



PROVINCE OF NEWFOUNDLAND

THIRTY-SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF
NEWFOUNDLAND

Volume 1

1st. Session

Number 51

VERBATIM REPORT

TUESDAY, APRIL 27, 1976

SPEAKER; THE HONOURABLE GERALD RYAN OTTENHEIMER

The House met at 2:00 P.M.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

ORAL QUESTIONS:

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

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, overwhelmed as we are by the speed with which we got through the first five items on the Notice Paper, I have a question which in the absence of the Minister of Justice and the Premier perhaps the House Leader could answer it for us. Could the minister tell us, Sir, when we will be setting up the Public Accounts Committee and how quickly it will get to work?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister without Portfolio.

MR. WELLS: Mr. Speaker, the question of committees, the hon. Leader of the Opposition will recall that shortly before - I do not know how many days, four or five sitting days I think - before the adjournment a committee was set up to strike the various committees under the chairmanship of the member for Green Bay (Mr. Peckford). They have, I think, twenty days from their appointment to report.

MR. ROBERTS: No, no. It was to be set up within twenty days.

MR. WELLS: Wait now. Let me have a glance at the Standing Order. But at any rate, Mr. Speaker, that committee will be reporting to the House in due course and the committees of course will then follow. So that the matter is in the hands of that committee at the moment. I think the hon. gentleman's colleague, the House Leader, is a member of that committee.

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

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. In view of the fact that the striking committee, which I think is the technically correct name of that committee, was set up some twenty-five days after it was required to be set up by Standing Orders, and in view of the fact that it has not yet met, I am informed by my colleague, the gentleman from Trinity-Bay De Verde (Mr. Rowe) who sits as a member of that committee, would the minister undertake in his capacity as House Leader to have a word with his colleague, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, to get the committee to meet quickly with a view to having it report back so that the Public Accounts Committee can be set up to consider whatever

MR. ROBERTS:

matters may properly come before it?

MR. WELLS: Mr. Speaker, the committee will meet very shortly.

MR. ROBERTS: A further supplementary then, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister tell us whether the committee will be given the power to send for officials and papers?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister without Portfolio.

MR. WELLS: No, I cannot agree to any such undertaking at this time, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Port au Port.

MR. HODDER: A question for the hon. Minister of Transportation and Communications. I wonder if the Minister of Transportation and Communications could tell me what the condition of the Kippens Bridge is? Is it safe and are there any plans to replace it this Summer?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Transportation and Communications.

MR. MORCAN: Mr. Speaker, I have been away from my office for the past number of days. I will be checking on it this afternoon and I will get a reply back to the hon. member.

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

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Tourism.

It is about the Salmonier wilderness park, which I believe is within the area of his departmental responsibilities. Could the minister tell us, please, just what action he has taken to ensure that the construction of the three park buildings which has apparently run into a considerable amount of difficulty, that that difficulty has been removed and that the matter is now progressing satisfactorily?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Tourism.

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Speaker, the latest information I have on the matter is that the Public Works people are looking at the site to determine just what additional work has to be done. There have been some problems and there was a tender call but the contract could not be let because of damage to one of the buildings which was not included in the initial tender call. And as a result of that the matter was referred to the Department of Public Works and Services.

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

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. And I hope the minister will grant me a little leeway in this because his colleague, the Minister of Public Works and Services, is not here and I would think the minister's department is in the role of a client and the Ministry of Public Works and Services is really in the role of a service department fulfilling a function. But in view of the fact there seems

MR. ROBERTS: to be very considerable question about some aspects of this matter, I wonder if the minister would undertake to lay on the table of the House a copy of the contract which was entered into, I believe with a St. John's firm known as, I think it was Gus Winter Limited - am I correct? - were the contractors; would he undertake to lay upon the table of the House a copy of the contract together with an explanation or a note, as the case might be, of exactly what work has been done and what has not been done? And I ask that, Sir, because the fear is the amount of money which was provided, and which I understand has been fully paid under the contract, even though the work to be done on the contract has not been completed and what has been done has not been done satisfactorily. The fear is, Sir, the Province will end up having to lay out a considerable amount of additional money to complete the job which I think we all want to see done.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Tourism.

MR. HICKEY: I will take the matter under advisement, Mr. Speaker, and see just what can be done on it.

MR. ROBERTS: Well, I thank the minister, Mr. Speaker, and a further supplementary; could the minister tell us, please, exactly what was the value of the contract let to the Winter Limited firm?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Tourism.

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Speaker, in fear of giving incorrect information, I would not hesitate to provide the information, but I am unable to right at this moment.

MR. ROBERTS: Well I thank the hon. gentleman, Sir, and one cannot expect him to have these matters at his fingertips. I realize that. The minister will get me the information and that is really all I could ask. Could the minister also undertake to let us know, Mr. Speaker, how much of the contract has not been completed and how much money has been paid to the contracting firm, which I believe is called Gus Winter Limited?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Tourism.

MR. HICKEY: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Twillingate.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Mr. Speaker, I do not know if I am in order in the question I would like to direct to the minister, I mean, I am not sure if it is a supplementary and if it dealing with the same matter with which the hon. Leader of the Opposition dealt.

What I wanted to ask the minister is this. Is the minister and are his colleagues in the government now quite determined that the wilderness area in question, and I take it it is the one on the Avalon Peninsula, is not going to be opened up by road and thereby destroy its character as a wilderness. May I take it that that is a settled policy of the government?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Tourism.

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Speaker, there is certainly no indication, at least as far as I am concerned, that there is any danger to destroy the area in question that has been preserved, and this is the whole purpose -

AN HON. MEMBER: Open towards Holyrood?

MR. HICKEY: Not to my knowledge.

MR. SMALLWOOD: I thank the hon. minister and I say God bless him, and I think a lot of people in Newfoundland will say the same thing.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Trinity - Bay de Verde.

MR. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Premier, I wonder if the Premier could straighten out certain and seemingly contradictory statements made by himself and the Minister of Mines and Energy with respect to certain OPEC countries interested in investing in the Come By Chance oil refinery. Is the Premier receptive to the idea and does the Minister of Mines and Energy still consider the idea to be foolishness?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Premier.

PREMIER MOORES: Mr. Speaker, I think it is fair to say that that is a totally erroneous intonation given in that question.

MR. ROWE: It is in the paper.

PREMIER MOORES: The fact is that we have had no proposals from any OPEC countries regarding Come By Chance. If we do we will gladly give our position on it. I will go further and say, Sir, that at this particular time and for the last few years there have been lots of weird and wonderful people who have suggested that possibly there was money available in the Middle Eastern countries for all kinds of purposes.

MR. ROBERTS: All they want is a finders' fee in advance.

PREMIER MOORES: That is all, yes. But they, Sir, I would suggest we would be very silly indeed if we took them seriously.

MR. ROWE: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. ROWE: One of the local newspapers, Mr. Speaker, is quoted as saying "The Premier is receptive to the idea". Has the Premier been in consultation or negotiations with any of these groups? And is he receptive to anything in this regard?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER MOORES: The Premier has not been in touch with any of these groups, Mr. Speaker. I think it is fair to say that any offer of money availability, whether it is in the Department of Finance or in any other department, has to be checked out just to the reliability of it and exactly what is meant. But the fact is to my knowledge right now there are no direct negotiations between this government and any middle Eastern Country regarding money for any purpose.

MR. ROWE: Well, is it correct to say that - a supplementary - the Premier was misquoted in the paper?

PREMIER MOORES: Who?

MR. ROWE: Is it correct to say -

PREMIER MOORES: No. Of course not.

MR. ROWE: Well you were - if I could just finish my question.

PREMIER MOORES: The statement from the paper, Mr. Speaker, I just quoted what my position has been from the beginning, and if anything other than that was in the paper it was a misquote.

MR. ROWE: Well, Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary. The Premier was quoted as saying, "He was receptive to the idea." Now what I am trying to find out is whether negotiations are going on directly with these countries through the Premier's office or through the receivers?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER MOORES: Mr. Speaker, I thought I had answered that question in that, if there was money available and it was definitely proven that there was actual money available, of course we would be receptive to talking to whoever had the money available. But as of yet it has not surfaced.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Fogo.

CAPT. E. WINSOR: Mr. Speaker, a question to the hon. Minister of Fisheries. Can the minister inform the House if he has received any

Capt. Winsor:

report or how is the enquiry going with the R.C.M.P. into the alleged fraud in the gear programme of the Department of Fisheries?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Fisheries.

HON. W. CARTER: Mr. Speaker, I think that question would more appropriately be directed to my colleague, the Minister of Justice.

CAPT. WINSOR: Mr. Speaker, well I will direct the question to the hon. the Premier. Would the hon. Premier, in view of the delays, now give serious consideration to the setting up of a judicial enquiry to clear up this whole matter?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Premier.

PREMIER MOORES: Mr. Speaker, I think the Minister of Justice can answer the hon. member's original question, if it is agreeable, he can do it when I sit down. The fact is I personally do not think a judicial enquiry is needed until the regular and normal course of justice has reached, you know, what they consider to be their final conclusion. But certainly I think the Minister of Justice can answer the question as to progress and where it sits.

MR. HICKMAN: Would the hon. gentleman repeat the question because I did not hear it?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Fogo.

CAPT. WINSOR: Yes. I certainly will. The question put to the hon. Minister of Fisheries was, could he bring the House up to date on the progress of the enquiry taking place by the R.C.M.P., you know, dealing with the alleged fraud of the gear programme 1974-1975?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Justice.

HON. T. A. HICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, this investigation, which is being carried on by both the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Newfoundland Constabulary is, and has been since the investigation started, been given top priority from an investigative point of view. Six members, I repeat, six members of the Commercial Crime Section of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, that is, it is referred to as the Fraud Squad but its proper designation is the Commercial Crime Section, six members of the Commercial Crime Section of the R.C.M.P. since the investigation started has been giving this matter top priority in areas

Mr. Rickman:

that are somewhat, that may be remote, They are also using in addition to these six men members of R.C.M.P. Detachments whenever and wherever the workload permits.

It is a fairly lengthy investigation, of necessity, because it involves the comparing of every account of every fisherman in Newfoundland who had dealings with the Department of Fisheries, as well as with suppliers.

MR. HICKMAN: The RCMP and the Newfoundland Constabulary were very considerably aided by being able to use the computer services of the RCMP in Ottawa, which was availed of early this year and which enabled them to get a computered print-out on all of the claims that are presently in the hands of, or were dealt with by the Department of Fisheries. Without that, if we had not been able to avail of computer services, that is the kind of an investigation that would last for years.

In addition to the very intensive work that is being carried out by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Newfoundland Constabulary have two full-time members of that force investigating, and they are assisted in their investigation by the Auditor General's Department. One auditor is working full-time and there is also one, a supervisor, who is actively engaged. I simply want to assure the House that the investigation is being carried on unhindered, unhampered but with absolute vigor and with the number of men assigned to it that the investigation indicates are required at this time.

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

MR. ROBERTS: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, because we have listened with interest to the minister and I think it is fair to say that the rest has obviously done the minister a lot of good. I wonder if he could tell us just when the investigation which he outlines, you know, at some length - he obviously anticipated a question and that was a right and proper thing for him to do and to prepare himself - I wonder if he could tell us when the investigation began and if could tell us how long he expects it will go on before it is resolved one way or another?

MR. HICKMAN: I cannot recall the date that the investigation commenced, but from recollection I think it was in August of last year that it commenced. There is no conceivable way to get an indication at this time as to when the investigation will be concluded because it is a massive investigation and it is being done -

MR. ROBERTS: How many claims are involved?

MR. HICKMAN: Well, there -

MR. ROBERTS: About 10,000?

MR. HICKMAN: There are many thousands of claims involved.

Now this does not mean - please! I do not want anyone to indicate that -

MR. ROBERTS: No, but does every one of them have to be looked at?

MR. HICKMAN: Every claim has to be taken and matched with that of the supplier. That is a massive job in itself.

MR. ROBERTS: That will not in itself - that may only be one kind of fraud.

MR. HICKMAN: That in itself indicates the nature, Mr. Speaker, of the time-consuming efforts that are required by the police. I would not under any circumstances wish anyone to read into what I am saying here that there are thousands of people who are guilty of any crime. But when you start an investigation you must start from square one, and the most competent people to do that are the police, aided in their investigation by auditors. So they start off by matching. This is why I said in the beginning that without the computer time being made available to us by the RCMP in Ottawa -

MR. ROBERTS: Were they all fed into the computer?

MR. HICKMAN: They were all fed into the computer.

MR. ROBERTS: That must have taken a lot of time.

MR. HICKMAN: That took a fair amount of time. They were fed in in December and January, as I recall it. If we did not have the computer services available, they would be there this time next year still going through matching grants to the suppliers.

MR. ROBERTS: But that only shows that the man got what the company was paid for. That is all that would show.

MR. HICKMAN: That is the first step of the investigation. When that is matched, then you start moving forward. And, Mr. Speaker, I am sure hon. gentlemen will appreciate that where there is a police investigation going on it is incumbent on me to be very

MR. HICKMAN: careful and very guarded in what I say, because under no circumstances do I want to create the impression that there are many thousands of Newfoundlanders involved in this; or secondly, to say anything which might in any way prejudice a person who, at the conclusion of the investigation, may be charged with an offence. I think that is as far as I can go.

MR. ROBERTS: It is a good point, a very good point, but if the minister would allow, Mr. Speaker, if it is in order, a further supplementary. A very good point about the prejudicing of people who are not charged with anything and may very well not be charged with anything, because one thing is sure and certain, if there are 5,000 of these claims there may be some that are fraudulent and there may not.

MP. ROBERTS:

But there are many thousands that are not fraudulent. We can agree on that. But in view of the fact that officers of the Mounted Police are going about portions of the Province - I have heard of some who happened to be going down through my district. I have had some phone calls from constituents of mine who assure me their consciences are clear and would like me to tell the magistrate so when the time comes. But, you know, it is widely known that members of the Fraud Squad are travelling. Indeed they have confiscated, I believe is the correct term, a number of nets from constituents of mine and I suspect in other districts in the Province as well.

There is some obvious public interest in that every person in the area knows the Mounties are there, and he knows what they are doing, and he knows every fisherman he has talked to and so forth. There is some public interest obviously in having a speedy end put to this matter and whoever is found guilty of anything to stand trial and whoever should not be charged - you know, end it.

MP. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. ROBERTS: This is a lengthy question.

MR. SPEAKER: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. gentleman but I think he will probably agree that it is a lengthy preamble.

MP. ROBERTS: I think you are right, Mr. Speaker, and I am grateful to you. The point is can the minister indicate whether there is any way in which he can assure the public the matter will be concluded as quickly as possible?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Justice.

MR. HICKMAN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I have no hesitancy at all in giving that assurance because the instructions went out from me to the Director of Public Prosecutions, who I know in turn passed them on to the police, this is why there are such a large number of police involved in this investigation, that the investigation was to proceed as quickly as possible and that when the investigation is completed and referred to the law officers of the Crown, that any charges that are to be laid, are to be laid without delay.

MP. ROBERTS: Well, Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister. A further supplementary. The minister has told us the investigation - I believe he said he was speaking from memory - started last August and well and good. Could the minister tell us how the matter came to light? Was that at the time there was the incident out at the building of the fire and subsequent police investigations, or how did it come to light then?

MR. HICKMAN: I think I am going to direct that to the hon. gentleman -

MR. ROBERTS: Well, to the former Minister of Fisheries then.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Mines and Energy.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, at that time, in August, 1975 I was the Minister of Fisheries. As I have said before, as a result of a fire in the Viking Building, which fire occurred under suspicious circumstances, a check was made to see if any files were missing as a result of that fire. One file turned out to be missing dealing with a certain area of the Province. However there was a duplicate of that file available. In checking into that file to see if there could be any connection between it and this mysterious fire, it was discovered upon investigation into all the claims made in that area that there was reason to suspect that there was hanky-panky in that area.

MP. ROBERTS: The file had to do with gear claims in that area?

MR. CROSBIE: Yes, it had to do with the gear claims in the 1974 programme. As a result of this investigation by the Department of Fisheries we then called in the Minister of Justice's department who put the CID in and the RCMP on the matter.

MP. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. gentleman would allow us to follow this line of questioning.

MR. SPEAKER: A further supplementary.

MP. ROBERTS: All right. It is a supplementary, Sir. I want to be precise. I think it is an important point, and the minister has set it straight. It was the fire in the Viking Building that brought the matter to light. The moment the minister knew about it, then he got on

MR. ROBERTS:

the phone or wrote a memorandum to his colleague, the Minister of Justice. Is that the correct situation, Sir?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Mines and Energy.

MR. CROSBIE: Well, we cannot discover any connection between the fire and these events. I am just saying that because of this fire which started -

MR. ROBERTS: There is a temporal connection, but no other.

MR. CROSBIE: Yes, right. There is no other connection that we know of. But as a result of it since there was a fire missing, then it was decided to have a very close look at that area and what had happened there. That close look discovered certain things that appeared to be alarming. As a result the Minister of Justice asked to put the CID and his people onto the matter.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: A supplementary to the Minister of Mines and Energy, Sir. Would the minister tell the House if the minister or his predecessor read the 1974 report of the Auditor General dealing with the gear replacement programme and the gear bounty programme, and if so why the minister did not act on the very strong recommendations and observations that the Auditor General made in his 1974 report.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Mines and Energy.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, I have read every Auditor-General's report since 1972 and in fact I might have read a lot of them before 1972. So I certainly read that one. The Auditor General's report for 1974 does not deal with this special gear replacement programme of 1974-1975. It deals with the ordinary year to year gear subsidy programme. I cannot remember exactly but I certainly would have read it

MR. CROSBIE: And that would have - I cannot remember exactly, but I certainly would have read it and if I was Minister of Fisheries at the time I would have asked my officials to check out what the Auditor General said and take whatever steps were necessary to improve the situation if they found anything to be wrong. But his report does not deal with this special programme. It deals with the ordinary gear subsidy programme.

MR. NEARY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. NEARY: Do I interpret from the minister's answer then that the investigation presently being carried on by the RCMP or the CID also involves the ordinary gear replacement programme and not just the emergency programme?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Mines and Energy.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, the present investigation deals with the special 1974 fishing gear replacement programme where gear was replaced by the Government of Newfoundland and the Government of Canada, one hundred per cent of the cost of any gear lost was replaced and that is what the investigation deals with.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Windsor - Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Consumer Affairs, or the Acting Minister of Consumer Affairs; does the mechanics exist within the Department of Consumer Affairs, the present department as we know it, to monitor increases in the cost of goods and services, in the price of goods and services in this Province, increases far in excess of the Price and Wage Control Board's requirements?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Provincial Affairs and Environment.

MR. MURPHY: The only machinery we have that monitors prices are the four or five staff we have that do a survey perhaps every six weeks across, and then what we do then we bring them to the attention of Mr. Noel Hurley, who is the federal representative here. We have no power whatever to roll back prices or to establish prices of any kind, and basically what we have been doing with the staff that we have

MR. MURPHY: is just the same, making regular checks throughout the Province at regular intervals and seeing if there is any great ups and downs and what-not and basically that is it. Their reports are on file, I think since I went in there in November sometime, I think there are three we have done right across the Province and if the hon. member would like to see them, the fluctuations and what not, and on that I am very happy to report that the last one we did the price of food generally right across the Province except perhaps - have gone down, you know, as compared to - if they had not gone down at least they remained very stable as compared to the fluctuations that were occurring previously.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary and then I will recognize the hon. member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir.

MR. FLIGHT: To the minister again; when the Public Utilities Board, for instance, approves an increase in a price for a service rendered, are there any lines of communications with the AIB, with Ottawa, any provincial lines to indicate that they have just approved something that is far in excess of the price and wage controls or do we have to take pot luck on that it would be brought to their attention? Mr. Speaker, if you would permit me, I am referring to a specific price increase in this Province that I am myself aware of this past two weeks where a cost of a services has gone from \$7 to \$10, a price increase of \$3 over \$7. Now there is no evidence - we know there is lots of evidence of wage control in this Province but there is no evidence at all of price controls.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Provincial Affairs and Environment.

MR. MURPHY: Has the hon. member brought it to the attention of any of my officials so as we could check? I do not really know at the present moment what the hon. gentleman is speaking of, but if he feels there is an unwarranted increase in anything we will look into the thing, if we cannot solve it at this level, at least we will go to the next level, the Federal Government, who have that power to roll back or to establish and I would be only too happy anytime because that is

MR. MURPHY: we are there for. We receive literally hundreds of phone calls a month dealing with different things. Some things we can deal with, but basically the actual setting of prices is without our control entirely. But if there is anything special that you feel, or anything else, just feel free to let me know.

MR. FLIGHT: One further supplementary, Mr. Speaker, please. I would like to follow this line of questioning.

MR. SPEAKER: I hope it will be brief because I did indicate to the other hon. member that he would be recognized next.

MR. FLIGHT: I will be very brief, Sir. It is supplementary but it is to the Premier, Will the Premier advise the House if he is now thinking along the lines of establishing a Department of Consumer Affairs to protect the public of Newfoundland from the type of thing I have just referred to, and it is going on every day in every community in Newfoundland, Sir?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Premier.

PREMIER MOORES: The answer is, Mr. Speaker, yes. As it is printed in the estimates there has to be some minor restructuring done. The Consumer Affairs Division, as it is now, has to be beefed up to take a more meaningful role, as the minister has indicated recently as well. The answer is yes, that consumer protection is important. I suppose it is neglected, it is very difficult to get fully covered, but certainly a Provincial Consumer Affairs Department would have to work very closely with the federal counterpart because it is possibly the weakness in the Anti-Inflation Board's efforts to date and it is something that I think concerns every member of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: The member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir.

MR. R. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, a question for the Minister of Tourism. As he is aware the extended caribou season closes on the Labrador Coast this Friday, I believe, April 30. It has been brought to my attention there are some people who, because of the gas shortage earlier and so on, have not been able to obtain their caribou. Would the minister consider giving permission, if permission is required, permission to allow these people to charter an aircraft, at their own expense of course, to get into the caribou country for the purpose of obtaining a moose or a caribou and flying the caribou back?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Tourism.

MR. T. HICKEY: Mr. Speaker, we gave a two week extension, I believe, to those people because of shortage of gas and because of weather conditions in the area that prevented them from getting in. Now I have not received any representation from them. I certainly will take the matter that the member raises to my officials to see just what the situation is. I cannot make a commitment at this time. I think we have to stop somewhere. If there is meat in the woods that has to be taken out, of course, I suppose that is a special situation, a situation we certainly will look at.

MR. SPEAKER: I will allow one supplementary.

MR. SIMMONS: A supplementary. The minister may not have completely understood. I was not requesting an extension on their behalf at all, but requesting permission to use an aircraft. There is no meat in the woods at the moment. It is just a question of going in and hunting and then bringing out the meat. I do not want to leave the impression that there is meat there to be transported out at this point in time. My question really was would the minister give permission, if it is required, for these people to obtain an aircraft at their own expense, to go in, do the hunting, not to do it from an aircraft, but to get to the site in the interior by aircraft and then to transport the meat out by aircraft. That is the question. I wonder in view of the shortage of time would he undertake to advise me soon so I could be in touch with these people.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Tourism.

MR. HICKFY: Well, Mr. Speaker, it would be an unprecedented step as I understand it, but certainly if there is a very difficult situation existing of course I will be glad to take the thing under consideration to see what can be done. I will report back to the House.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, -

MR. SPEAKER: I am sorry, but the time has expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY:

On motion that the House resolve itself into Committee of Supply.
Mr. Speaker left the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY:

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! Social Services, 801-01.

HON. C. BRFTT: Mr. Chairman, it is with a great deal of personal satisfaction that I rise for the first time as a minister and as Minister of Social Services to introduce the estimates of this department for the financial year 1976-77. I think that probably this is one of the departments that most people know very little about. It has a statement attached to it as big as this building. I would like to take what time is necessary to outline what we have accomplished in the last three or four years and possibly what we hope to accomplish in the next two or three.

You will recall, Sir, that the Throne Speech to open this session of the legislature spoke very briefly about Social Services. In effect what it said was that a good foundation had been laid for the development of Social Services in this Province. Also, the only reference to Social Services in the Budget Speech was what can be considered, I suppose, is good news regarding the ten per cent increase in rates.

MR. BETT:

A great deal needs to be said about developments in Social Services since this administration took office in 1972. While credit for new programmes must go to the government as a whole, and of course to this House for its endorsement of the programmes, I believe that special recognition must go to two of my colleagues, the Minister of Provincial Affairs and Environment and also the Minister of Tourism, who were the Ministers of Social Services during the period of the greatest change.

I think it is important that I say something about what Social Services are. In this way I think you will get an understanding of the role of this department and of its aims and objectives. Social Services are provided for people in need of protection, support and rehabilitation. They are aimed at strengthening and preserving individual and family functioning. In other words, the aim of the department is to keep families together, and aged and handicapped people in their own homes as long as possible. Social Services are based on the philosophy that the family remain the basic unit in our society and for this reason we believe that Social Services ought to be heavily committed to preserving the family unit.

Social Services may be viewed in terms of the people who need them. The first group in need of Social Services are children. I refer to children whose parents or relatives are unable or unwilling to properly care for them. Emphasis must be placed on providing services of a counselling, day care, or homemaker nature to enable parents or relatives to provide proper care. When this fails we have to provide alternate sources of care, for example foster homes, adoptions, juvenile correctional institutions and so on.

The second group in need of social services are families who are able with help to maintain their own living arrangements. The single, most important social service for these people is an

MR. BRETT:

adequate income maintenance programme. Sir, there are literally thousands of families who need no service other than adequate income support to maintain the family unit. However there are many hundreds of other families who need services in addition to income support. These services again are services such as counselling, homemaker and employment related services.

The third group of people who need our services are adults, still living in their own homes, who are unable to properly care for themselves. In cases of this kind we find that homemaker services are often needed to enable the relatives to provide proper care. However when these kinds of services are not adequate we have to look to the alternative type of social service. This means placement in boarding homes and nursing homes such as the Woyles Home we have here in St. John's, Harbour Lodge, Hillview Lodge and the other institutions.

Sir, I would like to mention that there is one social service in particular that is needed by all three groups. That is the homemaker service. This is very significant. Homemaker services are often the means of enabling children to remain with their parents. They are often the means of preventing family breakup and they are certainly the means of keeping aged and handicapped people in their own homes as long as possible. Sir, this government is committed to the philosophy that alternative types of care, such as extensive institutional care, should only be used when absolutely necessary.

When this government took office in 1972 it saw the need for a great expansion of social services in this Province. The government felt that its first step should be to get as many employable social assistance recipients as possible into jobs or vocational training. I am extremely happy to report, Mr. Chairman, that phenomenal results have been achieved. We have created a new division within the department called the Employment Opportunities Division and 3,800 recipients have been placed in employment or

MR. BETT:

training through the work of this division. In fact the able-bodied social assistance case load has been reduced dramatically since this government took office.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

Would the members on my left be a bit more quiet, please?

MR. BETT: Since April, 1975 we have placed 1,158 social assistance recipients in jobs. This means that these 1,158 families are no longer drawing welfare checks.

MR. ROBERTS: What was that date again?

MR. BRETT: Since April 1, 1975.

MR. ROBERTS: The last twelve months.

MR. BRETT: I beg your pardon?

MR. ROBERTS: The last twelve months.

MR. BRETT: Right.

MR. ROBERTS: Would the minister have a breakdown by - Mr. Chairman, I assume the minister does not mind being interrupted because he is obviously reading from some notes, and we will not interrupt his train of thought. Would the minister have a month to month table? Those 1,200 jobs in twelve months is 100 jobs a month. But I am interested in knowing whether it is fairly uniform or whether it is higher in some months than in others. And similarly, or along the same line, would the minister be able to tell the Committee how many of these were permanent jobs? I ask that because I would imagine that a certain number of them at least would be LIP projects or even OFY well possibly, but more than likely LIP projects or projects of that nature and while we do recognize, you know, 1,200 jobs is 1,200 jobs and is to be welcomed and certainly not to be sneered at, I am interested in knowing how many of them are reasonably permanent and how many Federal Government funded, what amount to make-work projects?

MR. BRETT: Well, Mr. Chairman, I do not have a table as such in my notes, but I will undertake, if there is one available, to get it before we close up the estimates of this department. And again, Mr. Chairman, there may be further explanation here. The answer to the hon. member's question may come further on in my notes. Some of these jobs are in community self-help projects which are initiated by the Employment Opportunities Division of my department. As indicated, the principal objective of this division is getting social assistance recipients out to work. Self-help projects were carried out last year in the communities of Bunyan's Cove, Phillips Head, St. Patrick's and Bartlett's Harbour, and in each case resulted in the provision of an adequate supply of fresh water to homes in these communities. These projects are deliberately labour

Mr. Brett:

intensive, and I might say they often accomplish what otherwise would require much more costly capital investment. And these results can be real eye openers for a local government when it comes to getting needed public work's projects done economically.

Apart entirely from the value of these projects, what delights me, Sir, is the fact that this work is being by social assistance recipients as an alternative to idleness. And I can tell you, Sir, that the men themselves are proud of their accomplishments.

I will be the first to acknowledge that these self-help projects are for a limited target population, and they are not to be viewed as an answer to the unemployment problems in the Province. But they are good examples of employment opportunities that are sort of under our noses and crying out to be done. I am rather disappointed that the general public has not been told more about this kind of rehabilitative work that is going on in my department. When one thinks of this department the first thing that comes to mind is the short term able-bodied recipient, and very little thought is ever given to the creative work and the rehabilitative type of work that is done in the department.

During the past two years you have heard a lot about the new Social Assistance Programme, and the next major step that was undertaken by this government was to introduce a completely new Social Assistance Programme which provided adequate support levels for everybody in need of assistance. I myself was a welfare officer in this Province for ten years, and I can assure you that I witnessed lots of poverty. And I am proud and happy that this government saw fit to grant substantial rate increases to social assistance recipients.

Only those people, Sir, who live below the poverty level can know the real meaning of poverty. Social assistance recipients live at the lowest end of the socio-economics scale. They know what it means to have an inadequate diet. They know what it means to have to deny their children boots and skates, pocket money to go to

Mr. Brett:

dances and buy bicycles and lots of other things that a normal child have that they do not have. And I would say in some cases they know what it means for their wives to have only one dress a year, and to get right down to it they probably even know what it means not to have a dime to put in the church collection plate.

MR. BRETT:

Of course, Sir, everybody knows about the odd case of abuse. But I would like to assure this House that they are relatively few in number. A new Social Assistance Programme introduced on January 1, 1974 provided greatly increased social assistance rates. A very important feature of the new programme was the elimination of lower rates for needy, able-bodied persons. Everybody knows that the old Social Assistance Programme discriminated against able-bodied. The old programme was concerned more about the reason for the need than it was about the need itself. In effect, the programme said that if we do not like the reason why you are in need then we will give you less, but if we like the reason then we will give you more. As a consequence the handicapped and the blind, the sick and the widowed received higher rates than the short-term able-bodied with the same number of children, who could not find a job no matter how hard he tried. Now, Sir, this was the kind of discrimination that the new programme erased.

Mr. Chairman, let us compare the old social assistance rates of March, 1972 with those of April 1, 1976. In March, 1972 an able-bodied man with a wife and three children living in his own home received a maximum of \$145 a month. If the same man were unable to work he would have received \$210 a month. This was back in March of 1972. In April of 1976, the same case, the same man whether able or unable to work would receive \$301 a month. This represents an increase of 107 per cent, in the able-bodied case, and forty-three per cent increase in the other case.

MR. NEARY: The man by himself?

MR. BRETT: This is an able-bodied man with a wife and three children, a typical family of five.

MR. NEARY: A man, his wife and three children.

MR. BRETT: Right, right. It would seem reasonable to expect that a more generous Social Assistance Programme might attract more recipients. However this did not happen, which speaks volumes, I suppose, for the moral fibre of the people of this Province. I am sure that almost everybody said, "Here goes the case load!" Of course, the reverse happened, as I pointed out very briefly in this House on a couple of occasions. The new programme also

MR. BRETT:

introduced an incentive scheme which was designed to make work more attractive than Social Assistance. Under the old programme Social Assistance recipients were taxed 100 per cent for every dollar they earned, and under the new programme they are allowed to retain a significant percentage of their earnings. It varies as the earnings go up. This was an encouragement to work more and, Sir, the results of the programme, I think, have vindicated our judgement.

On January 1, 1975, a year after the new programme was introduced, we increased the rates in relation to the cost of living. That increase was 12.7 per cent and it was granted to all recipients, short-term and long-term. We felt that this was the only appropriate rationale for increasing social assistance rates. This government does not believe, did not believe, will never believe in granting increases in social assistance rates on an ad hoc basis. I do not need to elaborate on that. I am sure everybody knows what I mean. There are some myths about welfare which I would like to discuss for a few minutes and hopefully dispel, myths with regard to the social assistance programme. One of the problems, of course, is that of misunderstanding. The services provided by this department, as well as the thousands of people throughout the Province served by the departments, are grossly misunderstood. There are several myths around about the service and the people served. I would like to identify two or three of them.

The first one is that the people who receive social assistance are the same people who receive it year in and year out. That is, the same people are on year after year after year. This is not true. The people who receive assistance because of unemployment change dramatically each month. Many of them receive assistance for only one month out of twelve. In fact, over half of them receive it for only one, two or three months. In the case of the people receiving assistance for reasons other than unemployment, the turnover is not as significant, but there is nevertheless at least a twenty-five per cent turnover in a year. Another myth is that people who receive social assistance are contented with their lot, they

April 27, 1976.

Tape 2157

RH - 3

MR. BRETT:

like things the way they are and they consider themselves to be fairly well off. That again, Sir, is not true. As I stated earlier I was a welfare officer myself for ten years. I do not recall ever meeting one such person, and I saw a lot for a period of ten years. The odd person might give the impression that he is contented with his lot. I believe that everybody on social assistance would rather not be on it. They would rather be independent like you and I, working people. They would rather have a job,

MR. BRETT:

they would rather have a nice house, they would rather have a car, and be like the ordinary citizen. I realize that some of them do have cars but most of them do not.

The third myth, Sir, is that people on social assistance are lazy and do not want to work. This is one that gets my dander up every time I hear it. Again I want to assure this House that this is not true. There may be a very, very small percentage but generally speaking it is a false statement. As already indicated, we have demonstrated since this government took office that hundreds of people receiving social assistance can be helped to get into employment or to take trades. The fact that we have some remaining on social assistance is no indication that they are not interested in getting off it. It merely means that although we have had a lot of success we have not as yet been 100 per cent successful, and of course I do not know of any project that is 100 per cent successful.

