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Speaker: Honourable Wade Verge, MHA

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The House resumed sitting at 7:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (Cross): Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Port de Grave.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LITTLEJOHN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We continue the debate tonight on the main motion. I was speaking just before we recessed the House earlier this afternoon. Mr. Speaker, we were talking a little bit about the fishery and the economic engine that the fishery is in my district, the importance of the fishery in the district.

Mr. Speaker, in the last ten minutes or so I just want to talk about some of the other things that are going on in my district, referencing them to the Budget. Many of us have gotten up and we have talked about our infrastructure needs. There is always going to be infrastructure needs, no matter whether you are on this side of the House or on the other side of the House. There is not going to be a community in this Province that is not going to have some type of need, an infrastructure need of some kind.

When I came to office in 2011 in our district, all the communities, all eleven of the communities had infrastructure needs. Mr. Speaker, trying to organize and formulate a plan and request – like us all, we go in and we make our case and towns and municipalities make their case for their infrastructure requirements. What I have tried to do is support those requirements and support those needs and wants.

Mr. Speaker, we all talk about our roads. We have made some significant progress in the District of Port de Grave with road construction. One of the roads that needed a lot of repair when I first came to office in 2011 was the main highway. I call it the main highway. I think it is Route 70 through many of our communities. That highway had not seen a whole lot of work done for a lot of years.

I have been very pleased to work with various ministers and various municipalities. We have done a significant amount of roadwork and new pavement and construction along Route 70.

That starts in Clarke's Beach, runs through Bay Roberts, runs through Spaniard's Bay, and it also runs through, what I consider an extension, Cranes Road. We also got some work done on Cranes Road.

Mr. Speaker, when we were doing this, we wanted to make sure we had some type of plan. We wanted to look at high-volume traffic roads first. As well, when I first came to office in 2011, the road to Port de Grave – and as I said today, the plant and the harvesters in Port de Grave are very important; they drive our economy in the region to a great degree. It was a constant theme that some work needed to be done on Bareneed Road, and we got some of that done.

Mr. Speaker, is there more work to do? Sure there is. That is no different in my district than any other district on either side of the House. In Port de Grave itself, the road going into Port de Grave, Happy Jacks Hill, it needs some work. I am working with the Minister of Transportation to see if we can get some work done there.

Mr. Speaker, there is some work that needs to be done in Makinsons. We got some work done, but there is some work that needs to be done on Juniper Stump Road. I can go all the way through the district. In the Town of Clarke's Beach there are certain sections of highway there that needs to be done. So when members opposite talk about their needs, there are still lots of needs on this side as well. We are all trying to make progress. We are all advocating for the people in our districts and our communities.

Mr. Speaker, I would remiss if I did not talk about something that is important and something that has been growing. I call it the arts, but I guess you can call it tourism as well. Ten years ago in my district there was very little reason to come and stay in my district, but working together in the region in general, taking in from the Member for Harbour Main to the Member for Carbonear – Harbour Grace and some of the co-operation that has taken place, we have developed a pretty good tourism industry with things for people to see.

I will speak about some of the things that are going on in the Town of Bay Roberts. Like this weekend, there is a Songs, Stages, and Seafood

Festival; a great weekend using homegrown Newfoundland and Labrador seafood, bringing people into the region, and bringing in some of the best chefs from across the Province. I look forward to Friday night, to the kick-off event. I have been there now for three years where eight chefs from across the Province will be doing eight different food choices. It is a wonderful event, hosted by the Royal Canadian Legion; they do a great job.

I understand that there will be some members opposite and members of government at the big BBQ on Saturday at the Bay Arena. It is a big event. It is growing, Mr. Speaker, using sustainable seafood from Newfoundland and Labrador. That is in partnership with the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture; I want to thank the minister, also the Minister of Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development, and the fishermen's union. They are all playing a large part in it and they are developing a great, sustainable product.

When we get into some of the events that are held, the shoreline walk in Bay Roberts – there is a great walk in Cupids and Brigus area in Harbour Main. I am trying to think of the name, but it escapes me. We have developed a tourism industry. We have developed something where people can come and stay – whether they stay in the District of Port de Grave or whether they stay in the neighbouring District of Carbonear – Harbour Grace, or Harbour Main, you can make a week of it now with the various events going on throughout all of the communities.

You could argue, Mr. Speaker, you could take in the Trinity Shore; tourism is becoming a very good industry. We have a very unique art gallery in Upper Island Cove; it is called the Grumpy Goat. Mr. Speaker, if you have not seen the artwork that these young ladies produce, it is worth your while to come to our district and go to the Grumpy Goat art gallery in Upper Island Cove. It is a wonderful place to go, two young ladies, great artists, and now, on Saturdays, they have a local lunch and brunch type thing and have expanded their business even further.

Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if I did not talk about the art gallery in the east end of Bay Roberts; it is called waterworks. Mr. Jackson

took a local garage, an old garage – he bought the saltbox house, lives in the saltbox house, uses the old store shed, and he has turned it into an art gallery. Not only a place where you will see him doing his work, but also displaying his product. One of the cool things is he has kind of themed it on the tourism ads for Newfoundland and Labrador. He has the clothesline, and he has the waterworks on the clothesline in the summertime blowing in the wind. It is pretty cool.

Mr. Speaker, all that comes back to something else that is a great thing in my district, and that is the volunteers. None of this happens without the volunteers who drive all these different community events. Whether it is the Canada Day BBQ in Port de Grave or the Upper Island Cove Days in Upper Island Cove, the Lassie Days in Spaniard's Bay or the Klondyke Days in Bay Roberts, or the Clarke's Beach Days, none of these events would be possible without the great volunteers and the great pride that these volunteers have in their communities. We need to pay tribute to them tonight as well, because without these great volunteers taking pride in their communities, Mr. Speaker, none of these events would be possible. I want to take my hat off to them tonight.

As well, Mr. Speaker, we have four volunteer fire departments in my district: in Bay de Grave, Upper Island Cove, Spaniard's Bay, and Bay Roberts. Combining the four fire departments, there are over 100 volunteer firefighters serving our district. These people are totally unselfish. Day and night, twenty-four seven, 365, they are on call.

I was sitting the other night with a volunteer fireman in the Town of Bay Roberts, and his beeper went off. We were at the Health Foundation auction, along with the hon. member opposite, and he was gone. No questions asked, gone. His wife was sitting next to me, and she said, Glen, can I have a ride home? That is the way they are. That is the way volunteer firefighters are, they go. When a call comes out, it makes no difference the time of day or night or where they are, Mr. Speaker, they go, and I want to commend them.

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend our town councils. Our town councils in our districts and

the people who lead communities, whether it is a town council or a local service district, a garbage committee, whatever it is, Mr. Speaker, I want to commend them tonight as well because they do yeoman's work. They do it in a lot of times when people do not realize the amount of time and effort that goes in.

Being a former municipal leader myself, I know. I used to work here in the day. You do your 9:00 to 5:00 job here in the day and you go home in the evening, and there was a lot of work to do. There are many members on both sides of this House who has given unselfishly to their communities to make their communities a better place.

We talk about heart, that is the heart and soul of it right there, Mr. Speaker. It starts with municipal leaders on councils and local service districts, or garbage committees or water committees, whatever it may be, but they are the heart and soul of your community. It is not from the federal to the municipal, it is the municipal. That is where it starts and that is where you get to know your people. I want to commend them tonight.

If I had another hour, Mr. Speaker, I could talk about all the other wonderful things in education and agriculture and all the rest. The people in my district, in the District of Port de Grave, I want to thank them for the opportunity to serve, and, Mr. Speaker, I speak to them every day.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is a privilege for me to be able to stand and speak to the motion and Budget 2015 tonight. There has been a lot said; a lot of hours have been spent in this House debating the Budget currently, but when you look back at it, this is really a Budget of about \$8 billion in expenses with about \$6.9 billion in revenue that will be

generated. So it leaves us currently at a \$1.1 billion deficit.

When you put that in perspective and you look back at the history and the hundreds of years that we have been as a people in Newfoundland and Labrador, going back for many, many years since Confederation in 1949, you ask yourself one question. We have seen some very challenging times and years in this Province – \$1.1 billion. Of all the difficulties we have had, if you go back to 1992 and the cod moratorium, and all the subsequent years that followed that with all the difficulties this Province has faced, have we ever had a deficit of \$1.1 billion? The answer to that is no, we have not.

When you think about where we are at our current point in our history in our Province, \$1.1 billion deficit, it is really unprecedented. It is unheard of; it is something we have never seen in our history.

We have seen this budget, Budget 2015 – there has a lot been said in recent years by this Tory government about what they have inherited, what it is they have inherited. We have often heard them speak about the infrastructure issues that have been inherited. There is no question about it, there were certainly infrastructure deficits. There still are infrastructure deficits in our Province. The Member for Port de Grave just mentioned it as he spoke. I can go around my own district, and there is no difference.

We can talk about roadwork. If I go into White Bay in my district of Humber Valley today, I can tell you there are kilometres and kilometres of road that are in desperate need of repair. You go into communities and we still have boil water advisories. It is prevalent, no matter where you go throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. I have travelled this Province extensively in the last three-and-a-half years as Leader of the Official Opposition and people tell me this. It is evident. You can see it as you travel our Province.

They talk about what has been inherited by this government, you talk about debt. Net debt at the end of 2015-2016 is \$11.5 billion – \$11.5 billion of net debt at the end of 2015-2016. So you go back and say: What did we inherit? What did this government inherit in 2003-2004? Net debt

at that time, guess what it was? It was \$11.487 billion. That was the net debt. So what we have seen over the last twelve years is really no change at all.

When this government talks about reducing the net debt in our Province over the last twelve years, that is not the case. The numbers speak for themselves. At the end of 2015-2016, the debt in our Province will be \$12 billion. That is after \$25 billion in oil money which has come from oil royalties and the Atlantic Accord. About \$4.5 billion in Atlantic Accord money I say, Mr. Speaker.

Then what we have seen – how did this government respond to the 2015 Budget? This is what happened. They took out ads; ads that were paid for by the taxpayers of Newfoundland and Labrador to promote this Budget, to promote what they wanted to say about this Budget, but they left out the glaring facts that were there. They left out the fact that there was an HST increase. They left out the fact that it was the highest deficit in the history of our Province, I say, Mr. Speaker, a \$1.1 billion deficit. That was all left out of the ad campaign that was paid for by the taxpayers of this Province, an ad campaign that really did not share the facts.

If it is taxpayers' money going to be paid for at a taxpayer's expense, if you are going to take this out of the pockets of seniors and families in our Province, well, then at least tell the facts. Tell the full story. Just do not take what you want to take from your Budget and talk about things that were announced many years ago, the things that have been advertised that have been done a long time ago, but the facts about the increase in the HST, the fact about the highest deficit in the history of our Province, the fact about borrowing levels like we have never seen before; \$2 billion this year and an extra \$4.85 billion in the subsequent years to come.

This is after having \$25 billion in money from oil royalties and the Atlantic Accord. The ad campaign paid for by the taxpayers of Newfoundland and Labrador did not tell the full story. This was money that was paid for out of this year's Budget, I say, Mr. Speaker.

We all remember back a few years ago when a past Premier – it was Premier Dunderdale who made a commitment over a ten-year plan of reducing the net debt per capita. That is the debt that every man, woman, and child in Newfoundland and Labrador would be responsible for. Their target there – this was another plan that was announced back in 2012. It was at a board of trade dinner here in St. John's. The net-debt per capita – what this government's objective was and what the plan was to get the net-debt per capita at the Canadian average.

What really happened since that point? What has really happened? Are we moving any closer to that? Mr. Speaker, the ad campaigns did not say it. The ad campaigns of the 2015 Budget did not say this, but these are the facts from what is happening based on the levels that we have seen in this year's Budget. The net-debt per capita will be almost \$22,000, and that is an increase of about \$7,000 in the last five years. It has increased from \$14,863 in 2011-2012 up to \$21,907 in 2015-2016.

Mr. Speaker, when this government makes a commitment like that, I wish that was a commitment they would not make. Because when you make a commitment, you must have a plan to get you to where you expect to be; but clearly, what they have done since that, they have actually added to the net-debt per capita of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians: \$7,000 more in the last five years, I say, Mr. Speaker.

The national average in ten years right now is certainly not a target, under the current plan of this government, that they will ever reach. There is no plan to do that. Then when you talk about planning, when you talk about the sustainability plan that was announced by this government just a couple of years ago, what happened to that? It was plan that they walked away from; this government has walked away from.

It really was not a plan. It was announced in a Budget, but really no long-term plan, no sustainability plan, it was never clearly there. No different than when you look at the plan for the fisheries fund. We all know in recent months about what happened to the fisheries fund. This was negotiated – or they thought

there was a deal. No doubt, I am on record as saying that the principles of the deal were certainly within the CETA negotiations; they were there. The framework was there, but what happened is they never concluded the deal. The never concluded the negotiation.

At no point will you ever see a federal minister, the Prime Minister, ever come out publicly and say yes, we have a deal, and the deal is around a \$400 million fund based on \$280 million from the feds and \$120 million in provincial funding. We saw a lot of federal announcements in this Province over the years.

AN HON. MEMBER: Earle thought there was a deal.

MR. BALL: Yes, and the current Leader of the NDP, as my colleague remind me, thought they had a deal too because they were in on some of the emails that were back and forth.

Getting back to the negotiations and how you finalize a negotiation, what happened in this particular case they went to The Rooms, got together, invited a few people, and they went in and had their little party, thought they had a deal – but who was not there? The federal party was not there. There was no document. No photo opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, clearly when many federal politicians are about to announce a \$280 million deal, typically what happens is they actually show up.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. BALL: They will show up. They want to be there because they want to be part of it. It is something they would be proud of, but in this case they did not show up. Even though they thought they might have had a deal, it was never concluded. We will not see one piece of paper that puts a federal signature onto the CETA deal which says there was a deal that was struck by this Province and by the feds, I say, Mr. Speaker.

So now what we do is we found ourselves – this Province, this government, was actually

planning to spend the fisheries fund, planning to spend \$400 million; \$280 million of it from the feds and \$120 million from this Province. What have we seen? We have now seen them, in the last few months, move away from agreements –

MR. J. BENNETT: (Inaudible).

MR. BALL: There we go. My colleague for St. Barbe reminds us of the Humber Valley Paving contract and how they quickly moved away – they thought they had a deal there too.

Nevertheless, back to the CETA deal, the feds did not show up and now we have removed ourselves from significant trade negotiations. Now we find ourselves having to move back, as a government, move away and now find themselves – as a matter of fact, I think we have a minister representing the Province at one of these negotiations even tomorrow, Mr. Speaker.

So these are the types of plans – the infrastructure plan. I want to remind the people of Newfoundland and Labrador just a few years ago about a multi-billion dollar infrastructure plan that the Auditor General went looking for. The news came back and it was kind of like a back of the napkin, back of the envelope, kind of a deal that really was not a plan at all. It was an infrastructure plan – we were told this is a revolving plan. This is really not a plan that the Auditor General, in his office, can go and actually do the audit, just to see if you are actually sticking to you plan at all.

So we had no sustainability plan that was announced. The CETA fund did not have the signatures that were required to make that stick, no remedies, so when it failed, it actually failed. There was no solution to that. The infrastructure plan that was announced many years ago – well, it really was not an infrastructure plan at all. It was just some document that was evolving over time.

Mr. Speaker, this is the reason why we find ourselves in a situation of a \$1.1 billion deficit. This is a government that has really failed to plan, failed to manage the affairs of this Province, failed to put aside money that is required to get us through the challenging times that we face today.

In 2009, there was also this celebration of now becoming a have Province. I know when I talk to people in the Province, they really do not feel – there is really not a sense that they belong to a have Province. At this particular point, they would expect that they would not have to be fighting for the things that we normally do. In the last twelve Budgets by this current government, we are looking at six deficits when we have had unprecedented levels of oil royalties, the Atlantic Accord money – six deficits in twelve Budgets. Without the Atlantic Accord, which we knew was coming to an end – everybody knew that the Atlantic Accord was coming to an end. Nine deficits of the last twelve Budgets, if we took out the Atlantic Accord money, Mr. Speaker.

This should not have been any news to this government that the Atlantic Accord money would end. This was, as we know, scheduled to expire or terminate in 2017, but instead what happened there was \$2 billion cash in advance and the Atlantic Accord was 2012. Everybody on the government side had to know that the Atlantic Accord was coming to an end; \$4.5 billion later, the Atlantic Accord would come to an end. These are the sort of things that lead into the current deficits that we have had. Nine out of twelve Budgets would have been deficits if it was not for the Atlantic Accord revenue, Mr. Speaker.

It is hard not to think about what it could have been for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians and what should have been, Mr. Speaker, with proper planning and with proper management of the affairs of our Province.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. BALL: Yes, with the Population Growth Strategy too, my colleague reminds me.

Budget 2015 unveiled what we consider to be a financial crisis that has been years in the making. Since this government took office in this particular Administration, we have seen, certainly, a downturn in our economy. The economic indicators that we are seeing in the next few years are certainly all pointing in the wrong direction.

This Budget unveiled the impacts of what is nothing more than a Tory Administration, a PC government, under planning and fiscal mismanagement that has been brought on our Province; \$1.1 billion deficit, with unprecedented amounts of borrowing. What was the solution to all of this? The solution for this government is let's increase the HST, let's take that from 13 per cent to 15 per cent, let's do that, and, as I said, let's borrow more.

HST – now, we all know in tough, challenging, economic times – your own budget documents support this – one thing that you should not do, one thing you should never do is, take money out of the pockets of the consumers.

Just this morning as we were coming back into St. John's, there was a gentleman who came up to me, he said to me as Leader of the Opposition – and he has been around. This is a person who has been around our Province for quite some time. He has made some significant investments. His comment to me was this: no matter what you do, Dwight, make sure that this HST gets overturned. It is a job killer and it will stunt the economy.

When you have economic indicators in our Province all going in the wrong direction, the last thing you want to do is take money out of the pockets of consumers, take money out of the pockets of seniors, take money out of the pockets of our young families, and that is what our HST does. That is the solution this government has had.

Mr. Speaker, we have already made the announcement. We have already said that if we get the support after the next provincial election, the HST will be (inaudible).

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HST places undue burden I say, Mr. Speaker, on our young families, on our seniors. It destroys consumer confidence. This was part of the conversation again that we had this morning. Key to a sustainable economy is that there must be a consumer confidence. Right now it is something I have not seen in this Province for many, many years. This is the lowest consumer

confidence we have seen in our Province for quite some time.

Investors from outside, investors from within are having second thoughts about making the necessary investments that will actually fuel our economy. I know this is a tough pill for people of our Province to swallow right now. This after coming from a government that has not been able to demonstrate the ability to effectively manage or even follow through on their own plans, let alone ones set out in this Budget.

Mr. Speaker, I have mentioned the solutions of this government by increasing the HST, taking the money out of seniors, taking the money from our young families and our youth, but then what happens is we have a Premier who says, well, do not worry about this. As a matter of fact, last fall we had the Premier and the Minister of Finance saying we are not overly concerned about this because the price of oil – we did not really see this coming but things will be okay.

Now, Mr. Speaker, simply someone saying it will be okay does not necessarily mean it is going to be okay. Things do not get better because a Premier or a Minister of Finance says: Well, do no worry about it. We should not be worried about that, things will be okay.

This is like win your lottery; buy your lottery ticket attitude that we see from time to time. We see this from this government. If a Premier says it is going to be okay, it does not necessarily mean it is going to be okay if you do not have sound management and proper planning to back up those words. So you have to make things better. How do you make things better, Mr. Speaker? Well, you plan for it. You manage better. You consult and you listen to the people.

Just today in the House of Assembly during Question Period we talked about certain ideas that came through with parents and groups who have some of our children affected with autism. The Premier said, well, we are consulting; we are listening to the people. The people came back with some clear solutions to the issues that were facing them. None of that exists; none of that this government has heard. So you have to do something about it.

Just listening to people and not taking action on it really means you have been dismissed. There has been nothing done constructively about your input. When that happens – and we hear this on a daily basis – when people reach out, they offer solutions, and they are not listened to. What happens is this, they just go away. They tune out and they feel they have not been listened to. They feel their input has not been valued. When that happens they just want to give up.

I know my colleagues here; we have been reaching out to people all across this Province. People are coming with solutions and people feel they have some value. This will be reflective – and I am really looking forward to the election when these things can be discussed where it needs to be. I am optimistic about the future of our Province but it requires hard work. We challenge our members on this side of the House, it will require hard work.

It will require listening to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador because many of their ideas, many of the solutions required to restore consumer confidence, to restore the investor confidence in Newfoundland and Labrador will be there. The solutions are there. Many of them are within our front-line workers who exist within our health care system, who exist within our education system. These are people working in our public service. These are people who are working in our communities right now. They are coming forward with many great solutions, simply because they feel valued. They feel part of where we are today, Mr. Speaker.

When it comes down to it – one of the other things that has been mentioned to me over the weekend is when we hear the minister and we hear the Premier talking about those famous words: Well, no one saw this coming. Of course we are referring to the oil prices. No one saw this coming. Well, Mr. Speaker, what we know about commodity prices, they are volatile. They are very cyclical when you look at this.

In the history of commodities – if it is oil, if it is mining, no matter what it is – the values will rise and they will fall. Sometimes many events that lead up to this is out of the control of governments but what we do know, it is volatile. They do rise and they do fall. The fact that you

did not see it coming does not mean you do not put contingency plans in place to prepare for it, because it will happen. Prices will fall and prices will come around.

Despite the rhetoric, the core problem we are facing right now with this government has not changed. That is simply the fact that it has become completely focused on any budget money, any revenue stream that is generated from oil. They refused to create the economic diversification that is required in our Province to make sure we are prepared to meet the challenges that we have to deal with in Newfoundland and Labrador right now, Mr. Speaker.

The Auditor General has identified it, others have identified it. The track record is they cannot effectively plan or manage the provincial affairs of this Province right now is evident. We see this; it is easy to see, Mr. Speaker, because it is a \$1.1 billion deficit and unprecedented levels of borrowing.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. BALL: Thank you, I say to my colleague.

Then we hear about bold and making choices and balance. Mr. Speaker, bold decisions does not necessarily mean they were the right ones. What is the difference between making a bold decision and making the right decision? What happens with a right decision is the research is done, the analysis is done, Mr. Speaker. We have seen examples of that in the last few weeks from this government.

They call it a bold decision, but when you go looking for the information, when you go looking for the analysis, when you go looking for the research to support what they call a bold decision, it is non-existent. It is not available, Mr. Speaker. The research and analysis to support what they call bold decisions does not exist. That is because they have not consulted, they have done the due diligence. This is what gets us in the position that we are into today, Mr. Speaker.

Let me remind the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, when you hear a Premier, when you hear a minister, when you hear a member of this

government talk about the bold decisions, the balance, the choices, and all that, do not mistake that for it to be the right decision. There is a big difference.

AN HON. MEMBER: The infrastructure program, \$5 billion.

MR. BALL: Yes, like the \$5 billion, as my colleague just reminded me, of the infrastructure spend that we would save when we went looking for that.

I would say a closer example that we could use for that would be the privatization of long-term care. When they announced this, there was not one shred of evidence produced to support the fact that this could be delivered cheaper – not there, not there at all.

