO MAX. OF 70%)

See You Soon *Kneel* 159 MAIN ST. UNIONVILLE
(905) 477-4077 OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK

*EXCLUDING NEW ARRIVALS

