Update on Changes to Part VII of The Mining Act

by Reno Pressacco

For those of you who may have forgotten, or haven’t had the need to venture into this section of The Mining Act, Part VII deals with the Operation of Mines and covers all aspects starting from advanced exploration through mine development to final rehabilitation and closure. This is an important section of the Act, as it requires submittal and approval of a detailed plan describing all aspects for the life of a project once it gets to the Advanced Exploration stage and beyond. These details are provided in a document called a Closure Plan, which is required for all new Advanced Exploration and Development projects, and may be required to be submitted for historical mining properties. This Closure Plan is the rule book or Bible for the entire life of a Project.

The proposed amendments have received Royal Assent in 1996, but have not been implemented due to delays in finalizing some of the accompanying regulations. Many of the proposed changes to Part VII are beneficial and serve to make the Closure Plan process more friendly towards the proponent. For example, under the old Act, a proposed Closure Plan had to be reviewed by all interested government agencies (eg. MNDM, MNR, MOEE, and MOL), all of whom required staff to do these reviews which often took months to achieve. The amendments will place more responsibility upon the proponent to certify that the Plan conforms to all requirements of the Act, after which the MNDM needs only review the Plan to determine if it does indeed conform, all within a 45-day period.

Additional positive changes include alternative options for a proponent to supply the necessary financial assurance such as a Letter of Credit or a Bond, and for the possibility for a company to “self-assure” a Closure Plan, providing that they meet a set of criteria. For example, the financial assurance requirements are waived if a proponent’s corporate credit rating is sufficiently high, as measured by such services as Canadian Bond Rating Service, Moody’s Investor Service, Standard and Poor’s Rating Service, or Dominion Bond Rating service.

Also, due to the reduced budget and staffing levels, audits and inspections will not take place with a given frequency. Rather, if a Project/Mine has a long track record of safe operation and compliance with the terms outlined in the Closure Plan, then naturally it does not need to be monitored as closely as another Project/Mine which is beset by infractions and issues such as tailings spills and subsidences.

Other parts of these amendments require further study however. For example, the conditions by which a proponent can obtain an “exit ticket” (this means that the site has been completely rehabilitated and closed out, and the proponent no longer has any liability for it) remain somewhat vague. The other big item remains the issue of ownership and liability of pre-existing mine hazards. Does the average prospector who stakes an old mine site (say, from the 1930’s) have to rehabilitate the site to today’s standards? This question, while addressed in section 147 of the Act, remains unclear - more on this at a later date.

Inside This Issue

Hostages Page 2
Consequences of the MacGregor Decision Page 3
Behind the Scenes at Mines Ontario Page 4
The Last Prospector Page 6
Ontario Mining Accord Page 7
Exploration Trends Page 8
Editorial

Recently an examination of the ways the Explorationist is produced and distributed has been carried out. The impetus for this is to find cheaper ways to distribute the newsletter to a wider audience.

Presently it cost $1.60 to print and mail out each copy. The Porcupine Prospectors and Developers distributes master copies to the Northern Prospectors, the Northwest Ontario Prospectors and the Sudbury Prospectors and Developers who are responsible for distributing copies to their members. The Porcupine Prospectors and Developers handles the distribution of copies to its members plus the distribution to politicians, senior bureaucrats and mining associations across Canada.

Various “bugs” have been worked out that now permit us to distribute copies to most members who have email address using the free Adobe Acrobat Reader Software. If sent as an attachment the copy could take up to 10 minutes to download using a standard phone-line internet connection. Alternatively the copy could be downloaded from the different association web sites. Even with these cheaper distribution methods to the majority of our members, it is estimated that the combined costs to distribute the newsletter to those not on the internet are $6,000 to $7,000 a year. Historically, major mining companies used to directly assist in these costs but this is no longer the case.

Given that the mandate of our associations is to lobby governments, we cannot be classified as charities to get cheaper postage. Moreover, to accept any government funds to help in distribution costs would be a conflict of interest. For this reason some of the associations are now looking at a two-tiered membership fee. Members who would still like to receive printed copies of the Explorationist directly through the mail may be asked to pay a premium in future.

Has our load as explorationists become too heavy?

At times when facing problems financing your exploration program, or when resisting alienation of land to exploration by special interest groups, do you feel like this donkey?

