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*Speaker: Honourable Wade Verge, MHA*

Wednesday

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The House met at 2:00 p.m.

**MR. SPEAKER (Verge):** Order, please!

Admit strangers.

Today I am very pleased to welcome to our public gallery Ms Jocelyn Greene, a former Executive Director of Stella Burry Community Services; and Ms Lisa Browne, the Chief Executive Officer of Stella's Circle.

Welcome to the House of Assembly.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Seeing that the people from Stella Burry were not in the gallery when I welcomed them, I will welcome them now: Ms Jocelyn Greene, the former Executive Director of Stella Burry Community Services; and Ms Lisa Browne, the Chief Executive Officer of Stella's Circle.

Welcome to the House of Assembly.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

#### Statements by Members

**MR. SPEAKER:** Today we will be hearing members' statements from members representing the Districts of Humber Valley, Exploits, Baie Verte – Springdale, Conception Bay South, Lake Melville, and the Bay of Islands.

The hon. the Member for the District of Humber Valley.

**MR. BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise in this hon. House today to recognize students in my District of Humber Valley named as award recipients by the Royal Canadian Legion. Every year the legion holds poster, poem, and essay contests as part of the Remembrance Day activities.

Mr. Speaker, this year Branch 3 of the Royal Canadian Legion in Deer Lake recognized two students in the senior literacy category: Racheal Paddock, a Level III student, and Noah Burnett, a Level I student, at Elwood High School.

Racheal took first place and Noah took second place in the provincial senior literacy category.

Mr. Speaker, Racheal and Noah now join other members from across the Province as they travel to Beaumont Hamel this summer. The trip to France is sponsored by the provincial command of the Royal Canadian Legion and will include July 1 memorial activities.

I ask all members of this House to join me in congratulating Racheal Paddock and Noah Burnett, along with the Royal Canadian Legion and its veterans, for continuing to educate our youth on the importance of the legion and its programs.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for the District of Exploits.

**MR. FORSEY:** Mr. Speaker, we are all aware of the commitment of the volunteer firefighters; they give their time unselfishly to their community. However, to be an active member for fifty years is an amazing act of passion and dedication as a volunteer firefighter.

Well, Mr. Speaker, at the fiftieth anniversary of the Peterview Volunteer Fire Department, Mr. Woodrow Hibbs (Woodie as he is commonly known) was recognized for his fifty years of volunteer service. As an active member, Woodie is still ready to respond to emergency situations, volunteering in community events, and helping those in need.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of this House to join me in congratulating Woodie Hibbs for fifty years of dedicated service to the Peterview Volunteer Fire Department.

Thank you.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for the District of Baie Verte – Springdale.

**MR. POLLARD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

On May 23, 2015, I had the privilege to attend the Springdale Royal Canadian Air Cadets 837 Northeast Squadron forty-first Annual Ceremonial Review. Commanding Officer, Captain Jonathan Edison and his personnel are to be commended for their outstanding leadership and dedication to the program. Mr. Herb Pike, the last remaining active veteran of the Royal Canadian Legion in Springdale, was the reviewing officer.

Since 1975, hundreds of cadets have been instilled with the motto, "To Learn, To Serve, To Advance" empowering them to become active and contributing members of society. Lifetime memories have been forged. Lions, parents, and communities have made a monumental difference in the fertile ground of the lives of our youth. They have been the wind beneath the wings of the air cadet program.

Congratulations to Flight Sergeant Brandon Oxford for capturing the best cadet award and to Joel Locke for the Royal Canadian Legion Medal of Excellence. Furthermore, congratulations to Jarod Locke, son of Mark and Corinne Locke of Beachside, who was the only air cadet chosen provincially to represent Newfoundland and Labrador in the 2015 Pilgrimage to Europe, Trail of the Caribou.

I proudly ask all members to join me in applauding the 837 Northeast Squadron upon their achievements.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

**MR. HILLIER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, residents of Conception Bay South are very well known for assisting those in need. Most recently, schools, community organizations, and individuals have shown an amazing effort to help fourteen-year-old Makayla Puddicombe and her family.

Last summer, Makayla was excited for school to close and enjoy the summer break. Unfortunately, her plans were interrupted as she

was diagnosed with an aggressive cancerous brain tumour rarely found in children.

Mr. Speaker, with the support of the community, Makayla and her family have been fighting the battle, but that fight just got a little longer. Makayla is now at the Sick Children's Hospital participating in clinical trials with fifty-eight other youth from around the world. A lengthy stay in Toronto and considerable travel has placed a financial burden on the family.

Again, in order to reduce that burden, residents of our town are continuing with support and have organized 'Sing for Makayla' which is taking place this Friday evening in Conception Bay South.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of this House to join me in wishing Makayla Puddicombe a speedy recovery and thank all the residents for their support and generosity.

Thank you.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Lake Melville and Minister of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs is requesting leave to make a member's statement.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Leave.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Lake Melville.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. RUSSELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for that leave.

Today, I pay tribute to Mr. Bruce Pardy, a true gentleman of Labrador who passed away last Wednesday.

Mr. Speaker, Bruce was a seasonal employee of the Labrador Affairs office working on the Labrador Transportation Grooming Subsidy. He lived in Rigolet during the winter season and maintained and operated the groomer for the region.

Bruce's true legacy will always be his extraordinary ability to fix things. Usually, the bigger and more complicated the machinery, the more Bruce's talents came to the forefront. Bruce was very well respected by his peers, and this can also be said of his dedication to assist anyone who called with a mechanical issue. All the groomer operators and snowmobile clubs in Labrador knew that they could call on Bruce literally day or night for guidance and assistance.

I have always admired and respected Bruce's determination to better the lives of not only his home community, but also the people of Labrador as a whole.

Mr. Speaker, I offer the condolences of the entire Province to his wife Irene, and his children, Denise, Bobbi, and my good friend, Teddy. Bruce was taken from us much too soon, and we will remember him forever.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for the District of Bay of Islands.

**MR. JOYCE:** Mr. Speaker, I rise in this hon. House today to recognize Rachel Barnes of Curling, a Level II student at Corner Brook Regional High.

Last fall, Rachel received top honours at the regional Royal Canadian Legion's Remembrance Day art contest in the black and white category for her depiction of an aged war veteran overlooking a battle scene. This scene included a grieving uniformed man at a gravesite to the veteran's side and comrades at his back.

This was Rachel's second year in a row for winning the regional contest and in March, she was notified that she also won provincially. For her first place win, she will be travelling to Europe on June 27 and will be visiting France, Belgium and England and touring First World War battlefields and historic monuments and memorials.

Rachel has always had a passion for drawing and thoroughly enjoys what she does. She also

has an appreciation for what the soldiers experienced and as quoted in a recent interview stated, "It's really hard to express on paper what they had to go through."

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in extending congratulations to Rachel on her achievement and recognizing our veterans in such a touching manner.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

### Statements by Ministers

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister Responsible for the Office of Public Engagement.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. KENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to compliment the Member for St. John's East on his new haircut. It looks very good.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in this hon. House to celebrate the success of an organization which has been helping people move forward in the areas of residential and non-residential counselling services, employment services and supportive housing for seventy years.

Stella's Circle began with Emmanuel House in 1945. The organization was incorporated in 1995 and now offers residential and non-residential counselling services, employment services and supportive housing. Annually, the programs at Stella's Circle help over 1,000 people overcome challenges related to poverty, illiteracy, incarceration, as well as mental health issues.

Mr. Speaker, when the provincial government partnered with Stella's Circle to launch the Social Enterprise Training program in 2011, we were excited about the possibility of helping the organization increase their training capacity. Through the original Social Enterprise Training program, and its subsequent iteration, Stella's Circle provides workplace-based training in

three distinct program areas: food services, trades helper and commercial cleaning.

As an example of the organization's employment-based work, 450 students last year were engaged in a variety of programs and services. Many successfully found work and acquired the skills needed to improve their employment prospects, which also improved the quality of life for themselves and their families.

Mr. Speaker, last year, we proudly supported the organization through an investment of over \$5 million – which they utilized to break down barriers and help individuals in making the kinds of connections that enhance their future. As we celebrate seventy years of success for Stella's Circle, I want to acknowledge two pillars of strength within the organization, both past and present. Earlier this month, Jocelyn Greene, the former Executive Director of Stella Burry Community Services, was given the Order of Canada. Ms Greene is credited with transforming the Emmanuel House residential treatment program into Stella's Circle and making it one of the largest non-profit organizations in the Province.

When Ms Greene retired last year, Lisa Browne stepped in as Chief Executive Officer and continued to lead the charge, raising the organization's public profile and focusing on sustainability and innovation. Ms Browne is also a recipient of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal for her contributions to the community. Mr. Speaker, I ask my hon. colleagues to join me in recognizing the work of these two individuals, and the success of Stella's Circle, in providing services that are transforming people's lives.

Thank you.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for St. John's South.

**MR. OSBORNE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am honoured to stand here as well today and recognize Stella's Circle, to recognize Jocelyn Greene as well as Lisa Browne. Any of the MHAs from the St. John's area are very familiar

with the work of Stella's Circle. They are familiar with the valuable services provided by Stella's Circle. I know the Member for Virginia Waters, my colleague, earlier mentioned and recognized Jocelyn Greene in this House for the work she has done.

Stella's Circle provides the services to those who are homeless, with educational challenges, and periods of long unemployment. The 125 staff at Stella's Circle has certainly made a dent in poverty reduction in this city. They are a model organization when it comes to poverty reduction.

The Queen's Jubilee Medal that was afforded and the Order of Canada were well, well deserved for the numbers of people who were helped by these two individuals.

Mr. Speaker, I say to Stella's Circle and to the staff at Stella's Circle: bravo – bravo.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for St. John's Centre.

**MS ROGERS:** Mr. Speaker, seventy years of –

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**MS ROGERS:** Mr. Speaker, seventy years of incredible, innovative, often life-saving service – what an honour to stand in this House today to acknowledge such an amazing legacy started by Stella Burry and what an honour to stand in this House to celebrate the wisdom, the vision, and the sheer courage and determination of Jocelyn Greene as she carried on that legacy. Jocelyn and the team she gathered around her are the epitome of Stella Burry's vision.

Thank you for the thousands and thousands of lives you have touched and empowered through the belief that we are all valuable members of society and with a home, a job, and a friend we can all be the best that we can be and no one is left behind.

Bravo, Jocelyn Greene and welcome, Lisa Browne.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

I think, as Speaker, I would be remiss if I did not say: bravo.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. DALLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I rise in this hon. House to highlight the first major delivery of nickel concentrate from Vale's operations in Labrador to Long Harbour.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. DALLEY:** This is a significant milestone for Vale and their operations in Long Harbour.

On May 25, the Umiak 1 – an arctic class vessel – delivered about 2,000 tons of high-grade nickel concentrate for Voisey's Bay. Vale is bringing in this concentrate to be blended with nickel matte from their operations in Indonesia. By January 2016, Vale will have the necessary impurity removal circuits in place to switch production to 100 per cent nickel concentrate from Voisey's Bay. Vale expects to receive several more shipments of concentrate by the end of the year.

Since construction of the processing facility in Long Harbour began, more than 30 million hours of employment have been generated with 80 per cent occurring in the Province. There are an estimated 700 people supporting operations in Long Harbour today. Congratulations to the work of the Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who constructed this facility, including Vale management and skilled workers who are professionals with world-class expertise in the development of megaprojects.

Mr. Speaker, we are very pleased that the first load of concentrate has been delivered to Long Harbour and we are looking forward to the day that the plant will be processing 100 per cent nickel concentrate from Voisey's Bay – a deposit considered to be one of the most

substantial mineral discoveries in this country in the last forty years.

Currently, the Voisey's Bay operation in Labrador employs about 450 people. It is estimated that an additional 400 people will be employed at the mine and concentrator when underground mining begins. First ore is expected at the end of 2019. The underground mine will have a capacity of approximately 40,000 tons of nickel per year and will extend the life of Voisey's Bay mine by at least another fifteen years.

We thank Vale for their commitment to the Province and to sustaining economic and employment benefits for many years to come.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I want to thank the minister for the advance copy of his statement. I too want to highlight the economic benefits of the project. It provides substantial employment in Labrador and in Long Harbour. It also makes a very significant contribution to the Province, which I might add, includes the sales of Mack Trucks.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It will continue to play an important part of our economy for many years. Let's never forget the important role of the Aboriginal partnerships on this particular agreement. It is great to see Vale reach this milestone. This has always been a visionary project in my opinion. The leaders of the day had the vision to see what could develop where others did not.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BALL:** We now see that it has developed into a successful secondary, processing project. We need more projects like this in our Province.

I want to congratulate Vale, their employees, and wish them continued success.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Signal Hill – Quidi Vidi.

**MS MICHAEL:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the minister for the advance copy of his statement. I too congratulate proudly the hard work of the workers, mainly from this Province, who built this facility. The project was first predicted I point out, to finish construction before 2012, then 2013. Now we have it in 2015.

We were led to believe the plant would smelt Labrador ore right off the mark. Then we were told they were not ready for that ore. Now we are told they will smelt and import, with the hope of Labrador ore finally in 2016. Here is hoping Vale gets the process right and smelts Labrador ore, making nickel and decent royalties for the owner of the resource, the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Further statements by ministers?

Oral Questions.

