



Province of Newfoundland

FORTIETH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF
NEWFOUNDLAND

Volume XL

Fourth Session

Number 14

VERBATIM REPORT
(Hansard)

Speaker: Honourable P.J. McNicholas

Tuesday

12 April 1988

The House met at 3:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):
Order, please!

Statements by Ministers

PREMIER PECKFORD:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
Mr. Speaker, the economic growth and employment gains experienced during the last two years in this Province are continuing in 1988.

Statistics for the first quarter of this year reveal that the level of employment in Newfoundland and Labrador averaged 175,000, a 6.7 per cent increase over the first quarter of 1987. This is the highest level of employment ever experienced in the first quarter of any year in the history of this Province.

The seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate averaged 17.7 per cent in the first quarter, 1.5 per cent less than for the same period last year. Indicating that these employment gains are being reflected in increased consumer confidence, the value of retail trade in January, the latest month for which statistics are available, was up 16.5 per cent from January last year. The number of new cars, as a criteria to use, sold in January was up a whopping 30.5 per cent.

These figures, Mr. Speaker, are indicative of the success of the administration's Economic Development Job Strategy policies, so clearly demonstrated by the

Minister of Finance (Mr. Windsor) in the provincial budget presented to this House on 29 March. We are confident that this success will continue throughout 1988, for the benefit of all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. WELLS:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. WELLS:
Mr. Speaker, in looking at statements such as this we should not be blinded by a few superficial figures, we should look at the real story.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. WELLS:
If the members would just listen first, they can judge what I say after.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. WELLS:
The simple fact is our unemployment rate has still been averaging about 10 per cent higher than the national average, and that is nothing to be very proud of.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Shame! Shame!

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. WELLS:
The budget figures, in fact, Mr. Speaker, tell a quite different

story when they are examined in detail, and before the budget debate is over, that will be made clear in the House.

The simple fact is, as well, that the total revenue -

MR. TOBIN:

If that is your opinion, boy (inaudible).

MR. WELLS:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to be heard by the members on this side and perhaps by other people who have come to the gallery, if that hon. member does not want to hear.

MR. TOBIN:

(Inaudible) Newfoundland. Come clean!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! Order, please!

MR. WELLS:

Mr. Speaker, the simple fact is, when the budget figures are examined it will be seen that the total revenue from provincial sources is projected to be less in the coming year than it was last year.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

What?

MR. WELLS:

The total revenue from provincial sources is projected in the minister's budget to be less in the coming year than it was last year. That does not speak very loudly for significant improvement in economic activity.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. WELLS:

Tax equalization from the Government of Canada is projected

to be \$110 million more than last year. What that really reflects, Mr. Speaker, when you really examine it, what it really says is our economic performance is so much further behind the economic performance of the rest of Canada that our tax equalization -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. WELLS:

Mr. Speaker, I would appreciate an opportunity to be heard.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. member's time has elapsed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. WELLS:

Mr. Speaker, if I may just finish on the basis of that.

MR. SPEAKER:

By leave?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

No leave! No leave!

MR. WELLS:

The wrong conclusions are being presented by the Premier and people ought not to be fooled by it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker, this is getting to be

a monthly ritual now, that the Premier comes in, trots out the figures, and we have to comment upon them. There are a number of things the Premier has not indicated. He says that the unemployment rate is actually down one-tenth of 1 per cent, from 17.8 per cent to 17.7 per cent. That is true on the adjusted rate. What he did not say was the raw rate was up 2.5 per cent between February and March of 1988.

Now, admittedly the raw rate is a difficult thing to deal with, but the fact is, Mr. Speaker, last month, in March, there were 50,000 Newfoundlanders officially listed as unemployed, 50,000. Mr. Speaker, if you look at it broken down by particular regions, you will also see that the unemployment rate went up by almost five percentage points in Western Newfoundland and Labrador. So we have some major regional disparities.

Mr. Speaker, the last thing I would like to comment on is the Premier's comment that the number of new cars sold in January was up a whopping 30.5 per cent. I asked myself, why is this? Well, one reason is we created a couple of new ministers over there and maybe they went and bought their ministerial cars at the time.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. FENWICK:

That may be an answer.

And the other thing, Mr. Speaker is that the Premier seems to be switching from selling cucumbers to selling cars.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member's time has elapsed.

MR. BAIRD:

You were complaining about imports yesterday. Where did you come from?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

Before calling for Oral Questions, I would like to welcome to the House of Assembly twenty-five Grade XI students from St. Paul's School, Harbour Grace, with their teacher, Marjorie Badcock.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

Oral Questions

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. WELLS:

Mr. Speaker, my question is for the hon. the Premier. In view of the stated intention of the fishing trawler from St. Pierre to fish in Canadian waters, would the hon. Premier advise the House of what representations if any he has made to the Government of Canada with respect to that proposal?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I just found out about it a couple of hours ago so to this point in time we have not done anything. Our position, though, is quite clear and has been clear for some time. Unlike the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Wells), we say no fish from 2J+3KL goes to the French, whereas the Leader of the Opposition says 'a limited quantity of fish' - and I

think I am quoting his exact words - 'a limited quantity of fish' should be all right to go.

Now, of course, the French are trying to move and be somewhat provocative here in the Province, and of course we cannot really take any position, Mr. Speaker, because the Leader of the Opposition does not want us to have any more say over the fishery. Now we are supposed to make representation on something which is a federal matter. It is a funny piece of business.

Our position, Mr. Speaker, is very clear, and we will make it clear again to the federal government before the day is out, that this is a provocation by France. Obviously, as I understand it - I just heard about it an hour ago, as I say - their wanting to go into 3L which is a definite, illegal act on behalf of France, and obviously we will be indicating to the federal government to take the necessary steps to see that this illegality ceases forthwith.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. WELLS:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. WELLS:

Mr. Speaker, I have heard about it for some hours. If not late last night - I do not recall which - or early this morning it was on the news.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. WELLS:

Early this morning I believe it was on the news. Has the Premier had any indication from the Government of Canada as to their position with respect to the matter and what they intend to do? And if so, would he indicate what that is?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I am sorry if I did not hear it at the time of the Leader of the Opposition. I apologize to the House that I did not hear it exactly on the news at the time the Leader of the Opposition heard it. It may be that I was very, very busy in meetings and did not see the papers or hear the newscasts. I mean, I find it almost revolting for the Leader of the Opposition to get on this way when he represents a party which is advocating giving fish out of a non-surplus fish area off Newfoundland to a foreign nation. I find it strange indeed. His party says 'Give more fish to the French,' and now, all of a sudden, he is trying to take the position, "Oh, my gracious, the French cannot do this." And here is the hon. gentleman, the person who is advocating to all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, that we give more fish than we have not got away to the French. Crazy.

MR. W. CARTER:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the member for Twillingate.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, my question goes to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Windsor). Following the minister's budget on Tuesday, March 29, Mr. Speaker, part-time fishermen in our Province were advised by the minister's department that no longer would they be able to qualify for a rebate on their gasoline purchases. Now we all know that on March 29 the minister presented his budget, what he called a good news budget, announcing a reduction in the deficit in current account, but little did the fishermen of our Province, Mr. Speaker, think that it would be balanced or reduced on their backs.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. W. CARTER:

Now would the minister tell the House, Mr. Speaker, first of all, his rationale for denying part-time fishermen that tax rebate? And, secondly, would he set aside that order and so instruct his officials and have part-time fishermen again qualifying for that rebate?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

MR. WINDSOR:

Mr. Speaker, I would be delighted to correct the inaccuracies the hon. gentleman has put forward to the House of Assembly. First of all, the action that the department has taken has absolutely nothing to do with the provincial budget. All that we are trying to do is enforce the laws of this Province as approved by this hon. House, that is, a tax exemption will be provided to bona fide fishers, farmers, and loggers.

Some time ago we sent out, prior to the March 31 expiration of their licenses, some 12,000 notices to these people notifying them that they had to apply and that there was a new system of identifying those people who were valid recipients of this tax exemption. Some 5,000 of those have been processed - some 5,200, I think actually - and licenses issued, several thousand others are received and being processed, and a couple of hundred have been denied, because they have not been deemed to be bona fide recipients of this tax exemption. In other words, they did not qualify for this tax exemption, which is not, under any circumstances, being denied to those who rightfully are entitled to it.

MR. W. CARTER:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the member for Twillingate.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to hear the Minister of Finance say that only full-time fishermen are bona fide fishermen, because I am sure there are thousands of full-time/part-time fishermen in this Province who will take issue with that statement.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, the fact remains, and I have been so advised by his officials, that as of April 1 part-time fishermen in our Province will not qualify for a tax rebate. Now, I ask the minister again, would he undertake to have that order lifted and make part-time fishermen eligible for

the gasoline tax exemption as they were prior to the March 29 budget?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

MR. WINDSOR:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman is not listening, obviously. He is trying to twist what I said. What I said was that those people who are bona fide people - I did not say anything about full-time or part-time - those who are fully entitled to receive the benefit, will receive it. What we are trying to do, Mr. Speaker, is to stop those people who are abusing the system and who are improperly and illegally taking benefit of a tax exemption for the use of tax exempt fuel.

Now, some people who have not been able to show and document to us that they are bona fide recipients of that extension have had licenses refused. If they can show that they are actual, proper recipients they will get it.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A final supplementary, the hon. member for Twillingate.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, the word from the minister's department, his officials, to fishermen who apply for that permit, is they are told that the department is incapable of separating legitimate part-time fishermen from others who are maybe not quite as legitimate in terms of the licensing system. If that is the case, then, would the minister undertake to provide us with a list of part-time fishermen? We will be very happy to supply him with the names of

people on that list who will qualify as full-time/part-time fishermen who should then get the tax rebate.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

MR. WINDSOR:

Mr. Speaker, I cannot answer the same question three times three different ways. All I can say to the hon. gentleman is that what we are doing is being more efficient. The hon. gentlemen opposite do not like to give us any credit for the improvement in provincial revenues gained last year, but I will say now to them, Mr. Speaker, that a great deal of those improved revenues are because of improvements in the efficiency of the Tax Division of the Department of Finance, primarily due to the efforts of my predecessor during his eight or nine years in this particular office. We are becoming more effective, more efficient and our auditors are now able to detect slippages in tax receipts that they were not able to do before. Because we are more efficient, Mr. Speaker, we are collecting more taxes, quite properly.

MR. LONG:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for St. John's East.

MR. LONG:

My question, Mr. Speaker, today is for the Minister of Health (Dr. Collins) and it concerns a letter that the hon. Leader of the New Democratic Party, the member for Menihik (Mr. Fenwick) received from the minister dated 26 February in which the minister says, in reference to a question

about the Johnston Report, 'Because this Report contains recommendations which formed part of a submission to the Executive Council, it is my view that Section 9(1) of The Freedom of Information Act would preclude it being released.' Mr. Speaker, yesterday the minister made an announcement, and my question concerns a statement made in the announcement, in which the minister said, 'It should be noted that the study' - the Johnston Report - 'was a purely intra-departmental undertaking, not initiated as such by Government or Cabinet, or directly by the Minister of Health but rather by department officials.' My question, Mr. Speaker, to the minister is: How could the Johnston Report, less than two months ago have been a Cabinet document that was not for public consumption, and yesterday become a public document?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Health.

DR. COLLINS:

Because the report when received formed part of a submission to Cabinet.

MR. LONG:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the member for St. John's East.

MR. LONG:

The minister says, 'The report, when received, formed part of a submission to Cabinet.' I would ask the minister if he would not admit that at the time, in response to an application by the member for Menihk and others who had concerns about this issue, he was misusing Section 9(1) of The

Freedom of Information Act in order to protect the government from criticisms around this issue? And if he will not admit that at the time he was misusing The Freedom of Information Act, that he now, in fact, is in violation of The Freedom of Information Act according to what he said in February in response to a request for the document.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Health.

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker, I am inclined to just say no and leave it at that - I mean, the question is so foolish - but I cannot just leave it at that.

Look, the hon. member has been beating the table saying, 'Where is the report? Where is the report? Where is the report?' for months and months and months. Now, when he gets the report, he is complaining about it. How do you satisfy such a foolish member?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

DR. COLLINS:

The report was received, it formed part of a Cabinet decision, therefore it was protected under The Freedom of Information Act. Cabinet decided it should be released, which is within its right, it has been released, and now the hon. member should be happy.

MR. LONG:

A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A final supplementary.

MR. LONG:

I do not think the staff at the Hoyle's Home or the elderly people

there who are receiving inadequate care because of staffing levels, would find what the minister or his cohorts have to say very funny about this issue at all.

Mr. Speaker, there is an important principle involved here.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. LONG:

My question concerns the minister's application of The Freedom of Information Act and the rights and privileges of members of this House and the public to access information. Will the minister not admit that he was finally forced, yesterday, at the opening of Estimates hearings on the Department of Health, to release this document as a result of an intervention by the office of the Ombudsman suggesting that this could no longer be kept secret under Freedom of Information Act guidelines?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of Health.

DR. COLLINS:
No.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the member for Port de Grave.

MR. EFFORD:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. EFFORD:
Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health also. Unlike my friend and colleague from St. John's East, I was very happy to receive the report from the Minister yesterday morning.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. EFFORD:

I was disappointed in the way in which it was given out during an Estimates Committee and I did not have the opportunity to read it, but last evening I sat down and had the opportunity to read it and I found it very frightening to know what is taking place at the Hoyles and Escasoni Homes. The Minister of Health has had in his possession since October, this report, which has recognized a number of problems and made recommendations. I ask the Minister of Health have any of the recommendations, set down in this report which has been in his possession for several months, been followed?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of Health.

DR. COLLINS:
Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated for some time the report-

MR. LONG:
For years! For years!.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. SIMMS:
Name him, Mr. Speaker. Name him.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please.