HOSTAGES

Recently a number of mineral development projects where held hostage to the political agendas of special interest groups. The hostages are:

- Voisey’s Bay - Labrador
- Diavik Diamonds Project - NWT
- Crown Jewel - Washington State, USA

These projects join the Cheviot Coal Mine in Alberta that has been held hostage for a while by special interest groups. In Ontario, lower profile hostages to special interest groups include:

- Martison Lake Project
- Trout Lake Project
- Sandy Lake Project
- James Bay Diamond Projects

The existence of these hostages and the de facto support of the special interest groups by government, discourages exploration and investment.
CONSEQUENCES OF THE MacGREGOR DECISION

an open letter to John Gammon ADM at Ontario’s MNDM by Reno Pressacco

Dear Dr. Gammon:

Further to our conversation at last month’s meeting of the Porcupine Prospectors and Developers Association, I wish to follow up in writing some of the points we discussed with respect to the Mining and Lands Commissioner’s ruling on the MacGregor issue (File No. MA 033-93). I must admit that I find this ruling quite disturbing, as it clearly sets several precedents which have far reaching implications with respect to implementation of Part VII of The Act.

In my opinion, it is true that Mr. MacGregor did make a business decision when he took the claims in question to lease, and the Ministry did make a reasonable effort to resolve the situation without resorting to stronger measures. However, the interpretations and rulings by the Mining and Lands Commissioner clearly went far beyond what common sense and accepted practice dictate. For example, one of the key points relied upon in the ruling was that Mr. MacGregor was engaged in mining by conducting exploration work on mining lands, as per a strict interpretation of the definition given in The Act:

("mine," when used as a verb, means the performance of any work in or about a mine, as defined in its noun sense); (Mining and Lands Commissioner’s decision, File No. MA 033-93, Page 30.),

and as a result of Dr. Cowan’s testimony:

“Dr. Cowan reiterated that there is a mine on the subject site, according to the Act and in his opinion, Mr MacGregor was engaged in mining. While chipping at rocks or drilling small cores may not be mining, if these activities are done in the vicinity of a mine, as defined, they are considered mining according to the definitions contained in the Act.

Dr. Cowan stated that in 1939, it was not Mr. MacGregor who ceased or indefinitely suspended mining. However, the Ministry regarded his recent work as mining. Dr. Cowan indicated that it had been assumed that mining had been done, in the form of required assessment work, in order to bring the property to lease.” (Mining and Land Commissioner’s decision, File No. MA 033-93, Page 9.)

Clearly, this definition of “mining” (verb) is quite general, laying open a large amount of room for interpretation and subjectivity. In my opinion, this definition requires refinement to more closely represent what is generally accepted by the industry today. May I suggest the following text for your consideration (the three main points are outlined):

“Mine,” when used as a verb, means (1) the extraction of mineral-bearing material with the intent of direct sale, or of processing for ultimate sale, stockpiling, or (3) for the purposes of test work, but excludes preliminary exploration.

A second key point on which the Commissioner’s ruling was based dealt with which type of work constitutes “mining.” The definition given in the July 24, 1998 Office Consolidation version of The Act (which may possibly be a revision of previous text, as I do not have an old copy of The Act) clearly excludes preliminary exploration, however preliminary exploration is not defined. Clearly, the normal activities which we use in the course of exploration work cannot be construed as “mining,” regardless of whether these activities take place on lands upon which a mine (past or present) exists. It is apparent that a definition of preliminary exploration work is required. In principle, this definition is easily had, and can be linked to which types of work are eligible for assessment work as described under Ontario Regulation 6/96 (Assessment Work, R1.1, “Page 135”)

A third point which I wish to address is the Commissioner’s musings with respect to the liabilities of unpatented mining claim holders:

“While not relevant to the tribunal’s findings, it is interesting to note that the definition of “proponent” includes the holder of an unpatented mining claim, so that Mr. MacGregor’s belief that, had he not been required under the unamended Mining Act to take his mining claims to lease, he might not be involved in these proceedings appears to be without merit.” (Mining and Lands Commissioner’s ruling, File No. MA 033-93, Page 22).

