

Scott, Rebecca PREM:EX

From: tno@gov.bc.ca
Sent: Friday, October 7, 2011 11:56 AM
To: Scott, Rebecca PREM:EX
Subject: TNO: Clark: Defends Lib attack ads

CKNW
CKNW Bill Good
07-Oct-2011 08:36

Bill Good: Premier Christy Clark is in the studio for a full hour.

Premier, good morning.

Premier Christy Clark: Good morning, Bill. Nice to be back.

Good: Nice to have you back. A new Ipsos-Reid poll indicates you were right not to go to the polls.

Clark: Well, no, I don't know about that. I mean, it's the second poll that has come out that's shown that I'm well ahead of Adrian. You know, there is a lot of information people use when they vote, and clearly, leadership is one of them. But you know what? The thing is, is I decided not to go to an election because our economy is fragile, and we have to.... I just don't think an election would have been good for our economy.

I am encouraged by the polls, but I am a lot more interested in the numbers that we'll see on the jobs front than the numbers we'll see in the polls front.

Good: There were good job numbers this morning, but I do want to get a little bit more into the poll and other topics. You lead Adrian Dix on a personal level, but the NDP leads the poll 45% to 38%. That's a seven-point margin. And perhaps most importantly, the Conservatives with John Cummins are polling at 12%. That would indicate real trouble for you.

Clark: Well, the Conservatives are down significantly from what previous polling has shown. You know, we do have to be concerned about splitting the vote, the free enterprise vote, in British Columbia. I mean, John Cummins is doing a.... He voted NDP in the last election, and he's working hard, I think, to elect another NDP government. We have to be concerned about that.

I have to be concerned about speaking to the issues that are of interest to free enterprise voters across the province. That includes everyone from the centre left to the right. You know, I think if people are concerned about jobs, whether they're in a union, whether they're in a small business, whether they're working in a corporate headquarters, they should be making sure that they put their support behind the free enterprise party.

Good: I have been surprised at the degree of attention you have given to John Cummins, and this is a prime example.

[Plays John Cummins attack ad]

Good: Did you approve that ad?

Clark: Yes -- yes, because I think it is important that people know who they're throwing their support behind and who they're voting for. I mean, Bill, I take my fair share of criticism every day, and I accept it, and I try and present my arguments, and I try and engage in that debate. I think one of the things that's important about the BC Conservative Party is that people not be confused about who they are. You know, he voted NDP in a riding where there was a BC Conservative on the ballot in the last provincial election.

Good: He wanted to defeat the Liberal Party.

Clark: Well, you know, I mean, if he wants to defeat the BC Liberal Party, do it the honest way and maybe run for the NDP.

Good: But that ad says politicians who say one thing and do another.... You said that we'd have an election sooner rather than later; you said no reduction of the HST, then you promised a reduction. You've changed your mind. You've flip-flopped on issues. You flip-flopped on the need for a tax on gas, originally said it would hurt families, and then changed your mind.

Clark: Okay, so let me say this first. I think calling changing your mind or listening to people a flip-flop all the time isn't right, because I think one of the things that British Columbians want to know from politicians is that we are willing to change our minds about things after we have listened to people.

Let's go back to the HST when it was introduced. The previous government brought it in, and they were hell-bent for leather to make sure it happened and said, "We're not changing our mind; we're not changing our mind," and British Columbians got pretty angry about it.

I don't apologize for when I have listened to British Columbians. On the election date, for example, I didn't hear a single person say: "Christy, you know what? We want you to go for that early mandate like you said you would." "Everybody said don't do it, and as the economy got softer and we saw what was happening internationally, I realized I had to listen to that. You know, I guess you can call it a flip-flop, but for me I don't apologize for listening to British Columbians and taking their advice.

Good: But you accuse John Cummins of saying one thing and doing another. How is it different?

Clark: Well, I mean, I think it's different to vote for one political party, vote against your own political party, and then decide to lead it. I mean, I have never voted for the NDP in my entire life, and I certainly didn't vote for them two years ago in the last provincial election and then decide to go to run for leader of a different party. I mean, I think that's a fundamentally different thing. That's not about listening to people, Bill. That's about deciding that you want to go and elect the NDP two years ago. I don't think what he's trying to do today in leading the BC Conservatives is any different. All he will do is elect Adrian as premier of British Columbia.

Good: Missing women. Your government set up the missing women inquiry, but many of the groups that were most in need of answers are not having their legal funding needs met. Are you concerned about that? Are you prepared to do something about it?