### Oral Questions

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

**MR. BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Government is taking a page from Stephen Harper's playbook on elections and turning taxpayer-funded ads to promote their Budget.

I ask the Premier: How much taxpayers' money are you spending on those Budget ads?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

What we are actually doing is we are providing the information, details, and messages to the general public who are looking for details and the facts about our Budget, Mr. Speaker, because there has been some rhetoric that has been presented by some people.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** Mr. Speaker, this is not new. What has happened in the past is government has spent investments in order to send out flyers and home flyers, that is the approach government has taken in the past to provide highlights and information regarding the Budget. What we found is by using current means, using electronic means –

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** – using local media, Mr. Speaker, online tags and so on, that we can provide better, clearer information with access directly to our website so people can get the facts about the great Budget that we brought down, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Premier talks about investment in Budget 2015, so speaking about the investment he should know what the cost is to taxpayers of the Province.

I ask the Premier: What is the cost to the taxpayers of Newfoundland and Labrador for those Budget 2015 election ads?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** Yes, Mr. Speaker.

I ran out of time, because I was going to address the specifics I was questioned, but I want to make it clear that what our goal is, is to share the facts of the Budget with the people of the Province, Mr. Speaker, in a way that we can do it as broadly as possible so that people can access as much information.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** Some of the things we are doing, for example, as you go on certain news sites and so on, you can click on websites, you can click right on the website that will bring you directly to the Budget. It is a bit hard to do that, Mr. Speaker –

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** – through paper flyers, mail outs and so on, and we want to make sure the people of the Province get the best value. We are spending about the same money we spent in the last Budget, the Budget before and so on, Mr. Speaker, about a \$50,000 range.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well, if it is about the same amount, I ask the Premier for the third time today, just answer the question: How much are you paying for those Budget ads?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** Mr. Speaker, I just told the member opposite how much we are spending. I just told you.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** Mr. Speaker, what I can tell you is that this process and what we are doing is ensuring that the people of the Province understand the facts of our Budget, the balanced approach that we have worked very hard to maintain. The investments we are making in communities, what we are doing for health care, mental health, the investments we are making there. The partnership we have with municipalities throughout Newfoundland and Labrador, investments we are making in education, in all areas of Newfoundland and Labrador, and we are giving people an opportunity. Directly go to the government website so they can learn the facts of the Budget, Mr. Speaker. Information is valuable to the people of the Province and we are providing it to them.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Premier has been saying that this Budget, and the Minister of Finance has been saying that this Budget is all about balance, and he has been saying that it is about choice, but his Budget ads tell a different story because it does not mention the increase in HST or the fact that government is running the highest deficit in the history of our Province.

I ask the Premier: If you believe in balance, if you believe in choice, why are your Budget ads leaving out critical facts like your plan for higher taxes?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

One of the things we are doing different from members opposite is we are talking about what



we are going to do, Mr. Speaker. That is what we are doing.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** Our government's plan is tested every day. Every day we come to the House –

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** Every day we come to the House and members opposite can ask us questions about the Budget – they have not done much of that lately, but they can certainly ask questions about the Budget. We will be more than happy to answer them, something like they are asking today.

We did find a balanced approach, Mr. Speaker, because instead of gutting the public service and putting 2,000 people on the streets, like members opposite did, we created an attrition plan so that we do not shock the system, so we do not have a negative impact on thousands of families throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

We saw in 1993, when they put 2,000 people out, they shocked the system, and our economy collapsed.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well, the Premier mentioned about members on this side of the House laying out a plan. I say to the Premier: What about the plan for the election? Do you have that date in mind?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BALL:** Mr. Speaker, over a year ago the former Premier said government was working on a new Energy Plan. We have heard very little since. In the Estimates Committee this year, the minister indicated the document would not be released until the election was called.

I ask the Premier: How do you justify using government resources and public employees to craft a document that will be clearly used for political purposes?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** Mr. Speaker, the member opposite should remind the people, as he is talking about our Energy Plan, of the great success we have had with the Energy Plan in Newfoundland and Labrador –

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** The Energy Plan has been significant for our Province, Mr. Speaker. We have made great investments in partnership and grown very strong partnerships with rural players in the oil business. We have developed great partnerships and we are building partnerships when it comes to renewal resources, such as the great and mighty Churchill River and what that has to offer.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** The Muskrat Falls Project, itself, is creating jobs in Newfoundland and Labrador for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. It is creating an economy. It is driving our economy. It is going to create revenue for the people of the Province for 100 years or more to come, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The hon. the Leader of the Official Opposition.

**MR. BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The minister was very clear in Estimates that the new Energy Plan would be rolled out as part of the PC election platform. This comes after public employees have been working on the plan for well over a year.

I ask the Premier: If this long-promised document will not be used for political purposes, when will it be released?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. DALLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I just want to correct the Leader of the Opposition because we can check Hansard, I do not believe I said it would be rolled out as a part of the PC election platform. When I was asked the question, when we are going to get the Energy Plan, I said we will probably roll it out the same time he rolls out his economic plan. That was the answer to him, Mr. Speaker.

When the Energy Plan is done and worked on, we will roll it out. We are very proud of the Energy Plan and the work that has been done. I can probably guarantee the people of the Province now, they are going to roll out one too, but you can bet it will mirror the Energy Plan that is driving this Province for the past ten years. They will have the same thing in theirs, non-renewable and renewable resources, what is important for the people of the Province, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In this House this week the Minister of Natural Resources said that Nalcor made the decision to not finish the dome at Muskrat Falls, but yesterday the Vice-President of Nalcor said something that was quite different. He said the decision was made by Astaldi.

I ask the Premier: Who is wrong here? Was it Nalcor's decision to scrap the dome, or is it Astaldi's?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. DALLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I correct the Leader of the Opposition once again. If he would read Hansard and my answer, and I think yesterday I stood to clarify that government did

not make the decision. Nalcor is the project manager. They are the ones managing the project, a great project on behalf of the people of the Province, and the contractor is Astaldi.

Between the project manager and the contractors, there are lots of conversations; but, ultimately, the decision to not finish the Integrated Cover System was made by the contractor, Astaldi. I said it yesterday, Mr. Speaker. I have no problem saying it again today. Astaldi made that decision.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In Hansard it quite clearly says – the minister said this – that Nalcor made the decision as the project manager in the best interests of the project.

I say to the minister today: Why are you saying today that it was Astaldi's decision when this is what you said in Hansard just recently?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. DALLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I think if he read all of Hansard, and obviously he never, he would see that I also indicated in the same reference that Astaldi had made the decisions. I stood on my feet yesterday to make sure that I clarified it for the people of the Province. Obviously, I will need to clarify it again for the Leader of the Opposition and the Liberals.

Muskrat Falls, Mr. Speaker, is an absolutely wonderful project being built –

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**MR. DALLEY:** – for the people of the Province. It is a massive project. There are thousands of people working, thousands of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians day in and day out building a project, a legacy for the people of the Province, Mr. Speaker, as we transition from non-renewable to renewable. Within that, there are a lot of decisions that have to be made, but the decision on the Integrated Cover System was made by the contractor Astaldi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The VP at Nalcor would not give an update on when the next cost update for the Muskrat Falls Project would be delivered. It is important that the people of the Province understand what is at stake here. Last year, the update was given on June 26 saying that Newfoundland and Labrador was responsible for \$7 billion.

I ask the Premier: When will the next cost update be delivered?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. DALLEY:** Mr. Speaker, this is a big project, a very important one for the future of Newfoundland and Labrador. We have committed, through various means of oversight, in making information available. More information has been available on this project than any other project in our history. There is an Oversight Committee as well that is providing information.

The number, Mr. Speaker, is \$6.99 billion. As we have committed to do when the number changes, we will gladly make that available, and again as I think the VP had indicated.

As this changes, as work progresses, as contracts are awarded and when we are in a position to do so, Mr. Speaker, we will gladly reveal all that information to the people of the Province. They have a right to know.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My question to the Premier was this – this is an important project in the history of this Province. We are at a critical juncture in the schedule there.

I ask the Premier: You are the one who said you were going to keep an eye on Nalcor, that you would provide the oversight here, when will the people of this Province expect the next cost update to be delivered?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. DALLEY:** Mr. Speaker, we will make that information available, as I just explained, when the – if the numbers change, we will certainly share that with the people of the Province, as we have committed to share all kinds of information on this project. A former Chair of Nalcor and a member of this House, the Member for Virginia Waters, had indicated that this is not a nice project to do; this is a must-do project.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. DALLEY:** What is important within all of that, it is also equally important that the people of the Province get the information, and we are sharing that.

I would ask, though, the Leader of the Opposition: Do you agree that Muskrat Falls needed to be built or not, because I have never really heard you say? Should Muskrat Falls be built?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well, projects in this Province that cost this much money should be built when the time is right for the benefit of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians –

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BALL:** – not for the benefit of Nova Scotians, I say, Mr. Premier.

Mr. Speaker, today, government's private member's resolution will condemn and seek a reversal to the –

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

Order, please!

**MR. BALL:** – recent DFO decision on halibut quota sharing.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

Order, please!

The hon. the Leader of the Official Opposition.

**MR. BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Today's private member's resolution will condemn and seek a reversal to the recent DFO decision on halibut quota sharing. Interesting, our Province owns a significant quota resource which is leased to Icewater, who, in turn, subleases it to a Nova Scotia company to harvest and land the halibut in that Province.

So I ask the Premier: Will you take corrective action to ensure that this quota remains here for the benefit of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As the member opposite does every time he gets up, he talks about two different topics. So I am going to go back to his first topic he talked about, which was on Muskrat Falls in response over here, Mr. Speaker –

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** – because he wondered, he said he will do it when the time is right, Mr. Speaker. Well, I am glad his colleague sitting next to him believed in this project, and said now was the right time to do it, and we are doing it. That is what we are doing, and we are doing it for the best interests of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** Mr. Speaker, as the member opposite –

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** As the member opposite is well aware, Mr. Speaker, last week the federal government made an announcement that had a significant impact to this Province. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, as soon as I learned of it I picked up the phone, I contacted the President of the FFAW – I can tell you, we are certainly on the same page on this.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** When I get the chance, I will get up again to respond further.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well, I have to remind the Premier one more time, how can you be on the same page with FFAW when the Newfoundland and Labrador quota, being leased to Icewater, subleased to Nova Scotia, fished by Nova Scotians, landed in Nova Scotia?

I ask the Premier: Is that what you support?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

One of the things that I have worked very hard at since I became Premier last year is to build relationships with our partners. If it be union leaders and those who represent workers, if it be harvesters or processors in this Province, or if it be businesses throughout the Province, I have worked very hard to build relationships with some of those people, and the FFAW is one of those.

I can tell you last week when we heard the Federal Minister Gail Shea made the changes to sharing of quotas as she did, Mr. Speaker, one of the first things – not one of the first things, the first thing I did was I picked up the phone and I contacted the FFAW. It is important that we work with partners, we work with business and companies, we work with unions as well, and that goes for the very broad fishery of Newfoundland and Labrador, Mr. Speaker, because we want to grow the fishery for many years to come.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

While the Premier was on the phone last week talking to FFAW and condemning the feds, why weren't you on the phone to Icewater and condemning Icewater for the lease to Nova Scotians? Why don't you make that call?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. GRANTER:** Mr. Speaker, as most people would know, Icewater out in Arnold's Cove is a company that is steadfastly involved with the groundfish fishery of the Province. With the collapse of the groundfish fishery for the last twenty-odd years, it was the only company in the Province that was really processing groundfish. This government, Mr. Speaker, stepped up to the plate for the people of Arnold's Cove and the hundreds of workers.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. GRANTER:** I had the opportunity last fall to get out to Arnold's Cove, look at and speak with the workers out there, and they are quite pleased with the work that they are doing out there and the processing that they do. We will support the people of Arnold's Cove, and we will support Icewater, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for St. John's North.

**MR. KIRBY:** Mr. Speaker, according to a memo sent to principals by the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District, schools that require secretarial assistance beyond June 26 will have to pay for it themselves from school-generated funds. In other words, they have to pay for their secretaries with money raised by students and parents from bake sales, walkathons, and other school fundraising activities they have worked hard on all year.

I ask the Acting Minister of Education: Were you aware that we have been reduced to asking kids to sell chocolate bars and fish cakes to pay for school secretaries?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. Acting Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. DALLEY:** Mr. Speaker, school is out on June 26 and our kids will be going home and hopefully enjoying the summer after another great year. If we look at our school system, I guess, in looking at what we have been able to do to try and support schools and to cut back on the amount of fundraising and things that have to be done in the schools and the cost to parents around school fees, school textbooks, millions and millions of dollars is having a very positive impact.

With respect to some of the changes in the allocations to secretarial hours, I do not have that in front of me. I will gladly go back and check. I can assure you that this government does not expect children to go out and raise money selling chocolate bars to pay for salaries in schools. It is not going to happen.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The hon. the Member for St. John's North.

**MR. KIRBY:** Mr. Speaker, the acting minister does not have the school calendar in front of him either because June 27 is an administration day. They need secretarial support.

It is bad enough that parents and children are already fundraising for essential school items like iPads, SMART Boards, reading materials, and gymnasium equipment. Now they are being asked to fundraise so that their school administration can have a secretary to do essential work after June 26.

