

Question 5: What specific accomplishments are you most proud of given your service in government over the past seven years? What role did you play in securing these accomplishments?

TC: In 1995 we inherited a province that was running an \$11 billion deficit, had a \$100 billion debt, massive unemployment, a flight of investment and ballooning welfare rolls. I am very proud of having helped to implement the Common Sense Revolution and of what we have been able to accomplish over the past six and a half years. From a personal perspective, my most significant accomplishment was to see the enactment of the Taxpayer Protection and Balanced Budget Act in 1999 which I authored. The Taxpayer Protection and Balanced Budget Act protects Ontario families from irresponsible taxing and spending governments by requiring the government to get the approval of voters before it can introduce a new tax or raise rates on a wide range of taxes. This act also prohibits governments from running deficits and provides for personal penalties to the Premier and members of the Cabinet if a deficit occurs.

EE: I am proud of my role in both developing the Common Sense Revolution and implementing it. I am firmly committed to the goals of the Common Sense Revolution and if I have an opportunity to become Premier, I would continue to build on the foundation of the last 7 years.

When I became the Minister of Finance and Deputy Premier in June of 1995, we were looking at an in-year deficit of \$11.2 billion. Within the first 28 days in office, I eliminated \$2 billion of in year spending, and eventually eliminated the deficit altogether. In my first budget I eliminated \$3 billion in spending.

I introduced 166 tax cuts in my tenure as Finance minister - more than any other person in Canada. I introduced two back-to-back balanced budgets, the first time since fiscal 1942-1943.

I was able to introduce, and our government passed, Balance Budget Legislation, which prevents all future governments from running a deficit.

The 2000 Budget demonstrated my debt reduction commitment by reducing the debt by \$3 billion, doubling the annual reserve to \$1 billion while at the same time outlining further personal income tax reductions, and small and large corporate tax cuts over 5 years.

JF: Some of the accomplishments of which I am most proud of are our government's successes in raising the standards of quality and efficiency in the services that citizens expect from government. As Premier, I will embrace further initiatives that raise standards, measure results, and improve accountability to taxpayers. I have demonstrated my beliefs on every portfolio Mike Harris has tasked me with.

As Minister of Labour, I provided compensation to families who were forced to pay extra for child care during illegal teachers strike. I fought to protect the jobs of Ontario construction workers and aggregate haulers who were not getting fair access to work in Quebec through the passage of the Fairness is a Two Way Street Act.

As Attorney General of Ontario, I worked to make streets safer and the justice system fairer for law-abiding citizens. I got tough on organized crime by introducing Canada's first laws providing law enforcement with the power to seize the assets of criminals. I established the first sex-offender registry in Canada to help law enforcement keep track of potentially dangerous sexual predators and personally took up the fight against child pornography. I championed the Parental Responsibility Act designed to hold parents accountable for the actions of their children.

As Minister of Finance, I introduced the Ontario's third consecutive a balanced budget, the first time that has happened in nearly 100 years. As Minister of Finance, I eliminated the income tax for the poorest 75,000 Ontarians, delivered on the 20% personal income tax cut promised and eliminated the personal income surtax for 340,000 taxpayers. This government accelerated personal, corporate, and capital taxes to respond to the economic impact of September 11th. We have implemented annual corporate tax reductions which will result in a lower combined corporate tax rate than all 50 US States by 2005.

But this is not the time for anyone to rest on the laurels of past accomplishment. I am eager to get on with the task of leading Ontarians to make our province the most prosperous, best-educated, and most innovative jurisdiction not just in Canada, but in the world. This is the Ontario we want to leave our children.

CS: Most recently, I am proud of the work I've done as Labour Minister for the province. Specifically, I can point to three bills right off the top of my head:

- Bill 17 which addressed the current dispute between Ontario and Quebec and is inherent inter-provincial labour mobility issues in the construction trade;
- Bill 139 which brought transparency and public disclosure to union leaders' salaries and compensation; and
- Bill 147 which triggered a long overdue overhaul of the Employment Standards Act.

As well, I'm proud of the role I played as Speaker of the Legislature for three years. It's a tough job, but I believed I engendered respect - not necessarily consistent admiration - but respect from all corners of the legislature for the non-partisan and no-nonsense manner in which I discharged my duties as a servant for ALL elected members. In turn, this allowed the government to embark on a sometimes heavy legislative schedule while simultaneously allowing for ample conduct on non-government and private members business.

EW: I am most proud of our achievements of lower taxes, more jobs, fewer families on welfare and a balanced budget. But I also take great pride in the fact that Mike Harris chose me to do three of the toughest jobs in our government during that time - Labour, Health and Environment. I believe that my strongest accomplishments were:

- Bringing balance to our labour relations to encourage job creation and investment;
- Overhauling the Worker's Compensation Board;
- Reforming health care by expanding hospital and long-term care services;
- Expanding and improving cardiac treatment, cancer care, dialysis treatment and preventative health programs such as Healthy Babies, Healthy Children and the universal flu vaccine program;
- Working co-operatively with stakeholders by establishing the Nursing Task Force and reaching a historic agreement with Ontario's doctors; and
- Protecting our environment with new regulations on air quality, cracking down on polluters, introducing a hazardous waste plan and improving water quality

But as I have said repeatedly, we cannot rest on our accomplishments. As a party we have so much more to do to keep Ontario strong and I will continue to share my plans with Ontarians to do so.