Another myth that used to be around was that people on assistance ought to be paid by voucher because if they were given cash they would spend it in the beer parlors. I can remember as a welfare officer that they would come in and you had your book and you wrote what they could get for food, what they could get for clothing and so on and so on. When we decided to pay them by check, again people started to push the panic button. The point I am trying to make, Sir, is best illustrated by our impressions of social services and the people we serve in relation to how well we really know them.

For example, if we have a relative receiving social assistance, we are likely to know exactly what kind of person he is and the kind of help that the department is giving that particular person. In these cases 99.9 per cent of the time we will say that they are not getting enough. But on the other hand when we think in terms of people who we do not know, strangers, and we do not know what services they are being given, our impression is often one of

MP. BRET:

doing a lot for people who do not really need it. That is the essence of the misunderstanding that I referred to earlier and I sincerely hope that this presentation on these myths has helped in some measure to clear up some of the misunderstanding.

Day care and homemaker services - this is an important part of the department. We are committed, Mr. Chairman, to the principle that preventive and supportive social services must be viewed as priority and we have begun to move in this direction. Everybody is aware that during the last session of the legislature we introduced a new Day Care and Homemaker Service Act which will provide the framework for the development and hopefully the growth of this service in this Province.

I would like to say a special word about what is happening in respect to these two services, day care and homemaker. The demand for day care services has grown, it has grown tremendously, almost alarmingly in the last couple of years. Really there are two types. One type is what I refer to personally as the baby-sitting kind of service. This type is sort of employment related. It is a service required by parents who want to go out to work and have their children looked after by the day, and for the most part the demand for this kind of service is coming from people who want to improve their life style by increasing their income. It is often a case of both parents working. I might say, Mr. Chairman, that it is for this type of day care that the demand is greatest and it comes from all over the Province. I suppose it is because the service is sought by people in the middle and upper middle income brackets.

As members of this hon. House well know these are the classes of people who are most effective in getting what they want. They are most verbal. They have the most clout. This government has taken a very definite position with respect to requests for financial support for baby-sitting day care services, as I call it. We do

Mr. ROBERT:

not think that government should be into the business of financing this kind of day care service. We believe that if people want this service they should pay for it themselves. I simply cannot see-and I do not think anybody in this House will disagree with me - I cannot see using the taxpayers dollars to provide a baby-sitting service for people in the \$10,000, \$15,000 or \$20,000 income bracket. There are simply too many other priorities in this department.

However, I definitely do feel that government has a responsibility to regulate the standard of service provided in this area. That is, if we are going to allow people to operate this kind of day care service then we have to regulate the standards. Incidentally, Sir, the private sector is already significantly involved in the provision of the baby-sitting kind of day care service. In fact there are

Mr. Erett:

approximately twenty-five, now I believe twenty-six; there was a new one opened at the University recently. So there are twenty-six now, I think, such day care centres licenced in the Province. And we intend to leave the provision of this service to the private sector. We have no intentions of getting into financing this type of service. However, we are involved, and we will stay involved, in protecting and improving the standard of service that these private day care services will provide.

The new Day Care and Homemakers Services Act will set standards and ensure that the standards are met. Only people who meet the standards will be granted licences, or be allowed to retain licences.

Now the second kind of day care service is what I will call a developmental type of service. And, Sir, we see a great need for this kind of service throughout the Province, but particularly in the larger urban areas. And this service is to children who are deprived socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically, and who are being neglected or on the verge of being neglected, whose parents are under great stress. Day care services in these situations can be a godsend. During the day the child is taken away from the stresses and strains of the home and exposed to a normal, healthy environment. This gives the mother a chance to collect her wits and to cope more effectively with her situation. And up to now, Sir, this is the only kind of service that government has been financing to a very limited extent. However we have seen great benefits derived from it. For example, permanent separation of children from parents has been prevented in literally dozens of cases, and developing neglect situations have been more or less nipped in the bud.

I am in receipt of a report from the day care centre Teach-A-Tot here in St. John's. It is very interesting, I wish that every member of the House will read it, probably it should be tabled.

Mr. Brett:

Sir, a very strict income test is used to determine who qualifies for these services that I have just been talking about, and that is on government account. We do not provide this service to people who can afford to purchase the service themselves. This is natural. Generally speaking the service is available only to the working poor and to social assistance recipients. However, while this service is developmental, aimed at children who are deprived in some way, nevertheless there are a significant number of single parents who avail of this service for economic reasons and who are enabled to enter gainful employment as a result.

Now our involvement in day care services at the present time is confined to the one here at St. John's which is called Teach-A-Tot Children's Centre. This is a very highly efficient and a helpful service. Approximately fifty children are served at any given time during the year. Actually it is the only organized service of its kind in the Province. We have not been asked to finance a similar service elsewhere in the Province, although we acknowledge that this service is needed in several of the larger centres of population in the Province, and we hope in time to see the service extended to those areas.

Now let me go back over that. We have been requested to finance the babysitting type of day care centres in other parts of the Province, but not this type, the type of the St. John's Teach-A-Tot.

Now, Sir, a word or two about homemaker's services. This is quite similar in nature and purpose to day care services, other than that it is extended to adult. It is aimed primarily at keeping families together and keeping aged and handicapped people out of institutions and in their own homes where they prefer to be. The secret to the success of the service lies with the homemaker herself. This is usually a very special type of woman, a woman with a lot of experience, probably in rearing a family or in providing

Mr. Brett:

certain kinds of nursing or paranursing services. Now they are paid a salary, it is not very large, but they are paid a salary for going into homes while the mother is in hospital, for example, and looking after the children, cooking the meals, and making beds etc., so that of course the breadwinner, the father, can continue working. And they also provide the same service for handicapped and aged people, and thus they help to keep down the demand for costly geriatric beds. This is something that I hope to see expand in the Province, because we do not have the geriatric beds available. And as I said earlier in my notes, many people wish to remain at home if they could and if we could extend this type of day care it would be of tremendous service.

MR. BRETT: Beginning on April 1st, this department will be taking over the provision of this service ourselves. There is one in St. John's and we are taking it over. Up to now we have been purchasing the service from a private agency. The key to the success of this service is in the recruitment and the training of good homemakers.

Homemakers will be recruited as casual employees of our department and they will not become permanent civil servants. They will be hired when and where they are needed and for the period of time their services are required. We have budgeted \$150,000 for this service this year, and of course the service can be obtained the same as any other service that we give, by applying to the District Welfare Office.

However, as in the case of day care services, homemaker services will be available only to people in low income brackets. And I repeat what I said earlier; if someone needs a service and they can afford to pay for it then that will be expected. We will not be providing this service free to people who can afford to pay for this.

We have initiated a programme of recruitment across the Province and we are working out a training programme with the federal and the provincial Manpower people. Up to now this type of service has been pretty well restricted to St. John's but with our taking it over, you know it will be extended across the Province.

At this time I would like to pay tribute to the work of the agency here in St. John's. It was started by a LIP grant but then for the past two years it was funded by this department. I am sure that a considerable number of people were greatly helped by this agency and I have no doubt that some of the homemakers who were employed with them will wish to continue this work in the employ of this department.

As I indicated, this service will be phased out and our department

MR. BRETT: will assume responsibility on April 1st. However, there will be a three month transition period during which the St. John's Homemakers Service will continue to operate. That will be April, May and June, until we take over the 1st. of July. However, there will be no void created as a result of the close down, and probably what is of special important is that the service will be expanded, as I said just now, across the Province. The selection of cases will of course rest with the social workers of the department in the various district offices throughout the Province.

Mr. Chairman, we have made a beginning in day care and homemaker services in this Province. We believe that it can be a very valuable social service if used selectively and wisely. We believe that there is a place for the private sector and a place for the public sector in the provision of these services. Government's role, as I see it, is to set standards and see that they are enforced and to provide financial assistance for those who are financially unable to purchase the services themselves.

Now, Sir, a few words on staff. Three years ago when the now Minister of Tourism, I believe, was minister of this department we greatly increased the social worker staff, and this is one aspect of the growth of the Civil Service in this Province that has paid great dividends. As a result of additional staff we now have fifty-six social workers who specialize in child care and protection and in working with children in conflict with the law. I suggest, Sir, that the significant decrease in the number of children being placed in foster homes and Juvenile correctional institutions is not a coincidence nor a sign of the times. I suggest that it is directly related to the emphasis that this government has placed on preventive and supportive social services.

During the past three years the number of children in the care of the Director of Child Welfare has declined from 1,759 to 1,311.

MR. BRETT: The result is that there are fewer children in foster homes and more children living with parents. Of course, Sir, in accounting for the decrease in the number of children coming into the care of the Director of Child Welfare one must acknowledge the major role played by the new Social Assistance Programme. Better support levels are now available to single parents thus enabling them to keep their own children.

As stated we have given every support possible to natural parents to look after their children. When this fails we believe that responsibility should shift to relatives. To this end, then, we have expanded a programme of child welfare allowances in lieu of foster home payments. These allowances enable relatives to look after their nieces, nephews, grandchildren, etc., without incurring a heavy financial burden. In this approach probably what is most important of all is that it preserves family ties and creates that needed sense of belonging so necessary to

MR. BRETT: the child's healthy growth and development.

At this moment we have 1,543 children receiving child welfare allowances living with relatives. These children are not in the care of the Director of Child Welfare. They are living with relatives and receiving child welfare allowances.

Mr. Chairman, I spoke earlier about the large percentage increase in social assistance rates since March 1972 up to the present, and I would like to say now that there was a corresponding increase in child welfare rates in this same period. The actual percentage increase was - I think it was seventy per cent.

During 1975 a milestone was reached in the history of adoptions in this Province. For the first time a waiting list of approved applicants for younger children existed. Ten years ago if you had told me that this would ever happen I would not have believed it. There are now twenty-seven such applications on file with no younger children available. However, there are thirty-four older and/or handicapped children available. It is interesting to note that five years ago there were 400 children available for adoption in this Province.

Sir, in the field of child care we have a very valuable working relationship with Mount Cashel and with the United Church. These two religious bodies provide institutional and group home care for a considerable number of children who cannot for varied reasons remain in their own homes. This kind of care is highly specialized for children with special needs. And we have also recently entered into a working relationship with the Mennonite Central Committee who have opened a group home in St. John's and they are providing care to a limited number of children with special problems. I might say that this home is working out extremely well.

These group homes are not costly to operate, yet they meet the

MR. BRETT: peculiar needs of the children involved. The Mennonites, who I have just mentioned, have also recruited two highly skilled social workers to work in Northern Labrador with native peoples. One of these is stationed in Nain and I think the other one is in Hopedale.

Sir, our department is well organized to deliver social services in this Province. It was only this past year that we were able through a continued programme of in-service training to provide skilled supervision in each of our multi-worker offices in the Province. We have forty-six district offices, and from these offices services are carried to homes in communities throughout the Province.

In delivering these services the calibre of staff, of course, is very important. Our in-service training programme has enabled us to develop staff of a high calibre and we have been greatly aided in this work by the School of Social Work at Memorial University. It is interesting to note, Sir, that of all the skilled help required to administer a programme of social services in this Province, there has not been a single occasion in the past twenty-years when we have had to go outside our own organization to recruit a skilled person for an important job. Now I do not know how many members in the Chamber were listening to what I just said. I do not think anybody was.

MR. ROBERTS: On both sides to be truthful. The minister should draw a lesson from that.

MR. BRETT: But to me it is very significant to think that in twenty years we did not have to go outside of this Province to fill a vacancy in this department. I do not think there are many departments that can boast of that. Every single management position -

MR. ROBERTS: It shows the excellent ministers they have had.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear! Hear!

MR. ROBERTS: There are three of us in the House who will vote for that.

MR. BRETT: - in the Department of Social Services, and most management

MR. BRETT: positions in the Department of Rehabilitation and Recreation are filled by graduates of our staff development programme, and more recently a large number of our social worker field staff are graduates of the Social Work Education Programme at Memorial University of Newfoundland.

MR. ROBERTS: Let us hear it for the minister who set up that course!

AN HON. MEMBER: PSW.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear! Hear!

MR. BRETT: I might also mention another interesting fact, that nine of the present magistrates in the Province were one time welfare officers. Nine of our magistrates, present magistrates were one time social workers.

MR. MURPHY: Good civil servants.

MR. BRETT: We can say I suppose they are products of the department's in-service training programme or have background experience in the department.

MR. ROBERTS: Any clients make it to the magistracy?

MR. BRETT: Former employees are also found in many other provincial, federal and private agencies throughout the Province,

MR. ROBERTS: Any magistrates make it to the client status?

MR. BRETT: And I am very proud of this kind of foresight and this kind of planning that has been long evident in social services in this Province. I do not take any credit for this type of thing, I have only been there two or three months, but the ministers who went before me, including the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) and the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. MURPHY: The Straits of Belle Isle, St. John's East Extern, St. John's Centre.

MR. BRETT: Sir, for a moment I would like to take a welfare at the national level. To do so is to acknowledge that there are problems in the system. It would stagger one's imagination when we realize that nearly \$12 billion are passing through the welfare system in Canada every year, \$12 billion. This of course

MR. BRETT: includes the family allowances, the old age pensions, the unemployment insurance, CPP, our own social assistance and so on and so on.

Some of these programmes serve the same target population. Unemployment insurance and social assistance often overlap, and there is admittedly some abuse of the system. However, attempts are being made at the federal-provincial level to rationalize the system. For the past two years my predecessor sitting next to me here has participated in a planning exercise with the Minister of National Health and Welfare Ministers across Canada, and I can see emerging from this planning exercise a more efficient approach to managing social services and, if finances permit, a form of income support and income supplementation that will ensure a basic income for all Canadians, hopefully with greater emphasis being placed on incentives to work, and I can also see a new Social Services Act emerging which will enable the provinces, with financial help from the Government of Canada, to provide more and better preventive, supportive and rehabilitative social services for our people.

On the Newfoundland scene, Mr. Chairman, there remains a great need for an integrated planning effort in the field of home care and residential care. At the present time there are financial barriers to prevent people from choosing the kind of institutional care they need. I believe that institutional services should be available in a way that should not influence a person's choice between care at home and care in institutions, and there should be no incentives or disincentives to one form of care or the other. I also believe that residential services should be available to any person, subject only of course to professional referral. By this I mean admission according to medical or social criteria on the basis of a professional assessment of each applicant.

MR. BRETT: Sir, we have come a long way in providing adequate alternative social services in the Province. In recent years we have seen a marked increase in the number of senior citizens homes and there is now a senior citizens home in practically every section of the Province.

There is still a shortage of nursing care beds, but we are rapidly meeting the need for this kind of service. Our efforts in the months ahead must be towards ensuring that an adequate supply of nursing care beds are available to those who need them, but at the same time we must place greater emphasis than ever on providing adequate home care which is the best alternative to costly institutional services.

Now, Sir, I must say something about overpayments. There are some conflicting

MR. BRETT:

thoughts on this. The ombudsman has nailed the government for being too strict. The Auditor General has nailed us for being too lax. I think probably my colleagues and the members of the Opposition might also feel that we are being a little bit too strict. So it is very conflicting and one wonders where to draw the line.

So at this point I will depart from my logical sequence of thought and say a little about this particular problem. By overpayments I refer to payments which are made to social assistance recipients for which there is no entitlement. These overpayments occur as a result of lack of information. In most cases recipients fail to report changes in financial circumstances or in the composition of the family. Occasionally overpayments are caused by administrative error on the part of members of the staff of the department. Whatever the cause the fact is that the recipient has received assistance to which he or she is not entitled. The laws of the land require that these overpayments be recovered. In this particular case the relevant laws are the Social Assistance Act and the Financial Administration Act.

The department recovers overpayments at the rate of ten per cent of the recipients monthly requirement. I might say that we have experimented over the years with different rates of recovery. Now there are some people who suggested that ten per cent is too high. As I said we have experimented with different rates. A few years ago the policy was to recover overpayments at the rate of \$5.00 per person per month, and we found this to be very hard on large families. For somebody with ten children and two adults it would be \$60.00 per month. We also experimented with allowing our field staff to use discretion in modifying the rate of recovery. Of course we found that this led to a lack of uniformity. We would get a social worker in Grand Falls to deduct a dollar per person and somebody in St. John's to deduct \$5.00 per person. So there was no uniformity at all and we had to discard that.

MR. BRETT:

Not surprisingly there are different opinions about our policy of recovering overpayments, as I said in the beginning. The clients themselves for the most part find the policy difficult to accept and they are sometimes supported in this attitude by the members of the House who argue that the hardships that result are unfair and unjustified. As I said, the ombudsman has one feeling and the Auditor General another.

Now as a matter of principle I believe that overpayments of social assistance should be refunded, as a matter of principle. I think this principle has its roots in our own value system. If people owe a debt, then they should repay it. I think there is something radically wrong, Mr. Chairman, with a philosophy that advocates something for nothing. I ask the question, what kind of programme would we have if social assistance recipients could incur overpayments with impunity? Indeed, Sir, what kind of society would we have if this kind of permissiveness were expressed in the laws of our land?

I realize, Sir, that it is a hardship on some social assistance families to have to suffer a reduction in their allowance while an overpayment is being recovered. But it must be remembered, Mr. Chairman, that for a while previously they were receiving more than they were entitled to. It is ironic of course, Sir, that the members of this House and the media should try to encourage me to modify our policy, while on the other hand our Auditor General scolds me for not being more rigid and more relentless in our recovery policy. The fact is that some overpayments are inevitable despite all we do to prevent them from occurring.

A special problem we have, Mr. Chairman, is with overlapping of social assistance payments with unemployment insurance payments. They are really not overpayments. In a very real sense they are advances on unemployment insurance checks. The recipient agrees to repay by signing a document authorizing the UIC Commission to refund

MR. BRETTE:

the amount in question to the Department of Social Services. We are experiencing a lot of trouble in collecting this money. We have something like 6,000 accounts of this kind on our books. In my view, Sir, the problem is in the system. The system provides for two income support payments from two different sources for the same target population.

MR. ROBERTS: What are the two?

MR. BRETTE: I do not know what the solution of the problem is.

MR. MURPHY: The PIC and the welfare.

MR. ROBERTS: Well, the family allowance is a support payment in that sense too.

MR. MURPHY: No, not in the same sense.

MR. BRETTE: What we are saying is we are reaching the same target here, people who are unemployed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

I should point out to the hon. minister that his forty-five minutes is almost at an end.

MR. BRETTE: Do I not have more than forty-five minutes?

MR. ROBERTS: That is all, thankfully.

MR. BRETTE: Well, okay, Mr. Chairman. Obviously I will not get through all of it. I wanted to mention appeals because - it is too bad about the hon. Leader of the Opposition. I am sure that he does not have to listen. Probably, Mr. Chairman, if I had gotten up and accused somebody of doing something under the table or destroying somebody's character that I would not have been told that I should sit down or that I was boring. I am trying to give some hard, cold facts about my department. If the hon. Leader of the Opposition does not want to listen, that is his prerogative. I am sure that there are other members of the House who do.

MR. MURPHY: You can get into it later on.

MR. BRETTE: I wanted to mention the appeal

Mr. Brett:

system, Sir, and this is a form where people who feel they have been unjustly wronged by the department can appeal to a special board that has been set up. It is not made up of government members, and I obviously do not have time to go into it, but it is there and I wish people would use it if they feel it is necessary.

I did want to mention the size of the case load, Sir. We know that the number of cases who have received assistance for reasons related to unemployment can and often does vary greatly throughout any given year, and the Leader of the Opposition asked me something on this. I think the reasons for fluctuation are usually rooted in the general economy, and they are often outside of the control of the department. But I think we demonstrated a concentrated effort that can bring about some changes in this case load. There is an illustration, if I have time, of what has actually happened. There were 8,930 cases of this type in January, 1972, while in February, 1976, and that is the latest figures available or it was when I made these notes, there were 3,958. And I would like to present the following table to further illustrate what has happened during the past fifteen months. And the size of the case load and in the given number of months there were from 8,000 to 9,000 people, now this is short-time assistance, were on welfare for a period of one month only; 6,000 to 7,000 for three months; 5,000 to 6,000 for thirteen months; 4,000 to 5,000 for a period of twenty-three months; and 3,000 to 4,000 for a period of ten months including February 1976.

Now for the preceeding twelve months, the calendar year 1971, the case load did not get below the 6,000 to 7,000 range, and actually went into 9,000 to 10,000 range. This means that in forty-six of the past fifty months the able bodied social assistance case load was lower than during any month in 1971, even the Summer months.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BRETT: How much time do I have left, Mr. Chairman, or is it gone?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Your time has almost elapsed.

MR. BRETT: Well all right. I just -

MR. CHAIRMAN: Does the minister have leave?

MR. BRETT: No, that is all right. I will conclude this paragraph.

I want to pay tribute, before I sit down, to the staff of the department, especially the field staff, I particularly want to do this, and I personally want to do it because I was a member of the field staff, and I know how difficult it is to administer the legislation of this department and to carry out the regulations, and the achievements that we have made in the past three or four years would not have been possible had it not been for the field staff. And, of course, I believe I should thank all the other agencies, private, Provincial and Federal who have helped us in our efforts.

And most of all, Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the people that we have served during these past four years because without their co-operation and desire to improve their lot none of these accomplishments would have been achieved.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Port au Port.

MR. J. HODDER: Mr. Chairman, I would just like to first make a few comments on the minister's statement. I must point out that the 12,000 jobs - or I am sorry, the 1,200 jobs that were created by his department, we must look at this in light of the 25,000 who are unemployed at any one time in the Province. And I wonder, and perhaps we could have some statistics on this, how many of them were short-term jobs jobs that are perhaps on LIP projects or water projects, as one I heard this morning?

I would like to hear how many jobs of work have been created by the Employment Opportunities part of his department. I believe that this is a good department, but I am not convinced that it is doing all that it should.

MR. HONDER:

Also the minister's figures on how much a person could or did receive in the past, and how good this government has been to the social assistance recipients of the Province since they came into power, and his comments on how much the cost of living allowances have been increased, I would just like to say this, that since 1972 we have had an unbelievable rise in the cost of living and the electricity rates, the cost of fuel, the cost of food and clothing have risen to a tremendous extent. I do not think that bragging about the raises or the government patting itself on the back about raises at this particular time is needed, since I think the government would have been a little bit inhuman not to have increased payments to social assistance recipients.

However I must congratulate the minister on his stand on day care services. Most of us would agree that the government has no business in providing baby-sitting services to those who are in a high income bracket, and I do agree that the government should become involved in helping the underprivileged child and the underprivileged parent and our older citizens.

Now, Mr. Chairman, the Department of Social Services is one of the most important departments in government and, as the minister has said, it is a department that must above all be run fairly as it looks after the sick, the needy and the underprivileged of the Province. This department is one that is concerned with the prevention of neglect and abuse of children in their homes through family counselling. It provides correctional services in rehabilitating children in their homes and at times it must remove children from their homes to provide substitute care through foster homes. It is concerned with employing recipients of social assistance either through job placement or through retraining. It is now attempting to become involved in day care and homemakers services.

As well it is involved in giving financial assistance to needy individuals and families in economic need so as to provide them with the type of assistance necessary to ensure a certain level

MR. HODDER:

of health and decency. The department also looks after adoption, and must look at the homes and determine their suitability to place people in them. Now I mention these functions of the department only to point out the important and necessary part the department plays in the social fabric of the Province.

However I fear that in some areas of the Province the load placed on the social worker does not allow him to look after his responsibilities adequately. I fear that with the cutback in the 500 public servants in this Province that has been announced, that if the Department of Social Services is cut back hardship will be caused. If social workers are not replaced when they leave or retire, then the function of the Department of Social Services will become seriously impaired. I would like to re-emphasize that, that this is one department that cannot suffer cutbacks. The social worker is a person who must know his community, live in his community, know the people who he deals with, and already there is a great burden placed on many of the social workers throughout the Province.

It has been my experience that whenever an agency decides to cut back, those in the field are the first to go. I hope that this is not the case with this department. Perhaps there are areas of the department which are not as important as other areas. I notice that Planning and Research has budgeted some \$14,000, that the general administration costs are some \$200,000,

Mr. Hodder:

and staff development is \$62,000. Now I have no criticism of this, except to say that nothing is as important as field services to this department, and that the Department of Social Services should receive less cut-backs than any other department, and if there are cut backs they should not be from the people who are in the field.

Now the Social Services field worker must know the community in which he works. He must not be so burdened down with office work that he cannot visit the community to which he is responsible. He must know the people who are ripping off the Province, and who are the genuine needy. At present many of our social workers are tied to their offices, seeing people by appointment, sometimes rarely visiting their area of responsibility. And this is happening because there is already at this moment a shortage of field workers.

The minister announced earlier this year that one of the most important of his programmes is the Development Opportunities programme, and in some case the Employment Opportunities worker has had to work with social assistance recipients because - or social assistance cases outside of his field because of a shortage in field workers.

We have many people in this Province who cannot look after themselves, sick, disabled, the unfortunate. We must look after them in such a way as to preserve their dignity. The field worker and the Department of Social Services spend too much time dotting the "i's" and crossing the "t's". We must allow the field workers time to deliver services in a decent manner. It is not sufficient that a staff person must rush a person in and out of his office. And I have know workers who have, and occasions where recipients have had to wait days in order to see a social worker. He must have knowledge of his clients, their backgrounds, and he must visit them and know their circumstances. He must serve them with dignity, and serve them in such a way as to preserve their dignity.

Mr. Hodder:

Another thing that I do not understand is why the social worker who knows the circumstances of his client must go, in many cases, to the regional office to get certain things approved. For instance, if a single person is suddenly medically handicapped, all the local office can give him is \$43 a month. Then a request must be made to the regional office for assistance, and it may be three weeks or more before this person receives assistance. And then after that, if he is living a long distance away, he must come into the office perhaps some two or three times before his request is approved and very often this is at a cost to himself. I feel that this is a duplication of effort. This is a decision that should be made by the field worker, since the field worker is the person who knows the circumstances of the case. And I feel that extra personnel would not be so necessary if we did not have this duplication of effort. Somebody in a district office is making the decisions when it should be done in the local office.

I would like to mention a case that happened last Christmas. A widow with a large family in my district had a stove made from a steel drum cut in half. Before Christmas it burned through and she had no heat in her home except the elements on her electric stove. A request was made to the district office for a new stove two weeks before Christmas, but no answer came back prior to Christmas. On Christmas Eve the main burner went in her electric stove, and on Christmas morning, which was cold on the West Coast, she phoned to tell me she was cold and one of her babies was sick.

MR. ROBERTS: Merry Christmas!

MR. HODDER: It was two weeks later that approval was received and a suitable stove found for her. This could have been done much faster if the social worker, who knew her circumstances, could have made the decision. As a matter of fact, in this particular case I understand that two of the local men went to see her. The decision was obviously made at the district office where they did not know her circumstances.

Mr. Hodder:

Another problem that I have encountered from the department is the problem of overpayments, which the minister mentioned earlier. This happens because a person may be receiving social assistance while working for unemployment insurance, and some time later the recipient may receive his unemployment insurance retroactively. No fraud is usually evident in most of those cases. I understand, and I have seen myself, that it can be as long as two years before the information on the overpayment is received from the WIC office and then some time later the person finds out that he has an overpayment. I had one, no, two cases where the overpayment to my knowledge - or I was told by the recipient that it was four years old, and that he did not know he had it.

Mr. Hodder:

This cannot be blamed on the Department of Social Services, but it is certainly a nuisance to the recipient and it causes problems in collection. But I feel that the department should take the initiative to iron out those problems with the Unemployment Insurance Commission.

Now, another problem: The Department of Social Assistance provides housing for recipients. They will pay only seventy dollars for a single person living alone in an accommodation. I know of a case where a woman and her son were receiving \$125 a month, which I believe was maximum at that time. The son left to go to university, and because she was now by herself the regulations said that she could only get seventy dollars a month. But she must still now pay her rent, and must now take it from what she used before to live on. The amount of money I believe that she was getting over and above the rent was \$163 a month. The same thing happens when a husband and wife live in rental accommodations and the husband dies; the wife is then only entitled to seventy dollars. I refer to some of those cases because I believe that they illustrate some of the problems that must be ironed out by the Department of Social Services.

Another problem which I am very familiar with was one again concerning building materials. In November of last year I was called to a home by a local priest and it was a home which most of us would not use as a storehouse. It was owned by a widow. It was leaking. It was cold. The lady was sick and the only heat in the house was a very small old-fashioned wood stove. I made representation to the Department of Social Services but it was two months before anything could be done. Most of the time was taken waiting for approval from the district office, even though two of the local social workers saw the lady afterward's and agreed that this was an emergency situation. Now I was in that house. I spent a half hour there. I was cold. It was, I will admit, one of the worst examples I have seen in my particular district. But I saw true suffering in this particular case. The fact that this long wait caused her suffering and is also a waste of time

MR. HONDER:

and duplication of services to which I am referring, and this is costing the taxpayer money and the social assistance recipient hardship.

Another point I would like to make is that if there are nine people in a family, the husband, wife and seven children, the assistance allowable I think at the moment - I am not sure if my figures are correct, but I think so - is, the maximum, which is \$397 per month. In my district a family of twelve to fifteen children is not uncommon. And a husband and wife with, say, fourteen children, that is sixteen altogether in the family, can only get \$397 a month, the same as the husband and wife with seven in the family. There is no allowance extra for over seven children. Now I see some reasons for that, but I do believe that there is quite a bit of hardship imposed on large families because there is a cutoff of seven people. I think it shows some inconsistency in the regulations.

I must also take issue with the department and the government of the fact that the social assistance rates did not go up in January as was promised by the Department of Social Services after the election. Now inflation has hit the low income earner and the social assistance recipient the hardest. Those who are on social assistance through no fault of their own cannot adequately live in the present climate of high prices. In quoting the Premier's speech made in Gander in 1974, I think, he said that, "Those people on low fixed incomes today are existing barely. They are not living. That is the society we live in and should be able to avoid." Now those words are still true even after many raises in rates because of light and heat bills and food bills which have risen dramatically this year, especially the light and heat bills. Now the government had promised the social assistance rates would go up in January. In 1974 the Premier said the programme would encompass the minimum wage, said that the plan included the provision for future social assistance benefits increased according to the cost of living indexed on an annual basis. Then last year the former Minister of Social Services said that payments

MP. HODDER:

would go up in January.

MP. WICZYV: When did I say that?

MP. HODDER: You said it on an open line. But the government held off until April, causing untold hardship across the Province.

Now I understand that last year the rate of inflation, I believe, was somewhere over ten per cent, somewhere between ten and eleven per cent.

MR. HODDER: I believe this government cheated somewhat when they waited three months before they put the rate up. And I think the government owes the social assistance recipients of this Province an explanation, also owes them a three month back payment.

MR. SIMMONS: Hear! Hear!

MR. HODDER: And we have problems, so we hold of the needy of the Province for three months while we send the Norma and Gladys to Europe, and I still wonder how many tourists we will get from Portugal and Italy.

Now to turn to the Auditor General's Report. The Auditor General's Report was hard on the Department of Social Services. However, the minister, when I asked him how he would change his accounting procedures, said that there was nothing wrong with them. The Auditor General pointed out that court action is not usually taken against recipients who knowingly make false declarations when giving information to social workers. When a recipient is found guilty of knowingly making a false declaration I believe that the department must be prepared to take court action.

I quote from page 78 of the Auditor General's Report. He says, "My analysis of the accounts receivable also discloses that court action is not usually taken against recipients who knowingly make false declarations when giving information to social workers. In two cases, where court action was taken and the recipient found guilty and ordered to repay the overpayments, little was done by the department to ensure that the action as specified in the court orders had been complied with, resulting in non-compliance by the recipient and failure to remit all monies due the Province.

"It is my view, that the department should formulate a collection policy adequate to ensure the follow up and subsequent recovery of all accounts and thereby maximize total collections," this is the Auditor General's Report still," to which the Province is entitled

MR. HODDER: under the Social Assistance Act and Regulations."

MR. MURPHY: Such as what?

MR. HODDER: When a person knowingly makes false -

MR. MURPHY: What formula? What formula does the hon. member suggest to reclaim it?

MR. ROWE: He is not in government.

MR. HODDER: Well you must be willing to take them to court, if they knowingly -

MR. MURPHY: I am talking about getting it back? What formula is the hon. gentleman suggesting?

MR. HODDER: I am not talking about just ordinary overpayments with UIC. I am talking about when they knowingly -

MR. MURPHY: We are talking about welfare overpayments. UIC is not into this at all. We are talking about abuse of government money, welfare overpayments.

MR. HODDER: Okay. A person makes a false declaration to the Department of Social Services and he owes money, then I think action should be taken against him. Otherwise you are allowing him to get away with fraud, with a false act.

MR. MURPHY: If he does not make a false statement.

MR. HODDER: If he does not make a false statement? I have something to say about that. I do not feel the same way about it.

MR. MURPHY: I am just wondering.

MR. HODDER: As I was saying, I believe that the department must be ready to take to court and collect against recipients who have obtained money because of false pretences, nothing more, because of false pretences. I believe that the system will break down and that the regulations will be a farce if we do not do that.

Now in the case of recipients as the minister mentioned a little while ago, and I agree with him, who have overpayments because of UIC back payments, those should not be unduly persecuted. In most cases the overpayments were not received through fraud and I would say in the majority of cases the department cannot collect until a person comes back for assistance, and if the department tries to collect

MR. HODDER: after they will receive very little because if the person is working he is still not receiving a generous wage in most cases and it is unfair to take him to court. Most of the social assistance recipients who are in this particular situation, some of them may get a great \$60,000 job but most of them go onto labour work and that sort of thing and I do believe that there is a problem and that it is very difficult to collect it but I do not think they should be persecuted. And I feel that in this particular case the Auditor General may be criticizing the Department unfairly because the department does demand repayment if he comes back or when he receives old age security allowance.

Now I would like to quote again from the Auditor General's Report, he says, "My audit of Subdivision 806.10.04, Refunds of social assistance, disclosed that there is no reconciliation of cash receipts credited to social assistance recipients accounts with the receipts which are recorded in the revenue subdivision. I am, therefore, unable to determine whether only valid and all revenue is correctly credited to the recipients's account."

He goes on to say that his audit disclosed, "two cases of receipts which were processed incorrectly and had not been corrected prior to audit;

MR. HODDER:

one receipt which had not been processed to the recipients account and this receipt had been noted for subsequent clearance by social services officials; large discrepancies in total receipts recorded in the revenue subdivision with those processed for credit to recipient accounts. The amounts processed to the recipient accounts were materially greater than the revenue actually recorded in the revenue subdivision." He said, "There is no system of review and approvals for the processing of credits to recipients accounts to ensure adequate administrative controls."