This is a rather frightening comment which serves to lay liability for rehabilitation of previous mine hazards upon the holders of staked mining claims. From what I understand from our conversation, an amendment was made (in an attempt to relieve the holders of unpatented mining claims from mine hazard liabilities) in the July 24, 1998 version of The Act, which I believe to be Section 147(1) of the proposed amended Act:

“The Director may, in writing, order any proponent of any lands on which a mine hazard exists or any prior holder of an unpatented mining claim on any such lands, other than a current or prior holder of an unpatented mining claim, to cease or indefinitely suspend mining work on such lands...” (see MacGregor Page 7)
Recently the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines asked the Ontario Prospectors Association and hence indirectly, the different regional prospectors’ associations for an endorsement of the Mines Ontario initiative.

This initiative was initially presented publicly in the spring of 1998. During the summer of 1998 a two volume “Foundation Briefing Book” was assembled by the staff of the Mines and Minerals Division. Then on October 28th an inaugural meeting was held of a subcommittee of the Minister’s Mining Act Advisory Committee to advise the government on the concept and this meeting was chaired by Mike Leahy. Initially 15 members were on the subcommittee, five from industry, five from industry associations, one from GSC and four from environmental groups. Part way through the committee hearings Barry Simmons took over the chair and six members formed a working group, five from industry associations and one from Northwatch.

During the hearings there was a general consensus that the MNDM is facing a funding crisis and the members endorsed the broad concept of Mines Ontario. However, the subcommittee had concerns including: 1) endorsing a concept when many facets of government reorganisation were unknown, 2) only positive examples of such a concept were presented to the committee, 3) how the concept was to be reconciled with the mandate to reduce government expenditures, 4) how the funding would be handled, 5) cost / management efficiencies of the concept were not demonstrated - a requirement to sell the concept, 6) the possibility that Geo Enterprises would compete directly with private consultancies, 7) confidentiality of industry data, and 8) the mining industry should have an effective voice on the board of directors.

In November 1998 the subcommittee reported to the Minister their endorsement of the proposed concept subject to a number of caveats.

1) Loss of Ministry status would weaken the voice of the mining industry which needs a Minister at the Cabinet Table
2) 35% of Mining Royalties (fully enhanced) or 45% of Mining Royalties (abandoned mine scenario) were regarded as the minimum levels of funding required.
3) A reorganized Mines Ontario would enhance efficiencies, flexibility and accountability. Strong industry representatives on the board must be an integral part and would add a new dimension and focus to operations.
4) All enforcement functions must remain within the new organization.
5) Reorganization would have to address social issues such as abandoned mines and staffing.
6) Liability with respect to compliance and enforcement must remain with the titleholder of a mineral property
7) The processes for implementing Mines Ontario are open and transparent.

Though not part of the recommendations there was a strong belief amongst the subcommittee that a new concept and guaranteed funding are insufficient in themselves to fix the Mines and Minerals Division of the MNDM. Rather, it was felt that a new management system would have to be implemented and a new approach would have to be embraced by the present staff.

In October 1999, the subcommittee made its final report to the government and had seven key recommendations.

1) Mines Ontario must include all the functions of the present Mines & Mineral Division.
2) At least 50% of the Board of Directors must be from the mineral industry. Board members would serve for three years on a staggered basis. It was also recommended that 30% of seats on the Board be reserved for various non-mining groups, but who, was unresolved.
3) A committee with the majority of its members outside the mining industry must provide oversight to enforcement functions.
4) A Minister of Mines must chair the Board of Directors and the CEO should be a director.
5) A cost-effective budget that provides an improved and adequate service to stakeholders is determined. Depending on the responsibilities, this funding should be either 35% of 45% of mining royalties.
6) Liability with respect to compliance and enforcement must remain with the titleholder of a mineral property
7) The processes for implementing Mines Ontario are open and transparent.

If these issues are adequately addressed, the subcommittee endorsed the Mines Ontario concept. A minority of the subcommittee disagreed with the first two recommendations.

The Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada recently endorsed the Mines Ontario concept by the narrowest of margins. This support was conditional on two major conditions being met, firstly that an adequate level of funding was assured, and secondly a commitment was received that the mining industry would have an effective political impact within Ontario. There was also concern within the PDAC that the whole concept could be undone by details.
Behind the Scenes at Mines Ontario

The Ontario Mining Association voted against supporting the Mines Ontario initiative. Four reasons are cited.

