



## ONTARIO CABINET SHUFFLE

In a Cabinet shuffle to be announced in a few hours, triggered by last month's resignation of Michael Bryant from the Cabinet:

John Wilkinson will move from the Ministry of Research and Innovation (MRI) and take over Revenue from Dwight Duncan who continues on at Finance;

MRI will report to John Milloy, the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. (Milloy continuing at MTCU means that Bill 175 will progress as scheduled);

Everything old is new again as Sandra Pupatello takes back Economic Development and Small Business and continues with International Trade;

Harinder Takar moves from Consumer Services to Government Services;

Ted McMeekin takes over Consumer Services;

A piece of Donna Cansfield's Natural Resources portfolio (Forestry) is chipped off and handed to Mike Gravelle at Northern Development and Mines.

David Caplan stays in Health and Long-Term Care, which suggests that the Premier believes the eHealth "scandale" is dying out. It also means Bill 179 will proceed unimpeded.

A peculiar move is John Wilkinson to Revenue from MRI, which on the face of it looks like a demotion. The Premier will claim that he needs a strong spokesperson to defend the HST. (This is an inescapable slap against Dwight Duncan



whose fervour for the HST has never matched the Premier's.) Cynics will claim that Wilkinson is being put in Revenue because of less-than-solid performance at MRI and/or to cool his leadership jets.

For a government supposedly committed to research and innovation, the shift of MRI to MTCU seems peculiar. The Ministry has not performed well and has suffered from turf wars with MED and other ministries. Nonetheless, one would have thought that a government committed to research and innovation would have shored up MRI and put in a strong minister rather than making it part of a dual portfolio.

Putting economic development, international trade and small business back together again under one minister makes organizational sense, but one wonders if the span of control will be too great for a single minister during these difficult economic times.