He said, "Even though our test did not disclose any mishandling of public funds, it appears possible to falsify any action memo of change order for credit, make errors in completing action memos and have numerous uncleared receipts now credited to the recipient's account." Now, "It is my view," Mr. Chairman, "that a system of review approvals and reconciliations should be implemented to ensure the proper recording of all social assistance refunds." The present system leaves the worker open to accusations of mishandling of public funds. I say possible accusations. I think that the department has high caliber personnel, but the regulations leave the door open for the bad apple who can spoil the reputation of the rest.

Another point made by the Auditor General is that short term assistance checks are being presigned and blank. I will quote again from the report. He says that, "In this regard Section 136.6 of the Field Officers Manual of the department states that 'Two signatures are required on every check. When necessary one of the signing officers may sign a batch of checks in advance.' When checks are signed in blank, the control feature afforded by the counter-signing officers' security of the transaction represented by the check is lost and risk of unauthorized use of presigned checks exists.

Now, I could make a suggestion. It may not be a good one but I think in cases like this that there should be check printers issued

MR. HODDER:

to all offices with orders to all banks that the check not be cashed unless it is done on a Department of Social Services check printer. I do not know if that would work but it might alleviate some of the problem.

The Auditor General also goes on to say - I quote him again - "In my view, checks should only be counter-signing after scrutiny of the transaction by the counter-signing officer. Where the scrutiny is not present I feel the check should only be signed by the welfare officer completing the transaction, thereby eliminating the illusion of a control which does not exist." I feel that the Auditor General is correct there and he is correct especially in cases where there are one and two man offices. In conclusion -

MR. MURPHY: I do not like to intrude 'Jim', but would you mind if I asked one question? With regard to the check printer, you feel every office should have a check printer issued by the department downstairs. How would that protect it any more than writing with a pen? Could he not cheat with the check printer just as well? The guy has his own authority to issue that thing. What is the protection built into that? I would just like to know, because I was in the department two and a half years and it was one of the big problems that we had.

MR. HODDER: The only thing is that in consultation I feel that, you know, if the check - of course the order would have to go to the bank as well.

MR. MURPHY: It would avoid lifting the check, I could see that, raising it from \$100 to \$200 but otherwise -

MR. HODDER: Also that that check would not be cashed. The orders would be given to the bank not to cash any checks from Social Service unless they had the Social Services seal and whatnot on it. I do not know. I give it as a suggestion. It may not be a correct one.

But anyhow in conclusion I would like to say that I can sympathize with the Auditor General when he says that he is frustrated with the fact that government departments do not follow his advice

MR. HODDER:

and I will be eagerly awaiting the next year's report, the Auditor General's report referring to Social Services in anticipation that many of those problems will be resolved.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member from LaPoile.

MR. S. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, if I may, Sir, I would like to get away from the bookkeeping arguments for a few moments and see if I can just get the discussion back on the level that I think it should be. The minister rather disappointed me, Sir, in his introductory remarks inasmuch as the minister did not make reference to the guaranteed annual income. The minister, I understand, and his predecessors have on a number of occasions in the last two or three years attended Federal Provincial Welfare Ministers Conferences when I would say that the guaranteed annual income was high on the agenda.

MR. MURPHY: That will be discussed for the next four.

MR. NEARY: Well that may be, Sir. But I personally feel that when I first introduced the idea of the guaranteed annual income at a Federal Provincial Conference everybody, including the Government of Canada, turned thumbs down on the idea of the guaranteed annual income. But now somehow or other I am getting the feeling from the information that is originating in Ottawa that the Government of Canada is now beginning to have second thoughts on the guaranteed annual income. I would say that the guaranteed annual income for Canadians who are forced on government assistance through no fault of their own, the guaranteed annual income is nearer than the hon. minister might think. It has to come, Sir, in my opinion. The Minister of Social Services can get up and make his civil service type speech all he likes, and pat himself on the back for all the accomplishments, and try to compare what this administration has done.

MR. BRETT: I pat you on the back.

MR. NEARY: Yes, and I thank the hon. minister for giving me a little pat on the back. But, Sir, we may as well face the facts in this hon. House, that we have large numbers of people in this Province at this very moment who are destitute, who are down -

MR. MURPHY: No, Sir!

MR. NEARY: Yes, Sir. Yes, Mr. Chairman, we have families who are destitute, downtrodden, deprived and we have children who are undernourished in this Province at the present time.

MR. BRETT: That is not fact.

MR. NEARY: That is factual, Sir, that is factual. If the hon. minister wants to follow me for a couple of days I will show him how factual it is.

MR. MURPHY: We do not know what they are doing with the money.

MR. NEARY: Ah well now, Mr. Chairman, the hon. minister - I am talking about the system.

MR. BRETT: All right.

MR. NEARY: I am talking about the amounts of the assistance too. Mr. Chairman, in this Province today we have children who are crippled, who cannot get a wheelchair from the government, who cannot get a pair of crutches from the government, from the minister's department, while we can sail the Norma and Gladys around the world, while we can lash out hundreds of thousands of dollars unnecessarily in consulting engineering fees, while we can see millions of dollars chiselled out of the Department of Fisheries. We have senior citizens in this Province who cannot afford to buy a set of dentures, as my hon. friend probably knows, because the government does not have a policy of supplying dentures. We have people half blind who cannot get a pair of eyeglasses. I was hoping that the minister in his few introductory remarks would tell us how the government was tackling these problems. Granted, Sir, the problems have been there for some time. They just did not start today. They were there in my time. I had, I think when I left that department, laid a pretty good foundation, laid a pretty good foundation, Sir,

MR. NEARY:

for the building up of that department. Up to the time I went into the department - and I am not patting myself on the back - I do not think there had been an original idea in twenty-odd years. I was the one who changed the name of the department. I was the one who introduced the cash system to get rid of the demeaning voucher. I was the one who instituted the adoption programme, and I could go on and on and on. I was the one who introduced the idea of the guaranteed annual income at these federal-provincial conferences.

MR. CROSBIE: Do not be so foolish, boy!

MR. NEARY: "Do not be so foolish" - oh, listen to old bully boy over there.

MR. CROSBIE: It is old hat.

MR. NEARY: Old hat my eyeball! The old hat was the Auditor General's report that the minister ignored and should get the flick out of the cabinet for costing the taxpayers of this Province \$4 million or \$5 million or \$6 million.

Mr. Chairman, every minister is responsible for the running of his department. I remember, Sir, when the great Mifflin Enquiry was tabled in this hon. House, when the Minister of Mines and Energy got up and decided to give me a couple of flicks, with^P the back of his hand by saying, "He should be thrown out of the House." Well, I say that minister should be thrown out of the House. At least the welfare recipients on Bell Island got something in return. "He was the minister," he said, "And he should be discharged." Well I say that minister should be discharged and suspended from his responsibilities for ignoring the report of the Auditor General. No wonder we cannot look after our social assistance recipients the way we should when we see such ineptness and incompetence and negligence on the part of ministers, wasting millions of dollars of the taxpayer's money. That is why we cannot buy the wheelchairs for the people who are crippled and the eyeglasses for the people who need them and the dentures for the people who need them to chew up their food, who are

MR. NEARY:

Diabetic and who are sick. That is why, because the money is squandered and wasted through incompetence and neglect on the part of certain ministers in the administration.

If the hon. Premier was doing his job according to constitutional government and parliamentary government, both of these ministers would be suspended until such time as that investigation is complete. Not because they did anything wrong, Sir, but because they were incompetent, inept, negligent in their responsibilities.

MR. CROSSIE: Mr. Chairman, while I am here I would be very pleased to comment on this issue on these estimates if the Committee Chairman rules that it is in order and relevant. I will debate the Fisheries estimates or Fisheries matters or my conduct. If the hon. Chairman finds these remarks to be relevant now, I will speak after the hon. gentleman and we will have a lusty debate. However if the hon. Chairman finds these remarks not to be relevant to this debate, then I will abide by that ruling also. But if this is relevant then of course I will speak in return.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would ask the hon. member to be more relevant to the subject.

MR. NEARY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Your Honour, I am merely trying to point out to the Committee that as long as we continue to waste public monies in this way, then we will be unable to provide the programmes that are necessary to take care of the needs of the widows and the crippled and the sick and the deprived and the unemployed, who are unemployed through no fault of their own. That is why, Sir, I think that the Government of Canada is working towards the guaranteed annual income that I am told is going to be phased in, first of all - the Minister of Fisheries who sat in the House of Commons probably heard Mr. Lalonde talk about the guaranteed annual income and tell the House that it is going to be phased in - first of all it will apply to old age pensioners. Then it will apply to, probably, widows and then those

MR. NEARY:

who are sick, those who cannot work because of illness and so forth, and eventually get down to those who are unemployed through no fault of their own. It will be phased in, brought in in stages.

I would like to hear the minister's views on the guaranteed annual income. I would like for the minister to give the House a progress report on what is happening in connection with the guaranteed annual income. Does this government support the idea of the guaranteed annual income? Or are they, like in a good many more instances, apathetic, complacent, not interested, just letting the other provinces carry the ball. Because when I was minister of that department I carried the ball on the guaranteed annual income at these federal-provincial conferences.

I tabled in the House, Sir, about two or three weeks before the House rose, before most of the members took off for sunny climates, I tabled in the House a proposal that I had put forward at a federal-provincial conference in connection with make-work programmes. The minister is over there trying to leave us with the impression that his administration is the godfather of the make-work projects. Well, the minister may have set up a separate branch down in his department to do that. But, Sir, let me remind the minister that most of the jobs that he referred to in the figures that he threw out to the Committee are jobs that were secured and obtained through LIP projects sponsored by the Government of Canada. Old bully boy cannot take it, he is leaving!

MR. NEARY:

I was hoping to get a few more flicks at the hon. minister, Sir. I guess I will have to wait till he comes back. But, Mr. Chairman, somehow or other there evolved in the last couple of years a policy that in my opinion discriminated against all those people who are unemployed. Now I do not know, the minister's department and Manpower so far have managed to get away with it because nobody has ever bothered to test this policy. The policy that evolved is this, that somehow or other the minister's department made a deal with Canada Manpower that on all LIP projects preference would be given to people on social assistance, especially those heads of families with the larger families. That is how the jobs were found, through projects sponsored by the Government of Canada.

MR. MURPHY: Anything wrong with that?

MR. NEARY: No, there is nothing wrong with it, Sir, except that it discriminates against other people who are unemployed.

MR. MURPHY: These are the chronic unemployed here.

MR. NEARY: These are not the chronic unemployed, Sir. These are not the chronic unemployed. These are men who are unskilled, who are unable to find jobs because they have been laid off like the people over on Bell Island who are not chronically unemployed, who were laid off because the mine closed down. They were economically marooned, the same as the people in the woods, who worked in the woods, the loggers and the miners. They are not the chronically unemployed. They are men who were unemployed through no fault of their own. Somehow or other the minister struck up a sweetheart deal, an agreement with Canada Manpower to give preference to people on welfare with large families. Well now, Sir, that may sound like a pretty good policy. But in actual fact it discriminates against other people who are unemployed. Oh! It does, Sir, it does, Sir.

MR. MURPHY: The people -

MR. NEARY: Sir, a man with ten children, a man with a wife and ten children will get the preference over a man with a wife and three children.

MR. MURPHY: And they will not receive any other benefits.

MR. NEARY: Ah! But they are all receiving welfare. They are all receiving social assistance.

MR. MURPHY: But no U.I.C. that they had contributed to -

MR. NEARY: Ah! I am not talking about U.I.C. The minister knows what I am talking about.

MR. MURPHY: Oh, no!

MR. NEARY: The policy is discriminatory, discrimination of the worst sort. I am surprised at the Canada Manpower, although I am all for people getting jobs. But I am surprised that Canada Manpower would adopt such a policy where the single man, the man with a wife and one child, the man with a wife and a couple of children, a man and wife and three children is discriminated against that he has to sit back because they start and take the large families first.

MR. MURPHY: What order would the hon. gentleman take them in?

MR. NEARY: I would take them in first come, first served.

MR. MURPHY: Friends come first?

MR. NEARY: No, Mr. Chairman, I would take them first come, first served.

MR. MURPHY: The welfare boys would be the first come, because they would be unemployed longer.

MR. NEARY: No, Sir, that is not so.

MR. MURPHY: Oh, well!

MR. NEARY: Absolutely not so. If the minister wants to come with me I would show him a few examples to open up his eyes for him.

MR. MURPHY: That is all right. I would not doubt it. You might show a few.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, the make work programme was first introduced in Canada, I believe, by the former Premier of this Province who said that people should work instead of getting welfare. The hon. the Premier at that time did not mean that people should work for welfare - should work instead of welfare. I followed up his idea. I put a proposal that I tabled in this hon. House a few weeks ago before some of the members took off to get suntanned,

MR. NEARY:

whereby the Government of Canada would fund via Crown corporations or through private enterprise if they saw fit, would fund make-work projects. These make-work projects, Sir, would be seventy-five per cent funded in this Province by the Government of Canada. You would have to change the present formula of the Canada Assistance Plan in order for Newfoundland to be able to participate because of the cost involved. I suggested, Sir, to the Government of

MP. NEARY:

Canada and to my colleagues from the other provinces that a make-work programme financed by the Government of Canada should be based on the personal per capita income of people in all the provinces and the rate of unemployment in the provinces, which would mean that in the case of Newfoundland we would receive more benefits than any other province because we have the second lowest personal per capita income in Canada and we have the highest rate of unemployment. Obviously, Mr. Chairman - I have said it so often in this House - private enterprise has failed to provide full employment. That is why I think, although Mr. Trudeau has been denounced from one end of this country to the other - and I notice that the Liberals in Ontario according to The Globe And Mail, the Liberals have broken their relationship with the Government of Canada, with Mr. Trudeau. I do not know what the old-line Liberal Party here will do in view of the fact that Mr. Trudeau is advocating a change in the system, in our economic system.

But it would seem to me, Mr. Chairman, that Mr. Trudeau's policy, Mr. Trudeau's statements have been completely misunderstood, deliberately or otherwise, and I am inclined to agree with him, Sir, that there are weaknesses in our system, in our capitalistic system, that private enterprise has failed to provide full employment and government is going to have to step in and fill the breach and provide employment for our people who are unemployed through no fault of their own through job creation and make-work projects.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MP. NEARY: In order to do that, Sir, we are going to have to adopt a formula whereby the Government of Canada will base its assistance to the provinces on the personal per capita income of people in that province and that ratio of unemployment that you have in that province.

MP. MURPHY: I have advised that a thousand times in two and a half years.

MP. NEARY: Well, it is about the only thing that the minister and I have ever agreed on and he must have read my paper. The minister must

MR. NEARY:

have read my paper and I am glad he did, that I presented -

MR. MURPHY: Anybody in the country who did anything learned it from the great member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary).

MR. NEARY: I beg your pardon?

MR. MURPHY: He is an instigator of every wonderful thing -

MR. NEARY: No, I am not the instigator, Sir, but I am the instigator of that idea.

MR. MURPHY: You know, you talk so much you have got to say one good thing out of a thousand.

MR. NEARY: Well, Mr. Chairman, before this session is over I have a little more I might say to the hon. minister and the administration.

MR. MURPHY: About me?

MR. NEARY: Well, maybe. I might want to find out about Frank O'Dea and his royal commission report on insurance.

MR. MURPHY: Poor Frank will never rest.

MR. NEARY: No, he will never rest. I guarantee the hon. minister that while I am in this hon. House.

Mr. Chairman, that is the sort of philosophy, the sort of ideology that I would like to hear the minister expound on. Not to get down to the little bookkeeping procedures because, Mr. Chairman,

Mr. Neary:

overpayments, we all know, are a bit of a nuisance, a torment, and frustrate people. The fact that trained social workers cannot get out in the field and do the counselling that they should be doing is due to the fact that they are tied down in their offices doing office work, and they do not learn anything about office work over at Memorial University, they cannot do the work that they are trained for. I had a plan that I was going to implement to put more office staff, put people who were not trained in social work in the offices to issue the cheques.

MR. BRETT: Support staff.

MR. NEARY: Well not support staff, but to put them in the offices, running the offices. And let the counsellors get out and get into the homes and counsel people.

And, Mr. Chairman, the minister also failed to tell us about this little group of pocket-sized Dick Tracys that are running around this Province. I believe there are five or six detectives, undercover agents, that the minister has in his department, who are going around socking it to the people who are on welfare, almost peeping in through their keyholes in some cases. And we heard reference to it recently in a release that it says, "Canadians on Welfare are losing their basic democratic rights. That is the finding of a study by the Canadian Civil Liberties Association."

The study is based on interviews with about 1,000 Canadian Welfare recipients. The report says "Government agencies intrude on relationships between husbands and wives, and interfere with living arrangements of unmarried couples in welfare cases." It adds, "The state pressures unmarried mothers to give up their babies for adoption, and invades the privacy of welfare recipients' homes. The Civil Liberties Association says welfare applicants and recipients seldom are informed of their legal rights." And it says, "Freedom of choice about whether people on welfare can work, or where they are allowed to work is extremely limited."

MR. NEAPY:

And I understand, Mr. Chairman, that a number of interviews that led to the report of this statement originated right here in this Province. And I heard the minister's denial on radio after this statement was made. Well, I want to bring to the minister's attention now a case that I am familiar with, that the Minister of Manpower and Industrial Relations is familiar with because it is in his own district, and the Minister of Social Services is familiar with, to illustrate the point that this is typical of what has been going on with these investigative officers, these pint-sized, pocket-sized Dick Tracys.

Down in the district of St. Barbe South there is a lady down there who one morning when she got out of bed, a knock came on the door, she opened up the door and there was a stranger standing there who she never laid eyes on before in her life. She did not know who it was. The gentleman said that he would like to come in and have a chat with her, so she allowed him to come inside the door. He said, "I want to talk to you privately." So she said, "Well, the only place that you could talk to me privately is in the bedroom."

MR. NEARY: So the fellow said, "Well, all right, I want to talk to you privately so we will go in the bedroom." So the gentleman and the lady in question, who was on social assistance, stepped into the bedroom, and in the bed was an old gentleman who was a border in that house -

AN HON. MEMBER: A border.

MR. NEARY: A border, he was bordering there. If the Minister of Manpower and Industrial Relations was sitting in his place he could verify this story, and the Minister of Social Services probably heard it before. So when this pocket-size Dick Tracey went into the bedroom he said, "Ah, I got you. You are living common law with this old gentleman in the bed." And the social assistance was cut off. The lady has been ever since fighting and arguing and scrobbing and scrapping trying to get her allowance back. I do not know whether she has got it back or not.

MR. MORGAN: The old fellow was getting his old age pension, was he not?

MR. NEARY: I do not know whether the old gentleman was getting his old age pension or not.

MR. MORGAN: He was.

MR. NEARY: I do not know whether he was or not. If he was he was paid -

MR. MORGAN: I know he was.

MR. NEARY: Well the minister knows the case I am talking about. It was a grave injustice that was done to this woman. This woman claims she was not living common law, and told the gentleman to his face, "I am not living common law with this man. He is a border taken in at the request of the Department of Social Assistance." I do not know whether her allowance has been restored yet or not.

MR. SMALLWOOD: The department asked her to take him as a border?

MR. NEARY: I am told, Mr. Chairman, that the department placed the man in the home. He did not have a home of his own, and this -

AN HON. MEMBER: Who was he?

MR. NEARY: I do not know who he was. This stranger -

MR. MORGAN: She was taking his total cheque and living on it herself.

MR. NEARY: Well, Mr. Chairman, that is not the story -

MR. MORGAN: Come on, give us the full details!

MR. MURPHY: It is very difficult.

MR. NEARY: That is not the story, Sir, that I have and that the Minister of Manpower has. And, Mr. Chairman, you talk about double standards in this Province! I asked the Minister Without Portfolio responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs about the MacPherson property, he told us, "Oh, we are going to write for an explanation." Well, Sir, I will give you an example now of what happens to a welfare recipient to see if they are written for explanations. And the Minister of Finance and I, who came over on the ferry from Bell Island yesterday afternoon, might be able to verify this case where this gentleman on Bell Island who has blood poisoning - he told me I could use his name in the House but I am not going to use it - had blood poisoning for years and years who has been on the brink of a nervous breakdown as a result of his physical condition, was being certified by doctors as being unfit for work, who will never work again, although the gentleman has tried desperately to rehabilitate himself and to get back to work.

Well, his son bought an old truck, put a tank in the back of it and the son got a contract, I suppose you could call it, orally or written I am not sure which, it was probably oral, with the Town of Wabana to deliver water to senior citizens and to people who were sick and to widows. And the son could not make a go of it because the total income from a whole year's operation, the total amount paid out to this family was about \$1,200 or \$1,500 and out of that the truck had to be paid for, the truck had to be insured, it had to be maintained, The young fellow had to get his pocket money. And the young fellow got discouraged, left, went up to Toronto and left

MR. NEARY: the truck with his dad. And the father, whom the minister probably knows, not quite as well as I do, the father being the type that does not like to sit around the House tormenting his wife all day, who when he starts to do a day's work he gets uptight, he breaks out in a rash because of his condition, the blood poisoning, the young fellow left the truck with his dad and he said, "Now look, if there is any income from this, pay off the installments on the truck, pay the insurance, pay the gas and send me up the balance up to Toronto,"-the young fellow has gone up to look for a job.

So the father carries on as usual. Welfare knew that he was doing it for months and months, and when all of a sudden last week, out of a clear blue sky - not a letter, a letter did not arrive saying, "Dear Mr. So and So would you please explain your income and your expenditure and if you sent the money up to your son," no letter from the administration asking him to explain like the Summer Games, Mr. Andy Crosbie was written and asked to explain. No, Sir! RCMP right into his kitchen, frightened the poor fellow to death and his wife and said, "Give us your slips. Give us your accounting of income and expenditure and give us the receipts from the money orders where you sent the money up to your son on the Mainland, and if you have not got them in our office at so and so time further action will be taken."

Mr. Neary:

and a result of that the poor fellow nearly had a stroke. He had to see the doctor, the doctor had to put him on heart pills, tranquilizers. He got frightened, he gave up the water right off the bat, and as a result the senior citizens and the sick people are not getting their water.

When I was on Bell Island yesterday I met a gentleman at the Beach who approached me to see if he could get his water back and I said, "Well, you certainly hit me at the right time, your member is here today. I do not know what boat he is going back on but you should wait and see him." And he waited and he saw the hon. minister. He lives quite a distance away. No drinking water at all down at the Beach.

But the point I am making, Sir, is the double standards that are used in this Province. In one case where it appears that honourable high mucky-mucks have chiselled the public treasury, you write and ask them for an explanation, But when a welfare recipient appears to have done a little bit of cheating or chiselling, R.C.M.P. into his house! That is the double standards, and that is the kind of a system and that is the way justice is administered in this Province. And I could go on and think of example after example of welfare recipients that are hauled up before court. The minister did not tell us anything about the number that had been charged in the last year or so.

So, Sir, all is not well with the Department of Social Services. We still have a large number of people in this Province who are destitute, who are down-trodden, and we have children, not hungry, we do not have any such thing in Canada any more as starving children or hungry children, but we have children who are undernourished and maybe, Mr. Chairman, it is not because of the , as the Minister of Provincial Affairs says, income they are getting. But I have a feeling in some cases it might be, because of the income, and living in ramshackled houses. How many members of this hon. House today can think of their own districts and think of the number of people

MR. NEARY: who are living in shanties and shacks and leaky homes, and senior citizens living in homes with the windows wide open and the snow drifting in in the Wintertime, outdoor privies.

MR. MURPHY: The same statement I made in 1962 when I sat over there.

MR. NEARY: Yes. And if the minister was over here he would probably make it better than I am making it today.

MR. MURPHY: The same thing, but there has been progress.

MR. NEARY: But, Sir, we have made a bit of progress, of course, we have. I mean we would want to be uncivilized if we did not. You do not stand still in this world. The government is getting more revenue from the sales tax, a lot of it due to inflation, sales tax that is collected on inflated costs. In a good many cases we are getting more revenue from the Government of Canada. Why would we not increase the allowance a little bit at a time? Why would we not increase it? We have not gone far enough. And I hope that nobody will stand in this House and dare tell us -

MR. BRETT: We have gone an awful lot further than you have.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, the former administration was the godfather of the welfare programme in this Province, and all we have done ever since is build on it. When I was minister I built a bit on it, the minister may build a bit on it.

MR. MURPHY: You people had increased it by seven per cent in the three years before we took over.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, the cost of living has escalated more since we got the heave ho! than it did in twenty years before that. And why would they not put a cost of living clause -

MR. MURPHY: Two hundred per cent it is now.

MR. NEARY: Two hundred per cent my eyeball! What happened was with the new programme the government put a limit on the amount of assistance to large families because their family allowance was being doubled by the Government of Canada. That is what they did. Instead of helping the large families as they should, they cut them down, cut them off.

Mr. Neary:

Mr. Chairman, all is not well. And I hope that no hon.
member even, Sir, when we do hear of the abuses, well so what!
who pays any attention to that. You get the odd abuse in banks
do you not? Do you not get bank managers who embezzle? Do you
not get

MR. NEARY:

doctors who cheat the medicare, MCP, rip off? Do you not get second mortgage companies who cheat? Do you not get the odd lawyer who will tell us he is only making \$1,800 a year and say nothing about all the legal fees that are coming in from these transactions? Do you not get that sort of thing, Sir? Do you not get the odd person who will get a gift of a motor car once in a while and a silver set? You get all these things, Mr. Chairman. The point I am trying to make here, Sir, is that in all aspects of society you will find people who chisel and cheat. So why come down like a ton of bricks on the poor old welfare recipient? He is no better or no worse than the high mucky-mucks that I am talking about, mostly the cocktail set who will ridicule and look down their nose at ordinary people as if they were scum and dirt under their feet.

So, Sir, I hope nobody would dare get up and say that all is well with the Department of Social Services because it is not. Far from it. And we have to keep plugging away. I am glad that the Minister of Provincial Affairs agrees with me because when he agrees with me I know I must be 100 per cent correct. We have to keep belting away until we get the guaranteed annual income for people who are sick and widowed.

MR. MURPHY: We will never get it.

MR. NEARY: We will get it, Mr. Chairman, we will get it. I remember when the Tories used to say that we would not get a vote for women in this country, and when the Tories were against social welfare altogether.

MR. MURPHY: How old are you?

MR. NEARY: I can read, Mr. Chairman.

MR. MURPHY: You are younger than I am and I do not remember that.

MR. NEARY: I can remember reading about all these things, hearing about these things. So, Mr. Chairman, I hope that the minister will provide us with some of the answers to these very important questions that I have raised, and forget the nonsense about bookkeeping. We do not want to hear about the little details and civil service speeches.

MR. NEARY:

We want to find out what plans the minister has for the future.

I heard the minister make reference to the day care programme the government has. I had a day care programme on the drawing board in 1971 before I got kicked out of that department, and here it is five years later and the day care programme has not been implemented yet.

MR. MURPHY: Gave everybody in the Province a drawing board.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, a number of proposals have been put up to the Department of Social Services in connection with day care centers. You can have all the legislation you like, Sir, you can have all the laws you like, but if you do not put some money into a programme it is absolutely useless. There is the weakness in the government's day care programme. We have a piece of legislation and we have no money, no funding.

So what we need, Sir, is for the minister not to get up in this civil service jargon but to get up and tell us how much funding, where the day care centers are going to be constructed, who will be eligible to use these day care centers. This is the sort of thing, Sir, that we would like to hear about.

The employment opportunities, I have dealt with it, Sir. I would like for the minister also to tell us about the correctional institutions, how they are functioning. I read in the paper there some time ago -

MR. MURPHY: That is Rehab.

MR. NEARY: That is Rehab. Oh, I thought corrections was in here now.

MR. MURPHY: No, it is not.

MR. NEARY: Well, Mr. Chairman, talking about rehabilitation. I personally feel it was a big mistake, a grave mistake for the government when they restructured themselves practically out of business to separate Social Services and Rehabilitation. They go hand and glove. I believe, Sir, that the time has come now to put Rehabilitation back with Social Services, not because we have got a minister who is too busy now at other things to handle that department,

MR. NEARY:

although I understand he gets full pay as minister -

MR. WELLS: No.

MR. NEARY: No. Well how much does the minister get?

MR. WELLS: Nothing for the administration of that department as acting minister, but the normal salary of a Minister without Portfolio which is, I think, half the regular. Nothing else.

MR. NEAPY: The minister gets half the regular pay, plus his sessional indemnity. I do not know how much time the minister spends in that department but he is acting minister of Rehabilitation and Recreation. I understand that that particular department -

MR. WELLS: Mr. Chairman, we are now debating Social Services.

MR. NEAPY: No we are not.

MR. WELLS: We are on the minister's salary for Social Services and he is absolutely out of order.

MR. NEAPY: Oh, sit down.

MR. WELLS: A point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. NEAPY: You should be well rested after coming back from the beaches of Miami. Mr. Chairman, I am merely arguing that -

MR. WELLS: A point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! A point of order has been raised.

The hon. member should be able to discuss matters in relation to the Department of Social Services when we are on salaries, 801-01. But it would not be in order for him to deal specifically with points relating to another department. So I would ask him to confine his remarks to the general topic he is on without getting into specifics relating to other departments.

MR. NEAPY: Thank you, Your Honour. Your Honour is quite right in making his ruling in my favour. I argue, Sir, that the Department of Rehabilitation should be returned to the Department of Social Services, that it has been grossly neglected over the past few months and both departments are so closely related, Mr. -

MR. WELLS: A point of order. The hon. member now says the Department of Rehabilitation and Recreation has been grossly neglected, etc. This is dealing with another department, not social services. It is out of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. NEAPY: The minister will be out of order before I am finished with him.

Mr. Chairman, to that point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! I think when the former point of

MR. CHAIRMAN:

order was raised, I think that that issue was dealt with, and I would just reiterate that my understanding of our rules is that the structure of the department under consideration can be alluded to but not specifics in relation to other departments. I would understand that the structure of a department might go as far as saying that some matters or some aspects of administration that are in other departments might be considered as transferable to the department under consideration. But I would understand that specifics should be avoided in this regard.

MR. NEARY: Yes, Mr. Chairman. Again I have to approve of your ruling, Sir. I believe if the Rehabilitation part of that department were returned to Social Services, Sir, that the various branches would be better served by a full-time minister, by the present Minister of Social Services. I hope, Mr. Chairman, that it will not be too long before the Premier will reshuffle his cabinet and do a little more restructuring and put that branch of that department back where it rightly belongs. It should have never been taken out of there in the first place. I think it was a big mistake, and I believe the minister will have to agree with me, that the two departments are so closely related, and I would assume that some of the minister's staff do work actually for the Department of Rehabilitation and the present minister has no control over the directing of that staff. So I think it should go back and the sooner, Mr. Chairman, the better.

The minister made some reference to geriatric care and to nursing beds and so forth and the minister intimated to the House that we were catching up. Well, Sir, that may be so. We have built a lot of senior citizens homes in this Province, Mr. Chairman, but the senior citizens homes that we have built are for ambulatory patients, not for geriatric care, not for bedridden patients, Sir. There is a desperate need. The minister is agreeing with me.

MR. REEVE: Exactly what I said.

MR. NEARY: There is a desperate need, Sir, The biggest need in this

MR. NEADY:

Province at this moment is for homes for nursing care.

MR. MURPHY: Not necessarily homes but extend the nursing care.

MR. NEADY: Homes, Sir. I do not know what the minister means by extended nursing care. I do not think you should have both in the same home. I think

Mr. Neary:

a senior citizens home for ambulatory people should be one thing, and for bedridden,geriatric care should be another thing. Because, Mr. Chairman, this is something that I had a real good look at when I was over in England onetime. I mean,if you have people who are on their feet,and they see people getting wheeled back and forth and taken out to the morgue and all this sort of thing,they get demoralized, and pretty soon you will find that these people themselves will give up and go down,and just give up and die, they see it so much every day , and the moaning and the groaning and the suffering that goes on. So the ambulatory people should not be exposed to that sort of thing. So therefore the two homes should be different.

And I want to remind the House, Mr. Chairman, that the Government of Canada,if the homes come under the minister's department, that the Government of Canada will share in 50 per cent of the cost of maintenance and operating of these homes, and the homes can be built by funds that are borrowed from Central Mortgage and Rousing who have all kinds of money available for these kinds of homes. That is how the senior citizens homes that we have now, the new ones--the one in Gander, the one in Grand Falls, the one in Corner Brook, the one in Stephenville, the one in Springdale, the one in Grand Bank--all the ones that we got off the launching path, all these homes were built through money borrowed from CMHC, grants from the Provincial Government, and a per diem rate that would take care of the maintenance cost and the cost of paying back the principal and the interest of the loan.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! I have to point out to the hon. member that all but a few seconds of forty-five minutes are left.

MR. NEARY: Well in the few seconds I have, Sir, I would hope that the minister would answer some of the questions that I have raised that I think are very, very important questions to the people in this Province who are on government assistance through no fault of their own.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Baie Verte-White Bay.

MR. T. RIDEOUT: Mr. Chairman, I have a few remarks that I would like to make regarding the Department of Social Services at this particular time, and maybe now the minister might be able to provide some answers to them when he clues up his remarks a little later on.

One aspect of the social assistance policy that sort of disturbs me at the present time is that there must be some sort of an arrangement between the Department of Social Services and Unemployment Insurance for recovery of social assistance benefits paid while the person on unemployment insurance benefits is waiting to receive that particular benefit. That is fair enough. I am not concerned about that.

What I am concerned about though, Sir, is the fact that the Department of Social Services will assist people while they are waiting for their unemployment insurance, then they apparently have an agreement with unemployment insurance to deduct the amount of the assistance. The thing that bothers me is that in numbers of cases in my district the Unemployment Insurance Commission has, after the recipient begins to receive his unemployment insurance five or six weeks, a couple of months sometimes depending on the problems with the cases, have deducted the whole thing right off the bat in one lump, one lump sum. That means that the recipient of unemployment insurance is now back where he started. He went to Social Services, received six weeks, for argument sake, benefit from Social Services, he gets his six weeks unemployment and they take the whole kit and caboodle away again. Where does he go? Does he go back to Social Services and get another couple of weeks benefits while he is waiting to receive his next unemployment cheque and then have it taken out again? I know dozens and dozens of cases where that has happened, and I talk to welfare officers in various parts of the district about it. And they tell me that they work on two systems; in some cases the unemployment insurance will only make one deduction, make one deduction, therefore they will take everything

Mr. Rideout:

all the one time. In other cases they had made several deductions and take \$20 every two weeks or something of that nature.