They have underestimated the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, because they see it for what it is. The people understand that the economy right now, what this Province needs now like no other point in our history is better planning and better management.

Throughout the Budget debate, my colleagues have been focused on drawing out the details of this Budget, not just listening to an ad campaign that was paid for by the taxpayers of this Province. Let's bring out the details, let's talk about the increase in HST, let's talk about the levels of borrowing, and let's talk about this government's inability to create new sources of revenue from many of the traditional industries that we see in our Province.

My colleagues on this side of the House, their job has been to draw out, to focus on what has been missing from the actions of this government. I would say we should not jump to a solution until you have determined the extent of the problems that we are facing in our Province right now. As I mentioned, making announcements on long-term care and those sorts of things without putting the proper planning measures in place is an example of poor management.

I can give you another example when we talk about long-term care. We had seven years to construct a long-term care centre in Pleasantville – seven full years. Today, we have thirty beds

in that long-term care centre that are currently empty. Why are they empty? Seven years to plan for it –

AN HON. MEMBER: No HR plan.

MR. BALL: No Human Resource plan, none at all. We are there now, the beds are empty, the rooms – there is no one in those rooms simply because they could not find the staff. Seven years to find staff. What have they done? They went out and they have leased beds in another centre that they do not even own, in a private centre, going out now and leasing beds somewhere else when we have thirty of our units that are empty – thirty that are empty – and we still have a waiting list.

We ask ourselves: Where are those seniors who are on the waiting list? What happens, they are now in an acute care centre, in a hospital, between \$50,000 and \$60,000 a month simply because this government had seven years to find people to work in a centre. What would you think was happening for seven years when that construction was ongoing? Many people drove by this, you could see this happening, this is not something that crept upon you, this is not something that you did not see coming; seven years to find staff to staff a long-term care site, could not do it and response is let's go out and rent rooms, let's go out and lease rooms, and let's leave seniors in an acute care centre when the rooms are there, the units are there, thirty units are there, Mr. Speaker. Their answer to that is let's go and build more, let's go and privatize it, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER: The beds are blocked.

MR. BALL: The beds are blocked, and obviously it is really not good use of our human resources, Mr. Speaker.

Budget 2015 paints a bleak picture for our Province in all of the provincial economic indicators, Mr. Speaker. People will look at me and say well, okay then, what is the source. The source of the economic indicators is this governments' own Budget documents.

Our population will shrink. We all know the challenges of growing a population. We all know what a growing population means to an

economy. We need just to look to PEI, a small province, and they will tell you that the economy in the Province of Prince Edward Island – they will tell you that the reason why they are growing is simply because they have been able to grow their population.

In our population, the Province will shrink from 527,000 in 2014 to 520,000 in 2018. That is not growth, that is not a growing economy, that is a shrinking economy, that is losing people, Mr. Speaker, many of those are Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who are moving to other provinces – a loss of 6,400 Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to other provinces.

Just a few days ago we saw the latest job numbers that have been released. The unemployment rate in our Province, according to the economic indicators that just came out a few weeks ago by this government, this is what was supposed to happen. The unemployment rate was 11.9 per cent in 2014. This is what Budget 2015 said, that it will grow to 13.3 per cent in 2018. It was going to go from 11.9 per cent in 2014 to 13.3 per cent in 2018.

AN HON. MEMBER: I did not hear that in the ad.

MR. BALL: Well, that was not in the ad, my colleagues said, but I will tell you what was in the announcement that came just a few days ago when we saw the latest numbers from Stats Canada – guess where it was? It was 13.8 per cent in May. In 2015, if you look at the economic indicators just released by this government a few weeks ago, we were already at and surpassed the levels they thought we were going to be in 2018, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER: We will be fine.

MR. BALL: Yes, the Premier says everything is going to be okay. The ministers are saying that everything is going to be okay. Trust me; we know what we are doing. We have a plan for this.

One of the plans they talked about, as I said, was increasing the HST. Then in recent days, it was mentioned by the Premier there a few days ago that since the price of oil has been rallying – and indeed what we have seen, since the Budget, is

prices drop by \$3. I say, Mr. Speaker, that is not what I call a rally. Now we are going to base the HST – we are going to take another look at that. Forgetting the fact that it takes 120 days to put this in, just because of the mechanics around HST – we are going to take another look at that, because oil is rallying. Even though it is gone down \$3, oil is still rallying. So we might be able to revisit our HST.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that is clearly electioneering. If you put a Budget out just a month ago, not even passed in this House of Assembly yet, we are still debating the Budget, and there is the Premier out, just a few days later, simply because he knows this is a bad decision, trying to distance himself from a decision that they know is wrong, that they know will kill jobs in our Province, they know it will stunt the growth in our economy – now we are going to take a look at the rallying price of oil, which is down \$3. We are going to take another look at that. That is the type of management that we are seeing from this government.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible) while you are up in Lab West.

MR. BALL: Yes, there you go.

Mr. Speaker, clearly that is not the way to manage a Province. Increase HST, announce it in your Budget, four weeks later think that oil is rallying, that oil has rebounded, when clearly it has not, and now we are going to adjust the HST.

So when you look at that, a Budget is supposed to be a plan. Here we are, it did not even see passage in the House of Assembly and this government is trying to distance itself from its own Budget. It has nothing to do with the decisions, the bold choices, as they say they have made. It has all to do with the feedback they have been getting from the people of Newfoundland and Labrador because they know that this decision is wrong, Mr. Speaker. It is wrong.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible) five-year plan.

MR. BALL: It is part of their part-time plan.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk a little bit about disposable income. That will also decrease for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. Real change in household disposable income will decrease in 2015, it will decrease in 2016, and again through to 2018. These are right from this government's own Budget documents, yet clearly left out of the ads that this government paid for at taxpayers' expenses.

The retail sales will also decline. So when you look at consumer confidence, this really goes back to if retail sales is declining, it really speaks to the fact that the consumer does not have the confidence. So what they do, you have heard people say, they pinch their pennies and that is exactly what has happened.

AN HON. MEMBER: Save it for a rainy day.

MR. BALL: They save for a rainy day, my colleague reminds me.

Retail sales will decline. This is the reason why we see unemployment rates that are continuing to rise, Mr. Speaker. Real change in retail sales will decrease in 2015, 2016, 2017, and again in 2018. This is this government, I would say, painting a very bleak picture for Newfoundland and Labrador. That was not –

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible) housing starts.

MR. BALL: Housing starts again, clearly we are going to see housing starts – and I can tell you if there is one industry that will feel the impact of the increase in HST, it is the housing industry in this government.

Where will the future be on our GDP, the size of our economy? That too will continue to fall. So, we have seen unemployment numbers grow; we have seen disposable income, that will decrease; retail sales will decrease; GDP, this government's own documents, they can read it themselves – maybe some ministers will get up after and read from a different page, but I tell you, go to your own Budget documents, read it yourself, the GDP will also continue to fall. GDP will decrease in 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018.

Keep in mind; this is all at a time with three megaprojects are on the go in our Province. We are seeing decreases in disposable income, our economy will shrink, and our population is falling, all at a time with three megaprojects occurring in our Province, Mr. Speaker.

What about our labour force? That also will continue to decline, Mr. Speaker. In 2014, our labour force was almost 271,000; in 2018, it will be down to 257,000. These are people ready and willing to go to work. We are seeing people in Newfoundland and Labrador who have just given up and they have just removed themselves from the labour force. Some have left the Province altogether, I say, Mr. Speaker. That is a decrease of 14,000 in the labour force in five years. How can you grow an economy when you have a shrinking population, you have your GDP declining, you have disposable income declining? Mr. Speaker, that is not economic growth. With housing starts, capital investment, and the Consumer Price Index dropping, your cost of living in Newfoundland and Labrador, that rises.

Mr. Speaker, this government's solution: Let's increase the HST, let's increase borrowing – and we do not even talk about the number of fees that have been increased by Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. No sign at all of economic diversification in this Budget at all. It is barely, barely mentioned.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. BALL: Yes, moose licence and the rainy-day fund, Mr. Speaker, all kinds of comments right now as my colleagues are reminding me of all the fee increases that we have seen in this Budget.

Mr. Speaker, taking a real honest look at where we are today is important. We have had nineteen consecutive months of year-over-year job losses in our Province. Twenty-three hundred job losses in the last year alone. Three megaprojects – we have Muskrat Falls, we have Hebron, we have Long Harbour, and we are still losing jobs. What does that say for the rest of the economy, Mr. Speaker? No economic diversification at all.

Government forecast another 12,000 people will be out of the workforce by 2018. Mr. Speaker, this is their own Budget documents, and I know that this government – this will not be part of a marketing campaign. This is not something that they will want to discuss on the election campaign, I assure you of that. The response is: Do not worry about it. You should not worry about this. We really do not need to plan. We really do not need to manage. Everything is going to be okay, I say, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible) clean up the environment.

MR. BALL: Yes, that is right. That is not talking about, as my colleague mentioned, all the environmental liabilities that this government has taken on and really has not even documented yet. Mr. Speaker, this government's solution is increase HST, borrow, and everything will be okay. That is what we hear from this government.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the other thing I think that is worthy of note is that there has been a lot of commentary around how do we get here, how did this happen. We did not see it coming, number one, but let's not forget the fact that this government was forecasting a deficit of \$500 million to \$600 million when oil was at \$105. It is not all about the price of oil.

Again, that was not something that was in the government ads. Did anyone hear that in the government ads this year that were paid for by the taxpayers of Newfoundland? No, it was not about that; it is we did not see the drop in oil prices coming. They are not talking about a \$500 million to \$600 million deficit when oil was at \$105, Mr. Speaker, so it is not just all about the drop in oil prices. That is what this government would like you to think about when clearly that is not the case, go back to Budget 2014 and just look at the deficits.

What do we have facing our future? We have \$1.1 billion this year and deficits in the next four years to come – just constant, constant deficits. What do they do; what is the solution? The solution is to be able to say that at some point we are going to get out of deficit. As a matter of fact, in 2020 we are going to come out of deficit. How are we going to do that?

They are going to predict the price of oil into the future in 2020 –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BALL: So they have a crystal ball – they could not predict it for one year and now they are going to predict it for the next five years. Now we are going to get out of deficit and come back in surplus. No sign at all of economic diversification, clearly all about oil, but it seems like almost drawing straws, pick a number, the number in 2020 will be \$90 – \$62 this year, could not predict it for one year, and five years it is going to be enough to take us out of this deficit, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER: It is going to rally.

MR. BALL: It is going to rally. We are in for a rally yet. We might even reduce the HST at that point, Mr. Speaker.

Accepting the responsibility for the actions is not something that this government has done a very good job at. Meanwhile, as I just mentioned, it was this government who was planning for 58 per cent of last year's, almost \$1 billion – this before the oil prices were starting to drop at all.

Today, we are in this situation because they have managed the economy really in what has been a reaction mode, no planning, not being proactive at all, never taking anything proactive to prepare for our Province when we meet the challenges that we face today. The actions of this government and those actions they failed to take is now what has gotten us into the situation that we are in today with \$1.1 billion. Mr. Speaker, never before in our history have we seen deficits like we have seen in this Budget. This in what is supposed to be the good times, the golden age.

We have seen a former Premier, a former Finance Minister say just a few years ago, we are flush with cash. Mr. Speaker, if we were flush with cash, why are we now having a \$1.1 billion –

AN HON. MEMBER: Two billion dollars.

MR. BALL: – and having to borrow \$2 billion? We are flush with cash.

AN HON. MEMBER: We flushed the cash.

MR. BALL: We flushed the cash, my colleagues are reminding me.

Mr. Speaker, this is indeed a very serious issue when we look at how you prepare for things. There has been a lot said about the levels of borrowing, the deficits, the amount of deficits and what we are passing on to the next generation.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I will tell you it will require a lot of hard work. The solutions for this will require a lot of co-operation and collaboration with communities, with associations, with businesses, with people across Newfoundland and Labrador, and clearly this is not happening. We are hearing this every day when we talk to – groups are telling us right now that they do not feel like they have been listened to by this government. They feel they have been left out of the discussion, Mr. Speaker, and why is that?

In a lot of cases we have had a government that has not been able to focus, when you look at the amount of Cabinet shuffles we have seen in recent years. Mr. Speaker, seven Finance Ministers in four years – seven Finance Ministers.

AN HON. MEMBER: How many Premiers?

MR. BALL: A colleague just asked me, how many Premiers? Well, some would argue, it is about 3.5 some people are saying. That is what they say.

Mr. Speaker, seven Finance Ministers in four years. Eight ministers responsible for economic development in seven years. You wonder why we cannot get focused; we cannot get disciplined on trying to create economic diversification in our Province – eight ministers responsible for economic development in seven years. Six ministers for workforce development in seven years. Seven Ministers of Transportation and Works in seven years, and fourteen Health Ministers we have had in the last twelve years.

Mr. Speaker, these are a lot of changes in key portfolios in our Province. What is this government doing about it? How do they propose to fix the financial situation they have

now put us in? Mr. Speaker, it has been tax and borrow, increase fees, and take money out of the pockets of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, our seniors; many of our seniors who are out there now struggling to make ends meet. What you do is increase taxes, increase fees. That has been the response of this government.

I want to talk a little bit about Labrador. Mr. Speaker, people in Labrador have been promised – there was a commitment made for two ferries for Labrador. What happened here? There was an RFP that went out for planning. Now we have seen the people in Labrador – once again they are left to wait because this government did not follow through on a commitment that was made.

On top of that, they really have not thought through what is going to happen, because they have not planned for this. We already know the current vessels that are being used are clearly not ready to support the services that are required up there. The ferries were delayed, both on the North Coast and The Straits ferries. Mr. Speaker, the people of Labrador – I was there just a few weeks ago – feel they have been shut out by the government of this Province.

We see the people in Fortune, as an example, where we have seen commitments that were made just a few years ago and not being followed through on. Government is not holding the companies and the industries that are responsible for the decisions and the commitments that they have made, this government is not holding them at task.

Mr. Speaker, we have seen the same in Harbour Breton, and the people in Lab West and Wabush with the recent closure of Wabush Mines, and what we are seeing in the disruptions at IOC. People in Central Newfoundland have been promised a commitment for the use of its fibre resources there. Clearly, that is not happening.

AN HON. MEMBER: Roddickton.

MR. BALL: Yes, my colleague reminds me of what is happening in Roddickton. We have seen the Roddickton pellet plant with \$10 million of taxpayers' money into a pellet plant that is not producing one single job, Mr. Speaker – \$10 million.

What are you doing now? They are going to create a new business plan, I say, Mr. Speaker, another \$185,000. They are going to do a new business plan. The first business plan was virtually non-existent. They needed a new wharf; they could not ship it out. The budget on that was about \$5 million. They put in \$10 million, clearly without a business plan that was structured for success.

They are still paying insurance on things they will not even get back. Someone else has funded that. There is insurance to cover a kiln and certain components of that, but now what they have done is put insurance around –and this government is calling it protecting their assets, when clearly they did not even know what their assets were. Mr. Speaker, the plan is not focused on growing the economy. It is really just taking it down and taking money out of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

We will speak to the HST. Why we do not support the increase in HST is it will have an impact on every single economic sector that we see in our Province. It will impact tourism. It will destroy consumer confidence, retail sales, spending power of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians from our youth, from our young families, from our seniors, people who are struggling to make ends meet – less people in the workforce.

Mr. Speaker, when you look at it, it is just not me as Leader of the Official Opposition. When we speak out about the increase in HST, I am not the only one saying that. We had the Retail Council of Canada that has spoken out about that. We have had boards of trade and chambers of commerce across our Province that has spoken out against this. We have had the Employers' Council; we have had the Federation of Labour and the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. Many people have spoken out against the increase in HST.

Think about the effect it will have on the first-time homebuyers, Mr. Speaker. That is an increase of \$9,000 on an average family home. This in the backdrop of a Premier who said that one of the objectives, one of the commitments he was willing to do was make it easier for that first-time homebuyer to purchase their first home. Well, Mr. Speaker, increasing the HST

certainly does not do that. In fact, what it does is it makes it much more difficult.

In their own Budget documents we have seen examples where they are not doing their due diligence on things like that, the impact that it will have on our young families, Mr. Speaker. What it requires will be better management. It will require new jobs, not less jobs, and it will require growth.

Mr. Speaker, there has been a lot said of where a government needs to be focused, about managing expenses, about reducing waste. As an example, we heard the Minister of Transportation and Works say about two other ferries. We were told they were going to negotiate the reduction of tariffs. This was going to happen because maybe they thought the relationship with Ottawa was much better than they thought, but they were going to get that money back in the tariffs.

AN HON. MEMBER: How much?

MR. BALL: Around \$24 million. They went ahead, they finalized that deal, but they did not have the negotiation on the tariffs. They did not have the tariff exemption. They did not have that part of the deal. They did not have that finished.

So, Mr. Speaker, what happens? It is an extra \$24 million that will now have to be spent, will now have to come from this year's Budget, money that could have went towards health care services, money that could have went towards roads and water. There are many places where this money could have been spent; but, instead, because they did not have this exemption on those tariffs negotiated, we now find ourselves having to come up with an extra \$24 million.

The other thing I want to talk a little bit about is the inability of this government to collect fines. Unless you are \$400 or less than \$400, we know there is really not a lot of effort into collecting those fines from people who actually break the law. Let's think about those people for a few minutes, the people who really did not break the law. Of course, what I am referring to are the over 400 seniors in our Province that saw overpayments. This government has no issue at all of going out and collecting that money. The

seniors who are not responsible for this at all, this is all due because of this government.

Now they are going to go out and they are going to collect the overpayment from those seniors. Guess what? Some of those are \$300, less than what you have just given up on people who have actually broken the law and you do not even bother to go looking for that. If we remember just a few years ago, we actually laid off some of the people who were actually responsible for collecting that.

Mr. Speaker, there are so many things we can talk about when it comes to growing the economy. I want to talk a little bit about some of the Crown land from within our communities. Just recently, I met some people, as you know, on the West Coast of Newfoundland. We find many people who make a living from the agricultural industry out there. They have told me – and not just on the West Coast, they have told me on the East Coast and in Central – about how difficult it has been for people to get Crown land transferred for agricultural use so they can actually increase the size of their agriculture and their farms and grow more and create employment.

Mr. Speaker, taking six and sometimes nine years – just think about it. If you are forty years old and you are working hard and you go looking for Crown land, by the time you are forty-nine years old you can expect to have that completed. That is not co-operating and not working with people who are looking to create partnerships with this government.

AN HON. MEMBER: Lost opportunities.

MR. BALL: Lost opportunities when it comes to creating economic diversification, creating a new source of revenue for people in our Province.

AN HON. MEMBER: The Corner Brook hospital.

MR. BALL: Yes, the Corner Brook hospital too is something that has been promised and really has seen little commitment from this government.

I am going to finish up my remarks in just a few minutes, but I want to look back at the history of where we are when it comes to deficits and surpluses. I think this is something that has really been lost on many people in our Province because what they have done is they have listened to some of the comments, the ads that have been paid for by this government; but if you go back, as an example in 2002-2003, we saw a deficit of \$644 million. You can imagine what a different place this Province was back in 2002-2003. It was a much different Province and here we are with deficits about one half of where they are.

With all the oil royalties we have had, all the negotiated – this is a government that talked about how Voisey's Bay was not even good for this Province. We should not do that. Now we see the minister, we see the Premier, celebrating the impact of the Voisey's Bay mine on Newfoundland and Labrador. I can tell you –

AN HON. MEMBER: (inaudible).

MR. BALL: Yes, the Baie Verte Peninsula, the mining conference, and our colleagues were there for that. That is an area I will say, Mr. Speaker, when you look at where you see communities, where you see industry pull together, working in co-operation that they can actually make a difference, creating hundreds of jobs in that peninsula.

In this year's Budget of 2015 to see a deficit of \$1.1 billion, it is unprecedented. It is not the way you want to be remembered in history. On top of that, borrow \$2 billion – that is not the mark or the legacy you want to leave to the next generation. All those deficits and the deficits that they are predicting for the future, Mr. Speaker, when you really think about it, the challenges that we are passing to the next generation, it takes better management and it takes better planning.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hard work.

MR. BALL: It is hard work, I say to my colleagues, it does require hard work, but I can assure you that our members on this side of the House are willing to put in the hard work that is required to do that. We are concerned about health care. We are concerned about education.

We are concerned about creating jobs. What I know, Mr. Speaker, in my own experience of over thirty years in business – and we have had the privilege of hiring many people – the best thing that you can do for somebody is help them get a job. They feel like they can contribute, they do contribute, and they increase the tax base in our Province. Mr. Speaker, finding employment, fostering employment, facilitating and growing businesses in our Province right now is what gets us in the position to be able to deliver the services that people so rightfully deserve in our health care system and in our education system.

Creating employment in all areas of our Province, including rural Newfoundland and Labrador, it will mean working with our fishery, it will mean working in forestry, it will mean extra work in tourism, making sure that we work closely with our small business operators where one job, two jobs, and three jobs makes a difference – we have seen that. People are there willing to make the investment to help grow our economy. This is where it works. It only works when you are willing to create the meaningful partnerships, the meaningful dialogue, that is non-existent right now in our Province.

I was speaking – I am going to finish up – when we talk about education and we talk about marketing, I would challenge anyone to go where I have seen, just recently, where we have taken an instructor at one of the College of the North Atlantic, where there was no marketing that went into this, and they decided that they were keenly interested enough in their own program. The teachers and the students are going to start it on their own. That is the kind of vibrancy that we are seeing. That is happening; people are taking this on their own. They see where this government has let them down, where we have had valuable programs that they want to promote because the jobs are there, and this government has not supported that.

I can tell you right now, Mr. Speaker, you just go to the Facebook sites and you look at it, you can see the enthusiasm and the energy that is on the faces of those young people as they are enjoying what they are doing. They do feel like they are left out.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to conclude my remarks right now by saying that I do believe the future of Newfoundland and Labrador is bright. It will require hard work, it will require co-operation and strong partnerships with our industries and our communities, Mr. Speaker, and we look forward to working with them.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Littlejohn): The hon. the Member for Exploits.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. FORSEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I have been very fortunate to be able to speak on the Budget, on the amendments and sub-amendments, Mr. Speaker. I have discussed different parts of the departments including agriculture, agriculture in the classroom, fire and emergency services, municipal affairs, and I wanted to talk about health care tonight.

Mr. Speaker, when they get up, like the Leader of the Opposition did, and cherry-pick – because anybody can cherry-pick, and that is what he did. He took a full hour and I never heard one recommendation.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Exploits.

MR. FORSEY: I never heard one recommendation or one idea for the night. At the end of it, I realized he was talking about something we had already started, and that was with regard to Crown lands. He had spoken to people across the Province this past couple of months about Crown lands. Well, I guess he forgot, Mr. Speaker, that we are doing a Lands Act review. We have already done the consultations. Thanks to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and lands for the job he is doing.

What did he say? Here is what is in our Crown lands, in our consultation, “identifying ways to improve Crown lands service delivery.” We are already being proactive in doing this. We are

doing this, but we talked about this particular act, what we were doing with it and the review. We talked about this quite a bit actually.