MR. SIMMS:
An irrational outburst.

DR. COLLINS:
Something is happening down there, but I do not know what it is.

MR. SIMMS:
There must be a party on down there.

DR. COLLINS:

As I have indicated a number of times, the report was made available to the new arrangements at the Hoyles-Escasoni Complex, an arrangement which is distinctly different from the circumstances in which the report was compiled.

The report was compiled when the two institutions were separate, when they were run directly by the Department, and when there was no contract with professional people involved in the day to day management and running of the Complex. Now is it an amalgamated Complex, the two institutions are brought together, and obviously one would expect this to improve the ease of management and the efficiency of management. Secondly, there is a Board of Trustees in place of the Department being in direct control of the Complex. This Board is composed of worthy members of our community who have taken up their duties with dispatch and enthusiasm. And thirdly, on the initiatives of government, we have contracted with proven professionals, professionals with a proven track record throughout Canada, to engage in the upgrading and the enhancement of the management and running of the home. So there is an entirely different situation there now than when this report was compiled. But despite that, we feel that the new arrangement may well get some goodies out of that report, so we made it available to them and indeed they are using the report to the extent that they find useful. But in addition to that, they have done their own studies, they have done their own assessment, they have done their own planning, and now, as I have indicated to the committee yesterday, they have come back

with recommendations and suggestions to me as Minister of Health which I will be bringing forward to Cabinet very shortly.

MR. EFFORD:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the member for Port de Grave.

MR. EFFORD:

I say to the Minister of Health that is not good enough. We have a large number of senior citizens in those homes and the minister is putting them on the backs of Extendicare to save money. It is not good enough.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. EFFORD:

I ask the minister how can any improvements be made by any management firm, since this report clearly recommends that in order to improve any facilities or resident care in the homes you must increase the staff by at least thirty-nine in the Hoyles Home alone, plus sixteen in Escasoni? How can that happen when there has been no increase in staff? The minister knows full well that no changes have taken place in either the morale of the workers or the care for the residents.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Health.

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker, changes have taken place. I told you we have amalgamated to one complex now. We put in place a Board of Management who have been there since January - a Board of Trustees, I should say - and the professional managers have been there since January. And they indeed have found that some parts, funny enough, were overstaffed, while other parts were understaffed. But they found some parts overstaffed. So they are organizing, planning, improving, making things more efficient, and they are doing an extremely good job. They have used the report to the extent that it was useful to them, bearing in mind there are new circumstances there now, and they have come in to us with a different set of suggestions which I will be putting to Cabinet.

MR. EFFORD:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A final supplementary, the hon. the member for Port de Grave.

MR. EFFORD:

Let me say to the Minister of Health very quickly that the thing with Extendicare is to make a profit so that they can keep their management contract going for a number of years. Now let me ask the minister, is it possible that we do not have any management people in this Province to manage a home, that we have to bring a crowd of people in from Ontario to make money when we have such homes as St. Pat's Mercy Home being very well and efficiently run? That is only used as an example. Why could we not use the people in the Province who have an education and know the concerns of the people, who know full well how to manage

and care for a home just as well or even better than the people from Ontario? Has the minister or any of his staff ever spoken to some resident of the homes, which I did this morning when I spoke to the workers of the home, and found out that the morale and the conditions at the homes are even worse than they were last year?

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Health.

MR. SIMMS:

That should get you a headline.

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker, beauty is in the eye of the beholder. If you find certain things over there, God bless you. I might find different things over there.

MR. EFFORD:

You will not concern yourself!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker, I think my record shows that I have a certain amount of concern for the people of this Province, especially with regard to the health system.

The hon. member is quite correct: There are competent people in the Province running the chronic care institutions. What we were faced with over there were two very different institutions that had to be amalgamated thereby creating the largest single institutional care unit in the Province, 410 residents. We could have, surely, labored on and tried to do this all on our own, but we elected, and I think it was a very sound

decision, made by my predecessor and by government generally, to do this very expeditiously, to get on with the job. We decided to bring in proven experts to do this as quickly as possible, get the place reorganized and enhanced as quickly as possible, and the results will show themselves in the very near future.

MR. HISCOCK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Eagle River.

MR. HISCOCK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My question is to the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth (Mr. Butt). Considering a report was done, Status and History of the Mealy Mountain Caribou Herd, B.J. Hearn and S.N. Luttich, Internal Field Report No. 4106, which went to four officials in his department, which basically recommended that the Mealy Mountain Caribou herd not be open at this time, why is it that the minister overruled a professional biologist in his department and decided to go ahead and have the caribou hunt in the Mealy Mountains of a herd which people have been conserving for the past fifteen years? Why is it that the minister overrode the biologists?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Culture, Recreation, and Youth.

MR. BUTT:

Mr. Speaker, if there was ever a member who is out of touch with his district it is the hon. member for Eagle River.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. BUTT:

Let me tell the hon. member for Eagle River that almost every single, solitary soul in Cartwright and Paradise River in his district have called my office, or the Minister of Northern Development, praising us for implementing a caribou hunt basically for subsistence hunters in Labrador.

Now, the only flak that came out of this, by the way, was from people in Happy Valley - Goose Bay, whose deep freezers are overflowing with caribou. You can ask the hon. member sitting next to you.

As for the report that you refer to, one of the same gentlemen who wrote that report told my predecessor and me that, in fact, a hunt of 200 animals could be sustained in the Mealy Mountain caribou herd.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased, as the minister responsible, for implementing that hunt this year, on an experimental basis, I might add. We kept on the conservative side, issuing 175 licenses. Out of the eighty animals that have been taken to date, despite what a few politicians within politics in Goose Bay were saying, in fact there was a very minuscule amount of female caribou taken. The hon. member is not doing his homework in asking this question and he should refer to his own constituents, in Cartwright and Paradise River, who are very, very pleased with this government for implementing that caribou programme.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. HISCOCK:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the member for Eagle River.

MR. HISCOCK:

Mr. Speaker, this is National Wildlife Week. Last year fifty caribou could not be taken because the herd could not then sustain itself. We arrested a priest and some native people in this Province. Is the minister basically calling his civil servants liars by saying one is saying it and one is not? The report clearly states the people in Cartwright and Paradise River, Mr. Speaker -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. HISCOCK:

- are not concerned with the hunt. But where there was a hunt, where the minister overrode the biologists, why is it that when people in those areas who never wanted licenses but bought the licenses and did not use them and practiced conservation, did the minister then override these people, take the licenses and give them to another part of Labrador? Why did he not respect the wishes of the people who bought the licenses but wanted to protect the herd of only 2,000 that has been down to 300 in the past couple of years? It is projected, according to this, that in ten years there will only be 3,000 caribou. Why did he override them?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth.

MR. BUTT:

Mr. Speaker, I want to give the hon. member a little bit of information because he is obviously very, very confused. The hon. member must understand the politics that some people in Goose Bay played with this simply because their own deep freezes were full of caribou, because there were all kinds of caribou in Labrador this year, in the Churchill Falls area, and they had the money, the machinery, and the wherewithal to harvest that herd.

Unfortunately in the hon. member's district and in certain parts of the Minister of Northern Development's (Mr. Warren) district, Torngat Mountains, they never had those financial resources at their disposal. So, in making that decision, Mr. Speaker, I took into account the traditional hunting rights of people who traditionally hunted the Mealy Mountain caribou herd, and keep in mind, as well, that there were 2,000 animals reported to be in that herd this year whereas there was a sustaining hunt of the Avalon herd when that herd was somewhat less than 2,000 and, in fact, that herd today numbers over 5,000 animals.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. HISCOCK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A final supplementary, the hon. the member for Eagle River.

MR. HISCOCK:

We will not be taking away, Mr.

Speaker, by pitting one area of Labrador against another. Talking about, Mr. Speaker, all the caribou in Goose Bay, why is it that the minister turned around and gave fifty licences there and forty to Sheshatshit and another twenty-eight to North West River when there refrigerators are overflowing with caribou? The question is, Mr. Speaker, even with a sustaining hunt the people in Cartwright are not questioning whether it should be or not.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. HISCOCK:

The question is, Mr. Speaker, the report recommends policing of the resource, and the other part says, Mr. Speaker, that only male sex -

PREMIER PECKFORD:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of order, the hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

The hon. member is up on a second supplementary. He is going on making a speech and he is not asking a question. This is Question Period. And we ask the hon. member to get on and ask his question so that other members opposite, who also want to ask questions, will have time to ask them. This preamble to a second supplementary, Mr. Speaker, is completely out of order according to the rules.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, the point is well taken. I did call the hon. member to order. This is a final supplementary, so I ask him to pose his question.

MR. HISCOCK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the principal also.

My final supplementary to the minister: Since the report recommends extra policing and that only male caribou should be taken, why has no extra policing been put into force and why are the people allowed to hunt both sexes, particularly when caribou are calving now?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. BUTT:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member of Culture, Recreation and Youth.

MR. BUTT:

Mr. Speaker, a couple of points were raised in the hon. member's question. First of all, there were no licences taken from those who were given licences or bought licences. The hon. member refers to Sheshatshit and North West River, and the NMIA basically and the LIA. Well, those people are recognized by this government and by this minister, who happens to be minister responsible for wildlife, and thank God it is not the hon. member for Eagle River.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. BUTT:

We recognize the traditional hunting rights of those people. In fact those people subsidize their grocery bill, if the hon. member does not realize what subsistence hunting is, by hunting caribou in Labrador. They have traditionally done that for a long time.

Now, you fell into a trap, obviously, because of John Hickey and a couple of others up there.

MR. HISCOCK:

I do not even know the man.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, no!

MR. BUTT:

Now the fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, that this government is extremely proud and this minister is extremely proud of what I did for the people in Labrador who have traditionally depended on that caribou for subsistence food, for a living. If in fact, when the next study is done on that herd we will determine next year if there is going to be another hunt next year or if in fact we have to wait for a year or two or three or four. But I can tell the hon. member, and he can check his statistics and find this out, that in fact the Avalon herd was substantially smaller than the Mealy Mountain caribou herd when we implemented a sustaining hunt, year after year, after year, and now that herd is in excess of 5,000 animals. So we made a good decision, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. KELLAND:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Naskaupi.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. KELLAND:

I would like to ask the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth, in view of the statement he just made that he recognizes the

traditional hunting rights of the Innu, how come, then, Mr. Minister, that your predecessor had them arrested last year for exercising their traditional rights? And further, when you are talking about politics being played in Happy Valley-Goose Bay, you tell me how you rationalize the fact that Joe Goudie, former member of this House, and head of the LMA, the Labrador-Metis Association, has recommended to you to close that hunt in the Mealy Mountains?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth.

MR. BUTT:

Mr. Speaker, I do not take my advice from Mr. Goudie, obviously. I am minister responsible for wildlife. I have a large number of dedicated people over there -

MR. SIMMS:

Specialists.

MR. BUTT:

Yes, highly skilled professional people.

- that I take my advice from.

Now the fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, that there were people arrested last year because they disobeyed the law, and people who disobey the law will be arrested again and again and again, and that is the way it should be. The fact of the matter is that this year -

AN HON. MEMBER:

Sit down!

MR. BUTT:

No, I am not sitting down. I have the floor, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. BUTT:

I am having a lot of fun with this because I have finally flushed them out. The hon. member now from Naskaupi is trying to save the bones of the hon. member for Eagle River, who has fallen into a big trap, and the hon. the Leader of the Opposition there is squirming in his seat, almost, because he knows what is after happening to the member.

Now the fact of the matter is if people go out and break the law there are ways of dealing with them. And last year -

AN HON. MEMBER:

Arresting priests?

MR. BUTT:

Yes, there was a priest or a minister and there were some Innu people who broke the law, and then justice took its course. My predecessor at that time acted within the law in having justice served.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The time for Oral Question has elapsed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

By leave.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

No.

Orders of the Day

MR. SIMMS:

Motion 1. Committee of Ways and Means.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Gander.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Minister of Finance is wondering how much longer he is going to have to suffer through listening to me. I would like to inform him that I could keep going for another two or three weeks on this particular budget. However, my colleagues are so anxious to get at the details that I have scarcely touched that I will, at this point, say that I will conclude by summarizing, first of all, some of the points that have already been made so that the Minister of Finance, in a very short period of time and so his attention span does not wander, can get a brief summary of what I have said so far.

First of all, I started off by saying that the budget is deceptive, and in the hour or so at my disposal yesterday I tried to explain in which ways the budget is deceptive. I dealt, first of all, with the deficit, explained that there were a couple of happy circumstances plus a bookkeeping change which, in budgetary numbers, reduced our projected deficit of \$173 million down to \$58 million. That was a reduction of \$115 million. However, I also pointed out, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to reiterate once more, that in actual fact our deficit last year, if we did not have that slight bookkeeping change which means nothing in terms of money, our actual deficit last year was \$85 million, which was a record current account deficit for this Province, double the deficit that we experienced in the few previous years. We experienced a record current account deficit, so things

were not as good as they seemed.

I also pointed out that our economy is falling further and further behind the rest of Canada and that the proof is in the budget itself. The projection of \$110 million extra in equalization grants next year, the member for Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan) maybe does not understand what that means. I will tell him what it means. It means that our economy has lagged further and further behind. That is what equalization grants are all about, I say to the member. The further our economy lags behind the rest of Canada, the more money we get in equalization. That is what the word means. And if we are getting a whopping \$110 million increase in our equalization payments next year, that is a very definite indicator that the federal government has said your economy is getting further and further behind. I hope the member understands that.