So, Sir, I maintain that that is the problem for a number of people receiving unemployment insurance benefits in this Province. I know there are a number of people in my particular district, and I would ask the minister to look into that matter.

Now I have maintained for some time, at least since the announcement was made the 1st. of April, that in many, many cases the government has hoodwinked the people receiving social assistance in this Province when they announced their 10 per cent rate increase effective the 1st. of April. And why I say that, Sir, is this; around the 12th. or 14th. day of April the people receiving social assistance in this Province received a letter from their regional offices saying that social assistance rates have been increased to the tune of 10 per cent, but at the same time there was a

MR. RIDEOUT:

change in policy saying that the amount of the increase would be taken off of special needs. At the same time that there was a rate increase, there was a change in policy saying that the amount of that increase would be taken off of special needs. Now, Sir, my point is that what the government gave on one hand in many, many cases they took away on the other.

I know of one particular case - and I have the documentation with me somewhere, I believe, and I intend to pursue it further a little later on - where the recipient is receiving \$2.43 less as a result of the ten per cent increase. Now, Sir, that is not an increase in any man's language, \$2.43 this particular person and his family will receive less now than before the rate increase. I do not think it is fair. I think in many, many cases even if there was a decrease in the special needs to make up for the raise in social assistance, I talked to people who were receiving exactly the same amount as before the increase came into effect. Well, Sir, that is not an increase. The cost of living has gone up. Everybody agrees with that. Social assistance rates, we say, are gone up ten per cent but for many, many people they have not gone up at all. In a couple of cases I know they have gone down. Now that to me is not an increase. It is not fair and it is something that should be checked into. This change in policy could not have come about incidentally. It must have been worked on. It must have been some long-range plan of the department to do just that when the increase came into effect.

I also want to say a few words about the system of enquiries that I have noticed working in the Department of Social Assistance. I believe it was sometime in January I visited Englee down in the Northern part of my district, and the welfare officer was not in at the time I was down there, so I had six enquiries to make on behalf of people. I came back and I wrote letters to the welfare officer in Englee and six of them came back, six replies saying that they had all been transferred to the Director of Enquiries here in St. John's.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Well I said, you know, that is fair enough. I am a bit green at this, maybe I should have gone to that gentleman first. So the next time I had a few enquiries to make I sent them directly to him. What did I get back? Letters saying they had been sent to the social worker in that particular area. Now, Sir, where do you go? You go to the social worker and he sends your enquiries off to St. John's to the Director of Enquiries. You go to him, and he sends them back to the social worker. So what do you do? Here you are, two and three or two and a half months a constituent waiting, sometimes very pressing problems, sometimes, in fact, dire emergencies and here you are sitting on your butt waiting for an enquiry to come back two or three times before you get an answer to it. I say, Sir, that certainly there is inadequacy in that system and I point it out to the minister and hope again that he will be able to do something about it.

The matter of overpayments, Sir, it seems rather ridiculous when a person who received assistance from the Department of Social Services four or five years ago who now in a few cases I know of is receiving old age security and in one case old age pension, suddenly finds a welfare officer knocking on his door saying that he owes them \$400 or \$500 or \$600 or \$700, that he owes the department that amount of money. There had to be some mistake on somebody's part and I would maintain that the whole mistake was not necessarily on the part of the recipient. I have talked to a number of people who have told me that they were receiving unemployment insurance benefits. They went to the welfare officer and he said, "You are entitled to receive this much to make up for, you know, whatever the ceiling is that you are allowed to receive. You are entitled to receive this much from our department!" Yet a couple of years later they find that they were not entitled to receive it and that in fact they were overpaid. That is a mistake not on the part of the recipient, it is a mistake on the part of the officials of the department. And I do not think that the recipients in those particular cases should be held responsible for

MR. BIDEOUT:

departmental mistakes. That has happened in a number of cases that I am aware of and I have brought it to the attention of the various people in the regional offices.

MR. ROWE: They are not only responsible but they have to pay for it.

MR. BIDEOUT: They have not only been responsible but they have to pay, and God knows, as we all seem to agree here, they are receiving a small enough amount as it is.

Also I think in some cases - not in all but in some cases - the department acts rather rudely. I would be tempted to say brutally when it comes to overpayments. I know of a widow living in Bide Arm in my district who was notified on February 14 that she had an overpayment in the Department of Social Services. She was receiving so much Canada Pension and so much Social Service payments and there had been an overpayment. Good Friday - that was what, the ninth or tenth of April, twelfth of April somewhere around there - that lady had not yet received a cent from anybody, from the fourteenth -

MR. RIDEOUT: February up until the middle of April without any income whatsoever, her Canada Pension had been totally cut, her social assistance had been totally cut. I had to get the welfare officer in Englee, off for the Easter recess, I had to contact him at home and ask him to go up and for God's sake give them something to tide them over until the office opened again and we could do something about it.

The 14th. of February, the 14th. of March, about a month and a half, almost two months without any income whatsoever because her only sin was that she had an overpayment.

Now, Sir, I say that is not good enough. Any system that can tolerate that there is something wrong with it. It might be the exception rather than the rule, but it is an exception that should not be allowed to pass and I certainly bring it to the minister's attention for what it is worth.

Also in the area of day care, I agree with the minister. I do not think we should get into providing day care for rich people, those people who can provide for themselves, but certainly I think his department has a role to play in that particular area. Also, and I assume the minister has looked at this, are you taking advantage of the federal-provincial cost sharing agreements that are available to set up day care services? My information is that the Province is not taking advantage of that particular programme at this particular time.

MR. BRETT: We do not want it.

MR. RIDEOUT: My only question is, I do not care if you want it or not, that is up to you, but are you taking advantage of it?

MR. BRETT: Of course we are taking advantage of it.

MR. RIDEOUT: Well some people seem to think you are not, so I ask you, You are the minister and you can reply when you get on your feet again.

MR. BRETT: You need to know what you are talking about.

MR. RIDEOUT: The federal government shares those costs with the Province,

MR. RIDEOUT: and my information is that this particular government is not taking advantage of that particular federal programme up to this date.

MR. BRETT: Do not forget we have to get our fifty per cent first.

MR. RIDEOUT: Yes, but you can get it back from the federal government after you have initially done that, so what is the problem? You know, you can deal with it later if you want. So these are a few of the comments I would like to make. Unemployment insurance recovery is certainly a problem. The ten per cent raise was not a ten per cent raise for many, many people in this Province, and also the system of enquiries that operates at the present time in some cases and the system of overpayments. Thank you.

On motion 801, carried.

MR. BRETT: Mr. Chairman, I would like to reply to some of these questions if I may, Sir. One of the first ones was asked really first of all by the Leader of the Opposition, and that was in connection with the number of jobs that were created by the Employment Opportunities Division of my department. Now it was suggested by the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) that we have a deal with LIP or Canada Manpower and I would like to tell him that this is ridiculous. We have no deal. There is no deal with anybody, and the figures that I gave here were jobs that were created by the Employment Opportunities Division of my department. It has nothing whatsoever to do with LIP or any other federal programme.

The question the hon. Leader of the Opposition asked was I indicated there was a total of 1,218 jobs created from I think that is April, 1975 to January, 1976 and he wanted to know how many of these were permanent and temporary and so on. And the figures are - permanent employment, there were 318 people; temporary employment - 779; and in vocational training - 121, which

MR. BRETT: gives a total of 1218.

Of course we co-operate with Canada Manpower. I suppose the department always did, but I reiterate that we have no deal. Now when I say co-operate I would hope, I would assume that our social workers are in contact with Canada Manpower and that they would certainly ask that the -

MR. NEARY: You have to get a note from the welfare officer.

MR. BRETT: I do not think that this so. Well, so what if you do have to get a note?

MR. NEARY: Well, is that a deal?

MR. BRETT: No, it is not a deal. Of course it is not a deal. As a matter of fact I received complaints from my very own district this Fall that Canada Manpower in Clarendville would not take on welfare recipients for LIP projects. So there certainly was no deal there.

The member for Port au Port (Mr. Hodder) mentioned the increase in rates and indicated that they have not been as high as they should be and have not kept pace with the cost of living. Now I will be the first

Mr. Brett:

member of this House to stand up and say that the indigent people of this Province, and probably all of the indigent people of the nation of Canada who have to rely on social welfare are, in all probability living below the poverty stage. And even if we have not increased it to the point where we would like, I am still proud to say that over the last four years in some cases it has been increased by 40 per cent, and in some other cases 107 per cent. And I pointed that out in the few remarks that I made.

The last administration, and I do not want to get too political, but the three years before we took office the increase was in the vicinity of 7 per cent to 7.5 per cent.

MR. ROWE: But look at the rising inflation.

MR. BRETT: I realized the rising inflation. But, you know, when you are talking about the cost of living increase, the cost in wages, would somebody sit down and take a look at the increase in the cost of living and the increase in wages, and in the increase in welfare.

MR. MURPHY: What about the cost of wages for the civil service?

MR. BRETT: And I think you will find that the increase in wages and the increase in welfare -

MR. MURPHY: The civil service -

MR. BRETT: - has gone up far more than the increase in the cost of living.

MR. MURPHY: Yes, I know, but how much? Sixty per cent or more.

MR. HODDER: Mr. Chairman, last year the increase in the cost of living was somewhere around 10.5 per cent. The point that I make was that the social assistance went up by 10 per cent, but you waited three months, That was the point I was making.

MR. BRETT: Yes, that point was well taken, Mr. Chairman. I guess all of us were victims of inflation. We had a problem. We had a \$30 million deficit staring us in the face, and we had to take many unpopular steps to do away with that, and one of them was

Mr. Brett:

not to increase the welfare payments by 10 per cent for the three months of January, February, and March. And I was not any happier about that than the hon. member for Port au Port (Mr. Hodder).

The same member also brought up about the shortage of field workers. I have to disagree with him on that. We have increased the field staff by forty-six since 1972. I am not suggesting that that is sufficient, but it is forty-six more-is it not?-than we had at that time. But I have had occasion to visit a number of welfare offices across the Province, some of the main ones like Marystown, Grand Falls, some of the larger ones, and I happen to know more than a little bit about field work. And the one thing that I noticed above everything else was that the social workers were not as busy as they used to be, and I do believe that they have more time to give to the clients than they ever did. And I do not believe that a lot of their time is spent in administration as suggested by the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary).

He mentioned the fact that people with medical certificates have to wait for long periods of time. Now I do not think they really have to wait that long, if the medical certificate is for a period of less than - or if a person is certified to be incapacitated for a period of less than three months, I think it is three months, then I believe the assistance is given from the welfare office rather than from head office here at St. John's. And the waiting period is really new to me. I mean, my understanding if a person goes into the welfare office and if he is in need then he will get it. There may have to be a report made to the regional director, but I do not think anybody walks out hungry. If there is a need then I understand that he is assisted right there and then.

Several individual cases were brought up here in the last hour or so. I cannot reply with respect to these individual cases. I do not know exactly what happened. I think it is the wrong place to discuss them, but if any member on either side of the House feels that some constituent of theirs who may be in receipt of welfare

Mr. Brett:

is being wronged, then certainly my office door is open, But I think the House of Assembly is certainly the wrong place to discuss individual cases.

Overpayments, now there is a lot has been said about that this afternoon.

MR. BRETT: I cannot remember all, but I did mention in my remarks, in my Civil Service speech, that this is a problem, and it is probably a greater problem now than it has ever been because the matter has been brought to our attention so forcibly by the Auditor General.

It is true that people who incurred overpayments three or four years ago may not have been notified about it until, say, a few months ago. And this is because I think I can say that a concerted effort was not being made in perhaps the years to collect these overpayments, but since the Auditor General has pointed it out then we have been making a more concerted effort, and I note every night during the week that some of the staff are back in the department digging out these overpayments and making every effort to collect them.

Somebody - the member for Port au Port I believe - mentioned sort of, if you will forgive the terminology, putting the boots to the people who make false declarations. That is completely separate, because if any social worker is aware of the fact that a welfare recipient came into the office and made a false declaration, well then that in itself, that very action, that making a false declaration dictates that that person must be taken to court. Because that in itself is wrong.

AN HON. MEMBER: As the Auditor General said.

MR. BRETT: Well I do not know what the Auditor General's report said. I do not have a copy of it in front of me. But as I said, that in itself dictates that the man must be taken to court or should be taken to court. Well then of course the overpayment is another thing. If an overpayment is created as a result of it, well then that would be another case.

MR. MURPHY: It has got to be paid anyhow.

MR. BRETT: The cut off in the amount of -

CAPTAIN WINSOR: What is the procedure in collecting overpayments?

Is there a set formula, a certain percentage or how do you go about collecting?

MR. BRETT: Yes, Mr. Chairman, there is. Do you mean the amount?

CAPTAIN WINSOR: Yes.

MR. BRETT: The rate is ten per cent of the requirements of the person. In other words, if a person - let us take a family of five - a typical family of five, three and two, his needs would be \$304 which means we would deduct \$30.40 a month.

CAPTAIN WINSOR: Ten per cent.

MR. BRETT: Ten per cent of the need, yes, of what he is allowed. Now I think again I outlined in my remarks that several ways have been tried. At one time we used to take off \$5 per person and this proved not to work too well because in the case of a large family, you take a family, say, of ten children and two adults, that is twelve persons, you would be taking \$60 a month. And this is more than anybody could have deducted at this present time. The highest we can go is \$397 so the most we would take now would be \$39.70.

Then we have another method whereby we left it to the discretion of the welfare officer or the social worker, and again we found that did not work because there was no uniformity.

Well, getting back to the cut off, there was a reason for that, and I think that my colleague here indicated to the member that was speaking at the moment the reason for it, and that was we tried to keep the welfare rates in line with the minimum wage. And of course there is very good reason for that, because if a person can become a recipient of welfare and get more money than he can if he is working, well of course you know what that does to the work incentive. So I think this was very, very important and I agree with it whole-heartedly.

MR. BRETT: Now to say that a person is penalized if he has more than seven children is only partly true because, of course, you do, if they have more children they get the added family allowance.

Now I mentioned that the rates are going up in January. Now this business, again the member for Port au Port (Mr. Hodder), this business of cheques being signed, I assume he is talking about the fact that cheques have to be signed by two social workers, probably the administrator in the office and one of the other social workers. Of course if cheques are presigned by one person I realize that it is a system that is open to abuse. This is true but I do not really know any way to get around it. Let us take sub-offices, for examples, and we have a number of sub-offices around the Province, like, for example, Botwood was a sub-office operating out of the Grand Falls office, but now Botwood is a full fledged office now. But it was a sub-office and we had a welfare officer go down there once a week or whatever it was, now if the cheques had to be signed say by two workers there at the office then this meant two workers

Mr. Brett:

going to the sub-office. Now there might have been two go to Botwood, but in some sub-offices I know there are only one. And if they both had to be signed at one time then, as I said, it would mean two officers going along where only one might have been needed.

As for the cheque printer, the hon. member suggested that it was only an idea. I do not see what difference that would make. It is different entirely from the original thing he brought up of presigned cheques. I do not know what signing the cheque and then putting it through a cheque printer, I do not know how that relates to each other, I do not know, but I do not see where it would make any difference.

The member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) wanted me to elaborate on what he called the guaranteed annual income. Now I do not profess to know the history of all that has gone on concerning the guaranteed annual income. My two, well I do not know about both of my predecessors, the two latest ones, but the last one, my colleague right here, the Minister of - what is it?

MR. MURPHY: It does not matter.

MR. BRETT: Anyway this is the gentleman I think that was in on most of the meetings in Ottawa. The member for LaPoile seem to be of the opinion that the guaranteed annual income will become a reality in Canada in the not too distant future. Now perhaps he is right. I do not know. I only attended one meeting, Mr. Chairman. The final meeting on that is suppose to be held in June, at which time a decision is suppose to be made. At the last meeting which was in, was it September? October sometime, the ministers, the ten Provincial Ministers and the Federal Minister agreed upon the principle, they agreed upon the principle only, the principle of income support and income supplementation, Now that could be the same as guaranteed annual income.

Income support, of course, basically is the welfare that we have now, basically the same thing, support for people who cannot

Mr. Brett:

work because there is unemployment or they are incapacitated physically or mentally. And then there is income supplementation and that will be designed hopefully for the working poor. Now it would be up to each individual province to decide on the amount of income support and the amount of income supplementation. The Province of Ontario could very well decide that the amount of income support for unemployed and unemployables and so on would be \$6,000 or \$7,000 a year, \$8,000 or \$10,000 a year, it is a rich Province. We down here in Newfoundland might decide that our level of income support might be \$5,000 a year. I cannot say what it would be. But an income supplementation, again this would be up to the individual provinces, Ontario may decide that everybody who is making less than \$15,000 should be supplemented, and we may decide down here that everybody who is making less than \$8,000 should get \$10,000.

Now I agree with the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) that this is a good concept, it is a good thing. I came from a poor family. I would love to see this brought in. But I do not know where the money is going to come from. We are spending this year in our department, how many millions?

MR. MURPHY: Thirty millions, approximately.

MR. BRETT: Well, all right, that is our share. So that is \$60-odd million.

Now if we are to bring in this income support and income supplementation we are going to have to find many, many, many, many more millions of dollars. Now the hon. member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) has got up here on several occasions and said, "Look, if you do not stop, you know what is going to happen." And somebody from the Board of Trade not long ago lambasted my department. They said, "That you should be putting less money into Social Services and more money into productive areas." So I how the people of this Province or how the people of Canada are going to feel if we come out and spend hundreds of millions of dollars more on this type of

Mr. Brett:

programme. It is necessary, I agree. I would like to see it.
But I do not know where the money is going to come from.

But anyway, Mr. Chairman, as I said it is desirable
and probably necessary, but for the life of me I cannot see,
how we are going to get into it. It is fine for the rich Provinces
of Ontario, and Alberta, and B.C. to talk about it. They can
probably afford it.

Mr. Brett.

Probably we will be forced into it. Maybe we will, but I think we will regret it if we are, because it is something that we just cannot afford. And I would not be the least bit surprised if we do get into it that after four or five years the federal government will do the very same thing with this as they are doing with Medicare. They will suck us into it, and then after we get sucked into it and really sucked into it, they will pull out. And if that ever happens, well, I just do not know where the money is going to come from. And whether or not, Sir, you were a godfather I do not know, but it is a good idea.

The member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) suggested that we have some desperately poor children, starving, freezing children in this Province.

MR. NEARY: No, I did not say that.

MR. BRETT: You did not? Well all right, it was something of that nature. I cannot buy that, Mr. Chairman. I cannot buy that. Probably twenty-five years ago we might have had some children in that category. Well, I do not think we have today. And if we do it is because our social workers, our government members are not aware of it. Because I am sure that if there was somebody - any child in the district of LaPoile freezing and starving that you would be told about it very, very quickly, and the minute that you heard about it, you would pick up that telephone and you would call Verh Hollett, and you would say that there is a child down somewhere in my district who is hungry or cold. And my deputy would immediately be on the telephone to the social worker, and he would have someone visit that home. And if there really was somebody starving and freezing that matter would be corrected very, very quickly.

Now I said in the House earlier in my few remarks that I will be the first one to admit that the welfare, the indigent people of this Province and of Canada are not getting enough. And I know they are

Mr. Brett.

living below the poverty level, but I do not think they are starving and freezing. I think they are better off today than they ever were. We would like to give them more, but we cannot afford it. You asked me about supplying wheel chairs -

MR. MURPHY: The hon. member asked you.

MR. BRETT: The hon. member - I am sorry.

- wheel chairs, false teeth, eyeglasses.

MR. NEARY: Crutches for crippled children.

MR. BRETT: I will be political, and I will answer your question with a question: Did your administration provide wheel chairs and false teeth and eyeglasses and crutches? You were in power for twenty-three years. We have been in power for four. So we did not do it. Two wrongs do not make a right. You did not either. What is your excuse?

MR. NEARY: We are not the government now. If we were we would do it.

MR. BRETT: Oh, of course. You had twenty-three years and you did not. But the hon. member has a point. I will stop being facetious or political. I realize that there are adults who need eyeglasses. I realize that there are adults who need teeth. I realize there are crippled children and adults who need wheel chairs. I realize, Mr. Chairman, that there are many, many people who have many, many needs that we cannot fill. We try to fill as many of the needs as possible. But we cannot fill them all. And I doubt if the day will ever come when any government will be able to fulfill all of the needs of all of the people.

Now the hon. member mentioned our Dick Tracys. The hon. member was Minister of Welfare, and then he changed it. And he is just as aware as I am, now as minister and previously as a social worker, of the many, many letters, some of them unsigned, phone calls, private conversations, that you get as a minister, as a member, as a social worker, regarding the abuse in the system, and you still get them. And I was questioned about it on Open Line this morning.

MR. BRETT: I think just about every programme of this nature, like unemployment insurance, I think just about everyone of them have investigators. I do not believe that our investigators go out like little Dick Tracys and try to hurt people. They get complaints and we have to follow them up, and if we do not I do not think we are doing our job. If we hear that there is somebody in Clarendville who was getting unemployment insurance and social assistance, then I think we have an obligation as a government to follow that up. We have an obligation to the people. So these investigators are very, very necessary and they are doing a very good job.

The problem of common-law marriage was a problem in your day, it is a problem now, and it will be a problem after I am gone.

MR. NEARY: Never use you or your, the hon. member.

MR. BRETT: The fact remains that it is a problem. We look on a common-law union the same as a legal marriage. We consider it a legal unit and we assist the family, as I said, the same as if it were a legal marriage. And if we have reason to believe that a man is living common law with a woman and that he is in receipt of assistance, a non-allowable income, then we do take action. And I am not suggesting that we are always right, but again this is a problem and we are trying to cope with it as best we can.

The hon. member read out some of the beefs or complaints of the Civil Liberties Association, whoever that is. And I have never heard so much - yes, I read it but I do not remember all is on it - so much utter trash and nonsense in all my life. Of course I rebutted it on radio because it is utterly ridiculous. One of the things they said that government is doing is forcing unmarried mothers to give up their children.

Now I cannot speak for Ontario. I cannot speak for -

MR. MURPHY: Nova Scotia, New Brunswick.

MR. BRETT: BC or Nova Scotia or PEI. I do not know what they

MR. BRETT: ___ are doing, but I can tell what we are doing in this Province. I do not know if it was this year or last year we brought in the new allowance, the child welfare allowance, and the very reason for bringing that allowance in was so that unmarried mothers would not be forced to give up their children for financial reasons. Now children of unmarried mothers can go to reside with their relatives and they are paid a fairly, you know, not a lot of money but they are paid an allowance.

MR. MURPHY: That is why there is a great scarcity of babies for adoption.

MR. BRETT: As my hon. friend here says this is the reason that we have less children available for adoption today than we ever had before.

MR. MURPHY: They remain with original mother.

MR. BRETT: So this is ridiculous. It certainly does not apply to this Province. Another thing the hon. member read out was that welfare people are not advised of their rights. Can you tell me anybody in this Province -

MR. MURPHY: Can the hon. member tell?

MR. BRETT: - who have not been advised of their rights, and can you tell me of any welfare recipients who were intentionally deprived of their rights, they were not told what they could do and what they could not do, and what they can get or cannot get? Now we have an appeal system here in Newfoundland, and if a person goes to a welfare office and seeks assistance, and if he feels that - if he did not get it and feels that he should, or if he got it and got too little, or if he is annoyed for any reason, he has a perfect right to go to the Appeal Board, a board which is made up of private citizens. There is no connection with the government. And if they are not satisfied with the decision of the Appeal Board they can go even further and take it to the Supreme Court. So I do not know how anybody can say that the welfare people of this

MR. BRETT: Province are not advised of their rights.

Another one, I believe, was that welfare people are forced or told where to live. I do not know about other Provinces, but again it is utterly ridiculous to suggest that that is happening in Newfoundland. Sure we have a shortage of homes for - well, we have a shortage of homes, period, but probably the problem is more acute or more difficult for welfare people. And this is simply because a lot of people who have space available do not want to rent it to welfare people. Now I would venture to say that most people in this hon. House, if you had a home or a basement apartment for rent you would be more likely to give it to a working man than you would to a widow with ten kids.

MR. BRETT:

The result is that often, too often, the widows, the crippled and so on end up in substandard housing. But that will never be cured until we have sufficient homes.

There is something else I would like to point out while we are talking about that. I have gotten my knuckles rapped on a couple of occasions by the Tenancies Board with respect to substandard houses. I would like to point out to the House that while this department will assist a welfare recipient in finding accommodations, we really do not have any direct obligation or responsibility. Our responsibility or obligation as a Department of Social Services is to provide the funds to pay for the accommodation, but not to find accommodation. So our knuckles should not be rapped. This is a problem for other departments. It is certainly not a problem for ours.

Somebody mentioned day care. As a matter of fact, a couple of people mentioned day care centers. I indicated in my remarks that there are two kinds of day care services. One is the baby-sitting kind. The need seems to be among the upper middle class and the middle class. Usually the need is brought on by people who want to go out to work, or they want their wives to go out to work, they want to improve their life style sort of. I indicated that there is no way that this government is going to get into the funding of this type of day care center or day care service. We have allocated however \$156,000 for this type of service. I repeat myself when I say the only one we have is the Teach-A-Tot here at St. John's which is a very good one. But certainly we have no intentions of getting into this type of day care service no matter what the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) or Port au Port (Mr. Hodder) or anybody else says, because we do not feel that the government should get involved.

Homemaker services, I will not elaborate on that. I do not think there were too many questions asked about it. I indicated that we will be extending our services across the Province. The homemakers will be hired by my department. We have budgeted \$125,000 for it and hopefully not only will the service be extended but improved.

MR. BRETT:

Extended nursing care beds, the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) wanted me to talk about that. Now I believe that I said that we are catching up as far as the senior citizens homes as we know them as such are concerned in the Province right now. He listed the ones at Springdale, Gander and so on and so on. I believe I am correct in saying that we are catching up in this respect. But there is a drastic need for extended nursing care beds. We have older people who are bedridden and the only place that we have now is the Hoyles Home or possibly some of our hospitals. So there is a need for that and I would like to see the government, when funds of course are available, get into this type of service rather than the ordinary rest homes that we have been building during the past fifteen or twenty years.

Increases were not paid in all cases. The member for Baie Verte-White Bay (Mr. Rideout) was very vocal in this respect. He said it was not an increase for everyone. Well, I would like to inform the hon. member that it was an increase for everyone.

MR. RIDEOUT: It was not.

MR. BRETT: It was. Now do you want to get into an argument to see who can shout the loudest? It is simply that you do not understand it. The fact of the matter is that you, hon. sir, do not understand it. It was an increase for everyone. Well let us take the case of a man and a wife - and I think this is the type you are talking about, probably, where one is receiving old age security. All right, two people under our social assistance regulations, two adults, qualify for \$248 a month. Now that includes the latest increase of ten per cent. Now about the same time that this increase of ten per cent came in there was also an increase in the old age security. Now I believe that is correct. I am not sure but I believe there was.

MR. BRETT:

Now let us assume that this couple was getting a supplement from this department to bring them to the amount that they - well, they were getting, say, \$238. We would give them ten dollars to bring them up to \$248. But the increase that they got and the old age security brought them up to the maximum amount that they could qualify for under the social assistance regulations. Therefore they could not get an increase because they did not qualify under our legislation. But the increase was for everybody. Now if I am not making myself clear, if I am not articulating properly, maybe the gentleman would like to come to my office and I can explain it more fully with the tables and everything in front of me. But I can assure you that the increase was for everybody.

The matter of inquiries - I must confess that I was a little bit confused there. But probably if the hon. member directed an inquiry to the welfare office, I am not sure that he could actually give you the information. It may have to be forwarded to the Director of Inquiries who can give it to the member. I am not sure about this. I could probably check it out at a later date. This could have been it. If the hon. member went to the Director of Inquiries for information, in all probability the Director of Inquiries had to go back to the field to get the information. He may not have had all the information that he wanted. So there might be a logical explanation. I do not think I can give it to you right now.

Now, Mr. Chairman, that seems to be most of the points that were brought up. If there are any others I will try to answer them later.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Mr. Chairman, I do not want to participate in this debate at all, but I rise to make three points. Number one, this has been one of the most enjoyable debates I have heard in this House in this session. Number two, the hon. minister except for the appalling, smashing and breaking of the rules of the House that he has been indulging in, he cannot seem to learn, he cannot seem to change, the hon. minister has delivered two excellent speeches here. This last one was extemporaneous,

MR. SMALLWOOD:

answering points raised by hon. members and he was excellent, best I have heard him, but I must admit I have not heard him very often. His formal presentation as minister of that department presenting his estimates in general was very informative and very useful, but not as enthralling as this extemporaneous speech in which he is replying to these points raised. The speech made by the hon. member for Port au Port (Mr. J. Hodder) was absolutely excellent. I just sat here and enjoyed myself. I said to myself, this is how debate should be carried on. Then came my hon. friend and former colleague in my Cabinet, the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary). As always he, of course, gets to be very naughty now and then. He likes to take hard swipes at someone or other. That is all part of it. But he never fails to make a good speech. Then we heard a rather firey speech by the hon. member for somewhere down there in White Bay. I think it is called White Bay South, is it?

AN HON. MEMBER: Baie Verte-White Bay.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Baie Verte. Well it is part of Green Bay and part of White Bay South - an excellent speech, the second time I have heard him. Each time he was good. Now, Mr. Chairman, the third point and final one is this: The Minister of Rural and Industrial Development introduced his estimates with a speech in which he outlined his department's programme, and ideology which was excellent. The minister of whatever he is minister of here today - what is it?

MR. NEARY: Social services.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Social Services. I agree with the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary). I think it is utterly, absolutely ridiculous, it is absurd to have split Recreation and Rehabilitation and Social Services. That is all one concern and it ought to be under one minister in one department. He too gave an excellent outline of his department. Now if every minister does that,

MR. SMALLWOOD:

just think, Mr. Chairman, the Department of Health, the Minister of Health, and then think of the Minister of Education and think of the Minister of Fisheries and think of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, then the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture and the Minister of Industrial Development because I think it is only Rural Development we have had. I do not think we have yet had Industrial Development, have we?

AN HON. MEMBER: No, that is right.

MR. SMALLWOOD: That is to come. And the Minister of Transportation and Communications and the Minister of Manpower - what is the other?

MR. NEARY: Industrial Relations.

MR. SMALLWOOD: And Industrial Relations, in other words the old Department of Labour with a fancy new name. The Minister of Tourism and the Minister of Mines and Energy. Now if -

MR. NEARY: You forgot the Justice Department.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Well Justice is, you know, terribly important and basic and fundamental and we cannot do without it but, let us face it, Justice is largely a formal matter.

MR. NEARY: I would not say that.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Largely formal, oh yes. I think it is. But if each individual minister will favour the Province and favour this House with a sensible, informative introduction of his estimates telling what are the hopes and plans and dreams of his department, it will be excellent. It will be excellent. Then having done that, and the House having debated that, the House then, or the Committee of Supply go on in to debate the actual figures.

Now, Sir, if the great basic departments, Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture, Industrial Development, Tourist Development, Mines and Energy, just to take five - these are what make the mare go, this is the goose that lays the golden eggs - if each of these ministers comes to the Committee of Supply and gives an adequate, informative, interesting account of his department's activities and plans it will be one of the most useful things that this House will ever have had.

MR. SMALLWOOD:

I used to encourage ministers in my cabinet, "For God's sake when your estimates are introduced - I know we all get fed up we want to get away, we want to get the House closed, we want to get out in the country - but look, in spite of that, introduce your estimates with a general all-round talk about your department!" Now if that is done in this chamber, and if hon. members, especially these younger men, these new men, full of vigor and vim and interest and wanting to make a name and wanting to become accustomed and fluent speakers and succeeding so well, if that happens I ask in God's name how are you going to do all that in seventy-five hours?

MR. NEARY: Thirty-six we have left.

MR. SMALLWOOD: In seventy-five hours altogether. Now I know, Your Honour, that I cannot revive a debate that has already been held and completed, although I do not think that any debate has been held and completed on this very question of how much time should be available to the House. It is no use the Minister without Portfolio - and, by the way, I have a quarrel with him when he told us here today truthfully and accurately that he is not getting paid any salary for being an acting minister of whatever it is he is an acting minister of, and that all he was getting was his salary as a Minister without Portfolio, which is about half the salary of a minister with a portfolio. Now I had ministers in my cabinet who had no portfolio, and it is perfectly true that they got a salary substantially lower than the salary of ministers who had portfolios.

MR. NEARY: \$5,000.

MR. SMALLWOOD: They got \$5,000, was it?

MR. NEARY: I was one of them.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Well, the hon. member was one of them. I quarrel with that, and I would suggest to the government that if they have a minister who is a fullfledged minister of the Crown -

Mr. Smallwood.

one of the Queen's ministers, a member of the Cabinet, if they have that, he should get paid a minister's salary. There should be no distinction.

MR. NEARY: Providing he does his job.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Well if he is the minister, he attends cabinet meetings. He helps to govern the Province, and he has an additional duty - I do not know if he gets a salary for being Government House Leader.

MR. DOODY: No, he does not.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Well, it is absurd! It is ridiculous! However, I have diverted myself. That is not what I -

MR. NEARY: The minister is practising law, so I mean he cannot serve two masters.

MR. SMALLWOOD: We have had ministers in this House who practiced law, and who were fullfledged ministers, and had departments.

AN HON. MEMBER: No, Sir.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Yes, we did. We certainly did. And not only that in my time, in my administration, but long years before I was born the same thing was true that Ministers of the Crown with portfolios practiced law and made their additional income. And in England, I believe, the Solicitor General of the United Kingdom goes out and practices law privately and earns his private fees.

MR. NEARY: Name me one. Who is one?

MR. SMALLWOOD: I do not know the names of all the Solicitor Generals. I only met one of them in my life.

MR. NEARY: Not one in my time. There was not one in my time.

MR. SMALLWOOD: In the hon. gentleman's time - was there a Solicitor General? - yes, we had one. I think Myles Murray was, was he not? Momentarily.

However, I will not be put off. I had something to say and it is this. It is no use for the Minister without Portfolio getting up here as he has done and reciting the number of times, the number of

Mr. Smallwood:

hours used up by the Opposition since Confederation on the estimates. That is no use. That will not wash. The last Opposition, when I was Premier, consisted of three men, the East end of St. John's -

MR. DOODY: There were not many conversations.

MR. ROBERTS: There was only a short time when there were three men.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Yes, that is so. That is toward the tail end of it, and I must say I emphasize that, the tail end of it, toward the tail end of it there were more than three.

Mr. Chairman, I have been known as Premier of this Province to stand up and virtually insult the Opposition, virtually to insult them, egg them, goad them, prod them, insult them virtually, asking them, "Look, debate the estimates, will you? Debate them. That is what you are here for. That is what you are getting paid for. Debate the estimates."

