

[Transcript] Patrick Brown on AM 980 London - September 25, 2017

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MPP: Patrick Brown

Media: Andrew Lawton (AM 980 London)

[START TRANSCRIPT]

Lawton: I want to welcome in to the show PC Party of Ontario leader Patrick Brown to talk about this further. Patrick, it's wonderful to talk to you again. Thanks for coming on today.

Brown:

- Well, thanks for having me on, Andrew, it's always a pleasure

Lawton: well, and it was particularly skilled how you worked an obscure, I think, like, 80s movie reference into Question Period this morning. You don't often get that!

Brown:

- Well, FIT-5 is as unnecessary as Police Academy 5
- I thought it was appropriate, given the fact that it's at zero percent on Rotten Tomatoes
- Not to take a—not-, nothing against the previous Police Academy
- But I, I wanted to highlight how unnecessary this was
- You know, right now we're spilling water power
- We're giving away surplus energy
- Here we are charging Ontarians to give it away to Michigan at a loss, Pennsylvania at a loss
- Our own hydroelectric power like things—like Niagara Falls
- The fact we're spilling Ontario water power
- We spilt enough water—just wasted enough water—we could have powered 500,000 homes last year
- And here's this **inaudible** at Queen's Park
- **inaudible** proceeding and signed 390 new contracts

Lawton: and the energy minister, however, said in response to that that this was not actually about new contracts, that these were from November of last year, which would put them before the Ministerial directive. So what do you respond to that with?

Brown:

- So he said, he said they started in 2016
- But it was the day after his 'unfair hydro plan'—this giant, borrowing plan—that they proceeded with them
- They, they started with 1100, they narrowed it down and they just selected the, the 390 that, that, that they're going with
- That's for 150 megawatts of power
- Let me say very clearly, Andrew, knowing that we don't need it, knowing that we have to give it away, knowing that we're spending hardworking ratepayers' money to give it away, I wouldn't have proceeded with it
- It would be done in its tracks—not a chance would I, would I, would I have proceeded with this

Lawton: but I guess the big question is, if they said very clearly that they didn't need to have any more green energy because we already have a strong [election] supply, why was there an imperative of any kind to start entering into new contracts?

Brown:

- Well, they, and, and some people say, you know, 'these guys must be

incompetent' to keep on signing these bad contracts

- I actually think it's a lot worse than incompetence
- A lot of people have made hay of the fact the Auditor General said we overpaid for these contracts by 9.2 billion—this is not my stat, this is the Auditor General—we overpaid by 9.2 billion
- What I—what really, I think, speaks to how nefarious this was, is of the 30 mega contracts the Liberals handed out, those companies donated 1.3 million dollars to the Ontario Liberal Party
- and this is very clear—this is the Liberals supporting their friends, their insiders
- it's who you know in Ontario—it's cash for access
- and, unfortunately, everyone struggling to pay a hydro bill is paying the consequence of this, of, of, of, of this Liberal decision, this decision to sign contracts for generation with their friends that we do not need

Lawton: so in your view, what is the problem with these? Because when we look at the 390, most of them are solar, 382 of them are. It is a project that's about 150 megawatts and, and underneath that you've got 7 bio-gas projects and, and one landfill-gas project. But, but what is the significance of that in your view? If it is, in fact, as the Minister said this morning about the province continuing to try to find the best deal, is this not a positive?

Brown:

- It shows they haven't changed
- You know, the Green Energy Act is an unmitigated disaster
- And after the Premier—and for years the Premier said hydro rates aren't going up, you know, the Finance Minister saying his hydro rate was going down, they are living in a fantasy *inaudible*
- Then all of a sudden in the spring they said 'we're going to borrow billions of dollars because we feel your pain'
- What this signifies—the fact that they're *inaudible* 390 new FIT contracts for power we do not need, what it signifies is they haven't changed
- This is the same old, same old group at Queen's Park
- They just don't get it
- It's the definition of insanity to keep on committing the same mistakes that you committed before
- We're borrowing money to pay for the old mistakes
- Think about this, Andrew—we've given away billions to our competitors in the US
- We charge you through your global adjustment, which is blended in on your residential bill, in some cases it's half your bill
- We're charging you to give it away because we have so much extra
- We're wasting our own water power, we're paying for it and just spilling it, and wasting it
- And these guys, in the name of green energy, are, are, are signing more contracts?
- Don't let them trick you, it's not green energy

- Out water power is green
- That, that dirty coal company they just bought in the US?—that's not green
- This company is *inaudible* this government is full of hypocrisy, it's disingenuous
- They're trying to pull the wool over our eyes
- And, and, and the reality—no matter what spin they say, they sign contracts for more energy than we need and everyone in Ontario is paying for it
- On their watch hydro rates have gone up 300 percent
- That's their legacy, that's their record

Lawton: I know when we look to—almost a year ago to the day, it was September 27th of last year—when the energy minister had first said that they were going to stop signing these new contracts for renewable energies. And then you look at the FIT-5 here—the Ministerial directive according to the energy, the, the Independent Electricity System Operator, came December 16th. So what was happening between September and December that allowed this pursuit of a contract here to be in the middle?

Brown:

- Let me say I doubt the Premier's going to want to come on this show and, and answer that
- I doubt that Glenn Thibeault will
- I've tried to ask them that, I've tried to say 'you promised us that it wasn't going to be more of the same' and yet that's what we're getting
- They—this reminds me of the Samsung deal
- You know, through an FOI we found out they could have got out of a billion and a half of surplus electricity
- But they didn't want to appear like they were walking away from their own mistakes, so they, they bought the billion-and-a-half of surplus electricity we didn't need—just, just for optics
- Imagine that, Andrew?—blowing a billion and a half dollars that everyone's going to have to pay for, for optics?
- I, I, I think FIT-5 is just like that—I think for optics they're proceeding with it, even though they don't have to
- It doesn't matter that we're going to—we don't need, it doesn't matter that it's wasteful
- You know, they're, they're only concerned about their image, they're only concerned about the self-interest of the Liberal party, not the fact that we're all going to pay more because of it

Lawton: Patrick Brown, joining me on the line. Patrick, less than 9 months to go until the election—is hydro still the ballot-box issue in your view?

Brown:

- I think change right now is the ballot-box question
- People want change from, from a, a, a government that is not in their best

interests

- But I, I, I think hydro is a part of it, I think it's affordability—there is an affordability crisis in Ontario
- Whether it's taxes, new increases on licensing, just the sense that it's tougher to get ahead in Ontario
- Right now, families are working harder, they're paying more, and they're getting less
- I think that's the issue
- Why is it that we're working harder, paying more and getting less in, in Kathleen Wynne's Ontario?

Lawton: PC Party of Ontario leader Patrick Brown. Always a pleasure, sir, thanks for your time.

Brown:

- My pleasure

[END TRANSCRIPT]