In the budget, Mr Speaker, there was also an increase of \$4 million in new taxes. There was a tax increase, in other words. We find now, today, that part-time fishermen have a problem, something that was not even mentioned in the budget. They are going to start recovering more money now, and there is a problem with identifying part-time fishermen. We are going to get more money from these people, because we are not going to give them their rebates. The lobster fishermen, who have to go out and buy gas to tend to their lobster pots, are now not going to get that tax rebate if they happen to be part-time fishermen.

I pointed out that the job creation section of the budget was

a deception, that the job creation announcement by the Minister of Finance amounted to a projected increase of 18,000 new jobs, but these were simply part-time, ten week/twenty week make-work type jobs. That was a deception simply because the impression was given that these were new jobs that were being created when in fact they are not, most of the jobs are simply moving people from social services to U.I.

But the budget also has built in a cut of close to 1,000 full-time jobs. That is in the budget, a cut of 1,000 full-time jobs. So, in fact, in terms of job development and job creation, there was a cutback in this budget. I pointed out the lack of long-range planning, the indicators that there was really no long-range planning.

First of all, the cutback of permanent jobs and the shifting of the emphasis from permanent to part-time jobs is a very shortsighted measure, a measure that may need to be taken because we are in such serious circumstances in this Province; we may need to get into a lot of twenty-week jobs, temporarily. But, Mr. Speaker, you do not do that without putting into place the mechanisms to create the long-term jobs that we hope we will get to eventually. So a lack of long-range planning. The budget was disappointing and deceptive in that way.

Some statements in the budget that were deceptive I have not really dealt with yet, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to. I hope the Minister of Finance is listening somewhere in the recesses of the Chamber.

In terms of borrowing, the amount of money that we have to go and borrow, get from somewhere else, the impression was given that we have turned the corner, our economy is picking up and we are not going to have to borrow as much money. The reverse, Mr. Speaker, is, in fact, true.

In 1988-1989, the projected borrowing in this budget that I am talking about now amounts to, and this is a combination of both current and capital, I am not talking simply about the current deficit which the Minister announced is down a little bit, the combination of current and capital account requirements is 8.9 per cent of the total money that we are going to spend. That is in the budget projected for this year.

If we look at last year's performance, we find that the total amount of money that had to be borrowed, both current and capital, was only 8.6 percent. So, in actual fact, Mr. Speaker, there is an increase in the amount of money that we now have to borrow, not a decrease, which is the impression that was given in the Budget Speech that was presented by the Minister. The impression was given that we are going to be borrowing less money, when in actual fact we are going to be borrowing more money. That, Mr. Speaker, is the height of deception.

Also, and this point was brought up a little earlier by the Minister of Finance in answer to a question, the minister says our economy is getting better and better, we are improving; things are getting better; we are now getting into prosperity. Well, Mr. Speaker, let us look at the

reality. And this reality is not the reality according to this member, it is the reality according to the budget documents presented to this House by the minister. Next year the provincial economy that is supposed to be going ahead by leaps and bounds - sales are going to be astronomical, everybody is going to be on a spending spree, buying spree and so on - will provide only 45.1 per cent of our financial needs. Of the money that we need to keep going, the provincial economy will provide only 45.1 per cent of our needs. Now, last year it provided 48.6 per cent, which means a drop of 3.5 per cent.

Where is this booming economy that the minister talks about? Where is this booming economy that the minister spoke about a few short minutes ago, when in actual fact our provincial economy will provide 3.5 per cent less of our requirements than it did last year? What a booming economy! What a booming minister! And, Mr. Speaker, what deception!

Obviously the money has got to come from somewhere, so one source is that we are going to borrow more money. I already pointed that out. We are going to borrow more money, not less. We have heard an awful lot from hon. members opposite about things looking up, and we are getting on our feet, and we are getting away from dependence on Uncle Ottawa. We have heard them say that. Well, let us look at it. Again I will stress, Mr. Speaker, this comes from the budget presented by this minister, not from this hon. member.

In 1988-1989 the federal government will provide 46 per

cent of our needs. Last year, the federal government came up with only 42.6 per cent of our needs. So, next year, the federal government is going to provide 3.2 per cent more of our needs. In other words, we are going to a greater dependence on equalization payments, on the cost-shared payments, and all those, which means we are going to a greater dependence on Ottawa not less of a dependence.

The minister, a very short time ago, accused the Leader of the Opposition, who made essentially the same statements, of misleading the House. That is what he said. I know the Speaker probably did not pick up the words, but I am sure we all heard it here. He accused the Leader of the Opposition of misleading the House. The Leader of the Opposition said essentially what I said, that we are becoming more dependent on Ottawa, we are providing less of the money for ourselves, and we are, in fact, going to borrow more money next year. That is what he was saying. Yet, from the Minister of Finance's budget, that he presented to the House, these figures are not arguable, they are there in black and white for everybody to see.

Make no wonder, Mr. Speaker, I started off by pointing out that this is a deceptive budget. It is deceptive because it indicates that we are not on the upswing, our economy is not taking off, that the increase in retail sales that we see now does not nearly keep pace with the increase in the rest of Canada, that, in fact, we are falling further and further behind, creating even greater dependency on the federal government, not less.

It was less than four years ago, Mr. Speaker, when this Premier travelled the Province with the Prime Minister of this country, and let me remind this hon. House of what was said during that month long period, in August of 1984. First of all, they said no more make-work jobs. The make-work job is a creature of the Liberals. These make-work jobs are horrible and we should not have them. No more make-work jobs, we are going to provide permanent jobs, permanent full-time jobs. That is what we are going to provide. That promise was made time after time after time all across this Province, full-time, permanent jobs. Where are they? In this budget, supposedly 18,000 ten and twenty week jobs are being created, and 1,000 permanent full-time jobs are being destroyed.

Also, during that month long period, in addition to the promise of getting back to full-time employment made by two hon. gentlemen who are First Ministers in this country right now, in addition to that there was the promise of prosperity, that this Province would experience prosperity that it had never experienced before. These gentlemen were not going to be afraid to inflict prosperity in this Province like the Liberals were. The previous governments were afraid to inflict prosperity on Newfoundland but, by Heavens, these two First Ministers would inflict prosperity on this Province, and the prosperity was going to be right around the corner.

Compare what was promised in 1984 with the reality of this budget today. The reality of more part-time jobs, fewer full-time jobs, the reality of borrowing

more money, of running larger deficits, the reality of a greater dependence on Ottawa, compare that with these promises made three and a half short years ago.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for something to happen. I would suggest to you that it is obvious in looking at this budget, sugar-coated as it may have been, that analysis of this budget will reveal that there must be a change in attitude, there must be a change in philosophy, there must be a change in approach, and, above all, Mr. Speaker, there must be a change of government. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

Before recognizing the hon. member for Humber Valley, I would like to welcome to this House a former member, Mr. Pat Canning.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Humber Valley.

MR. WOODFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I listened yesterday evening to some of the comments by the hon. member for Gander and, again, to some of the comments he made today. Yesterday evening especially he mentioned deceit and deception. Deceit and deception are two of the words he used an awful lot yesterday in his comments on the budget.

Mr. Speaker, I find it rather hard to swallow that, especially the media in the Province, and

business people like Chamber of Commerce people all across the Province, and even the N.D.P., if I am not mistaken, said they found it very hard to find something wrong or something bad to say about the budget.

Now, granted we all, whether we are P.C., N.D.P., Liberal, or whatever, would like to see a better one. We would like to see the deficit wiped out completely. We are not that naive to think that it would be this year, even next year, or the year after. But, Mr. Speaker, looking back a full twelve months, looking at that budget and looking at the one for 1988, I think, Mr. Speaker, it is a remarkable job.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. WOODFORD:

No matter who brought down the budget in this House, whatever government that was in power, nobody would be able to please the Opposition, regardless of who they were. The Opposition, by its definition, is to oppose. Its mandate really is not only to represent its constituents, individually or collectively, but their mandate primarily is to defeat whatever government is in power, regardless of the political stripe. Their mandate is to defeat government and then sit as government.

Now, no matter what you are into, Mr. Speaker, whether you are in business, working for someone else, or whatever, you always try to get to the top. In this case, the members of the House of Assembly strive to become the government. That is a way of doing it.

If there was an alternative, if there was some other remedy that they could come up with - I do not hear the alternatives. Yes, they dwell on jobs. It is very timely, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member for Gander yesterday evening mentioned it, it was a big thing. The Minister of Finance mentioned higher revenues because of the retail sales tax. They brought in higher revenues but it was primarily due to the big items.

How do you buy big items, Mr. Speaker? How do you get them? What is the difference in buying a pencil and buying a car? You have money to buy both. Nobody gives it to you. Some of it is exempt. Some of it is not. So, where do you get it?

It is rather ironic that the Premier came in today with a Ministerial Statement with the bottom paragraph stating that one of the big reasons was because of the fact that there was a 30.5 per cent increase in the sale of automobiles in the Province. It is rather ironic that that was mentioned yesterday and this came in this evening. There must be someone doing something right if that thing is happening.

It was also mentioned in the Ministerial Statement that it is the lowest time the unemployment rate has been in years and it is best time for the first quarter in the history of Newfoundland. It was not just a flippant thing or a flighty thing or something which stood a week, two, three, or a month. The Conference Board of Canada, in yesterday's paper, said the same thing. Next to Alberta, Newfoundland will have the highest economic growth rate as of 1988.

Some the reasons they gave relate

to the fishery, stability in the newsprint industry and a better price for newsprint. The fishing industry and the newsprint industry are two of our resource sectors that have created some stability in the Province over the last two years.

Mr. Speaker, I will not get carried with the pros and cons of the Opposition or the N.D.P. They are against motherhood anyway, so I will not get carried away with that.

I would like to take this opportunity to speak on a few things that are applicable to my district. Nobody should be able to comment on anything in the House, whether on a general nature or otherwise, unless they have something that is tangible and you are close to what is going on. I have to admit that in the District of Humber Valley I am close to what is going on. I understand what is going on, whether it is good, bad, in between, or whatever. The only industry that I did not have personal contact with except for a fly rod, netting a few caplin, or something like that, was the fishery. The rest of the industries, bar none, I have had individual experience in over the past years, the last one being the agricultural industry.

I have been sitting three years as a member and this is the fourth session of the House of Assembly and not once in those three years - correct me if I am wrong - have I heard a question from the Opposition concerning agriculture, except for Sprung. Now, Spring has sprung, Mr. Speaker, as of the 21 March, I believe, and that is the very day when the House opened. All I have heard was Sprung, Sprung, Sprung, for the

first week or two.

Correct me if I am wrong again, go back to Hansard, I think, it was on the 21 or 22 March, all of a sudden they stopped asking questions on Sprung. Sprung had sprung so it stopped. Plus some other things happened. Some produce came on the market. We took the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Wells) and another member or two out to have a look at the greenhouse, including the members from the NDP, or one anyway, and the media, and all of a sudden everything has quietened down a bit. That is not saying that everything is okay. I am not that naive either. I am not saying that.

Getting back to the Sprung thing, I would like to mention it because I am sure that the people of Humber Valley and the people of the Deer Lake area would have loved to have a Sprung greenhouse situated on the outskirts of Deer Lake, Cormack, Reidville, or what have you, and I am sure there would not be anything heard from any or the constituents or any of the workers there.

That is another thing, Mr. Speaker. It is funny that with all this process about Sprung, there was not a word from the workers saying it was a bad or good thing, really. If Mr. Sprung and his daughter had to come to Newfoundland and they had erected the Sprung greenhouse in St. John's or anywhere else in the Province, with no government help, no nothing, just came in, got their permits and erected it, and two to three years after production started something happened, like possibly something along the lines of what happened in Calgary, a gas leak in Calgary

was really what sealed their fate there. That has been proven because the environmental assessment that was set up after by the Alberta Government categorically said in their report the reason the crop failed was because of the gas leaks as it was built on an old oil refinery site.

But say they came here and put it up, production started, they are in production for two or three years, then all of a sudden something happens like that. What would the members opposite say if this government had said, 'The hell with that. There are only 150 or 200 jobs there. We will forget it. We will not bother to put any money into it,' notwithstanding the fact that it was a guarantee. How many guarantees are signed in this Province? I am sure hon. members opposite and on this side sooner or later will, if not in the past, sign a guarantee or a note at the bank for their son or daughter or someone else to buy a car. What is the difference whether it is \$5,000 or whether it is \$500,000? You are signing for something and not only that, in this case we have a 50 per cent ownership, which makes it more palatable. So those things, as far as I am concerned, Mr. Speaker, just do not hold any water with me.

In Humber Valley itself, Mr. Speaker, getting back to what the hon. member and some others said yesterday evening, this past year alone in January, February and March of this year, 1988, it is the first time - I have talked to approximately seventy businesses in the Deer Lake area alone, in the Cormack regional area - this is the first time in their history of business that they had to hire extra help. I do not want to name

any of the businesses. I do not want to do that, but that is an excellent sign, again reflecting on the Ministerial Statement today, of the first quarter of January, February and March, when I am talking about being in touch with your district and in touch with what is going on in the Province.

Criticizing for the sake of criticizing is what I do not like. Criticizing constructively is another thing. I think it was Henry Ford who once said, 'Do not find fault, find a remedy.' Give us a remedy. I said before I would not mention the names of businesses in my district, but in January, February and March, it was the first time they hired anybody in the Winter months. Talking to some of the people right on through to Humber Valley, not only in my district, right on down through Humber West, Humber East, Bay of Islands, the districts that I am more associated with and closer to, they are all experiencing the same thing. Ask the hotel operators. It is one of the best Winters they had yet. Why?

One of the main reasons is because of Marble Mountain. Who was putting some of the money into Marble Mountain now to keep it up and working in conjunction with the Department of Development and Tourism, and working in conjunction with Air Nova and other airlines to bring people in to ski at Marble Mountain from the Atlantic Provinces, from Eastern Newfoundland, and from wherever. It is a real plus for the whole region not just for Corner Brook, it backs right on up to Deer Lake and Deer Lake Airport.