MR. NEARY: Billy Browne did it.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Billy Browne did it. Yes, he did it. And he did it to the disgust and chagrin of his own colleagues in the House who wanted to get the House closed.

MR. MURPHY: That is not a correct statement.

MR. NEARY: He nearly drove us all nuts.

MR. SMALLWOOD: I did not hear the hon. minister. What did the hon. member say? Let me ask the question, and then answer me. What did the hon. minister say?

MR. MURPHY: It was not a correct statement.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Well, possibly not. One does not guarantee that every -

MR. MURPHY: It sounded nice, you know, but it just is not right.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Well, it is perfectly true that the Opposition being perhaps small in number, and being perhaps disspirited, bored to death having been in Opposition for eight years, ten years, twelve, fourteen, seventeen, eighteen years, twenty-one years, twenty-three years sitting

Mr. Smallwood.

here in tiny numbers in Opposition, they got bored, they got fed up, they got discouraged and perhaps they just wanted to get out of the House and get the House closed as quickly as possible.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SMALLWOOD: It is no use for the Government House Leader citing that as a criterion, as a yardstick. You have over here on this side of the House now only seven or eight fewer hon. members than you have on that side. And if seventeen or eighteen ministers speak on the estimates, seventeen or eighteen of them, and if all the hon. members over here, which is their right and their duty to do, also debate the estimates what do you do in seventy-five hours? I plead with the House Leader for the government. I know it cannot be done in this session. I know that. It is too late. It is too late to do it in the present session. I plead with them to bring in before the House the closes, bring legislation in changing that, and if a time limit must be put on it and that I am not sure of - in the great

MR. SMALLWOOD: Parliament at Westminster, the House of Commons at Westminster, even the great House of Commons at Ottawa. We have in the case of Westminster over 700 M.P. s. That is a big public meeting. They cannot all get in the Chamber. It is only on a very rare occasion that all 700 are present and one-third of them or more have to stand, there is no seat for them.

MR. NEARY: That is right.

MR. SMALLWOOD: A tremendous gathering of parliamentarians! There, perhaps, it is a sheer necessity to put a time limit to make sure that government business gets done. But remember, Mr. Chairman, the House of Commons, the House of Assembly does not exist only that the government may get its business done. Please remember that. The Queen's Government must be carried on. The Queen's ministers must introduce laws and the Queen's ministers must ask the people's House to grant them money to carry on the Queen's business, in other words the public service. Yes, but that is not all the House is for. That is not all Parliament is for, that is not all this House of Assembly is for and so therefore, if we do not respect this House and the rights of hon. members, and if we do not keep the rules within reason, now we are all going to break the rules. I confess, I make the humble confession here that many a time I have broken the rules of parliamentary debate and procedure. Yes, I have and I will continue to do so.

MR. NEARY: Innocent. Innocent.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Of course I will. I will speak apart from the subject, I will be out of order and no one will be quick enough to catch me at it and I will break the rules. But there is one rule no hon. member of this House, whatever side he sits on, is allowed by the law- and it is not a law that this House made, It is a law that was made before any of us was born. It is a law that was made before our fathers were born and in most cases before our grandfathers

MR. SMALLWOOD: were born and it was not made here, it was made in England—that an hon. member of this House is never to be named except by Mr. Speaker and then as a penalty. You must never talk about Mr. Smith or Mr. Jones or Mr. Brown if he is a member of the House. Outside the House you can, but not in the House. And another thing that is absolutely taboo is the word "you", to look across the floor and say "you". It is against the law of parliamentary precedent, parliamentary procedure, parliamentary practice.

Now if that is not enforced, the next thing members will be calling each other by their names, not by their districts, not by their portfolios, not by their official position or office in this House.

The Minister of -

MR. MURPHY: Social Services.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Social Services this afternoon - take a man who, you know, there are men who cannot pronounce a certain word. They cannot get their tongue or their lips around it, and he is like that except that he has no difficulty pronouncing. His English is magnificent. He is fluent. He is a good speaker. He is one of the best in the House, and I am surprised and pleased to notice that here this afternoon, very pleased. But he has some kind of an incapacity to say "the hon. member." The hon. member asks, the hon. member wanted to know this, the hon. member wanted to know that, the hon. member made the point, the hon. member this, that or the other, he cannot do it. He has to say "you."

Now I notice also that the hon. member for Port au Port (Mr. Hodder) has something of the same failing; he says "you," and "yours" and "you" and "yours"! If that is permitted I suggest to you, Mr. Chairman, I have been in this House now a total of twenty-three years and now I am on my twenty-fourth, and before that for twelve or fifteen years, twenty years, I was in here as a reporter in the Press Gallery. I am very, very

MR. SMALLWOOD: familiar with the history of this House and with its proceedings, very, very familiar indeed. And I tell you, Your Honour, I tell you that if these little - for instance the way we dress, is it all right to put on a pair of jeans and sit in here, is that all right? There is no particular law that says you cannot. But there is a very old precedent, and the present Prime Minister of Canada, Mr. Trudeau when he was Minister of Justice, was reprimanded by, I do not know but it was the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Diefendbaker, anyway some prominent member on the Opposition side, reprimanded him because instead of wearing a pair of shoes he wore a pair of open sandals,

MR. SMALLWOOD:

and he said it was not respectful of the House. If the lawmakers of a country or of a province are not respected, if their assembly, the place where they meet, if their meetings, if their functioning be not respected by the public, how can the public be expected to respect the laws that those lawmakers make? If the judges of the courts do not wear robes and gowns, and if they are not addressed as My Lord, Your Lordship, Your Honour, if that is not done, if they go in wearing blue denim, how long will the courts be respected? How long will justice be respected? If the clergy in the churches do not keep up appearances, how long will it be before they too will forfeit public respect? Because remember there is always - and we have it here in Newfoundland, make no mistake about it, we have it here - always there is the ignorant, and it is ignorant because it is not true, it is not correct, it is ignorant - there is the ignorant feeling that Jack is as good as his master, and you should make no distinction between anyone, courts, churches, parliament.

So I beseech the minister, after that splendid two speeches he made today, I beseech him in future eschew the word 'you' and avoid the word 'your' except to Mr. Chairman. You can say 'you' to the Chairman or Mr. Speaker or you can say 'your' or you can say 'your House'. You can say that. But you cannot address any one individual member with the word 'you' or the word 'your'. If that rule is not carried out we are going to be in deepening trouble. It will go from one to the other, because if that rule can be ignored, cannot others be equally ignored? If you can say 'you', why can you not say Mr. Smith there, Mr. Jones, Mr. Murphy? Why not? Because the rule is that you cannot. And the same thing applies to the other thing.

However I must say I have enjoyed this debate here this afternoon and I hope it goes on. And we are meeting again tonight, are we?

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, before the minister gets on with the details of the estimates I want to go to bat for my hon. friend the Minister

MR. NEARY:

of Finance in connection with a problem that has arisen in the minister's district over on Bell Island in connection with transportation of people on social services. The minister for some reason or other, not the Minister of Finance but the Minister of Social Services, for some unknown reason, for some reason unknown to the people of Bell Island, this year discontinued a service that the people, the indigent people, the people who could not afford transportation, that the people have had I suppose for the last eight years, that is transportation of people on social assistance to hospitals in St. John's and to doctors offices in St. John's.

There was a gentleman on Bell Island who had a contract with the minister's department to convey all those people who had to visit the General Hospital, the Grace Hospital, the St. Clare's Hospital, specialists' offices, eye doctors, there was a gentleman who had a contract to transport all these people from Bell Island across the Tickle and into St. John's. This service, Mr. Chairman, took the place of the old policy of having to go to the welfare office to get a voucher for a taxi to the Beach on Bell Island, a voucher for the ferry coming across the Tickle, and a voucher for the taxi, Portugal Cove taxi, to take you to the General Hospital. The minister now overnight has wiped that out, has left the people on Bell Island who depended on that service high and dry. I will be very surprised if the Minister of Finance does not support my plea.

AN HON. MEMBER: No.

MR. NEARY: Yes, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the minister is saying no. It is true, Sir, the service has been dropped for some unknown reason.

MR. BRETT: The service has been dropped and a better one implemented.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, I will tell the House the better service that has been implemented. The minister's department has gone back to the old system only worse, because now, Sir, the indigent people who have to come to St. John's have to get from their homes on Bell Island to the ferry on Bell Island at their own expense. If they live up in Bickfordville or Lance Cove or down in the East End or over on the back of the island they have to get to the beach on their own. Is that better? The minister got the gall and the audacity and the nerve to tell me that that is better. What do they do? Go on shank's mare and walk three or four miles?

MR. BRETT: There are lots of them over there who think it is better.

MR. NEARY: Who thinks it is better, Mr. Chairman?

MR. BRETT: Most of them?

MR. NEARY: Most of them. Well, Sir, I spent a few hours on Bell Island yesterday as did the Minister of Finance, the member for Harbour Main-Bell Island, and the minister, I do not know whether he got the flack that I got, but my antenna certainly picked up quite a bit of flack.

MR. BRETT: Flack from one person.

MR. NEARY: No, Sir. I was not even talking to the gentleman who had the contract, never spoke to him, although I heard and read a letter that to me smacks of political overtones.

MR. BRETT: Oh, go on.

MR. NEARY: Oh yes, Mr. Chairman.

MR. BRETT: That is not fair.

MR. NEARY: That is fair, Sir. Not from the minister but from somebody on the government side.

MR. MURPHY: We treated that 100 per cent right across the board.

MR. NEARY: Well, why was it dropped all of the sudden?

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Chairman, do you realize now what is happening to these -

MR. MURPHY: For four or five years it was popular. It is the only place in existence in this Province where that service was given.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, it is the only place in existence in this Province where you have 7,000 people living on an island.

MR. MORGAN: Tell the federal government that and they will handle DREE.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, that service, I believe -

MR. MORGAN: Tell the federal government that.

MR. NEARY: That service I believe cost \$12,000 or \$15,000. I do not know how much the contract was, around \$12,000 or \$15,000, and it was a good service because now, Sir, what is happening, these people are forced to get to the ferry on Bell Island on their own. They have to get up in the morning at seven o'clock to catch the eight o'clock boat and walk down, sometimes, from Lance Cove, Bickfordville, Middleton Avenue, West Mines, three and a half, four miles to catch the ferry to get across. Then they are given a little voucher, this demeaning voucher again that we tried to get rid of, for their transportation on the boat, and then they are given a voucher to get a taxi in Portugal Cove but only then to be delivered to the General Hospital.

Now what happens after they get to the General Hospital and the doctor who is holding the clinic down there says, well you have to go up and visit a specialist over in the Medical Clinic over on Bonaventure Avenue? How do they get from there over to Bonaventure Avenue?

MR. BRETT: The same way that they got there when your friend had the ambulance.

MR. NEARY: Oh, Mr. Chairman, that is not so.

MR. BRETT: Oh, yes it is so.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, they were taken from the General Hospital when this gentleman has the contract.

MR. BRETT: By whom?

MR. MORGAN: By your friend:

MR. NEARY: Well you can call him my friend if you like. I certainly -

MR. MURPHY: Do not mix it up now. There is no friend in this thing here.

MR. NEARY: No, there are no friends in this. Mr. Chairman, there is where the political prosecution comes in, you see. I do not represent that district now, Sir, I represent LaPoile district.

MR. MURPHY: Right. So there are no political overtures.

MR. NEARY: But I am still -

MR. MURPHY: If we did it when the hon. member was there he could say it is political, but now we have one of our own ministers there. Well certainly God they cannot insinuate political overtones.

MR. NEARY: Well I can tell the hon. minister that his own colleague is not very pleased about this.

MR. MURPHY: He may not be. Everybody is not always pleased.

MR. NEARY: He is not very pleased because -

MR. MURPHY: I am not pleasing -

MR. NEARY: - the minister is doing a grave injustice to the people over there on that island.

MR. MURPHY: That is rubbish. Nothing to it.

MR. NEARY: How do they get, Mr. Chairman, from the General Hospital up to the medical clinic on Bonaventure Avenue, and then back down to the General Hospital again, or up to the eye doctor or up to the specialist office or up to the Grace Hospital? How do they get there? Will the minister tell me how they get there?

MR. BRETT: Social workers at the General.

MR. NEARY: Social workers at the General? Not so, Sir, that is not so. These people come in and are stranded down at the General.

AN HON. MEMBER: What is wrong with the social workers?

MR. NEARY: I do not know what is wrong with the social workers at the General. The social workers at the General will not give these people transportation.

AN HON. MEMBER: Well, they should.

MP. NEARY: Well they do not and that is my argument.

MR. MURPHY: Anyway I am going home pretty soon boys.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, I would like for the minister to reconsider that decision that he has taken. Mr. Chairman, I will give you an illustration, if the Minister of Provincial Affairs would just keep it down.

MR. MURPHY: Sorry.

MR. NEARY: I do not mind the minister talking. But, Mr. Chairman, you had people who were brought over in that transportation service. I saw one kid alone that would justify that service. That was a kid in a body cast, and

MR. NEARY:

had a body cast right up to its hips, legs spread open with a stick in between. The mother had to come about once every ten days to two weeks to bring that child into St. John's. Now the emergency ambulance service, the regular ambulance service, will not take care of that situation. Now that woman has to get that little child down to the beach herself. The welfare officer over on Bell Island will not provide a voucher.

MR. MURPHY: That is no different than anywhere in the Province.

MR. MORGAN: Where is the social worker?

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, Bell Island is an island. Does the minister understand that? It is an island.

MR. BRETT: Yes, and Fogo Island is an island. I understand that, too.

MR. NEARY: Well, Mr. Chairman, I am sure that the people of Fogo Island get their transportation over to Gander.

MR. BRETT: The same way as they do over on Bell Island now, no different.

MR. NEARY: They get their taxis. Look, Mr. Chairman, the minister can get down there and get as snooty as he wants. But I saw taxi bills that came out of Gander Hospital, out of Grand Falls Hospital and out of Corner Brook and out of St. Marys and out of Placentia.

MR. BRETT: And now you see them out of Bell Island.

MR. NEARY: I saw the taxi fares.

MR. BRETT: And now you see them coming out of Bell Island. What is the difference?

MR. NEARY: No, Sir, they were not coming out of Bell Island. It was cheaper in the long run, Sir, the policy that they had of one man handling all their transportation. The policy, I would say, was costing the public treasury less than it will cost now. And it is creating a hardship on a large number of people, sick people, not people who have to use the regular ambulance service. That is the same all over Newfoundland. But you got people who are sent back and forth every day, numerous people going back and forth, sent back and forth every day that have to get to a specialist, to a doctor in St. John's or to a doctor's office or to an eye specialist

MR. NEARY:

or to a dentist. Now they are stranded. They are left high and dry. I would be very surprised if the Minister of Finance does not get up and endorse my request that the minister reconsider that policy because that is a wrong decision, a wrong policy. I do not know who advised the minister on it. There may have been a bit of politics involved in it. I do not know, not by the Minister of Finance I do not think. There may have been a bit of flack. I doubt if there were any complaints although I saw a letter that said there were assorted complaints came into the minister's office. The assorted complaints were probably from party hacks on Bell Island and not from people who were using the service. I would like for the minister to table these assorted complaints we hear about. It was a good service, Sir. The people now are being punished and penalized. People in a community that have no industry, no way to earn a dollar, now have to get down to the ferry on their own and then pass in a little voucher when they get aboard the boat, and then pass the voucher into the Portugal Cove taxi that only takes them to the General Hospital and nowhere else. Let me hear the minister get up and explain his way out of that one, talk his way out of that one and tell us what he is going to do about it.

MR. BRETT: Mr. Chairman, I do believe that I owe the House an explanation with respect to the matter that the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) has brought up. I have some facts but not all of the facts. It is now five minutes to six. But we have taken away a service from the people on Bell Island. I do believe that I should explain why and explain to the House that the alternate service is equally as good or better in our opinion. It being five minutes to six I wonder if the Committee could rise and when we come back at eight I would have a more comprehensive answer to the question. I do not have all the facts at the moment. I would like to give an answer to it.

AN HON. MEMBER: Do it further along on another item.

MR. BRETT: Well, that is okay as long as I get the opportunity to answer the question.

On motion 801-01 through to 805-03-07 carried.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Port au Port.

MR. HODDER: 806-01, I would just like to ask a question there, it seems that the figures shown in 806 there, this is where the ten per cent increase for social assistance recipients this year is shown and I was wondering, it does not seem to show a ten per cent increase over the previous year, I was wondering if the minister could explain?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister of Social Services.

MR. BRETT: The hon. member is interested in 806-03-01, is he not?

MR. HODDER: Okay if you could just hold it until we get to that point?

On motion 806-01 through 806-02-02, carried.

MR. ROBERTS: As a matter of interest on the Appeal Board, why is it down by twenty per cent, Mr. Chairman.

MR. MURPHY: \$200 less.

MR. ROBERTS: No, it is \$1300 less.

MR. MURPHY: Oh, I thought that was \$3300 against \$3500, is it not?

MR. ROBERTS: No. As I read it, Mr. Chairman, 806-02-03 Appeal Board, the minister is asking for \$4200 this year and he revised his estimates last year at being \$5500. If you want to wait a minute I will look up to see what his -

MR. DOODY: Treasury Board has slashed it.

MR. ROBERTS: Well, that is the only thing Treasury Board has slashed as apparent in this subhead, Mr. Chairman. The Minister of Finance says that -

MR. DOODY: I think that is what happened.

MR. ROBERTS: Well, it may well be that Treasury Board has slashed it, if so the question is is the slash a realistic one. Last year the minister asked for \$3500 and spent \$5500; the year before he spent

MR. ROBERTS: \$3300 and this year he is asking for \$4200.

Now the Appeal Board is something that is worth a little discussion. Perhaps the best thing, Mr. Chairman, would be to allow the minister to deal with my initial point which has to deal with the costs which have gone, the revised figures from \$3300 to \$5500 in the two most recent fiscal years, and then we are looking at \$4200 this year. It is not a lot of dollars, Your Honour, but there are big percentage variations and I think therefore they are worth questioning. Maybe the minister could have a crack at that and we will go on from there.

MR. WELLS: As it is now about one or two minutes to six I would move the Committee rise, and we will come back to this.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The clock is now considered to read six, I rise until eight o'clock in the evening.

The Committee resumed at 8:00 P.M.

Mr. Chairman in the Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! Subhead 806-02-03.

The hon. Minister of Social Services.

MR. BRETT: Mr. Chairman, it is time to gather my wits here.

Before we adjourned at six o'clock the hon. Leader of the Opposition questioned the decrease in the amount allocated for the Appeal Board. Last year the Revised Estimates were \$5,500, and this year it is \$4,200. I have an explanation. The actual amount granted in the 1975-1976 estimates was \$3,500. And following this it was realized that the Appeal Board could not operate on this amount and thus a request was made for a further \$2,000, a request to Treasury Board, which was granted and brought the amount up to \$5,500. Now the actual amount spent by the Appeal Board last year was \$4,758.51, to be exact. But when these estimates were made up by my department in November, we had actually spent \$3,800. We did not anticipate any real expensive meetings to the end of the year, to the end of March, so we made up our estimates on that figure, \$3,800, plus ten per cent for inflation which brought us up to \$4,200.

Now in view of the fact that we have actually spent \$4,700, I think we realize at this stage that we probably underestimated, and I think we are going to need something more like \$5,000 than \$4,200. In any case, it is a very insignificant amount, and I do not see the House arguing over \$800.

On motion 806-02-03 carried.

MR. BRETT: Mr. Chairman, the member for Port au Port asked me a question under the wrong subhead, but I did say that I would answer it under this subhead, 806-03-01. And he questioned the fact that ten per cent of \$46 million will amount to more than \$49 million, which is correct. But this figure is based on the actual case load when the estimates were made up. And the trend is downward for both long-term and short-term. It has been for the past two or three years. Probably we are being

MR. BRETT.

over-optimistic, but I am sure the hon. member realizes that case loads do not remain static, and perhaps we are being over-optimistic, but we feel that they will continue to decline and for this reason, you know, we have come up with what looks to be a less amount.

MR. BRETT:

Everybody, but everybody who will get assistance over the next twelve months will get the ten per cent increase.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Baie Verte-White Bay.

MR. PIDEOUT: I want to have another word to say on this special needs situation that I mentioned today and in response to what the minister had said a little earlier this evening. It was the principle of special needs that I was a bit concerned about. What I have been saying in effect is this; that when the letters from the regional offices came out to the people receiving social assistance concerning the raise, it was said in the letters in plain English, in black and white, that there was an increase of ten per cent effective April 1 in social assistance rates, but at the same time there was also a change in policy and that the amount of special needs would be reduced by the amount of the rate increase. In other words, the way I read it, and I suppose the way it is figured out - and the minister can tell me if I am wrong - is that the rates were increased by ten per cent, therefore the rates of special needs, the special need that is built into the overall social assistance plan, was reduced by ten per cent. Now that is the way I read it and that is the way it was explained to me when I contacted officials at the department enquiring about it. That is what I am concerned about, Sir.

I am concerned about it because if those special needs existed before the rate increase, then certainly they have to exist after the rate increase. The rate increase, ten per cent, would only just take care of the increase in the cost of living for the past year and probably not even that, hardly that, to say the least. So the special needs that existed before certainly have to exist now.

Now the minister in reply to a few things I had to say earlier this evening mentioned that we should not mention individual cases, and I agree with him. But what I am talking about is the principle involved in this special needs. He talked about a man and his wife, one of them would be a pensioner, presumably the man for

MR. RIDEOUT:

arguments sake. Well the case in particular that I am talking about is the man, who is a pensioner, his wife, who is a social assistance recipient, and four children. They are actually ending up under this new programme receiving \$2.43 less than before the rate increase came about. In explaining it in the letter it is because of the change in policy related to special needs. Now I emphasize that, special needs.

Again I will tell the minister for his information, some of his officials tell me that they were very upset that this policy change came about at the particular time that there was an increase in rates, and some of them told me that the special needs was actually discontinued in January but it did not come up until those letters came out in April when the rate increase became effective. So I am concerned about that because, as I said to the minister, I know some cases where it has actually brought about a decrease in the amount received. I know of some other cases where it has not changed at all. They have not received an increase or a decrease. So they are no better off than they were before the rate increases came about.

MR. F. ROWE: Could we get an answer to that? I mean an explanation of some kind. You have your officials here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister of Social Services.

MR. BRETT: Mr. Chairman, I had hoped that my deputy could be here. I do not profess to have every single answer. I am not aware of any change in the special needs. I confess I am not, and I can only reiterate what I have said on two or three occasions today, that if there are special cases, that the hon. member bring them to my attention. If my deputy gets in before we finish with the estimates, if I can get an answer to this I will. But to the best of my knowledge there has been no change in the special needs. I am not aware of it. But if there is I will try to get it for you before we finish the estimates.

MR. F. ROWE: Mr. Chairman, I do not know if it is in order to hold 806-03-01 over or not, but I thought my colleague had brought up a legitimate question here, one that should be answered and explained.

MR. F. ROWE:

And if we could hold this particular subhead over until his officials arrive it will certainly be appreciated on this side of the House.

MR. NEARY: Pass it over and bring it up before the time is over.

MR. F. ROWE: Well, pass it over, right, and continue on with the rest of the subheads and when the official, the minister's deputy arrives we can get back to that particular subhead if it is in order.

I would like to request that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: By consent.

MR. ROWE: By consent.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Consent is given.

On motion 806-03-01 carried.

MR. ROWE: Your Honour, are we going to hold that over and go to the next subhead?

MR. BRETT: I am in complete agreement with it.

MR. ROWE: Or we can discuss it during the total, right?

MR. BRETT: Mr. Chairman, if I can get the information before we get through, I will gladly give it.

MR. ROWE: Thank you.

On motion 807-01 through to 807-03-02 carried.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shall 808-01 carry?

The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, 808-01, staff development. It has been reported to me in the last year or so, Sir, that the programme instituted in the department by the previous administration of granting \$400 bursaries to students to do social welfare courses at the University - it has been reported to me that the \$400 bursary is still being awarded to students, and the students are unable to find work with the minister's department. In other words, the bursary programme is continuing, but there is no guarantee now, as there used to be, that the -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: If I can get a little peace and quiet here, Sir, I might be able to hear myself talking.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

MR. NEARY: I am like the former Premier, you know, Mr. Chairman, I cannot listen to two conversations at the same time. That is one of my weaknesses. They are discussing their holiday in the sun, no doubt.

Mr. Chairman, it seems to me that the minister owes the House now an explanation over this bursary programme. Is it necessary now to continue granting the \$400 bursaries? Do we have a sufficient number of trained social workers? Are all the students, all the graduates of the university, are they now able to find jobs? with the minister's

Mr. Neary.

department? Sir, if we are just paying out the \$400 bursary to students to go over, punch in a year or two at the university and then come out and not be able to find employment with the minister's department, does the minister not think then that that is just a waste of the taxpayers' money? I have had students come to me in the last few months who have received the bursary of \$400 in the last year or two, who have not been able to find a job with the minister's department, who are now working at something completely different than what they were trained for. They just cannot get jobs, either summer employment, or part-time jobs, or full-time jobs with the minister's department. Have we reached a stage where it is now unnecessary to grant these \$400 bursaries? Can that money be put to better use in the minister's department? How many of these students have received bursaries in the last three years, say, who are not working for the minister's department, that there are no vacancies, no jobs in the minister's department? Why give the social welfare students, why give them the bursary, when the minister cannot guarantee him a job, either in the Summertime or on a permanent basis? Could the minister, I wonder, explain this programme and just what is happening in regard of the bursary programme? I think it is a very valid point.

MR. BRETT: Mr. Chairman, the hon. member's point is well taken. These are happenings that took place long before my coming to this department. But I understand from my Deputy Minister here that this incentive, or bursary of \$400, was given mainly to get people to come into university to train for positions in the Department of Welfare. That need has now decreased to the point where it is no longer necessary to give bursaries. We have a sufficient number of students coming into university taking social welfare courses. Therefore the need no longer exists.

MR. NEARY: Will there be any bursaries this year?

MR. BRETT: No, there will be no bursaries this year. There were none last year, none the year before. As far as I know everyone who did receive a bursary now has a job either with this department or some other Department of Welfare.

MR. NEARY: You are not aware of the unemployment problem?

MR. BRETT: Well, I am not aware of any at the moment. While I am on my feet, I do not know if I need the leave of the House or not, Mr. Chairman, but getting back to this special needs, I have an answer. I do not know if it is the one that you require. But I have been told that the special needs to -

MR. F. ROWE: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: A point of order.

MR. ROWE: Probably if the minister intends to get back on that subject we will be able to debate it back and forth at this particular point in the estimates, can we assume that? Or we can deal with it at the total. All I am saying is if the hon. minister has a comment now and my colleague wishes to reply, can he do so?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order!

MR. ROWE: I think it is just a procedural thing.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would suggest that we wait until the others are through. Then we would go back to 806-03-01.

MR. ROWE: Okay. That would probably be better.

On motion 808-01 through to 809-01 carried.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shall 809-02 carry? The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, 809-02, \$150,000.- could the minister give us a breakdown, tell the Committee how that \$156,000 is going to be spent this year for day care services?

MR. BRETT: Yes, Mr. Chairman, That amount is for Teach-a-Tot only, the day care service which we have here in St. John's.

MR. NEARY: One project only, Teach-a-Tot.

MR. BRETT: Right, yes, exactly.

MR. T. RIDEOUT: I wonder would the minister tell the House if any part of that \$156,000 has been cost shared with the Federal Government?

MR. BRETT: It is all being shared fifty per cent.

MR. RIDEOUT: Fifty/fifty.

MR. BRETT: Yes.

On motion 809-02 carried.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shall 809-03 carry?

The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, homemaker services, \$125,000 - how is that money going to be spent? What programmes are included in that \$125,000?

MR. BRETT: Yes, Mr. Chairman, as I outlined today on a couple of occasions, we are closing out the homemaker service as we had it here in St. John's and we are extending it across the Province. The breakdown is thus; the estimated cost of \$125,000 will permit the employment of twenty homemakers at a cost of \$6,000 each for a year. It is anticipated that these twenty homemakers will serve approximately eighty cases at any given time. As I outlined today in my formal speech at the beginning, we are extending this thing across the Province. The homemakers will be hired by the department and will be paid by the department, not as permanent civil servants but as part-time, sort of. This is the actual cost of the salary for twenty workers.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, could the minister pinpoint what parts of Newfoundland and Labrador these twenty homemakers will be employed to serve? I presume they will be working out of welfare offices. The minister must know by now what communities, what regions, what parts of the Province these homemakers will be working out of.

MR. BRETT: Mr. Chairman, there are no specific settlements or districts or areas. The service will be given as the need arises. If it is in the hon. member's district, we will give it there. If it happens to be in my district, it will be given there. We have no way of knowing who will require homemaker services now, say, in the next twelve months. But wherever the need arises it will be given.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, I am either naive or maybe I do not understand what the minister is trying to say. The minister is asking for \$125,000. Has the minister done any research at all in where the homemakers service is required? Is he just asking the House to give him a blank cheque for \$125,000, and just to take pot luck? Well if it pops up maybe six months from now you need somebody to do homemaker service in LaPoile district you will get one. I mean, who is the minister trying to cod? I mean the minister should know now if there is a need, and where the need is and where these people are going to be? What areas they are going to be employed to serve or are they going to be working out of the welfare offices? Will they get mileage for their cars? The minister mentioned a salary of \$6,000; will they be paid their expenses? You know, give us a few more details. There is \$125,000 just stuck in the estimates and the minister cannot give us any details. It is a poor way to come into the House, completely unprepared.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Just ask him.

MR. NEARY: I asked the minister once already.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: You asked him. He gave you some, and you want more.

MR. NEARY: Yes that is right. Ah, button your lip!

MR. BRETT: Mr. Chairman, I think I can answer that. Mr. Chairman, we did not get into this business yesterday or this morning. The hon. member was involved in this a long time ago.

MR. NEARY: That is right. I know it.

MR. BRETT: And certainly we must have learned something over the last twenty-five years since Confederation. We have some idea of what or how much homemaker services will be necessary, but I cannot tell, the hon. member cannot tell, and neither can anybody else in this Chamber, tell me or anybody else what or how much or what have you, homemaker services are going to be need in the next twelve months. There is no way that anybody can estimate the exact figure. If you want to you can say it is a good guesstimate.

MR. BRETT: Perhaps it is. But there is nobody qualified to give you an exact figure. I do not know how many women in Trinity North are going to be hospitalized and will need someone to go in to care for the children in the next twelve months. I do not know how many women in LaPoile are going to have to go into hospital in the next twelve months and need homemaker services. There is no way. You would want a team of researchers to fill this building to come up with figures like that, and the hon. member knows it because he was involved in it. But as I said, we did not get involved in this yesterday. We have been involved in this for the past twenty-five years, and we do have some idea and that is the best figure that we can give this House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, it would seem to me, Sir, that the minister has absolutely no idea of what a homemaker service is all about, none whatsoever. And the little butterflies from Ottawa can pound their desks all they like and be as snarky as they like.

Mr. Chairman, the homemaker service is based on individual need. The minister made a statement a few minutes ago that twenty people were going to be employed in different parts of the Province at a salary of \$6,000 each, and that is what threw me for a loop because you hire homemakers as you need them on an individual basis. And I merely put a question to the minister to tell the House, to tell the committee to what areas of Newfoundland these twenty men or women were going to be assigned and what areas they would be servicing, because the minister made the statement, I did not. Maybe it may end up the end of the year the \$125,000 may not be spent at all. It may end up that the minister may have to hire three or four homemakers in one district of Newfoundland.

AN HON. MEMBER: You are wrong.

MR. NEARY: No, I am right, absolutely right. It could happen. The minister said that he was going to hire twenty new people scattered

MR. NEARY: all over Newfoundland at \$6,000. Now I want to know where they are going to be? Or are they just going to be hired as they are needed?

AN HON. MEMBER: As needed.

MR. NEARY: Well that is what I said. That was the way it used to be.

MR. BRETT: Where they are needed.

MR. NEARY: No that is not what the minister said. The minister said in his original statement, "We are going to spread our programme right across the Province. We are going to hire on twenty new staff at \$6,000 a year." Then I asked the minister if he could tell us to what parts of Newfoundland this staff would be assigned? Because I do not think the minister knows what it is all about.

MR. BRETT: Mr. Chairman, I would like to assure the hon.

MR. BRETT:

member that I do know what it is all about. The answer to his question is that we will hire them where needed, when needed.

MR. NEARY: Oh well now, that is better.

AN HON. MEMBER: That is what he said.

MR. NEARY: No! That is not what he said.

On motion subhead 809-03 carried.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Does 806-03-01 carry?

MR. F. ROWE: On 806-03-01, I believe, Mr. Chairman, the minister was going to reply to a question put to him by my colleague from Baie Verte-White Bay (Mr. Rideout), 806-03-01, page 47, special needs.

MR. BRETT: I have to confess to the House that I am not as versed, probably, in this as I should be, but the information that I have been given is that special needs to old age recipients was phased out in consultation with the federal Department of Health and Welfare more than a year ago, I would assume on the basis that they would not cost-share it. However the payments were not stopped suddenly. They were phased out as old age security was increased. I understand that there are very few cases now receiving any special needs at all, and there is no provision for special needs in the social assistance programme at this time. But special needs to old age security benefits was phased out in consultation with the federal government. They agreed and they said that they would not cost-share it so the thing was phased out.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Baie Verte-White Bay.

MR. RIDEOUT: Well, then maybe I could ask the member a question. If it began to be phased out more than a year ago, I do not completely understand how come it could turn up in letters written by his department in April. That I do not understand. Also if it was phased out sometime ago because of raises in old age security, then how can we justify taking the current raises from old age security for people who receive social assistance also? How can we justify doing both?

We have taken special needs away from them because they got a raise in old age security. Now when they get a raise in old age

MR. RIDEOUT:

security, we also take away part of their social assistance. How can we justify both those things?

MR. BRETT: In all fairness, Mr. Chairman, this thing was being phased out over the past couple of years and it is conceivable that people could, a few people - and I think if you go across the Province from Port aux Basques to St. John's you will find out that a few people may have received letters to this effect at the same time that the increase was brought in. But I do not think it is province-wide. I do not think that everybody received a letter at the same time that the increase was brought in. What I am saying is that, you know, there were probably a few phased out at the same time, sort of coincided with the increase and it probably looked as if this department was trying in some obscure way to stop from paying the ten per cent. But this is not so.