I ask the Premier: Will you cut your self-serving, taxpayer-paid radio ads and use that money to restore funding for vital school secretarial supports that they need to wind up school after the twenty-sixth? Cut your taxpayer self-serving radio campaign and put that money towards secretarial support.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The hon. the Acting Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

**MR. DALLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Obviously they are smart answers, Mr. Speaker. He has not spent much time in the school because the twenty-seventh is an administrative day, but as I said the kids go home on the twenty-sixth. Kids are not back in for administrative days.

So it just points out those smart answers. When you really do not have all the details or know what you are talking about, it hurts, Mr. Speaker. What you need to do is stick with the facts.

Do you know what, Mr. Speaker? I will gladly go back and check the allocations of secretarial time, absolutely. Again, I will reiterate, I am very proud of the work that we are doing in schools, the initiatives to support parents. When you talk about raising money for SMART Boards, I am not sure how many millions of dollars have been invested in SMART Boards for the kids to better their education.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for St. John's North.

**MR. KIRBY:** I encourage the Acting Minister of Education to visit a school, Mr. Speaker, because it all does not end when the kids go home. Principals and administration have to have time to do all the work that happens after, starting on June 27, which is an administrative day, that they need secretarial support for.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**MR. KIRBY:** I say once again to the Premier: Will you cut your self-serving taxpayer-paid radio advertisements and put that towards school secretaries, rather than expecting our children to sell chocolate bars and have walkathons so they can have secretarial support on administrative days in school?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The hon. Acting Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. DALLEY:** Mr. Speaker, my critic wants to point out, I guess, my lack of understanding of what happens at the end of a school year. When I compare my experiences to his at the end of a school year – because it is my understanding he has not been in the K-12 system. I spent twenty years in the K-12 system.

We are very dedicated to the schools and have a long list of accomplishments that we were able to do, but I can tell you at the end of a school year when the kids go home, that is when the work starts for administrators, Mr. Speaker, in making sure that when September rolls around things are in place –

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**MR. DALLEY:** – parents know what is happening, teachers know what is happening and the secretary, without question, is very valuable in the work that they do. I have experienced it personally. Again, I will reiterate; I do not expect to go out and raise money through chocolate bars to pay for secretaries – ridiculous.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Burgeo – La Poile.

**MR. A. PARSONS:** Mr. Speaker, we have been told by the lawyer for the Dunphy family via the media that the forensics in this case will not be completed until mid-August.

Given that it has been well over a month with no update on this very serious file, I ask the Minister of Justice: Can you provide this House and the general public with an update on the investigation into the death of Donald Dunphy?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Justice and Public Safety.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. KING:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As the member opposite would know, I have been very clear and very forthright in my answers to questions around that case. I cannot provide an update. I am not privy to an update in that case. The only knowledge I have about that case is the same knowledge the member just shared through the media today. Any information that will be shared by an update would be through the RCMP or the lead investigators on the investigation; it will not come through me as the Minister of Justice in this House.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Burgeo – La Poile.

**MR. A. PARSONS:** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice knows full well that he has the authority to ask the RCMP, RNC, or the Chief Medical Examiner for information. He has that right.

I ask the minister: Have you made any inquiries to either of these groups to ask for an update on the matter?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Justice and Public Safety.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. KING:** I am fully aware of the rights I have as minister, Mr. Speaker. I think we had a great discussion about a month ago, my colleague and I, and Hansard will reflect that the member opposite presented some very skewed and off-the-mark views of what the responsibilities and the rights of the Minister of Justice are. I very clearly laid out then, as I will again today, that I do not intend to have any discussions with the RCMP around this investigation.

When the RCMP is ready, they will provide an update to the public. This is an operational issue

that has no right for the Minister of Justice to be involved in, and I do not intend to debate it here on the floor of the House of Assembly.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Signal Hill – Quidi Vidi.

**MS MICHAEL:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Premier and his government have taken a Harper-esque approach to spending public funds in tough times by taking out self-promoting ads, flying in the face of their own austerity Budget.

I ask the Premier: How can he justify this totally unnecessary spending?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Every year governments utilize resources available to share the details of budgets and planned budgets with the people of the Province, in the respective provinces. It is done throughout the country, Mr. Speaker.

We have taken a different approach this year. Instead of sending out tens and tens of thousands of flyers to people's home mailboxes, we have decided to take a different approach this year. One that is interactive. One that allows for people, at the click of a mouse, to bring them right to the Budget site so they can get all of the correct information, the facts of our Budget, so that information is available to more people in the Province.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** I believe this is a good approach, Mr. Speaker, to reach out to more people throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Signal Hill – Quidi Vidi.

**MS MICHAEL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I point out to the Premier, they can press on that button on the computer without either the ads or mail outs. This government has the resources to pay for those ads, but they do not have the resources to put a workplace plan in place for the St. John's long-term care facility.

The Minister of Health and Community Services said last week they will continue to use beds in the Chancellor Park for-profit facility to cover some of the beds that will not be open in the St. John's long-term care facility, at least until the fall.

I ask the Premier: Will he confirm this government is using the occasion of their poor management of the new long-term care facility to bring in privatization of long-term care by the backdoor?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Right now in Canada, we are the only jurisdiction that does not regularly engage in private-public partnerships, especially in long-term care, Mr. Speaker. In Ontario, 60 per cent of long-term care beds are operated by a private partnership. It is not a lot different than partnerships we have with personal care homes throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. It is different, but not a lot different, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we know there are backlogs in emergency rooms. There are people lying on stretchers in hallways in emergency rooms. We know that surgeries get delayed because there is not a bed available. People cannot go from an emergency room up to a hospital room because acute care beds are occupied by long-term care patients.

Our plan is to build 360 new long-term care beds through partnership with the public or not-for-profit. We are going to build 120 in West, 120 in Central, and 120 in Eastern, and it is going to go a long way to improve health care in the Province.



**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Signal Hill – Quidi Vidi.

**MS MICHAEL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I ask the Premier: How can you justify making this fundamental change to our health care system without a mandate from the people of this Province?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** Mr. Speaker, we have been working at long-term care and improvements to our health care for many, many years. We have been doing that at length, Mr. Speaker, and we have made great improvements. We have some of the best wait times in the country today because of a concerted and focused effort by our government in partnership with our regional health authorities.

Hip and knee replacement is one of the fastest growing surgeries required in Newfoundland and Labrador today, and we have the best wait times in the country. Cataract surgeries, as an example, we have made great improvements. We have shortened wait times in emergency rooms.

We do that, we make those decisions, and we roll out those plans and we execute those plans because that is our responsibility to do that in the best interest of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians throughout the entire Province. That is what we are here to do, and we are doing it, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for St. John's East.

**MR. MURPHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The fracking review panel will be holding only two public consultation sessions over the summer, both as of yet unscheduled and both on the West Coast of the Province.

I ask the minister: Does he think that two public consultation sessions are good enough to cover off a very important provincial, environmental and health issue in this Province?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. DALLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I would agree with the member that hydraulic fracturing is a very important issue for the people of the Province. When this issue came about, our government made a decision that we would not accept any applications for hydraulic fracturing.

I met with those who are opposed to hydraulic fracturing on the West Coast. They wanted a process to be able to have an opportunity to voice their concerns. We have provided a process, and I have indicated in this House it is a very independent process. I am not going to interfere with the panel, Mr. Speaker. They are very credible people, very professional, and will do a great job on behalf of the people of the Province.

I want to reiterate, Mr. Speaker, they are doing the work independent of me, as minister, or government. I want to assure the people of the Province that our government has not made a decision on hydraulic fracturing.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The Member for St. John's East has time for a very quick question.

**MR. MURPHY:** Mr. Speaker, surely the minister agrees that fracking and all its implications is a major issue.

I ask the minister: Will he ask the panel to include public consultation in St. John's, Central Newfoundland, and Labrador as well?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources has time for a quick reply.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. DALLEY:** Mr. Speaker, it is a provincial policy. I think we need to recognize that as well, but the focus is obviously on the West Coast, for the reason that if fracking is to take place where there are potential oil discoveries, it is on the West Coast of the Province and the geology over there.

Again, Mr. Speaker, the panel can make up their minds whether they are satisfied with the amount of information they receive. If it is not in person, Mr. Speaker, there are websites, and there is an opportunity to write letters. I invite all the people who have a concern to make sure to make those concerns through some medium to the fracking panel.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The time for Question Period has expired.

Presenting Reports by Standing and Select Committees.

#### Presenting Reports by Standing and Select Committees

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Exploits.

**MR. FORSEY:** Mr. Speaker, the Government Services Committee have considered the matters to them referred and have directed me to report that they have passed without amendment, the Estimates of the Department of Finance, the Public Service Commission, the Government Purchasing Agency, Department of Service Newfoundland and Labrador, and the Department of Transportation and Works.

Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Further presenting reports?

Tabling of Documents.

Notices of Motion.

#### Notices of Motion

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Government House Leader.

**MR. KING:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As per Standing Orders, I give notice that the House will not close at 5:30 p.m. tomorrow, Thursday.

I further give notice that we will not close at 10:00 p.m. tomorrow, Thursday.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Answers to Questions for which Notice has been Given.

Petitions.

Orders of the Day.

#### Orders of the Day

#### Private Members' Day

**MR. SPEAKER:** We go to the hon. the Member for Port au Port to begin debate on his private member's motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. CORNETT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I would say I am pleased to have a chance to speak in favour of this private member's motion this afternoon, but that would not be true. This motion should not be necessary. It is totally discouraging that yet again federal Fisheries Minister Gail Shea has made a decision on resource allocation that negatively impacts our Province.

Once again, for the benefit of those watching on television, or online, or may be just tuning in, the motion we are debating reads as follows:

BE IT RESOLVED that this hon. House condemns and seeks the immediate reversal of the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans decision to divide the 172.8-ton increase in the halibut quota equally among eight groups instead of respecting this Province's traditional share of 29.1 per cent – a decision that will reduce the additional share available to

Newfoundland and Labrador from fifty tons to about twenty-one tons.

Mr. Speaker, the decision on Gulf halibut quota allocations made by Minister Shea last week is just the latest in a growing trend of federal government actions that negatively impacts Newfoundland and Labrador.

Mr. Speaker, this is an important issue. I want to take a few moments to go through the history and to set the stage for today's debate.

A sharing arrangement on Gulf halibut was established in 2007 by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and was based on historical catches, resulting in 32 per cent for Newfoundland and Labrador fixed-gear fleet. Despite this arrangement between 2009 and 2011, on two occasions quota allocations were split equally among the eight inshore fixed-gear fleets in the Gulf resulting in a reduced share for our Province's fleet.

In 2011, DFO initiated an external review to address this issue. Its own review confirmed the sharing arrangement put in place in 2007 was consistent with DFO policy and with those established for other groundfish fisheries in Atlantic Canada. Following the review, DFO announced that the sharing arrangement would be stabilized at 2013 levels going forward.

These shares, Mr. Speaker, did not respect the original 2007 arrangement of 32 per cent for the Newfoundland and Labrador fleet and, instead, Newfoundland and Labrador's share was stabilized at 29 per cent. Mr. Speaker, it is totally unacceptable that the federal minister has ignored the established sharing arrangement for Gulf halibut quotas and continues – continues – to erode our Province's share.

DFO has stated that this is about more equitable sharing of the resource. Nothing, Mr. Speaker, could be further from the truth. The established sharing arrangement is based on each of the eight Atlantic Canadian fleet's historical catches in the competitive fishery.

Of course, we all know what this is really about. It is not about equal sharing. This is strictly a political decision in an election year to provide for a disproportionate increase in halibut

allocation to benefit Minister Shea's home Province of Prince Edward Island.

Of course, history shows us that playing one province or region of this Province off against another for political benefit is nothing new for the current federal government. It is a game they play every day. Minister Shea herself has shown from past actions and past decisions that she is not above this type of petty politics. We are asking Minister Shea to reverse this ill-advised politically motivated decision immediately and to provide us with our established share of the quota.

Mr. Speaker, it is the right thing to do. It is the just thing to do. Instead of adhering to the established allocation formula in allocating shares of this year's increase in quota, the federal minister is sharing this year's Gulf halibut quota increase equally among the eight inshore fixed-gear fleets in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

As I noted earlier – and I am sure other speakers this afternoon will reiterate this as well, but it warrants repeating, Mr. Speaker – this means the Newfoundland and Labrador fleet operating out of the West Coast and Labrador Straits will receive approximately twenty-one tons of the increased quota instead of the fifty tons it should receive based on the established sharing arrangement that we have established. This will result in further erosion of the allocation for the Newfoundland and Labrador inshore fixed-gear fleet.

Mr. Speaker, our West Coast harvesters face challenges and uncertainty as many other harvesters throughout our Province do. We all know fishing can be a very tough business. Most of our districts have fishing villages right around this Province. This decision strikes at the very heart of the West Coast and Labrador Straits fleet and removes opportunity for them to get a better and fair share of the increase in quota based on an established allocation method.

Mr. Speaker, this method was supposed to provide certainty and predictability to the industry. Instead, Minister Shea has thrown established policy to the wind and is striking yet another blow to Newfoundland and Labrador

inshore fish harvesters, and we are not going to stand for that.

We need to look no further than Minister Shea's refusal to date to implement an alternative to the federal LIFO policy for Northern shrimp quota allocations. Mr. Speaker, she has repeatedly made decisions to the detriment of halibut harvesters in both 3Ps and the Gulf of St. Lawrence. She is continuing the trend of slowly chipping away at the livelihood of inshore harvesters throughout Newfoundland and Labrador, with the quota allocations announced just last week.