This Winter again, the rent-a-car

business is unreal. They had ninety-eight and a hundred cars out every week. It is unreal! What has happened to the Deer Lake Motel? Some of the reasons behind why we are getting the terminal now is because of the fact of the business at the Deer Lake Airport. Just a few short years ago, Mr. Speaker, if you can recall, we went through an awful crisis in Deer Lake. We almost lost our airport because of the fact that Mr. Steele was going was going to haul E.P.A. out of Deer Lake, period. Out! Period!

Mr. Speaker, just look at it today. We have \$6 million terminal announced for Deer Lake now and just a few short years ago it was dead, it was going to be a ghost town. You could not sell a house. You could not do anything. You could give it away, but you could not sell it. Now it is announced the terminal is going to proceed. In the next couple of months it is going to start. The traffic load or the traffic movement has gone from somewhere around 85,000 or 90,000 to 115,000 to 117,000 last year. It is all good, positive stuff.

Naturally the spinoff is three to one. That has been proven. Nobody can argue with that. It is three to one. Right on down through the system, the hotels and the gas stations. Irving is putting up a new million dollar complex there. They are moving the one they have out and putting a new one there. Imperial Oil is putting a new one up. DPV is moving into the industrial park. Kenward Truck Bodies is moving in, a new shopping mall, a new hotel, and a new milk processing plant went in, I think, the later part of 1986. That started production putting through 55,000 litres of

milk a week.

We have got to be positive! If we are going to criticize for God sake, criticize yes, but constructively.

I can criticize too. I can still criticize some of the stuff that is going on right here on this side of the House. We have not got enough for agriculture, we will never have enough. We have not got enough in municipal affairs, we will never have enough. We have not got enough for highroads.

Members talked yesterday on petitions about roads. Nowhere in this Province, Mr. Speaker, bar none, are the roads any older than those in the White Bay area of this Province. You can drive from the Trans Canada to Jackson's Arm and there is approximately six kilometres of pavement and that was laid last year. It is all dirt road into Hampden, into Sop's Arm, into Pollards Point, and down to Jackson's Arm.

Mr. Speaker, I will mention the Cat Arm Project. The Cat Arm Project was one of the biggest developments in the Province. Trucks and heavy equipment going over that road like you would not believe, yet there was nothing done, absolutely nothing. We had a P.C. member! Believe it or not, we had a P.C. member and a good one, and a darn good one in whose boots I will never fill. I will never fill them. Wallace House was an excellent, excellent member, and I want to go on record as saying that. But he could only get a share of the pie. He could not get it all; a share of the pie.

I would love nothing more than

after three or four years sitting as a member in any district to be able to go back and be able to say, 'Look, I sat as a P.C. member.' Get up in the community halls and get up on the stage and say, 'Look, I was a P.C. and that is why the roads are paved, that is why you have no potholes.' It is the easiest thing in the world. I can go around, my God, and everything is lovely, but not so. I have to go explain every Spring to my councils, my fire brigades, my recreation commissions, and everyone else the same as the hon. members opposite. I have got to tell them why I could not get \$20,000 instead of \$10,000 and why I could not get \$20,000 instead of nothing.

Those explanations have to be given by me as well as members opposite. I have roads in the district, like I said, that are the oldest in the Province and believe you me I have lots, I have lots.

Mr. Speaker, most of the things I have talked about so far was the service industry. When anybody mentions Kruger they think about Corner Brook. Corner Brook, Mr. Speaker, is a very small cog in the wheel when it comes to the forest industry in this Province. Only for the outlining areas the Deer Lakes of this world, the St. George's of this world, and the White Bays of this world and further down the coast, they would be without supply. They supply, I think, it is approximately 100 cubic metres of wood a year to the three mills in the Province, and most of that comes from the district of the Humber Valley.

In White Bay now Kruger has a project started, as everyone knows, on Main River, the Main

River project. It is not started yet. It is started with regards to bridges and getting the right of ways cleared and stuff like that but they have not started cutting there because of the fact that bug killed timber out around the hon. member for Stephenville's area, up around St. George's-Stephenville area. That had to be cut and rightly so, they should cut it.

Again, the people of White Bay have said to me, 'Why does government insist that Kruger cut the wood in the Stephenville area and not let us harvest it in White Bay. It is very easy for me to come back and say, 'Boys, look, to hell with that area out there, I want Main River started.' Easy stuff to do! But I cannot do that. I have to be realistic.

You cannot let them slaughter stuff. I saw it for too many years with Bowater, Mr. Speaker, stuff slaughtered, timber dropped, just go in and cut out the best and leave it there. It is ridiculous. There are blocks of timber there now with 100 cords of wood on them. It is no problem to go in and find them all over the Goose Arm road and down through the back of Deer Lake and up on the back of Grand Lake and down on the Northern Peninsula way too as well. It is all over. But to do away with that and have a more cautious approach, a realistic approach and a conservative approach, a new policy and a good forestry policy, including the silviculture programme, we say, 'No, you cut all or you cut nothing.' That is the way it should be. Whether it is Kruger, whether it is Abitibi Price, no matter who, that is the way it should be. Too much of that has gone on in the Province and, as

far as I am concerned, they will try it again today. They will try to get away with it.

The Main River project will employ 250 people in the woods industry there alone. Like I said, that is out West. Some of the fellows there are working out West granted, but when they do come back, there will be openings for other cutters.

Anyway, the sawmill business in that area, again because of the Bowaters Act, the 1938 Act, they have control over all the timber rights in the Province and some later on with the passing of the Reid lots - I see the Leader of the Opposition is shaking his head. I suppose you say, 'Why did you sign the deal with Kruger and not change that?' That has been looked at. My understanding is that the 1938 Act is being reviewed and hopefully some of those things will be addressed. I certainly will be having a few words to say about that.

MR. WELLS:
That was 1927.

MR. WOODFORD:
Yes, 1927. I did not know the year. But, in any case, in the White Bay area now I have an area called the Chouse Brook area. There are about 300 or 400,000 cords of wood in there that will never be cut if I live to be 100. I flew over it last year. I could not believe it. They told me, 'No, there is nothing there.' I went through it on skidoo several times and I said, 'Boy, I do not know, I cannot rest.' So I went in myself and had a look. It was unreal! It is not bug killed. Some of it is becoming overmature. No doubt, overmature, but not bug killed. Good standing

timber.

So now we are going to try to work out something with Kruger whereby the sawmillers will go in and take at least 60 per cent and let the rest of the pulp wood, whatever is good for sawlogs, go for sawlogs and let the rest go to them or something. I mean, this kind of stuff cannot happen. You have got Main River on one side with 1.6 million cords and you have Chouse Brook on the other side with 400,000 or 500,000. Now, that is only in my area. I do not know about others. But, anyway, this kind of stuff cannot happen if we are going to have stability and security in the newsprint industry in the Province.

They are using now 100,000 cubic meters of wood a year in the mills. The sawmillers are cutting exactly the same, 100,000 cubic meters, and we have the potential in the Labrador region for 350,000 cubic meters a year, just in Labrador! It is not being touched. It is being looked at now and so it should be. That is 3.5 times the amount that is being used by a newsprint industry in the Province now.

On agriculture, Mr. Speaker, I just mentioned the Central Dairies plant in Deer Lake that started last year putting 55,000 liters a year through the plant. As of last year we were, I think, approximately 52 per cent self-sufficient. We went from 52 per cent to something like 80 per cent on an average last year. With that averaging every year, that consumption rate alone every year, we could be self-sufficient in two years with the existing producers providing the land base is taken advantage of. You use it and you get your local forage crop.

If we go to self-sufficiency in, for instance, just the milk business alone in the next two years, that will mean another 1,000 to 1,200 animals. Where would that go? It would go primarily to Humber Valley, and the hon. member for Terra Nova's district because they are two of the areas of the Province that has the land base and the production capabilities in those areas. Naturally the main part of the consumption will be on the Eastern part of the Province, so that is one of the things we have to overcome, because of the freight from West to East.

In any case, 1,000 to 1,200 animals! You talk about potential in an industry that was down there a few years ago and not that far up now, believe it or not. I do not mind saying it but it is a thing that you have to overcome. I have to cultivate those fellows on this side as well as the members on the other, and a lot of other people in the Province. I mean, they just do not understand it. Although our forefathers and fathers years ago, go back to 1949, before Confederation, and Newfoundland was self-sufficient in everything, every form mentionable, milk, meat and what have you. We were self-sufficient. Today, Mr. Speaker, we are bringing it all in from the Mainland or somewhere else.

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition I believe, not too long ago mentioned something about, 'They can grow cucumbers in the North Pole.' Yes, they can grow them in the North Pole under the Sprung thing and some of the other hydroponic things that were in existence before Sprung, but we can use that same analogy, Mr.

Speaker, for everything. We do not have to make newsprint in Newfoundland! We can make it in Brazil and some of the other countries a lot cheaper than we can in this Province. We do not have to grow any vegetables in this Province or produce any milk, we can do it in Ontario! But when we get to Ontario they can say, 'We do not have to produce it in Ontario because we can do it cheaper in Wisconsin.' Wisconsin in the United States, Mr. Speaker, produces more milk in one state than all of Canada.

So we can use that analogy for everything. We can go on and on to textiles, newsprint, fishery even, parts of the fishery. We can use it in pretty well every one of our resource sectors.

The only thing they cannot take from us and say, 'You can get it somewhere else,' is our scenery and our resources and our people. They just cannot do that.

Using that analogy in other places and going along with the 'You cannot do it here' syndrome, that is all I heard in the agricultural industry, Mr. Speaker, when I came to Cormack in 1971 right from the people involved. 'You cannot do that here. You cannot do it!' When you go to look for a piece of land or a loan or something like that, 'No way, we cannot do it.'

At the very same time when I looked and asked for a resume of the individual who was talking to me, where was he from? He was from across the Gulf! He was down here acting as an ag-rep. [agricultural representative] telling me that I cannot do anything in this Province! That is all I heard! I farmed in spite of government, not because of it.

That has been changing over the years, Mr. Speaker, and it is still changing. We have a long ways to go, not only in agriculture, in everything, in our roads, in Municipal Affairs, in everything, but we have to be realistic and take a little bit at a time. It is only what this Province can absorb. We went through a deficit a short year ago. Now we are looking at a different one. We do not want to go back.

Concerning Sprung, the hon. member mentioned the tomatoes in the Co-op at Gander. I think it was just last week The Financial Post reported "Canada's first greenhouse warmed by steam in Kincardine, Ontario..."

"Bruce Tropical Produce Incorporated plans to produce vine-ripened tomatoes all year for sale across Southern Ontario.

"The 7.5 acre greenhouse is one of the biggest in Canada. Annual capacity will be 3.2 million pounds of tomatoes a year for a capital cost of \$7 million. The greenhouse gets its steam from the nearby Bruce nuclear power station owned by Ontario Hydro" and it will provide the heat. The steam will not go directly into the greenhouse, it will be circulated in loops around it. The 3.2 million pounds of tomatoes will be 1 per cent of the total importation of tomatoes into Canada today. There are approximately 320 million pounds of tomatoes coming into this country every year, Mr. Speaker. That one will be 1 per cent. What are we going to do for the rest?

Now, to explain something about the tomatoes coming into the Co-op in Gander. That was good

business, I think. If Sprung can put one in for \$3.00 a pound and the other fellow has to sell his for \$2.00 a pound, God bless Sprung! They are good businessmen as far as I am concerned.

I was selling milk for three years produced and processed on the farm. I only had to produce 500 liters a day, but my next door neighbor had to produce 1,100 to survive. It is just good business.

The article goes on to state, "Tomatoes are the largest dollar-cost imported produce item coming into Canada. Consumption falls off in Winter as the quality of the vegetable drops. Imported tomatoes have far to travel and ripen with difficulty.

"Winter tomatoes are usually gas-ripened, which changes their color but does not mature the inside."

I just wanted to touch on that because the hon. member mentioned it yesterday.

The Leader of the NDP mentioned today, in response to the Ministerial Statement, 40,000 or 45,000 jobs. But the hon. member only a short year ago stood up here and spoke against the NATO base in Labrador. Totally against it! So if you said 45,000, automatically today, if we did not have so much opposition, you could have knocked 1,000 off of that just on one project.

MR. FENWICK:

Do not be simplistic now.

MR. WOODFORD:

I am not being simplistic, it is being realistic, if that was started. We can keep going on and

on, but I will leave that for another day.

Mr. Speaker, all in all, when I started off I mentioned about being close to what is going on and things like that. Any member in a district would certainly get the feeling of what is going on, whether business is good or bad. People are going to tell them. They are not all going to come up to you and say, 'Well, boy, you are doing a wonderful job,' by no means. They are certainly going to give you the oaths. There is no doubt about that.

But I can see it right throughout the Humber Valley, the turn around. There is no doubt about that. If anybody wants to debate it with me, good enough. I can provide some stats on pretty well every part of the industry, the resource sector, tourism. I cannot believe it! The Strawberry Festival in Humber Valley was unreal, and the other festivals around the Province, but I will mention the one in Humber Valley. The hon. Leader of the Opposition was there on opening night. Unreal! Unreal!

They are to the point now where they are going to have to incorporate the name in order to save the name part of it, because every Tom, Dick and Harry will be running off with it. Right now they are trying to get the people of Corner Brook to take a more active role in it, although the actual growth of the strawberry itself will be further up the Humber Valley. But 75 per cent of the total production in the Province is produced in Humber Valley, of the total production in the Province. If we had the blast freezer capabilities and the proper freezer capabilities to get

it out here where the consumption is, we could double our production overnight.