He wants to talk about trying to stay on track. Well, anybody who was listening to VOXM the other morning – and these are people and leaders who figure they have the ideas on what they should be doing and focusing on what you need to do. This is a political scientist who says the Leader of the Opposition went off track – again, went off track – more time spent on financial interest of the party and responding to questions rather than focusing on setting policies. That is a political scientist saying this and he is getting up talking about what he wants to do.

A funny thing, it was only a couple of days ago we were talking about the election, and today talking about the election and having the election in November. Well, in January he was in favour of moving the election ahead. Now he wants to move it back. They have to make up their minds what they want to do. To me, it sounds like whatever the flavour of the day is. It is the flavour of the day, that is the only thing. If there is a little bit of public pressure out there on an issue, that is what they are for. That is exactly what they are doing.

I will say I am not the only one. Other people out there are picking up this kind of stuff because the other day I said, I do not know, maybe I should go back and have a look at what – because Hansard is a wonderful thing. We have all said certain things, and I am sure we all mean well when we are in here, both sides of the House, Mr. Speaker.

I think we were talking about – there was a private member’s motion that was brought in and the Member for Signal Hill – Quidi Vidi seemed to be onside with the political scientist and seemed to be onside with a couple of other people. She got up and started talking about the Opposition. She said, “I find it rather ironic coming as it does from a party that has a history of mismanagement in this Province.” That is what she said about the Opposition. That is what she said.

“In the 1950s the Liberal government spearheaded an industrialization strategy which cost the people of this Province a fortune and

failed.” See, short memories, short memories. “While they stand and try to score political points here today claiming they are better managers of the Province’s money their long political legacies say otherwise.”

Then the Leader of the Opposition, who would like to be Leader of the Province –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. FORSEY: The Leader of the Opposition who would like to be Leader of the Province gets up and talks about the leaders of our party. He gets up and talks about the leaders of our party. He says: I am glad my colleagues reminded me. Well, I say to the Leader of the Opposition, your colleagues should have reminded you about the other Premiers in the 1990s. It was Wells. No, it was Tobin. No, it was Tulk. No, it was Efford. Oh, no, that is wrong. It was not Efford. He wanted to be. Then it was Grimes. My goodness, that is five and a half, because if Efford had to get there it would have been six. So there you go. They forget.

Then he gets up and says: Well, you laid off a few people. I really do not know where we laid off a few people. I cannot, right now, put my finger on it, but I can guarantee you one thing, I know they laid off thousands in the 1990s. They are the same crowd who tore up the contracts and laid off 2,000 workers and put a wage freeze on for eight years, besides the rollback.

Mr. Speaker, I will tell you what this government did. They wonder what we did with the money. Because our public service – and we had the respect for the public service, which we always did and always will. We are not tearing up contracts belonging to them. We gave them back 21 per cent. That is where a lot of the revenues went to. It went into the pockets of the hard-working people in the public sector, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. FORSEY: That is where that revenue went to.

Mr. Speaker, when we did have the money and the money was coming in and oil prices were good, because we were right. Who could predict it? They could not predict it in Alberta either, Mr. Speaker. We could not predict it in Newfoundland and Labrador, but when we did have the revenues – talking about disposable income – we put \$620 million back into the pockets of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, \$620 million.

Now, I did want to talk about health care because it is near and dear to me. I will say in some of the other initiatives we took when we eliminated school fees and we brought in free textbooks, I can remember talking to a parent in my district, it was in September, and she said: Clayton, this is a wonderful program. Do you know how much I do not have to come up with?

They did not want us to eliminate school fees. They did not want us to bring in free textbooks. They did not want us to have the lowest income tax bracket in the country, Mr. Speaker, but, \$467 to that mother on free textbooks, that was a lot of money.

I will talk about something that I do know a little bit about and none of us –

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. FORSEY: – a little bit more about – okay, how is that? A little bit more about.

Everyone is touched, Mr. Speaker, with sickness of some kind, and I am no different than anybody else. I did listen to some conversation today and the Ministerial Statement on foster children, what we are doing in the Foster a Future. It is a good program. Even the people on the Opposition side said it was a good program.

My own father was a foster child. When we do things for foster children – and I had a very good friend, a young person, who became a foster child and the foster parents in my community really, really did a lot for that particular student, graduated high school – and guess what? Never got past twenty because of what happened in the years prior to, she just could not handle it anymore. That is a sad thing to happen, but that is the kind of stuff that goes on.

We did the same thing in health care, Mr. Speaker. It was only a few days ago there was a gentleman here – because we keep talking about culture and we keep talking about diets, part of the reason that we are probably the way we are is because our diet is our culture. There are a lot of things that are genetic as well and there are a lot of things we cannot do a lot about, but we can certainly try to help ease the problem when we get these problems.

It was only a couple of days ago when a gentleman left St. John's to ride on a bike across Canada to make awareness for dialysis and kidney disease. The other part that really touched me, I listened to him that morning on the radio when he was getting ready to leave and that he lost his kidney through Alport disease. Well, so did my brother-in-law, the very same disease. You can lose a kidney and lose the use of it through different reasons, but what we can do as a government is certainly try to make these people more comfortable and be able to lead a half decent life. That is why when we came in here we went from seven dialysis sites to sixteen.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. FORSEY: That is where the money went, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. FORSEY: Yes, it comes across as being wasted. It is wasted.

Now, they are not going to raise taxes, but they are not going to get the loan of any money. So the only other things I see they are going to do is cut because that is the only other way to save money.

Just let me say that just the dialysis units alone – and I know the Member for Burgeo – La Poile and the members over there on the West Coast, they know how much their constituents who are on dialysis had to travel. They know the distance they had to go, three and four hours to and three and four hours back.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we do not have to do that today, thank you very much – thanks to this government. We do not have to do that today

because now they do not have as far to travel. We put sites in Bonavista, we put sites in Port aux Basques, and we put sites in Harbour Breton so they could stay closer to home.

Now, in the meantime, I will say there is such a thing as home dialysis because I witnessed it. This gentleman is promoting that as well. You can get home dialysis. It takes longer. You are on a machine nine hours every night, or you can drive to the hospital and you can be on a machine probably three times a week for four hours a day. You can do that if you want, but you have choices.

That is what we were doing. We were investing. We were spending the money that needed to be spent in order for people to have better lives in this Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. All of a sudden there is a downturn and oil revenues are not as great, but they are not as great across the country either. We cannot do a lot about that. Even the Leader of the Opposition said it was volatile. It is, we all know that, but I would like to think – I did make a note of the Member for Carbonear – Harbour Grace. He said: If you do not have an interest in this place and if you do not have your heart in the right place, then you should walk right out the door, if you do not care.

Do you know what? He has a point. He is right. There is nobody on this side who is going to walk out the door because they do not care, I will guarantee you that. That is not the way we came in here and that is not the way we are going to leave. I bet you, every one of us, including everybody over there –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. FORSEY: Boys, give up the jollies and the laughing because I would like to think that they came in with a little bit of respect of who brought them here and why were are here. I know the Member for Carbonear – Harbour Grace was very passionate about it when he spoke about it. He had his heart in the right place.

I know by the way – when it comes to the fishery, I grew up in the fishery, in the traditional fishery when we did have a few weeks in the spring where we were catching

lobsters and then we used cod traps. I spent a couple summers on the Labrador, too, I say to the member. In Packs Harbour, actually, and the family used to go down there back in the 1960s. There were people who used to go down there from Bay Roberts. People went down there from all over the Province because Fishery Products sent them down there and set them up down there. That is why I was there, but then we did not even have the luxury of talking about fresh fish and how much money you were going to get for it because it all salt bulk. That is what you had. The member knows. He is nodding his head. He is right.

We all came in here with the same thing on our mind: There is something that we can do; there is something that we can offer. We offered ourselves and our service to this lovely Province that we have. They can get up and make fun at a couple of leadership whatever – the thing we had. Sure, they can. We can go back to the 1990s and do the same thing they did. We can all do that, Mr. Speaker, but I am going to tell you something, the money that we spent on diagnostic equipment and skilled trades in high schools and fixing all the roofs on the schools and building new schools, every bit of it was needed.

That is what we are about. That is what this government is about. That is what our members, the members over here, are about, Mr. Speaker. Under the new leader we have here, our Premier, we are staying on track. I am satisfied to stay here as well and give it a shot with that Premier because we are on the right track. Did he say we were going to be okay? Yes, Mr. Speaker, we are going to be okay.

Now, that might sound like a word that sounds like okay – everybody uses okay, but do you know what? Okay means you are going to be all right.

You have to make the right decisions. You have to make the right choices. That is what we are doing, making the right choices, but you cannot flip-flop, Mr. Speaker. You cannot flip-flop. You cannot go with the flavour of the day. You have to go with what you believe in. That is why I think we are on the right track. I think the people are going to realize that the investments that we made were for the benefit of the

Province and for the benefit of all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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 have a few minutes to speak on the Budget. The Member for Exploits did make some good points on dialysis and other points. There is no one on this side ever going to disagree with making someone's life easier by accessibility to health care. I do not think you have ever heard a member on this side criticize that, Mr. Speaker, not one that I heard of in this Province – even from the Third Party, they support that also. To stand up and try to say that there are people on this side criticizing dialysis, it is just not becoming of a member in this House, Mr. Speaker.

When he stopped trying to criticize the leader, he made some good points about health care. He made some good points about accessibility, people travelling, and people should stay close to home. I heard the member just say that. I was proud of him. I was proud of you saying that.

I cannot wait for him to support radiation in the Western Memorial Regional Hospital so people can stay on the West Coast and they do not have to travel to St. John's.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. JOYCE: If the Member for Exploits really feels that people should be closer to home for health care, let him stand up right now, take my next nineteen minutes, and support radiation in Western Newfoundland, Mr. Speaker. Here is the opportunity because what you are saying about dialysis, I agree –

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Exploits – on a point of order?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. FORSEY: Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: On a point of order?

MR. FORSEY: No, he asked me to take his nineteen minutes.

MR. SPEAKER: I am sorry; the hon. member cannot speak because he has already spoken to the main motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. JOYCE: If the member thinks radiation is a joke for the people of Corner Brook, ask the Member for Humber West. If thinks it is a joke for people in Corner Brook who have to travel for radiation, it is time for him to take the smile off his face. He should go through it, Mr. Speaker. Ask the Member for Humber West what it is like with people he meets.

MR. FORSEY: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Exploits, on a point of order.

MR. FORSEY: Mr. Speaker, what I said, I believe in, that people should stay as close to home as possible.

MR. SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

The hon. the Member for Bay of Islands.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. JOYCE: That is what I find, Mr. Speaker, when you get an issue that this government committed for eight years, when they finally approve that there should be radiation, they want to interrupt you because they do not want to hear the truth. They really do not want to hear the truth. So if the member really feels that, when the vote comes up, I hope he is going to vote against the Budget because there is no money in it for radiation for the new hospital in Corner

Brook for the construction – let's see if the member is going to stand up and stand by his words he said here tonight.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to speak on the electoral boundaries commission that came out today and just have a few words. I made a presentation on behalf of the people of Bay of Islands. As you know now, we all know, and all of the Province knows, the Bay of Islands will stay intact with a part with of Corner Brook, which was recommended. I just want to thank all of the councils and the fire departments. I always said if I am representing the people of Bay of Islands, I am going to do it to the best of my ability.

When I went around the Bay of Islands to the fire departments and other parts they all said no, we should stay together. I just wanted to thank everybody for all of their support, thank all of the fire departments for all of the –

MR. GRANTER: (Inaudible).

MR. JOYCE: I hear the Member for Humber West, and I have that on my notes, the Member for Gander here – a fire truck in Cox's Cove that was brought out last week, myself and the Member for Humber West are going to go out and deliver the keys on Friday to Cox's Cove because it is the need of the people out there in Cox's Cove. This is what our role is, every MHA in this House, to advocate on behalf of their districts. I know in Cox's Cove – I called the minister and gave him the time that we are going to have the community celebrations, we are going to go out together – and this is the way governments should work with Oppositions, with the Third Party, with anybody in this Province, work together.

I just wanted to recognize Wayne Payne, the town council, and the firettes for raising the money in Cox's Cove. It is a job well done.

Mr. Speaker, I will get back to a few of the issues I was speaking to, and I know the Member for Exploits had a big joke about radiation. He had a big joke about radiation; he was going to stand up on a big point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. FORSEY: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Exploits, on a point of order.

MR. FORSEY: When I stand up, Mr. Speaker, I do not stand up on a joke when it comes to radiation or anything to do with diagnostic equipment.

MR. SPEAKER: There is no point order.

The hon. the Member for Bay of Islands.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. FORSEY: (Inaudible).

MR. JOYCE: Mr. Speaker, the Member for Exploits is telling me to sit down. The only people who are going to make me sit down are the people from the Bay of Islands. If they tell me to sit down, I will sit down. If the Member for Exploits wants to stand up and interrupt me all the time when I am talking about radiation, he can go ahead, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER: Shameful.

MR. JOYCE: Shameful is right.

He is talking about his big Budget for the last eight years, the government – it was 2007 they committed to the hospital. The hospital was supposed to be built in 2012, yet it is a big joke. Oh yes, all of the money, Mr. Speaker.

Just think about the radiation out in Western Newfoundland, think about the long-term care. Our leader got up today talking about long-term care, there are thirty beds not even open – not even open – thirty beds in St. John's. Guess what, Mr. Speaker? They were talking about the long-term care beds in Corner Brook. When they put in the long-term care beds in Corner Brook, the long-term care facility, the infrastructure was in place, the plan was in place, this government cut it by 100 beds – 100 beds.

I advocated at the time. The Member for Humber West who was not in government at time, he heard me, as principal of the school. He heard me. We spoke about it when he was principal, about the 100 beds cut. Guess what, Mr. Speaker? Now they are going to build a

new one with 120 beds. Can you imagine that, Mr. Speaker?

You are talking about where does the money go. I just want to give you a little – the hospital out in Corner Brook that is supposed to be built, which some infrastructure is done, some roadwork is done – not a lot to say it was done. According to the government, there was \$40 million spent out there. To build (inaudible) beds, it cost \$52 million. Another \$12 million and we would have had another long-term care facility, and there is nothing to show for it out in long-term care. Is that good planning?

Now the hospital will not be built at least until 2021-2022, and it is going to be put radiation in it, Mr. Speaker. Guess what? By 2022-2023, by their report, they are going to need a second radiation unit in Corner Brook.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible) obstetrics stuff.

MR. JOYCE: Obstetrics stuff, cuts in beds – obstetrics is cut, Mr. Speaker.

That is the kind of things that we have to stand up and support. Do I think government did good things? Definitely. Do I give praise to ministers in government when we work together when you are improving the lives? Definitely, 100 per cent. I have yet to not work with a minister in this government, the government before, back in 2007-2006, not once, when there was recognition that should be given, that I never gave recognition and worked with a government.

I will give you a prime example, two examples, and there is no one who can take it away from us. Myself and the leader, when we dealt with Corner Brook Pulp and Paper, we were given all the information. The Member for Humber West brought us in on it, and we worked as a group to solve that problem. Radiation in Corner Brook, we worked as a group to solve that problem also, Mr. Speaker.

So, to think we are just over here to oppose, we are not just here to oppose. We are here to offer solutions. What we are going to do, what I am going to do, I am going to advocate on behalf of the people who elected me. I represent the

people of the Bay of Islands, Corner Brook area, and I will do that.

Now some members opposite do not think that is fair. They think we should always say everything is rosy when it is not. It is just not in my nature. If there are good things happening, I will be the first to stand up and say it, Mr. Speaker. I have always done it. I respect when people work with you. I respect when there are good things done for any district, anything across the Province, Mr. Speaker. I respect that. I understand the constraints a government has, I understand all the constraints.

If we are ever lucky enough to get in government, do I think we can solve all the problems in Newfoundland and Labrador? Of course not. Do I think the government opposite should be able to give everything we want, everything we ask for? Of course not. It is impossible to do, and I do not expect it. I definitely do not expect it, Mr. Speaker. I would not ask any minister to do that because it would not be fair to put them in that position. What I do ask is work with the Opposition, work with the members who are elected, and work with the individuals across the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. That is how we provide good government.

When I look at Muskrat Falls, as another example – and we heard the minister. I have all due respect for the Minister of Natural Resources. I think he is a great guy. I think he works hard. I have all due respect, but I remember when this Muskrat Falls debate was on the go.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. JOYCE: Yes, I was here for Voisey's Bay. I might be the only one in this Legislature who voted for Voisey's Bay. I am probably the only one in this Legislature who voted for Voisey's Bay. I actually voted for that. I stood here and I did my due diligence on it. What now? It is one of the greatest projects in Newfoundland and Labrador, the government is touting it as something. Am I proud of it? You better believe I am proud of it, Mr. Speaker.

I will get back to the minister. Before the minister took – this is not on the minister one

bit. When we were having the debate about Muskrat Falls, we had this odometer where we could call over to Nalcor and they could tell us how much our electricity was going to be. Where is it now? It is gone. It is actually gone because it was such a joke to tell the people of the Province you can dial into this number, punch in how much you are making, and they will tell you how much you have to pay for your heat and light in the next little while. You can actually do that, but what a joke.

Mr. Speaker, we heard about Muskrat Falls, the hundreds and millions of dollars that is going in this year. I do not know \$600 million or \$700 million – \$670 million I think it is – this year gone into Muskrat Falls. Again, this is no knock on this current minister because he was not there.

We are talking about all the New England states, all in the agreements – produced one agreement. Then we had one purchase sale for the New England states for Muskrat Falls, just one. The purchased one we had from Nova Scotia, just one, and just one from New Brunswick. It is just not there, Mr. Speaker. So all this hype about all of these agreements we had with the New England states that they are dying for power, they are crying for it, asking us to go ahead with Muskrat Falls.

Where are all the agreements? If we have such good planning here and Muskrat Falls is going to be on in 2017, you have to have agreements in place if you are going to sell the power. Show us the agreements. We are spending; I think it is \$670 million this year gone over to Nalcor for Muskrat Falls. Where are the agreements if you are planning so well? Where are they? It is just not there.

Mr. Speaker, here is another question. We are selling the power to Nova Scotia. How much are we selling the power for if we are such good planners? How much is it per kilowatt? It just cannot be done, Mr. Speaker. There are the types of questions we have.

I am glad this party here, our Leader and the Opposition – one of the policies we made is that if we make money on the sale to Nova Scotia on Muskrat Falls, we are putting it back to reduce the rates in Newfoundland and Labrador. I am

proud of that. Do you know why I am so proud of that, Mr. Speaker? It is because Newfoundlanders and Labradorians will pay for Muskrat Falls. When I hear the minister and the government over there saying we have money coming in, we are always going to have it. We are, but it is Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who are paying it.

One of the points on Muskrat Falls that was overlooked, there is a fifty-year band on any new technology in the Province. We have to buy power from Muskrat Falls. It is a monopoly. These are all the questions we need answered. These are all the questions people need answered.

Mr. Speaker, when you want to talk about some issues – I will use the Bay of Islands for example. I will use water and sewer, and I know the Minister of Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs is very open. He is very approachable. You can sit down and at least have a frank discussion with him. Mr. Speaker, this is how we get results. This is how people get results, when you sit down and you share ideas. You say, okay, what is the priority? What is the need? You have the officials who sit down and do the analysis of it. Then you discuss what needs to be done.

I look at some other ministers; there is not a minister over there, I do not think, who would not try to do the best for the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. I do not think that. I honestly do not think that, Mr. Speaker. I think we have some who get carried away, absolutely, no doubt, but most of the ministers I deal with, and even a lot of the backbenchers, are there for the people.

Just because we raise issues, that does not mean everything is bad, everything is gloomy. That is our role. When I bring up radiation in Corner Brook, that is my role. That is what the people are asking me to do. When I bring up the long-term care in Corner Brook, that is my role. That is what I want to do, because that is what people need. That is what they expect.

Sometimes, sure, we have a difference of opinion. Sometimes we have a debate, but that does not mean I am wrong or the Member for Humber East is wrong. That does not mean it is

wrong, not one bit, as we bring this up. It is absolutely not wrong. It is because the issues are being raised to us.

Mr. Speaker, all across the Province – and I know the minister is working on this, I know he is working with MNL. Safe drinking water all throughout the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador is a priority for any government. Do I honestly think that problem can be solved overnight? Absolutely not, Mr. Speaker. Do I think there are ways we all could work towards it? Absolutely. What we need to do is make a concerted effort, set out a plan with MNL, with all the municipalities in Newfoundland and Labrador through MNL, and set out a plan that we can start bit by bit to get safe drinking water. That is what we need to do, Mr. Speaker.

We just cannot stand up and give out platitudes. Platitudes do not bring safe drinking water. What brings safe drinking water is money to help to invest in the towns. A lot of the towns – and I give the minister credit on the fiscal framework with a lot of the towns. That is going to help a lot of towns. I supported that, Mr. Speaker – a bit late, but I supported that because that will help the towns in rural Newfoundland and Labrador. That will definitely help the towns be sustainable. I know when the minister was bringing that up and I was down to the press conference, I supported it. Anything that you are going to do to improve the lives of people in Newfoundland and Labrador, I will support. I will not criticize for the sake of criticizing, and no one on this side will criticize for the sake of criticizing. It just will not happen.

Mr. Speaker, we heard all the members and they stood up – the hon. Member for Exploits just got up and started naming a few, money that the government spent. It was good ventures; but do you expect us to believe that spending \$30 million down in Parsons Pond to try to drill a few holes – do you think we have to support that because of this government? The \$10 million in the pellet plant which was doomed to fail before it even started, are we supposed to stand up and say oh yes, that was a good investment? Are we supposed to do that? Of course not, Mr. Speaker.

One day I stood up here, Mr. Speaker, I was up to \$380 million that was wasted, and I mean

wasted. I can stand up here – but just because you do what the government is supposed to do and serve the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, the minute we come up with another option or can we look at something different, we are bad. It just does not happen that way, Mr. Speaker. It just honestly does not happen.

I have a few more minutes left, Mr. Speaker. I am going to speak on the District of Bay of Islands just for a little while. At St. James All-Grade – I was here today speaking about the graduation – they are cut two teaching units. At Sacred Heart, three teaching units. When the government stands up and talks about the priority for the government is education and then we hear all these cuts, which no one ever said was going to happen – they always said no, education is sacred, it is not going to be touched, yet now we see these teaching units being cut.

I look at the road going out between Frenchman's Cove and York Harbour. I know we are going to have a meeting with the minister on some roads in the Bay of Islands. That road is deplorable. It is deplorable. It was so bad – there is still damage that happened through a flood, three years ago, that is still not fixed. It is still not fixed. I know the Member for Labrador West helped out and there were some priorities there with the damages. I remember I went to that minister and that minister went out and said okay, we can fix things here. I remember that minister, the Member for Labrador West, did that.

Mr. Speaker, that helped a lot, but since then there has been hardly any – and the former member there was a great help too, I have to say, especially with the long-term care. I just want to say I will sit down and I will have my opportunity again.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DAVIS: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

It is a pleasure to rise tonight and use my time in the Budget debate. Before I get too deep into my notes, I think it would be good to acknowledge the Member for Bay of Islands because he is a veteran, in his own right, in the House. He has been here for many years and sat in government for a long time. When I was listening to him speak tonight actually, I was thinking: Is he going to use some of his time to talk about some of the projects that were completed on the West Coast, in the Corner Brook area, while he was in government? I was thinking about some of the good things that have happened on the West Coast in the last decade or so.