1) The initiative will be the beginning of the end for a mining policy within the government. This as the Ontario Geological Survey represents the critical mass of technical expertise. Removing the OGS as a government organization and replacing it with a few mining bureaucrats as policy makers within the Management Board is not a viable alternative.

2) The initiative started as a way for the government to spend less money on geological surveys and administering the Mining Act. To assume that Mines Ontario will end up with a bigger budget is a contradiction.

3) Mining taxes in Ontario are too high and not competitive with other jurisdictions. So any initiative that is tied to funding from mining royalties lessens the chances of reducing such taxes.

4) Any new government will question the validity of a crown corporation that offers services “just to” the mining industry. Therefore, future governments could totally axe such a crown corporation.

In December 1999 the OPA endorsed the Mines Ontario concept subject to a legislated funding formula, the opportunity for revision of the proposed organizational / operational structure, and subject to ratification by local membership.

Revisions to the concept have addressed some of the issues raised. There is now a proposal that a “Mining Policy Branch” be retained within the government and that the Mines Minister, Deputy Minister structure is retained in this “Branch.” However, there has been no clarification on the composition of the Board of Directors but statements have been made that this issue will have to be clarified by a transition management team. There are also comments that seats would be assigned to municipalities, First Nations, and other crown land users. In addition there is pressure to have mining industry representatives as a minority on the board as such representatives are looked upon “as foxes guarding the chickens.”

Considering that some environmental lobby associations believe that all mining must be stopped in Canada, having such representatives on the board would effectively emasculate any advocacy for the industry to the Mines Minister. Perhaps the environmental component on the Board of Directors could come from a Deputy Minister or a Director with the Ministry of Environment. It is also important to be specific on who should be a Director of Mines Ontario. How about the following?

- a prospector
- a junior mining company executive
- a major mining company executive
- a mine manager
- a member from the exploration service industry
- an aggregate producer representative
- a PDAC or OPA representative
- a councilor from a northern municipality
- a First Nation representative
- a former premier / cabinet minister whom no longer holds a seat at Queen’s Park.
- a director from MOE
- Deputy Minister of Mines
- Minister of Mines (Chair)

The other contentious issue is funding and there is a diversity of views on this, some warnings but little clarification. Most opinions expressed are in agreement that there is a funding crisis in geological surveys and a service level comparable to 10 years ago should be restored. How this funding can be restored and assured raises concerns. A warning came from the Aggregate Producers Association of Ontario (APA0) which now administer the aggregate industry on behalf of the MNR, noting the annual fees and tonnage levies still pass onto the government and are not retained by the Association. It is interesting to note that none of these fees will be redirected to a Mines Ontario even though the aggregate industry is a major user of OGS products. It was also mentioned by the APAO that attention to details is essential to successfully adopting a concept such as Mines Ontario.

Another aspect to funding that has received little attention so far is the “additional revenue generating services,” i.e. consulting and professional advice. Except where such advice is given to another government or ministry on administration of mining acts, such services encroach on those services offered by private exploration consultants. Cited examples of “additional revenue generating services” include offering geophysical advice to Ontario Hydro on seismic surveys. This is incredible as the OGS has no geophysical expertise. However, offering below-cost project management services for mapping does jeopardize industry consultants (see The Last Prospector page 6.) Similarly, the ability to hold mineral rights could be a conflict of interest. Therefore, it is suggested that any ground staked on behalf of the crown must reside with the proposed Mining Policy Branch and not with a Mines Ontario. Furthermore, a Mines Ontario must be prohibited from geological consulting services to the mineral industry, governments and agencies across Canada and overseas.

The purpose of this article has been to try and summarize concerns and opinions of many people who have been involved in discussing the Mines Ontario concept. This is done as a background to members in the different constituent associations of the Ontario Prospectors Association prior to a vote on endorsing the concept. In Timmins, the Editor has assembled a copy of the Foundation Briefing Books plus various presentations made by the MMDM. These are available for viewing in Timmins on request.
The Explorationist

6 February 2000

Working to keep mining and exploration alive, into the new millennium.

The Last Prospector

On my last trip to town for supplies and mail I got to talken with the lads around the wood burner in the general store. One of the lads mentioned that he’d just got notice from the Ontario Department of Mines that the assessment he applied for last spring was cut back and his claims would be soon reopened for staking. As he had spent all his money, he couldn’t apply any more work.