MR. RIDEOUT: Mr. Chairman, what about the second part of the few remarks I made? I understand now what the minister is talking about, phasing that out, I understand it and I thank him for the information. What about the situation I just mentioned a moment ago where we have taken special needs away from those old age assistant recipients and we are also taking away from them any increase that they get in the old age security allowance? So we are taking away twice.

MR. BRETT: Mr. Chairman, I do not want to have to go through that whole thing again. We have spent far more time on my estimates than anybody thought we would. But I explained that very fully this afternoon.

MR. RIDEOUT: It will be over now soon gentlemen.

MR. BRETT: I pointed out, Mr. Chairman, that two people qualified for x number of dollars, and if they are receiving this amount from some other government source then they cannot qualify through my department, and as far as I know this is what you are saying now, that two people in receipt of old age security, social assistance or both or what have you, if they are getting the maximum amount from some other source that they would qualify for from this department, then they do not get any money from this department.

MP. RIDEOUT: One other question, Mr. Chairman. The special needs has been taken away from the recipients of old age security, as I understand it. Were the special needs taken away from any other recipients of social assistance or are they still receiving special needs, other categories I mean?

MT. BRETT: No, Mr. Chairman. To the best of my knowledge there was no one else getting it. These were the only group of people who were getting it.

MP. RIDEOUT: Well that comes back to the point, then, if the letter that was written by the Social Services Department to the people saying that at the same time we increased the rates ten per cent we made a change in the policy whereby we

Mr. Rideout.

deducted that rate increase from the amount of special needs. So that means then that all the people on social assistance in this Province, who are entitled to special needs, have in fact received some sort of a deduction and, therefore, did not get the full ten per cent raise.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The hon. member for Trinity - Bay de Verde.

MR. ROWE: I must say I do not know what has transpired here.

The hon. Minister of Social Services was paid a few compliments by the member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) this afternoon, and the compliments must have gone through his head or something or another.

But his performance -

MR. BRETT: Do not get nasty now.

MR. ROWE: Well, if you want me to get nasty I will really give the hon. minister the gears.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

MR. ROWE: Do you want a drum or a bugle to make the noise, boy, or what?

Now, Mr. Chairman, am I going to be accorded the same courtesy as we accorded hon. gentlemen opposite or are we not?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

MR. MORGAN: Who are you referring to, 'the guy'? Tell us.

MR. MURPHY: What is the story? I would like to know.

MR. ROWE: Mr. Chairman, if the hon. Minister of Transportation and Communications had as much money for pavement as he has lip he could twin the Trans-Canada Highway overnight. Now if I can be permitted to carry on with a question: My colleague from Baie Verte - White Bay (Mr. Rideout) has asked a number of questions with respect to special needs that I must admit that I am not completely conversant upon myself. I cannot understand the answers that have been forthcoming from the minister.

MR. BRETT: Try again.

MR. ROWE: Yes, right. But the minister, Mr. Chairman, has gotten on with such language, you know, "to the best of my knowledge, I think that a few might have received some letters somewhere along the way." Now that is a pretty obscure and remote or nebulous kind of answer.

MR. BRETT: I do not read every letter that goes out of my department.

MR. ROWE: The hon. Minister of Social Services is responsible for everything and anything that comes from his department. And he also has assistants, his deputy minister at the present time. Now if the minister does not know the answer to the question let him confess it, but do not try to wiggle and weasel out of it by saying, "to the best of my knowledge I think that a few might have gone out to some people, maybe over a certain point in time." You know, this is all I am asking the minister. If the hon. minister does not know the answer to the question, let him admit it. But do not get himself into deep water or quicksand by trying to weasel himself out of the question. Now if the minister says he can give it another try, by all means. But the minister also said that the number of people - is it? - who require these special needs has dropped significantly. Probably a legitimate question would be, how many people are in that category?

AN HON. MEMBER: Social assistance.

MR. ROWE: Yes, social security

AN HON. MEMBER: Social security.

MR. ROWE: How many people are in that category now as compared to a year or two ago? And let us not have this, 'I think,' and to the best of my knowledge, 'a few might have' and this kind of a thing. Because needless to say, you know, it does not reflect well on himself nor his department. So I simply ask for a clarification on the nonanswers that we have received.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister of Social Services.

MR. BRETT: Mr. Chairman, I will have another go at it seeing

Mr. Brett.

that the hon. member cannot seem to understand what I am saying. And I confess to the hon. member that I was not fully aware of the answer to the question when it was put to me, and I said that. Now I think I might have it now. Now I do not profess to know every single, solitary thing that goes on in my department.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BRETT: And I do not sign every single, solitary letter. I do not - one, two, three, four, five every day. Do not be so ridiculous!

MR. ROWE: Is the minister responsible for his department?

MR. BRETT: Just a minute. I am not finished. You will get your turn.

Special needs were an allowance for spouses of old age security who were themselves not sixty-five. Do you understand that?

MR. ROWE: Yes, sixty-five. I can count that high.

MR. BRETT: It has since been decided in consultation and agreement with the federal government that we would do away with the spouses allowance. The federal government refused to cost-share, so the allowance has been done away with. Now, I cannot make it any plainer than that, Mr. Chairman.

MR. ROWE: So it is the federal government's fault, is it?

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Chairman, if my memory serves me correctly, Sir, that was a forty dollar allowance that was granted to the spouse of old age pensioners who did not qualify for the old age pension, forty dollars, granted by the former administration. It was a Liberal policy.

MR. BRETT: Right on.

MR. NEARY: And it did not have to be done with prior consultation with the Government of Canada, did not have to be.

MR. BRETT: You are wrong.

MR. NEARY: I am right, Sir.

AN HON. MEMBER: Had to get it cost-shared.

MR. NEARY: It had to be done with prior consultation if we wanted it to be cost-shared.

MR. BRETT: That is right.

MR. NEARY: But that does not necessarily mean that we had to have consultation with the Government of Canada to continue that policy. This government could have continued it on its own.

MR. BRETT: That is right.

MR. NEARY: But this government elected, decided - I do not know who took the initiative - the minister says the Government of Canada refused to continue to participate in the programme that had been initiated, I believe, in 1970 or 1971. I do not know if that is correct or not. I can only take the minister's word for it. If this government wanted to it could have continued to give special assistance to the old age pensioners in this Province. But the government here, this government - do not try to pawn it off on the Government of Canada - this government decided to discontinue the programme, to phase out the programme, and they phased it out when the Government of Canada granted assistance to spouses of old age pensioners at age sixty. That is what happened, if the minister would just think about it and get up and admit it.

MR. NEARY:

When a spouse of an old age pensioner reached the age of sixty then the minister found an excuse to save a few dollars and so the Province phased out the programme. And that is what happened.

MR. MURPHY: Would the hon. member permit just one question. Was the old age pension indexed at that time that brought in the forty dollars?

MR. NEARY: The old age pension, was it indexed at that time?

Let me see.

MR. MURPHY: It was checked right across the board.

MR. NEARY: I am not quite sure but I believe it was.

MR. MURPHY: Right next to the cost of living.

MR. NEARY: I believe it was, because later, if the minister's deputy will remember, the forty dollars was not forty dollars at all. The forty dollars then they started to scale it down. I was the one who set the policy, forty dollars straight across the board, no strings attached, cost-shared by the Government of Canada. But when they indexed the old age pension then this administration started to reduce the forty dollars. Every time the old age pensioner got an increase in his old age pension the forty dollars was reduced by whatever the amount of the increase was. But that did not happen in my time.

MR. MURPHY: No, because it was not indexed. It remained at the \$140 a month, whatever it was.

MR. NEARY: That is right. Well, it was forty dollars.

MR. MURPHY: That is fair now.

MR. NEARY: When I left the department it was forty dollars.

MR. MURPHY: No, I am not talking about the forty. I am talking about the old age pension. It was not indexed at that time to the cost of living. When it did start to go up, the forty dollars came down and still maintained the same amount of money.

MR. NEARY: Well, of course, which in actual fact was gypping the old age pensioner.

MR. MURPHY: It was not gypping anybody.

MR. NEARY: They got it from the Government of Canada and the Province took it away from them.

MR. MURPHY: It was not a legal debt, so you are not gypping anybody.

MR. NEARY: It was, Sir. It was gypping the old age pensioner.

MR. MURPHY: Oh, come on, come on!

MR. NEARY: We have had that argument in the House before and I would say it was the Government of Canada, the Liberal government up in Ottawa, who was passing it out in one hand and this crowd down here were taking it back with the other. The same thing happened to the social assistance programme.

MR. BRETT: That is a policy we followed from your administration.

MR. NEARY: No, Sir, it is not a policy that was followed from my administration.

MR. BRETT: Come on now. Tell the truth.

MR. NEARY: I laid down the law, as the gentleman who is sitting next to the minister will remember, forty dollars straight across the board. I had an awful job to get it through cabinet at the time because of a couple of my colleagues who felt that all welfare recipients should be taken down in the harbour and drowned, or they should be taken out and shot, or they are all lazy good-for-nothings. But I managed to get it through and it was forty dollars with no strings attached. That is the programme now that the government has done away with. They did away with the mother's allowance, they did away with the special programme for old age pensioners. They added the family allowance to the income of social assistance recipients to make it look good, to try to make the Province look good when in actual fact it was Ottawa who was providing all this money. So there are three programmes that I know of.

MR. MURPHY: Ottawa ruled on three and you did not get them.

MR. NEARY: Ottawa did not rule on three. Ottawa will only rule when the Province takes the initiative. I

MR. NEARY: would submit in this case it was probably the provincial government here who wanted to phase out the programme and get rid of that \$40 special care for old age pensioners. As far as I am concerned they should be still getting it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Baie Verte - White Bay.

MR. RIDEOUT: I would just like to say a couple of more words on this before it passes. I want to say now, and I want to say it most sincerely, that I think it is very sad that this government has seen fit to follow the policy that has been explained here by the minister in the questioning we have asked him this evening and tonight.

We are not only talking about old age pensioners, Sir. We are also talking about people who were fortunate or unfortunate, whichever way you want to look at it, in their twilight years to marry and have families. A man seventy-seven years old who marries and has a young wife and four or five kids now ends up receiving less income through old age security or pension, whatever you call it, through social assistance than he was receiving before the rate increases.

AN HON. MEMBER: Tommy rot!

MR. RIDEOUT: Pardon? I do not know what I am talking about? I hope that is not what was said, when it is in very, very close to me. I think it is very, very sad that the government has seen fit to carry on that policy. I often wondered how come old age recipients - where one person was an old age recipient and the rest were on social services, I have often wondered how come when the pensions were indexed this other little cheque that they were getting fell. Now I can understand it. Not only has it fallen and will continue to fall, I suppose, as the other one goes up, but the special needs of \$40 has been taken away completely, altogether.

So the point I have been trying to make then is that they have been hit twice with the same rod, those older people

MR. RIDEOUT: what happened to have young families and trying to keep those young families in school and whatever else. I think it is very sad that this government has been fit to do that, and if nothing else happens I implore the minister to please reconsider. There is not one family, there are dozens and probably hundreds, and probably more than that in this Province who are found in that category. Please reconsider, for the sake of human decency, reconsider what you are doing in this case.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister of Provincial Affairs and Environment.

MR. MURPHY: Mr. Chairman, I had not planned to say anything on this thing but when I listened to "in the name of human decency, and in the name of this"- I am horrified.

MR. ROWE: Oh my!

MR. RIDEOUT: You get out and look at a seventy-seven year old father and you will be horrified.

MR. MURPHY: A complete lack of knowledge of speaking.

AN HON. MEMBER: Your are not in your seat.

MR. MURPHY: I cannot, unless I sit on the Deputy Minister's knees. Do you want me to do that? I will do it, look, and I will be in my own seat. Is that all right with the House or do I sit here?

AN HON. MEMBER: Completely irrelevant.

MR. MURPHY: Is it all right? Okay. I need unanimous consent to -

SOME HON. MEMBER: Oh, oh!

MR. MURPHY: As a minister of that department for two and a half years, I might criticize this government, the administration that I am in, perhaps for many things, but if there is one thing they have done is shown regard for the people of this Province.

MR. SMALLWOOD: A point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: A point of order.

MR. SMALLWOOD: My dear friend and old time friend and opponent in the House will not mind, it is nothing personal, Let us keep the rules. The rule says the member speaks from his own seat.

MR. MURPHY: Okay. No sweat. This could be the downfall of the government because I did not speak from my own seat.

MR. SMALLWOOD: No. No. The government will not fall -

MR. MURPHY: How wonderful it is.

MR. SMALLWOOD: The government will not fall on this.

MR. MURPHY: How wonderful it is.

MR. SMALLWOOD: No. No. I am still on this -

MR. MURPHY: Is there a point of order or something?

MR. SMALLWOOD: Yes.

MR. MURPHY: All right. Is the point of order acknowledged?

MR. SMALLWOOD: If the hon. minister will allow me, yes, I am on this point of order.

MR. MURPHY: Yes, okay. I am sat in my own seat.

MR. SMALLWOOD: The point of order includes the fact, Your Honour, that the practice in every Parliament under the Union Jack and now also the Maple Leaf Flag, in every parliament when ministers are permitted by the House to have their technical or clerical assistants, especially their deputies, and sometimes ministers will have three or four specialists in their department in order to assist them with information, when that happens, never have they been known in history to occupy seats of the members. They always sit in front. A special table is put in place and the deputy sits there in front of the minister. No minister, especially a big department such as welfare or whatever it is called, can possibly carry in his own head all the thousands and thousands of facts, and even with his deputy he cannot possibly do it but it would be greatly helped.

So if the minister wishes to speak, let him speak from his own place. And if the other minister wishes to have the assistance and the advice and the knowledge of his deputy, let the deputy sit where deputies always sit in parliamentary bodies in the British system, which is out in front of the member, not occupying the seat of a member, because the deputies were not elected to this House and they are in here by courtesy of the House, and we are delighted to have them and they are respected highly but their place is not in a member's seat. Their place is in front.

MR. MURPHY: Mr. Chairman, if I may.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister of Provincial Affairs.

MR. MURPHY: Mr. Chairman, I just heard the hon. member tell about someone sitting out there. I have been in this House since 1962 and there has not been one, not one, not a half one, not a quarter, sat anywhere but along side the minister. Where do we get these great parliamentary traditions and everything else? Where do we get this stuff? They are talking about us only allowing seventy-five hours, and then we listen with all due respect to the hon. and venerable gentleman. Never seen it before! Is there anybody who sat in this House in any other session saw any deputy minister sit out here anywhere? Did the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) see anybody? Come on, let us have it! Only next to the minister. Ah, silence!

All I was going to say was just a few short words on all this, people being horrified, at this government what they are doing to the poor people. We came in here in 1971, this government. There was one thing we looked at. That was the human element of this, the people who needed help most. We went back over the records, 1969, 1970, 1971 and the hon. minister is here, the Minister of Tourism now, who himself was a long-time welfare minister. In that three years seven and a half per cent. Am I right, seven and a half per cent was granted.

MR. NEARY: A point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: A point of order.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, my understanding, Sir, when you are in Committee of the Whole on estimates is that on the minister's salary you can have a wide-ranging debate, a sort of a general debate. But the question that was put to the minister that held over, I think it was 03-01, was in connection with special allowances to old age pensioners, spouses of old age pensioners. That is the matter that the minister is dealing with.

MR. MURPHY: That is wide open.

MR. NEARY: No, Sir, that is not wide open. The minister is now -

MR. MURPHY: In other words I am not relevant, ah.

MR. NEARY: The minister is irrelevant -

MR. MURPHY: If anybody moves I am not relevant I think I will go home and watch the hockey again.

MR. NEARY: The minister is entering into a general debate.

MR. MURPHY: - after what I heard here today, I will tell you that! Sweet relevancy!

MR. NEARY: The minister is entering into a general debate,

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

MR. MURPHY: God help us all! 'Steve' sit down, will you?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I will have to say that I cannot recognize the hon. member for LaPoile's point of order because there is already a point of order before the Chair which has not been disposed of. As I understand it, the point of order relates to where the technical staff may sit in the House, whether or not they can occupy -

MR. SMALLWOOD: No, Your Honour. When an hon. member of the House may speak from.

MR. LINDRIGAN: Mr. Chairman, on that point of order. First of all I think it was bit discourteous, some of the remarks regarding the deputy minister. In my case, for example, it is impossible for anyone assisting me to sit in front of me unless they sit in the chair of the hon. the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Secondly, I would like Your Honour in giving your ruling, Your Honour, about the position of the speaker who just started his remarks three feet from his own seat, whether in fact it is not tradition in the British parliamentary system, in the Committee, not in the House but in the Committee, to be able to speak from any seat in the House?

MR. NEARY: No.

MR. LINDRIGAN: Well, I just wondered because I have done it so frequently in another place without any interruption. Not in the chamber in the House when it was a regular sitting of the House, but in Committee in formality permitted that type of -

MR. NEARY: No wonder you are so unruly in this House, you formed your habits in Ottawa.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: - that type of participation. I remember one time speaking from the seat of the Leader of the Opposition on western agriculture. It was late in the evening, I do not mind admitting. But certainly I always assumed that the informality of the Committee -

MR. NEARY: That is why you are permitted to do what you like anyway.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: - would permit that type of participation. The hon. member is a little bit annoyed because he was put down earlier this evening. He was pointed out as being incorrect and he got nailed a little once or twice on the fingers. He got tapped on the fingers -

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

MR. LUNDRIGAN: - and he cannot take it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

I feel I should now rule on the point of order unless there are further comments forthcoming.

The hon. member for Trinity-Bay de Verde.

MR. F. POWE: Mr. Chairman, I do not wish to prolong this, but I am just trying to search through Standing Orders here and I cannot seem to find and give you the citation. But it clearly states there somewhere in the Standing Orders that a member can only speak from his place in the House of Assembly, his own seat. That is clearly stated, and the Standing Orders take precedence over Beauchesne on this sort of a thing.

Now I do not think we should be allowed to have ourselves get mixed up as to the seating arrangements for deputy ministers or assistance deputy ministers or any staff of any particular department. I think we could get carried away on that one. I think we should focus in on only one thing, that is, where a member speaks from. It clearly states in the Standing Orders he speaks from his seat. So that is the simple solution. Unfortunately I cannot locate it here in the Standing Orders.

MR. NEARY:

Your Honour, I am inclined to agree with the last speaker that under the Standing Rules of this House in order for a member to address the House, to speak in the House, he has to address the House from his own seat. Now if it so happens that the situation develops that happened here a few moments ago, that the deputy minister is sitting in a member's seat, then the member, if he wants to speak, would say to the deputy, "Would you mind just moving over to another seat for a moment? I want to have a few words on this particular item." That is not the first time that has been done, Sir.

MR. MURPHY: It was never done! Never done!

MR. NEARY: Oh, Mr. Chairman, what usually happens is this, Mr. Chairman, that when a minister feels incompetent and unsure of himself, and he wants to bring his support staff into the House -

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

I do not think the hon. member for LaPoile's (Mr. Neary) comments are directed to the point of order at issue.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, what I am saying is that when a minister wants to bring his deputy into the House, he will usually ask his seating partner if he would give up his seat for his deputy or his assistant deputy. And the member usually would agree. But then if that member wants to come back and speak, he would ask the deputy to just move aside for a moment so he could get up and speak to the House. So a member has to speak from his own seat, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

The relevance rule is Standing Order 47 which states: "Every member desiring to speak is to rise in his place," so I think that disposes of that aspect of the point of order.

MR. NEARY: And uncovered, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Pardon? Uncovered. I did not read the complete order, but I read the part that was relevant to the point of order I felt.

On the second aspect of the point of order, as to where the technical staff may sit in the House - I believe that was part of the point of order? Of my own knowledge, of course, I have no idea what the

Mr. Neary.

precedents were. But I am informed by the staff at the table that in the past technical staff did sit in members' seats for temporary periods. All I can go on is the advice that I have been given.

MR. MURPHY: They sat in front, out in the front, the member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) said.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shall 806-03-01 carry?

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, I am raising a point of order in connection with the speech that was being made by the hon. member for St. Johns' Centre (Mr. Murphy).-

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is this a point of order?

MR. NEARY: Yes, it is a point of order, Sir.

- the Minister of Provincial Affairs and Environment.

The minister had entered into a very wide-ranging debate, and to my knowledge, Sir, this could only be done on the minister's salary, and the minister sat on his right and did not take advantage of the situation to address the House, to make general remarks and comments on the minister's salary, and in my opinion, Sir, he has no right to do it now. The Minister of Social Services is answering a specific question put to him by the member for Baie Verte - White Bay (Mr. Rideout). So I think the minister should be compelled to confine himself to that special assistance for old age pensioners.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shall 806-03-01 carry?

MR. NEARY: What about the point of order, Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

MR. NEARY: Are you not going to rule on the point of order?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

The point of order relates to curbing the remarks of the hon. Minister of Provincial Affairs and Environment. The hon. Minister of Provincial Affairs no longer has taken the floor so the Chair is not in a position to curb his remarks.

On motion 806-03-01 through to 806-03-03 carried.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shall I report Heading VIII - Social Services without amendment?

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, the Minister of Social Services, Sir, before the House rose at six o'clock, promised to get the Committee some information in connection with a transportation service for people on social assistance between Bell Island and St. John's. The minister has not yet provided the Committee with that information.

Mr. Brett: I do not know, Mr. Chairman, if I require the leave of the House or not, but the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) is correct that I did -

MR. CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. minister have leave of the House?

MR. MURPHY: No! Not if it is carried, no! No leave!

MR. BRETT: Wait now! Come on now!

MR. MURPHY: Go on, boy! Carried!

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. minister, I understand, does not have the leave of the House to continue.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. Your Honour the question was put to the minister under the appropriate heading, Sir. And the Committee agreed that when we got down to the total for the department that the minister would provide the House with the information.

MRS. H. MCISAAC: That is right.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WELLS: On that point of order, Mr. Chairman. I distinctly heard the minister say that he would prefer, or that he wanted to make a reply to this. And it was suggested to him at the time I think somebody said that he could do it under the appropriate heading.

MR. SMALLWOOD: On the wind-up.

MR. WELLS: Yes on the wind-up. So I think it proper that he be permitted to do so.

MR. DOODY: I agree, that he should but in the House not in Committee.

MR. WELLS: In fact the minister expressly said that he would yield at the time if he could do this at a later stage. I think he ought to be given that courtesy.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is it the consent of the House that the hon. minister be given leave to make a further explanation?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed!

MR. CHAIRMAN: Agreed.

MR. BRETT: Mr. Chairman, earlier this afternoon the member for LaPoile questioned me as to why we discontinued the special ambulance

Mr. Brett:

service on Bell Island. It was a contract service. The name of the contractor is not important, I do not have it here. But a decision was made by my department, confirmed by me, that we would discontinue this special contract, this special ambulance service. As I said, this was brought in long before my time. I do not know why. I assume that there was no ambulance service from Bell Island at the time. Anyway the cost to government last year was in the vicinity of \$16,000. And this department questioned the need to continue this special ambulance service being contracted for the island. We realized that there was no special service for Fogo Island and other places in the Province that are similar. We realize that there is now a regular means of transportation from Bell Island to the city, and in view of this it was felt that there was no real need.

Under the contract the average cost per person was in the vicinity of \$25, that is \$25 per person, and the regular means of transportation would cost \$6 per person. Now we asked ourselves the question, should the people of Bell Island receive special treatment? And we contend no. We say that the people of Bell Island are entitled to the exact same service as everybody else in this Province. And that is exactly what we did, and really we see nothing wrong with it.

The service in itself was fair, but nothing really to write home about. The hon. member from LaPoile mentioned this afternoon that people are now brought over from Bell Island, and, as he puts it, dumped off at the General Hospital or St. Clare's or somewhere else, and left to get from there to some other clinic as best they might. Well, it is the policy of this department not to pay transportation within city limits, and this applies to every single person in the Province. And again I answer the hon. member's question by posing to him a question; what is the difference in someone travelling from Bonavista or Clarendville by Clarendville Transportation System, which is a bus, from out in Bonavista Bay or Trinity Bay to St.

April 27, 1976

Tape 2206

PK - 3

Mr. Brett:

John's and to be let off at a bus stop and have to get to the General or the Grace or any clinic, what is the difference in that than someone from Bell Island being brought over and dropped at the General and having to get to a clinic?

MR. BRETT: Why do you want special service for the people of Bell Island?

MR. NEARY: Ask you colleague, he was -

MR. BRETT: My colleague did not ask me. You did, the hon. member. But they, as I said, they are entitled to the exact same treatment as everybody else in the Province and we feel that that is what they are getting. The cost was exorbitant, \$25 per person as compared to \$6. I do not believe any government is justified in carrying out the policy like that.

MR. DOODY: Mr. Chairman, with just about two minutes, it will not take all that long.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! Order, please! It is my understanding that the hon. Minister of Social Services has been given leave -

MR. NEARY: By leave.

MR. DOODY: Let the record show that the member for Bell Island stood up.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is the hon. Minister of Finance given permission by leave.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: By leave.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister of Finance.

MR. DOODY: It will only take one or two minutes. One of the darts that my hon. friend from LaPoile (Mr. Neary) threw across the floor, the minister said that he had not heard from the member for Harbour Main - Bell Island on that particular aspect, that he had gotten the message from the ex-member for Bell Island and now member for LaPoile. I do not think that that is what the minister really meant, because we have had long discussions and consultations and there is considerable correspondence in the area.

The situation as it now stands is that the department has agreed, and I think reasonably so, to look at the present system and see if it works, to see if there is really a need for an exception for Bell Island. If there is they will get back to it and re-examine it.

MR. DOODY: They have considered the protests that I have made on behalf of the district and are quite willing to give it a chance to gell and see if there is a need for a special circumstances situation.

I find it very difficult myself to say that there is a special circumstances situation. Maybe there is. We have had some complaints from people on the Island. The hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) says that he would like to see them tabled. I do not think that is necessary. I think that he and I, or he and the minister, can get together and look at the documentation on that and that should prove to his satisfaction whether or not the facts are there.

MR. NEARY: Can I see them tomorrow?

MR. DOODY: In my office, sure. And, you know, we can see. He knows the area better than I, and I am very grateful to him for having filed from the area in anticipation of my arrival, but nevertheless I am quite pleased at all times and welcome his advice.

MR. NEARY: Be careful, or I will go over there and do your work for you.

MR. DOODY: That is right. I am doing all the work now and you are getting all the credit. But nevertheless I do feel that the people on Bell Island have been used to this unusual service. I think that the department does have the right to give it a test to see that the new system is not at least as good or perhaps better than the old system, and maybe during the next few months the department will have a chance to assess it. I could not let the thing pass without making a comment, Mr. Chairman, and I really feel that there is some justice in saying that Bell Island is an unusual situation and it is an unusual set of circumstances. The people over there have been so used to being battered, so used to being beaten, and so used to be pounded that they are finally getting to the boiling point now, even in terms of the new ferry rates which the Liberal Government in Ottawa have seen fit to impose

MR. DOODY: on them.

I wonder at their resilience and resistance to this sort of thing. So let us give it a few months and see if the thing works out, if it does not we can have another look at it. In the meantime the documents are available for the hon. ex-member who now resides on the West Coast. But certainly if it is necessary it will be looked at again, and I think the minister will go along with that.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Very reasonable outlook.

On motion Head VIII without amendment, carried.

HEADING VI - EDUCATION, 601-01

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister of Education.

MR. HOUSE: Mr. Chairman, in introducing the estimates for the Department of Education, I think we have to look basically at our aims and objectives, and if we had to go through them, of course, we would have to read the document that has been in Newfoundland and amended just about every year since it came into existence. So basically speaking I just want to say that we aim in education to develop all people regardless of their ability to the best of that ability right through to their trade and professional training.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HOUSE: And I say people there because education in this Province now is not exclusively for young people. We have it for older people as well, and we have a division of continuing education and we have people today in university, for instance, who are in excess of eighty years of age. I believe that is a fact. There are some people taking these kinds of programmes.

MR. WEARY: More than one?

MR. HOUSE: I believe there is more than one. I am not sure of that. But we have people of all ages getting an education.

The estimates will indicate, I think, that we are achieving our objectives of educating all the people, and while we agree that our aims, of course, cannot be met except by degrees, there is constant improvement being made each year. And I believe such can and will be documented as the estimates unfold, and as most people have something to say about them. One of the big things about education, of course, is the cost, number one, and, number two, is the fact that everybody knows something about it. Everybody

Mr. House.

has gone through an education programme and they know something about it.

MR. SMALLWOOD: The fishery, everybody knows all about the fishery.

MR. HOUSE: All never went fishing but they all knew about education.

In the presentation, Mr. Chairman, of the estimates it will be seen that our operation costs this year have gone up by about 15 per cent over last year, and it will also indicate that our capital costs are down. And, of course, that is shown to be down by virtue of the fact that a lot of the DREE projects that were in effect over the last number of years have been completed. Most of these DREE funds, of course, were coming from another level of government.

In preparing the estimates and getting our department's estimates ready we were cognizant of a number of things. One was the fact that we are in a restraint programme, and another, of course, is the fact that we are in an era of high inflation, and high costs. But the reason why we had to take so much time, and it did take a lot of time, and a lot of soul searching, is the fact that while we are in a restraint period, we did not want to see the quality of education lessened.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HOUSE: Because, you know, that is something we cannot have happen, and the fact that it is gone up by 15 per cent, by virtue of the fact the operations have gone by 15 per cent showed that we were not exceptionally extravagant. Now one of the things, Mr. Chairman, over the years - and this is my first year in the House of Assembly and first time hearing, of course, debates on current issues such as education or many other issues -

Mr. House:

but I have also been involved with the Council of Ministers across Canada, the Ministers of Education. And right across the Dominion of Canada education is one of the departments that is taking a lot of flack from the public because, of course, of its costs. And as its cost and scope increases there will be more public criticism evolve and of course there will be more and greater demands for accountability.

One of the things I think we have got to realize and recognize is the fact that education is just like food, gasoline, motor cars, and everything else-it costs. And when we are paying 8,000 or 9,000 professional salaries, nobody expects to get that for a song, and hence most of our costs in education today are costs in manpower.

I want to mention here also, Mr. Chairman, that I would like for people, and this House, the hon. members of this House, perhaps to recognize education as being not something that is remedial such as health care, or welfare or road maintenance, education is something that is a part of living, it is a part of becoming, and most pupils-or most people go through one-quarter of their life or their working time in getting an education.

Now to take a look at education in Newfoundland as it relates to Canada and the world, I want to give an over-view of a situation. We are part of a programme in Canada called the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. I want to mention this because I want to show something of the problems we are facing in education in Newfoundland and in Canada. The OECD that I just mentioned have been doing a study of education throughout the world, and as I said we are a member group of that study or organization. And Canada is the country in the world where the largest percentage of its total population are receiving an education at the expense of the Treasury. In Canada there is 30.9 per cent of people engaged in full-time educational activities at one time. And the second country

Mr. House:

running up to that is the United States, which is just behind by about one percentage point. Why I am mentioning this is that is a pretty high rate of people to be not employed in turning money into the Treasury, and at the same time getting an education at the expense of the Treasury.

And if we look at the Newfoundland situation and take our people involved in day school education, and the people involved in university, trade schools and adult education, and these are prorated back to equivalents, you will find that about 32 per cent of our Newfoundland population are receiving an education at the expense of the Treasury. And that for what we call a have-not Province is a pretty high rate and a pretty demanding rate particularly when we think in terms of the fact that we are paying pretty fair bursaries to students going to colleges and universities. I just want to point that out because 32 per cent of our population is a big percentage.

One other thing -

MR. SMALLWOOD: Does the hon. minister mean that those who are going to school constitute in the aggregate 32 per cent of the entire population?

MR. HOUSE: Yes.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Of course that is another way of putting the same thing, is it not?

MR. HOUSE: Yes. Getting monies -

MR. SMALLWOOD: Getting public money.

MR. HOUSE: - being paid for by the Treasury. The cost of teachers -

MR. SMALLWOOD: Could the minister say how that percentage compares with some other provinces?

MR. HOUSE: In Canada it is 30.9 per cent, I do not know the other provincial averages. But in Canada all over

MR. HOUSE:

It is thirty point nine per cent.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Thirty one per cent compared with thirty-two.

MR. HOUSE: Yes. I think we are higher than any other province in Canada.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Would the minister again allow me? Would that be because in a large part of the rest of Canada a lot of the education that people get is not paid for with public funds but rather private schools and so on? Would that be the reason?

MR. DOODY: The distribution of age, I would say, is the main factor.

MR. HOUSE: The distribution of age is the main factor.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Yes, that is right, the main factor. We have a high proportion of young people.

MR. HOUSE: Now, Mr. Chairman, I want to continue on this trend because I mentioned at the beginning adult and continuing education. We have done a study - despite the fact that we have all these people in school now and despite the fact that we are spending copious amounts of money on education, we have a study completed by our adult and continuing education people and they have told us that between 80,000 and 100,000 Newfoundlanders over the age of twenty are what you would classify as functionally illiterate. That is they do not have a Grade V standard. They need at least a Grade V standing to get into our basic training programmes to upgrade them for trades training. So that would indicate to us the need for an adult and continuing education programme which we have this year, and a very effective one. Of course it is not only this year. It has been in the past too. But we have a separate -

MR. F. ROWE: What percentage was that again?

MR. HOUSE: Well it is about - I use the figure 80,000. They said between 80,000 and 100,000, which means about one-quarter of our adult population over twenty years of age.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Would the minister again allow? I hope he does not mind me - instead of waiting afterwards and getting another speech from him, giving these answers, he might be more interested

MR. SMALLWOOD:

In answering as he goes. Grade \bar{V} is the definition of what the minister calls functional illiteracy. Now throughout a large part of my life the illiteracy rate in Newfoundland was from twenty-five per cent coming down to twenty and around eighteen or twenty per cent. But that was not known as functional illiteracy nor was there a definition of it as meaning those who had less than Grade \bar{V} . It meant any adult who could not read or write. That is not now the definition of illiteracy.

MR. HOUSE: No. We use, Mr. Chairman, the term - I think the normal term is a Grade \bar{IV} standing but we use Grade \bar{V} in the Province here because you have to have a Grade \bar{V} standing to get into basic training skill development programmes. We will use that as the cutoff point here. That does not mean that you cannot read or write, but it means that you are at that standing.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Yes, right.

MR. HOUSE: So I just want to give that as an overview, Mr. Chairman, to show that while we are spending a lot of money on education, and while I think we have improved in quality and quantity in education we still have a long way to go and we have to emphasize the importance of adult education in Newfoundland and we will have to do that for a long time to come.