He referenced health care and long-term care. There is a brand new long-term facility built in Corner Brook, Mr. Speaker, by our government since we came in. I know he was delighted when that happened. We built it. We did it. A new City Hall in Corner Brook, we built that. I know he was delighted one as well. A new addictions centre, a very important facility – there had been an addictions centre in Corner Brook for a number of years. It was actually originally housed in the former CNIB building out in Corner Brook. We built a brand new addictions centre out in Corner Brook. I know the member opposite is very proud of that as well.

A new courthouse in Corner Brook, a state-of-the-art courthouse in Corner Brook as well; money for new roads; a new state-of-the-art school in Corner Brook. Just last year \$110 million to Kruger, Corner Brook Pulp and Paper, to keep that very important industry alive.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DAVIS: Fire trucks and equipment in support of modernizing and updating the new city's fire service, and support and assistance there as well, Mr. Speaker.

I know the member opposite is quite aware that in the last decade, there has been a lot of great progress in Corner Brook. He does advocate on a regular basis for his district and for the region of the Province. I am very pleased he has done that. We responded to that by significant investments in the West Coast of this Province, Mr. Speaker, the West Coast of the Island.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DAVIS: Mr. Speaker, I thank him for his comments, and I also want to thank the Minister of Finance. It goes without saying – this year, seeing this first-hand like I have never seen before, and that is the amount of work that goes into the Budget planning process, the delivery of the Budget, and laying out the Budget for the public. I can tell you that the Minister of Finance has my significant support and backing because he did a masterful job, a wonderful job, and we owe him a great level of gratitude and appreciation for the work that he has done –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DAVIS: Also, Mr. Speaker, for the staff that work in his department and other departments, I know there was endless hours punched by so many people in government. One of the biggest matters, I guess, or issues or comments you hear that sometimes really strikes me the wrong way is sometimes people are critical of public servants – sometimes they are; they are critical. Sometimes I come to work very early in the morning and there are lots of nights I am here late and I tell you that there is very, very few times – I do not know of any – where a public servant has not been here before me and a public servant has not been here after I left in the evening. During the Budget process, that is especially true –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DAVIS: That is especially true during the Budget process. Not only for our staff in the Department of Finance but also in departments who work very hard with ministers, senior executives, as they plan and do their work. So I want to extend my appreciation to all of them.

We know, Mr. Speaker, this year the circumstances we faced was the unprecedented drop in oil prices, and it was not an easy challenge to face. It was not an easy challenge to face at all and we had some very difficult and hard decisions to make – we did. That probably, in some ways, added to the amount of time, the amount of thought and deliberation. I know, as a Cabinet, we met – it seems like endlessly,

some of them will tell you, and seems like at sometimes we would discuss matters and discuss matters and we would work on them and we would seek out alternatives and better ways to do it; and after several hours of discussion, we sometimes came back to where we were and then went off in different directions.

It was important as a team effort that we have those concerted discussions. We certainly had those as a Cabinet and also with the people of the Province. We had consulted with people in our own districts. As well the minister and his team consulted with the people in the Province.

Mr. Speaker, you do not choose the obstacles that fall in your path. What you do choose is how you are going to deal with them. That has been my attitude and my approach, and that is the approach that we have taken. Very frankly, we laid out the facts. We consulted widely. We deliberated very carefully. We put everything on the table. We took many, many months of long hours to arrive at what is a very fine balance. Our theme this year, *Balancing Choices for a Promising Future*, I think we have achieved a good balance after much work and dedication.

As a government, and different from the Opposition, we simply just cannot sit on the fence. We have to make decisions and we have to make choices.

When you face a loss of than more than a billion dollars in revenue on a Budget that is less than \$10 million, it is a significant impact and it is an enormous task to overcome. When you put up your hand and you say you want to sit at that table, you want to sit at the decision table and you are dealt a hand, you have to play that hand. It is as simple as that, and that is what we have done.

We have not run from our responsibilities. We have not tried to escape from the responsibilities we were given. We have stayed here and we are facing them head on. We are here in tough times as well as good times, and we are willing to face those tough times as well. Ignoring those challenges was simply not an option. Putting off making choices was simply not an option. Playing our cards close to our chest, like members opposite quite often do, Mr. Speaker,

that is just simply not an option. We had to deal with it decisively, and that is what we have done. We have made choices.

When it comes down to choices, Mr. Speaker, there are essentially three choices to be made. It is one of three choices. That is you have to increase your revenue, you have to reduce your expenditures, or you have to borrow and increase your debt. They are three very simple choices that you have.

It is interesting, on Budget Day when the media is set up out in the lobby and members of the House are going out and talking to the media, it was really interesting to watch some of the dynamics that played out, because we heard different versions of what they feel we have done or should not have done. They never tell us, members opposite will never say what their plan is or what their solution is. They will never offer a solution.

Even tonight when I was listening to the Leader of the Opposition, while he questioned and discussed the decisions we made and what we did as a government and what we did as part of our Budget, at no time, no time, did he offer what their solution would be or how they would do it differently. Now we have heard members opposite say, well, we have not seen the books so we do not know. They know enough to say what we are doing is wrong but they do not know enough to say how they would do it differently.

Mr. Speaker, there are three options: you reduce services, you increase your borrowing, or you increase your revenue. What we sought out was balanced choices. That is what we looked for, we looked for balanced choices.

MR. HILLIER: (Inaudible).

PREMIER DAVIS: Now I hear the Member for Conception Bay South over there, he wants to wade in on the debate. I know he has already done that, but he must not like what I am saying because he usually does that. He usually starts to speak up and talk across the floor when he does not like what he is hearing.

Mr. Speaker, the truth of it is that one of the very basic and first principles we looked at was about

public servants and the impacts of laying off large numbers of public servants. The Member for Exploits referred to this earlier. He talked about public servants and he talked about job cuts and what happened back in the early 1990s, because the Liberal government of the day chose to lay off large numbers of public servants. They laid off about 2,000 direct employees; 10 per cent management staff, and eliminated a number of vacant positions besides that. The numbers were up around the 3,000 level in total.

They came into the House of Assembly – they negotiated a contract. At the time, I was actually on the West Coast, living in the Bay of Islands district. I remember when we were awarded and negotiated, and the government of the day had agreed on significant increases. At the time I was a police officer, and I can tell you we were very low paid compared to other police services in the country. We were delighted when we negotiated an increase of more than 20 per cent. We thought it was wonderful. We thought we had struck the jackpot. Finally, finally, we are going to have a standard of living. Finally, we are going to be able to live our lives a little bit more comfortably and we are going to be able to enjoy our lives a little bit better.

They negotiated agreements, and they came in here in the House of Assembly, and gone. They wiped them all out. They did not wipe out what we had given up to achieve those gains, because that is what happens in negotiations. We will give up two people in a police car, as an example.

The Member for Conception Bay South looks for more policing all the time. What he does not realize is that it was their government who eliminated two police officers routinely in a police car. We gave that up. Two police officers in a police car, we gave that up to get these significant increases, because at the time police officers could not afford to eat. They could not afford to feed their families. They were very low paid for the jobs they did. It is not that way today, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you. It is certainly not that way.

What they did is when they went into the Legislature, you still had to give up those two officers in a car but you also lost your raise besides. That is what the Liberal government

did of the day. They did that in the day, and I know public servants remember it.

I was talking to a public servant, a friend – I know him for many years – just a couple of days ago, who I had not seen for some time. In the conversation he was reminding me about: do you remember back in those days? I said, yes, I certainly do; I certainly do remember. I remember what happened and I remember how public servants were treated.

We have a long history on this side, Mr. Speaker, of treating public servants with respect. We have a long history of it, and when we announced our –

MR. J. BENNETT: (Inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

PREMIER DAVIS: Yes, Mr. Speaker, there you go. The Member for St. Barbe over there, I guess we struck a chord with him when we talk about respecting public servants. We struck a chord with him when I talked about respecting public servants.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DAVIS: He is over there with his hand up to his mouth now shouting at me, Mr. Speaker, because we know the history of respect, or lack of respect that member has for public servants. We certainly know that, I can tell you now. I must have struck a chord with him, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, one of the first principles we wanted to do, one of the very first principles was that we did not want to eliminate huge numbers of public servants just for the sake of reducing our expenditure. Just to say out the door you go, big numbers of you, 2,000 of you go out the door and we will find a way to continue to deliver programs and services.

Also what happened, Mr. Speaker, is when the government opposite did that, when you look at all the economic indicators, all of a sudden back then it dropped. Because the spinoff effects are huge, they are significant. So you laid off a couple thousand people, you impacted a couple thousand families. Then what happens is, well,

they are not buying their groceries the way they used to. They do not shop at the mall the way they used to. Maybe they do not buy the car they were going to buy. They do not take the vacation or the trip. They do not go camping like they used to. They do not buy supplies and items for their children. They do not go to a restaurant like they used to.

Mr. Speaker, the economy just takes a dive. That is what happened back in the 1990s, and I certainly did not want that to happen as well, because with the unprecedented fall in oil prices

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SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DAVIS: Because with the unprecedented fall in oil prices our economy is very fragile, there are no two ways about it. Members bring that up opposite, and they are right, it is fragile. We did not want to do that.

I will tell you what we do not know. We do not know what they are going to do. Mr. Speaker, we do not know. The members opposite have said until we understand the complexities – the member opposite, a Liberal member said this – we cannot tell you what part of government we will eliminate. We cannot tell you what part of government we will eliminate.

AN HON. MEMBER: Who said that?

PREMIER DAVIS: The Member for Virginia Waters, the Finance critic said that. We cannot tell you, we will not know what part of government we are going to eliminate.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

PREMIER DAVIS: Mr. Speaker, they do not like it because they are getting noisy over there again. A telltale sign, they get noisy over there when they do not like what you are saying.

Mr. Speaker, that tells you, and it should tell people of the Province, that is what they would do if they were government today. They would eliminate part of government. Now, the Liberal government of Nova Scotia just did it. We know the Member for Virginia Waters is close to some of the other governments and some of the members of other governments, and Nova

Scotia just did it. They eliminated a whole department, wiped it out, gone. Mr. Speaker, that is what member's opposite said they were going to do to Newfoundland and Labrador.

Now that is not only laying off public servants, Mr. Speaker. You have to think about it now, think this through. That is not only about laying off public servants. When you do that you eliminate a whole section of government, a whole department. If you eliminate a complete department, then the programs and services being delivered by that department are gone with it.

You have to wonder, well, what department would they eliminate? Because they do not know yet, they have not decided, but they are going to eliminate a department. What department are they going to eliminate? Are they going to eliminate Child, Youth and Family Services? I cannot see how they can do that.

Maybe they will just eliminate tourism. The great work we have done, as a government, in promoting the Province, and the tourism operators in this Province have done fabulous work in creating and growing the tourism industry that is driving our economy.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DAVIS: Maybe they will eliminate that department, Mr. Speaker. We do not know what department they are going to eliminate, but they are going to eliminate a department. It is clear and simple.

They are going to take shots at health care. We know this too. The evidence is mounting. I say to you, I say to Members of the House of Assembly, I tell you now the evidence is mounting on what they are going to do, because they are also going to go after health care. The Leader of the Opposition has said he is going to make nurses work harder. He said it. He said it on *On Point*.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

PREMIER DAVIS: No, I am not. He said it. He is going to make nurses work harder. He said that is what he was talking about. He was

going to make nurses work harder. We know they are going to go after it as well, Mr. Speaker.

There is evidence around – when we came into government back in 2003, there was work underway and being done to start to eliminate some of these rural clinics. You take some of these smaller clinics in rural parts of our Province, they are all over the place. Work was underway to look at: Where can we start eliminating these clinics in rural Newfoundland? Where can we start centralizing health care? That is what they are talking about doing, but they will not tell us if that is what is on the radar today.

I have said, Mr. Speaker, fear those who are peddling change just for the sake of change, when they will not tell you what that change looks like. They will not tell you. That is right, Mr. Speaker. That is what they do. Beware of those peddling change just for the sake of change.

MR. HILLIER: (Inaudible).

PREMIER DAVIS: Again, Mr. Speaker, I have struck a chord opposite because the Member for Conception Bay South cannot resist. That is what he does. He does it here in the House, but that is okay, he can go on. He can continue on. I sat here quietly. I did not interrupt them, but that is fine. They can continue to do that, Mr. Speaker.

Members opposite talk about plans. We have had lots of plans over here, Mr. Speaker – lots of plans. We have a provincial healthy aging plan we have done. We have a cancer control plan that we have done. We have our Close to Home strategy – we announced a ten-year strategy there.

One I want to talk about here, if I can for a few minutes, is Caring For Our Future. It is a provincial strategy for quality, sufficient, and affordable child care in Newfoundland and Labrador – 2012, ten-year plan, Mr. Speaker. A great plan because members opposite talk about child care.

Just to let you know, Mr. Speaker, through that plan that started in 2012, we have grown the number of seats. We have made efforts around

growing child care and we have grown the number of child care seats in the Province. It is about those three pillars. It is about quality, it is about affordability, and it is about sufficiency, making sure there is enough. We have taken big strides in doing that. If you listen to the people opposite, they make it sound like we have not done anything with it. Very simply, they talk as if we have done nothing.

The Member for Bay of Islands when he spoke earlier – and I referenced this when I started – talks as if nothing has happened in Corner Brook. I just listed a whole number of things that have happened under our government in Corner Brook in the Western part of the Province, great success stories, but you will never hear him say it.

Under the child care strategy, back in 2003 there was 4,600 regulated child care spaces in our Province – 4,600. In 2014, we have reached 7,850 – 7,850.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DAVIS: That is regulated child care spaces in regulated child care centres. Not only that, because we have also brought forward family home-based child care – 146 homes up to 2014, 822 regulated spaces; that is almost 8,700 spaces created. That is a plan that we developed. That is a plan that we are executing.

Through that plan we are doubling the expenditures, the investments, being made in child care as part of that plan. As you grow programs and services – as a matter of fact today if a person is in a neighborhood somewhere in the Province – and I met these people from time to time: I cannot find child care. In my neighbourhood, my town, my community, I cannot find regulated child care. The answer is: We will help you with that. Pick up the phone and call the office, and we will meet with you. We will provide you with funding to hire a co-ordinator to do an assessment and analysis of what you meet for child care –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

PREMIER DAVIS: We will help you do that. You can determine what is it you need, how many spaces do you need, what are the age groups that you are going to require, what do you project it will be in the coming years, what kind of staffing are you going to require, how many trained staff are there in the area who could work at the child care centre. If there are no people there who could work in a child care centre who are qualified, well let's talk about how we are going to get them qualified and get them trained so that when you develop your child care centre, open them, you will have qualified staff to work there.

The department will work with a community group, a not-for-profit group – it could be a group of neighbours. It could be just a group of interested neighbours who say we need child care and we do not have child care. It could be a service organization. It could be faith-based. It could be any group who has an interest in child care or in their community and they feel there is a need. We will help them with that; we will help identify it. They are happening all over the Province, Mr. Speaker. There are great success stories that are happening. I tell you, they are doing great work in developing more child care.

You cannot go from here to here overnight. You cannot do it. It takes time. You have to work through it. You develop it, you grow that service, grow that opportunity over a number years, and that is what we have done from 4,600 in 2003 to about 8,700 today, Mr. Speaker. That is growth.

Mr. Speaker, while I am talking about children, we can talk about the schools as well. Let's talk about schools. Let's talk about other plans, like our five-year plan. In this year's Budget, we did a five-year infrastructure plan as well. It is contained in our Budget information, our Budget packages that are available. You can go online and see it. You can go on the government website and there is a book in there about infrastructure.

Quite often the members opposite will talk about what have you done with the money. Well, have a look at this document, Mr. Speaker. Have a look at this one. It is the infrastructure book from 2004 to 2016. It talks about investments in infrastructure; listed in there are long lists. It

talks about infrastructure investments in forestry and agriculture, post-secondary education, fisheries and aquaculture, roads, highways, transportation, the Trans-Labrador Highway, municipal infrastructure, health care, health care equipment, addiction treatment centres, Muskrat Falls, K-12 education, housing, tourism, environment, justice, public safety, emergency services, and rural broadband.

Mr. Speaker, there is a full list of them there, of all areas, of what we have made investments in in infrastructure. When we came here in 2003, the infrastructure was crumbling, it was falling apart, and it needed investments.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible) oil money.

PREMIER DAVIS: That is right, oil money.

Also what is contained in here is our five-year plan for infrastructure. What we are going to do in the future is laid out here. Schools are laid out here, what we are going to do. Back in 2003 a common discussion in the Province at the time, a very common discussion that was happening at that point in time was the mould in the schools. The schools were not fit to put children in; a common daily discussion: schools were not fit.

Our problem today, Mr. Speaker – do you know what we talk about in schools today? We talk about capacity. We talk about the population growth in certain areas is so rapid and so fast we are challenged to keep up with providing the schools a sufficient number of seats to put the students in. I think that is a much better problem to have than it is to have mouldy schools. We have come a long way in the last decade or so, in the last twelve years. We have come a very long way, and members opposite seem to forget that. They forget we have come a long way.

We have transformed this Province. This Province is different today than it was before, and it does have a lot to do with oil, I say to the member opposite. It does have a lot to do with oil because oil has helped us along; there are no two ways about it.

Members opposite have talked about a Generations Fund. Members opposite have talked about, well, why are you doing that now? Why didn't you do that before? You did not

plan for the eventuality of the collapse of oil in the world oil prices.

Mr. Speaker, they quite often will talk about Norway. You can talk about Norway, because Norway has their sovereign wealth fund that they created in 1990. Norway was producing oil, at the time, for about twenty-five years. For the first twenty-five years they did not have a sovereign wealth fund. In 1990, they started the sovereign wealth fund.

Do you know why they did not have a sovereign wealth fund for the first twenty-five years? Because they had to invest in their infrastructure; because they had to develop an economy and grow an economy; because they had to grow in the provision of services and programs for their citizens. Does that sound familiar, Mr. Speaker?

It is the same thing we were doing here in this Province – the same thing. They did it for twenty-five years in Norway before they developed that sovereign wealth fund, which is treating them very, very well. They have done that. They improved their economy. They grew industry. They grew programs and services. They rebuilt their infrastructure. That is exactly what we are doing, Mr. Speaker.

When members opposite ask: What did you do with the money? Well, that is what we did with the money. They ask: Where is the money? It is everywhere. It is everywhere throughout this Province. People are benefiting from it from coast to coast to coast. From Labrador and the Island as well, people are benefiting from that.

Mr. Speaker, we still have a five-year plan. We have stated out a five-year plan for attrition on our staffing. Instead of laying off people and dropping the economy like the Liberals do, we have a five-year plan. Every year hundreds of public servants leave the public service. They leave for many reasons. Sometimes they leave because they are retiring. Something they leave to go to private service, or they do not want to be in government. They leave government. Hundreds of people do it every year.

Our five-year attrition plan is instead of paying big money to people who leave government, paying big severance packages to people leaving

government in big numbers, having a negative impact on the economy, our attrition plan is to slowly ratchet down spending. I am using the words now of the Minister of Finance, these are his words: ratchet down our spending. Ratchet down our cost of operation. Ratchet down our public service over a five-year period, very gently and smoothly. It is planned out to do that. In five years we are going to do that, Mr. Speaker, and we are still hiring Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to come to work in public service.

I will use this as an example now. Back in the 1990s – again, I will go back to my policing days when I was a public servant. I joined the RNC in 1985. We were the fifth new class that the PC government had hired for police officers back in the 1980s. They started hiring and sending them to Holland College in PEI to train. That is where I went and trained, in Holland College. I was like the fifth class. I think there were one or two classes behind us, so six or seven classes. They were all hired early in their career and then they started to progress through their career.

When 1989 and 1990 came along, the Liberal government came in and stopped hiring. They stopped hiring police officers. So all of these people started to go through their careers. There was nobody behind them, nobody coming behind them. People were retiring, moving off. They were going through their career, Mr. Speaker, in the middle of their career, this group of people were coming through, getting close to the end of their career, and in 2003 we came back in government.

The government of the day, the members of our Party who were running the government of the day said we have a problem coming here. I remember I was a member of the Police Association executive, which is essentially the union, the bargaining unit. I was a member, and we were lobbying government. We said we have to fix this because in a few years' time these people are all going to retire and you are not going to be able to hire them, train them, and get experience quick enough. You are not going to be able to do it.

We started in 2003-2004. I remember I worked regularly with a fellow – I will not name him –

he had several years less experience than me, about eight or nine years less experience than I did. If I remember correctly, between my level of seniority and his there were about fifteen officers in that period of time, because that is all that was hired. There was nobody hired.

So what happened, in 2004 our government, the PC government started a new training program at Memorial University. I say, and I stand by it, the best in the country today. Bar none, the best in the country today.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DAVIS: It is the most comprehensive police training program in the country today. It takes a full year to be trained. Most police services are five months, six months, and so on. The RCMP is about six months, many of them are around that period of time, but we put them through Memorial. They do a couple of formal semesters at Memorial.

This program started in 2004, graduated in 2005. Now what we have is a new crop of officers, because we have been hiring every year ever since then, every year trying to keep up. Ever since then we have been hiring new officers.

So we have this big group of people who are now at the end of their careers and leaving. A lot of them have already left. I think most of them have already left. They are ready to go. We have very few in the middle, and now we have this crop coming behind them.

Mr. Speaker, I did not want to see that happen in the public service. Because if you lay off large numbers of people like the Liberals did back in the early 1990s, that is what you do. You cut it off; you just cut it off.

What our plan is, it is to allow people to leave, and we continue to hire year after year in the public service. We will hire young Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, Memorial University graduates, post-secondary, the College of the North Atlantic, private school graduates, people who want to come to work in public service, from engineers to accountants and everybody in between, Mr. Speaker, support staff and so on, social workers, doctors, nurses. There are more doctors and nurses in this

Province today than there ever has been before, more than ever before, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DAVIS: We are going to continue to hire them, Mr. Speaker, so that we have a solid base of public service. We have people who are senior in their careers, we have people in the middle of their careers, and we have people who are early in their careers. That is what the RNC lost for many, many years, because of the actions of the Liberal government that was in power of the day. That is what is what happened. So we want to continue to do that.

We have an attrition plan, but we ask members opposite: What are you going to do? They will not tell you. The simple reason why they will not tell you is because if they tell you, you will not vote for them. People will not vote for them. If they told you all the facts, people are not going to vote for them. That is why they will not lay it out, Mr. Speaker. They just will not lay it out.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DAVIS: Mr. Speaker, members opposite will talk about – and I heard them over there calling across the floor a few minutes ago. I will take a drink and let them get it out of their system over there, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, they talk about, oh, you have not planned. Well, in the couple of weeks following the Budget, we came in here and we had four days. The first four days of Question Period were focused mostly on the Budget. After that they just went off and stopped asking questions about the Budget, but they get up every day in Petitions, they get in Petitions – and Petitions are generally, we ask the government to do more of this, we ask the government to do more of that. They do it in Question Period and they also do it in debate.