Clark: Well, the people whose lawyers are being paid for by taxpayers are the families of the missing women themselves, and every group that would like...you know, advocacy organization that would like to have funding for a lawyer is perfectly free to represent themselves. I mean, remember this, Bill. The inquiry is staffed up by lawyers whose job it is to make sure that those people are heard adequately. They are advocacy organizations. They have absolute standing to be able to speak before the inquiry. We have expanded the scope of the inquiry so that more people can be heard, and we have provided [lawyers], at taxpayers' expense, for the families.

You know, here's the thing. When you have a limited amount of money, and our economy has been.... We're hopeful about the economy, but internationally it's pretty fragile. There's a not a ton of money to spend. I think that we should be making sure we're looking after the families of the women who went missing and making sure that we are taking resources and spending them on the front lines when we have them rather than spending it all on the inquiry.

Good: Are you concerned that the inquiry will not be valid if many groups who had wished to be heard cannot be heard or choose not to be because they can't afford counsel?

Clark: Well, you know, I would encourage everybody to go and make themselves heard. There is no requirement to have a lawyer in order to represent a group at the missing women's inquiry. They have every right to stand before the commission, make their voice heard, and I would really encourage them to do that.

Now, I do think that Wally Oppal brings a lot of wisdom to this. There are a lot of people working on the commission. The families will certainly be represented. I have every confidence that they are going to get to the bottom of what happened in the past. You know, nonetheless, the more people that choose to appear, the better information the commission will have.

[Break]

Good: It looks like Metro mayors will approve plans for, among other things, another two-cents-a-litre tax on gas to fund transit needs. Do you support that?

Clark: I support them figuring out a way to do their bit to build the Evergreen line. We have put over \$500m on the table for this. It's been sitting there a long time. The feds have put their money in, over \$400m. We had an agreement as governments, the three levels of government, that they would come up with their money. They haven't yet. It's been waiting a long time. And you know what, Bill? I used to live in Port Moody. I did for years and years and years. I would drive that commute every day to downtown. They need rapid transit out there. You know, the province could use it too, because it's going to create 8,000 jobs.

I hope that if any of them are listening today, they'll take my encouragement to vote in favour of getting the Evergreen line off the ground. It is so important for the Tri-Cities area. We're ready to go. Let's get those shovels in the ground and get people working.

Good: I have a request on Twitter to ask you about the Broadway line. There are a lot of people think the Broadway line is in more need than the Evergreen line, and there are people who think both should be looked at from a light rail perspective instead of SkyTrain. You could probably do both for the cost of SkyTrain on Evergreen.

Clark: There are a lot of theories out there about that. I wasn't around for the last five years in government, I'm new to the government, but my understanding is they have looked at the cost of all those things and that SkyTrain is an economical way to go for the Evergreen line.

But having said that, Bill, here's the thing. It's been sitting and waiting for 20 years, and people in the Tri-Cities need rapid transit. We need to address the pollution needs. We need to support commuters. We need to get those 8,000 jobs going in the region. Let's just get on with it, for heaven's sakes. I don't think people in the Tri-Cities are sitting there saying: "Oh, gee, let's go talk about it some more." Let's just get on with it. Let's get those shovels in the ground, and let's get people to work faster.

Good: That said, you're getting a lot of pushback -- at least, TransLink is and the mayors are -- because people resent another tax on gas. We already pay almost the highest gas taxes in the country. This will put us to the

highest. People just say enough is enough is enough. Mr Cummins says the municipalities could fund this if they just cut 1% from their funding.

Clark: You know what? I mean, these are two separate issues. The mayors are going to decide whether or not they're going to do this, and they're deciding how they're doing it. They are responsible for their piece of the funding on this. They are responsible to their taxpayers. They are going to go to a municipal election, so we'll know, Bill, where voters stand on that after municipal elections, I think.

But you know, I'll agree with this. We do need to make sure that municipal governments are spending their money well, just like we make sure that provincial and federal government money is being spent well because we have an auditor general. That's why I said way back in January that if I was to become Premier, I would bring in a municipal auditor general, and what they'll do is they'll look at value for money. Is each municipality getting value for money for the money that they're spending?

I used to hear when I used to sit in your chair a lot about this project, that project, that wasn't being done well. Well, that's why you have an auditor general -- to make sure that we are getting our money spent well.

Good: Were you surprised at the pushback you got from the mayors at the Union of BC Municipalities? A lot of them seemed to resent the fact that the provincial government is stepping on their toes.