One of the other things I want to mention is about the quality of education. This is another thing that is hitting all across the Dominion, that people are talking about the dropping in quality in education and the dropping of standards. This has been brought up a few times in the House of Assembly here and I heard it in Chamber of Commerce meetings, I have heard it in the Council of Ministers meetings. One of the things that I cannot understand, and I will not understand, is the idea of a standard. I do not exactly know what people are talking about.

But in quality of education we must bear in mind that when we are talking about quality we have to bear in mind two very important

MR. HOUSE:

things: The fact that we are thinking in terms of developing people to the top of their potential, number one, and number two, we have not to think in terms of the fact that we are mass educating our people. Today of course we are getting a large percentage of our people going through high school.

MR. HOUSE: And you are getting people up to the grade XI standard who are not of the same calibre as the top quality. You get some low innate abilities getting up to Grade XI. And that says a lot to me for the quality of teaching that we are getting, because we are perfecting teaching well enough now that young people who have low abilities can get enough schooling to help them get on in the world, whereas heretofore they were dumped on the market when they had about Grade V or VI. Our top quality students today, I would say, are better than ever they were before.

I have to reflect back to the first year I was in university, which was 1952, I think - 1952 or 1953, 1952 I believe - there were 350 pupils which represented the total post-secondary education in Newfoundland. This year we have approximately 14,000 or 15,000 in the university and trade schools which shows us, of course, that - and I am sure the top number of these are better and just as able, perhaps, or more able than the 350 that represented all the post-secondary students when I was there. So quality is improving along also with quantity as far as we are concerned.

There is another myth, I think, about education that we have to straighten up, and that is the fact that where people frequently get up and without taking time to look they will say, "We have the biggest dropout rate in Canada," and this sort of thing. But we are not the group with the biggest dropout rate in Canada. As a matter of fact, we are higher than any of the rest of the Maritime Provinces.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Rear, hear!

MR. HOUSE: And now this last year we did a survey on a group of students that came in 1964 in Grade II, and in 1975 62 per cent of these were in Grade XI. Coupled with that, of course, was the fact that we had an outward migration of students in that period of time from that particular Grade II class of 15,000. Then beside that -

MR. SMALLWOOD: How could the minister know that?

MR. HOUSE: Well, we have school statistics showing it. We did a study and we have statistics showing it. The outward migration - we get the outward migration.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Yes, but outward migration of the youngsters that were in school in 1972?

MR. HOUSE: No, in 1964.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Or 1964. How could we know how many of those particular youngsters out-migrated from Newfoundland in subsequent times?

MR. HOUSE: We have statistics on it. School statistics.

MR. SMALLWOOD: But who has the statistics?

MR. PECKFORD: The schools.

MR. HOUSE: The schools.

MR. PECKFORD: When they are transferred -

MR. HOUSE: When they were transferred the schools knew they were transferred out and where they were transferred to.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Transferred out of the Province?

MR. HOUSE: Yes.

MR. PECKFORD: Right, Yes.

MR. SMALLWOOD: And the schools they attend here keep records of that?

MR. HOUSE: Oh yes.

MR. DOODY: Report to the authorities.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Oh! I see.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: They have not completed their schooling, see, so they are still recorded here.

MR. HOUSE: They are still recorded here.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Yes. Yes.

MR. HOUSE: I want to point out that that is pretty well - I believe we are about the same as New Brunswick, higher than Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island and close to some of the other provinces.

With regard to school facilities, the other thing I just want to mention here while we are talking about quality

MR. HOUSE: education, I am not the one who is going to state that quality education is connected totally with quality buildings or quality facilities. But we have been improving our facilities and improving our offerings in education. In the last four years there has been \$100 million worth of new schools built. Of course that has been connected with the DREE schools, plus the fact that we have given guarantees to school boards for the next twelve years that so much money would be made available to them.

One other thing was mentioned last year and we hope to get something going on it this year. There is about 25 per cent of our pupils who are involved in pre-vocational education. There is something we can say about that, and I remember in the estimates for last year where the minister last year stated that if we could obtain DREE input for these schools we would be adding vocational wings to existing high schools. Of course we never got this DREE input and we are still working for it.

But in addition to that, Mr. Chairman, there are about sixty industrial art centres in the Province also, where pupils are getting that kind of education, a utilitarian aspect to their education.

MR. HOUSE: Now I am not going to go totally through the estimates, as you can see by looking at them they are pretty elaborate. There is \$264 million worth of estimates there and I am not going to go through it all. I am going to hit some of the high points and point out some of the reasons for the basic costs.

We are looking at future policies and one of the things I have to speak about, Mr. Chairman, is special education. Again when we are talking about educating all the people, we have got to think in terms of all abilities of pupils and as hon. members know we have had special education going on in our schools to a degree for the last ten years. I believe I have the distinct honour, I am not sure of that, of organizing one of the first classes of special education in the Province. This was what we called organizing education for the educable mentally retarded pupil. We have 700 teachers involved teaching those kind of pupils now, and that is where one teacher takes twelve pupils who cannot cope with the ordinary class, and that has improved education tremendously in the Province for two reasons: First of all it has given these pupils an opportunity to learn something, and secondly, it has taken them out of the regular classroom and given the teacher the opportunity to do the kind of work that he is supposed to do. Now this year again we are embodying - the department of course a couple of years ago took up responsibility for the administration of the trainable mentally retarded pupils and most of these were administered through the Vera Perlin schools and of course through schools set up by the department.

Now we are asking school boards to take these over and they are being embodied in regular schools, not in regular classrooms, in regular schools, special classrooms within schools, and of course we are making provision for salary units and there is provision in the estimates for changing school facilities for that special kind of service. This is being brought in gradually and it is our hope that most of the TMP students will be able to associate with regular students in the schools. They have to live with regular people, so we

MR. HOUSE: think they should be educated as closely as possible to regular people.

We have also done a school study this year by Dr. Bunch where they had through the Atlantic Provinces Special Education Association we are hoping to try to get as much education for all kinds of special services in the schools, including the School for the Deaf. Now obviously you are not going to be able to take all levels of disabilities, but take as many as we can and embody them in the regular school system. This is something that we are working towards, the integration as much as possible of education for all students, integration as much as possible of all kinds and levels of pupils. The other thing, of course, we are working on a school for the blind which we are taking part in in the Halifax area.

So that is one thing for the future, we are continuing to try and improve the quality of education for these very special students. One of the things about this, it takes about four times the cost to educate TMR students, because one teacher can only handle a maximum of about six pupils, and the thing about it is it is costly, and quantitatively you do not get the same kind of value from it because educationally these youngsters do not progress so fast. But we are dealing with human beings and of course we are dealing with educating all the people.

One of the other things for future development, I would hope and we are planning, Mr. Chairman, is more emphasis on curriculum at the local level. We have a number of consultants at the department, but also now school boards are getting more affluent, having more consultants and better qualified teachers and we are using these in development of curriculum.

MR. HOUSE:

We are trying, I think as much as we can, encouraging as much as we can and we will be doing this. I have been doing it as the minister and of course some of my officials, encouraging as much as we can the relationship between industry and education.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. HOUSE: I think all hon. members should bear that in mind, -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HOUSE: - that education is not for something out there in the future. It is intrinsically tied up with our culture and with our way of life. If I may digress here, and it was alluded to some time ago by my hon. friend behind me here, and I think I had talked to him about it - at one time people thought of education as being something that you got so you could become something else. Many a time when I was going to school, and many a teacher has said this to pupils in my presence, "Look, old man, if you do not buck up you are going to land up in the fishing boat. You are going to land up in the woods," whatever the profession or trade or work may have been in that area. They were using it as a threat. "If you do not get an education you are going to have to do this and that." What they were saying in essence is that if you are going to be any of these things you do not need an education. The second thing they were doing, of course, was downgrading our two primary resources. Of course, that has been reflected throughout our culture. It is not an accident that fishery and woods work and that sort of thing is in the state that it is today in this Province. It is not an accident. It has grown in us. It is cultured in us. I think if you could take the example of Iceland where they had their education attuned to their culture and their industry -

MR. DOODY: And proud of it.

MR. HOUSE: - and very proud of it, you would see that education was more meaningful to them.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HOUSE: I think this is what we have got to work for. I hope that we

MR. HOUSE:

generate some interest there.

I was very pleased, pleasantly surprised and delighted to read an article just a couple of weeks ago on a programme going on in a school in Harbour Grace where they are doing a social studies programme, a very comprehensive social studies programme in the fishery. There is a lot of that kind of thing going on in the Province. The only thing that I am disappointed about is the fact that teachers are not and administrators are not letting this be known. They are not blowing their horn enough. A lot of that is going on and it is improving education tremendously.

Now some of the other things I just want to mention - Mr. Speaker, I do not know how long I have been going. I did not expect to be this long - I want to mention a few of the other statistics for people who are interested in them. We have today 150,827 students in our schools. That is our elementary, high and junior high schools. That is a loss of 300 over last year and it is down 5,000 since 1971-72. So we are levelling off in school population. We have 7,773 teachers. Two hundred of these, of course, are connected with board offices. One of the important factors I would like for people to remember is that seventy per cent of these have the equivalent of four years in university, which means they got a grade four certificate. One of the best innovations or one of the things that has developed quality education in this Province - and I do not care who wants to contradict me on this - has not been our buildings or anything else. It has been the quality of teachers we have been able to pay and put in the field.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HOUSE: That is the thing that has improved education in this Province and developed it to the level it is. We have thirty-five school boards, and of course that is not new. We had thirty-five last year. But I want to compliment school boards on a number of things. One of the basic things is - and I am going to say this right now - is that that group responded very well last year when we talked to them about our programmes, our restraint

MR. HOUSE:

programme. They responded very well despite the fact that they were in difficult financial times. That group has grown in maturity. Of course, when you are giving them local control in education that develops maturity and again improves quality of education.

In vocational schools, again I want to point out for the benefit of those people who may be wondering if we got enough vocational schools - when the vocational schools open this year, and there are seventeen of them, there is a 5,000 enrollment, when they opened this year we had to advertise 265 places. We advertised stating there are 265 vocational school places open throughout the Province. Now I do not know for sure if they are all filled or not. If two colleges - and of course there are 2,500 in these and of course about 7,000 in the university. I want to mention also here, Mr. Chairman, that there will be some new programmes. Obviously we have got to get some new programmes. Despite restraint there will be some new programmes. One of the things, of course, is

MR. HOUSE: going to be - we heard news some time ago from the hon. Don Jamieson that there was going to be a processing or data centre here in the Province. But one of the things the schools immediately have to get attuned to is the fact that we have got to start producing people who can take on the jobs. We do not want to be the group who are going to get the part-time jobs. So next year we are putting on a course in computer science here at the Trades College and of course that will be a three year programme and as a result we will be able to place 125 more people in the Trades College next year.

I would like to bring attention to one other point of progress that I consider progress apart from the general level of things, and that is the community college concept and I do not know what the original idea was of community colleges. But community colleges to me exactly meant what it said. A community college, the community is the college. A community is the college. And we appointed a director last year to set up a pilot project of a community college in the Bay St. George area, and to get ready for that he went abroad to the Mainland and looked at some of the other provinces and the one that was most impressive, I guess, for our needs was Saskatchewan. But when we sized up the situation in Saskatchewan and many of the other provinces, Mr. Chairman, it was discovered that we had as much going for us, a lot of things going for us in the community college concept. The thing we lacked was the organization. We have the University Extension proliferated throughout the Province, the adult education programme, the Trades College, the trade schools, the Fisheries College going throughout the Province, the adult education courses, that is upgrading, and the special courses in cultural pursuits and so on.

MR. SMALLWOOD: In the Frontier style.

MR. HOUSE: In the Frontier College of course, that is going in

MR. HOUSE: certain parts. But what we have lacked in the area, what we lacked was co-ordination and it was no good to go out from the department or the university or anything else and say, "We are going to give you some education." People do not respond to it that way. Some of them did respond because they wanted to get upgraded to go into trades and so on. So the community college concept which we are trying to evolve now will develop boards in local areas, and they will identify the needs, and of course the delivery systems that we will have to give them the education programmes they want are already available and can be brought to them.

MR. MURPHY: When the hon. minister says 'needs', does the hon. minister mean a building as such or is it just a group that would meet in an existing school or something like that?

MR. HOUSE: The concept is that we are talking in terms of using the existing vocational schools as nucleuses, but we will use the other educational services that are around because most of the work goes on in the evening anyway, and of course at a time of high cost it is a lot better to utilize your buildings fully than to build new ones.

So that concept is a good one and I think hon. members should bear in mind the idea is to get people identifying their own needs, because as I have stated a number of times, you cannot impose an education from outside, it has got to come from the people themselves. You know, it means so much more to them because they will see a real need for it.

There are a couple of other things, I just mentioned the special education and adult education; incidentally this year we have thirty-six courses other than academic courses going on in adult education and 14,000 people are involved in that, 750 part-time teachers.

There are a couple of things I have to mention with respect to the service to school boards. I just mentioned school boards. We just initiated a policy of giving insurance to schools.

MR. HOUSE:

The total amount of funding to school boards this year or for their operations is \$20,400,000. I want to mention that, plus the fact we are insuring their schools. To some schools this has meant a lot, because it has averaged from, I believe, a high of \$24 a pupil down to a low of \$6 or \$7 that we were paying for insurance. That kind of money now school boards have to work with and bring about programmes. I think there may be a lot of people will say, "Well, you have cut back on the specialist programme." I want to have people bear in mind we did not this year or any year cut back on specialist programmes. We said we would give up to \$1,500 for a specialist programme. We stated that, we would give 'up to.' But as the number of specialists became, as there became more of them and as the number of subjects we give specialists for became more plentiful, of course, they eat into the funds we had cut out for that service. So we could not say we are giving \$1,500 for every one, we said 'up to.' So we divided it down and distributed it on \$1,000.

A little bit of talk erupted about school busing. Of course, it came as a result of a petition that was sent in. A lot of people expressed their opinion on that. Of course, we have a lot of opinions on it also. We have been just conducting a study of school busing. This year's estimates is well over \$11 million for school busing. That is up, I think, about \$2 million over last year. I am not sure. There has been no appreciable, no appreciable increase in the number of pupils we are carrying. We are carrying about 75,000. The fact is it is escalation in cost that has driven the prices up. We have made a survey and of course that survey will be known to the House and to the government in due course. But listening to the debate a few days ago I want to point out one thing people are saying, "Do not go busing pupils from kindergarden to six." That is a very nice thing to say. I think the policy enunciated by government last year was that we would cut down on that as much as possible. But one thing you cannot do, you cannot go back. The fact is we have got central elementary schools built throughout the Province at great cost. You just cannot go back and tear them apart and drag parts of them back in the community. So that cost

MR. HOUSE:

is going to be with us. But one of the things we do stick to is the fact that we should do as little of it as possible. I agree with a lot of the people who say we are doing too much of it. But I do not agree with the people who say we should not do any of it because I think we have had proof that there is a necessity for some busing.

Another thing I want to touch on, Mr. Chairman, is the Labrador Coast. I happened to be down there a little while ago. The federal and provincial committees provide services there through the school boards. There are a couple of things happening there, I think, for future direction that we should think in terms of. One is the fact that we are trying to bring high school education to the peoples on the Coast and we are working with the school boards on that. Of course, right now they have to go up as far as Lake Melville to get their grade eleven, from grade nine to eleven, I think. Of course, there is going to be a review of curriculum for that area because the same curriculum that we have in the schools on the Island part of the Province is not necessarily good for that area.

CAPT. WINSOR: Is the minister or the department having much difficulty now in getting teachers to go to especially Northern Labrador? I recall when I was the M.H.A. up there it was very seldom you saw a Newfoundland teacher in North West River. Is that situation improving today?

MR. HOUSE: Yes, Mr. Chairman, the situation is improving although there are still a large number of teachers from the mainland of the Province, and I believe some of the Menonites from the United States, some parts of the United States are still there. But there are very few teachers with less than a degree in any of these communities. Most of them have degrees. All the principals, for instance, I believe are Newfoundland people. So that same thing is not applying now. One of the things we have there too is a better pupil-teacher ratio by virtue of the fact that we are having this federal-provincial input. Also we can hire, if we can get them, aides among the native people, people who can come in and help who speak the native Innu language. So that is improving tremendously, as is the quality, yes.

April 27, 1976.

Tape 2215

RR - 3

MR. HOUSE:

The last thing I want to mention, a couple of things - one is the polytechnical institute, which I am sure I am going to get questions on. I think it has been

MR. HOUSE: a desire of both this government and the last government to get something like that going. I want to point out perhaps that the last government talked about it for five years, we talked about it for two or three and we got some planning done on it.

I want to reiterate again: Last year in the estimates the minister mentioned if we can get DREE input we will definitely have this polytechnical institute, because it is very necessary for the Province; it is necessary because we want an institution at a technical level that corresponds to the university. We said we would be building this if we got DREE input and we are still working on it. I said the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs has been working on it, and I said it was a burning issue with him because he very frequently refers to it as a pyrotechnical institute. Anyway, DREE has given us an indefinite 'maybe', and that is about as far as we have gone. But we are still working on it and, of course, there will be some work done and continued on the planning.

I mentioned answering a question earlier that we would be continuing the planning and would have the preliminary plans done by the end of May. I believe we are still continuing this but in no way, according to what is happening now, can we have preliminary plans. Even if we got any input it would be very limited, the amount we could get done this year.

Mr. Chairman, I am just about finished now. I did not think I could go this long. I did not think I had enough material here. But the budget is \$20 million over last year. The specific increases are in teachers' salaries, which are specifically increased by virtue of the fact that there was a 10 per cent increase that came up just recently and the fact, of course, we have these career projections where teachers upgrade during the summer and a lot of them get new grades. The insurance is another extra cost and there is an extra million dollars in there for capital this year over last year which is in line with

MR. HOUSE: what we have projected over the next ten years. Of course the colleges are up, and the fact also that we are spending more money in adult and continuing education. These are the basic increases over last year's budget. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

MR. LUSH: Mr. Chairman, I find it very difficult to disagree with anything the minister said because he very brilliantly used the antics that we use in teaching so much, and that is, we are always told when you look at a student you always look at him as a glass half full. You see, generally we always look at the glass half empty, sort of thing. And it is a very important concept when dealing with a student to look at a student as half full. So the minister certainly looked at all the assets that we have and the positive things and therefore I shall have to comment on the things that he did not say to try and express the way I feel about education and particularly about this year's budget.

But I did mention that the minister looked at education from the half-glassful concept and I think that is a good concept. I think we do have a lot of things going for us in education that we have not had going for us in the last - up to ten or fifteen years ago. Today we have a great base to build on, We have people who are more interested in education that they have ever been before. We have more and better schools. We have more and better qualified teachers. And we do have a little diversification in programmes. We would like to see more, but these are the assets that we have. And, of course, the greatest asset at all is that we have young people, people who can be trained, people who can be trained to be an asset to society.

However, before getting into expressing some of the things that I want to say, I do want to make a couple of comments on some of the things the minister said which I agree with. He talked about quality education, and in talking about quality education he, I think, said something to the effect that as far as

MR. LUSH: he was concerned probably the most important element in that, of course, was the teacher. And I think that in any endeavour in education certainly that the teacher is the most important factor, and that is something

April 27, 1976

Tape no. 2217

Page 1- mw

MR. LUSH: that has been proved time and time again. However, I would not want to take that statement, and I almost gathered that by a couple of people who spoke in education back some days ago when we were talking about busing, it is almost - what shall I say? - people have a tendency almost to become romantic and sentimental and you would almost think that they wanted the old schools back to which we attended, you know. And I think there is that tendency once we start talking this way to underestimate the value of good facilities. And I do not think that was the intent of the minister at all. But I certainly, as an educator, would not want to give that impression. Certainly the teacher is the most important factor. But given the teacher, a good teacher, and then given the teacher with the proper facilities, then I think we can expect a much better system of education. As a matter of fact, there was a study done at this university itself which outlined the things that affected education, the achievement in education. And there were several, as a matter of fact, that we think that might have a tremendous affect on education which seemed to have little. And one of them, of course, was the facilities or better schools. But one of the important points of that study was that the most important factor in education was the education of the home, the education of the parents. That related greatly to the achievements of the students.

So what I want to point out is that even though the teacher is the greatest factor, that we have to consider many things, the education of the parents, the facilities that are available. I certainly would not want to go back to the type of school which I attended, neither would I want my children to attend them. I would want my children to attend schools in which they can receive physical education, in which they can receive music instruction, in which they can receive all

6009

Mr. Lush.

sorts of help from specialist people, like guidance counsellors and all of these specialists that we are aiming towards getting in our schools today. And I do not think we should at all try to underestimate or to try and make little of these services, of this progress that we have made to date. And I do not think, as I say, that the minister was referring to that. He mentioned about the efforts in adult education. Again I think this is a very important aim and something that we should strive for, certainly in view of the fact that the home, the education of the parents, is proven to be a very important factor with respect to the achievement of the children in school. So that is a very, very important aim, and I hope that we can continue further in this area.

The minister, in beginning, mentioned about the aims of education, and I do not want my remarks to be too idealistic or to philosophical in this respect, but this is something about which I felt very strongly, something about which I have some strong ideas on is the aims of education. I do believe that we are rather remiss in this Province in establishing aims of education. We have got a rather general and vague set of aims of education that we have had, I do not know how long, every student that went to university memorized them and learned them a long time ago, and they are the same thing back when we went to university as they are today.

MR. LUSH:

That to my mind is not a set of aims of education at all. We are probably the furthest behind in this respect, in the development of aims and objective in education. Every province in Canada has gone very much further than we have in this respect in the development of aims in education. This is very important. If you have not developed aims and objectives, how do you know where you are going? What we have done in this Province, as I said, we have got these general motherhood aims, this sort of thing, but at the subject area we have not done a thing. I think the government has to take the lead in this respect, that we have got to develop aims and objectives for the Province.

They must be established in every discipline. I realize that we have done them in a couple, not too many. I could name them but that is not important.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Name them.

MR. LUSH: Language arts is one that we have done them in. I think we have made some effort in mathematics. Outside of that I think we are again making some efforts in science, but that has not been finalized yet. But what is happening, unfortunately, in this Province is that whereas the Province should be taking the lead in establishing these broad aims and objectives, it is the school boards. And it should be vice versa. It is the government which should be doing these broad aims and objectives. Then the school boards should be refining these objectives and aims to meet the needs of their own students.

So I think it is very important that we do this today in view of the fact that we have got a base from which to start. Naturally you should always have aims and objectives. But we have arrived at a place today where we have, I think, spent vast numbers or vast amounts of dollars in teacher training, in building schools. I think the time now has come to look at our aims and objectives, to look at what type of education we need in this Province, what type of programmes do we need. And I feel a little bit irate at times when I hear people condemning the

MR. LUSH:

educational system. I think, basically, probably it relates to the fact that we have not done this, that we have not gotten down to setting up these aims and objectives, to ask ourselves where it is we are going.

It was mentioned in this House not too long ago - I just forget by which hon. member - something about referring to graduates from the university in the United States who will be out of jobs next year, this sort of thing. I do not think we have that to worry about in this Province. We are not close to that at all. But what we are close to, what we do have to look at, is the types of programmes that people are studying. And I would suggest that the reason why these graduates are walking around in the United States, if indeed they are walking around, and on the mainland, is because they have been trained in the wrong areas. We must be very careful about that in this Province, that we do not overtrain people, that we look at the kinds of needs that we have and that we train people according to these needs. If we do that I do not think there is any fear that we will have graduates walking around from the university, from the trade schools or from anyplace else. I think that has happened in the trades schools, where people have gotten into areas where there was no great need for it in society, and they went and took their particular course, whatever it was, finished the course, and found out there were no jobs. The reason why there was no job is because the aims and objectives were not laid down as to the kinds of programmes that we needed, and people got trained in the wrong things. That is what we have to be careful about. So this is the importance of establishing the aims and objectives, looking at where we are going, what type of an educational programme do we need, what kinds of skills, what kinds of expertise will our students be required to use in the world of tomorrow. So this is very important, I would suggest, this looking at education, where we are going, establishing our aims and our objectives.

While on that point I just want to make one other reference. The establishing of aims and objectives is also very important to looking at your educational system, where you are going, so that you do not

Mr. LUSH:

overtrain or undertrain people. That is one important aspect. Another important aspect to me - it might be a rather trivial - but it is also very important in helping the Province to decide what kinds of textbooks they need. In the past we have not had any sort of thing like this. You know, we just say, if you are doing science this looks like a good book. Or a salesman might have come in and said this is a good book and this sort of thing, took people out and wined and dined them and he decided, or the person selecting the book decided this was the right book and took it, or the committee, now that we are working with it, is almost going through the same procedure.

I would suggest that in order to be able to intelligently select the kinds of textbooks that our students need in the Province we have to know the aims and objectives of our programmes and

MR. LUSH:

where we are going. The other thing I want to get on to, of course, is this cost of education, financing education. That is a very important issue. The minister almost seemed embarrassed about the tremendous amount of money that we are spending on education. I believe that we have got to face the facts with finances in education that they are going to continue to escalate and if we are to provide the proper training for our students that we are going to have to spend more money in education.

In 1965-1966, I think it was, this Province spent \$30 million on education. This year \$264 million; you know, a tremendous jump in ten years from \$30 million to - no, I am sorry. That \$30 million was in elementary and secondary schools. So this year we are up to about \$170 million, around there. So from \$30 million to \$170 million in the amount of money that we spent on secondary and elementary schools. So we can see the tremendous jump. People are concerned about this kind of rise in the expenditure. Politicians are concerned about it.

Associated with this concern too for the rapidly increasing expenditures have been demands for accountability. People are asking whether we are getting value for the investment in education. They question efficiency of spending when they are told of the major problems still facing our schools. They question whether they are really getting more scholar for the dollar. And of course they have that right. We have that right. I question many things in education, but I question them in a positive manner. I agree with the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) when he mentions so often the university budget. I would like to have the opportunity to have access to see how university monies are spent, but not because I think that there is anything going on that is not proper. I would like to know, for example, what Harlow is costing this Province. Again, not that I think there is anything wrong with Harlow, because I think it is a marvellous institution. I think that it is a great benefit to this Province. I think that if we were to get rid of Harlow that you would

Mr. LUSH:

find every university across Canada trying to get it as quickly as possible. I think particularly for a Province that is isolated, people who are insular, I think that Harlow is a marvellous institution, but I certainly would like to know what it is costing the people of this Province. I understand that it does not cost very much, but I would like to know. I think this House has a right to know these things.

So people are beginning to demand for accountability in education, and so they should. I think probably that we have been responsible for bringing on this aspect of accountability. When I say 'we' I think of educators, because in the last decade we have looked to education to stimulate economic growth, to eliminate poverty, to reduce vandalism and crime and even to lessen prejudice and discrimination. We now recognize of course that these expectations were rather unrealistic. We now realize that education alone cannot eliminate all of the social ills. But education is one thing that will help eliminate these social ills. So for that reason we still have to place a high priority on education.

The rapid growth then of educational expenditures in this Province have caused people to question the value of their dollar. But many factors have contributed to that growth, including increases in enrollment, and the minister mentioned about that, the effects of inflation, and developments aimed at improving the overall quality of education. A number of studies have attempted to establish the proportion of expenditure increases that may be attributed to each of these factors. One study of enrollment growth and the effects of inflation indicated that up to seventy per cent of the expenditure increases during the 1960's in this Province could be explained by these factors. That is seventy per cent of the expenditure increases in this Province could be attributed to growth, student growth, and inflation, seventy per cent.

MR. LUSH:

This left an increase of about thirty per cent which resulted from other factors, such as improvement in the quality of the teaching force, improved facilities, new and improved programmes, smaller pupil-teacher ratio and so on. In other words, the real increase in spending was much lower than the apparent increase. This is what I find that people do not grasp in education. For example, the \$264 millions that we are now spending this year seems like a fantastic amount in education. I am sure, or I would not blame people if they said, you know, that is enough for education, we cannot give them more, how can we give them more. But the fact remains that a large percentage of that can be attributed to student growth, inflation and the other factors that I have mentioned.

MR. HOUSE: A good question. Student enrollment, what rate, the student growth is all based on the number of students?

MR. LUSH: The number of students.

MR. HOUSE: Five thousand less, according to all the statistics, than three years ago.

MR. LUSH: Yes, so they are. But we still have more students than we have ever had before, you know, even though they are decreasing. When I say 'before' I am not talking about 1949 or this. But it has been more students than we have ever had before, but now starting down the down swing, but only - what was your figure you mentioned? - 3,000 or 5,000?

MR. HOUSE: Five thousand.

MR. LUSH: Five thousand, right.

MR. MURPHY: And down by 300 from last year.

AN HON. MEMBER: What are you talking about, university students?

MR. LUSH: The whole bit, the whole bit. In looking to the future one can project expenditure requirements by looking at the weaknesses and shortcomings of the present system and estimating the cost of eliminating these. One can also get an estimate of expenditure requirements by analyzing expenditure levels in these parts of the Province where

MR. LUSH:

educational progress has been widely recognized. It is difficult to make a judgment about the cost of rectifying some of the major problems with which education in this Province is now faced. All one can do is list some of the conditions that should be of major concern. This is what I want to do, to list some of these conditions that should be of major concern to us. One I got to eliminate right away because the minister sort of - but I have got to say it - this Province still has the highest drop-out rate in the country. You see, this was a speech I prepared in 1974. Now it has become obsolete. But I think the point is still valid. What the minister did not say, and I still agree with the statistic that he gave although what I should change mine to now in view of his is that our statistic is still the highest in Canada, excluding the Atlantic Provinces. But I believe the point that made his statistics so much better this year was that you included in that one a new statistic or a new method that we had not included before. I may be wrong. But I have been told that this year you have included people who went to trade schools. In other words, when we were including our drop-out rate previously, people who left school, and we did not include in that people who attended trade schools and this sort of thing, which is a wrong way of doing it because if a person attends another institution of learning he is not a drop-out. But we have been doing that. If a person just left school we considered them a drop-out. I am not sure whether that was the case all the way through, but certainly for the most part, that if a student left school he was considered a drop-out. Now we do not do that and rightly so. If a student goes to a trade school or another higher institution of learning or some post secondary institution of learning he is not a drop-out. That was making our statistic look very bad.

AN HON. MEMBER: If he did not finish high school?

MR. LUSH: Yes, that is right. If he did not finish high school and went to trade school he was a drop-out.

MR. LUSH:

Yes, a drop-out from high school. But now the figure does not include that. The figure now, okay, the person now if he goes to a trade school he is not a drop-out. That is making our statistic - the minister might have, but that is the way I understand it. I might be wrong. But anyways I still say with that statistic that is making us look much better. If we have improved on that one in the last two or three years that is marvellous. But we still do have then the highest drop-out, excluding the Atlantic Provinces, in the rest of the country. Despite recent improvements many of our school buildings are obsolete in terms of today's requirements. Many schools have inadequate water and sewerage systems, inadequate library resources and too few technological teaching aids. We do not have to look very far to see these types of schools.

We all

Mr. Lush:

have them, I expect, in our own districts, I was about to say outside of St. John's, but we have got them here too. I have been familiar with them, I worked here for four or five years, and know that we also have schools not necessarily fitted in with every statement that I made there, but certainly schools that are inadequate.

The curriculum programme in many of our high schools is very narrow, and that is true for a large number of our schools.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: How do you define curriculum?

MR. LUSH: In this one I was thinking of the very narrow thing of subjects, shall we say.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Not the total learning.

MR. LUSH: Not the total learning, right. Just in the number of subjects that students can take, that sort of thing.

MR. DOODY: Do not be too specialized, now, or you will lose us.

MR. LUSH: Well, he is pushing me into it.

MR. DOODY: I know that. You are becoming like the lawyers. They are my learned friends.

MR. LUSH: Mind you, I say that not that I am embarrassed to go into it, because I believe that this is a very good place to discuss those things.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Bona fide concerns.

MR. LUSH: And I think the House of Assembly for too long has left education outside its purview.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH: And I think that these things should come in.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DOODY: Like war, it is too important to be left to the generals.

MR. LUSH: Well, I just want to make an illustration that schools in my district, some very large schools in my district, for example, students cannot study French there. You know, I think that is a sad reflection on education today in a large community where students cannot study French. In many communities they can only do one science course, if at all doing one.

MR. F. ROWE: That is probably the general science.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: That was probably brought on by cancelling that programme they had.

MR. LUSH: I shall get to that.

So that is a very valid point then why we are going to have to spend more money on education.

The next point is we have relatively few specialists in such areas as reading, and guidance, and too few qualified teachers in music, art, home economics and industrial arts. And I asked the minister, I am very sincere about it, a couple of days ago why the Department of Education did not fill the four positions, I think it was, with the Department of Curriculum and Instruction with specialists people there, people in reading, people in mathematics, people in social studies, I just forget the other one for the moment. But where we have so few specialists in our schools, in the smaller schools, these people were offering a tremendous benefit to the teachers out there who did not have the expertise that they needed in reading or in mathematics or whatever, and these people were offering a tremendous benefit out there working with those teachers, helping to work with students, and this year that has not been going on. It is too bad. It is too bad. And it is particularly since we have school boards having so few of these kinds of specialists people.

Another point I want to mention is that there are too many classrooms in the Province with more students than a teacher can effectively teach, and of course that is related to the government reneging this year on phase three of its reduction of the teacher-student ratio. This is a very, very important thing in education that all of us here, most of us are parents and we realize the difficulty of working with large numbers of children. We have the highest teacher-student ratio, and this is just something that is not substantiated, it is just a feeling, it is just an opinion, but I would say that we have the largest student-teacher ratio in North America. Now there are instances, of course, where our teachers have

Mr. Lush:

probably small numbers of students, but on the total I would think that our student-teacher ratio is probably the largest in North America. And that is going to affect quality education. A teacher cannot work as effectively with thirty-five students naturally as a teacher can work with twenty or twenty-five. And if we are concerned about quality education, I think we are going to have to move quickly in this particular area. And I realize there are problems, but I do not think the problems are insurmountable, I do not think they are as great as we think they are.

There are increasing arguments for more preschool opportunities, particularly for those children from

MR. LUSH:

from poor homes. I want to mention this because I think this is most important. I mentioned earlier that it has been proven that probably the thing that has most effect on the achievement of a student in school is the parents. We brought in a plan of preschools, nurseries, to help children particularly who have come from families that are not so well off, of the lower social economic people. We have introduced a plan of preschooling, or some people call it nursery schools so that we can give these people the benefit of catching up, these people -

MR. LUNDRIGAN: A head start.