Then we all gotta wondering just who exactly are these assessor fellas and where do they come from? The gall damned reason for the cut was that the ODM assessor didn’t feel that the consultant buddy hired, a real educated guy with so many initials behind his name that he needs two business cards, was worth the amounta money buddy paid. Would appear that the assessor fella’s decision was based entirely on the number of pages and the quality of the paper in the report, rather than the amount of time and field costs actually expended to complete the project and report. Finally when the assessor fella finished withal the fiddling and finagling with numbers, it worked out that the $500 per day “all inclusive” consultant’s work was only worth $200 a day, even though buddy paid the $500 a day.

This is $70 less a day than a government geologist makes working in an ODM office. Furthermore, those government fellas only have to work 37 hours week, have paid pension benefits, medical benefits, sick leave, disability benefits, unemployment insurance, office costs, and government trucks. Rarely if ever do the government geologists go into the field, don’t have to worry if their clients are going to pay, or where their next job is coming from, can book holiday time to boot. I canna figure where the government finds these assessor fellas. My guess is they could never ha been industry geologists, because an industry geologist would know better. I suppose if push came to shove, even an ex-government field geologist would know better. In any case, these assessor fellas should be cut loose in the bush to fend for themselves for awhile, and maybe they will learn somethin.

GONE BATTY
by Mike Leahy

There are some (many?) who would say I went batty a long time ago. The present trend in the exploration industry will, if it continues, drive a few more prospectors/geologists into the batty domain. It is a dark and cloudy time, enough to make you want to go hang upside-down in a cave (or an old adit) for a while. Once perched in this precarious position, you might find yourself in some pleasant company - the company of the Little Brown Bat. These cute little mosquito-eating machines need winter homes to hibernate the winter away. The new mines reclamation initiative by the MNDM is, however, a potential threat to these winter hideouts. Thousands of bats migrate from far and wide to a few suitable caves, making each one critical to their survival. In co-operation with Science North, I am planning to survey abandoned mine sites this year to identify those being used by hibernating bats. I need your help in identifying mine workings that might be used by bats. If we find any colonies, they can be easily protected from destruction by the use of grates rather than solid cement or rock fill. If anyone knows of suitable workings or has seen bats around underground openings, please give me a call. 705-567-4696 or RAVENR@NT.NET

Annual Meeting
of the
Northern Prospectors
Association
on
Sunday February 13th
at
1:00 pm
in the
Royal Canadian Legion
Kirkland Lake
Large Meeting Room

Dave Gamble will give a talk on the Potter Mine.

Gerhard Meyer will give an update on the annual operations of the Resident Geologists Office.

Nominations and elections will be held for the 12 seats on the Board of Directors.

Coffee and donuts will be available. Other refreshments available next door.

TLP continued

by Mike Leahy

GONE BATTY
by Mike Leahy

There are some (many?) who would say I went batty a long time ago. The present trend in the exploration industry will, if it continues, drive a few more prospectors/geologists into the batty domain. It is a dark and cloudy time, enough to make you want to go hang upside-down in a cave (or an old adit) for a while. Once perched in this precarious position, you might find yourself in some pleasant company - the company of the Little Brown Bat. These cute little mosquito-eating machines need winter homes to hibernate the winter away. The new mines reclamation initiative by the MNDM is, however, a potential threat to these winter hideouts. Thousands of bats migrate from far and wide to a few suitable caves, making each one critical to their survival. In co-operation with Science North, I am planning to survey abandoned mine sites this year to identify those being used by hibernating bats. I need your help in identifying mine workings that might be used by bats. If we find any colonies, they can be easily protected from destruction by the use of grates rather than solid cement or rock fill. If anyone knows of suitable workings or has seen bats around underground openings, please give me a call. 705-567-4696 or RAVENR@NT.NET

Annual Meeting
of the
Northern Prospectors
Association
on
Sunday February 13th
at
1:00 pm
in the
Royal Canadian Legion
Kirkland Lake
Large Meeting Room

Dave Gamble will give a talk on the Potter Mine.

Gerhard Meyer will give an update on the annual operations of the Resident Geologists Office.

Nominations and elections will be held for the 12 seats on the Board of Directors.