Of course, we are all aware of the impact of LIFO on our harvesters and our Province's economy. In 1997, when access was provided to shrimp fishing Area 6 for the first time to inshore harvesters, access was granted on a temporary basis. Then, in 2007, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans converted all temporary permits to regular licences, meaning that the inshore shrimp harvesters had all the same rights and privileges associated with a permanent licence as the offshore. The federal government has also made provisions to enable harvesters to use the licences as collateral so that they could finance buying and combining of enterprises.

Since the inshore harvesters were provided access to the Northern shrimp fishery, we have seen more than \$200 million of private sector investment in both vessels and plants. That is \$200 million in the economy of Newfoundland and Labrador, \$200 million in the pockets of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, \$200 million to harvesters in our Province.

It was federal government policy that granted permanent licences to these harvesters and then encouraged them to take on more debt to participate in a Northern shrimp fishery. LIFO now threatens the very survival of these same harvesters and the plants that rely upon on them.

In a similar way, Minister Shea is cutting the legs out from under harvesters who are trying to plan for their future and make informed decisions around investments in their enterprises. Like with the Northern shrimp, Minister Shea is applying the rules to suit the interests of one group at the expense of another.

With LIFO, we are trying to get a federal minister to establish a sharing arrangement based on adjacency and history to create stability in the shrimp fishery for both the inshore and the offshore sectors.

With Gulf halibut, Mr. Speaker, there already exists a stable sharing arrangement based on history, and we cannot get her to honour it. What we need is a federal minister and a federal government who right the things that are wrong and stand by the things that are right.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the federal minister and the federal government we already have today seems hell-bent on doing the opposite. Once again, we are asking – not asking, Mr. Speaker, we are telling Minister Shea to reverse this ill-advised, politically motivated decision immediately and to provide us with our established share of the quota for Atlantic halibut in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to hearing what other people have to say in this hon. House this afternoon as we move through this afternoon's debate.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Carbonear – Harbour Grace.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SLADE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I look forward to sharing a few thoughts and concerns on this issue raised in this PMR today put forward by the Member for Port au Port.

Mr. Speaker, as this one pertains to the fishery, of course, it is very near and dear to my heart, given my background in the fishery and especially as the MHA responsible for fisheries in the Official Opposition.

Everyone understands the importance of the fishery to our Province; everyone that is, except the federal government. Perhaps in this case, to

quote somebody rather famous, “They know not what they do.”

Seriously, how can the decision-makers in Ottawa really and truly understand the industry and our challenges when they are so far away? How far away, Mr. Speaker? Well, to be precise, these people who control our fishery, our lives, our futures, live and breathe 2,727 kilometres away from where we stand in this Legislature here in St. John’s.

That is a long distance if you want to hear someone. It is a long distance when you want to understand what somebody is going through or hear what their concerns are. It is a long ways to try to look each other in the eye and see the frustration and the anger when you make decisions that are unfair and unfit. Imagine – to place it in a little bit of a context – trying to parent a child from 2,727 kilometres. There certainly would be disconnect between the parent and the child, now wouldn’t it?

Well, we have to stop kidding ourselves about the ‘twenty-seven-twenty-seven’ problem, as I call it. It is weakening us. It is frustrating us. If we are not careful, it will destroy us, slowly but surely.

We stand in this House here today and we are talking about one issue where we feel we have been shafted by the federal government. Today, we are talking about the federal government not giving us a fair historical share of halibut quota increases of 172.8 metric tons.

Last month, we stood here and complained about inshore fishers not getting their fair share of the Northern shrimp quota because government unilaterally imposed a decision-making tool called LIFO, that they unilaterally pulled out of a hat.

Last year, some of us stood railed against the food fishery and how each year Newfoundland and Labrador gets unfair treatment from the federal government compared to the rest of Atlantic Canada. We get the shortest season. We get to catch the least amount of cod.

Several years ago, we all stood against the loss of our vital search and rescue centre. Several years ago, we invested millions of dollars into

our own centre for scientific fisheries research because the federal government is not carrying out vital fisheries science.

Just this week, we talked about the federal government renegeing on the promise of a \$280 million fisheries fund under CETA, while we gave up a key fisheries policy called MPRs, which was created to ensure benefits remain in Newfoundland and Labrador from our seafood.

Is the federal government listening today? Did they listen last year? Did they listen yesterday? Will they listen tomorrow? The answer is clearly, no.

Do you know why? It is called the ‘twenty-seven-twenty-seven’ problem. It has been there since we joined Canada in 1949, and that distance is not going to change any time soon. Which is why, Mr. Speaker, we need to regain a great deal of control over our fisheries resource and its management.

We need to aim to be, at the very least, co-managers and collaborators of this important fishery resource. Some have called it joint management. As Liberals, we have stated that one of our policies will be to achieve implementation of a joint management board when elected to government. In fact, the Liberal Party of Canada passed a resolution last year, at their AGM in Montreal, because they understood the importance of closing the distance and working together on decisions related to science, conservation, marketing, harvesting, and processing of our fishery resource.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the House that in April, 2011, the Harper government gave a solemn commitment to the Premier at about that time, giving a promise to the Province of a formal role in management of the fishery, but that did not happen. Why? Because I believe our own provincial government is a big part of the problem. It has failed to keep Harper’s feet to the fire on this issue and a great many more issues.

While this government stands and talks about the fishery and how they are doing everything for the fishery, the fact of the matter is the government also has a very poor record of

providing real leadership for this vital industry. This is a government that has missed many opportunities over the past twelve years to grow the fishery, instead it slid backwards last year. This is a government that is content with the status quo when it comes to the wild fishery. This is a government that had a revolving door of ministers, so that just as a minister gets in to learn the ropes, he goes and the fishery suffers.

I will give you an example, Mr. Speaker. Take the issue of direct sales of our fish by harvesters. Government commissioned a report five years ago and has failed to act on it. When I asked the minister in Estimates last week why the report is collecting dust, his response was: Well, I have to get my head wrapped around it. It is not good enough, Mr. Speaker, it is not good enough at all. This is the fallout from having too many ministers. Nothing moves ahead, the fishery stagnates, our economy and people suffer.

There is a lack of vision, a lack of strategy, and a lack of investment. Just to illustrate, the fisheries budget has been cut \$30 million since Budget 2012, when nearly \$50 million was allocated, while this year's Budget earmarked \$21.5 million. That is a 56 per cent cut to the department that used to be the most important department in government, before this government got oil in their eyes.

Mr. Speaker, there has been a long pattern of missteps and failures by this government, including the failure of RMS, the dismantling of FPI, and the selling off of our marketing arm, the loss of fish plants – signing, supposedly, ironclad agreements that turn out to be not worth the paper they are written on.

We only have to think of the Fortune plant to know where I am getting to here, Mr. Speaker. Government has been wishy-washy because we know, they know, and the workers know that OCI has blatantly broken the 2012 agreement. What kind of message is this sending to the businesses that want to come in and sign agreements? That they can run roughshod over us because we do not hold their feet to the fire. It is absolutely unbelievable.

I think one of the more serious failures by this government has been the lack of effort to develop and nurture a federal-provincial

partnership and collaborative approach that would better serve our fishery. Under this government's watch we have had the feds show no mercy to Newfoundland and Labrador or our fishery. Yet this government has not had the interest nor the political clout to fight strategically and successfully against the many wrongs inflicted upon us like cuts to search and rescue, staff at federal science, and a whole host of fisheries conflicts.

This is a government that supported our PMR in 2012, which they claimed confirmed the provincial government committed to the principles of disallowing the shipping out of unprocessed resources. Well, lo and behold, a year later in 2013 they were signing away MPRs under CETA. To make matters worse, they could not or would not place any values on our MPRs.

Mr. Speaker, this is a government that has been reactive, not proactive. They have not shown the leadership needed to help close the distance between us and Ottawa. They have not gained any ground in addressing the 'twenty-seven-twenty-seven' problem, which is why we are standing here today talking about unfairness of the federal government in dividing the halibut quota increases equally amongst eight groups, instead of the Province getting its traditional share which would have been 29.1 per cent this year.

Mr. Speaker, I support the spirit of this PMR. I support our West Coast fishers getting a fair share of the fisheries resources, the fifty tons instead of twenty-one. I support that quota sharing arrangement be reinstated in this year's quota increases.

The thing is we can no longer sit back and just condemn the actions of the federal government and plead for mercy. I believe that we have to become outraged to the point that we must be more proactive on this issue rather than just all standing in this House and having our say. I believe we have to take a firmer, more decisive and substantive stand – legal action if we have to – if we are to reverse decisions handed down by the high from Ottawa like this one on the halibut quotas.

I have to state the unfairness of the halibut is not an isolated issue, Mr. Speaker. We have a serious federal-provincial disconnect going on and we need to figure out how it can be addressed. Until we face up to the larger issues, we will forever continue to stand in this House and condemn how we are being treated by the federal government.

There is a saying: If you keep doing what you are doing – which is nothing – then you will get the same outcome. I think that this will require a dedicated team of people to help us strategize on how we can overcome our dysfunctional relationship with Ottawa.

In the meantime, I will conclude with a message that our office has received from fishers in the 3Ps area, which I believe applies to the West Coast halibut harvesters: We need to have a plan to build and support our multi-species enterprises. We need support from all levels of government and the union. We need to access our resources, such as halibut, haddock, et cetera. We need our best interests to be considered. We need decisions to be made with conservation in mind. We need communication, transparency, and collaboration.

Mr. Speaker, there can be no progress, no closing the ‘twenty-seven-twenty-seven’ problem until there is true collaboration. Right now, this is the biggest problem facing the Newfoundland and Labrador fishery. The lack of partnership is stunting our growth. Newfoundland is a ship that is not meant to be anchored but to be free to sail.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER (Cross):** The hon. the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

**MR. GRANTER:** Mr. Speaker, thank you.

It is a pleasure this afternoon to be able to stand to speak to this motion. I just want to say thank to the hon. member for his words this afternoon, but a thought was going through my mind as I listened to him this afternoon. He had some very good points, I would say. A thought came to my mind – before I get into the crux of what I

am going to say – a handshake only becomes complete when the person receiving the handshake puts his or her hand out to receive the one that you are giving him or her. That is the same thing with regard to relationships that we might have with the federal government.

You work through your ministers, you work through the Premier’s Office, with the Prime Minister, you work through Intergovernmental Affairs, and you reach out to the federal government and they reach out to you and hopefully you can find common ground; but, we have not been able to find the common ground on many issues in relation to the federal government in the last little while.

I know my colleague who spoke first for Port au Port articulated some, and I know the hon. colleague across the way for Carbonear – Harbour Grace also articulated in very fine fashion some of the issues that we have with regard to the federal government.

Just before we move on, just to respond to one of the statements from the hon. Member for Carbonear – Harbour Grace with regard to the MPRs and Fortune and those kinds of things, the yellowtail agreement, as an example, Mr. Speaker, companies offered up yellowtail quotas for anyone in the Province that might want to come and harvest the yellowtail, and there were no takers – absolutely none.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take a few minutes to talk about this motion on the floor of the House today. I was taken back last Thursday as I came to the House and just received the press release from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans in Canada. First, when I started to read it, I was a bit elated when I read on May 21, 2015 that the Department of Fisheries and Oceans today announced the total allowable catch for the Atlantic halibut in the Gulf of St. Lawrence Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization division 4RST a total allowable catch of 1,036.8 tons – and that was established on May 15, 2015.

So, I was a bit elated by that, knowing that there was a total allowable catch increase. In the very next sentence that is when my elation was broken. The sharing formula, stabilized in 2013, will be used to distribute the first 864 tons of

quota, and the remaining 172.8 tons of quota will be shared equally between the eight regional inshore fixed-gear fleets currently involved in the directed Atlantic halibut fishery in 4RST. So you brought up in one part of the paragraph, Mr. Speaker, and you are actually deflated in the next part of the paragraph. That is what I want to talk about in the next twelve or thirteen minutes.

Mr. Speaker, as the provincial Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture, I would like to take some time this afternoon to go over some of the background leading up to last week's decision by the federal Minister Shea to further erode the share of Atlantic halibut quotas in the Gulf of St. Lawrence available to Newfoundlanders and Labradorians and our harvesters on the West Coast and the Labrador Straits.

This decision is truly not even short of an outrage. I said it last week here in the House, and I encourage all members – and I know we will this afternoon – here in this House of Assembly to support the motion that we are debating when we vote on it a little later in the next hour or so. Mr. Speaker, some of the background was already touched on by my colleague for the District of Port au Port, as well as my colleague across the way for Carbonear – Harbour Grace, but I would like to take some time over the next eleven minutes or so to get into a little bit more detail about what has transpired.

Mr. Speaker, in the mid-2000s, the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans announced its intention to create more stable and predictable allocations of fisheries resources by stabilizing sharing arrangements for the commercial fisheries in Atlantic Canada. The purpose was intended to ensure that decisions were made through a transparent and rule-based process. DFO also committed to establish stabilized shares for competitive fisheries, where no such arrangements existed at the time, Mr. Speaker.