Clark: Well, you know, I understand where they're coming from. No level of government likes having an auditor general. I mean, we have an auditor general at the provincial level. He is often very critical of the things that we have done, and that's never comfortable, and it's not fun. I'll tell you that because I was in ministries that used to get criticized back in the day when I was in Children and Families and Education.

But you know what? We learned a lot from the advice that he gave us. We didn't always take it, but we learned a lot. I'll give you one example. The Auditor General went out and looked at CareCards and found out that we are the victims, potentially, of millions of dollars of fraud because there are all these unaccounted-for CareCards out there. We have no idea whose they are. There are way more CareCards in British Columbia than there are people who should have them. Well, we're addressing that now as a result of the work that the Auditor General did.

The Auditor General also went in and looked at the NDP's fast ferries. There was a lot of good that came of that.

You know, it's not comfortable. I don't think Glen Clark liked it when he did the ferries. I didn't like it when he looked at some of the stuff we were doing. But you know what? We learned from it. I think municipal governments will have the same benefit.

Good: To the gas tax. Is that the best way to fund transit, and do you favour or support the gas tax if that's what TransLink decides to do or the mayors decide to do?

Clark: Well, we'll see what they decide. I mean, we are going to enable them to do what they choose to do based on the decision or the discussion that they had with their voters. We are going to enable it. It's their decision, so it's not for me to comment on whether or not they have come up with the right way to fund it. As I said, they've got a municipal election coming up, and they're going to be accountable for their decisions, just like I am going to be accountable for mine. So I'll let them make their decision. We'll enable them to do it, but ultimately, it's their decision.

And you know what? The thing that the opponents of this never talk about is the fact that the Tri-Cities have done without rapid transit for 20 years, and it has been promised for 20 years. Go talk to Joe Trasolini in Port

Moody about all the development that he's embarked on with the expectation that there would be rapid transit, the promise that there would be rapid transit coming to that community that has never come through.

Good: I thought it was cheeky, if that's the right word, of mayors Corrigan and Brodie to come out against it when their communities are already well served by SkyTrain.

Clark: Well, you know what? I think that is the challenge that the mayors council frequently experiences. You know, you are sitting there accountable to your own community but then having to justify decisions that will benefit the region and not necessarily your own community, and it really does require big thinking on the parts of mayors. You know, I understand it is often difficult, particularly in an election year, but the thing is that we will all benefit from the Evergreen line. You know, for Derek Corrigan -- he's a good union guy -- 8,000 high-paying, family-supporting jobs will be created by the Evergreen line. For Malcolm Brodie, he cares about the environment. That is going to do a lot to reduce the total cumulative impact of emissions on all of us in the lower mainland.

Good: The RCMP. Minister Toews seemed taken aback when your Minister Bond suggested this week that BC might go it alone in policing, then you said a provincial police force might be cheaper. How can that be?

Clark: What I said was we have an obligation to investigate whether or not it could be, and here is how it could be. We don't know yet. I mean, we're investigating it. We have an obligation to do that. The contract as it's been proposed has no cost containment. The federal government would be in a position to negotiate all of the contracts, to build all the infrastructure, and then local taxpayers would be the ones paying for it. And so when you disconnect the decisions about how much we're going to pay from the people who are going to ultimately have to pay, you have a problem.

It's a 20-year agreement, so imagine how big the gap could get between our ability to pay and what we might have to pay, and that's the issue. Twenty years from now -- ten years from now, five years from now; I don't know -- it could end up being cheaper to do a provincial police force, but the fact is, Bill, I just don't know yet. We are trying to collect those numbers now. Ultimately, though, municipal governments have said this. They have said to me and to Shirley Bond, "We want you to negotiate an agreement that contains the costs so we can keep the RCMP in British Columbia," and so that is what we are trying to do.

[Break]

Good: Premier Christy Clark in studio.

I want to go just a little bit further down the road on this idea of a provincial force. If it would serve BC better.... And many think it might. We've had two dysfunctional commissioners of the RCMP, all kinds of high profile screw-ups by the RCMP -- the most obvious, the Dziekanski thing. So if a provincial force would serve BC better, even if it cost more money, would you consider it seriously?

Clark: Well, here's the thing: we are really negotiating this contract on behalf of municipal governments -- on behalf of Dianne Watts and on behalf of the folks in Kamloops. We are representing them. They say they want the RCMP. This negotiation's been underway for a long time. We're trying to conclude it in a way that protects property tax payers so that we can have some cost containment there. That's what municipal governments tell us they want. That's what we should get, because there's only one taxpayer in British Columbia.