I think some of the figures put around at the Strawberry Festival last year were something \$3.5 million that was dropped in thirteen days, or something close to it. I think the dollar figure is right. I do not know if it was seven or thirteen days. That is a lot of money, just for one little segment of the industry.

You talk about tying things in and taking advantage of it and exploring the potential. This was a thing started to promote the production and sale of strawberries in the Province, and it has overlapped into the tourism industry and now has taken off. The hotels and motels, everything booked solid. The Deer Lake Motel now has four bus tours turned down as of February, because they cannot handle them. They are going down into the hon. member for St. Barbe's district, Rocky Harbour. That is where they had to go. And there, the same way. Gros Morne, L'Anse-au-Meadows -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. member's time has elapsed.

MR. WOODFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Just to sum up, I just wanted to say a few words on the budget. I could go on in generalities with regard to the Province itself, but I wanted to try to zero in.

I know the hon. members are probably a bit put out by the references to agriculture. Not a lot of people like to hear about it.

Booker T. Washington once said, "No race can prosper 'til it learns that there is as much dignity in tiling a field as in writing a poem."

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, listening to the member who just took his seat he is certainly the epitome and the quintessence of what is wrong with this government and what is happening in Newfoundland today. One sentence was very, very telling, one sentence was very, very revealing and the sentence was, or the phrase was, 'That he got into farming in spite of the government and not because of the government, that he was a success in farming in spite of the government and not because of the government.' And that is the whole problem with every natural resource industry in this Province. I could have given precisely the same speech that the hon. gentleman just finished giving, talking about the agricultural resource in this Province, and talking about the forest resources in this Province. Every member on this side of the House could have given

the same type of speech.

And even though the member wants us to be upbeat and positive, I never heard anything in his speech that indicated anything positive. He was talking about the weaknesses of the industry. He was talking about the necessity for better management within the forest industry. He was talking of the necessity for the companies to be able to come to a better understanding with the sawmillers in this Province. And that is precisely the way I feel about it. It is precisely the way that members on this side of the House feel about the sawmilling, feel about the forest industry in this Province. I wonder what he is doing. I wonder what the government is doing with a member on that side of the House who feels so strongly about the development of the forest industry, who feels so strongly about the development of agriculture in this Province when, yet, we still have these insurmountable problems in the forest industry.

Oh, Mr. Speaker, and I am sure His Honour knows the problem, what a problem it is for a small sawmiller to make it in this Province today. What a problem! They cannot get a permit to cut wood, and the member for Humber Valley (Mr. Woodford) just illustrated the abundance of wood all around this Province, in Bonavista North, in Terra Nova. The story is the same wherever you go and these sawmillers just cannot seem to get a permit. They have to go through all kinds of trouble, all kinds of difficulty, all kinds of bureaucratic red tape just to sustain themselves, just to live, Mr. Speaker.

And the hon. gentleman now is in a position where one would think that he can do something about it, on the government side. I wish I could get on the government side, I wish I were on the government side, I tell you I would do something about these problems.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH:

I wish I were there, Mr. Speaker. I do not believe it is going to be too much longer before I am there, and I will eradicate these problems that the hon. gentleman keeps raising in this House. We will eradicate them and we will make the forest industry in this Province an industry that the ordinary people of this Province, that the loggers of this Province will want to pursue, that they will be able to pursue without encountering the kinds of problems that the hon. member identified and rightly identified, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in the agricultural areas the hon. gentleman mentioned, I think, that as long as he has been here, he has heard nobody on this side of the House raise any questions about the agricultural industry in this Province.

Mr. Speaker, that was not an accurate statement. I have raised agricultural issues in this House. I have talked to both ministers. As a matter of fact, I have been on the phone almost daily to the present minister, and he knows that very well. Since October of this year, I have been concerned with the drought that took place in this Province last Summer, and working for farmers in the area of Bonavista North.

I might say that I am not totally pleased with what the government has done in that respect in this particular year. I am not sure that it has made a lot of farmers happy, and I am hoping that the minister is going to be very sensitive to this problem and is going to deal with farmers individually. Because if he does not, this guaranteed loan programme still is going to see a lot of farmers having to get out of farming this year because they were just not able, and are just not able, to overcome the difficulties they encountered last year as a result of the excessive dry season that we had in this Province. So I am hoping that the minister is going to look at cases individually. I think as a general initiative that is not bad, but I do not believe that will meet the needs of all the farmers of this Province, and some farmers are going to need something a little more than a guaranteed loan.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, we have problems in the agricultural industry, we have problems in the forest industry, but it looks like the member for Humber Valley does not like them raised on this side of the House. If they are raised on this side of the House, somehow it is classified as being negative. If you raise any problems on this side of the House, if you point out the weaknesses in certain industries in this Province, that is seen to be negative.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I now want to get into the details of the budget. I did want to address some of the matters raised by the member for Humber Valley, and I now want to talk about the budget.

The member for Gander (Mr. Baker),

the spokesman on this side for Finance, made the observation that the budget was deceptive. I just opened the budget, to Page 1 actually, the highlights, and I thought I would take a look at that as he was saying the budget was deceptive, and my eye caught the statement with respect to the government's initiative to stimulate employment. It says, "To stimulate employment, Government will be allocating \$44,000,000 in funding as follows," and the first one is the one that I want to use to illustrate the point being made by the member for Gander, that the budget is deceptive. Now, it says, "To stimulate employment an amount of \$29,000,000 for the Community Development Program to create short-term employment for up to 13,500 people." Bear that in mind, Mr. Speaker. The government, last year, in 1987, said they were going to allocate \$29 million. How many jobs were they going to create? They were going to create 13,500. I want hon members to get these two figures in their minds. They were going to allocate \$29 million last year, and they were going to create 13,500 jobs. That was in 1987. In this year's budget, in 1988, they are going to allocate \$32 million. That represents an increase of \$3 million. Now, how many jobs would hon. members expect they are going to create by increasing the amount by \$3 million more? Last year it was \$29 million for 13,500 jobs. This year it is going to be \$32 million, an increase of \$3 million, and how many jobs are they going to create?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Fifteen thousand?

MR. LUSH:

They are going to create 500 less than last year. There are going to be 13,000 this year. They are going to spend \$3 million more, but they are going to create 500 jobs less. Is it that they are going to pay these people on these jobs more money? That could be, but they are going to pay them a lot of money. They are going to get a lot of money, because there is \$3 million more and they are going to create 500 jobs less.

Mr. Speaker, it appears to me that somebody just took the pen in hand and wrote down whatever came in their mind, and did not look at last year's budget awfully close, either.

Let me illustrate another area that seems to be deceptive: Let me do last year's first. Last year they were going to allocate \$2.5 million for the Federal/Provincial Employment Enhancement Programme to create 1,500 jobs for social assistance recipients. This programme has a little more flexibility in it than the first one. This year, they are going to allocate \$3.3 million, it is up by \$800,000, they are going to put \$800,000 more dollars into this programme, and how many more jobs do you think they are going to create? They are going to create exactly the same number.

Now, that certainly seems to be inconsistent. That just does not seem to harmonize. There seems to be some anomalies here, some large, huge inconsistencies. For \$2.5 million last year they said they were going to create 1,500 jobs, this year for \$3.3 million, for \$800,000 more, they are still only going to create 1,500 jobs. The only explanation is that they are increasing the pay. Now I

certainly hope that that is it, and I alert the people out there, the people who will qualify for those jobs. I will alert them, and I would want them to inform me as to whether or not they are going to receive extra pay. Because if they are not, there is going to be some money left over somewhere. Either that, or they are wrong in their jobs. Now, maybe they are wrong in their jobs. Maybe they are going to be wrong in the jobs, but it is seldom that a government underestimates. And this is what they appear to be doing, if we can compare it with the monies that they allocated last year.

Well, Mr. Speaker, in total, in looking at the initiatives of this budget and looking at the job creation since I am now onto that, we will compare it with last year's budget. Like the member for Humber Valley, I, too, was amused by the reaction of the media, in particular, and some business groups in the Province to this budget. What a great budget it was! Some people have even labelled it an election budget. Can you imagine? An election budget! They said nothing about last year's budget being an election budget, and in the job initiatives last year the government said they were going to create 21,000 jobs. That was what the government committed themselves to creating last year in its job initiatives strategy, 21,000 jobs.

How many did they commit themselves to creating this year? Eighteen thousand, a drop of 3,000. Nobody said last year's budget was going to be an election budget. Is that not strange? What was the reason for it? Why was it that the present minister

was able to create that euphoria? Why was it that the present minister was able to create that optimistic mood in the land? Why was it, even, that he did not get the press to go searching beyond the words of oratory and the rhetorical language? How was it that he was not able to get the press to go searching? Why was it?

The main strength of this budget, Mr. Speaker, was in its presentation. That was its main strength, its presentation. It was presented in a positive, upbeat manner, and that made all the difference. But once one searches beneath the words and beneath that positive, upbeat attitude, then one sees that this budget is not a big lot better than last year's budget.

I have already demonstrated that in its job initiatives there are going to be 3,000 less jobs this year in the government's direct job creation programme than was in last year's. I have already demonstrated that. So the strength of the budget was in its packaging and in its presentation.

Another strength, quite apart from the packaging, and I will come back to the packaging in a moment to point out just how different it was, and I will come back to its presentation in a moment just to point out how different the budget was this year in its presentation, but another strength of the budget, a real strength of the budget, was in its deficit reduction. Yes, Mr. Speaker, we must all be very proud when we see any modern-day budget making its deficit a little smaller, fine tuning and refining the deficit, but, again, one has to ask the question, was that due to any initiative of this government?

The fact that the deficit was reduced so dramatically, did that have anything to do with the smarts of hon. gentlemen opposite, or did it have something to do with economic and financial events over which they have no control? I am sort of inclined to believe the latter.

Last year, when the former Finance Minister introduced the budget, what a fatal day that appeared to be. It was announced that we were on the verge of financial ruin, with a current account deficit of something in excess of \$170 million. Oh, Mr. Speaker, what financial calamity, what financial ruin, faced the people of this Province. But, do you remember the brightest phrase of the century? The Finance Minister said that he had a plan in mind to kick-start the economy. He was going to kick-start the economy and his plan was, Mr. Speaker, despite the tremendous financial ruin that faced the Province, equivalent to that of third world countries, his plan was, Ottawa, bail us out. Mr. Mulroney, bail us out.

MR. TOBIN:

What happened to us then?

MR. LUSH:

I do not know what happened. I did not hear that Mr. Mulroney was going to bail them out, I did not hear that, but we did hear of certain things that happened, Mr. Speaker, that sort of suggested it had nothing to do with the smarts of hon. gentlemen opposite, it was a turn in the economy, and in financial things around them, over which they had no control. As a matter of fact, had it gone the way they had indicated it was going to go, we would have certainly achieved the objective

of reaching a \$172 million deficit, no question about that, and more besides.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, that was a bright spot in the budget, that the deficit was reduced last year, and this year, we understand, it is only going to be around \$40 million. Mind you, only \$40 million.

Now, people are always happy when a budget does not slap increases in taxes on people. That is always good to make a budget be received properly, when there are no increases in taxes, either in the retail sales tax or in the income tax. Now, this government does not have much leeway with these two taxes. Lo and behold to the government in this Province that increases further the retail sales tax in this Province, or, Mr. Speaker, the income tax, both of which are the highest in Canada. So, Mr. Speaker, we cannot be going around applauding the government and commanding the government because they did not increase retail sales tax, or because they did not increase income tax. Let us get rid of that attitude in this Province. We have reached the limit. We have reached saturation point. There can be no more increases in the retail sales tax. There can be no more increases in the income tax. We are already the highest taxed people in Canada with respect to retail sales tax and with respect to income tax, Mr. Speaker. We are the highest taxed people in Canada. That is irrefutable, Mr. Speaker. It cannot be refuted, these two facts, the retail sales tax and the income tax. Newfoundlanders pay the highest of both of these two taxes in Canada today, so we cannot commend the government for

not increasing these taxes.

Mr. Speaker, in the generation of revenue the government went to the same areas they did last year, in this great election budget, they went to the Liquor Commission. Last year they were asked to increase their profits by \$1 million. This year they were asked to increase their profits by \$2 million. Last year the government said there would be a moderate increase in the rates of certain fees and licences. This year they said that it must be increased somewhere by \$1.5 million. So, Mr. Speaker, they employed the same sources of revenue generation as they did in last year's budget.

So what was so great about this year's budget? What was so great about it, apart from the deficit reduction? The people got no break with respect to retail sales tax, they got no break with respect to income tax, and they got no break with respect to the revenue generating measures that the government have been taxing for the past four or five years. Absolutely amazing the increase in fees levied by this particular government over the last four or five years. From catching rabbits, Mr. Speaker, to goodness knows what, the fees have just escalated. But they are a sort of subtle fees, they do not cause a lot of public objection. For example, nobody knows what the cost of a birth certificate is until they go and get one, and when they get it, they do not realize that \$10.00 is a 100 per cent increase over what it was two years ago, because a birth certificate is not something you pick up every day. I can remember one time when they were \$1.00 or \$2.00. The last price I can

remember was \$5.00, and then it went right from there to \$10.00.

