

What a Thief Leaves Behind

By Tom Reimer

He told himself nobody would get hurt.

Standing outside a stranger's home, he repeated it as though saying it could make it true. He was only there for things. A television. Some jewelry. Something he could turn into cash. He did not want to think about the people who lived behind the door.

Thinking about people made it harder.

He preferred to imagine a house as a collection of possessions. Objects had prices. Objects did not cry, lose sleep or ask their parents whether the bad man would come back.

Then he stepped inside.

The first thing he noticed was a pair of small boots beside the entrance. One had fallen onto its side. Above them hung a child's coat with a mitten sticking out of the pocket.

For a moment, his own daughter came to mind.

He pushed the thought away.

Keep moving, he told himself. Do not make this personal.

But everything in the house was personal.

There was a photograph on the wall of an older couple standing beside a lake. A birthday card sat open on a table. On the refrigerator, a crooked drawing showed four people holding hands beneath an enormous yellow sun.

He had entered looking for valuables. Instead, he kept finding evidence of a life.

He opened a drawer and saw a small velvet box. Inside was a ring, worn thin along the bottom.

He wondered what it might bring him.

He did not know that a woman had worn it through forty years of marriage. He did not know her husband still reached across the bed some mornings before remembering she was gone.

He took it anyway.

That was the bargain he made with himself: do not ask what anything means.

A sound made him freeze. Suddenly, his thoughts were no longer about money. They were about being discovered, being recognized, being unable to undo what he had started.

He left with less than he had hoped to find.

Behind him, the house looked almost unchanged.

That evening, its owner stood in the doorway and knew that something was wrong. Later came the telephone calls, the police report and the search through drawers. Then came the question nobody could answer: would it happen again?

The thief would never see the bedroom light left burning all night. He would never hear a child ask why someone had come into their home.

He had told himself nobody would get hurt.

He needed that lie.

This imagined scene has a real human message. A burglary takes more than property. It can take the comfort of coming home and feeling safe.

Before a break-in happens, give your home security attention. Check doors, windows and locks. Discuss concerns with your household and seek advice about improvements.

The man who took the ring might remember only what he was paid for it. In the house he left behind, someone would keep remembering the hand that used to wear it, and the place where it should have been.

Province Awards Contracts to Eastern Ontario

Manufacturers to Build G7's First Small Modular Reactor

As part of its plan to protect Ontario and position the province as a global energy superpower, the government is announcing that contracts have been awarded to two Eastern Ontario companies to advance construction of the G7's first small modular reactor (SMR) at the Darlington New Nuclear Project (DNNP). Gillam Construction Group in Carp will receive nearly $35 million to construct the DNNP Administration Building, creating 100 new good-paying jobs, while Mansteel Rebar in Pembroke will receive $31 million to fabricate, supply and install reinforcing steel for five of the plant's core buildings, supporting 100 good-paying jobs and adding 20 more over the course of construction.

These contracts will add more than $66 million to Ontario's GDP, and represent another milestone in Ontario's nuclear build-out, connecting local businesses to one of the province's largest clean energy infrastructure projects and creating opportunities for Ontario workers, skilled trades and suppliers to participate in the next generation of nuclear technology.

"Ontario is taking decisive action to be a first mover in the Western World on small modular reactors to unlock generational prosperity and safeguard our energy sovereignty," said Stephen Lecce, Minister of Energy and Mines. "As we advance construction on this nation-building project, we are creating more than 18,000 good-paying jobs and securing a world-class nuclear supply chain that builds the components for SMRs at home and around the world. Eastern Ontario has always played a critical role as a clean energy powerhouse and nuclear innovator, which is why it's fitting that we announce contracts across the region that will keep the economy strong."

Ontario's nuclear industry is tariff-proof and recession-proof. As global uncertainty and U.S. tariffs put pressure on the province's key industries, the DNNP is opening new markets for tariff-impacted sectors, including steel. Today's announcement builds on the 14 contracts awarded last week to companies in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA). Gillam Construction Group and Mansteel Rebar now join the over 100 Canadian companies that have already signed agreements with Ontario Power Generation (OPG) to deliver this first-of-a-kind project, establishing themselves as leaders in the growing domestic and global markets for new nuclear technologies.

"Gillam Construction Group is incredibly proud to provide construction services to the Darlington New Nuclear Project through the delivery of its new Administration Building," said Marcus Gillam, CEO, Gillam Construction Group. "We are honoured to play a part in this generational project that will provide clean, safe and reliable energy to Ontarians for generations to come."

