

Doug Ford and Hydro

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There's an old episode of Seinfeld where a well-to-do gentleman of the upper crust is seen eating his Snickers Bar with a knife and fork.

Sure enough, the trend catches on ? at least in the world of Seinfeld ? and everyone starts eating their candy bars, donuts, and cookies with a knife and fork instead of picking them up with their fingers like a normal person.

It's a jab at how 'common people' view those who might have a little more than the rest of us. The joke is we all put our pants on one leg at a time and nothing is going to change that.

Ontario Progressive Conservative leader Doug Ford's recent announcement that if elected, he will do whatever is in his power to fire the top Hydro One executive along with some of his henchman making the big bucks certainly resonates with the 'common folk' of Ontario who are paying a lot for electricity.

Realistically, even Ford's advisers admit there's really nothing he can do to outright fire the CEO of Hydro One, but his attitude sure is in the right place and many Ontarians do wonder what kind of a job is worth a \$6.2 million salary ? especially when a good chunk of it is paid for by us ? the taxpayers.

'The party's over with the taxpayer's money, we're going to start respecting the taxpayers,' Ford said, repeatedly saying the money spent on Hydro One salaries is 'morally indefensible.'

To be fair, Hydro One is not a wholly owned public corporation any more. A good chunk of it was sold off by the Liberal government in a revenue generating bid, however nearly 50 per cent is still owned by us ? the public.

Usually when referring to CEOs who make huge bucks, there is a comparison to what other people in the same position make. In private business they use that to justify some of the huge salaries people at the top make. In truth, they aren't really worth the huge dollars they earn and everyone at the top knows this. But as long as the top guy is getting paid a massive salary, all his underlings are as well.

It's better to smile and collect a huge salary than point out that your boss isn't very good at his job.

I used to work at a large company where the big shots were paid big money. One president was dropped in one year from who knows where. He lasted for two years and made more money in that couple of years than the average middle management person would make in two lifetimes at the going rate. He floundered in the job and was fired. When he left, they gave him an \$8 million cheque as a going-away present ? for his poor performance.

When it comes to public money, everyone should be accountable.

The previous CEO of Hydro One was paid a salary of \$741,000 in 2014. What could possibly justify an increase to over \$6 million just four years later?

Ontario has the highest hydro rates in the country by far ? more than double that of Manitoba and Quebec and a lot higher than every other province.

When paying these outrageous salaries, the old excuse is about paying for the 'best person' for the job with the most talent, the most brains, and the most experience.

Sure sounds good, but the truth is no one is truly that good where he deserves \$6 million and would turn down the job for a paltry

amount of less compensation and the second best candidate would be worth only \$2 million.

Ford made a smart move when he made his announcement. He brought a chart showing the salaries of other people doing the exact same job in other provinces. The difference in salary was startling and pretty much proved Ford's point.

There isn't a single job or position on this planet that can't be filled by someone else.

From the Queen to the plumber who lives next door, if that person disappeared there is someone else who is qualified and will step in and fill the position.

For some reason there's always this mystique about people in the top echelon, but the truth is they eat their Snickers Bars the same way the rest of us do.