Mr. Speaker, the main difference in this budget from last year's budget was in its packaging, in its presentation. For example, there was no mention in this budget about the public debt, a public debt almost reaching \$5 billion. There was no mention of that. There was no mention of the per capita public debt, no mention that every man, woman and child is indebted by this government somewhere in excess of \$8000, approaching \$8200. There was no mention of that in this budget, none at all. Last year the government announced a three year freeze on road construction, that is road construction by the Province, non-cost-shared road construction, I think, the Province refers to it as. They put a freeze on the construction of public buildings, a freeze on hospital expansion, a freeze on the capital funding that they give to Municipal Affairs. What did they say about that this year? Did they say the freeze was lifted? I sort of sympathize with the poor old Minister of Finance of last year who had to make all these rather bleak and drastic announcements, saying there was going to be a freeze on this and a freeze on that. I sort of sympathize with the minister who had to get up and make that rather negative announcement, in a way, a very bad-news announcement. I must say he tried to use words like 'kick-start' and 'good news' to take the harm out of it, but, Mr. Speaker, you could not take the harm out of these freezes. Did the Minister of Finance this year talk about freezes? He never mentioned the word. What did he say? What did the new Minister of Finance say about capital funding

for municipalities? Municipalities are out there, councillors waiting for more money, people wanting water, people wanting sewer, people wanting their roads done in rural Newfoundland. They were waiting for this budget to come down. What did the minister say? He said, we are going to give \$25 million to municipalities, giving the impression, Mr. Speaker, that this was triple last year's, but it was the same amount that was given last year and the same amount that is going to be given next year, because it is frozen. But the new minister made no mention of freezes, he gave the impression that the fall was on, that the freeze was gone and that Newfoundland was now booming forward.

What did they say about monies for transportation? What did they say about that? What are they going to do about transportation, for secondary roads, for the non-cost-shared roads? He said we are going to put \$40 million into that, and people listening to that would have thought that that must have quadrupled. It was the same frozen price as last year. The difference with this budget, Mr. Speaker, was in its presentation. There was no talk of freezes, no talk of public debt, but talk of the economy growing, the economy booming. That was the talk, Mr. Speaker.

I have talked about the employment projections. I have talked about how they were down from last year. I have talked about how monies received by municipalities are the same as they received last year. I have talked about monies for transportation, how they are the same as monies for last year. And I have talked about revenue.

generation and demonstrated how government have used the same old worn-out ways to generate revenues, no new thoughts, no new ideas, no indication, Mr. Speaker, that this government is creative or innovative. Indeed, there is every indication that they are very, very tired, that they are very, very fatigued. They are so tired and so fatigued, Mr. Speaker, they need to be relieved of their duties, and I think the people of Newfoundland are going to do that for them very quickly, at the first opportunity they get.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, there is no indication of any innovativeness, there is no indication of any creativeness in revenue generation, in terms of provision of funding for public services and government job creation, there is no substantive difference, Mr. Speaker, between this budget and last year's budget, and, indeed, I have used examples where it was worse. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, beneath the veneer of this subtly crafted document is a lot of rhetoric, self-praise and piffle, and every indication that though this Province's economy may be improving, Mr. Speaker, it is still in the intensive care unit. Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Forest Resources.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to have a few minutes to make a few comments on this Budget Speech, Mr. Speaker, brought in by the hon. the Minister of Finance. Before I get started, one thing I would like to do, as was mentioned by the hon. member for Bonavista North, is congratulate the former Minister of Finance for kick-starting our economy. When he brought down his budget last year he suggested he would kick-start it, and his kick-start has resulted in \$115 million less in our projected deficit. So he certainly has kick-started our economy, he has put us on a good course. He had a hard five years in which to direct this Province, very hard times, and through his fiscal management at the time he has been able to show us that we can reduce our deficit, and I think he has done a good job.

I also want to congratulate the present Minister of Finance for showing us directions in which we shall be going in the next few years, certainly in the next year, and it looks, from all independent sources at least, that our economy is coming around and that we will be growing faster than most economies in Canada. I believe there is only one economy predicted to grow faster than ours next year, and that would be Alberta. With the money they have had in Alberta over the last ten years, I can well imagine how they can grow, Mr. Speaker. It looks like the fiscal management of this Province has come around to show that our economy is improving and will continue to improve.

I listened to the hon. member for Gander when he made his speech, a good speech, as just about

everyone in this House usually makes, and his biggest criticism, Mr. Speaker, was that hidden away somewhere in this budget was a tax increase of some \$4 million. Now, there might be increases in fees, or there might be certain increases in liquor prices to total \$4 million somewhere in this budget, but in a budget of some \$3 billion, that \$4 million tax increase, cited by the Opposition Party as being such a major increase, works out to be somewhere around a .1 per cent increase in taxes in this budget. Considering the times we are facing now, I think that is an amazing feat for the Minister of Finance, to be able to bring in a budget to the people of this Province with such a minuscule tax increase and still keep within the responsible fiscal direction the former Minister of Finance had set out for us.

Mr. Speaker, since our last budget, when I was fortunate to be Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development - I was very pleased to work all last year in that department - you can see the improvements that were made, particularly in the agricultural industry. Last year, we were the only province in Canada to show a growth in the agricultural industry; we grew by a little more than 2 per cent. We grew the year before a little more than 2 per cent, which, again, was the only growth in the agricultural industry in Canada. That shows that some of the policies which we have are beginning to show that the potential in the agricultural industry in this Province is being developed. We have a long way to go yet, but we are making headway.

There are more monies needed, and I know that the new Minister

Responsible for Northern Development (Mr. Warren) is working on an agreement with the federal government, which he hopes to have finished up fairly shortly, an agricultural subsidiary agreement, which is badly needed, no doubt about that. The agricultural industry certainly can use it. I certainly should get credit and give credit to the farmers of this Province for not waiting around for federal or provincial governments to put massive amounts of money into the agricultural industry. They are doing the job themselves and they are doing a good job. They are increasing their production, and they are increasing the growth in agriculture in this Province. The provincial government has supported the agricultural industry considerably over the last years. I think the chicken and hog industry alone has gotten something like \$35 million in direct grants and subsidies since 1979, some of that to Farm Products, and some of that directly to the farmers, which is a very significant amount of money.

Last year, there was in the agricultural industry, a \$5 million forage agreement signed, which is being used to develop the forage potential in this Province to alleviate some of our dependence on imported hay, particularly. Any kinds of imported feeds that can be replaced certainly will be of benefit to the farmers and to this Province, so that we will not have to be spending some \$2 million a year on imported hay, particularly, for the dairy industry. These improvements are being made, Mr. Speaker, and the agricultural industry is growing.

Mr. Speaker, since I moved to the

Department of Forestry I have had a couple of months to get used to that department, and to try to get a handle on what is happening in that department. They had a very good minister before, who gave Newfoundland a very high profile in the National Forest Industry. As Chairman of the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers, the former minister did a very good job, I must say, and his reputation throughout Canada is well known. I am very proud to be able to follow him and report to this House that he has done a good job nationally, recognizing that the Newfoundland industry is not the largest industry in Canada. But he was very instrumental in organizing and getting all the forest industry together for improvements in national forest strategies, and I would like to congratulate him on that.

Mr. Speaker, as we all know, last year we had an extremely dry Summer which had a very hard effect on our agricultural industry, and it could have had a drastic effect on the forest industry in this Province. We could have had much more damage done in the forest fire situation last year, but we had eight water bombers on standby. And although we had more fire starts than at any other time in our history, we had less actual acreage or hectarage - whatever you would call it in metric - damage last year than we had the year before. Hectarage, I do not know if that is a proper word or not, but we did have less actual area damage, or less actual wood loss last year with our dry season because of an improvement in our forest protection activities.

Mr. Speaker, this year we expect to do even better, because we have

four new CL-215 water bombers on our water bomber inventory, and we also intend to use four of the Canso water bombers, so that we can have them stationed strategically throughout the Island and Mainland part of our Province. We would hope to have, depending on the fire hazard in different areas, water bombers stationed in the Western part of our Province, in Stephenville and Deer Lake. We would hope to have water bombers at different times during the season stationed in Springdale. Obviously we will have water bombers stationed in Gander, which is our main fire co-ordinating headquarters. We will have a water bomber stationed in the St. John's area to look after the Avalon and Bonavista Peninsulas. We hope to have a CL-215 stationed in Happy Valley - Goose Bay, and we will have a Canso water bomber occasionally stationed in the Labrador City area of our Province.

The Northern Peninsula is covered now from Deer Lake and if there are extreme fire hazards, there is also the potential of having a water bomber stationed occasionally at the new airport in the St. Anthony area, which will benefit our fire protection.

Mr. Speaker, along with this we are trying an experiment this year at our Central Newfoundland station, a new type of Helitack Fire Protection, which is a larger helicopter than we are used to in this Province. It will carry equipment, a five man firefighting crew, and a basket, I believe they call it, to transport water to a site. It will allow us to make a quick response to remote fires so that we can attack them quickly and get them out, resulting, obviously, in less fire damage.

Mr. Speaker, in times when there are very few new programmes, I want to congratulate the Minister of Finance for allowing the Department of Forest Resources to try out this new programme, which was very hard to get money for this year. But we saw that the benefits to the Province would be very major if we tried this out and it worked. If this type of Helitack firefighting unit works well here on the Island this year, we would hope that within the next couple of years to have one stationed on the Island and one stationed in Labrador, so that we can provide a very effective and efficient firefighting capability in this Province.

Mr. Speaker, again this year we will be continuing with our silviculture programme in the department. We will be treating - if I can find the right figures here - more acreage again this year in the forest industry than we did last year. We will be planting, once again, some 12 million seedlings, which will be produced through our Wooddale operation. We will also be continuing with our pilot programme on the Western part of the Province, in private wood lot operations, and in conjunction with that private wood lot operation, we have two development associations in that area which are producing seedlings in their own greenhouses to provide to this private wood lot operation. That will continue once again this year, Mr. Speaker, and we hope to be able to increase the private land production of fiber for our forest industry and for our logging industry.

Mr. Speaker, we have a 6.7 percent increase this year in our forest management budget which,

again, we certainly need and we will use as effectively as possible to increase the forest resource in this Province. There is a \$2.5 million budget allocation in this year's budget for a spray programme. Primarily it will be a hemlock looper spray programme this year. We will be using two types of spray this year, Mr. Speaker. Last year we had some very good success with the Bt spray programme. We did a lot of experiments last year and we found that under ideal circumstances we got very good results.

This year what we will be trying to do is expand the Bt programme, so that we will be trying to use the information obtained last year in the experimental programme and trying to make it work in a regular spray programme.

The percentages of Bt to be used are not yet finalized, but we will be trying to get that into our regular commercial spray programme, which should benefit the Province in the long-term, using the Bt spray rather than the chemical sprays.

Mr. Speaker, last year was a very successful year for Forestry. Newsprint prices were high, and we are looking forward to even better prices for newsprint this year. We had a very successful year in the sawmill industry in this Province, and we are looking forward to having increased sawmill production in our Province. I am not positive of the figure now, but I believe we are producing something less than 15 percent of our wood requirements, things that we can produce in this Province, and that will be increasing over the next few years. There are

developments, through the Newfoundland Lumbermen's Association, which have increased the quality of our sawmill output. They have grading facilities now which allow the consumer to be able to judge our product as compared to products that are coming in; the consumer will know that they are getting as good a quality as possible from local wood, or as good a quality as they are going to get in wood from anywhere else in Canada, or in any imported wood. So, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to increased production in the sawmill industry this year.

The forest industry it is not all rosy. There are problems. The past two outbreaks of insect damage in our Province has created quite a major problem in forest management in our Province. We are presently cutting somewhat above our annual allowable cut, the main reason being that the two major paper companies and ourselves are trying to salvage as much of this damaged fiber as possible before it becomes useless or ineffective for anything in the paper industry or the sawmilling industry.

We have to continue our silviculture programmes in this Province so that we can, in the future, have an adequate supply of fiber for our mills, particularly, and our sawmilling operations. One statistic that amazed me, when I was being briefed on this Department, is that in this Province we cut a large enough volume of firewood last year to keep the Grand Falls mill running for one year. So, there is an increasing demand for wood fiber as a fuel in this Province, and that wood that is being used, the professional staff in our

department are directing the people to cut wood that is not suitable for saw logs and is not suitable for the pulp and paper industry. But because the demand is increasing, we have to address that problem and try to satisfy that demand along with the demands of the logging industry and the pulp and paper industry. The amazing thing about it is that the highest increase in demand is on the Avalon Peninsula. It is mostly a firewood demand in that area, and the Avalon Peninsula is not noted to be the most productive forest area in our Province.

I am not sure if the 35,000 requests for cutting permits for firewood were on the Avalon or in the Eastern Region, which is a bit larger than the Avalon. But it is a very great demand. A lot of the wood in this area is controlled by private landowners, so it is very difficult for the Department to keep an adequate supply of wood. Therefore, this is not all bad, because it directs an activity outside the Avalon area to more rural areas where there are some firewood supplies, and we see an increase, particularly in hardwood firewood; birch is what we usually use here.

Several businesses have started up now between Clarenville and the Central Newfoundland area which are trucking in birch and selling it here in the St. John's area, which is creating jobs all over the Province. So the demand is doing some good for the rest of the Province, and certainly that demand for hardwood fire fiber, I guess we could call it, is being satisfied off the Avalon area.

One very interesting development in the sawmilling industry, which

I have visited since I became minister, is a sawmill operation in the Central Newfoundland area, Springdale particularly, which is developing a super modern, I guess, compared to most Newfoundland sawmills, a very modern sawmill industry in this Province where they are trying to use all types of wood fiber. The owner of this mill says there is nothing produced in a tree that cannot be used and used very effectively. His idea is to get as much value added to that piece of fiber, or that tree, as we would ordinarily call it, or log, as possible. He is now producing a birch hardwood flooring, which is one of the first attempts at this. He has been very successful, and he has a good market.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Where is that?

MR. R. AYLWARD:

It is in Springdale. The gentleman's name is Mr. Max Goudie, and he is a very good entrepreneur in this Province. He has worked very hard to do this. He has a birch siding or panelling that he is producing now. This wood has generally been used for firewood, but he is innovating, or he is adding value to the wood supply.