Within a couple of weeks, two, two-and-a-half weeks after the Budget, Mr. Speaker, I started adding it up. I started looking. How much are they asking for? How many hundreds of millions do you think they asked for? Do you think it was \$100 million they asked for, \$200

million? Do you think they asked for \$500 million? Do you think the members opposite asked for \$500 million, \$800 million?

AN HON. MEMBER: More.

PREMIER DAVIS: How about a billion? How about \$2 billion? In the couple of weeks following our Budget, while they are over criticizing us for the moves we made – \$2 billion. They are in the \$2 billion range of ask, Mr. Speaker, right here in the House of Assembly, \$2 billion. Then they criticize us for the decisions they made.

They stand up and say, what did you do with the money? They got up and started saying, what did you do with the \$10 billion you got from oil? What did you do? It was not long, what did you do with the \$12 billion you got for oil? What did you do with the \$15 billion you got for oil? Where is that \$18 billion you got from oil? Now they are up to \$25 billion.

Now they seem to be capped out at \$25 billion lately, Mr. Speaker. They seem to be capped out at \$25 billion, but for a while there it was a running total. It continued to grow and grow and grow. We did not know where it was going to stop, Mr. Speaker. We did not know where it was going to stop.

MR. HILLIER: (Inaudible).

PREMIER DAVIS: There is the Member for Conception Bay South over there. I think he is talking about his new highway that just got opened. No, maybe he is talking about the new arena that is being built and paid for by government. Maybe he is talking about the new town hall that is being built in Conception Bay South, Mr. Speaker.

That is it. Oh no, Mr. Speaker, I know what he is talking about. He is talking about the tens of millions of dollars being spent on waste treatment, sewage treatment, up in Conception Bay South – tens and tens of millions. Maybe he is talking about the beautiful T' Railway that is up in CBS. Oh no, it is the Manual's River building, the new Manual's River building that government has contributed to. That is what he is talking about.

MR. HILLIER: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South, on a point of order.

MR. HILLIER: Mr. Speaker, everything that the Premier suggested was done by council after he left.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

There is no point of order.

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER DAVIS: Yes, they have their heads down over there now, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, there has been significant investments, significant work done, and significant improvements to the Province over the last twelve years. Despite what members opposite like to talk about from time to time, sometimes it is good for us to remind them of the investments that have been made because, essentially, they are endless – they are endless.

We have created plans, Mr. Speaker. We have created substantial plans. I have just laid out some of them for you and I have shared some of them with you here that I have brought with me today. I have a long list of plans that have been done by this government and a long list of strategies that have been done: Skills Task Force; Northern Strategic Plan for Labrador, significant plan for Labrador, a big piece of work; Poverty Reduction Strategy, one of the most successful in the country.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DAVIS: For people who do not know what that means, it very simply means this: We have fewer people relying on social programs today than ever before in the history of Newfoundland and Labrador. We have taken people who have struggled to live on their own and to pay their own way, they have gained better education and better opportunities. They have moved off of social programs and now they are self-supporting and they are now contributing to the economy. They get up every morning and they go to work. They earn a living and they feed their families. They live

their lives and they look for better opportunities for themselves and their families and they work hard – hard-working Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who, not too many years ago, were relying on social programs for their own existence and for that of their family.

Through our program, we have been very successful in helping those people to give them opportunities so that they can be contributors to the economy, Mr. Speaker. They are all better off for it, we are better off for it, and I congratulate each and every one of them.

Some of them have worked very hard to move from social programs to being able to fend for themselves and earning a living that they can pay their own way. Even some of the supports we have given along the way, one of them always was about – you remember when people had to move from social programs to working, one of the first things they lost was their pharmacare, their own programs. They would be cut off. So you stop receiving benefits for drugs, as an example. We changed that, Mr. Speaker. So now there is a transition. So instead of just cutting them off, as time goes on they can now transition from social programs to working. It is a very successful program, one of the best in the country.

Violence Prevention Initiative: The next phase is soon to be released. The members opposite asked, and as one of my colleagues said today it will be coming soon. We look forward to that one as well. Mr. Speaker, Climate Change Action Plan, and Energy Plan – the Energy Plan, a big one. My colleague and my friend, the Minister of Natural Resources, likes to talk about the Energy Plan on a regular basis. I tell you what, it has had great success in this Province.

As I have said, what we see in our Province is about oil. The transformation that you see in our Province is about oil. You can drive around this Province and you will see new homes and you see people going around in their pick-up trucks. They have their winter gear; they have their snowmobiles. They have their motorcycles and their boats in the summertime.

There are lots of people in the Province who are doing so much better now because of oil than

they ever did before. All you have to do it drive from community to community and look at the homes that are there. Look at the homes that are now being built in communities. Some communities that were struggling not so long ago have beautiful, new homes – people building homes in communities, small towns. Some of those beautiful towns that have beautiful seascapes and landscapes where they want their second home, a cottage or summer home and they want spend time there, Mr. Speaker, all because of oil.

We are not finished with energy. The minister will talk about that in great detail, I am sure, because Muskrat Falls is the other project that they are not in favour of across the way, Mr. Speaker. They do not support Muskrat Falls. We know there is one over there who does, who supports Muskrat Falls. They do not support it. If you think about the high-paying skilled jobs that people have had through Muskrat Falls, thousands of jobs that people have had just in the construction of Muskrat Falls, thousands of jobs through Muskrat Falls, thousands of high-paying jobs that are being created through the investments in Muskrat Falls.

Mr. Speaker, I know some media like to say: There he goes again. He is talking about the Hoover Dam. He is talking about all the power and everything, but it is important to think about it. It is a really good reference because the Hoover Dam is well known. It has been producing power for eighty years. The Upper Churchill has been producing power for forty years. Muskrat Falls will do the same thing, Mr. Speaker. It will produce power for 100 years to come.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DAVIS: Clean, green, renewable electricity, Mr. Speaker.

One of the big benefits – I mentioned climate change. It is a very important matter, climate change; not only just for Newfoundland and Labrador, worldwide. We know that we have pristine waters and clean air here in this Province, Mr. Speaker. We do. Just Muskrat Falls alone will reduce our greenhouse gas emissions by 10 per cent. It will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, our carbon emissions,

by 10 per cent because of Muskrat Falls. Muskrat Falls will allow us to take out – I have to see which direction I am; it is over that way. It is out that way. Out in Holyrood, where the Holyrood generating plant is, that will come off line.

If you ask people in Holyrood and Seal Cove – ask the Member for Conception Bay South, I am sure he will agree – one of the big benefits that people in Conception Bay South, Holyrood, and the Conception Bay area will all agree that Muskrat Falls is shutting down Holyrood, that dirty polluter – one of the worst polluters in Canada, Mr. Speaker –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DAVIS: It provides supplementary power to the Northeast Avalon. It has been a huge polluter, a desperate need for significant upgrades and so on; but instead of putting our money into that dirty polluter, we are going to build Muskrat Falls. The Holyrood plant will be taken off line through Muskrat Falls and 10 per cent of our carbon emissions will be gone. We will have cleaner air for it and we will be better off for it because of Muskrat Falls.

People do not talk about that very often. I know members of the NDP are very high on the environment, as many of us are. They talk about it on a regular basis, more than the members from the Liberal Party, but the members of the NDP will talk about the environment much more. I am sure that the Member for St. John's East or the Member for Signal Hill – Quidi Vidi would be more than happy to talk about the benefits of shutting down Holyrood, getting off of Holyrood and, instead, having to produce power through a clean, green process.

Just think about it, Mr. Speaker, we get a lot of rain here in Newfoundland and Labrador and every time it rains that is money falling out of the sky. When Muskrat Falls comes on line that is money that is going to be falling out of the sky.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DAVIS: I have been talking about plans, Mr. Speaker, and some of the strategies that we have had and some of the ones that we

have done. I am going through a long list; I do not want to go over all of them: the Agriculture and Agrifoods Action Plan; the strategic culture plan; tourism strategy, a great success story. When I speak to other Premiers in the country, they quite often ask: What is your secret? Mr. Speaker, we can do beautiful, colourful ads, great promotions, very well managed and strategically delivered.

MR. OSBORNE: (Inaudible).

PREMIER DAVIS: The Member for St. John's South is over criticizing our tourism plan, Mr. Speaker. I think that is what he is doing. Is that what you were doing, criticizing the plan?

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

PREMIER DAVIS: Yes, he is criticizing the plan, but this year there will be \$1.1 billion in tourism spending in our Province – \$1.1 billion in spending right here in our Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DAVIS: Mr. Speaker, we can bring all the people here all we want through these great commercials in tourism, but I have had a couple of experiences with people in the last number of years. I was with the Member for Port au Port and we were doing a tour in his area and I said: I want to down to the alpaca farm down there. Some of you may have visited there. The operator there is a former police officer, former RCMP officer. The consistency assistant for the member is a former military police officer.

I said: Let's go down and see him. Ed Hutchings is his name. He is the operator out there. I worked with him when I was on the West Coast actually; he was police officer on the West Coast for many years. We went down to stop in to see him. When we pull up, outside there was a smart car parked; a smart car with a Texas licence plate on it. I said: That is a long drive in a smart car from Texas to Newfoundland and Labrador. I go inside and there is a man and his wife in there. He is fairly blocky, husky fellow – I am thinking that is a real long drive in a smart car. Ed Hutchings says: Let me introduce you. So he introduces

me to the guy. He just retired as a police officer in Texas.

So we have a retired police officer from Texas. We have a retired RNC officer. We have a retired RCMP officer. We have a retired military police officer. We could have had a police convention, I suppose, for that matter, and the only other one there was Tony – I am sorry, the Member for Port au Port. Sorry, Mr. Speaker, I apologize. The Member for Port au Port was the only other one who was there.

So I said to him: That is a long drive in a smart car. He said: Yes, it is. I said: Did you come here from Texas in a smart car. He said: No, I will tell you now. I retired last year, so we bought a motorhome and we decided we are going to tour Canada. We are going to go all the way from BC right over to Nova Scotia. That is what he was going to do.

When he got to Nova Scotia, he learned about Newfoundland and Labrador. Then he said: Let's go the rest of the way. So they packed up their motorhome. They came across on the boat. He said: We were a bit tight on time so we came over for a couple of days to have a look around. I said: You cannot see a lot in Newfoundland in a couple of days. He said: No, I have been here for three weeks.

So he came over for a couple of days, but he just absolutely loved the place. He did not want to leave. They were doing that much driving, he parked the motorhome and started to use the smart car because he wanted to tour and he wanted to drive. He was driving long distances. It is much more economical to drive a smart car than it is a motorhome.

He raved about our place, but what he really raved about, as so many people do, is he raved about the people.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DAVIS: He raved about our people in our Province. He raved about how you can walk in a community, you can go to a community and it is like you lived there all your life.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DAVIS: People are so welcoming and open to you.

While we can do all of the finest ads and promotion that we want about Newfoundland and Labrador, we can bring all the people here that we want, attract and draw people to our Province, it is our people who keep them here longer and it is our people who bring them back. There are lots of stories I could share, success stories, of tourism experiences that I have had with meeting people from away who have come here and have enjoyed that. Hats off to our tourism operators and not only to them, but all the people of the Province because they always do that; they always make our visitors feel welcome and they bring them here.

A lot of that, Mr. Speaker, has to do with pride. In policing and military they call it esprit de corps, pride in your unit. It has to do with pride in your unit, your unit being the Province. It has a lot to do with attitude as well because we have an attitude over here in the House that we are the best. We have the best people in the world. We have the best landscapes and seascapes. We have the best opportunities for visitors to come here. Members opposite do not have such a positive attitude, and it is really unfortunate.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

PREMIER DAVIS: No, you do not. Least, lowest, and last, is that a positive attitude, I say to members opposite? Least, lowest, and last, is that a positive attitude?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (Verge): Order, please!

PREMIER DAVIS: Mr. Speaker, we like to think here that the glass is half full. That is the attitude and that is the position I would like to take. Things are not all bad – and the Member for Bay of Islands said it. They have a job to do over there. He said it when he was up just before I got up tonight. He said they have a job to do. They have a job to do the things that they do in the least, lowest, and last kind of attitude, things are all bad and things are no good. They have that job to do. So members opposite have to take some responsibility for it; they do. They

have to take some responsibility because things are not all bad in the Province.

Things, Mr. Speaker, are actually very good. It is kind of like Buddy Wasiname and the Other Fellers, when they do their routine. Boy, it is not very good, is it? No, boy, some bad. Yes, it is the worst I ever saw. Then they go from –

AN HON. MEMBER: She is gone.

PREMIER DAVIS: She is gone – that is right; she is gone, some bad. Within a couple of minutes they go back to well, it is not that bad. Actually, it is pretty good. They go from that to it is pretty good to boy, she could not be any better. She is some good, she could not be any better.

We see that here on the floor of the House of Assembly sometimes, Mr. Speaker, and we know members opposite have a responsibility to try to hold our feet to the fire and question what government does, but really they should think about it because Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are not the least, lowest, and last; they are the best – they are absolutely the best.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DAVIS: Now, Mr. Speaker, I was going to go through some of the other strategies that are here from chronic disease management, long-term care, and social housing – and when I see long-term care, I cannot help but respond to comments by the Leader of the Opposition that he talked about earlier. I was listening to him when he was on his feet earlier tonight and he was talking about long-term care and what we are going to do with long-term care.

It was really interesting because a lot of the members opposite talk about their business backgrounds. A lot of their businesses were partnered with government. They do that. They partner with government. They provide programs and services on behalf of government. In everything from health care to repairing ships and vessels, they partner with government in providing those services. Government provides and buys services from people of the Province all over.

I am of the belief that instead of government being the primary employer everywhere, we need to create an environment where businesses can thrive. I believe that. Also, we should utilize businesses and services from businesses. Because, quite frankly, quite often private business can deliver programs and services more effectively, more efficiently, for better value than what government can. In those cases, we have a responsibility. We have a duty to find the best ways to provide those services and those programs. Long-term care is one of them.

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition said earlier tonight: Oh, the Premier said it was bold and it was innovative. Well, it was because nowhere has this Province ever said we are going to go out and engage with private business and we are going to seek out best value for long-term care.

For generations and generations, as long as I can remember, when I was a young fellow – I grew up in St. John's – when I was a young fellow growing up in St. John's my father was on the board for the Agnes Pratt Home, for as long as I can remember. I was not unusual on a Sunday afternoon that dad had to go down to the Agnes Pratt Home. Either he had to sign some cheques or sign some approvals. He had to do some work down there.

I remember they were building a big extension down there at the time. I remember him talking about how challenging it was for the church to work and partner with government and the health care of the day and so on, but it was a faith based, long-term care home. The church ran it. The church owned it and the church ran it. It was not only the Agnes Pratt Home. There was Saint Luke's, St. Pat's, the Glenbrook Lodge, they were all faith based, long-term care homes that for as long as I can remember existed in St. John's where I grew up.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

PREMIER DAVIS: There are others, yes, absolutely. There are others around the Province.

Mr. Speaker, that was not a bad arrangement. It was not. Over time there was an evolution of health care having heavier and bigger roles and

responsibilities in managing and owning and operating those facilities, but it was not a bad arrangement.

So having faith based, not for profit, long-term care is not new, but what is bold and innovative and different is for us to go out and engage with private business to create those homes and do it in a way that we are approaching it, because there has been great success around the country with private business in long-term care.

Now, members opposite get up and say, but you do not know how much it is going to cost. Now the Leader of the Opposition has been in business long enough to know that in order to determine what someone is going to charge you for the service you have to go through a process to say, what are you going to charge us for the service? That makes a lot of sense I think, Mr. Speaker. If you are going to ask someone what are you going to charge or what the service is going to cost, you have to go through a process to ask them what it is going to cost. We have to go through a competitive process.

You do not know what company A may provide, or company B or company C. You have to go through that process, and the member opposite knows it all too well. Until you go through that process –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

PREMIER DAVIS: What we have done is we have looked at the experience we currently have here in this Province, because we also partner with a private business, Chancellor Park, that provides long-term care beds to government, to the Province, and we pay them. They have trained and qualified health care people, professionals who work in their facility, who provide the same training, same qualifications as you would find in a provincial health care facility. They provide those services, but for substantially less cost, Mr. Speaker.

We do know that by partnering with private business, we can create and provide long-term care services at less cost. Yes, we do know there are acute care beds that cost \$50,000 a

month to operate, that have patients in them waiting for long-term care.

Our plan, Mr. Speaker, is to build 360 new long-term care beds; 360 through partnering with private business and not-for-profit. Let it be a competitive process. Allow that to be a competitive process. Allow those private individuals, those private companies, those not-for-profit based groups to come to us and say, we want to compete for that service. We want to compete to provide that, and here is what our proposal is. That is the process. Members opposite know that, Mr. Speaker.

For them to say, oh, you do not know what it is going to cost. Mr. Speaker, that is smoke and mirrors. It is nothing more than smoke and mirrors. It is rhetoric from the Opposition to try and take away from the fact – because one thing the Opposition have not told you is how they are going to build long-term care. Again, no solutions, no plan, no answers to the problems, because they do that. That is what they do, Mr. Speaker, that is what they do.

Whenever they speak and they ask questions – if you ask them a question, how are you going to do that? How are you going to do this differently? They will say, well, what the government is doing is wrong. Yes, the government is wrong, absolutely wrong. So what are you going to do? Well, we are not going to do what the government did. What are you going to do? Well, what they did was wrong. We are not going to do that, but they will never tell you what they are going to do, Mr. Speaker. That is why I say the people of the Province should fear those who are peddling change simply for change. They should do that.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

PREMIER DAVIS: Yes, and I am going to say it a few more times yet. Between now and the election, I tell you, I might say it a couple of hundred more times. I will say it over and over because people need to know the truth, Mr. Speaker. They need to know the facts and to know the truth. That is what they need to know, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DAVIS: Mr. Speaker, for government to build 360 long-term care beds today it is going to cost hundreds of millions of dollars that government simply does not have. If we can find a way to create those long-term care beds without having to find –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

PREMIER DAVIS: – the hundreds of millions of dollars to build them, we are better off as a Province. That is what we are doing.

There are success stories right across Canada. In Ontario, 60 per cent of long-term care beds are privately owned – 60 per cent. They have a lot more long-term care beds in Ontario than we have here in Newfoundland and Labrador, I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, and most provinces do.

In Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, they are still building them. The Liberal governments in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

PREMIER DAVIS: – are continuing to build private partnership, long-term care beds. The Liberal governments of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick are continuing to do it, Mr. Speaker. As I said, the Liberal government in Ontario, 60 per cent are private business.

In BC; we are actually partnering with Partnerships BC. The Liberal government out in BC have a Crown corporation, PBC or Partnerships BC, and we are partnering with them because they have a tremendous amount of experience and success in building private-public partnerships, Mr. Speaker. They have a good record. They have a solid record. We are partnering with them because we do not have that same experience. So we are going to where the experts are; the people who have those experiences. They have that knowledge and they know how to do it, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I only have a few minutes left, but I mentioned a little while ago about how we have laid out plans. I have talked about that.

Much of my theme tonight has been talking about the plans that we have. People of the Province – because I believe the people of the Province will make the right choice this fall. They will look at our plan versus what members opposite have. They were starting to talk about: oh, in a few weeks we are going to announce our big plan.

They were going to announce their big plan, Mr. Speaker. That is what they were going to do. Then they came out and said: Well, we have two of our supporters here, two St. John's business people –

AN HON. MEMBER: Not elected.

PREMIER DAVIS: Not elected. Yes, they would not throw that at us, that is for sure. They would not throw the fact at us that they are not elected.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

PREMIER DAVIS: Two unelected St. John's business people who are going around the Province to talk to people.

Let me tell you what is happening, Mr. Speaker. The people they are talking to are picking up the phone and are calling us, and they are saying: Do you know what they said to us? So the picture is starting to be painted as to what is happening. I tell you now, Mr. Speaker, the picture is starting to be painted.

We are starting to find out what their plan is all about, because they said they do have a plan. They actually have a plan but they refuse to share it. They are not going to share it.

Do you know what they are saying, Mr. Speaker, what the Liberals are saying? It is no one's business what our plan is. That is what they are saying, we are not telling you. It is not your business for us to tell you what our plan is. We are going to continue to slide along. We are going to duck and weave the best we can, because we are not going to tell you what our plan is. We are not. We are going to go out and talk to people but we are not going to tell you what our plan is, Mr. Speaker, because they

cannot tell us what the plan is – they cannot. If they tell us what the plan is people are not going to be happy with them.

When they go out sometimes, and they do that. We know that on election day, and I talked about it when I started – on Budget day, sorry, I said that earlier too. On Budget day they went out, the Leader was out on one side of the lobby giving one answer: here is what we are going to do, we are going to raise the deficit, and we are going to have a longer deficit for a longer period of time. At the same time, the Liberal Finance critic was on the other side of the House saying we are going to reduce spending and we are going to increase revenue. That is right, we are going to reduce spending and increase revenue – at the same time.

Mr. Speaker, it was either strategic on their part – they had all the bases covered, so no matter which way they go now they have themselves covered – or they really did not know what one person's position was going to be or what the party's position was supposed to be, Mr. Speaker. That is what happened.

Mr. Speaker, they talk about openness and transparency. They had their secret millionaire dinner up in Toronto. That is what they had, Mr. Speaker. They had that.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

PREMIER DAVIS: No, a million. No, no, you had to be –

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

PREMIER DAVIS: It did not cost \$10,000, I can tell you that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DAVIS: Mr. Speaker, it certainly did not cost that.

Do you know what? All of the people who financed our campaigns, Mr. Speaker, we made it public, not like members opposite. We released them, Mr. Speaker. That is what we did, unlike the members opposite.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DAVIS: Members opposite are going to say the rules do not allow us to say it. That is what they say, Mr. Speaker. The rules do not allow us to release that information. It does, Mr. Speaker, but members opposite choose not to share it. It is their choice. They choose not to share it.

Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you – I am going to wrap up in a few seconds – that the Budget we have brought down is one of balanced choices. They were tough choices, they were hard choices, Mr. Speaker, but we are willing to stay at the wheel and stay at the helm. We are ready to stay the course, Mr. Speaker. Newfoundland and Labrador has had a great decade.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

PREMIER DAVIS: The last ten years for Newfoundland and Labrador have been phenomenal, better than it has ever been before, Mr. Speaker. Even though we are in a tough time right now, I can tell you with our party at the wheel, with our party in charge of this Province, the future is bright for Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS DEMPSTER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am happy to stand and speak to the Budget again. Mr. Speaker, I am always happy to stand and be a voice for the people of Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair, the people who elected me, and it is always a pleasure to bring forth the issues – and lots of issues.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MS DEMPSTER: I was happy tonight to listen to our leader for an hour as our leader raised the

issues and the concerns from all around the Province again and again and again. He spoke very eloquently to this government and the money that they have had since they have come into power since 2003, the \$25 billion in oil money, and now we are facing the biggest deficit that we have in the history of the Province – touched on real issues. Despite all the money, now we see a Budget that was brought down which they are going to tax us back to prosperity, as my colleague likes to say.