I'll say this, too, on the RCMP. Because Shirley Bond and I brought in the independent investigations office this spring, for the first time the RCMP will be subject to independent oversight of investigations. So some of the situations that you've referred to, like Robert Dziekanski, which I talked about a lot when I was sitting in

your chair, would unfold completely differently now with an independent investigations office. And I think that's a really crucial change for the RCMP.

Good: I want to talk about BC Hydro. I had this conversation. Here's just a little bit of it, with Rich Coleman.

[Plays Coleman interview]

Bill Good: Talking with Energy Minister Rich Coleman on waste at BC Hydro -- something you aren't disputing or denying.

Coleman: No, I think the report was pretty clear that we're a little top-heavy and that we have some cutting and changes to do in how we structure the company. This is a little bit over the top on some of the benefits.

Good: It's a lot over the top.

Coleman: Well, it is over the top. It's time to take a step back. The world is not exactly in a great financial position these days. Everybody has to sort of tighten their belt and take a look at their business, and Hydro has to do the same thing.

Good: Hydro bloated -- you agree?

Clark: Well, Hydro grew a lot in the last four years. There was 41% growth in the company. I don't think that was justified. I think we do have to make sure that they are managing their budgets just as carefully as government does, because when I say I want to put families first, one of the things I'm doing is trying to find every way that I can -- and we can't do it everywhere -- to lower the total impact of costs that government imposes on families. So BC Hydro was one of them. They were proposing a 50% rate increase. When I became Premier, I said forget it. We're going to go in. We're going to review the company and see if we can find a way to get some savings out of it.

The report that.... I asked for it. My deputy did it. They came back and they were pretty critical of government, some of the decisions that government had made. It wasn't just Hydro; it was some of the decisions that government had required of Hydro. I think it was important that we listen to that, we respond, and we did. So Hydro is going to be a lot slimmer company, and we have gotten that rate increase down by half.

Good: How many flex days a year do you get?

Clark: (Laughter.) What is a flex day again?

Good: It's a good question. I mean, if a flex day is some benefit that BC Hydro workers get that gives them far more holidays than their holidays, and they seem to get it automatically, and they get bonuses. What was it? I think more than 90% of the employees who were eligible for bonuses got bonuses.

Clark: I think in the world now, when we look around us and see what's happening in the United States, see what's happening in Greece and Europe, we have to be pretty cautious about how we're spending our money, because I want British Columbia to be a safe harbour for international investment. I want us to have the best fiscal reputation in the world, because we need that investment here, Bill, so we can create jobs in the province.

One way to do that is to make sure that we are minding our dollars well. And you know what? It didn't seem to me or to Rich Coleman like BC Hydro was minding our dollars well. High Hydro rates don't serve investors that are creating jobs well, and they don't serve families who are trying to put food on the table very well.

Good: So much to talk about, and I do still want to get to calls. I know callers are going to list some of the things that I haven't reached yet -- things like Community Living BC. But before I get to a break, I want to talk about cameras in the court for the trial of rioters, if any are ever charged. You raised the issue. Did you think that through?

Clark: Yes, absolutely. I think we should have cameras in the courtroom for the rioters. They went out there, and they committed those crimes -- against all of us, by the way. They attacked our sense of civil society in a very profound way. They did it with cameras rolling. They did it with video on. They lit cars on fire while waving to folks on Facebook, for heaven's sake. They should be quite ready and willing to be tried with the cameras on in the courtroom.

Good: But politicians are not supposed to interfere in the judicial process. You cannot instruct judges to open the courts to cameras. Or do you think you can?

Clark: In the throne speech, what I said was: we are asking Crown counsel to make this request of the judge. So you're right; we cannot tell the judge to do it. But we have instructed our Crown counsel to go to the court and ask for that to happen. And we very much hope that the judge will agree to that. We can't make the judge. You're quite right, and I recognized that in the throne speech. But the judge probably won't ever consider it, Bill, unless we ask.

Good: And then they will say no.

Clark: Not necessarily. In the polygamy case, in the Bountiful case, there was a camera in the courtroom. You could watch it live stream over the Internet. And you know, I hear Adrian talking about how expensive this is going to be. Well, in the polygamy case, CBC put a camera in the courtroom, and it was a pool camera. Anybody could use it. You know how much that cost us? Next to nothing.