MR. LUSH: Right. In the United States they call it a head start. They have developed there a head start programme. But the fact is that in Canada the preschools and nurseries have gone in the wrong direction. The people who are going to them are the people who should not. The only people who can go to them are the people from the wealthy, you know, the children from doctors and lawyers and this sort who do not need their children there. That is what has been happening in this Province. We have not got around to being able to get the right kinds of people into these schools. And the reason of course has got to do with funding. Somebody sets up a private school, generally, and what happens is they charge a fee. So the only people who can go to them are the people who do not need to go to them, and that puts these people further ahead still of the person who should be there, and of course makes the job more difficult for the teacher when they come to the school in the first year. Am I making myself clear?

MR. MURPHY: You need money for these. They are private mostly and fairly expensive.

MR. LUSH: That is right. Very expensive to go, so you cannot get the people who should go to go to them. But it is something that the Province should look at. It is something that the Province should do if we can because it is very important to give these children a head start.

MR. LUSH:

I do not want to go into any more of these philosophical educational matters but I think these were important and I wanted to raise them in the House. I think they are important for people to know about. I did have one here and that was there is a tremendous need for a broadly based programme for the education of adults. The minister mentioned that and I will not go any further on that one.

I think these conditions demonstrate the magnitude of the task with which the Province is faced if our people are to have the educational opportunities they deserve. A look at expenditures across Canada will confirm this fact. In 1974, the last year for which I could find statistics anyway, the total current operating expenditures per pupil in Newfoundland were \$706 - that is per pupil - compared with \$1,066 for the whole of Canada.

MR. MURPHY: In all the grades?

MR. LUSH: Yes. So \$706 per pupil in Newfoundland compared with \$1,066 for the whole of Canada. In Ontario of course with the highest expenditure in the country, they were paying \$1,170 per pupil.

So in order to bring current expenditure up to the Canadian average, this Province will have to spend half as much again on education as it did this year almost.

MR. MURPHY: In what area would you be lacking -

MR. LUNDRIGAN: - by saving that dollar on education?

MR. LUSH: Pardon?

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Can you measure the relevancy of that high school education?

MR. LUSH: Well, it is very difficult

MR. LUNDRIGAN: The end result.

MR. LUSH: It is very difficult as you know to be able to measure the amount of success that you are getting in relationship to the dollar you are spending. But I think what it does say is that in other provinces in Canada the things that I mentioned here, for example, the narrow curriculums, their curriculum is much broader. So that would help bring up this figures, you see.

MR. LINDRIGAN: The best educational system in Canada is right here.

MR. LUSH: Pardon?

MR. LINDRIGAN: One of the best educational systems in the country is right here in this Province.

MR. LUSH: I do not refute that argument at all. But I think again that in order to maximize the quality of education, in order to make education better, I think that we do have to expand. That is where I feel that we are falling down the most, on the narrowness of our programmes, that we cannot train enough of our people. Our high school programmes right now are still geared basically to the person who is going to university. You know, that is where it is geared. When you say we have got the best educational programme, I would agree with you; it is the best educational programme with respect to training people to go to university, and with respect to the discipline that we have, with respect to the qualifications of teachers and the dedication of teachers. From what I have seen I would hold our system up to anything I have seen on the mainland.

But when it comes to being comprehensive in what we are offering, then I think we fall down. This figure naturally is arrived at through looking at obviously the total cost of what these people are spending on education as opposed to what we are spending. I guess what I am saying another way is that I think that we are getting value for our educational dollar. There is no question about that. I think we are getting value. I do not

MR. LUSH: feel guilty as an educator when people ask me to be accountable for what is happening in education, because we have, number one, so few frills that there is no way that we can waste or to be extravagant. We are using well what we have. But what I am asking for I expect is that I would like to see what we have expanded so that we are educating more people. I could have looked into the handicapped, but the minister mentioned it and I did not bother to look at it. You know, I still think we have a tremendous ways to go there. But we certainly have to expand and widen our programme in order to give our students, our Newfoundland students, the same educational or the same equal educational opportunity as students on the mainland of this Dominion have. And that is certainly what we are aiming for, is to make sure that students in this Province have the same equal educational opportunity as students in the other parts of Canada.

And of course another aim should be to see that every student in this Province has equal educational opportunity. A student in some part of Labrador should have the same equal educational opportunity as a student here in St. John's, and I do not think that exists at the present moment. There are some inequities within the Province. There are some people who cannot get the same education in smaller communities as they can in larger communities.

Well, if that is the case, that we do have to spend more money on education, you know, where is it going to come from? There is no doubt in my mind that the Provincial Government has to, I think, foot the cost of education in this Province. I think it is unrealistic to expect that we are going to come up with any sort of a tax that is going to mean anything in the way of getting educational dollars. It has been a real problem with education, every since education was publicly financed, to find some system whereby to finance education

MR. LUSH: and it is becoming evermore complicated, evermore complex.

The difficulty of course, and I am not going to go into this, you have heard this gone through before, the difficulty is to find an equitable taxation method, and we have been no more successful in finding an equitable taxation method than any other place in Canada, probably less able to do so because the present tax form that we have now is certainly most inequitable. And, you know, I think there are certainly some distinct advantages as far as the provincial government funding the total cost of education, certainly the cost of a foundation programme. And the major arguments that may be presented in favour of the full provincial, or nearly full provincial funding include the following: it produces greater equality of educational opportunity; under the plan educational services are not determined by local wealth, place of birth or willingness of parents to spend for educational services; it provides greater equity for taxpayers, especially if taxes such as the Income Tax are used extensively; it produces competition among school districts for teachers and other resources; it helps the Province deal more effectively with the federal government concerning educational matters.

And I just want to make one comment here with respect to full funding, and full funding too, of course, by the Provincial Government does not necessarily mean that there would be no local ways of raising money. It is just a method that you go about it. But I just want to make one statement here. Most people think that if you take away the ability, or take away from local school boards the - what is the word I am looking for?

AN HON. MEMBER: The power.

MR. LUSH: No, I am not looking for that, to take away from them

MR. LUSH: the ability to raise money, then they lose control you know, because the control of education of course belongs to the people spending the money so hence the government would have more control.

MR. HOUSE: They have lost control in New Brunswick and they are losing control in Nova Scotia.

MR. LUSH: My feeling, anyway, is that it should not, because I have always felt that boards, they have not raised a lot of monies - we have got to face that in Newfoundland, they have not raised a lot of monies - the monies they have raised we have been grateful to them for it. We are grateful now to the tax authorities and I am sure the board is, for the monies that they are now getting to them.

But school boards to my mind if they have no financial problems can get down to what education is all about, and that is looking at the aims and objectives in their particular area, looking at curriculum development and that is what should be going on. There is the authority they would have, is the authority with school programmes and that is the kind of authority they want. That is the kind of authority they should have, and now all they are doing is looking into spending a few measly dollars, you know, so I think that is erroneous. It is a myth for us to think that school boards have a great degree of power because of the few cents they are now spending, and I will get onto that a little later.

But I claim really that full provincial funding provides opportunity for greater local control, because then the school boards can get into curriculum development, into programmes, and that is what education would be all about. School boards do not then have to concentrate on how to raise money. Rather they are able to concentrate their efforts more on improving the nature and quality of programmes and services provided for their children.

Before finishing up on this there are a couple of other points I want to allude to. The minister talked of the aim of improving

MR. LUSH: the quality of education in this Province, and naturally that must always be the aim of education, to improve the quality. And of course the difficulty has been that with the small amounts of money that we have been getting that we have not been able to do all of the things that we would like to do and in a time of restraints, since we do get a small amount of money, since we have no real frills in education; just about anything you do must of necessity affect the quality of education. If you look at the restraints this year and ask yourself, you know seriously, how could they not effect the quality of education in this Province?

Something I mentioned a couple of days ago here in a question to the minister, I think, was the seven superintendents, regional superintendents that were supposed to be, according to a recommendation from the Royal Commission, more commonly known as the Warren Report, recommended seven regional superintendents, and I said, I think, the government of the day accepted that and they appointed two. There are five not appointed, five. Now certainly these people, if they are a value to education, they must be appointed and I only know about one, and as far as I can understand about one, he is doing a tremendous job, that is the regional superintendent in Central Newfoundland. As a matter of fact the NTA passed a resolution, or attempted to get a resolution on the floor last year to see that these were appointed because this man was doing such a fantastic job. Well, you know, five not appointed, five regional superintendents, people who can be working in education in this Province not working.

MR. DOODY: Are they nominated?

MR. LUSH: Yes. Yes.

MR. SIMMONS: Departmental appointees.

MR. LUSH: They work at the departmental level. They are actually the liaison between boards and government. I think that is what really was supposed to be the function, plus getting out and helping with programme.

MR. DOODY: They super imposed on the DECs.

MR. LUSH: No. No.

MR. T. LUSH: Anyway, the one in Central Newfoundland is doing a fantastic job working with the principals and the supervisors in developing new programmes, and helping with remedial programmes. There were five people supposed to be working in this Province but the positions not filled. Then I mentioned the specialists, at least four specialists in the Department of Curriculum Instruction, people that could provide a tremendous help to teachers and consequently to students in this Province. The teachers are being denied the expertise of these people and, of course, more seriously, our students.

MR. SIMMONS: A lot of them were dissected, do not forget that.

MR. T. LUSH: Well, they should fill their positions, you know.

Then, of course, there was the reduction in the specialist grant. The minister mentioned that this specialist grant was up to, I just forget the exact terminology he used, but I think he said, that the specialist grant was to be up to \$1,500. Now it is my understanding, certainly that boards took this to be, because I think in the year previously that they gave the maximum \$1,500, so naturally boards assume they would be getting this \$1,500 again this year. And, of course, the thing that was probably not proper about this was that many boards ordered materials, thinking of course they were going to get their \$1,500 and that was dropped back, I think, it was somewhere just before Christmas that they were told that was going to go back to \$1,000. So here they were faced with the situation of ordering materials to supplement and support their programme to the tune of \$1,500 per whatever they were entitled to get, and then to find out it was down to \$1,000. You know, obviously that sort of thing has to affect the quality of education, the three things I have mentioned, the regional superintendents, the specialists, and the specialists grants.

The last thing I want to comment on in this respect is the school busing, and I do not want to say two minutes?—I just want to say that I think that the government should take a hard look at this.

Mr. Lush:

We discussed this the other day, and I think some people, a lot of us got emotional about it, you know, and we leave the impression that busing is all wrong. That certainly is not the case. There are certain areas where we shall always have to have busing. But I think we do have to take a look at it. And if there are areas where students can get a good education within their own settlements then I think we will have to take a good hard look at this situation. I do not think -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH: - we should just use buses just for the sake of getting students to a larger school.

I just want to say in closing, Mr. Chairman, to say that I think the time has come for a fresh look at education. I think this is an exciting time to be a Minister of Education, to be involved in government, particularly with education, at a time when we do not have to look at how many schools we are going to build because you are restricted on money, but it is a time to look at where we are going, it is a time to look at what type of education we are going to offer our people, a marvelous time, and I hope the government will offer our people - they will execute this responsibility and establish new directions for education in this Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir.

MR. R. SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. DOODY: 'Roger' is absolutely harmless.

MR. SIMMONS: Thank you! Thank you! Well, I may as well sit down at this point, Mr. Chairman, after that introduction from my good friend, the Minister of Finance and the Scrooge of Treasury Board to whom my colleague made reference. The reason why we do not have all the new school buildings and that kind of thing, do not have more specialists, more regional superintendents and that kind of thing, I hope he knows who my colleague from Terra Nova (Mr. Lush) was talking about. The man who put the wrong picture on

Mr. Simmons:

the cover, Had he put the other picture on the cover things would have been a lot more revealing than they are.

MR. DOODY: It would have been a great deal more interesting.

MR. SIMMONS: And it would have been a great deal more interesting.

Mr. Chairman, I believe my colleagues, particularly from Baie Verte-White Bay (Mr. Rideout) and Terra Nova (Mr. Lush), have certainly covered most of the points that I would want to address myself to, and I do not see the need for repetition.

MR. WHITE: "Tom Rideout" has not spoken.

MR. SIMMONS: The member for Baie Verte - White Bay (Mr. Rideout) has not spoken. He gave me the impression he had. I have been out at a -

MR. DOODY: Positive endings.

MR. SIMMONS: Well, he told me he needed an honourable mention, so! I was out at a meeting and I thought he had spoken, but he made a good impression anyway, Mr. Chairman, on me he made a tremendous -

MR. NEARY: What did he say?

MR. SIMMONS: That is why he made such a good impression. Mr. Chairman, as I was saying the -

MR. DOODY: Most of his party are very exciting indeed.

MR. NEARY: No, they are not.

MR. SIMMONS: Sir, the first time I agree with the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) which means I am headed in a direction about which I should take considerable caution.

Mr. Chairman, I do not particularly want to repeat the points that have been made so well. Perhaps the Minister of Municipal Affairs would explain it to the member for LaPoile. It should only take a day or so, Mr. Chairman.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh! Oh!

MR. NEARY: Is that Pumps, High Heels over there talking?

MR. SIMMONS: That is the high heels, Mr. Chairman, that is my physical stature bringing to bear again.

MR. NEARY: Get up on your stilts.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, it is a pity -

MR. NEARY: Just stand up.

MR. CHAIRMAN (MR. YOUNG): Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS: It is a pity there are no stilts, Mr. Chairman, for one's mental height, to enhance one's mental height. Too bad.

MR. NEARY: Why do you not stand up? You have to stand up in the House.

MR. SIMMONS: Well, I am comfortable sitting down here, Mr. Chairman,

Mr. Chairman, I would like to come to one or two subjects that have not been raised in any detail. I believe the minister in his

MR. SIMMONS: opening statement, which I am sorry I did not get to hear because I was involved in a meeting outside, but the matter of educational opportunity for the handicapped is an issue that I do not believe has had enough attention in the Newfoundland school situation.

Of late, and initially because of the efforts of Mrs. Vera Perlin, we have had considerable emphasis on the mentally retarded child, and I think there is a fairly adequate programme for that category of student in the large centre and the medium-sized centre. I say it that way because there still needs to be some emphasis for the mentally retarded child in the more rural parts of the Province. There is always a limit to what you can do in terms of providing facilities for minimal numbers of students, but having said that perhaps the direction we should be going in insofar as these students are concerned, I am talking about the mentally retarded child in the sparsely populated parts of the Province where busing to a central location is not feasible, where school is not within easy access, say within fifteen, twenty miles even. I might digress for an example and mention that in a situation I know fairly well, Springdale for example, mentally retarded students are bused in from South Brook, from Little Bay, from Beachside, well, you are talking distances of up to fifteen miles or so there.

But there are other cases, and take my own district as an example, Grey River, for example, there is no way that a mentally retarded child could commute to a school say in Burgeo or Ramea, the only centres of population there. And for those people, who have, I maintain, just as much right to an education as a child in any other part of the Province, for those people perhaps there ought to be a programme whereby you would bring them in to a central location in a dormitory accommodation and look after them in that way. We are not talking large numbers. I do not know what numbers we are talking. My guess is that in terms of the youngster in the communities of under a couple of thousand population, and who are

MR. SIMMONS: not accessible by road, who are not in a position to commute to larger centres on a daily basis, my guess is that you are probably talking anywhere from 200 to 400 people, probably, 200 to 400 students. So you would not need a large facility to accommodate those students. Indeed you could probably think of it as an annex or an addition to a couple of existing facilities. I would not want to see them all brought into St. John's, for example. Perhaps

MR. SIMMONS:

you can think in terms of Grand Falls and Corner Brook or even the medium size town, the Springdale, Grand Bank type town where they would be somewhat in their home environment, relatively speaking, but at the same time would have access to school facilities, access to dormitory facilities and to round-the-clock supervision. I think it is needed and I do not think any more needs to be said about that. It is an area that unless something has happened in the last year or so, unless there have been some new initiatives -

MR. HOUSE: It depends on the degree of retardation you are talking about because there are two or three levels. You are talking about the educible and the trainable.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes. If the minister would refresh my memory. Which is the -

MR. HOUSE: The educible are those with an IQ say just below eighty. That is the saw-off mark. But you can get a fair education -

MR. SIMMONS: The trainable are below the sixty-five?

MR. HOUSE: Yes.

MR. SIMMONS: The terms are terms I have not been using recently. I forgot the significance of them. But the educible mentally retarded are the people who are in those TMR classes.

MR. HOUSE: No.

MR. SIMMONS: No, I am sorry. They are the people in the slow learners classes and that kind of thing. And the TMP are the trainable. Yes, TMP, Trainable Mentally Retarded people are the people to whom Mrs. Perlin's schools were catering. Let us put it that for. For the Committee's information the TMP, the Trainable Mentally Retarded are the people accommodated in what is traditionally thought of in the Province as classes for the mentally retarded, the Vera Perlin Schools as they were commonly known until the department took them over.

I am addressing myself to both because as soon as you get into the small community - again I am talking about the community where you have the multi grade classroom, you have two or three grades in

MR. SIMMONS:

a classroom - you create the additional problem. You may well have a teacher who is competent and you do have the teacher who is competent to teach that educible mentally retarded child. But she has already got three other grades to handle and it becomes just a physical and an educational impossibility for to handle them in that situation. So to the minister's question I am really talking about both.

The solution might have to be somewhat different for both. In terms of the TMR, the Trainable Mentally Retarded I was thinking particularly of these when I made my comments about the centralized facility. I would like to hear some reaction from the minister. I strongly believe that some initiatives have to be taken there. I am a strong believer in the items that my colleague from Terra Nova (Mr. Lush) has advocated, the additional superintendents. I believe they are needed. I believe we need additional funds for school construction. I believe we need a number of other things that have been mentioned, the teacher-pupil ratio commitment of the government.

But if I were to rank the priority it would not be one that would require millions of dollars. It would be the one I am talking about right now, the centralized facilities for the Trainable Mentally Retarded and the other one that I want to come to in a moment, the facilities for the physically handicapped. These two would be the priority. The minister might want to have his officials put some kind of a preliminary cost estimate on this and the Minister of Finance, if he can be pleasantly surprised about dollar signs any more, I think he would be kind of pleasantly surprised to find that the programme we are talking about would at once reach a relatively large number of people and at the same time, relatively speaking, cost very little money.

First of all let me just mention what I mean when I say reaching a relatively large number of people. Not only would it reach the child

MR. SIMMONS:

concerned, the family concerned, but it would reach the community and the schools which are presently affected because in a number of cases, in particular as it relates to the educible mentally retarded, that is, the students who are attending regular classes in many cases right now, and they are doing it with a lot of co-operation from school administrations, teachers and principals and so on. They are doing it sometimes at the expense of many of the other students. I am not preaching isolation here. I am not preaching barring them up in separate cells or facilities. I am not saying that. But I am saying in a good many cases what is happening is that these students are at once in a situation where they cannot derive very much benefit at all, and at the same time are effectively interrupting the possibility of other students doing very well. So there are a lot of people affected not only those who directly are mentally retarded. Mr. Chairman, I think I have elaborated sufficiently on what I feel is the need for the Trainable Mentally retarded child.

I would like to come to another group and a group of people who I believe have been ignored almost -

MR. SIMMONS:

I will even strike the almost- they have been ignored completely, just been ignored. There has never been a programme of any kind for the physically handicapped people if you exclude a couple of groups from that term, if you exclude the blind child and exclude the deaf-mute child for whom there are programmes here and in Halifax. The government, of course, has financial participation in the Halifax school as well. If you exclude those groups, the deaf-mute and the blind child, and come to the persons who have other physical handicaps - I am talking about people who have cerebral palsy, for instance, advanced forms of multiple sclerosis, talking about people who have visible physical handicaps, people who are in wheelchairs - there is no programme for these people. They cannot get themselves to school. I might acknowledge that the department does have a programme to finance their getting to school, to finance their transportation. If they cannot get on a regular bus because they are in a wheelchair, there is a programme, a financial programme to take care of the child, take him in a taxi, that kind of thing. There is that programme.

These children have a requirement which is far beyond the problem of getting them to school because when they are there they are with people who are physically very active and with whom they have difficulty identifying in some respects, but even more important for whom the teacher can do very, very little. Now, Mr. Chairman, I would just like to quote one set of instances to dramatize the problem I am talking about. I point out to members of the Committee that the people I am talking about are not very visible people. You do not see them very often when you go knocking on doors unless you go in. They are not people who get out around. They are usually confined to the home because every time they move they need a second person to go with them to push the wheelchair to take them out. So you do not very often see them. Let me tell you about one particular community. It is in my district. It is the community of St. Albans. I am talking about one town only. I am sure this story, perhaps not as dramatically, but in degree it could be told by any member in this Committee about just about

MR. SIMMONS:

any community in his district. St. Albans: I can tell you about a set of parents, a couple in St. Albans who have two girls, one sixteen years of age, one about nine. Both of them have a rare disease. The name of the disease escapes me now. But the effect of it is that they are unable to sit up. They have never been able to sit. They were born this way. Both girls, nine and sixteen, are confined permanently to cribs in the kitchen, cots in the kitchen. They have strength in their arms but not in their legs. They have no joints as it were and they cannot sit up or they cannot stand up. But they have strength in their arms. They can pull themselves up. For that reason the father has had to board the crib up all the way to the ceiling so they do not pull themselves out over the crib. They sit there as infants would in diapers and that is where their existence has been ever since they were born, one nine, one sixteen.

In that same town there is a couple - by the way, these two girls are two of eight in a family - in that same town there is another couple who have two boys who are in the identical situation, two cots in a kitchen boarded up to the ceiling - the boys, the ages, as I remember them, run about seven and ten years of age. That is the second family.

In the same town there is a boy about twelve, same condition, in a cot all his life, about twelve. Neither one of the five that I have mentioned so far, - they have all been tested, by the way - neither one of the five is mentally retarded. All of them, apart from their physical handicap, are normal people, except that now, of course, never having been to any educational institution, they are illiterate, they are functionally illiterate. But neither of the five is mentally retarded.

One other family I would like to mention, a fourth family - I have left this one deliberately until last - the family has nine children, eight of whom have been in wheelchairs since birth, eight of the nine. The ages now run from twelve to twenty-eight. The twenty-eight year old fellow is here in the Hoyles Home in St. John's. We made some arrangements for him in the last year or so.

AN HON. MEMBER: Is that St. Albans?

MR. SIMMONS: Yes, same town, same town.

MR. SIMMONS:

This particular family had a mother who had considerable initiative. I am not saying the others did not, but I just want to zero in on this particular one right now. She was able to make arrangements by cajoling and begging and doing everything else, she was able to get help, and also because her husband was regularly employed, able to get financial help to get the wheelchairs and to get these youngsters to school. All of the nine at one point or other has been to school for varying periods. But I have mentioned, Mr. Chairman, eight, plus one, plus two, plus two, I have mentioned thirteen people in one community. Five of the thirteen have never been to school in their lives because and only because they are physically handicapped. Neither one of the five has any mental retardation and that is supported by testing.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I have just mentioned that to dramatize the need. That situation could be duplicated many times over around the Province. There is no programme whatsoever to take care of that situation from an educational standpoint, or if I were talking about another department I may say from a nursing standpoint. Let us forget for a moment the educational need there, the educational vacuum which exists there for those five in particular. Let us think about the mother of the two girls who has six other normal children to look after. Think about what her existence has been for the last sixteen years. Permanently, for sixteen years in the one case and nine in the second case, she has either had one or two cots in her kitchen, right in her kitchen. They have their complete existence in that kitchen. Think of the family, the social connotations for that particular couple. I would say, Mr. Chairman, that both from an educational, in the narrow sense of the term, and a broadly social consideration, I believe we as taxpayers and as a Province have a responsibility to those parents and to those children. I make a strong plea as I can that the Department of Education would take under advisement the matters I have laid out and not for St. Albans only but as a microcosm of what is the problem provincially, take it under advisement, and also the Department of Recreation and Rehabilitation. I think there is a very real need there. It is a need that we should in all

MR. SIMMONS:

conscience be addressing ourselves to. We are not talking a lot of money. But if there were a programme, if there were an institution - and I am saying, and let me say it more clearly, I am saying that in the case of those five people, in particular I mention the first three families and some of the other eight in this other one family, the eight children I mentioned, the need is somewhat past for some of them because as I remember them four or five of them are eighteen years old or over. But for the other three, who are twelve, fourteen and fifteen, I believe, they are going to regular school and perhaps is the best place to leave them at this point. But were in five years earlier in their lives the programme I am talking about would meet their needs too.

Let us talk about the other five, the two girls in the one family, the two boys in the other family and the other boy. Those five children, and perhaps it is too late for them too. As I pointed out one of these five is sixteen years of age now. But there are others around this Province. I repeat, I make a strong plea as I possibly can, that somebody listen to the plight of those particular people and the other dozens, perhaps hundreds that they represent around the Province and that as a result of listening to their plea something will be done (1) to cater to their educational need which is not being met at all right now; (2) that something be done to cater to the overall nursing requirement and the overall social requirement that I have laid out in terms of its effect on the families in the communities concerned.

I believe, Mr. Chairman, it is a bit of a sad commentary. This is not politics at all. I think this is above politics. It is the kind of thing that all of us as taxpayers ought to be awfully concerned about. I said I believed when we were talking about the Department of Social Services, or elsewhere earlier in Committee, I said that I often get the feeling as I see some of the

MR. SIMMONS: situation that these parents find themselves that I get the feeling, 'There but for the grace of God go I.' I have said many times I am proud to be in a political constituency or a country or a nation or a Province which looks after them so well, the people who cannot look after themselves properly through no fault of their own. As a taxpayer and a citizen I always take particular humble pride, if that is possible, in being one of the taxpayers involved. But I believe if we think particularly - it is a bit of a contradiction, I admit, to the Minister of Finance but I always would like to give the minister something to think about and I hope in particular he will think about the problem that I have laid out because it is going to affect -

MR. DOODY: Institute a reform?

MR. SIMMONS: Yes. He is one of the people, of course, who has not only lived with it but mastered it to a much more considerable degree than the people I have talked about have. And perhaps we are lucky at this time that we have as the Minister of Finance a gentleman who can identify with the problem.

MR. DOODY: Not all the time.

MR. SIMMONS: A very kind Scrooge, if he wants another contradiction. We think of him over here as a very kind Scrooge. I want the Minister of Education to get that message, too because I hope he will talk very soon to the President of the Treasury Board and -

MR. HOUSE: Not much benefit -

MR. DOODY: I can feel by his remarks it is a love story.

MR. ROBERTS: The 'basement'.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, let me make it clear that I have never owned a house of ill-dispute and any meetings we have will be held in the basement of my colleague, from Trinity-Bay de Verde.

MR. ROBERTS: In view of what has gone on at the hon. gentleman's house before he bought it, he might be cautious.

MR. SIMMONS: I live at 102 Patrick Street.

MR. DOODY: Oh my God!

MR. SIMMONS: A house which has a history, not always very

MR. SIMMONS: happy. Enough said.

MR. ROBERTS: Was the name Fox? Was it?

MR. SIMMONS: No. No.

MR. ROBERTS: Oh! That was the lady's name, was it?

MR. SIMMONS: No. No. The name of the lady that the Leader of the Opposition wants seen in the record, I believe, is Mrs. Parsons.

MR. ROBERTS: I remember the gentleman's name because when I was Minister of Health he was in at Waterford, Neil. They were letting him out on weekend passes.

MR. SIMMONS: The name of the young fellow involved is O'Neil actually.

MR. ROBERTS: O'Neil?

MR. SIMMONS: Yes. Mr. Chairman -

MR. ROBERTS: I do not know what this has to do with the minister's salary.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, where I live, of course -

MR. ROBERTS: Now if it were the Minister of Tourism's salary we would have a lot to say.

MR. SIMMONS: Where I live, Mr. Chairman, is important only -

MR. ROBERTS: How did we get on to where you live?

MR. SIMMONS: Where I live is important to this Committee only in the sense that it reinforces that I fear not the dead but the living.

MR. ROBERTS: Hear, hear! When you see the living you are surrounded with you should fear them.

MR. SIMMONS: With lots of fear. Real paranoia, as a matter of fact.

Mr. Chairman, just to clue up my thought so I do not have to pursue this tomorrow, I believe that the need I have outlined is a very real one, it is a desperate one. And I cannot think of a bigger, a more immediate, a more pressing priority in the whole expenditure range of the Province than coming up with a programme for institutional care for the two groups of people I have talked

MR. SIMMONS: about, the trainable mentally retarded in the small community who do not have commuting access to school facilities, and the physically handicapped, excluding the deaf-mute and the blind child, both groups of whom I believe are adequately taken care of. I would like the minister at some point to respond to that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

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

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply have considered the matters to them referred, have passed estimates of expenditure under the following Heading VIII, Social Services, all items without amendment, have made further progress and ask leave to sit again.

On motion report received and adopted,
Committee ordered to sit again on tomorrow.

On motion the House at its rising
adjourned until tomorrow Wednesday April 28, 1976, at 3:00 p.m.

C O N T E N T S

April 27, 1976

Page

ORAL QUESTIONS

Query as to how quickly the Public Accounts Committee will be established. Mr. Roberts, Mr. Wells.	5818
Meeting of the Striking Committee requested so that the Public Accounts Committee can be established. Mr. Roberts, Mr. Wells.	5818
Query as to whether the Public Accounts Committee will be given the power to send for officials and papers. Mr. Roberts, Mr. Wells.	5819
The Kippens Bridge. Mr. Hodder, Mr. Morgan.	5819
Action taken to ensure that construction of three park buildings in the Salmonier Wilderness park is now progressing satisfactorily. Mr. Roberts, Mr. Hickey.	5819
Request that a copy of the contract be laid on the table of the House together with an explanation of what work has been done and what remains to be done. Mr. Roberts, Mr. Hickey.	5821
Value of the contract. Mr. Roberts, Mr. Hickey.	5821
Extent of the contract completed and the amount paid to the contractor. Mr. Roberts, Mr. Hickey.	5821
Query as to whether the wilderness area will not be opened by a road, thereby destroying the character of the area. Mr. Smallwood, Mr. Hickey.	5822
Query as to the OPEC nations investing in the Come By Chance refinery. Mr. Rowe, Premier Moores.	5822
Negotiations with the OPEC nations. Mr. Rowe, Premier Moores.	5824
Negotiations with OPEC through the Premier's office or the receiver for creditors of the Come By Chance refinery. Mr. Rowe, Premier Moores.	5824
Query as to progress of the RCMP investigation into the alleged fraud with respect to the emergency fishing gear replacement programme. Capt. Winsor, Mr. W. Carter.	5824
Establishment of a judicial enquiry into the matter. Capt. Winsor, Premier Moores.	5825
Redirected to Mr. Hickman.	5825
Query as to when the investigation began and its anticipated duration. Mr. Roberts, Mr. Hickman.	5827
Number of claims involved. Mr. Roberts, Mr. Hickman.	5827
Query as to whether the Minister of Justice can assure the public that the matter will be concluded as quickly as possible. Mr. Roberts, Mr. Hickman.	5830
Query as to how the matter came to light. Mr. Roberts, Mr. Hickman.	5831
Redirected to Mr. Crosbie.	5831

C O N T E N T S - 2

<u>ORAL QUESTIONS (continued)</u>	Page
Temporal connection between the fire in the Department of Fisheries and discovery of the alleged fraud. Mr. Roberts, Mr. Crosbie.	5832
Query as to whether the then minister or his predecessor read the 1974 report of the Auditor General pertaining to the gear replacement programme. Mr. Neary, Mr. Crosbie.	5832
Query as to whether the investigation covers not only the emergency gear replacement programme, but the ordinary gear replacement programme as well. Mr. Neary, Mr. Crosbie.	5833
Ability to monitor increases in the cost of goods and services. Mr. Flight, Mr. Murphy.	5833
Communications with the Anti-Inflation Board. Mr. Flight, Mr. Murphy.	5834
Establishment of a Department of Consumer Affairs. Mr. Flight, Premier Moores.	5835
Query as to whether residents of coastal Labrador who had been unable to date to take a caribou despite extension of the season to April 30 might be permitted to use aircraft to reach the hunting grounds and return hunters and game to their communities. Mr. Simmons, Mr. Hickey.	5836
Possible use of aircraft reiterated. Mr. Simmons, Mr. Hickey.	5836
<u>ORDERS OF THE DAY</u>	
Committee of Supply - Head VIII - Social Services.	
<u>801-01</u>	
Mr. Brett	5837
Mr. Hodder	5865
Mr. Neary	5880
Mr. Rideout	5905
Mr. Brett	5911
Mr. Smallwood	5929
Mr. Neary	5939
Mr. Brett	5946
On motion 801-01 through to 805-03-07 carried.	5946
<u>806-01</u>	
Mr. Hodder	5947
Mr. Brett	5947
On motion 806-01 through to 806-02-02 carried.	5947
<u>806-02-03</u>	
Mr. Roberts	5947
The Committee rose at 6:00 p.m.	5948
The Committee resumed at 8:00 p.m.	5949
<u>806-02-03</u>	
Mr. Brett	5949
On motion 806-02-03 carried.	5949

C O N T E N T S - 3

<u>ORDERS OF THE DAY (continued)</u>	<u>Page</u>
Committee of Supply - Head VIII - Social Services (continued)	
<u>806-03-01</u>	
Mr. Brett	5949
Mr. Rideout	5951
Mr. Brett	5952
Mr. Rowe	5952
On motion 806-03-01 carried.	5954
On motion 807-01 through 807-03-02 carried.	5954
<u>808-01</u>	
Mr. Neary	5954
Mr. Brett	5956
On motion, 808-01 through 809-01 carried.	5957
<u>809-02</u>	
Mr. Neary	5957
Mr. Brett	5957
Mr. Rideout	5957
On motion 809-02 carried.	5957
<u>809-03</u>	
Mr. Neary	5957
Mr. Brett	5957
Mr. Neary	5959
Mr. Brett	5959
Mr. Neary	5960
On motion 809-03 carried.	5962
<u>806-03-01</u>	
Mr. Rowe	5962
Mr. Brett	5962
Mr. Rideout	5962
Mr. Brett	5962
Mr. Rideout	5962
Mr. Brett	5962
Mr. Rideout	5964
Mr. Rowe	5965
Mr. Brett	5966
Mr. Neary	5968
Mr. Rideout	5971
Mr. Murphy	5972
On motion 806-03-01 through 806-03-03 carried.	5979
Discontinuance of the special ambulance service for Bell Island.	
Mr. Brett	5980
Mr. Doody	5983
On motion Head VIII without amendment, carried.	5985

C O N T E N T S - 4

<u>ORDERS OF THE DAY (continued)</u>	Page
Committee of Supply (continued)	
Head VI - Department of Education Estimates.	5986
<u>601-01</u>	
Mr. House	5986
Mr. Lush	6007
Mr. Simmons	6030
The Committee rose, reported having passed Head VIII Social Services, all items without amendment and reported having made other progress, asked leave to sit again and was ordered to sit again on tomorrow.	6045
ADJOURNMENT	6045