Then we listened to the Premier get up and what a contrast. When the Premier gets up and he imitates a bit of Buddy Wasiname and the Other Fellers and he wonders for the first few minutes he is up, what we would do. Well if he wants to see what we would do, I say drop the writ and we will show him what we will do. Drop the writ.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS DEMPSTER: Mr. Speaker, my colleague for Torngat sometimes he jokes and says it is not easy to run the government from this side, but we are not doing too bad. The few ideas that we did let out, they were happy to take them and implement them –

AN HON. MEMBER: Full-day kindergarten.

MS DEMPSTER: Full-day kindergarten; Bill 29, we said a first order of the day we would repeal Bill 29; bicycle helmets – so we cannot give away all of our good stuff. Show us an Opposition that will, before the writ is dropped, come out with all their policy. I guarantee you – I have an uncle, and I thought about him here tonight, that says you can fool some of the people some of the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time. This government is going to find out that they did not fool the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. They have bungled and mismanaged over a decade, and now they are saying stick with us. We have a plan. We did not have one for the last ten, twelve, fourteen years, but stick with us. We have a plan.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to be talking a little bit about tourism tonight. When you get up and your time is limited, you hardly know where to start because there are so many issues. Tourism

is something that sometimes when I think about tourism and the lack of a tourism development officer, a product development officer in Labrador, it saddens me. Sometimes, Mr. Speaker, it really infuriates me.

The Premier, when he was speaking, said what would you do in Opposition, what would you guys do, what would you cut, and he went through a number of departments. He said: Would you cut tourism? Mr. Speaker, if he cut tourism we would not see or feel the difference in Labrador because it is non-existent there today right now – non-existent. That is what I am going to talk about for the next few minutes and how sad that is.

Just a few years ago we had two or three people who were working in tourism in Labrador. When I came into the House of Assembly in the fall of 2013, there was a position that had gone – the guy had retired and it had not been filled for months and months. One of the first things I did, I was pushing for that tourism position to be filled in Labrador, in the fall of 2013. I was told it is coming soon – it is coming soon.

It is like many other things, Mr. Speaker. I could talk for the remainder of the evening on all of the wonderful things that are coming soon, like the adult literacy plan that we have been waiting on since 2007; the Poverty Reduction Strategy the Premier mentioned, one of the best that they have in the country – one of the best in the country. This was an office that was created in 2012 and four years later, we are still waiting for something concrete on the Population Growth Strategy.

I sat in Estimates when some questions came up about the Population Growth Strategy. The minister responsible, just a couple of weeks ago in Estimates, said he has learned not to commit to dates when asked about timelines. I thought to myself how is that for accountability. After four years of waiting the minister says: Well, I have learned now in this business not to commit to dates.

Mr. Speaker, I say the people of the Province are watching and they understand much more than we give them credit for understanding, I can tell you that. I hear it all of the time when I am out in all of the four corners of the Province.

Back to the tourism, in the fall of 2013 the position was going to be filled. We waited and nothing happened. Here we are, we are moving into the summer of 2015. We are coming into tourism season, so that is why it is prominent on my mind.

Last week we celebrated Tourism Week in the Province. Mr. Speaker, I represent a beautiful, beautiful part of this Province. It would take me more than twenty minutes to talk about some of the places that we have in the district. We have the oldest funeral monument in the New World, with the Maritime Archaic Indian burial site. Mr. Speaker, that happens to be out in Point Amour where we have the tallest lighthouse in Atlantic Canada and the second tallest lighthouse in the country, standing thirty-three metres, I believe it is 132 steps, and you can go and you can have dinner in that lighthouse.

I am going to talk about some of these beautiful sites. The other day, my colleague for Humber East was in Estimates. He could not get any satisfaction from the minister. He said: Why can't you commit to filling the tourism officer position that has been vacant in Labrador for two or three years? Why can you not commit? He did not get any satisfaction, so he asked questions here in the House of Assembly. I was absolutely astounded, Mr. Speaker – we hear lots of excuses, lots of excuses, but I was astounded after sitting here in the House for two years, almost two years, to hear the Minister of Tourism stand and say: I am certainly quite happy with the level of service that we are providing regarding tourism in Labrador.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I have a message for the minister of tourism; the people in Labrador are certainly not happy with the level of service. Here is another example of a government blatantly not listening, when we have endless, beautiful tourist attractions and yet nobody marketing.

The Premier can get up and talk about oh, they ask for money, they ask for money, they ask for this and that; but sometimes you make a small investment and you get a huge return. We are looking at little communities that we are trying to make viable, that we are trying to make more sustainable, and you make a small investment and you get a big return; but we have not seen

very many good examples of that this government can show, Mr. Speaker. We have seen where they have squandered tens and hundreds of millions and have gotten nothing back, but not to put a little something into places where they can get something back.

Mr. Speaker, I mentioned the Point Amour Lighthouse. I can come on down to Red Bay, the UNESCO World Heritage Site – I was pleased to have the Lieutenant Governor and his wife come into the district a couple of weeks ago. They were very impressed with the Basque whaling site and the majestic beauty that surrounds Red Bay, and I am only just touching on some, Mr. Speaker, to build my case.

Then you come on down to Battle Harbour, Mr. Speaker, and you will have an experience like none other, a step back in time to when cod was king. Many people from the Island, many people I would say sitting on the other side, their forefathers and their grandfathers have come to Labrador, they fished and they had the experience. You visit Battle Harbour and it will take you back to a time when that was happening.

Mr. Speaker, you come on down, we have the Mealy Mountains, the beautiful, majestic Mealy Mountains and Cartwright about to become a gateway to the Mealy Mountains Park; another example of how this government is stifling, is crippling, holding back Labrador from progressing, from being able to make it on their own, holding them back – a file since 2007.

We have Parks Canada – we have the federal government that wants to, is ready, is waiting to put \$35 million into an area and they got a file that is sitting on their desk since 2007 and you wonder why it is so infuriating and so upsetting. They will not give the communities a chance to help themselves. Yet, they will get up and they will talk about the things we are finding problems in. Stand up and tell me if I am wrong, Mr. Speaker.

Right around the Mealy Mountain Park, we have the beautiful Wonderstrand. I was reading an article from a tourist lately that said with a bit of luck and some cards that all lined up just right, I found my way to one of the most beautiful places in the world: the Wonderstrand.

Why is it, Mr. Speaker, that a bit of luck and a lot of cards got to line up right for a tourist to find her way to a beautiful place in Labrador? Why is it? It is because we have a \$13 million marketing budget and guess how many ads were in it from Labrador? One ad from Labrador. There are so many beautiful sites, yet with a bit of luck – the Tourism Industry Association of Canada talks about two things. When they talk about tourism, they talk about two things that you need: You need marketing and you need access.

Here we are, Mr. Speaker, and I have just touched on a few – I live up in the bottom of St. Michaels Bay. The bay that I live in has 365 islands, fascinating coves; you could not stay there long enough to explore it all. How do people know about it? This government has not seen fit – we have had several people who were working in tourism several years ago, we had a person who retired, and over the last two or three years they have not seen fit to fill the position when we are sitting on a gold mine with so much to market.

These people will come, they will spend their money, they will go back and they will tell other people because word of mouth is the strongest form of advertising, Mr. Speaker, but this government has not seen fit to do it. It is very disappointing. It saddens me when we are not being given a chance. So we need the marketing and we need the access. Mr. Speaker, we are stifled. We are crippled in both areas.

Access – the people watching tonight know all about the difficulties that there are in access when it comes to getting to Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair or getting to Labrador. I am not making it up. They live with the woes every day. I cringe every time I hear somebody get up and talk about the provincial ferry strategy.

It is good that some areas – I would never not wish for somebody to have good, adequate transportation to and from an area where they live. It is a necessity. It is important, but every time I hear about the provincial ferry strategy – and I realize that myself and my colleague for Torngat, what we got out of the provincial ferry strategy was a piece of paper. We got a piece of paper and that makes it difficult when you are talking about tourism and you are talking about

marketing, it makes it difficult to access the area when we still do not have a new ferry that is so desperately needed. We do not know when we are getting a new ferry. We have no idea when we are getting a new ferry. Once again we see that they put out the RFP and they did their homework after – they did their homework after. There are many examples we could give of where they have bungled things so badly there.

Mr. Speaker, I will continue to advocate for the people, but every time I am back in the district I hear from tourism operators, establishments in the area, some beautiful establishments that you could stay in, starting at the Southern part of the district in L'Anse au Clair, the Northern Light Inn. You can come right on down Sea View cabins in Forteau. There is the Oceanview in West St. Modeste. There is Whaler's Restaurant and Cabins in Red Bay. There is Riverlodge Hotel in Mary's Harbour. There is Alexis Hotel, and I mentioned that.

There are so many beautiful establishments, but they are not getting their fair share of this billion-dollar industry. They are not getting their fair share because this government, while they can put out a Budget that talks about balancing choices and a promising future, they have not balanced their choices. There is a huge inadequacy. There is a big imbalance in the scale.

I talked earlier about the difficulty of getting across just on the ferry and the other issues that the businesses are dealing with: broadband. Many, many times I stand on my feet and I advocate here for improved broadband services in the region. In this technological age when tourist establishments need to be checking online to see what groups are booking to come, the speed is so slow that government should be intervening and saying service providers are not allowed to charge individual residents in communities for a service that they are not getting. Every single day I hear from businesses who cannot even use an Interac machine in their business. Imagine if it was like that here in the city for a day and people had to experience what we do in that area.

Mr. Speaker, the bad roads – I had quite an email a little while ago from an individual and it was in capital letters, three words, it was called:

FIX THE ROADS. It was a very, very upset person. I could not blame them for being upset. He said: Southern Labrador, you have a beautiful part of the Province where you live; you have beautiful people; but if you want tourists to come, if you want them to bring their motorhome, if you want them to spend their money on the lovely crafts that you have in your store, fix the roads.

I have stood many times on my feet and petitioned for improvements to Route 510 from L'Anse au Clair to Red Bay. Mr. Speaker, I am very, very concerned that it is only a matter of time and a life will be lost on that road because it is in such a deplorable condition.

I believe seven-and-a-half tractor-trailer loads were the amount of cold patch – imagine, last year. I do not know what the cost is of a tractor-trailer load of cold patch, but I know that there is only so far that goes. As the road continues to be built – I mean, I know members opposite get up and they tout the millions of dollars that they are investing in a road through Labrador, investing in a road through Labrador – you tell me a more basic piece of infrastructure that you can get than a road. While most of the rest of the Province and the country is into getting their road improved for the second time, we are still trying to get our first one, and a slow process it is I might add.

Here we are now on the Goose Bay end and we are going to see some asphalt this year and it will be a reprieve for the people; but, on the Southern part, it is going to take a long time at the rate they are going and at the rate that they are getting tenders out the door. We are going to be a long, long time still driving on gravel road, Mr. Speaker.

Here we are, we are talking about tourism, we are talking about marketing – we have the sites, Mr. Speaker. We do not need to build it and they will come. We do not need to do that. Anybody would come – you can put our tourist attractions up against anywhere in the world. I did not even touch on my colleague's area, the majestic Torngat Mountains and so many beautiful areas as you go further north, Mr. Speaker.

I cannot believe – and I would love for someone to get up after I sit down and give us an explanation on why they do not see fit to have anybody marketing the tourism potential and helping the industry in Labrador. Just imagine, Mr. Speaker.

We hear it all the time about all of the money that is coming out of Labrador and nothing coming back. Mr. Speaker, people are justified a lot of times when they say that. I cannot disagree with them. I cannot disagree when you talk about tourism and you talk about marketing and you talk about access. We do not have the marketing piece and we have so many issues around the access. How can you disagree with the people? It is so true what they say. The delayed roadwork and the bungled RFP for the new ferry, Mr. Speaker, so much beauty but no marketing and no access.

AN HON. MEMBER: Talk about the ferry.

MS DEMPSTER: Oh, there is so much I could talk about the ferry. I get tired of talking about the ferry because the minister accused me the last time I was up talking about the ferry, he said she likes to get up and stand on her soapbox and beat the drum. Now I was a little bit offended by that, Mr. Speaker, because as my colleague from the Bay of Islands said, we have an obligation in this House. We have an obligation in the Opposition to democracy, to stand and to raise the issues.

When they table a piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, we have an obligation to the people who elected us, to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador to tear that up, to propose amendments so that at the end of the day the legislation that the people of the Province have to live under is the best that it could be. Although, I have to say, a lot of times we are not given much to work with.

We heard from our Premier earlier tonight. I am talking about tourism and I am talking about small communities, but, Mr. Speaker, it crossed my mind as I was listening to the Premier, one of my little communities, many of my little communities, the population in one community is more than what elected that man to be Premier. Just imagine that, the people in one of my little communities are more than the

population who elected that man to be Premier; yet, he saw fit to interfere with the electoral boundaries process. He saw fit to interfere to save a couple of million dollars he said. My colleague from the Bay of Islands said it was up to \$400 million in wastage the other day when we debated in a private member's motion.

Now he is interfering with the by-election. He has a mandate. We thought we were going to the polls in September, and now we are going November 30. Mr. Speaker, people see through it, and everywhere I go people are sick to death of it. They are saying get on with the day, drop the writ. Let's have an election, it is time for change.

Mr. Speaker, one of the other issues – and I was not going there tonight, I was not, because I do not want to talk about Muskrat Falls every time I stand, but the Premier talked about tonight what Muskrat Falls is going to do for them. I just want to close by telling him, we are still going to be left with a dirty diesel, unreliable generator.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS DEMPSTER: We are still going to be left with that, Mr. Speaker, no different.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Minister of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. RUSSELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As I do each and every time I get on my feet in this hon. House, I would like to say thank you once again to the great people of the District of Lake Melville. Thank you for your continued support. It is my honour and privilege to represent you every single time I stand in this House and every day I go to work. It is a rare and wonderful privilege indeed, Mr. Speaker, that we all share on this side of the House.

I would just like to say a little bit about my district, of course, as I always do before I get into the politics of what we are seeing here

tonight. The banter back and forth and the rhetoric, if you will, is always interesting, but I just want to talk about Friday night in my district, in the Innu community of Sheshatshiu.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say, to watch the largest graduating class in the history of Sheshatshiu and all the glory of the wonderful show, if you will, the event they put off was simply breathtaking. I will say to the teachers, to the parents, to the guardians, the Innu took over their education and they work closely with the Province from time to time. They know what it takes to get the job done in order to make their kids succeed, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. RUSSELL: Absolutely, give them a round of applause. Seventeen, Mr. Speaker, the largest graduating class.

We had one young Innu lady by the name of Sarah Nuna who never missed a single day since kindergarten all the way to Grade 12. It was wonderful to applaud her and give her some special recognition there, Mr. Speaker, and, as well, announce a few dollars to give specifically to snowshoeing, floor hockey, skiing, and some miscellaneous funds that I think may be used for mixed martial arts with a good friend of ours, Collin Baikie, who lives just across the river in North West River.

It was a wonderful evening, but I just want to tell the students of Sheshatshiu, no matter what you do and where you go, you have that large circle of friends. You have everybody in government. You have everybody who represents you and all the leadership within the Innu community and outside. We are here to support you in whatever you choose to do, whether it is the trades, whether it is university, whether it is political, whether it is going into leadership. Whatever it is, the sky is the limit. You can do it.

With that message, Mr. Speaker, I will move on to my Saturday night, which was – I am looking for words here, I will go with – breathtakingly inspirational. I hear the banter and everybody joking around in the House, but I spent the evening with the Happy Valley-Goose Bay Howling Huskies. They are our Special

Olympians. That is our team. To see them get their awards for all the events they take part in over the year and to see the pride on the faces of the moms and dads and the guardians there, Mr. Speaker, the reason why I say inspirational is because that is what it is.

We think about what we do in our daily lives. We think about all the problems and the trials and the tribulations in our lives. I will simply say it is absolutely nothing compared to what these young adults and these kids are overcoming, and to let them know just for that one night at their banquet, that we are so proud of them. All of Lake Melville, all of Labrador is so proud of them for representing us at every event they take place in. It was truly a wonderful event.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. RUSSELL: With that, Mr. Speaker, to know that our government programs contributed to, just a few months ago, \$10,000 worth of equipment for our Happy Valley-Goose Bay Howling Huskies, and to know at that event I was able to kick in another couple of thousand dollars to help them in terms of making sure they look sharp, they have the uniforms, that they are ready to go and they have the training gear necessary in order to do the very, very best that they can do every time they compete.

To Susan and Jody, and everybody who allowed me to come and participate, I just want to say thank you very much. It means a lot to me. I would like to say to all of the athletes, thank you for representing us so well.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I am going to go real quickly back to a little bit of the government stuff here. Estimates, of course, for those just tuning in here tonight, we go back and forth across the House. People get a chance to critique us.

I will thank the Member for St. John's East. He had some wonderful commentary and questions about Labrador. We had a great back and forth, answering some questions. The one thing I never got to, because of time limits and the way it went back and forth, was to talk about some of the grants and subsidies within the department

that I represent, being Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs.

On the Labrador Affairs side, in terms of some of the grants, I just want to talk about the \$351,000 that we – again, in this Budget – are putting into the trail grooming subsidy, Mr. Speaker, connecting all the isolated communities. As the Member for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair talked about her communities being very isolated, beautiful – the people, wonderful people. That little bit of money is making sure that trails are marked, trails are groomed, and that we have groomers, operators on standby. It is a wonderful program.

I agree that the tourism potential in Labrador is simply untapped, it is unlimited; but, in the same note, a lot of the ads and a lot of the marketing we have done were specifically about Labrador as well. We understand that it takes money to connect these communities, especially in winter in Labrador with our climate, Mr. Speaker, and I will say that subsidy goes a long way.

Later on this week I will be attending Combined Councils of Labrador. Year after year we put \$100,000 – again this Budget does that as well in the Combined Councils. That is to get all the municipal leaders together to talk about common issues. It is certainly a well-planned event and a worthwhile event too, and I look forward to participating in that.

Again, to the Member for St. John's East, we had a great little chat about the Air Foodlift Subsidy and about what we have to do in terms of mirroring Nutrition North programming in order to make sure that the intended value that is put into that program gets to the end-users in those isolated communities when we subsidize things like milk and eggs and produce. That is something we are going to be looking at.

In terms of departmental grants, we put \$43,000 in to assist youth from Labrador to get out to attend our annual youth conference out here on the Island portion of the Province, to bring their experiences, to learn some new things about the Island, to meet some great people, and to share in what it means to be a youth in Labrador because it certainly is a little different.

There are other miscellaneous grants, small amounts, we give to things like running clubs and we give to groups that do great work in our community. Some of them could be church groups, could be the Salvation Army, or could be groups like the SPCA. Every little dollar matters, and I think everybody can say that is the true fact when you are giving out amounts in communities to those volunteers and those people who need every extra dollar in order to get the job done.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will just move on really quickly with Aboriginal Affairs. We do a lot of stuff – and we never got into this. I will talk about \$382,000 that goes towards – you look at the Nunatsiavut Government, the Government of Canada, and our government doing things like Torngat Wildlife & Plants Co-Management Board, joint fishery boards, joint secretariats, all of these tripartite, if you will, boards and organizations that help facilitate the implementation of land claims. It is something we do in Aboriginal Affairs. We do a great job of it. We have staff that are second to none when it comes to dealing with the implementation of land claims, I will say.

Dispute Resolution Boards, Land Use Planning Appeal Boards, and Aboriginal grants – I just want to get into that, Mr. Speaker, because during Estimates you never know how the flow of the dialogue is going to go and I just never got to that particular part of it.

With that I will move on, with my last few minutes here, and just talk briefly about some of the things I have been hearing. Of course, I will say, with beaming pride, that I am a Labradorian and I am a native Aboriginal Labradorian, Mr. Speaker, and I have a father from the Island –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. RUSSELL: – I have said it many times in this House – and a mother whose roots go up to the very top of the Northern parts of Labrador, and I am so very, very proud of where I come from on both sides of my family, Mr. Speaker.

When we talk about Labrador, you can see the emotion in the faces of the two other representatives across the way, and in my colleague for Lab West as well, when we talk

about Labrador; you are darn right we are proud, Mr. Speaker. I know there is a game going on here and there is a lot of negativity, and I hope the people at home realize that is their job and it is our job to defend. We have the responsibility to govern and put the money where it needs to go. I guess at all costs they have to tell us how wrong we are and how bad a job we did in order for you at home who have supported us in the past to get their support. That is the back and forth of it, Mr. Speaker.

When it comes to Labrador, I listened to some of the commentary – and I will talk very quickly about something that the Leader of the Opposition said during his one hour. It was great and I really hope the people at home really got to say do you know what, there is one hour from the Leader of the Opposition and one hour from the Premier, hold them up, side by side, and see what you have. You have doom and gloom. You have negativity. It is depressing. It is sad is what it is, Mr. Speaker. Then, you look at our leader and what you see is you see that plan. You see the positive energy, you see the charisma, you see a vision, and you see a path.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. RUSSELL: A path forward through this bump in the road that I will refer to when we talk about this oil pricing. You go back to one thing that the Leader of the Opposition said – and I wrote it down because it struck me – he said: It was a complete failure to diversify, which led us to this point we are at right here. That is funny because thirty kilometres from my doorstep is a project called Muskrat Falls. I hope that is the precursor to something called Gull Island, Mr. Speaker. That is what I hope. We talk about it – we got up during many Budget speeches in this House. I got up time and time again and I said this: We are going to become an energy super warehouse.

I talked about increasing the number of revenue streams into our coffers and diversifying our economy. I talked about that time and time again. If you talk about moving away the royalties and the volatility of the oil markets, Mr. Speaker, and you talk about then getting into green, clean energy – and there was even commentary across the way there tonight saying: Oh yes, what did you sell it to Nova Scotia for?

Well, that link, that \$2 billion link, is an investment in our future.

What we are going to do is become that energy super warehouse and, hopefully, this project right now is going to lead to Gull Island, which has, I believe, almost triple the megawatts, Mr. Speaker. It puts us into a place where – and they said: Well, this year what is it, \$730-odd million that we are going to invest in Nalcor? What you are going to see back is by 2025, around that time period, is every dime and more back to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. RUSSELL: Some people talk about even getting to 2041, like we always talk about getting our rights back from the Upper Churchill – those rights revert and we become a power player, an energy broker in this part of the world. In this part of the world, we are going to be something to behold. I say to the people at home, come with us, have pride in where we come from, who we are, and what we have available to us; enjoy our vision, take part in our vision, and get to a point where we are going to be a powerhouse. We are on that path right now.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. RUSSELL: I tell you what, I will say again, and I said it before, it needs to be said right here today again. That is a vision for my children, for my grandchildren, for your children and your grandchildren out there, I say to the people at home – that is a vision. What do we get from across the way? They never wanted it to happen. They did not want Muskrat Falls to happen.

So where do you stand on Gull Island then? What about the next phase? What about the real prize in this whole thing? I guess all the engineering guys, they said, you have to do Muskrat first, then you can look at Gull, maybe. So if you do not want Muskrat and you do not want the prosperity and the thousands of jobs that come with Muskrat, then get up and stand up and tell us right now that you do not want Gull Island either. Because this is part of the package. This is part of us redefining who we are. Having oil is one thing, but having the

ability to wheel electricity, Mr. Speaker, wherever we want, to be able to not let anybody hold us back, that is what vision is, that is what leadership is, and we have that on this side of the House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. RUSSELL: I have family and I have friends over there, and it is not going to be easy, you are not going to make everybody happy, because there are union components, there are contractors, subcontractors, and not everything is going to go exactly perfect – especially when you are in the biggest megaproject in our Province’s history, Mr. Speaker. You can expect there to be little bumps here and there.