Following that announcement in 2007, DFO announced the stabilizing shared arrangement for the inshore fixed-gear fishery for Atlantic halibut in the Gulf of St. Lawrence in NAFO division, commonly known as 4RST. This fishery, which involves eight fixed-gear fleets

from all four Atlantic Provinces include: the Gulf of New Brunswick; the Gulf of Nova Scotia; the Gulf of Prince Edward Island; Western Newfoundland, of which we are part; Quebec North Shore; the Gaspé Peninsula; the Magdalen Islands; and Scotia Fundy. That was shared, based on each fleets historical catches in the competitive fishery. That is absolutely key, historical catches in the competitive fishery.

The Newfoundland and Labrador inshore fixed-gear fleet received 32 per cent; however, two years later, Mr. Speaker, after a sharing arrangement was implemented or established by, yes, the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans, they backed away from the shares they put in place and began splitting several quota allocations equally amongst the inshore fixed-gear fleets in the Gulf, rather than in accordance with the shares. This occurred in 2010, and it also occurred again in 2011, which the hon. Member for Port au Port articulated earlier.

These decisions, which were made by the hon. Minister Gail Shea, resulted at the time in a reduced share for this Province's fleet. While those from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and her own Province of Prince Edward Island, received increases above the historical percentage shares. Our Province strongly opposed these decisions, as they did not reflect the established sharing arrangement or the fleet's historical participation in the Gulf halibut fishery. Mr. Speaker, we asked the Department of Fisheries and Oceans in Ottawa at the time, and on numerous occasions, to reverse these decisions.

In 2011, Mr. Speaker, we were encouraged when DFO announced it would undertake an external review of the sharing arrangement for Atlantic halibut to be conducted by Ernst & Young. Our Province provided input for that review, noting there is no rationale for reopening the sharing arrangement and that DFO should simply respect the shares established in 2007. The Ernst & Young review, which was released in 2012, confirmed that the sharing arrangement put in place in 2007 followed the federal policy and was consistent with those established for other groundfish fisheries in all of Atlantic Canada.



Following the review, DFO announced that the shares for Atlantic halibut had been recalculated and stabilized, not to the 2007 level but to the 2013 levels, and for there on going forward. As a result, Mr. Speaker, the Newfoundland inshore fixed-gear fleet was reduced from 39 per cent to at least 29 per cent. We did not agree with that decision at the time as it did not fully respect the 2007 shares, but DFO's announcement, at the very least, indicated that future allocations for this stock would be distributed to the inshore fixed-gear fleet in this predictable manner.

Mr. Speaker, as we all know, last week Minister Shea announced that in 2015, and again for 2016, the total allowable catch for Atlantic halibut in the Gulf of St. Lawrence has been increased from 864 tons to 1,037 tons. DFO announced, however, that the increase of approximately 173 tons will be split equally amongst the eight inshore fixed-gear fleets, the ones that I announced a little earlier, rather than in accordance with the stabilized shares.

The Newfoundland fleet will therefore receive approximately twenty-one tons of the increase, instead of the historical fifty tons it should be, based on the 2013 shares. Minister Shea has again made a decision that is in total violation of the established shares, Mr. Speaker, and in no way reflective of Newfoundland and Labrador's catch history or DFO's allocation principles of stable resource access.

Given the outcomes of the Ernst & Young report, the one I alluded to earlier, their external review and DFO's previous announcements of stabilized sharing in the Gulf of St. Lawrence on Gulf halibut, DFO has absolutely no rationale for the decision that was made last week.

When it comes to halibut in the Gulf, Mr. Speaker, this decision implies that established shares can be ignored, despite DFO's commitment to stabilizing sharing and transparent decision making. Minister Shea has defended her decision on the basis of equity among fleets.

Where is the equity, I would say, Mr. Speaker, in the Southern halibut stock? Where the entire 3Ps inshore fleet has less than 3 per cent of the total allowable catch, whereas Nova Scotia-based fixed-gear fleets hold 50 per cent of the

total allowable catch, forty-seven percentage points different, Mr. Speaker.

Due to their small share and DFO's removal of the 10 per cent bycatch announced, our Province's inshore harvesters in 3Ps, whom I met with on numerous occasions on the South Coast, now are forced to throw away halibut or cease fishing for other groundfish due to the increasing presence of halibut in the area.

This is occurring at the same time, Mr. Speaker, while the United States and Saint-Pierre and Miquelon are arbitrarily setting their own quota and increasing their catches of the same stock at the same time while they build their historical numbers of catch. We have repeatedly asked for a review of the sharing arrangement for halibut off the South Coast in 3Ps as the existing shares have not been stabilized or do not reflect the history of the fishery over the past fifteen years. DFO has completely ignored requests on a number of occasions.

Mr. Speaker, I also question where equity can be found in the allocation policy for Northern shrimp. Although separate, we can link them together. The Newfoundland inshore fleet is taking most of the quota cuts and if the shrimp resource continues to decline, will likely be removed from the fishery in another few years under the Last In, First Out policy.

Minister Shea has so far refused to rescind LIFO and establish an approach to the allocation of Northern shrimp which respects, Mr. Speaker, adjacency and the history of the inshore fleet. LIFO has resulted in the inshore losing 46,000 tons or 57 per cent of their allocations adjacent to the Province, while the offshore has been reduced by 12,000 tons or 16 per cent of the Northern shrimp allocation.

Atlantic halibut, Mr. Speaker, is one of the most valuable fish species per pound in Atlantic Canada. The price of halibut this year is in the order of \$6.50 to \$7 a pound. Minister Shea has decided to use this value as political currency. She has put fisheries management in Canada back thirty years when politics and lobbying determined quota allocation decisions instead of sound resource access principles and policies.

The fishery is where this Province got its start several hundred years ago. The fishery will continue to be a major part of the Province's economy and our collective story long into the future, Mr. Speaker. With an annual value of approximately \$1 billion last year, the seafood industry is a major economic contributor benefiting individuals, families, and communities throughout all of Newfoundland and Labrador. We are trying to support and grow this industry to reach even greater success and to create more benefits for our people and our coastal communities, Mr. Speaker.

While we continue our efforts to grow this industry, Minister Shea and the federal government continue to cut resources out from under our harvesters, processors, plant workers, who are trying to make a living from the bounty of the ocean off our coasts.

To abandon established, stable, and sensible quota allocation methods in order to give an unfair share to one group over another for one's own political benefit is really conduct unbecoming of a minister of the federal government. As noted previously, Mr. Speaker, Minister Shea has so far refused to implement an alternative to the federal LIFO policy for the Northern shrimp quota allocations and has repeatedly made decisions to the detriment of the halibut harvesters in both 3Ps and the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

Mr. Speaker, she is continuing this trend with the quota allocations announced last week. These decisions, along with the federal government's decision to go back on its commitment to share in a fisheries investment fund as part of CETA, show an ever-growing contempt for the people and economy of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The people of Newfoundland and Labrador, Mr. Speaker, and indeed the people of Canada, deserve a federal government that makes important decisions that impact individuals, impact families, communities, and economies for the right reasons and that are made in accordance with established and predictable policies.

Once again the federal government is showing that it does not believe Canadians should have

an expectation of consistency and fair treatment and that it is prepared to pit the interest of one region in this great country against another region in this great country, Mr. Speaker.

We will continue to call upon the federal minister to reverse this ill-advised, politically motivated decision immediately and to provide Newfoundland and Labrador with its established share of this important Atlantic halibut quota.

Mr. Speaker, on that note, and seeing I have six seconds left, I will conclude my remarks and look forward to hearing the rest of the debate by my colleagues on both sides of the House.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for The Straits – White Bay North.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. MITCHELMORE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I stand here today to speak to the private member's resolution by the Member for Port au Port, because yet another fishery inequity has been cast upon Newfoundland and Labrador waters by the federal government. I certainly see that in this scenario, in this situation, we have yet again seen where our fish harvesters are not getting its fair share of halibut quota.

I listened intently to the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture because he has claimed to be coming out swinging at this issue, but we have not seen him go to Ottawa yet and have a meeting with the minister because he does not have relationship with Ottawa. This is the Tory government's approach and their Tory economics and actions, and they continue to be the blame, really.

If we look at that side of the House –

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**MR. MITCHELMORE:** – the only elected Premier on that side, Premier Dunderdale, stood hand in hand with Stephen Harper at a campaign rally. This is what the Minister of Fisheries talked about: the importance of that handshake. I think Newfoundlanders and Labradorians know that this government was there with their Premier, Premier Dunderdale, shaking hands with Stephen Harper. They are trying to have a family feud right now but they might even have a family feud –

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**MR. MITCHELMORE:** – within their own caucus because I really wonder where the Member for Gander – is he going to stand up and condemn the federal government for this decision? The Member for Gander has said I am not running for re-election under this PC government here. I am going to run for the Conservative Party for Stephen Harper. The Member for Gander wants to run in an area that is heavily dominated by fishing and fishing activity here. Will he stand up in Ottawa for the fishers of this Province in Newfoundland and Labrador? We will see where he stands in this House of Assembly. We will see where that happens. We do not need to be sending people to Ottawa who are not going to speak up for the issues of Newfoundland and Labrador.

As we are aware, and we see, recently we have been subjected to the unfair sharing of the Northern shrimp quota reductions in which our onshore fishermen and fisherwomen have taken the brunt of the cuts under the principle of the last-in, first-out policy, LIFO. As well, when we look at the inequity when it comes to the food fishery, we are one of the provinces that do not have parity with the rest of Atlantic Canada when it comes to the length of time we are permitted to engage in the food fishery. Where does the minister stand on that?

Let's not forget that our fishers are more at risk now since Ottawa has decided, in its infinite wisdom, to close the marine search and rescue sub-centre in St. John's. They have also said that they would close and have closed the Coast Guard radio in St. John's and will close in St. Anthony, putting more fishers at risk.

The minister can get up and talk about a relationship, but it was this government that shook that hand. Of course, we do not forget the \$280 million promised fish fund, after the minister here has granted exemption after exemption for minimum processing requirements.

Where is the custodial management that was promised in the 2005 election from the feds, or the promise in 2011 of giving the provinces a greater say in fishery management? All broken – and this government, and this Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture, or the Member for Port au Port, are not doing their work when it comes to building that relationship, getting that co-operation and collaboration.

DFO decisions have affected groundfish harvesters in 3Ps over several years. “Of the allotted quota, 50 per cent that is allotted as bycatch and other directed fisheries, with the remainder being taken in a direct Atlantic halibut fishery.” There is no longer – or permitted that the halibut bycatch have been subjected to unfair quota allocations and –

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**MR. MITCHELMORE:** – thus has been shortchanged vis-à-vis other harvesters from Nova Scotia in the 3Ps area. Last week we get to what we are debating here today. It is the final injustice that is being inflicted upon us where if the fair stable sharing agreement was instituted, we would have fifty more tons –

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**MR. MITCHELMORE:** – of quota rather than just twenty-one tons. For our halibut fishers off the Coast of Labrador, off the West Coast of this Province, this is really an impact.

I go back to the historical piece just for the timeline. In 2007, DFO implements the stable sharing based on historic catches, 1986 to 2004. Based on that method used to calculate the 32 per cent, even this percentage was low in comparison to the historic pattern for

Newfoundland and Labrador which was closer to 45 per cent.

In 2009, what happened? DFO, under Minister Shea, reduces the share down to 27 per cent, going back to a stable sharing agreement. It was cut in 2009 under Minister Shea. Then in 2011, following significant protests and a two-day sit in the Corner Brook DFO office, DFO announces new Minister Keith Ashfield. They would return to the stable sharing agreement. Keith Ashfield becomes Minister of DFO and acknowledges the mistake and returns to the stable sharing agreement.

In 2012, the quota remains status quo. In 2013, the quota is increased and shared based on a stable sharing agreement. In 2014, the quota is unchanged and the stable sharing agreement is continued. In 2015, when we an increase in the quota, we do not get the fair share based on the stable sharing agreement. This, in my view, is quite frankly unfair. I am not seeing the action that is needed by this government on the other side of the House when it comes to what they are doing to correct the injustices that are happening when it comes to the fishery.

So last week the overall 2015 quota for halibut in the Gulf region was 1,036.8 tons. One portion is based on 864 tons while the second portion is the increase of 172.8 tons. What happened is that the increase for the year was shared equally among the eight regional inshore fixed-gear fleets harvesting halibut in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and a complete ignorance to the management tool already used, already established.

Consequently, Newfoundland and Labrador's share of halibut resources are reduced from 32 per cent down to 24 per cent. So we are at a loss. We will get twenty-one tons instead of fifty tons if the sharing formula had applied across the board. So you can see we are at a loss here.

Harvesters say this is completely unacceptable. I say it is unacceptable too. It really goes back to show the poor management style of the provincial government, because based on blasting the federal government in their decisions, as well, we have to look at what the Province is doing. Because the provincial

government – and as the Leader of the Official Opposition has pointed out today – has a 130 ton quota of halibut. That 130 ton quota is leased annually for twenty years to a Nova Scotia-based fish company.

The Province acquired the quotas in June, 2004, in what was called a resource repatriation move, geared to keep the plant in Arnold's Cove operating. Now, I heard the minister say this is not true. So if he is calling me a liar, then I would attest he get up and state in the House of Assembly where I am incorrect.

“Our approach ensures that the quotas and the historical rights to this fish will remain in Newfoundland and Labrador.” That is what the government's October 25 press release says.

The quotas are listed under a government-owned company called the Newfoundland and Labrador Industrial Development Corporation and Icwater. The provincial company pays \$50,000 a year to lease the quota. It is worth well over \$1 million. The Province has no escalation clause.

