

TRANSCRIPT – Patrick Brown on Newstalk 1010 with Jerry Agar – April 28, 2017

MPP: Patrick Brown

Media: Jerry Agar (Newstalk 1010)

Time: 10:50 AM

[START TRANSCRIPT]

Agar: I think what people really want to know from the Conservatives is, is what you would do differently, how would the budget look differently if you were doing it?

Brown:

- Well, first of all it would be a balanced budget, not a fictional one
- There is so much different we need to do with this government and, and, Jerry, I know you get that
- One of the starting points I would have is a value-for-money audit on the entire government, because the more I look at this government, the more examples—egregious examples—of waste we see
- And you name any department, I can give you examples of waste and, and frankly, we don't have a revenue problem, we have a spending problem with this government
- And what they're doing is they're hiding the debt as a way to confuse the public
- They put some of it—their hydro plan's not a hydro plan, it just borrows and they put that cost on the OPG
- Their infrastructure spending they call 'off-budget spending', but the debt still goes up
- It, it, it, it's all a shell game, and, and I think the people of Ontario want us to watch every taxpayer dollar properly
- And what I mean by that is I look at healthcare and I see these giant new LHINs where they're hiding—hir-, hiring—78 new executive vice-presidents, more bureaucracy at the expense of frontline care, more paper-pushers
- The last thing we need in healthcare is more paper-pushers, when we can't even afford nurses, you know—

Agar: Would you cancel that, if you became Premier?

Brown:

- I would absolutely cut the fat, administrative spending in healthcare
- Do I think we need 78 new LHIN vice presidents?—absolutely not, I would immediately stop that, we don't need more paper-pushers
- You know, I, I look at hydro, you, you want something I'd cancel right away?—I'd cancel the 'Bad Contracts Act'
- I look at the Green Energy Act, you know, we overpay by 9.2-billion so far and we're still doing it

- Jerry, we're spilling water power every day—Merrickville, Manitou, Niagara Falls—we're charging Ontarians to give it away
- We're giving it to Pennsylvania, New York and we're charging Ontarians for it
- So something I want to cancel, I want to cancel the Green Energy Act, which has been an unmitigated disaster

Agar: We do know that cancelling contracts can get very expensive, we saw that with the hydro plants that were going to be built and then not built. And I doubt that whether they have shown you the contract, do you know for sure that cancelling the contract would end up being cheaper for us than the contracts we have for wind, etcetera?

Brown:

- So Jerry, a few great points there, they will not share the major contracts
- There are 30 mega contracts that they got \$1.3 million in donations which is a scandal in itself
- Energy we don't need they benefited, the Liberal Party did
- We have only one copy that they accidentally leaked to us, the Samsung deal, they actually released it on a different release
- On that there was an exit clause for a billion and a half of surplus electricity that we could have taken
- If similar provisions exist in the other contracts we could be out of all our surplus energy
- But it's not just the old contracts, they keep signing new ones, Jerry, knowing that we don't need it they keep on signing new ones
- The day after their fair hydro plan or the borrowing plan, they proceeded with 1100 more
- They're about to proceed with LRP 2 and if the notice to proceed has not gone out, you can cancel with almost minimal costs
- And I have to say, why do they keep signing these deals?
- Is it because they're their friends, their supporters, their financial benefactors?
- Something smells in the province of Ontario that we're continuing to purchase and sign contracts for energy that we do not need; and we're giving it away to our competitors in the U.S.
- It stinks and I'm going to stop it

Agar: The NDP would do pretty much a universal drug plan, in the budget that came out yesterday the Liberals have promised a drug plan, which actually sounds better than it is because for a lot of the people under 25 they're already covered in one way or another anyways. What would you do with that?

Brown:

- Well Jerry, how about means testing?
- I look at Justin Bieber, he would qualify under their plan
- He's worth what—200-million-plus there or growing
- He'd get free coverage under them

- What irritates me about this, about this photo op they're doing on, on a drug plan
- We already have 7 drug benefit plans that they run, and they're not running properly
- So now they're going to create an eighth plan and with no means testing
- What that means, you've got millionaire kids, who are going to get their drugs covered
- But when you look at rare disorders, you look at orphaned patients, they get no help
- I, I think of the Madi Vanstone who wasn't, who wasn't going to be covered
- I think right now, there's a new drug for cystic fibrosis, approved by Health Canada, that's not available in Ontario
- It will not be covered for a person who can't afford it in the province of Ontario
- But a millionaire's kid is going to get their drugs covered

Agar: So you would cancel this program if it were in-place and the next election you won, I'm talking to Patrick Brown, the leader of the Progressive Conservatives; you would cancel this thing that they announced yesterday?

Brown:

- I'm going to fix the drug benefits in, in Ontario
- What I mean by that, is I'm not going to subsidize drugs for millionaire kids
- I'm not going to be paying for Justin Bieber's drug *inaudible* for millionaires
- I'm not going to be paying for their drugs
- I'm going to make sure those that actually need it are the ones we take care of
- I think of Madi Vanstone, that 12 year old who was on life *inaudible* who, who, who wasn't going to live unless she got help
- Those are the people that I want to fight for

Agar: Okay, John Tory is not happy, I think that up until now he has tried at least publicly to look as though he can get along with Kathleen Wynne, he may have started to give up on that, he feels that this budget abandon Toronto, do you think that's fair and what would you do for the city?

Brown:

- I think John had made some very legitimate concerns and I think he's right to be upset
- So let's, let's talk about his two big concerns
- On Toronto Community Housing Corporation, he expected help
- You know, they could save 6.2-million-dollars-a-year simply by buying natural gas at the City of Toronto rates instead of being forced to buy under the province's scheme
- That would save 6.2 million

- The city has asked for it, the province has rejected that
- I think that's a fair request
- Another thing that council has put forward is people who are evicted from social housing, jails, those prisoners who are convicted
- So, convicted criminals, when they get released, they automatically get a spot
- And the provincial Liberals insist this is appropriate
- City Council has argued, 'is it?'
- Frankly, I agree with City Council that it's outrageous
- I don't know why the province continues to obstruct Toronto's request on that
- On infrastructure, remember Jerry in beginning interview I was talking about value for money

Agar: Yeah

Brown

- We're spending \$190 billion on infrastructural over the next 13 years
- Yet Kathleen Wynne making spending promises for 2030
- But on that value for money, the Auditor General did a report that didn't get a lot of attention
- And it said in December, we could be seeing cost overruns of 35 percent
- We were repaving a road on the 403 every 2 years instead of every 15 years
- You know we had companies getting contracts to build things like bridges
- They had no history in building
- Doing it wrong
- Because they don't actually monitor results
- We don't monitor – are you getting value for taxpayer dollars
- They culture I want to bring to Queen's Park is we're going to make sure every dollar that people pay in taxes gets spent appropriately
- And there's no better example of how it's wasted when I look at infrastructure
- So when John Tory says he's not seeing help on infrastructure, he's right
- Because it's being wasted by government that does not monitor what they spend

Host: Patrick Brown, leader of the Progressive Conservative. Thanks very much

Brown:

- My pleasure

[END TRANSCRIPT]