The bottom line is this government is willing to work with anybody who has concerns about the project. That is not the issue. All I am asking is for a little co-operation from the other side to just get up and say where you stand. Just tell us where you stand when it comes to the biggest project in our history. Instead, do you know what they are going to say? They are going to say: Oh, we did it wrong – we did it wrong. I tell you what, if they had the opportunity to do it, they would have been front and centre trying to pull it off. This government, this side of the House, we pulled it off. I am very proud of where we are headed with that project.

With that, Mr. Speaker, with my last my few minutes, I have got my Muskrat Falls, I guess, airing of grievances off my chest. I will move on. I am going to talk about a few of the little things that were said during the debate here, and I will talk about some of the comments from the Member for Cartwright – L’Anse au Clair.

I am absolutely blown away that she got up and talked about some positive things. Of course, it is not hard to do when you talk about the beauty and the type of people that you have in your own district.

I have been in her district, I acknowledge that fact. What people, I say, what opportunity there. She talked about some of that, and I hope we will work together to do whatever we can to better the situation for anybody who is living in the great District of Cartwright – L’Anse au

Clair. I will do what I can as well, and I know we all will, Mr. Speaker.

I have to have one bit of commentary here, because we heard some commentary earlier from the Member for Bay of Islands and then we go back to the commentary from the Member for Cartwright – L’Anse au Clair, and it goes back and forth. At one point last week they were up talking about our \$10 billion in squandered oil revenues. Then that became \$15 billion, and then it was \$25 billion. I think the Member for Cartwright – L’Anse au Clair ended her commentary on that – \$30 billion I think it was, Mr. Speaker. Again, \$15 billion, up it goes, up it goes.

We have all had one of those stories where you haul that fish over the side of the boat and it was pretty good. By the time you got back to talking to your buddies in town about that fish, it was a whale, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MS DEMPSTER: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Cartwright – L’Anse au Clair on a point of order.

MS DEMPSTER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It must be the time of the night, 10:30 and we are still going strong in the House.

I ask the member – Hansard is a wonderful thing – table the document where I said \$30 billion, but they did squander \$25 billion in oil; \$25 billion they squandered.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

There is no point of order.

The hon. the Minister of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs.

MR. RUSSELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I guess I could have gotten up and tried to make a big show of everything and do that while she was speaking, but I do not do that, Mr. Speaker.

The bottom line here is –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. RUSSELL: I listened intently to everyone over there making their commentary on the Budget and I, please, would ask for the same respect in this hon. House, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to talk about one more of her comments too. It was simply saying that this government is holding Labrador back from progressing. I have often shared in this House, memories of my childhood being raised in Labrador, and I tell you what, I come from a home I am very proud of, where my mom was a secretary and my dad was an electrician. So I did not have a silver spoon in my mouth, Mr. Speaker, but I had the wherewithal to know what my surroundings, what my community, and what our infrastructure was like even in those early days.

When you talk about holding Labrador back, I will say it one more time, they said that the Trans-Labrador Highway would never be paved, Mr. Speaker. This 2015 Budget has \$55 million earmarked in it for work on the Trans-Labrador Highway. What we are going to see is one of the most beautiful towns – also in my district is Churchill Falls. What you are going to see is the final eleven kilometres done and over with. I am so happy to see that. It is going to be a monumental occasion.

What we are also going to see is on the far end of the District of Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair we are going to see, I believe, two eighty-kilometre contracts put into motion in order to widen that road. When you widen it, Mr. Speaker, you are getting ready for blacktop. On the other end up around Muskrat Falls, what you are going to see is we are going to push for that eighty kilometres of blacktop there too.

So from those two parts of Labrador, which even in my childhood up only until recently, until we got here on this side of the House, until we took power, Mr. Speaker – so the project for widening and the one on my end up near Lake

Melville for blacktop, they were not even connected. You could not even go from one end of her to the other. Now we are holding Labrador back from progressing.

What we did – and they say we have squandered, we have squandered. What we did – we have heard the Premier say it. We have heard every minister over here say it. We have heard everybody in the backbench say this, is that when the times were good – and they were when the royalties were rolling in and the price of oil was comparable to that success. What we did is we invested. We invested in our infrastructure, Mr. Speaker.

They talked over there across the way about: well, you need a solid foundation for education and all that. You look at the infrastructure that we inherited. You let it rot. It is as simple as that. What did we do, Mr. Speaker? We put our money where it needed to go. We put it in the schools, in the hospitals, in the pavement. You look at our children now, they are connected. They are connected from one end of the Province to the other.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. RUSSELL: From one end of Labrador to the other. They have some of the best teachers and the best schools to go to, Mr. Speaker. We have health care, which is always going to be a challenge by the way. I will say we are doing a wonderful job, second to none.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. RUSSELL: We are going to keep investing in these areas, Mr. Speaker. All I am asking everybody out there in TV land to do is recognize where we were in 2003 when we took government and remember what it was like before, what it was like after, and recognize the game that is being played in this House.

It is not all doom and gloom. The sky is not falling. The glass is half full or more, Mr. Speaker. We have a lot more work to do on this side of the House and I am proud to be a part of it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Burgeo – La Poile.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. A. PARSONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am very happy to stand and speak for my third time to this Budget 2015, the main motion. I have taken two opportunities to speak. I can hear heckling from the other side. I say let me get started; it is only ten seconds in. I have not even said the controversial stuff yet.

I will continue on, Mr. Speaker. This is my fourth Budget since I have been elected. It is probably the last one before the next election, whenever that happens to be. We have been hearing dates, but anything is possible I am sure.

This Budget is unique. It has been a bit different than the Budgets I have seen previously. Now I am sure members who have been here longer, maybe the Member for St. John's South or the Member for Harbour Main, they have obviously seen a lot more, but in my short time this Budget has been different than the three others.

Number one, it was much later presented in this House. I think the reason was that it might have conflicted with the federal governments or they had to wait for that, or something to do with the price of oil. We all know how the price of oil affects how this government operates.

The second one is there has been a lot less speaking to it by members on the other side. Again, I may be wrong. I know more members have spoken to the main motion, but I think in years previous – because it never changes. The Opposition always puts in amendments and non-confidence motions. That happens every year.

Every year the Opposition stands up and we speak to the Budget, but in other years the members on the other side have taken an opportunity to speak to those motions but this year they never, in many cases. I have the charts there. Many have not taken the opportunity to

speak to it. For that I say, why? Why haven't you spoken to your own Budget?

They might prove me wrong. They might all stand up tonight and speak to the main motion and they may prove me wrong. I hope they speak to it. It is their document. They should speak to it. They should have some ownership.

The third thing that I found the most interesting about this Budget is that we are not even done voting and they have already talked about changing it. We are not even done voting. It comes out on Budget day and they talk about HST and we are going to up the tax on people. We all know the seniors are going to feel that in January.

We are not even done voting, we are not even done speaking to the Budget, and the Premier comes out and says: Well, the price of oil – we may change that. So sometimes we wonder why we are in the situation we are. Why we are in the mess that we are in.

Now government would have you believe that they couldn't do anything, it was the price of oil. It is not our fault. They say it is unprecedented. The Premier's words tonight: this is unprecedented.

So it is funny, because we have this thing called the Internet and you look at it, and we look at the price of oil. It is funny because in November 2008, oil was at \$54. December of that year it went to \$41. In January it went back up, \$43, but in February it went back down to \$41.

Now, maybe somebody could correct me. What is the price of oil today?

AN HON. MEMBER: It is \$63.

MR. A. PARSONS: It is \$63, and this crowd on the other side lead us to believe they could not handle this. God forbid, we cannot deal with this fluctuation – but they have been there before.

Again, when you say unprecedented, I say to the Premier quite simply, there is no other way, you are wrong. You have no idea what you are talking about. That might be the fact that there has been eight Finance ministers in the last

seven years, or maybe I am wrong, there might have been seven Finance ministers in the last eight years. Sometimes it is hard to keep track, my math is not good.

There are a couple of other things that have been interesting. There are these things called trends. It is funny because these mixed messages that we get from the other side – I have sat down, I have listened to the majority of the Budget Speech. The different messages that you hear are interesting, because at different points during this Budget, one member, the Member for Bay Verte – Springdale stood up and said: well, that crowd on the other side, they only go back to the past. They always go back to the past. They do not talk about the future. They only go back to the past.

Then I think the next speaker for the other side stood up and said, look where we were when that crowd was there. Look where we were, what we had to take over. Again, I am getting a mixed message from the other side.

Then it is funny, because I heard the Premier stand up and say – because we asked a question, it might have been Question Period during the Budget. He said: well, I cannot take responsibility for that, I was not here then. In tonight's speech the quote was: When we came to government in 2003.

Number one, I do not think a lot of them came to government in 2003, but they like to take credit for it. I am sorry, because I get confused. They do not like the message that we seem to be giving, which is you have had more revenue come in than any government precious and you are in a worse spot than you were when the crowd came in, in 2003.

The Leader of the Opposition stood up tonight, and I do not know about the speaking notes that some people get, there was a deficit in 2003. Look at the deficit in 2015 and look at the revenue had in between. That is why we say you squandered it, because you had more given to you from the resources of this Province than any government before and we got more in debt. There are more people in debt, higher levels than ever before.

I think the member who just spoke, the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs said: Well, it is all doom and gloom over here, all doom and gloom versus sunshine and lollipops over there. What I would say is we are only looking at your Budget. We are looking at the facts and figures. This is just the Estimates book here. We are looking at what you gave us showing the household disposable income going down, housing starts going down.

I am starting to sound like a member opposite, I cannot remember who – down. The only thing going up it seems is unemployment. Unemployment is going up. Again, I am sorry if we get confused when we say we cannot understand how you can talk so highly about this, the few on the other side who are speaking, but at the same time the book you gave us and the people say otherwise – mixed messages.

I wanted to talk about a few other things from this Budget, and my time runs short, so I will try to get in as much as I can. A couple of the other interesting things we have seen during the last little while, during this debate and brought up by the other side is we hear – well, one thing I found very interesting was, we talk about – I think the Premier, again I get confused because he says: well, I was not here so I do not take responsibility, but the Liberals back in the 1990s, all the jobs they laid off. Now back then I was in junior high, so sorry.

The Premier talks about all the jobs laid off, but the Premier was actually there two years ago when you laid off almost 2,000 – laid off almost 2,000 two years ago. The majority on the other side were there. Two years ago everybody over there on that other side were there when they laid off over 1,000, and this year there are more. We could talk about the teachers they are cutting, especially out in rural Newfoundland and Labrador. We could talk about that.

Again, they want to take credit when it is good but when it is not good, well, look at those Liberals back – look at what Sir Richard Squires did. I mean they cannot go back any further.

Now, I am going to continue on to a couple of different topics in the Budget, topics that I speak to a lot of the time which are health and which are justice. One of the things – actually, the

Member for Exploits said it tonight, and I agree. He talked about dialysis. We have a disagreement sometimes in theory or opinion, but he talks about the value of dialysis. I certainly know the value of dialysis, especially for those who have to travel. I do not agree that it is a fix to the problem, though, because the fix to the problem is to deal with people getting diabetes in the first place. That is the problem, is there is no plan there.

Sometimes he tries to misconstrue my words and say, well, he does not like dialysis. I love dialysis for those people who need it. I raise money for those people who need it. The problem is we cannot keep putting dialysis units up. We have to stop the root cause, and we have not gotten there.

The government right now still does not know how many people get diagnosed with diabetes every day, every month, every year. They have no idea. They cannot measure it, they cannot manage it. That is the first thing.

The second thing is the members say, well, you have dialysis out in Port aux Basques, so you should be happy. What I would say is, unfortunately, we have three new people who are travelling to Corner Brook to get it because there is not enough room and because there are two nurses who have not been replaced; two. Those people are travelling 216 kilometres to get dialysis because we do not have enough.

What are we going to do, put another dialysis unit in Port aux Basques? I would love to see the beds go out. In fact, I would like to see the nurses there use the beds they had, that they fundraised for. I would like to see that but the bigger problem is the cause in the first place, which this government has done very little about, and which we, led by our leader, have said we will bring in a strategy. We will bring in a registry. We said that two years ago. We will bring in a registry because if you cannot measure it, you cannot manage it.

There are so many other things when it comes to health. I just had a chance to speak to dental hygienists the other day. They want to practice to the full extent of their abilities. They would like to see it. Unfortunately, they have not had a chance to have a meeting with the department

after five tries. They are still not getting through. They could be contributing more. They want to, but they are not being listened to.

We could talk about autism. Again, we asked questions in the House today. I will give the member opposite – the Minister of CYFS stood up and answered the question today. The Premier tried first –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. A. PARSONS: No, but he provided an honest answer. The problem was that we asked three questions and he only got to answer the third one because the Premier had to stand up and make a mess of the first one, and tried to stand up and put a political spin on a growing issue in this Province. It is a huge issue. I am glad to see the minister opposite stood up and tried to answer, and admitted this is an issue, and it is.

Now, I want to continue on here. We could talk about justice. In justice there were a lot of things that were brought up. I know there has been a new judge promised. We are waiting anxiously to see when that new position out in Clarendville gets filled. We want to see that new position out in Clarendville, we want to see when that gets filled. I know they have been advocating for that.

We could talk about HMP, the Waterford's decrepit younger brother, sister, or whatever. It is another old building. The good news is the prisoners will be wearing, hopefully, the outfits. Again, it is something I called for. I cannot criticize. It is a great thing. We asked about it, but we did get criticized asking about it before. I know the Member for St. Barbe asked it, and the previous Minister of Advanced Education said: How dare you ask a question on that. That is an insult to their dignity. It is funny; it is better this year. It is good.

The other thing that we brought up – and this was an important thing; I got a lot of calls on this. It is funny because we talk about the fines outstanding, there is \$37 million in fines – and I know the Member for Cape St. Francis was on the Public Accounts; he knows the problem. There is \$6.3 million owing in fines less than \$400 that government does not go after. They

do not go after. CRA does not go after anything less than \$300.

They can try to say it is an issue, or that we are trying to fix it – New Brunswick got it fixed. New Brunswick goes after you for \$84. Do you know what? It adds up; it is \$6.3 million. When the seniors in the Province get overpaid because of government screws up, well don't you worry, you might owe a dollar and we are coming after you for that. We are going to come after you. In fact, we are going to hire one of our buddies to go get you.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. A. PARSONS: I have no idea what the payment is there.

So here is the issue: \$6.3 million owing in fines, doing nothing to collect and, in fact, laying people off versus \$935,000 in a government mistake and we go out and hire our buddies to go after them. No matter what the amount, we are going after you. That is an interesting contrast. To me, the logical implication that I would take from that is we are not going to go after offenders, but we will go after seniors. That is unfortunate.

Now, I am going to continue on here. There are so many things to speak to and one of them, again we talk about legislation. Back to health, just for a second, e-cigarette legislation, I asked about it. I would like to see it. Unfortunately we likely will not see it this session, which means we will not see it at all. That is an unfortunate thing that I was hoping to see, but we will not.

I think I actually heard the Premier tonight complain about petitions – complain about petitions. He said we hear the members on the other side – they are standing up with those petitions –

AN HON. MEMBER: Again.

MR. A. PARSONS: Again.

Notwithstanding the fact that is our job as representatives of people to stand up and represent petitions – and again I have seen members on the other side do it on one occasion

– one occasion. So we present petitions – and the thing is I know what they are trying to get at. They are trying to say you tell us not to spend and then you ask for more money. The problem is it is how you spend. You spent over \$50,000 –

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

Is the member standing on a point of order?

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Burgeo – La Poile, my apologies.

MR. A. PARSONS: No problem, I was waiting for that point of order. That would have been interesting.

Over \$53,000 spent on promoting this Budget, yet when we ask for money for things like cell service or roads that do not have craters in them, what are you doing asking for it. As I said then and I will say now, that is our job to represent the people. I would rather spend money on a service for people than spend it on your self-serving, gratuitous ads that are absolutely misleading and no need – absolutely misleading.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. A. PARSONS: If the Premier does not want us to represent those people, I do not know what else to say. Maybe we can change the rules to not have petitions, but that is our job to represent people and pass petitions, and petitions do get things done. Again, we are asking for those things that we should not have like cell service and roads.

I can continue on – I have to go back to this because our leader tonight stood up for an hour and spoke to, again, the Budget and all the things in that wonderful document. He referenced the different things; \$1.1 billion in deficit – that is this year – but that was criticized. They keep coming back and they want to talk about fundraising. They brought it up again tonight, loves to bring it up.

I say it was funny because on the same day that the Leader of the Opposition was up in Labrador standing shoulder to shoulder with the members

of Lab West, where was our Premier? He was not in Lab West. He was fundraising. So if you want to talk about it one way, it can go the other way too. I know the Member for Lab West was up there. I saw the video, it was not so pretty, but he was up there. Where was the Premier and where was the minister? They were not there because I think they were fundraising. Again, if you want to talk about fundraising, that is how it goes.

We will continue on here because there are so many other things that we have in this Budget and I only have two minutes left here. The Budget shows that essentially – it is funny; they are treating the Budget like a living document. It can change on a day-by-day basis depending on oil, or how they feel, or what they think is a priority the next day. That is the problem with this Budget. That is not the only problem with this Budget, that is just one of the main problems with this Budget.

The member said it right; in the next ten minutes, there might be another announcement so we will change the Budget again. That is the unfortunate part because the one thing that this crowd on the other side forgot is that it is not about what they want, it is about what the people want. It is about what the people need. That is why we criticize the self-serving ads. At a time when teachers are getting cut, you find a way to go out and spend over \$50,000 in ads. We find that unfortunate. We talk about the misplaced priorities, we talk about the fact that depending where the price of oil is tomorrow who knows what else is going to happen because it could change, and that is why people do not trust exactly the direction of where we are going.

I heard somebody on the other side tonight talk about we have been accused of squandering fifteen, twenty, twenty-five, thirty – I think it is between \$20 billion and \$25 billion. I had somebody say to me: The crowd on the other side spends like drunken sailors. I said: That is an insult to drunken sailors. Drunken sailors spend their own money. Let's keep that in mind.

That is what the crowd on the other side tend to forget. The other side tend to forget that this is the people's money, this is the people's Budget, this is the people's House, and that is why we have continued to speak out against it. With this

last thirty seconds, I will say again we will not be supporting this Budget because we want to support the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DALLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I appreciate the opportunity to I have a few words. I was not sure if I was going to, but I was inspired by the speech from the Member for Burgeo – La Poile, absolutely inspired to get on my feet and talk about the people of Newfoundland and Labrador and making decisions, what is in their best interest.

If you listen to the speech, there was quite a few shots at the Premier and trying to discredit the Premier every chance he gets. That is understandable, Mr. Speaker. In Opposition, he did that; that is fine. Not much of that happened all night, but this hour of the night I guess he figured there were not too many people watching –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. DALLEY: – but that is fine, we will get to that in a minute.

Mr. Speaker, they are talking about the Budget and we are going to make a vote on a Budget here now shortly, and I am pretty confident the Budget will pass because there is a lot of good stuff in the Budget. I think it is important – and you can listen to the Opposition or you can listen to any of us. There is not everything in the Budget, Mr. Speaker. No one Budget can solve every one of the problems; that is reality. They have things they wish they would have done. I can tell you there are things over here that we wish we could have done as well, but that is the reality of a Budget.

You can stand on the other side and complain and criticize, but the reality is there is a lot of good decisions made in this Budget. One of the things – we are going to head into an election in a few months. It is probably the last Budget, no question. So, the rhetoric is ramping up. The leadership issues are ramping up. They are taking shots at the leaders where they can, Mr. Speaker. That is all fine and it is all part of the game if you call it politics or whatever you want, but let's get right down to some of the things that are happening. The comments that they are making have been made many times. The media is picking up on it. The public are picking up on it. They are criticizing. That is their job; that is fine. What are they backing it up with when they criticize?

We all know they are backing it up with very little, without question. They are not backing it up with anything.

AN HON. MEMBER: Drop the writ.

MR. DALLEY: We will drop the writ, not to worry, but let's talk about backing it up, Mr. Speaker. I want to use Muskrat Falls. I want to talk about Muskrat Falls to back it up. They give you a picture of what is being presented to the people of the Province and the choices they have to make, because they will choose one of the three parties in this House, but I would encourage people to have a listen. We have heard talk about peddling change for the sake of change. Basically saying we can do this better, but we are not going to tell you how.

We see that, but that is fine. That will unfold, but what are you backing it up with? Let's talk about Muskrat Falls and what we have seen from the Liberals on Muskrat Falls. They are not all Liberals over there, Mr. Speaker, because there are three people over there sitting down who have supported Muskrat Falls.

AN HON. MEMBER: At least.

MR. DALLEY: I will get to that in a minute. We have some more who are flip-flopping and we have some more who do not know if they are going or coming on Muskrat Falls. They cannot figure it out. They are waiting to see which way the wind blows, or which way the people of the Province decide, and that is where they are

going to land. We are seeing that, Mr. Speaker. I am not going to make this stuff up, I am not going to stretch it, and I am going to tell the facts as they are. We can go back and find it.

Let's talk about Muskrat Falls and what you back it up with. We started this project years ago, Mr. Speaker. The Churchill River has been studied for thirty years. When we started about Muskrat Falls and all the studies that were done with respect to our energy needs, recognizing – and I will get to that whether we needed energy or not and obviously we do; we need more power. We studied all kinds of options and the least-cost option was Muskrat Falls, Mr. Speaker. I think it was \$2.4 billion cheaper than the next option.

All of the independent studies, all the information out there – and the Liberals argued that day after day, but do you know what? They did not back it up. They did not bring anything into the House, they did not present anything to the public to back up a different decision, but they just argued against it. Pure politics – pure politics – that is it; nothing about whether it is the right decision for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. So, what did they do? Then they took it on and they argued in this House, and some of the members were over there arguing – some more of them are new to the House and they were not a part of that debate so they know, people sitting in front of them, come into this House and they argued, but they did not back it up.

Mr. Speaker, they said very clearly in this House that rates are going to double. They are wrong, and they did not back it up. The Liberals came into this House and argued that we could not sell any excess power; nobody wants it. We could not get out of Nova Scotia and they wanted our power. They argued that we could not sell the power, but they could not back it up – a point of order over there, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair, standing on a point of order.

MS DEMPSTER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I just wanted to remind the minister the Liberals at the time were asking questions because the PUB and the Joint Review Panel, the only two independent groups, were not even given time to do their review, so we had concerns – we had concerns.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

There is no point of order.

The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DALLEY: Here you go again, Mr. Speaker; don't let the facts get in the way. The PUB had Muskrat Falls; they had \$2 million of taxpayers' money. They had a right to make a decision that their own company that they hired, the company that the PUB hired to deliver and research and make a decision around Muskrat Falls could make the decision, but the PUB could not.

Even though they had time, they had money, the company they hired could decide, but they could not. So I appreciate the point of order, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DALLEY: Let's get back to backing it up, Mr. Speaker, because this is what the theme is going to be about as we head into election. We are going to define one party to the other. We are going to define the leaders. We are going to define the Leader of the Opposition, the leader of government, and the Leader of the Third Party. How are we going to define them? We are going to talk about backing it up.