So this comes into a piece of history where you do a bad deal and you do not learn from it. You do a bad deal and you do not recognize the cost of energy is going to go up and you get a bad deal; a bad deal like the Upper Churchill. You get a bad deal agreement.

The same thing is happening with this halibut fishery and our provincial quota as to what we own. The Province signed a long-term deal with Icwater for \$50,000 for all the quotas, not just halibut, and there is no escalation clause. The value of halibut, turbot, and other fish species have increased in price and value. It is an important fishery. The Province placed the quotas – this was back a while ago – to be valued at around \$20 million.

What is the provincial government getting, collecting for the Treasury for our resource that is being processed, being shipped, and workers from Nova Scotia are earning the value from it? – \$20 million. We are getting \$50,000. It is completely shameful. It shows mismanagement on the other side of the House when it comes to the public resources we have, when it comes to

the control of the resources that we have in the fishery.

We have control over that quota, that resource, how it can be processed, and how it can create economic value for the public Treasury and for the people of the Province; yet, this minister and this government chooses to give it to Nova Scotia. It is unacceptable, really unacceptable.

The more the taxpayers of the Province see this Troy economics, these bad decisions, the PC math that is happening, they are going to continue to see that this government is not fit to manage the fishery. The minister got up and said the fishery was valued at a billion dollars, but a little less last year. It was worth a little less last year. Despite other resources, the fish prices going up and increasing, increasing, but we are not able to see growth in the fishery. It is just poor management.

It is more than double the amount of the halibut quota available to smaller enterprises. This provincially-owned quota is more than double the amount available to smaller enterprises on the South Coast of Newfoundland and Labrador. They have a total of sixty tons to catch between all of them. We see where the government's approach is, it is give it to the big company so they can sell it to the Nova Scotians and make lots of money on that, but where are we going to be?

The deal that is currently with Icedwater runs for a number of years. It runs for seven, eight, or nine years that are left in this particular deal. It is an example that it is a lack of due diligence in ensuring that maximum benefits are obtained from our provincial resources.

Time and time again this government has not done its homework. They did not do their homework on MPRs. They did not do the value on it, despite their own report saying that back in 2010 they should have assessed the value of MPR.

When they go to bargain and negotiate, they do not have the ammunition in their pocket because they do not have the information. They are not doing the research. This is a government that is more willing to sell out their resources, not do their homework, not have the value, and then

place blame on someone else because they did not do their homework. This is a time when we need to see maximum benefits from our resources that we have complete economic control over.

I find it rather challenging to see the Member for Port au Port and the minister get up, and I would like to know where the Member for Gander is going to stand on this particular issue when it comes to condemning the federal government. Because I truly believe we should get our share and we should definitely get that extra fifty tons, but in addition to that, we should put to use and get more value than \$50,000 for 130 ton quota that we own, the people of the Province own in Newfoundland and Labrador. We have so many harvesters who are not getting that value. They are not even getting half of what is there in that quota.

Governments have to be nothing less than partners, collaborators, and co-managers. This is where I can agree with the Minister of Fisheries when he talked about that relationship. You actually have to have the action; you actually have to show it. You have to have those partnerships.

My colleague, the Member for Carbonear – Harbour Grace, talked about that. He talked about the position of our party, of the Official Opposition caucus, and the resolution that was passed by the federal Liberal Party of Canada on how we could achieve. Do you know what? It is the federal government's legal, constitutional, and moral obligation. We must hold them responsible, and as the Official Opposition, we must hold the provincial government responsible. You have to call to action the others.

The Minister of Fisheries got up not too long ago in Estimates and in the House talking about how proud Newfoundland and Labrador should be because we are the only Province that is funding 100 per cent of research; yet, the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency funded basic research for the Province of PEI under halibut. We are not getting ACOA funding the research when it comes to what we are doing when it comes to cod, in CFER. That is a real problem.

We have to spend \$15 million of our public money to do that when we are not reaching out to ACOA to help fund. What are we doing to defend our position in the resource and get maximum information? What outreach has the provincial government done to secure research in halibut from ACOA and from the federal government?

They have not done their work, Mr. Speaker. They are so easy to condemn others, but they are not willing to do the work, the hard work, and they are here in this House debating this piece of legislation. We will support this motion, but we want to see greater action done by the minister. We want to see him up in Ottawa meeting with the federal minister. He made no initiative in saying he had secured a meeting with Minister Shea on this matter, and we certainly need to fight for the community, fight for the people of the Province, and it is revealed time and time again, there is absolute mismanagement by the people of the Province.

The harvesters will not stand for it; the fishermen's union will not stand for it. The FFAW should be slamming this government for their lack of decision and management of the fishery. It is incredible what is happening when it comes to all of these decisions that have been made. To see the approach that is taken by the provincial government – we need to see a lot more.

I will make sure that on behalf of the people I represent, and the Official Opposition, who are all members that we represent on Labrador and the Island of Newfoundland, and across the Province – we will be speaking loudly, and we will call you out every single time you make bad management decisions.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. MITCHELMORE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Baie Verte – Springdale,

**MR. POLLARD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

First of all, I just want to say a great big thank you to the people of the District of Baie Verte – Springdale for sending me to the House of Assembly. It is always a pleasure and a humbling experience to stand here and represent them every single day in the House of Assembly, or even outside the House of Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

I want to thank the Member for Port au Port for bringing this private member's resolution to the floor. Today, it is important to him, to the West Coast, it is important to the Northern Peninsula, and it is important to the Minister of Fisheries as well. In fact, Mr. Speaker, it is important to all of us across this great Province of ours. It is a pleasure to speak to this private member's resolution today.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**MR. POLLARD:** Mr. Speaker, I have had some attachment to the fishery, but rather indirectly. My mom was born in Hooping Harbour and my dad was born in Williamsport. Both worked in the industry at a very young, tender age, but I might add they did not go into the fishery as a career.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**MR. POLLARD:** It was not their chosen career, Mr. Speaker. My father went on and worked in the lumber woods, then he was employed with Imperial Oil, and then he went on and started his own business as self-employed.

As a boy I have fond, vivid memories of my grandfather Charlie Randell and my grandmother Beatrice Randell who fished in Hooping Harbour. I have memories of me and my brothers and sisters going out in his boat, his wharf, and standing on the stage watching him haul his nets, watching him gut the cod, Mr. Speaker. It was a good experience, I must say.

I do have a deep appreciation for the fisher people of this Province, Mr. Speaker. It is a very dangerous occupation; we all know that. It is very challenging indeed. I applaud my forefathers and all the fisher people for their perseverance, for their tenacity, and for their bravery.

It is not easy. Making a living on the water is certainly not easy. It is a dangerous occupation, Mr. Speaker, as we all know that. I would like to thank all the fisher people of this great Province of ours for adding to our heritage, adding to our culture, and carving out our identity. Fisher people are very hard-working, resilient people for sure. I have the utmost respect for the fisher people of this Province – the utmost respect. They are very hard-working, resilient people.

Since I became MHA of the Baie Verte – Springdale district, Mr. Speaker, I have had the opportunity to meet and converse with many fisher people, of whom I admire very much in our district. The fisher people in my district, especially on the Baie Verte Peninsula, have contributed immensely to the overall economy of the Province. Yet, at the same time, we all know they work very hard to eke out a living. Some struggle; some did very well in the fisheries.

We all know, Mr. Speaker, fisher people in our districts, but some notable people in my district, for example, Leo Seymour – I visited him one day he said I will take you out in boat and you watch me haul capelin. I said yes, but to this day, I admit, I have not gone out yet. I am not very brave, but I would really like to go out and see first-hand and experience what they go through. I really want to him up on that offer.

We have the Ray Wimblesons of the world, we have got the Perry Burtons, and the Keith (inaudible), these are just a few among numerous fisher people in my district and across the Province of ours who get a good living from the fishing industry but they work very, very hard and are experiencing very, very challenging times.

I have to reiterate how much I respect them. I am confident that the fishing industry will always remain a very important sector to our

economy, to our region, and to the way of life for our Province, not only to the Baie Verte Peninsula but the entire Province. They will always add to our culture, our heritage, and to our economy for sure.

Mr. Speaker, we are again hit hard with another blow from DFO with Gail Shea's recent decision. In the words of President Keith Sullivan of FFAW, he said this particular move was disgraceful. He calls this move another tough blow to the fisher people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

It certainly is unacceptable, it is outrageous, and very, very disappointing, Mr. Speaker. I do empathize and I do sympathize with the fisher people of this Province. Like I said before, they are so resilient. No matter how many hard knocks our fisher people receive, or no matter how many times they are pushed down, or receive setbacks, they seem to rebound, they pull up their socks, they get through it, they innovate and they make a go of it. I really see that and admire that characteristic in fisher people.

At the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, I suppose we are only human, so it must get tiresome after a while. My question is: Why do the fisher people of the Province always have to fight DFO for everything? Why do they have to fight, scratch, claw, bawl, and shout over trying to get some fair treatment, Mr. Speaker? I do not understand that because we are not second-class citizens. We are not third-class citizens. We are equal to our counterparts in the Atlantic Provinces right across this Nation of ours. We do not take a back seat to anybody.

Over the years, we all know there has been a steady erosion of federal presence in Newfoundland and Labrador: like the federal jobs have reduced; the closure and downsizing of high-profile offices or centres; and senior executive positions, when they become vacant, are not filled. So I ask the question again: Why it is that policies developed by DFO and the federal government, why are they not adequately addressing the needs and the concerns of the people of the Province, especially the fisher people of the Province?

Take for example the LIFO policy, which was alluded to earlier. Let me ask this question:

Why can't the federal government discontinue this policy and replace it with a new sharing arrangement that is fair to both the inshore and offshore fleets of the Northern shrimp fishery? I pose that question again. Both sectors are important as economic drivers not only to the regions, but to the entire Province of ours.

With respect to the private member's motion on the floor today, let me zero in on that, Mr. Speaker. Minister Shea's recent decision, as alluded to earlier, to ignore the established, stable sharing arrangement for Atlantic halibut in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and reduce our Province's share of the quota from 32 per cent down to 24 per cent will undermine the considerable efforts made by the Province in our fishing industry to develop a Gulf-wide research program for the Atlantic halibut. While we are providing funding for research, our share of the stock, on which we are helping to provide that valuable scientific data, is being eroded, much to our dismay. I might point out that we are the only Province that solely funds our research.

DFO, the Province, and the industry all have a role to play, Mr. Speaker – we know that – in managing our fisheries, particularly in light of the ever-increasing demands for sustainable seafood from the marketplace. We are more than willing to work together, but recent decisions by DFO's minister, especially, is making this very difficult for us to work together, to collaborate, and to come to a consensus when we are sort of ignored and not invited to the table and ask for our input, and valued.

To put it quite simply, Mr. Speaker, Minister Shea's decision not to respect the established shares in the Gulf halibut fishery compromises the federal, the provincial, and the industry partnerships on fisheries science, which is something DFO has been promoting for a number of years. This decision today must be reversed and our harvesters be allocated their historical share of Atlantic halibut in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

Mr. Speaker, as we pointed out earlier, the decision on Gulf halibut quota allocations made by Minister Shea last week is just the latest of a growing trend of the federal government to

make steps to negatively impact our Province. That is very disappointing, I might add.

I know others have already spoken about the LIFO policy, and I did earlier, and the Northern shrimp; but just to reiterate, this key issue will help to illustrate this trend of decisions, particularly by Minister Shea, that has significant negative impacts in our Province.

In a similar way, this latest decision on the Atlantic halibut in the Gulf of St. Lawrence discounts historical participation of harvesters on the West Coast of the Province and Labrador Straits in the halibut fishery. It discounts the need for predictable, fair, and transparent established allocation methods and pits one group of harvesters against another.

The policy framework by the federal government always said that they want to create more stable, predictable allocations of fisheries resources, and decisions would be made in a timely, concise manner and conflicts would be resolved through a fairer, transparent, rules-based process. That is a noble mandate, that noble policy framework on which you can build any policy; but the actions of this federal minister do not bode well. It is opposite, Mr. Speaker. It undermines our opportunities for our Province's harvesters to make returns on our investments and efforts according to an established quota allocation method.

I do not think we can take this quietly. As the saying goes, we cannot take this sitting down or lying down. I think all of us, like we did in the All-Party Committee, I am sure we will get support – I am assuming and I am anticipating unanimous support here today on this private member's motion. We cannot stand idly by and allow the federal government to continue to undermine our Province's fish harvesters and the efforts of our provincial government to continue to further develop and improve our world-class fishery, which we know now is approximately a billion-dollar industry, Mr. Speaker.

Whoever thought that since 1992, when the cod fishery collapsed, we would still have a billion-dollar industry? Because of our diversification of our investments, we have made that today, and we are quite proud of that.



I would certainly encourage all of us, Newfoundland and Labrador Members of Parliament, and Senators to pressure our federal government and Minister Shea on this rather cold, callous, indefensible decision in the House of Commons. I think we need to stand together on this issue as we have on the issue of the LIFO policy on the Northern shrimp.

I look forward to other members on this side of the House and on the opposite side of the House to continue this debate. Like I said earlier, I think we will have unanimous support on this very, very important private member's motion today, Mr. Speaker, which really affects, directly or indirectly, every fisher person across this great Province of ours. I consider it a real privilege to stand today and represent the people of the District of Baie Verte – Springdale to have my say on such a very, very important issue.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Signal Hill – Quidi Vidi.