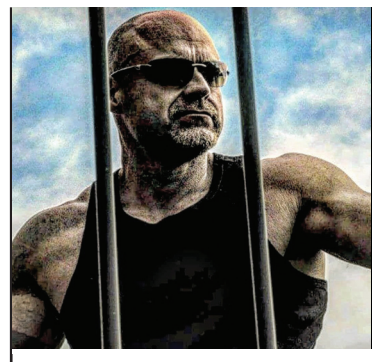
As countries around the world undergo a major nuclear resurgence in search of reliable, affordable and secure electricity, Ontario's first-mover advantage is making it the partner of choice to build the components these projects need. This advantage has secured new domestic manufacturing investment in Ontario, including Velan's planned facility in Durham Region to build critical safety valves for SMRs in Europe, and BWXT Canada's agreement to manufacture key SMR components in Ontario for Poland.

"Mansteel Rebar Ltd. is proud to be part of the Darlington New Nuclear Project, contributing to one of Canada's most significant energy infrastructure investments. As a Canadian-owned and operated business, sourcing all of our reinforcing steel from local Canadian based steel mills, we are proud to support Canadian jobs and manufacturing," said Allen Piddington, General Manager, Mansteel Rebar Ltd. "With our skilled workforce currently on site and the recent award of additional work, this project represents an important opportunity to support local employment, strengthen Ontario's construction and steel industries, and contribute to the province's long-term energy needs. We look forward to continuing our role in building Ontario's nuclear future."

Once complete, the four SMR units at the DNNP will deliver 1,200 megawatts (MW) of reliable, clean electricity, enough to power approximately 1.2 million homes. The construction, operation and maintenance of the four SMR units will add $38.5 billion to Canada's GDP over the next 65 years. The government has worked with OPG to ensure that 80 per cent of project spending goes to Ontario companies, helping anchor the economic benefits of this generational investment in the province. The construction and operations will protect Ontario workers and jobs by sustaining an estimated 3,800 highly-skilled, good-paying jobs for the next 65 years.

"Companies like Gillam Construction Group and Mansteel Rebar are essential partners in delivering the G7's first small modular reactor, showcasing the strength of Ontario's world-class nuclear supply chain and skilled workforce," said Nicolle Butcher, President and CEO, OPG. "This complex, first-of-a-kind project will meet Ontario's growing electricity demand while strengthening the made-in-Ontario workforce, expertise, and supply chain capacity that will be essential as we advance the next generation of large-scale nuclear projects."

SMRs play a central role in Energy for Generations, the government's first-ever integrated energy plan to ensure Ontario has the reliable, affordable power it needs to power new homes and drive economic growth. The government's integrated approach and record investments in energy infrastructure are also providing the certainty needed for Indigenous communities, municipalities, businesses and industry partners to invest confidently in Ontario's future. With a clear path forward, the plan is not only meeting the demands of today, but it is protecting jobs, supporting workers and powering economic growth for generations to come.



THE Mr. X Files

By John Mutton

CENTRAL EXCLUSIVE

Karmageddon

They Wanted Mr. X to Be the Story Now the Documents Are Telling Another One

By Mr. 'X' ~ John Mutton, Former Mayor of Clarington

There is an old saying in politics: Never let the truth get in the way of a good story.For a while, I was the story.Mr. X. The Greenbelt scandal. The former mayor. The lobbyist. The man everyone seemed eager to condemn. The Progressive Conservatives had their controversy. The opposition had its talking points. And the public had a version of events that was far from complete.But there was one problem.. I had the documents. And I decided the public deserved to see them. Not selective excerpts. Not carefully managed political statements. Not the parts that made one person look bad while leaving everyone else conveniently out of the picture. The actual evidence. The documents don't disappear because they're inconvenient. In October, The Trillium reported that an assistant in Minister David Piccini's office forwarded a developer's Greenbelt presentation to the housing minister's office in June 2021. That documentary trail matters. It raises serious questions about what government offices knew, when they knew it, and whether the accounts provided during the Greenbelt investigations accurately reflected those communications. Then came the reporting concerning Kirstin Jensen, a former senior official in the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. WhatsApp messages examined during the Integrity Commissioner's investigation contradicted aspects of what Jensen had initially told investigators about invitations to sporting events and golf.

