

[Transcript] Andrea Horwath on CP24 with Stephen LeDrew - December 7, 2016

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MPP: Horwath

Media: LeDrew

[START TRANSCRIPT]

Horwath:

- --we were going to lose something that reven—generates revenue—for our province, far into the future
- It's an absolute mistake

LeDrew: And as you've said in the past, we may be—the people of Ontario lose control over hydro. And, but, Fred Hahn just told our audience a half hour ago, he said, she can stop it right now and stop the further sale.

Horwath:

- Mmm-hmm

LeDrew: You agree with that?

Horwath:

- I agree with that 100 percent
- In fact, every day this week I've asked her to stop the sell-off of Hydro One and I'm probably going to ask her to do that again tomorrow in Question Period
- It is a wrongheaded decision; it's time for her to acknowledge that and to climb down from it
- You know, nobody voted for this
- Nobody voted for this in the last election
- She doesn't have a mandate to do this
- Every time I talk to anybody in Ontario, they all agree with me that it should never have been sold off, so I don't know why she continues on this wrongheaded path
- It's, it's wrong for Ontario

LeDrew: Last week we had the Auditor General, Bonnie Lysyk, in here, and pretty devastating report. The government gets that in advance, so they know what, what she's complaining about. They, to my knowledge, they didn't come back and say 'well, you're wrong', in any circumstance. So, I mean, it's damning, as far as an upside-down truss, as far as asphalt wearing out after 2 years, as far as bad accounting. What's going on with this government up at Queen's Park? You're there all the time—you study it.

Horwath:

- Well, you know, the government has, has gone on an agenda that, that nobody asked for
- And they're not taking care of the basics
- I mean, we have a, a healthcare system that's falling apart
- The Auditor General also spoke about the occupancy rates in hospitals, which are far, far higher than they should be
- 85 percent is the optimal amount of beds to be filled to have an operating—to have a hospital operating at the proper levels

LeDrew: Right.

Horwath:

- We have 60 percent of our hospitals operating at more than 100 percent occupancy

LeDrew: So how would you fix that, Andrea?

Horwath:

- Well, I mean, the government has frozen hospital budgets 4 years in a row
- And then on top of that—prior and since—has increased funding at less than inflationary increases
- So that means cuts
- So this is not a, it's not, it shouldn't be a surprise to anybody that this has happened

LeDrew: But the government's in debt, the government is—

Horwath:

- Well, you know—

*LeDrew: --is, is, it it has this huge, massive *crosstalk**

Horwath:

- --but then, but, but again, let's, let's recall that in the election campaign the government said that they're going to get rid of the deficit without cutting healthcare or education

LeDrew: Right.

Horwath:

- We have schools closing all over the province
- We have schools crumbling—where they still exist in the province, they're falling apart literally at the seams
- Our kids and our, our educational workers are in danger in some of those ho—some of those schools

LeDrew: But if you were Premier. If there was an election right now and you became Premier, you don't have, you wouldn't have a lot of money to spend on the schools or, or healthcare.

Horwath:

- But, but, but, I mean, it's all about priorities
- Look, they spent—

LeDrew: Where would you take it away from?

Horwath:

- --8, 8 billion dollars more than they should have on, on the way that they finance their infrastructure
- They wasted a billion dollars on the Smart Meter programs—a, a billion dollars more than they said they were going to
- So they were going to spend a billion dollars
- They spent 2 billion dollars on Smart Meters, and nobody's benefiting from them
- This government has a very bad record when it comes to being very wasteful with the public purse and looking after its own interests and the interests of, of the, of the people that are very well-connected to them
- And, and I think people are, are, you know, quite disappointed with the performance of Kathleen Wynne and the Liberals

LeDrew: So, I mean, your, your job is to highlight that, to show the—

Horwath:

- Mmm-hmm

LeDrew: --problems with it. Are you going to be continuing with that in 2017. What's going to be the big issue, is it going to be hydro, is it going to be government incompetence?

Horwath:

- Well, I mean, I think it's, it's pretty clear that the electricity system, it, it needs a jolt because it's just not—

*LeDrew: *laughter* Indeed.*

Horwath:

- --it's just not serving the needs of people
- And now we're hearing from businesses big and small about the impact it's having on their ability to either keep workers on staff or, or invest, or expand
- It, it's causing some problems

LeDrew: So, again, I, I, I ask you, if you were Premier, and you have this and you have—I know there's just so many agencies, no one can count them, and it sounds like a lot of bureaucrats, a lot of high-paid managers, bad service. Is there somebody or some organization you would call in and say 'here, fix this darn thing'?

Horwath:

- Well, I mean, certainly when it comes to the electricity system we've already said that it'll be job number 1, should we form a government in 2018
- And we'll call in the Auditor General and the Financial Accountability Officer and—

LeDrew: But is there one man or woman or one group that can fix it, do you think?

Horwath:

- I think, I think a government can fix it if they are determined to fix it
- Instead, this government seems to be on a totally different agenda and they're more worried about their own political well-being than they are about the, the basics, the fundamentals—healthcare, education, the ability for people to afford their electricity bills, decent jobs, these are the priorities

LeDrew: But, I mean, the Premier's not an uncaring woman. I mean, you know, I mean, I just chatted with her when she was here a few weeks ago. We had a long chat on-air. I mean, she doesn't strike me as an uncaring woman. It just seems that some of these decisions are wrong.

Horwath:

- Well, I mean, it's so—just because you care, doesn't mean you're actually performing in the way that you should be as the Premier of the province and, and listening to the concerns of people
- They've been at the helm for 13 years now
- We have the basics, the fundamentals, that aren't being looked after, and people are worried
- They're worried about their ability to have a decent life here in this province today, but even more so, what's going to happen to the next generation

LeDrew: On that note, we're out of time. We'll see you again. Andrea Horwath.

Horwath:

- Thank you, Stephen.

[END TRANSCRIPT]