**MS MICHAEL:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I am glad to stand and speak this afternoon to this private member's resolution which condemns the recent decision of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, and seeks the immediate reversal of their decision to divide the 172.8-ton increase in the halibut quota equally among eight groups, instead of respecting this Province's traditional share of 29.1 per cent. I am happy to go on and speak to this and explain why I am so upset over this, why our caucus is upset over this, and why we will be voting for this resolution.

What Minister Shea – because it is the minister ultimately. What Minister Shea has done with regard to the halibut quota is extremely disheartening. It is especially disheartening because after the All-Party Committee met with her and her officials in Ottawa not too long ago, our second meeting with her – the first meeting here in St. John's back in 2014 was something that was very disappointing.

At our last meeting in Ottawa the All-Party Committee felt that things had softened a bit and that the minister was understanding the position of us here in Newfoundland and Labrador, and of the people who are part of the fishing community.

Now, we were there, of course, on the Northern shrimp issue and the quotas around the Northern shrimp, but the principles that we were dealing with were the same as the ones that we are going to be dealing with here today. We thought she was softening and she was understanding our position a bit.

It is clear that nothing has changed with Minister Shea. It is clear that she is making decisions, not based on policies of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, not based on past practice, not based on what has been historically acceptable here in Atlantic Canada with regard to quotas. She is basing her decisions always on decisions that would benefit people in her own riding in PEI, and that, Mr. Speaker, is despicable.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**MS MICHAEL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for intervening there.

For a federal minister to be making decisions based on doing a favour for people in his or her own riding is completely unacceptable. I cannot get over the blatant way in which this minister flies in the face of policy and changes policies through new practices and twists policies to her own interpretation.

An 87 per cent increase to Gulf PEI harvesters, from 24.79 tons to 46.38 tons is a breathtaking reversal of the traditional longstanding, stable sharing arrangement of the Gulf of St. Lawrence halibut quota. That is a really important phrase: stable sharing arrangement.

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans has a policy called stable sharing arrangement designed to avoid exactly the kind of controversy that we are dealing with, by enshrining as permanent existing percentage shares for the various fishing fleets engaged in a

particular fishery. This decision, the decision to change that balance, flies directly in the face of this policy, Mr. Speaker.

However, a government like the Harper government, which is willing to use hundreds, if not millions, of dollars of public money in advertising to promote their own partisan agenda, certainly would not think twice of apportioning a public resource to their own ends as well. That is what has happened here. Make no mistake that PEI harvesters benefit from this unfair, arbitrary allotment of a long-established halibut quota.

We are not against the PEI harvesters. What we are against is what the minister has done. Changing a relationship, a sharing of the quota that has been a permanent sharing of the quota and that has been fair.

The principle of adjacency is a bulwark of the fisheries policy but Minister Shea seems to have misunderstood what the principle of adjacency is all about. In this instance it works, but it works because she seems to think the adjacency means who is most adjacent to her as the minister, and the PEI harvesters are the ones who are most adjacent to the minister. So that is the principle she is working out of, Mr. Speaker. It is very disgraceful.

The head of the FFAW has said of this unexpected, unwarranted, and unfair quota cut, "This is a disgraceful and desperate attempt by the Conservatives to maintain their federal seats in the Maritime Provinces, at the cost to the economic sustainability of Newfoundland and Labrador, where the Conservatives hold no seats."

Unfortunately, we have come to expect this kind of treatment from Harper's version of the DFO. We saw this treatment when the federal department decided its policy of LIFO, Last In, First Out, a policy not applicable anywhere else in Canada to any resource but applies to the Northern shrimp quota with disastrous consequences for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. They are making up policy on the go, on the run.

Now, what sort of is disappointing here today is that I absolutely agree with the resolution that is

here on the floor and in solidarity with the people in the fishing community, and the harvesters in the fishing community of this Province, I am going to vote for the resolution; knowing at the same time, there are many times the Progressive Conservatives in this House show that they really are close cousins to the Conservatives in Ottawa who may have taken progressive out of their name and are a different party.

On the one hand, this government here is, right now, standing for the people of the Province, which I am very happy about, but they put out a Budget in which they show they are not for the people of this Province. It is with mixed feelings that I am going to be voting for this resolution that is on the floor, and they know that. They know that when we vote for it we are not going to be voting for other things they are doing, but we are voting for this resolution.

We are not going to be voting for them paying for the ads they have on the radio right now promoting themselves and doing that out of public funds. That is where they show they are a lot like the Conservatives in Ottawa. They are showing that in all kinds of ways but when it comes to this issue, we have to fight for the people of this Province. At least they are doing that, and that is why we have the All-Party Committee, the All-Party Committee that we put together when the federal department did decide to make LIFO a policy, as I was just saying.

In this case, in the case of the halibut, the minister has deemed that the first 864 tons of the quota will be distributed based on the established quota sharing arrangement with harvesters based in Western Newfoundland receiving 32 per cent. That is good, but the additional 172.8 tons announced last Thursdays will be shared equally between eight regional inshore fixed-gear fleets in the Gulf, meaning Newfoundland's overall share of the quota will drop to roughly 24 per cent.

There is no history to the so-called eight districts. The minister has created arbitrarily eight districts in Atlantic Canada, and there is no history to those so-called eight districts. They are a political construct of the minister designed for the sole purpose of division for the halibut sharing principle. Of course, as we have seen

from the Harper government, the fact that the loss of a significant portion of the quota to the harvesters of Newfoundland and Labrador hit hardest on people who have a very difficult time wringing a living from fishing.

It is no surprise this policy takes away from those with the least. They do not seem to care about that. As I said, it is very disheartening to realize that is the spirit of Minister Shea. Even though we can sit at a table and have her act decently with us, like we did at our last meeting, ultimately she does not care about the people of this Province. Ultimately, that government does not care about the people of this Province.

We saw that when this Province had to deal with Harper on the CETA deal, the deal between the federal government and this Province in relationship to their negotiations with Europe. They needed us to relinquish our minimum processing requirements, one of the only jurisdictional powers we have in control of our own fisheries. They needed us to walk away from one of our only true rights to our largest sustainable resources in order to convince European nations to sign a trade agreement which they claim – and this provincial government also claims and has done so as late as yesterday – would benefit Canada. That is a debate for another day. That is not what we are debating here today.

They think it is the best possible deal for Canada. This government does. The only thing this government is upset about is the way in which they have been fooled by the federal government. The federal government, the Conservatives, led this government to believe they would get \$280 million over five years in compensation for relinquishing our rights, but it was not long before this government discovered the money promised would not be forthcoming.

Now, I agree with this government. I have read the documents that went back and forth between Ottawa and our provincial government. I do believe there was a promise in there, but I think at the same time, in whatever way, this government also was hoodwinked and did not see that they were being hoodwinked.

You have to be on top of your game when you are dealing with somebody like Harper and his

government. I have to be on top of my game with this crowd here, too, Mr. Speaker. They should know how to be watching out for the snake in the grass, which is what I consider Harper and his crowd to be.

They discovered that the money was not going to be forthcoming. As far as we know, it is still not forthcoming. The fund, in the way I do think the letters between them indicate, is not going to happen. Yet, they continue to say there is an agreement; there is not, unfortunately. If the other side is not keeping it, there is no agreement. They made a big deal of that agreement. All I want them to do now is admit they were hoodwinked.

Coming back to what we are dealing with here today, we all still have to stand, I believe, together in saying that we cannot accept what Ottawa has done. We cannot accept what Minister Shea has done. I think we should formally let them know. I do not know if we do it through the House of Assembly, through the All-Party Committee. I know the All-Party Committee is a committee on the Northern shrimp quota, but maybe we should use the All-Party Committee to write a formal letter to Minister Shea, also telling her, I hope, that there was a unanimous vote here today in this House, condemning what they have done about the halibut quota as well.

Let's not be quiet about this. I think the time has come to take off the gloves. I am not willing to go back to Ottawa and sit and smile at Minister Shea and pretend that everything is fine between us. We went in good faith, when we went a couple of months ago. We went in good faith to that meeting. Do you know what? I do not feel I can go back in good faith to a table with Minister Shea and DFO.

I do not blame the people inside of DFO. This is something that is political. This is something that is grossly political. I think it is absolutely disgraceful. We want to let the people in this Province know who Shea is and who Harper is. We want to let Canada know that we understand what we are dealing with.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Bellevue.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. PEACH:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

It is really a pleasure for me to stand here today and represent the people of the great District of Bellevue. I want to speak on this motion that has been put forward. I want to read the motion into the record:

“BE IT RESOLVED that this Honourable House condemns and seeks the immediate reversal of the Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans decision to divide the 172.8 ton increase in the halibut quota equally among eight groups instead of respecting this Province’s traditional share of 29.1% – a decision that will reduce the additional share available to Newfoundland and Labrador from 50 tons to about 21 tons.”

Mr. Speaker, for years the federal government has been making decisions that have not been in the favour of the fishery of Newfoundland. I was with the fishermen’s union thirty-five years ago. Thirty-five years ago we were talking about things in the fishery and we are still talking about the same things today. We are still fighting the same battles today.

I listened to both sides speaking today, Mr. Speaker. Over on the other side, we talk about the PCs, and we talk about the PCs, and we talk about PCs, but I am going to tell you, back in Roméo LeBlanc’s day myself and Kevin Condon, a member from Renew who was the inshore fishermen vice-president, was in Ottawa and we fought against LeBlanc for one full week on policies that were a reflection of the fishery in Newfoundland, the inshore fishery. I think, Mr. Speaker, we have missed the boat again today. I think we are missing the boat. We are not getting the point. We are playing too much politics with the inshore fishery of Newfoundland today.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. PEACH:** Mr. Speaker, I just want to speak about the quota for the people out there who are listening to understand why this is to the floor

today. I am going to try to make people understand – I do not know, maybe I do not understand it myself, but I am going to try to because it is always mumbo-jumbo when it comes to the federal government.

The federal government comes down with regulations. You think you got everything okay and then when you start fishing, or you get your licence come to you, it is a different way than what you had thought it was.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, there were 860 tons of quota for halibut last year. The Province had 29.1 per cent of the shares, based on the 860. So what Minister Shea has done is she came in with 172.8 tons and what she said was we will leave the 29.1 per cent there – well, actually I think last year it was 32 per cent, it increased to 32 per cent. So she said: We will leave that alone. We will not touch that. What we will do is we will share out the 172.8 tons equally among the other eight groups. It is not districts, it was groups. It could be five or six in Nova Scotia and there could be two or three in Newfoundland. What she said is we will put it out equally among those groups, and that is what she did.

Now here is the danger, Mr. Speaker. This is why I said people are missing the point. This could be a precedent for the federal government, every year, to increase quotas in Newfoundland and throughout the Atlantic Provinces, and to add on another 150 tons again next year and say we are going to equally divide that against the people in the eight districts. They are not going to touch the one that is there, the 860. We will not touch that; we will leave that alone because that is there. We cannot tamper with that. We will leave that there, but we will increase the quotas every year. That way, we are gradually going down, down, down all the time with the quotas.

This is what I see is happening to the inshore fishery. This is why I said earlier people are just not getting the point on this. I think we have to fight this with the federal minister. We have to fight this with the federal government. What about our Liberal people who are in Ottawa? Somebody mentioned earlier about Kevin O’Brien –

**MR. SPEAKER:** That is unparliamentary, withdraw please.

**MR. PEACH:** I am sorry – unparliamentary.

Somebody mentioned earlier about the Member for Gander going to Ottawa. I wonder would he stand up for the fishery of Newfoundland. I will say this: The people on this side of the House here know what the Member for Gander stands up for and what he stood up for. I have all faith in the Member for Gander being a voice for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador and the fishery in this Province.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. PEACH:** Mr. Speaker, when we really look at the federal government and what they have done for the fishery in this Province, every time a regulation or a policy comes out, it is always something that they have to fight. The inshore fishermen are struggling every day with everything that comes out from the federal government.

The Province can speak out against it. We can speak out against it, but our voices do not go very far with the federal government. The minister makes the decisions. I will give you an example of what the minister did. The minister said: Sorry, I cannot change the LIFO policy because the LIFO policy is a document that is written and I cannot change it.

Here she is, Mr. Speaker, changing the quotas. She is changing the halibut quotas with no decision from anybody else. She just made a decision that she is going to cut the quotas in eight different ways in even shares. Mr. Speaker, she says one thing on one side of her mouth and something else on the other side of her mouth. I am not sure if it is politics she is playing with it or if she is just trying to be smart. At one point in time before, the Minister of Fisheries was going to cut the quotas, just a couple of years ago; and, for some reason, the Minister of Fisheries was transferred out and another minister came in and he changed it. He cancelled it. He said we are not going to cut any quotas, so he changed it.

Mr. Speaker, let's look at some of the unfair federal government regulations. One that the

fishermen are fighting every day and they have fought it for the last ten years, but somebody came on the news media a couple of years ago and they brought it to the media, and that is the regulation on the size of boats.

This past year there was two people in my district who had to cut eight inches out of the stem of their boat so that they could meet the regulations of 39'11". That does not make any sense at all.