One of the problems he is having is getting a supply in the Province. He cannot get people in this Province to cut the wood for him. He has imported some of his birch from the Nova Scotia area, which I found very, very amazing. But he has made arrangements now to get at least up to 90 per cent of his requirements somewhere throughout the Island, and maybe some of it from even as far away as Labrador.

MR. FUREY:

Is it regular hardwood planks for flooring?

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Yes, the regular small flooring. If anyone knows anything about flooring, you usually find a veneer top on a softwood when you do a hardwood floor in most houses. This is a full half inch of solid hardwood, which is, I guess, one of the best products you are going to find on the market.

MR. FUREY:

You would have a hard time driving nails in that.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Yes. It is hard to get down, but you are not going to wear it out with sanders once you get it down.

He has also tried to replace some of the imported log homes that are coming into this Province. Over the past few years there have been a couple of entrepreneurs who tried to get log home packages developed in this Province. Most of the ones you see around, or several of the ones you see around, have been imported from Nova Scotia as a package. Now Mr. Goudie has developed a log home package which I find very interesting for this Province. It is a very good package, and he sold several of them last year; he has a fairly high demand for them again this year, and he will be producing them, also.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible) his first year.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

No, these are regular logs of spruce and fir, always. He is also using the aspen, which has been a very underutilized species

in our forests, to make moldings. Some goes into his siding and the like, but he uses aspen mostly for moldings, which is a very good use for this type of fiber that we have in our forests. He also has a log siding which can be used inside. The main reason that he can produce these products is that he has developed a kiln in which he uses the waste products from his regular sawmill to dry out the birch and other species.

Mr. Speaker, these developments in the forest industry are very exciting to me, and I hope to be promoting them even moreso as time goes along.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. minister has five minutes.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Five minutes! I have not been up here for thirty minutes already, have I?

Beside all of that, I want to get on to some basic politics, some of the things that have been on my mind for the last little while. I probably will not get leave to finish this, but I will start it off anyway. I hear a lot in the media lately, and I have heard a lot since the new Leader of the Opposition has been elected to his position, about there being time for a change. I hear that over and over again; I heard it through the election campaign in Waterford - Kenmount.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. R. AYLWARD:

I just want to look at what this really means, or what it is seen to mean since the new Opposition Leader has come in with his time for change. I have seven changes

right now that I see occurring under his leadership. The first change that I see, which is a drastic change in this Province, is that leaders are supposed to get extra salaries. Mr. Speaker, if that is a type of change, I do not want it. That is not the change I am looking for.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Another change I see, Mr. Speaker, is that members of this House of Assembly can decide what dictates or constitutes a conflict of interest, so that you do not have to declare all your conflicts, just the ones that you feel you should declare. That is a change that I do not want to see in this Province, Mr. Speaker. Just dealing with that, I would say that if the Premier of our Province decided to do that, all hell would break loose and the media would be driving him out of his tree because he would not declare everything. But I have heard that reported on only once in the media since the conflict of interest statements have been made public.

Mr. Speaker, another change which I have seen, and it relates to the Waterford - Kenmount by-election, is to cut off nomination meetings two days before the advertised date. I do not like this change, Mr. Speaker. I do not want it for my part of the Province, and I will not put up with it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Another obvious change in this House of Assembly, Mr. Speaker, that I have noticed, and I noticed

it on two very serious occasions, I thought, but certainly I have noticed it, is that the Opposition members seem to be muzzled; they do not have the feeling that they had before; they do not have the freedom to operate in this House that we enjoy, it being our right. Mr. Speaker, that is another change I do not want to see.

Mr. Speaker, I read in the paper, whether it was a misquote or not a misquote I do not know, but I do not think it was, there is a change that will come about, that we will have to give away Northern cod to the French. I do not want this change, Mr. Speaker. It will not happen while I am here.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. R. AYLWARD:

There was another drastic change that was reported, Mr. Speaker, a drastic change in direction from what this government wants, and the change will be that the Province will not have any more control over its fisheries. This is certainly a change that I do not wish to have. Mr. Speaker, if I, or the Premier of this Province, or any of the Cabinet ministers were going around this Province getting complimentary airline tickets and hotel rooms, again all hell would break loose. It would not be accepted by my constituents, I know that. None of these changes would be accepted by my constituents.

Mr. Speaker, if this is the change we are about to see, or that it is time for, then I do not want to see it, and I will work twice as hard in this Province to make sure that we do not get it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Stephenville.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise and speak in this debate on the budget.

MR. YOUNG:

(Inaudible) tried to get out.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

The hon. minister - protect me, Mr. Speaker. The problem I have is that they want me to run all the place. When you are good, Mr. Speaker, you are good and that is the way it is.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Mr. Speaker, I am going to speak to the issues, as much as I can, and talk about the unemployment rate in this Province and the actions that this government has taken to solve that problem.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! Order, please!

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, they use the word 'muzzle'. Well, if they will just sit there for thirty minutes, they are now going to hear what muzzle means.

Mr. Speaker, we have been trying to bring forward constructive suggestions to the government, to not just tell them what they are doing wrong, but to tell them how they should do it. Mr. Speaker, it becomes a problem when this government decides that they are going to get you, but now they are getting scared. They are now getting scared because Waterford-Kenmount, Mr. Speaker, sent a strong message.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. K. AYLWARD:

It sent a strong message to the people across the Province; it sent a strong message to the people on the Avalon; it sent a strong message to the people across the House, Mr. Speaker. It is about time. I welcome my colleague, Eric Gullage, to the House of Assembly. It is a signal to the rest of the people and I welcome him. He is going to be a good member and I am sure he is going to perform admirably on this side of the House, as he will in the future on the other side of the House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. K. AYLWARD:

I want to also say, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to constructive suggestions, before I get into talking about the great district of Stephenville for a few minutes, I want to give a couple of suggestions that we have made in the last two or three years that

this government, though they will give us no credit, have somehow tried to go around and say, they are trying to do something with. They have taken our ideas, Mr. Speaker, and for that I can commend them. The only problem is that they have not taken too many of our ideas. But that is okay because we are saving them, we have them all ready to go and when they call the election, Mr. Speaker, we are going to unveil the plan that is going to convince the people of this Province that not only do they need a change, but they are going to get one. I am looking forward to it, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. K. AYLWARD:

We have, Mr. Speaker, in the last three years developed ideas and policies on youth unemployment and how to tackle it and how to deal with it. We have suggested those alternatives to the former Minister of Career Development and we will suggest them to the new minister, Mr. Speaker.

One of those ideas was to get more funding out there for young people to start business and, lo and behold last year, Mr. Speaker, what did we have? After two years of pounding them over there, they finally brought in a programme called a Youth Entrepreneurship Fund. Where did the idea come from and where did the push come from, Mr. Speaker? It came from the loyal Opposition.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. K. AYLWARD:

It came from the loyal Opposition, a good constructive idea, an idea

put forward by us, researched by us, with our great research capabilities that they have given us over here to do our work with, all that wonderful staffing and offices that we have, so that we can undertake to do the job that we were elected to do. But be that as it may, we have done that and we put it forward. There are many options but they adopted that one. For that I commend them, but there are a whole lot of other options they should look at.

The hon. Leader and myself were in the Port au Port district, Mr. Speaker, only on the weekend past. We sat down with the Port au Port Economic Development Association and they presented to us a report on Youth Unemployment which was shocking, to say the least, but the results - they hit home and I will tell you, Mr. Speaker, they did an extensive report in 1983. They came back with the results in 1987. They just presented the report to government and they presented it to us this past weekend.

The leader and myself we were discussing these ideas that they put forward after they developed these ideas listening to all these young people, Mr. Speaker. They listened to all the young people and they developed some ideas. The strangest thing about the recommendations that they make about employment counselling for youth, which should be a priority in this Province, these are the same things that we have suggested on this side which is a policy of this party, which we have pushed for the last three years.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the provincial government, because we are not yet the provincial government, but I urge the one that is there

presently, in the district of Port au Port and other districts on the Northern Peninsula, for example, and other areas of the Province, to realize that they are in need of these services and to try to adopt a policy to address the problem. It has not been done adequately.

The results of the Port au Port survey, Mr. Speaker, show it was comprehensively done. I commend the Port au Port Economic Development Association for a fine effort, because they did put it forth very well. I commend them for their research because hopefully - and I hope to present that report here in the House in the next few days - it will hit home to the government that maybe in their budget allocations in the next little while they will look at setting up - although we have recommended it, mind you. Shame on us! Shame on the official Opposition for putting forward a decent idea that might help solve the problem. But please look at it, put another name on it, but do it because the problem is out there and it needs to be addressed, Mr. Speaker.

I cannot urge the government enough because that is the only way that we are going to get it done. We, over here, continue to do our homework, to present ideas on a whole variety of options when it comes to the fishery, forestry and the whole works. It is all there and it is all coming, Mr. Speaker.

One other constructive suggestion that we are made was on defence policy and defence money: For the last two years I was asking the Premier and his administration to help us on the Sea Cadet base lobby over in Stephenville. I am

a member of the House of Assembly. The hon. Premier is the government. I assumed that if I asked the Premier and his government, which represents all of Newfoundland and the constituents of Stephenville, that they would help us in our lobby.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, I was dealing with all federal politicians and my caucus, who helped me, but on the other side we had a few members individually who wrote letters of support, and I appreciate that. But when it came down to the Premier, what did he do? He decided to play politics, because he decided that it was an Opposition member who was putting forward the idea and was trying to get the lobby going.

Mr. Speaker, when I volunteered to say, 'Look, I will pat you on the back and give you all the credit if you would only have a meeting with the hon. Minister of Defence in Ottawa.' No way, Mr. Speaker! He would not do it. He would not listen to it, as a matter of fact. All he would try to do is give credit to his colleagues around him who are in my area. I do not mind giving the credit, Mr. Speaker, but the problem is you have to earn it. Unfortunately, they did not do it. We lost that Sea Cadet base, unfortunately.

Now, three years ago there was no such thing. Guess what they have formed here in Newfoundland?

"In order to access as much of this potential" defence "business as possible, a group of eight local businesses have recently formed Newfoundland Aerospace and Defence Associates. This group, in part through assistance from the Province, will lobby industry

and government in Central Canada to promote this Province's capabilities in the area of high technology manufacturing and engineering."

Mr. Speaker, we would never have seen it unless the Opposition, which worked hard, put it forward. It is our policy over here. Mr. Speaker, if we had had this group three or four years ago, we would have a Sea Cadet base in Stephenville and we might have had a variety of defence monies being spent around the Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Instead of greenhouses.

Unfortunately, that was not the case. But at least they have started to listen a tiny bit. They went around and about it and said, 'We are going to try to do something on it.'

Finally, they listen after us losing a potential development that could have developed the whole Bay St. George region and given our economy a stable base. Unfortunately, that did not happen. I know for a fact that there was hardly a real meeting set up between a government minister down here and a federal government minister to discuss this issue.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, the Associate Minister of Defense (Mr. Dicks) came in from Ottawa to Newfoundland, spoke at the Board of Trade meeting last year, and said that Cape Breton deserved more defence money than Newfoundland because they were an area of high unemployment. They

let them walk out of here and no government official or minister met with him to discuss the lobby that we had going from all over the Province. I find it shameful, but unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, you have to put those things behind you and go forward.

I look forward to seeing new initiatives being brought forward by a new Liberal Government because I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that that is something we are going to see in the very near future.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. K. AYLWARD:

There are a number of things that I would like to touch on, Mr. Speaker. The Rural Development Council had their meeting here last weekend. They were wanting to hear where the funding was going to be coming from for their 55 associations all over the Province.

Unfortunately they were met with the news that the Rural Development Agreement is going to be no longer in existence and they are going to have to apply - get this - to the ACOA programme. Now this programme was supposedly set up as new money down here in Atlantic Canada. So what are they doing?

Now we see it. The Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs (Mr. Dawe) had a press release in the paper over the weekend saying that the Rural Development Associations have now to look at the ACOA programme and apply for funding to keep going. I am amazed, Mr. Speaker, because this is suppose to be new money. What it looks like they are doing, which has

been brought out by the Opposition in Ottawa, is all these previous programmes are just going to be bundled up, gotten rid of and give less money to Atlantic Canada, rather than more. This appears to be the case.

What really bothers me, Mr. Speaker, is the Rural Development Movement in this Province needs a shot in the arm. It does not need a shot in the head. It is about time that this government, which preaches about rural development, started to do something about it. Unfortunately that was an indication of what their plans are for the future.

I think it is shameful, Mr. Speaker. I think this government, the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and the hon. Premier should look at getting an agreement that will help the Rural Development Associations in this Province to prosper, to develop, and to give them the expertise to proceed. Unfortunately, we are not seeing that.

I hope and I would express my concern to the government members opposite that they try to deal with that situation because the Royal Commission on Employment and Unemployment, which was done very extensively and put forward by this government, recommended that the Rural Development Associations be supported and be funded more and be given resources.

It appears that this government has decided to go along with the federal government and not bother with and not support fully what the Rural Development Movement wants to do. It surprises me, Mr. Speaker, but you can only read what you see there. Everything is going to have to revolve around

this ACOA programme. It is unfortunate, Mr. Speaker. While you can welcome the money, the money is not new. It appears that that is the case now. I would ask the provincial government to do something about it, to try to address the problem, Mr. Speaker. Unfortunately, we will have to see.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about the district I represent and which I am proud to represent, a district which saw in its wisdom to elect this young member from Stephenville three years ago. I believe that they will see the wisdom again the next time, Mr. Speaker. I think they will.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

AN HON. MEMBER:

Federal or Provincial?

MR. K. AYLWARD:

As a Liberal.

As an Opposition member, Mr. Speaker, you can accomplish a few things. You have to haggle them. You have to do it all. You have to lobby, lobby, lobby.