But the thing for me is, it's an openness issue. I think our courts should be more open in general. And I think we should have an appetite -- as someone who was formerly in the media, as someone who wouldn't have had time to go visit a courtroom personally....

Good: That's a different issue. I have always argued for cameras in the courts. But to pick out the rioters as one single event. Why not murderers or gangsters?

Clark: Well, I mean, where do you want to start? Why not start with this? Why not start with a case that has profoundly affected our sense of civil safety? And maybe this isn't where we end, Bill. Maybe we could make this request in every case. I don't know if that's where we'll get to, but we cannot get there, we cannot get to a more open court system, unless we start.

[Break]

Good: It's time for your calls to Premier Christy Clark.

Patricia, I think you want to talk about an issue that I was going to raise but saw that you were on it, and that's Community Living.

Patricia: Thank you for taking my call. My call is directly regarding CLBC and the drastic actions they have taken towards disabled people and their families. In my situation, it's a group home that's going to be closed. My sister has lived there for ten years, and the other three have been there 25 and 20 and 2, and they're just going to close it.

Good: Was that the story that was on Global last night? Yes, one of them. But I think that was the Sidhu family. But it's just terrible what CLBC is doing to my sister's group home and other situations. And I think there's such a lack of balance. It's all about saving money, and I don't think they're looking at individual situations at all. It's just one drastic policy that's driven, maybe, by some bureaucrats that have no idea of the impact on these people's lives.

Good: Premier?

Clark: Patricia, thank you for calling. The thing is that those individual situations really do matter. The issue is at CLBC is something that the minister is taking on in a big way right now. Stephanie Cadieux's taken over there...

Good: The new minister.

Clark: Yeah.

...and recognizing that CLBC has to look at individual situations. Now, let's put this in context. We spend \$710m a year on services for people with developmental disabilities. It's a significant amount of money.

Good: Eight hundred group homes.

Clark: Eight hundred group homes; 40 have closed. And some of them have closed because of....

Good: I believe it's 65.

Clark: I think it's closer to 40, but we could have a debate with CLBC about that, probably.

In context, it is a smaller number of homes that have closed. Some of them have closed because they're pretty decrepit, and some of them probably aren't the right place for people to be. Having said that, though, we do have to deal with individual situations. And CLBC has to be communicating with families in a very sensitive way, because when you are talking about people who are incredibly vulnerable -- as, obviously, the person in Patricia's family is -- change is really difficult. It's not like, "Gee, I'm just going to move down the street to another house." It's totally different from that.

Good: You're being split up from your friends, the people you've known for 10, 15 years. In one case, the story was this man and woman were in love, loved each other, and they're terrified they're going to get split up.

Clark: And you know what? CLBC has to be thinking about those situations individually, working individually with folks. Now, remember this, though. Despite the fact that some of the group homes have closed, the number of people in residential care has grown by 2%. So more clients are coming online, and more money is being spent. We added almost \$9m to the budget just recently, and we're continuing to do that. We've grown the budget every single year. But that doesn't mean that we don't have an obligation to be dealing with situations on an individual basis and making sure that people are comfortable and feel safe when change is proposed for them.

Good: Cory, good morning.

Cory: I just have a quick question for the Premier. She keeps on insisting about this family first agenda. I'm a family. We make decent money around here. But every time I take a look at every one of these bills I pay or turn on the news, there's.... Hydro is up, ICBC is looking for increasing rates when the government's taken money into general revenue. You've got TransLink looking for.... Just taxed to death here. Property taxes.

Then you hear these stories, and you see BC Place -- although it's a beautiful building. How is this a family first agenda, when the typical family in BC is just getting taxed and feed to death.

Clark: Well, you know, there is nothing I can do about BC Place. The money is spent, and I guess, according to people who were there, people really think the stadium is great and the money was spent well. But I'll leave that part of it aside, because I wasn't part of that decision. But I will say this....

Good: Your government was.

Clark: My predecessor was. I wasn't.

Good: You're going to be held accountable for what your government has done.

Clark: I want to be held accountable for the changes that I'm bringing, and I'll tell you what some of the changes are. When I became Premier, BC Hydro was proposing a rate increase of 50%. I said forget that. We went in right away. I sent my deputy in to do a review, and we've gotten that rate increase cut down by half. BC Hydro is taking some pretty dramatic actions -- up to 1,000 staff will be leaving -- in order to make sure they are keeping rates down for ratepayers.