Coffee and donuts will be available. Other refreshments available next door.
MacGregor

continued from page 3.

claim with respect to a mine hazard that was created by others prior to the staking of the claim and that has not been materially disturbed or affected by the current or prior holder, as the case may be, since the staking of the claim, to file within the time specified in the order a certified closure plan to rehabilitate the mine hazard, and the proponent or prior holder shall file the certified closure plan within that time or any extension of time granted by the Director.” (The Mining Act, July 24, 1998, Page 91).

Forgive me, but I find that this text is unclear at best, and utterly confusing at worst. This section clearly requires editing for clarity.

In closing, I wish to commend the MNDM for their recent allocation of funding towards rehabilitation of abandoned mine hazards on Crown land. This does much to demonstrate the Crown’s equitable treatment in respect of mine hazards not only upon Crown lands, but in areas which pose a danger to the public safety. In addition, the introduction of “the MacGregor amendment (ie. Section 147(1)), while requiring some clarification, is also a positive step towards supporting the mining and exploration industry in Ontario. In further support, I urge you to consider the revised definition of the term “mine”, as it will do much to combat the increasingly negative perception of Ontario’s treatment of the mining industry.

I look forward to your comments and response.

Yours truly,

Reno Pressacco

Ontario Mining Accord

by Stew Fumerton

In hind-sight, the morally ethical position that the mining industry took last spring not to participate in backroom deals with the Ontario Government was wrong. By refusing to participate in the backroom deal, the mining industry was effectively cut out of any consideration in land-use planning.

This backroom deal involved the Forestry Industry, the Partnership for Public Lands, and the Ministry of Natural Resources. The general consensus reached in this deal was released in March 1999 to the public as an accord entitled “A foundation for Progress.” This accord contained thirty-one commitments to jointly promote parks and the forestry industry.

Subsequently it was acknowledged that the mining and exploration industries had been excluded from any consideration in this accord and there was talk that a companion “Mining Accord” should be developed. After some initial discussions between the various prospecting associations about developing a published code of conduct as the first step in developing an accord, the whole process has come to a halt.

Presently the mining / exploration industry is not at the table when land-use decisions affecting us are made. Decisions such as moving the “green blobs” to accommodate the forestry industry and which disregard mineral potential. In the absence of any input from the mining industry, little or no consideration is given to our interests so it is imperative that we regain a seat at the table.

In order to get back to the table we must raise the issue through multiple channels with the Honourable Ministers John Snobelen and Tim Hudak.

Membership Meetings

Monthly meetings for the different groups are as follows:

Ontario Prospectors Association.
Meetings are held as required in various locations.
Chairman: Gary Clarke
Phone: 807 625 9291

Northern Prospectors Association.
1st Thursday of each month, at 7pm at the Royal Canadian Legion.
Chairman: Dale Alexander
Phone: 705 567 4377

Northwest Ontario Prospectors Association.
Exec Meeting 2nd Wednesday of each month except Jun, July and Aug, at 1:30 or 2:00pm at the Davinci Centre
Past Prest: Dave Christianson
Phone: 807 767 4670

General meetings held at Con College in Sept, Nov, Jan, Mar and April at 7 or 8pm

Porcupine Prospectors & Developers Association.
2nd Thursday of each month at 6pm at the Gold Mine Tour.
Chairman: Bob Calhoun
Phone: 705 268 0693

Sault & District Prospectors Association.
2nd Thursday of each month at 7:30pm at the Ministry of Agriculture Building.
Chairman: Bob Burns
Phone: 705 946 4491

Sudbury Prospectors & Developers Association.
3rd Tuesday of each month at 7:30pm Willet Green Miller Centre as required.
Chairman: Bob Komarechka
Phone: 705 673 0873

The Explorationist  7  February 2000
Data represented in these graphs is from NRCan and StatsCan and show interesting associations. The graphs show total exploration dollars spent each year in each province as a percentage of the total exploration dollars spent in Canada for that year.

In the case of B.C., extremely favourable geology combined with major discoveries do not counterbalance problems relating to land access and the political/bureaucratic environment within the province.

In the second chart, the dramatic effect of a major new discovery on revitalising exploration in a region can be seen. In this case the exploration activity in the Northwest Territories and Labrador.

In the third chart, profiles for Quebec and Ontario are shown. Two provinces with favourable geology, comparable to that in B.C. These profiles are shown in conjunction with some political events. The events in Ontario are simply consist of displaying the political party in government along the bottom axis. For Quebec, the events pertain to the sovereignty debate.