Rates are going to double; they could not back it up. We cannot sell the power; they could not back it up. Mr. Speaker, they went so far as to say –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. DALLEY: – we do not need the power. Yet when the power went out a couple of years ago, all we heard for weeks is it is not reliable.

You did not plan. You do not have power. So, Mr. Speaker, proved wrong again.

Mr. Speaker, what else did they say? Each time we went through and they could not back it up, where did they go next? Next they said: You will never get the loan guarantee. Stephen Harper will not give you the loan guarantee. You will never get it. This project, you are never going to be able to pay for it. You are never going to get the loan guarantee: \$5 billion.

Mr. Speaker, they could not back it up, and they were wrong. We got the \$5 billion loan guarantee, and it is equivalent to a billion dollars for the people of the Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DALLEY: Mr. Speaker, it did not stop there. Then they said: Do you know what? You will never get financing for that. You will not get the financing. We sat in the House, the Liberals argued it, and I can tell you there are three members over there, two in particular, who sat on this side of the House and heard the arguments coming across: You will not get your financing. Mr. Speaker, almost every large bank in North America put a bid in to get the deal to be able to provide the financing for Muskrat Falls.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DALLEY: They did not back it up, and they were wrong.

Mr. Speaker, the point I want to make about not backing it up and being all over the place – and that is what we are seeing: all over the place on the Budget, cut the HST, borrow more money, government is borrowing too much money – you are all over the place. They are trying to find their way and depending on what the people want to hear, that is where they are landing. They are not backing it up; they are playing politics. That is the Liberal way, and I will get to that in a minute.

When we talk about Muskrat Falls and the benefits of Muskrat Falls, whether it is stabilizing rates, whether it is reliability, whether it is getting rid of Holyrood, whether it is being 98 per cent renewable energy, whether it is

creating an export market where we can sell our excess power for revenue for as long as the river flows so that every time it rains, we make money for the people of the Province; or maybe because we can develop all of this and then we can tap into the rest of the energy resources we have, the potential for 5,000 megawatts of wind, or the potential to build Gull Island – our government made the bold decision that was talked about earlier by the Leader of the Opposition, the bold decision that we can do this, we can do it right, and we can do it to benefit generations of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DALLEY: Mr. Speaker, let's switch gears a bit. Talking about backing it up, the Member for the Bay of Islands – and he can correct me – if memory serves me right, he was elected previously, sat in this House, and I know he mentioned earlier tonight that he was probably the only one in the House that voted for Voisey's Bay. He is probably right.

Four or five amendments later, we got a great project. Yes, they did start it and I can tell you when the Long Harbour facility was opened up, I know the Premier personally called Roger Grimes and invited him to come because he was the one who started the project. Class, Mr. Speaker – that is class.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DALLEY: Mr. Speaker, the Liberals also tried – and here is where I have a problem with everything that goes on over there about backing it up and not sure where they sit with Muskrat Falls.

The Liberals tried to develop the Lower Churchill Project. Brian Tobin and Roger Grimes, leaders of the day, felt there was a need to develop Muskrat Falls. I am not sure, but I would suspect at the time the Member for Bay of Islands was in this House sitting on the government side supporting the government that tried to develop the Lower Churchill Project, but today he cannot support it, just like some of his colleagues, because it is pure politics, Mr. Speaker. It is pure politics.

Let's take a look at what else is going on over there with respect to Muskrat Falls. The Member for Virginia Waters served on the Nalcor board for five years –

AN HON. MEMBER: How long?

MR. DALLEY: Five years, and took on chair of the board. Now, Mr. Speaker, I commend her for that. I congratulate her. It is a public duty she took on. She did a great job. Her and her colleagues on the board, a very, very important job, Mr. Speaker, the Board of Directors of Nalcor; making some key decisions, planning, direction and competence with respect to the future of Newfoundland and Labrador. Do you know what, Mr. Speaker? I give her credit. She did a good job, and I know the people who served on the board with her would say the same thing.

Mr. Speaker, here is where everything crosses up. It is important for the people of the Province as we try and back up – you have to be able to back it up. The Finance critic over there, leader number two, firmly believes in Nalcor, in Muskrat Falls and the future of the Province. This is not a nice project to do, this is a must to do, was her comments, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DALLEY: Mr. Speaker, she is absolutely right. There are other comments she made to support Nalcor and their ability to manage the project and manage the risk. Because that is what we do, she said at the time when she was the Chair of the Board of Nalcor, or when she sat on the board. She believes in that.

We have three members over there who supported Muskrat Falls. We have some people who supported it back when it was convenient but not convenient now, and then we have the Leader of the Opposition who cannot make up his mind whether he supports Muskrat Falls or not.

In March of last year he said: Of course I support the Lower Churchill Project. He said it here in the House. The other day when I asked a question in the House: Muskrat Falls is costly, and I would build it if it was the right time. It should be built when it is the right time.

Mr. Speaker, when is the right time? Was it the right time back when the Liberals wanted to do it for political reasons, when we had no money, when we were not sure if we needed more power? The reality is, Mr. Speaker, it would have been done then if people like the chair of the board at the time and Newfoundlanders and Labradorians didn't realize that they were going to give it away to Quebec to develop it again. That is why it did not get done back then.

The reality is, is it the right time? Well, I say to the Leader of the Opposition and the Liberals, and the people watching, when is the right time? You say we need power. We have questions about reliability. Liberty, the PUB, the Opposition, the Open Lines have all spoken about that.

Secondly, when is the right time? When all the oil is gone? When we have no revenues, Mr. Speaker? Remember, this decision is not one to make in a week and it is over. This is a long-term decision. It will take four or five years to build it, but it is a 100-year asset. We are going to have power. As long as the water flows we will make money. As long as we build that we are going to have reliability. The time is right. The time is right to do it, Mr. Speaker.

That is the problem I have, Mr. Speaker. When we talk Muskrat Falls, they are all over the place. They are all over the place, but the reality is and the point I am making, I am using Muskrat Falls to make the point for the people of the Province that as we hit the road and as you look at what they are saying about peddling change for the sake of change, ask them to back up what they are saying, Mr. Speaker. Ask them to clarify on some of the most important issues facing our Province and for the next generation, my children and theirs, projects such as Muskrat Falls.

You talk about planning, how we are taking a non-renewable and investing in renewable. It is not a bad plan, Mr. Speaker. The envy of the country I will say. It is not a bad plan. It is not putting a burden on our children, paving the way for their future, taking from non-renewable to renewable. That is one side of it. I have talked about that.

Then you have the non-renewables around seismic, the scheduled land tendered sale, and improved liabilities, and improving the environment. Along with all the work we are doing and planning for the out years, 5 per cent of our offshore is under licence. There is over a million square kilometres out there of untapped resource that belongs to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

I can tell you, you can go to the Energy Plan where we can back it up. You can look at what we have done because we can back it up, Mr. Speaker. You can take a look at what is happening in the offshore, and we can back it up. You can take a look at the need for Muskrat Falls, the planning, the progress, and we can back it up. If we cannot, I can assure you the Member for Virginia Waters can back it up, Mr. Speaker. No question.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DALLEY: The Member for Burgeo – La Poile says from 2003, we are worse off today. We are in a worse spot. Well, are we?

In 2003, when we came into government, there was a major deficit. There was major debt, but there were other things that we never had. We had no plan. There was no plan to develop our resources. There was no revenue stream. Our Province was bankrupt when it comes to infrastructure, Mr. Speaker.

We do not have that problem today. Yes, there are financial challenges today. Yes, the oil prices have an impact. Yes, there are some decisions they would like to make and probably would make. There are some that we would like to make, but the reality is, Mr. Speaker, we do not have the same infrastructure deficit. We do have a plan. We do have revenue. We do have it laid out for generations to come.

So you can talk about what we have done, but we have no problem engaging any day about where we are going and what we are doing because we have it laid out. We have five-year plans, but more importantly, we have plans from generation to generation. We have plans about developing our non-renewable resources. We have plans to invest in renewable. We have plans where we know that the long-term future

of Newfoundland and Labrador has never looked better. That is decisions that this government has made and this government can back up.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DALLEY: Now, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to have a few words and to share my views on what I am seeing over on the other side, how they are all over the place, the Opposition Leader included, all over the place with Muskrat Falls.

Why is it you cannot come out and say that the PC government made the right decision in building Muskrat Falls? If you want to debate certain aspects of it, I understand that, but the decision to build Muskrat Falls was the right decision.

The difference between us, the PC Party of Newfoundland and Labrador, our government, and the Liberal way is that the Liberals tried to build Muskrat Falls for political reasons. Where we make our decisions – and we will continue to do so, and when we go to the polls we will be very clear to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador that you can count on this government, the PC Party, to make decisions, not for politics like the Liberals, but we will make decisions in the best interest of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. JOYCE: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Bay of Islands, on a point of order.

MR. JOYCE: I just want to correct the minister. We were doing the whole Lower Churchill, not just Muskrat Falls, so I just want to make that correction. You should know it as minister.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources, speaking to the point of order?

MR. DALLEY: Yes, just quickly.

Mr. Speaker, the Muskrat Falls Project is about \$7 billion. The whole project, including Gull Island, would have been about \$20 billion-odd. I would like to know how we would pay for that if they have an argument with \$7 billion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

There is no point of order.

If the hon. the Minister of Finance speaks now, he will close the debate.

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WISEMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I just want to thank everybody for their contribution to this debate. It seems like only yesterday that I stood in this House and I read into the record the Budget for the fiscal year 2015-2016.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. WISEMAN: Over the course of the last month or so, there have been lots of comments about the Budget – some good, some bad, some offering some very good suggestions as to what might be in there versus some of the choices that we made. Because this Budget was about choices – it was about balance and it is about choices.

Many people stood in the House and made comments about different choices that they would have made, Mr. Speaker, and that is fair game. Others stood in the House and provided some support for the Budget. Others stood in the House and provided some criticism, yet had no options.

I doubt very much, Mr. Speaker, in the remaining eighteen minutes that I have left – and this will be the final contribution to the debate on the Budget – that I am going to convince members opposite that this is a wonderful Budget. I doubt very much if I am going to do that.

In a few moments we are going to vote on the Budget, there will probably be a division called, and members opposite will, to the person, vote against the Budget and, in so doing, will condemn and not support all of the good things that we have laid out in this Budget plan.

I say, Mr. Speaker, rather than speak to members opposite, let me speak to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador in my closing comments. This Budget was about balancing and choices. We needed to make some critical decisions for Newfoundland and Labrador and in the best interests of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, and we have made those choices.

I say to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, whether you agree with this Budget, whether you agree with some of the choices that we have made, or whether or not you have some alternate thoughts on what should be in this Budget, this Budget, though, is a plan. The Premier, this government, led by our Premier, has laid out for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador our fiscal plan for the next five years.

So regardless of whether you agree with this plan or you would like to see another plan, what I suggest to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, though, is that you think about it for a moment. November 30, Newfoundlanders and Labradorians will go to the polls and they will make a decision who they would like to be their Premier for the next four years, what party they would like to lead this Province. Whenever you make an important decision like that, Mr. Speaker, you need to make an informed choice and in order to make an informed choice, you need to understand what your options might be.

Mr. Speaker, back on April 30, as a government, I happened to read the Budget, but it was the Budget of this government. I had the pleasure and privilege of being the Finance Minister that delivered this Budget, but I can tell you it was a reflection of this government's view of the

future. We have laid out in here a plan, and I would ask the people who live in Newfoundland and Labrador to ask yourself this question: When you go to the polls in the fall, what is it you understand to be the plan that this party offers for the next five years? Where is it? It is in print. The most significant part of it, there is a Budget Speech you might want to refer to, but there is a document called the Highlights. I want to bring members' attention to it, and people of the Province may want to look at this because this lays out in a very clear fashion a plan for the next five years.

We say, for the next five years, here is what is going to happen year by year, here is how much money we are going to spend, here is how much money we are going to bring in, and here is how we are going to spend that money. Now, how are we going to know if we are on target? We have built in some performance measures. We have said that year over year here is how we are going to perform. It is like a report card, and we are going to report to the people of the Province twice a year in this House of Assembly. In the fall, we are going to provide an update on where we have gone in the first part of the year. At Budget time, we will lay out another report card. So twice every year for the next five years, we are going to report to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador through this House of Assembly how well we are doing – and we have, in fact, indicated what the performance measures will be.

We have identified key performance measures as to how we are going to measure our performance. So everybody in Newfoundland and Labrador can tell us and will see every six months – they will be able to say okay, we now know how well you are doing, or whether or not you are off track because here is how we are tracking your performance. Here is what the picture will look like at the end of five years, here is what is going to happen, here is how much money we are going to borrow, here is what we are borrowing for, here is how much we are putting in infrastructure, here is a five-year infrastructure plan, here is how much we are putting in education, here is how much we are putting in health, and here is how much we are putting in transportation. We are laying all of that out, Mr. Speaker.

You may not like what is in this document. You may have some other choices that you would make, but what I say to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador if any political party, any individual offering themselves as a candidate to run for any political party in this Province, and they come knocking on your door next November and they want your support, you ask them, whoever that person is, whatever party they represent, can they produce for you a laid-out plan for a five-year period, a fiscal management plan for the next five years. How are we going to get ourselves from today out to the next five years?

I say, Mr. Speaker, if there is any individual who comes knocking on your door and asking for your support to elect them and they cannot produce for you a document that says here is the party that I am running for –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. WISEMAN: – here is what they represent. If they cannot produce that for you, if they cannot tell you a five-year plan that has performance measures, has a mechanism to track it, has a commitment built in that they will report to the people of the Province semi-annually – if they cannot produce such a document, then I suspect you should be very suspicious. You should be very suspicious, Mr. Speaker, of anybody who says trust me, vote for me, and we will do what is right.

Mr. Speaker, that will not wash; the people of Newfoundland and Labrador are not that gullible. They are much more intelligent, they are much more informed, and they are much more sensitive to their welfare, to the welfare of their neighbours and their friends, and for the welfare of Newfoundland and Labrador.

My message, obviously, is that this House will vote on this Budget in a few moments, so my comments are not necessarily to the members of the House; but again, to the members of the public in Newfoundland and Labrador this is a plan, a vision of what we believe as a government is a good fiscal strategy for the next five years.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WISEMAN: If other people, if other parties have an alternative plan, let's lay it – lay it out. If other parties, other individuals, have another plan, lay it out, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. WISEMAN: Be upfront with the people of Newfoundland and Labrador; share your plan. Because if all you can do is stand and criticize someone else's plan, then that is pretty shallow, Mr. Speaker. That is really, really shallow. To suggest that we do not need a plan, we just need change in this Province, and we are the agents of change and that is the reason you should vote for us. The people of Newfoundland and Labrador are not going to fall for that. They are going to need to have a plan. I encourage all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, not as they listen to us vote here tonight, but as they look at themselves – and in the fall make sure that as you are asked to support a candidate or asked to support a party, make sure there is a clear vision, a clear fiscal plan for the future.

Newfoundland and Labrador is finding itself in some challenging times in the next few years, Mr. Speaker. It is going to be really important for all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to understand the way forward, to understand what the options are for good fiscal management for the next twelve months, but also taking us into the next five years. That is what we had done.

Tonight, we are going to vote on a Budget that is going to see us for the next twelve months. More importantly, Mr. Speaker, we are voting on a Budget tonight that endorses a five-year fiscal plan to return to surplus in 2021. That is what we are voting on tonight.

Members will stand in their place in a few moments and exercise their right to vote in this House, I suspect, because the majority of the people who participated in the debate appeared to support this motion. Members opposite will stand and vote against this Budget and all that it entails.

They will stand on Division, Mr. Speaker. You watch. They will stand on Division and have their names read into the record as having not approved this Budget. There are many good things in this Budget. They have agreed in debate that there are many good things, but despite that, they will stand in their place tonight

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. WISEMAN: – and they will vote against it because they believe that is the political thing to do. That is the political thing to do; not vote in the interest of their constituents, but vote in the interest of their political agendas.

I say again, thank you to everybody who has participated in debate. Thank you for all your contributions. Whether you have agreed with the Budget or disagreed with the Budget, we appreciate your comments and we appreciate your suggestions. Remember, to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, this Budget contains a vision for the next five years.

Thank you all for your contribution to the debate.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

It is moved and seconded that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

All those in favour, ‘aye.’

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: All those against, ‘nay.’

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Nay.

MR. SPEAKER: I declare the motion carried.

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

MR. WISEMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I received a message from His Honour the Lieutenant Governor.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

All rise.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

As Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, I transmit Estimates of sums required for the Public Service of the Province for the year ending March 31, 2016, by way of further supply and in accordance with the provisions of sections 54 and 90 of the Constitution Act, 1867, I recommend these Estimates to the House of Assembly.

Sgd.: _____
Frank F. Fagan, CM, ONL, MBA

Please be seated.

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

MR. WISEMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move, seconded by the hon. the Premier, that this message be referred to a Committee of Supply.

MR. SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that the House resolve itself into a Committee of Supply and that I do now leave the Chair.

All those in favour, ‘aye.’

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: All those against, ‘nay.’

The motion is carried.

On motion, that the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole, Mr. Speaker left the Chair.

Committee of the Whole

CHAIR (Littlejohn): Order, please!

The Clerk.

Resolution

“That it is expedient to introduce a measure to provide for the granting to Her Majesty for defraying certain expenses of the public service for the financial year ending March 31, 2016 the sum of \$4,757,760,300.”

CHAIR: Shall the resolution carry?

All those in favour, ‘aye.’

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those opposed, ‘nay.’

Carried.

On motion, resolution carried.

CLERK: Clause 1.

CHAIR: Shall clause 1 carry?

All those in favour, ‘aye.’

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those opposed, ‘nay.’

Carried.

On motion, clause 1 carried.

CLERK: Clauses 2, 3, and 4.

CHAIR: Shall clauses 2, 3, and 4 carry?

All those in favour, ‘aye.’

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those opposed, ‘nay.’

Carried.

On motion, clauses 2, 3, and 4 carried.

CLERK: The schedule.

CHAIR: Shall the schedule carry?

All those in favour, ‘aye.’

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those opposed, ‘nay.’

Carried.

On motion, schedule carried.

CLERK: Be it enacted by the Lieutenant Governor and House of Assembly in Legislative Session convened, as follows.

CHAIR: Shall the enacting clause carry?

All those in favour, ‘aye.’

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those opposed, ‘nay.’

Carried.

On motion, enacting clause carried.

CLERK: Whereas it appears that the sums mentioned are required to defray certain expenses of the public service of Newfoundland and Labrador for the financial year ending March 31, 2016 and for other purposes relating to the public service.

CHAIR: Shall the preamble carry?

All those in favour, ‘aye.’

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those opposed, ‘nay.’

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Nay.

CHAIR: Carried.

On motion, preamble carried.

CLERK: An Act For Granting To Her Majesty Certain Sums Of Money For Defraying Certain Expenses Of The Public Service For The

Financial Year Ending March 31, 2016 And For Other Purposes Relating To The Public Service.

CHAIR: Shall the long title carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those opposed, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, title carried.

CHAIR: Shall I report the resolution of the bill carried without amendment?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Nay.

CHAIR: Carried.

Motion, that the Committee report having passed the resolution and a bill consequent thereto, carried.

CHAIR: The hon. the Minister of Finance.

MR. WISEMAN: Mr. Chair, I move, seconded by the Premier, that the total contained in the Estimates in the amount of \$7,541,808,100 for the fiscal year 2015-2016 be carried and I further move that the Committee report that they have adopted a resolution and a bill consequent thereto.

CHAIR: The motion is that the total contained in the Estimates in the amount of \$7,541,808,100 for the 2015-2016 fiscal year be carried and that the Committee report that they have adopted a resolution and bill consequent thereto.

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Nay.

Carried.

On motion, that the Committee rise, report progress and ask leave to sit again, Mr. Speaker returned to the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER (Verge): Order, please!

The hon. the Deputy Speaker.

MR. LITTLEJOHN: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply have considered the matters to them referred and have directed me to report that they have passed the amount of \$7,541,808,100 contained in the Estimates of Supply for the fiscal year 2015-2016 and have adopted a certain resolution and recommend that a bill be introduced to give effect to the same.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair of the Committee of the Whole reports that the Committee have considered the matters to them referred and they have directed him to report that the Committee have adopted a certain resolution, and recommend that a bill be introduced to give effect to the same.

When shall the report be received?

MR. HUTCHINGS: Now.

MR. SPEAKER: Now.

On motion, report received and adopted.

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

MR. HUTCHINGS: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance, that the resolution be now read the first time.

MR. SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that this resolution be now read a first time.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Nay.

MR. SPEAKER: Carried.

CLERK: "That it is expedient to introduce a measure to provide for the granting to Her Majesty for defraying certain expenses of the public service for the financial year ending March 31, 2016 the sum of \$4,757,760,300."

On motion, resolution read a first time.

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

MR. HUTCHINGS: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance, that the resolution be now read the second time.

MR. SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that this resolution be now read a second time.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Nay.

MR. SPEAKER: Carried.

CLERK: Second reading of the resolution.

On motion, resolution read a second time.

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

MR. HUTCHINGS: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance, for leave to introduce the Supply bill, Bill 5, and I further move the bill be now read the first time.

MR. SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that the hon. the Minister of Finance shall have leave to introduce a bill entitled the Supply bill, and that the said bill be now read a first time.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Nay.

MR. SPEAKER: Carried.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board to introduce a bill, "An Act For Granting To Her Majesty Certain Sums Of Money For Defraying Certain Expenses Of The Public Service For The Financial Year Ending March 31, 2016 And For Other Purposes Relating To The Public Service," carried. (Bill 5)

CLERK: A bill, An Act For Granting To Her Majesty Certain Sums Of Money For Defraying Certain Expenses Of The Public Service For The Financial Year Ending March 31, 2016 And For Other Purposes Relating To The Public Service. (Bill 5)

On motion, Bill 5 read a first time.

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

MR. HUTCHINGS: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance, that the Supply bill be now read the second time.

MR. SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that the Supply bill be now read a second time.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

Carried.

CLERK: Second reading of Bill 5.

On motion, Bill 5 read a second time.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Deputy House Leader.

MR. HUTCHINGS: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance, the Supply bill be now read the third time.

MR. SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that the Supply bill be now read a third time.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Nay.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is carried.

CLERK: A bill, An Act For Granting To Her Majesty Certain Sums Of Money For Defraying Certain Expenses Of The Public Service For The Financial Year Ending March 31, 2016 And For Other Purposes Relating To The Public Service. (Bill 5)

MR. SPEAKER: This bill is now read a third time. It is ordered that the bill do pass and that its title be as on the Order Paper.

On motion, a bill, "An Act For Granting To Her Majesty Certain Sums Of Money For Defraying Certain Expenses Of The Public Service For The Financial Year Ending March 31, 2016 And For Other Purposes Relating To The Public Service," read a third time, ordered passed and that its title be as on the Order Paper. (Bill 5)

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. HUTCHINGS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Premier, that the House do now adjourn.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is that this House do now adjourn.

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Nay.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is carried.

This House stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow.

On motion, the House at its rising adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, at 1:30 p.m.