ICBC. We went back and told them they had to do a review of the rate increases that they were proposing.

BC Ferries. The commissioner of BC Ferries is in there doing a review of their rate increases.

I mean, we are working at this one by one by one. Where we can, we're trying to reduce those costs for people, because Cory is right. It's tough for families out there. But here's the thing we need to do, Bill. We need to make sure while we're trying to reduce the cost burden of government on family, let's get out there and enable the creation of more jobs, more great-paying jobs in the province so people can work at better wages and not always feel so squeezed.

Good: Andrew, go ahead to the Premier.

Andrew: I'm listening with great interest here, about Christy and her flip-flopping and....

Good: Andrew, you've got a terrible and impossible line, but I do know you wanted to ask about smart meters and whether or not the Premier thinks there should be a moratorium on smart meters.

Clark: No, I don't. The thing is that it's a smart grid. What it's going to do is it's going to make it possible for ratepayers to save a lot of money over the long term by helping us conserve power. What the smart grid will do is help us predict how much power people need during the day, and it'll help Hydro decide when they're going to produce power and send it down the line. That is a huge potential savings to British Columbia. And not just that; it's a great conservation effort as well.

Good: Were you surprised at how much pushback there is over health concerns?

Clark: You know what? I am a mother myself, and I know that when you hear these scary stories from people about all of these frightening things that technology can do, you jump to it and you want to know that your kids are safe. I totally get that.

But the thing is that the concerns that anti-smart meter people are talking about are absolutely nothing compared to having your cell phone on your ear, compared to being here at CKNW, with all the wireless that's going on around us. The impact of it...

Good: We choose to do that. It's not imposed on us. I choose to have an iPhone. I choose to use it. I'm not personally concerned about the health risk of a smart meter, but if people are, should you be able to come in through BC Hydro and impose them on them?

Clark: Well, Bill, your employer here at CKNW imposes on you wi-fi wireless all over the place, which has a bigger impact than a smart meter would.

Good: I don't consider it an imposition.

Clark: If you choose to go to BC Place or you go down to the convention centre or you sit in a Starbucks, you've got wireless there. It's something that you don't necessarily choose. But you know what? When you're walking down the street and you walk through a wi-fi area, you may not be choosing that, but it's causing you a lot more impact than that smart meter would on the side of your house.

Good: Family Day. You declared another statutory holiday. Did you consider the cost to small business? Another stat holiday is said to cost \$300m to the economy, and small business people have families too.

Clark: Yes, I did, and that's why we have delayed it, and that's why it's going to be happening in 2013, not 2012.

Good: Before the next election.

Clark: Well, I wanted to do it in 2012, but the economy is fragile, and people said they wanted a little more time to get out there and figure it out. I get that.

But the thing is that Ontario has one. Saskatchewan has one. Saskatchewan, which has more statutory holidays than British Columbia, has a better-performing economy than we do. So I think we should be careful about some of the numbers that people put out there, because here's the thing, Bill. I think that it's good for productivity for families to be able to have one extra day together in the middle of what's really a pretty dark season.

Good: Steve, you've got the last call.

Steve: Premier, I just wanted to say I was at UBCM. I'm a town councillor in Ladysmith. I just wanted to make it clear that my understanding of the motion at UBCM around costing was about the way feds are downloading the cost of RCMP to municipalities. But the entire group made it clear that the support for the RCMP on the street.... Not forgetting that occasionally there's a rogue cop and there's some terrible incident, overall this province supports the RCMP. We certainly support the RCMP in our town.

Clark: Thanks for that. That was what I heard too -- that local governments want the RCMP. And that is why we are negotiating to keep the RCMP on their behalf. The question is, though.... We have to contain those costs, because property tax payers just cannot be put at that kind of risk. There's a billion-dollar building out in Surrey that's been built by one agency of the federal government to house the RCMP. It's a pretty expensive building, and we need to be able to contain some of those costs at a provincial and a local government level; otherwise, we're going to be paying through the teeth.

Good: We are out of time. Jessica wants me to ask you if you'll come back and do this again soon.

Clark: I would be delighted.

Good: She wants me to ask you that because if you take too long, we just keep playing that promise back over and over again. [xrz]

TNO...

This e-mail is a service provided by Today's News Online and is only intended for the original addressee. All content is the copyrighted property of a third party creator of the material. Copying, retransmitting, redistributing, selling, licensing, or emailing the material to any third party or any employee of the Province who is not authorized to access the material is prohibited.