Just recently we had a few announcements, Mr. Speaker, that we have worked on for quite some time. It was amazing to see the Federal Minister for this Province, Mr. Crosbie, in Stephenville. He even had to give me some credit and I thank him for that. Even in his press release he credited the MHA for Stephenville for doing a good job in lobbying for a Coast Guard base, Mr. Speaker. I can only say, Mr. Speaker, it is nice to see once in a while that the effort is welcome and that you also get a tiny bit of credit while you are in the Opposition.

It is awful tough, Mr. Speaker, because all we do is condemn, condemn, condemn. We do not suggest anything. We do not ask. We do not push. We do not lobby.

We have so many resources over here, I do not know why I would not want to live in Opposition forever! It is great, Mr. Speaker. You can pick up the telephone anytime and get a hold of anybody at any time because there are about five lines and they are all blocked. It is great. The resources are super! It makes you feel good as a member of the House to be able to carry out the work that you were elected to do just as everybody on the opposite side.

The only problem is that it makes it a lot more difficult. We have got to work ten times harder to even look as good as them, just to look as good as them! That does not matter because we got the effort over here and it is going to be put forward. Everybody is working hard and the people out there in our Province know it.

That was just one thing that was just announced recently that this member had something to do with and I thank the Federal Government for it. That is okay, I have no problem. But again, some of the people in my area are saying, 'Well they did not give us the Sea Cadet base, maybe it was because of our lobbying.' Obviously hard work helps, Mr. Speaker, it helps. You have to patch yourself on the back once in a while, Mr. Speaker, not too often mind you or you will get like the government on the other side.

Mr. Speaker, when we look at further developments in Port Harmon and Stephenville area, it

is an area that was a former American base. I would like to see in the future further development of an industrial park. We have been pushing very hard.

Newfoundland and Labrador Housing has just finished an assessment of the area and I will be urging the Minister and meeting with him and hopefully the people of Stephenville will see an opportunity to get an industrial land base so that businesses can be attracted to the area. That is something that we have been pushing and that is not just me, that is the town council and everybody else. So just to make sure that I do not get any credit, I will make sure that I will low key that in the next few months and let the town council take over. But I want to see an industrial park because I think it is very important for the development of all of Bay St. George, not just Stephenville, but all of Bay St. George. It is very important. It is something that we would like to see.

We are also pushing now to see if we can a number of senior citizens housing units built in the area. The Royal Canadian Legion has undertaken a project to get a number of units built and I am hoping to see that thing come to fruition.

Mr. Speaker, we have had some successes and Stephenville is a town that has a lot of potential. I am hoping and going to be working continuously to make sure that that becomes a reality.

We have also the Western Community College, which is blossoming as far as I'm concerned. It is a leader in Canada among regional

community colleges and I credit the staff and the President of the college and also give congratulations to the new Board of Directors just elected. I would extend a warm hand of help at any time and in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to express an invitation to members of the House. This summer will be the tenth anniversary of the Stephenville Festival which has been a very successful operation over the years and we are looking forward to seeing a great many people from across the Province attending the festivities.

We are also going to have a Provincial Arts Conference in Stephenville this summer to discuss a number of issues related to arts in this Province. We will be bringing in people from all over Canada and I would urge again all members to consider that this summer. It will again be putting Stephenville on the map in cultural affairs, which has come about over the last two or three years.

Mr. Speaker, the Abitibi-Price Mill has been very successful thus far, but we are concerned and concerns have been expressed to me about the future of the wood supply. I would hope that the Minister of Forestry will look at this problem and hopefully this can be addressed. It is a successful operation and it has a bright future. I bring those concerns to the Minister and will be addressing these concerns with him in the future.

Mr. Speaker, before I leave and go onto what I think of the budget itself, the Stephenville Airport has seen some major improvements over the last few years and we are

hoping to see more. We are presently working on a combined services building for the airport in the area. It will ensure the future stability of the airport. It is an airport you can always depend upon. We are looking forward also, Mr. Speaker, to it being highlighted this summer with the return of U.S. Forces people who were stationed in Stephenville over twenty years ago. So I look forward to seeing this new development on the airport next year. It will ensure the stability of the transportation centre of Stephenville and I look forward to seeing the hon. Minister of Transportation federally announce it. I would ask the Minister of Transportation provincially to support it.

Mr. Speaker, look at what the situation is in rural Newfoundland, look at the statistics. The statistics that I look at, Mr. Speaker, though I have a Bachelor of Commerce Degree which allows me to delve into the more intricate details, but there was one statistic, one fact that overrides everything you see.

The population of rural Newfoundland is declining and has declined over the last three or four years. That, Mr. Speaker, shocks me. Not only that, but when you look a bit closer you will see that most of the population that has declined is young people. So, therefore, that resource is being lost, Mr. Speaker. It is a problem that this government, when it paints a glossy picture, is not really looking at as hard as it should be, Mr. Speaker.

While we see certain programmes and we welcome them - there is one there on the university graduates,

\$1 million this year to help with university graduates. Endorse it fully, but the only problem is it is about 100th of one-tenth of what is needed to tackle the problem. While we have only so many resources, we have to decide where our priorities lie.

When it comes to rural Newfoundland and the economic base that is now suffering because of the lack of economic progress, Mr. Speaker, you have to look at where government expenditures have gone and in the areas that they have gone. Rural Newfoundland is dying while in here, in St. John's, we are growing. The reason is we have a stable base in St. John's, and that is fine, but we have to be concerned about rural Newfoundland.

The other shocking statistic, when it comes down to losing the young people, is that their education, Mr. Speaker, is suffering. When you see the policy of this government when it comes to educational funding to rural parts of the Province - the Leader of the Opposition has addressed this on many occasions over the last six or seven months - the policy that we are paying in rural Newfoundland \$100 or more less per pupil than you are in St. John's or in richer areas of the Province, that disturbs you and it has to disturb you, Mr. Speaker, because how are young people in rural Newfoundland able to take advantage of all of these wonderful opportunities that we want to present to them in our community colleges, in our university, that is now overloaded - I do not know how many times - in this city, and in Trade and Tech and in all the other educational facilities that we have.

Mr. Speaker, it is nice to build them all and it is nice to have them there, but if you have not got the education to get out of Grade XI or XII, because the funding was not there and you decided to leave because there was not enough career counselling, Mr. Speaker, and you could not see light, then all of these wonderful buildings that we have are going to be empty in a very short period of time. You will not have to worry about the overflow of students going to the university, because there will not be any left to go.

It is time that we got very serious about addressing the problem. It is not going to go away. Career counselling is a major thing that needs to be put into the school systems, and it has got to be addressed. This Province is dying slowly unless something is done. The facts speak for themselves. You just cannot not look at it and say to yourself, 'Well, we just cannot watch and just keep everything the same.' You have got to address the policy.

While I welcome the initiatives and new facilities, I would ask the government, as I said in the beginning, rural Newfoundland and its young people are in a lot of trouble. Unless we address that problem, then we are going to get nowhere. The future of this Province, and you have heard it before, lies - there is no doubt about it, it is serious - with the future development of young people.

When you look at the development associations, Mr. Speaker, if young people come into the development associations, they bring new ideas. If they can stay

in the education system, they will do much better in the future and they will help develop the economy. But the problem is, Mr. Speaker, that they are not getting the opportunity because we are not providing a good enough system to keep them there. We have to do better and we have to work harder.

I would hope that the policy that we recommended on developing better counselling for young people be addressed by this government because, Mr. Speaker, that is where it lies. This budget speaks about a lot of programmes and a lot of government services that are offered, Mr. Speaker, but there is one thing that it does not take on and that is the problems that we have out there.

We are losing our people and we are losing them at a much higher rate than we have before. When I see that, I think it is time that we did something about it. Not only that, we are suggesting, Mr. Speaker, things to do about it. I would hope that the provincial government will take these considerations very seriously.

They always say that we have to be criticizing them all of the time. Unfortunately, that is part of our role. We have to do that because we are the Official Opposition. But we are also suggesting to you things that can be done. I would ask that these things be considered, Mr. Speaker, because if they are not, we are going to continue to see the problems we have seen and they are not going to go away. They are going to be there for a long time to come.

I have seen too many things, Mr. Speaker, in my short career in politics where money has gone. I

think it is time we looked at our priorities, looked at where we are spending the money and looked at providing and making it a higher priority. We have one piece of pie, but we have to look at making it a priority that we deal with the lack of education that some of our young people are able to attain.

There is a high drop-out problem in this Province. Some of our young people are facing a very dim and bleak future. There is now in some areas two and three generations of young people with no education and it is getting into the system. We have to address the problem and there are a number of ways to do it.

Before you can address a problem, Mr. Speaker, you have to know the problem exists. Until such time that this government decides to take it on, we as the Opposition are going to make sure that they understand the problem exists, Mr. Speaker. We are also going to be putting forward a number of suggestions.

Such as, Mr. Speaker, in providing more services to rural Newfoundland, we would like to see more government services provided. Government is the biggest economic contributor in this Province in the sense of spreading out its jobs and it has the easiest decision-making process of all. It can decide if a place has high unemployment to address the problem. It also has the resources.

I hope government will listen and will look at the problem and look at the areas that need to be addressed and do so as soon as possible because, Mr. Speaker, time is running out for this

government, let me tell you. I am getting tired of hearing them blaming us for twenty years ago and still blaming us for today's problems. It is not washing any more, Mr. Speaker, and it is time that they became accountable for their actions. We as the Opposition, Mr. Speaker, are going to make them accountable for their actions.

I look forward to the day where we can attempt to try to straighten out the problem that have existed. The only problem is we are going to have an awful mess, Mr. Speaker, to clear up. It is being created by this government that exists right now with its twenty-three Cabinet ministers and three parliamentary secretaries. I am a little bit amazed in this Province that we could have such a big bureaucracy and yet the population is declining. We have people leaving like crazy and we are making the Cabinet a little bit bigger to deal with the problems. It is absolutely amazing!

I would hope that the hon. the Premier will wake up, Mr. Speaker, one of these days. Actually, I do not know if I hope that, Mr. Speaker, because if he stays the way he is, we are going to get him and that is not a problem at all. That is going to happen very quickly.

Mr. Speaker, to sum up the budget, here is what this government is all about. It is right on front picture, Mr. Speaker. The front picture indicates it all. We are not against new technology. We are not against new initiatives, new ideas. Bring them all in, we are all for it, Mr. Speaker, but you have to check out the viability, Mr. Speaker. You have

to know at least that you have a chance.

Also, rural Newfoundland needs help. Mr. Speaker, I will tell you a lot of the people whom I talked to out there do not think that - I like Mount Pearl, but I do not think it is rural Newfoundland, Mr. Speaker.

I will suggest to you a number of other initiatives that you might take to help us out there, because we are in trouble and we are asking this government for some help.

Mr. Speaker, I think this government considers the light at the end of the tunnel to be the Sprung greenhouse. Well, let me tell you. The light at the end of the tunnel for the people of this Province is the Liberal Party.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. DINN:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of Mines.

MR. DINN:
Mr. Speaker, one minute is hardly enough time for me to get into full stride. I will adjourn the debate but I would like to take about thirty seconds because next week, when we resume this debate, I will be speaking about exploding the myth. I will just take on a couple of the individuals who spoke here this afternoon.

For example, the member for Stephenville (Mr. K. Aylward) just talked about the light at the end of the tunnel being the Liberal

Party. If that is the case, it is a freight train coming towards us. You had better get out of the way, if that is the case.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. DINN:
And, Mr. Speaker, that train has no conductor.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. DINN:
With that, Mr. Speaker, I will adjourn the debate.

MR. SIMMS:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. SIMMS:
Just before we move adjournment, Mr. Speaker -

DR. COLLINS:
I think we won. I think we won.

MR. SIMMS:
Anyways, it was the sign of an excellent debate to come next Monday.

Mr. Speaker, just before we move adjournment of debate I would like to advise hon. members, as I have been trying to do, of the Estimates Committees scheduling and the departments to be dealt with so that we get it all on tap.

Tonight, again the Government Services Estimates Committee will meet here at seven-thirty to deal with the departmental estimates of Housing. That is tonight. Tomorrow, Wednesday, in the morning, there is no meeting by

agreement. Tomorrow evening the Social Estimates Committee will deal from seven-thirty until nine with the Department of Health, they will conclude with the Department of Health I guess, and then from nine until ten-thirty I think is the scheduled time, they will begin the estimates of the Department of Career Development and Advanced Studies, tomorrow night.

On Thursday in the morning at nine-thirty the Government Services Estimates Committee will deal here in the House with the estimates of the Department of Finance, which should go through in a breeze I suspect, and in the evening, Thursday evening, the last evening for the meetings this week, the Resource Estimates Committee will deal, from seven-thirty until eight - they need a further half an hour or so the committee estimates - they will continue with the estimates of the Department of Mines. I hope the minister does not give away any of his debating notes and skills at that particular meeting. Then, starting at 8:00 p.m. or thereabouts I guess, until ten-thirty, the Resource Estimates Committee will deal with the estimates of the Department of Development and Tourism. I understand the minister will be here in time for that Thursday evening without any difficulties.

So I trust that that is very clear to everybody.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

I want to thank the Goverment

House Leader for being so gracious this evening and I would ask him to advise the Minister of Mines (Mr. Dinn) to stay out of the way of the trains.

MR. SIMMS:

I will not try to address that, Mr. Speaker. He has already mentioned -

DR. COLLINS:

He is way off track.

MR. SIMMS:

Yes, they are well off track.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, I would like to move that the House adjourn until tomorrow, Wednesday, at 3:00 p.m. and that this House do now adjourn.

On motion the House at its rising adjourned until Wednesday, April 13, at 3:00 p.m.

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