Think about that.

An investigation that imposed serious consequences on me also contained evidence that challenged statements made by a senior government official. Yet the public did not have the complete picture. I am not declaring that anyone committed perjury. That is a criminal allegation requiring evidence and due process. But I am asking a question every Ontarian should want answered: When an integrity investigation uncovers evidence that materially contradicts a government witness, who is responsible for ensuring that contradiction is properly examined? And why should the public have to wait for investigative journalists to uncover it? Then came Laurie Scott The disclosures did not end with the Greenbelt. The previously confidential 132-page report also documented my dealings with Progressive Conservative MPP Laurie Scott, including discussions about minister's zoning orders and political fundraising. The reporting raised questions about the relationship between political fundraising, access to elected officials and government decision-making. Those questions deserve answers. I have never suggested that politicians should be prohibited from fundraising or that every meeting between an elected official and a developer is improper. But there cannot be one standard for the lobbyist and another for the politician. If the conduct is serious enough to examine when I am involved, it is serious enough to examine when an elected official is involved. Accountability cannot stop at the door of a minister's office. And now the fundraising records. There is another chapter to this story. I have provided documentation concerning my role in the Progressive Conservative leader's dinner fundraising activities, including evidence relevant to disputed accounts of whether I served as a vice-chair. The Trillium is examining that material. I will not pre-empt its reporting or claim that its conclusions have already been established.

But I will say this: when political organizations dispute a person's role in their fundraising activities, the appropriate response is to examine the contemporaneous records. Invitations. Correspondence. Committee documentation. Financial records. The truth should not depend on which version is most politically convenient. The opposition doesn't get to rewrite the history either The Ontario NDP has every right to demand accountability from the government.

In fact, that is part of its job. But demanding an investigation after journalists reveal information is not the same thing as uncovering that information. Credit belongs where credit is due. Jessica Smith Cross and Charlie Pinkerton of The Trillium have done important investigative journalism, examining records, testing competing accounts and asking questions that deserve answers..I supplied my previously confidential Integrity Commissioner report and supporting material because I believed the public record needed correcting.

That decision was mine.

The reporting was theirs.

The NDP is entitled to pursue the political and legislative consequences of those revelations.

What it should not do is blur the distinction between its subsequent calls for accountability and the work that brought the evidence into public view. Political accountability is not a competition for headlines. What about the Integrity Commissioner?

There is another institution whose role deserves examination. Ontario's Integrity Commissioner possesses significant investigative responsibilities. Those responsibilities exist to protect public confidence in government, not merely to identify wrongdoing by one participant in a controversy. The Commissioner's office made findings against me. Those findings remain part of the official record, whether I agree with them or not. But the evidence concerning other participants also matters.

If documents gathered during an investigation contradict important witness statements, the public has a legitimate interest in understanding how those contradictions were assessed. Were witnesses questioned again? Were the inconsistencies evaluated? Was consideration given to referring any potentially criminal conduct to the appropriate authorities? And if the law prevented the disclosure of important corrective information, should that law be reconsidered? These are not requests for special treatment. They are requests for equal scrutiny. They underestimated the wrong man. To those within the Progressive Conservative Party who thought they could throw me under the bus, destroy my reputation and simply walk away, I have a message. You didn't do your homework. You didn't understand who you were dealing with. You didn't understand the strength of my resolve. And you certainly didn't understand that I wasn't going to disappear quietly because it was politically convenient for you. I'm a world champion fighter. But the toughest fights I've ever faced haven't necessarily been on the mats. They've been the battles where my reputation, my integrity and the truth itself were on the line. You may have thought you could knock me down, bury the evidence and move on to the next political headline.

What you failed to understand is that I don't quit.

I didn't become a world champion by backing down when things got difficult. I got there through discipline, determination and an absolute refusal to surrender. And that same determination is what drives me today. I will fight for what I believe is right. I will fight to expose misinformation. I will fight to ensure the public gets the truth, even when that truth makes powerful people uncomfortable. And I'll keep fighting for what's right until my dying day. Not with fists. With facts. With documents.

With evidence. And with the kind of determination you clearly underestimated. To those who thought throwing Mr. X under the bus would be the end of the story: You picked the wrong man to underestimate. And to everyone who thought this story was over, I have just one thing to say.

You wanted the public to know about Mr. X.

Now you're going to have to live with the public knowing the rest of the story.