Mr. Speaker, they fish out to the twenty-mile limit, the 39'11" can go twenty miles. If you are a forty-footer you can fish in the twenty-mile limit, about twenty miles and up. So what is the difference? It is safe for the boat owner. The quotas do not increase. If the boat was forty-four feet, the quotas do not increase, so why can't they fish that fish?

What they do is they go from forty feet up to sixty-five feet and you can fish out to the 200-mile limit. Most of them go out 100 mile, long steams, seven and eight hours to get to the fishing grounds. It is terrible – terrible. Safety of the people is not in mind; a forty-footer going out to sixty-five miles off the shore in stormy weather.

Mr. Speaker, we also look at the herring. In the summertime – well, from January to September, the herring seines and the tuck seines, we call them, can fish eighty fathoms, so you can use an eighty-fathom seine from January to September; but from September to January it has to be 120 fathoms. What is the difference? A herring is a herring, no matter how you are catching it.

**MR. MITCHELMORE:** Not if it is a red herring.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. PEACH:** Well, Mr. Speaker, the only red herring that is probably in this House is on the other side.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. PEACH:** The herring nets – and this is a new one that is coming out this year. In some bays, it is happening now. They are setting herring nets. Right now, if you set a herring net,

you can set it off from the land, straight off from the land; but coming up this year now, the federal government is coming in with a regulation that you can only set the herring nets parallel to the land. There are fishermen in my area, in 3Ps, who have really big concerns about that. The reason why they have concerns about it is because they are fishing shoal water. They get a lot of swell, a lot of waves, heavy seas sometimes. If you are hauling your net side on the wind, that is a big problem. It is really unsafe.

What they are saying is that the federal government should be looking at the herring nets being an option. If you want to set them off from the shore, fine; if you want to set them parallel to the shore, that is fine too. The reason why they are doing it, Mr. Speaker, is because of salmon. They are doing it because of salmon. The herring nets have to be set one fathom under water. They do it on one fathom under water, so when the salmon are swimming along the shore they swim up, and the salmon swim over the nets.

I am sure my friend from Carbonear over there can attest to what I am saying here because he has been a fisherman too. These are some of the things that the fishermen are experiencing. People are really upset about these too. Setting nets for bait – they can only set the nets one week before lobster season. When they get a chance to set the nets, the herring are all gone. They are not there anymore. The herring fishery is over and there is no fish there for them to fish. These are some of the things that we look at in regulations.

Last week, Mr. Speaker, there was a decision on the Gulf halibut quota allocations. It is one of the largest (inaudible) federal government actions that negatively impact our Province, Mr. Speaker. It is totally unacceptable. The federal government has ignored the established and sharing arrangements for the halibut quotas and continues to erode our Province's share.

This is strictly a political decision, Mr. Speaker, so they say. In an election year to provide for a disproportionate increase in halibut allocations to benefit the minister's hometown province of PEI, we are asking Minister Shea to reverse this ill-advised, political motivated decision

immediately and to provide us with our established share of our quotas.

Instead of adhering to the established allocation formula, the federal government and the federal minister is sharing this year's Gulf halibut quota increase equally among all eight inshore fixed-gear fleets in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, Mr. Speaker. That is what I said a bit earlier. This means the Newfoundland and Labrador fleet operating out of the West Coast will receive approximately twenty-one tons of the increase instead of the fifty tons it should receive based on the 2013 assessment.

What we were saying, Mr. Speaker, is if they had taken the 178.2 tons of fish and put it onto the 860 and then give the share arrangements on 29.1 per cent, then that would then be what the people and the fishermen of this Province are looking for. Instead of doing that, as I said earlier, the minister has found a way in doing this – she has given out a small amount. So we will leave the others there and she shared it out equally.

Next year, you watch and see if I am not right. If Minister Shea is back there next year or any minister now, she set a precedent that this will happen every year. This will happen every year. If we do not fight this now, come together with the fishermen's union, come together with the All-Party Committee and fight this now, Mr. Speaker, this same thing will happen again in another year.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know about the other side of the House, but this side of the House here is not going to stand for it. We are not going to stand for these kinds of decisions being made.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. PEACH:** It is unfair to the people. It is unfair to the fishermen. It is unfair to the fish plants. The Atlantic halibut, Mr. Speaker, is one of the most valuable species per pound in Atlantic Canada. The price of halibut this year is in the order of \$6.50 and \$7 per pound. Minister Shea has decided to use the value as political currency.

Minister Shea has so far refused to implement an alternative to the federal LIFO policy. As I said

earlier, the LIFO policy she said you cannot change. Then again, all of a sudden, she can come out and she can change the quotas for halibut on her own, for her own benefit. This is not being fair to the fishermen and it is not being fair to the Province. It is another one of her tactics.

We have people over there in White Hills here in St. John's. Sometimes I wonder what they do over there because it does not seem like their voice goes very far either. I do not even know if they do have a voice because that voice that they have certainly does not pay off in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. It has not been for years. It is not doing it today. It did not do it thirty-five years ago. We have been fighting this battle for a long, long time. The inshore fishermen have been fighting this battle. It is time for us to stand up, stand as one, and fight this.

Thank you very much.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Bay of Islands.

**MR. JOYCE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am just going to stand for a few minutes. I heard the member speak on these cuts with the federal government. I heard the member say he does not know about the Opposition side. I just want to remind the member that it was our leader who suggested the All-Party Committee on LIFO – this Opposition, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. JOYCE:** Mr. Speaker, I am not here to condemn anybody. I am here to say we should stand together on this. I am not here to say that I do not think the members opposite agree that there should be changes. I know they do, absolutely. We all agree in this House.

I do not think it is a time, Mr. Speaker, that we should be trying to cast aspersions on each other, who is the better Newfoundlander and Labradorian. I think we absolutely all are. I do not think there is one member in this House who would not agree that we should stand together.

I ask the members, when you are standing in the House here and you are asking for something that we should be united on, you should speak in a united way instead of trying to cause some chaos in the House or some division among the Opposition, among the government, or among the Third Party, Mr. Speaker. We need to stand together.

I can assure you here, Mr. Speaker, that this member here, and I am sure our caucus here, will stand with the government. I have absolutely no problem standing with government when it is going to benefit Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. Not only benefit Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, it is the right thing to do.

It is easy for me to stand up here and talk about who has a better relationship, who should stand up for who in Ottawa, the MPs, and the Senators. That is not the issue. What we need to do, Mr. Speaker, is try to get such a group together. We need to get all the House together when it is going to affect Newfoundland and Labrador. We need to get our MPs onside. We need to get our Senators onside.

This is just not a (inaudible) who is for it and who is against it, and stand up here and beat up on Stephen Harper and beat up on some people who say, oh, you cannot get along with Stephen. Let's stand united. This is affecting Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. This is going to affect many of our communities. This is going to affect people in our communities, Mr. Speaker, who will not have work this year. This is going to affect fisher people who cannot catch the fish. That is who it is going to affect.

It is easy for us to stand up here and pound each other's chests and blame it on this one. Let's stand united. Let's stand as one. Let's not be divisive in this argument. We did it with LIFO. We set up an All-Party Committee. At least we will stand together.

I say to the member who is next to speak, this is not a Liberal issue, a PC or an NDP issue, this is a Newfoundland and Labrador issue, Mr. Speaker, and we need to start standing together on issues that are going to affect Newfoundland and Labrador. People will decide later, all the election and all the politics, that is all fine. We

all have lots of time to do that on their own time, and let people decide.

There always comes a point – and I remember back when the government was in place and they had to fight with the Liberal government over the Atlantic Accord. We were in Opposition. We supported that government on the Atlantic Accord. We supported it, because it was the right thing to do.

So on these cuts, and how these cuts were made, it is the right thing to do, Mr. Speaker. We have to stand together. I know the Member for Port au Port agrees. I know he is going to stand up and he is going to speak very eloquently on how we should stand together as a group, and I support you on that.

I am glad this motion is brought forth in this House of Assembly. I support this motion 100 per cent, but what I would ask, let's stand united. Let's not pick and choose who should be fighting, or who is the biggest, strongest Newfoundlander. I say if we walked out that door, every one of us in this House, we are standing up for Newfoundland and Labrador.

Every one of us here should not be putting anybody down. When it comes to a common issue, we should stand together. We should stand up and be proud that we are Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, and say to Ottawa and say to Minister Shea, this decision is wrong. The way you went with these cuts is wrong.

We did it with LIFO. We set up an All-Party Committee. We did it with the Atlantic Accord, and we were in Opposition then. I remember a certain – that we had an opportunity –

**MR. PEACH:** A point of order.

**MR. SPEAKER:** A point of order, the hon. the Member for Bellevue.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. PEACH:** Mr. Speaker, no disrespect to the Member for Bay of Islands, but what the Member for Bay of Islands is saying to the people on this side of the House is to work

together. I basically came back to say what Chris Mitchelmore –

**MR. SPEAKER:** There is no point of order.

**MR. PEACH:** – sorry, the Member for The Straits – White Bay North had said about a member on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Bay of Islands.

**MR. JOYCE:** I do not mean to be casting aspersions on anybody in this House. I know the Member for Bellevue is very passionate on this. I understand that. You gave a great speech on it. You gave a great speech on the history of the fishery.

One thing I ask on this here, we did it on many occasions, and we should do it again here now. Once Ottawa sees us divided, it is going to happen again. We need to stand together. So, my plea, not for us in this House of Assembly, because we are going to stand up, we are going to go home today, but there are going to be people affected. There are going to be Newfoundlanders and Labradorians affected by this, by losing their job, fisher people, Mr. Speaker, and they are doing the wrong thing.

I implore to everybody, let's stand together. Whatever the government needs to be done from this Opposition, I can assure you, you have our support. You have our support on this to fight Ottawa, to bring whatever we need to Ottawa to ensure that this decision is changed – like LIFO.

I know the Member for Port au Port is going to finish up on this, so I ask you once again, as always, Mr. Speaker, we stand with you because this is a Newfoundland and Labrador issue, not a personal issue, not a Liberal, PC, or NDP issue. This is a Newfoundland and Labrador issue, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you very much.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** If the hon. Member for Port au Port speaks now he will close debate.

The hon. the Member for Port au Port.



**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. CORNETT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is certainly a pleasure to stand up in my place again on this private members' resolution day to close debate on a very important subject, Mr. Speaker, a subject and an issue that touches many lives in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Mr. Speaker, I heard the Opposition saying that they are going to support this resolution this afternoon unanimously and they support the action of this government in fighting for what is right and just.

Mr. Speaker, in listening to the Member for The Straits – White Bay North a little earlier, I do not know where he stands. I do not know if he is standing with the Party or standing by himself, but certainly there was no indication from him that he was supporting this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all the hon. members who participated in the debate this afternoon. I certainly want to thank the Member for Carbonear – Harbour Grace, Humber West and Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture, The Straits – White Bay North, Baie Verte – Springdale, Signal Hill – Quidi Vidi, the Member for Bellevue, and, of course, the Member for Bay of Islands.

I believe from the debate this afternoon, the commentary and discussion that we had, there is unanimous support in this House to support this motion, as I said, and to support the private member's resolution. More importantly, Mr. Speaker, what this means is that we as legislators in this Province are standing together as one voice. We are standing together not to ask the federal government but to tell the federal government, and to demand the federal government, to demand the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, to demand the Minister, Gail Shea, and more importantly, Mr. Speaker, to ask our federal representative, Minister Rob Moore from New Brunswick, to stand with us, the people of Newfoundland and Labrador to ask, to demand, to tell Minister Gail Shea to reverse the decision, the ill-advised decision she made last week to equally share our quotas with

eight groups instead of respecting our Province's traditional share.

What we are asking, Mr. Speaker, it is our right to ask for it, it is ours, and on behalf of all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, this Legislature stands united in asking for a reversal of that ill-advised, unfair, and unacceptable decision made by the federal Government of Canada, and Minister Gail Shea, and Minister Rob Moore.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER (Verge):** Order, please!

Is the House ready for the question?

Shall the resolution carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**MR. SPEAKER:** All those against, 'nay.'

The resolution is carried.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** Division.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Division has been called.

Summon the members.

### Division

**MR. SPEAKER:** Are the Whips ready?

**AN HON. MEMBER:** No.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Okay.

The Whips are ready.

Shall the resolution carry?

All those in favour, please stand.

**CLERK:** Mr. King, Mr. Hutchings, Mr. Kent, Mr. Dalley, Mr. Sandy Collins, Mr. Felix Collins, Mr. Jackman, Mr. Granter, Mr. Littlejohn, Mr. Cross, Ms Perry, Mr. Brazil, Mr.

Russell, Mr. Forsey, Mr. Hunter, Mr. Dinn, Mr. Cornect, Mr. Hedderson, Mr. Kevin Parsons, Mr. Little, Mr. Pollard, Mr. Peach, Mr. McGrath, Mr. Andrew Parsons, Mr. Osborne, Mr. Joyce, Ms Cathy Bennett, Mr. Jim Bennett, Mr. Slade, Mr. Mitchelmore, Ms Dempster, Mr. Edmunds, Mr. Kirby, Mr. Lane, Mr. Reid, Mr. Hillier, Mr. Flynn, Mr. Crocker, Ms Michael.

**MR. SPEAKER:** All those against the motion, please stand.

Order, please!

**CLERK:** Mr. Speaker, it is unanimous, thirty-nine ayes.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The motion is carried, unanimously.

It being Wednesday and the business concluded, we stand adjourned until 1:30 o'clock, tomorrow, Thursday.