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(Hansard)

Speaker: Honourable Patrick McNicholas

Tuesday

7 April 1987

The House met at 3:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

Order, please!

Statements by Ministers

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be able to announce details today of our Fisheries-Related Job Creation programme which will be undertaken by my department this year.

MR. BARRY:

Getting out for an election?

MR. RIDEOUT:

You better keep your hat on. That could be tomorrow's announcement.

We will be concentrating our efforts on carrying out repairs, maintenance and expansions to a number of fishing facilities throughout the Province. To date, we have approved 38 projects, creating 373 jobs, -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:

- and costing, Mr. Speaker, \$567,000. Many of the jobs that will be created under this Fisheries programme will be short-term because of the large repair -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. RIDEOUT:

Hold on now!

- and maintenance component of the programme. However, all of the projects are necessary to provide improved facilities for our fishermen. On the other hand, Mr. Speaker, some of the jobs, especially those in the area of aquaculture and salmon enhancement, will run for in excess of twenty weeks.

The following projects have been approved and will begin as soon as weather conditions permit: Trout River, repairs to fish handling facility; Forteau, repairs to the community stage; Bonavista, repairs to the Marine Service Centre; Bonavista, repairs to the Regional Ice Plant; Southern Harbour, repairs to the Marine Service Centre; Southern Harbour, repairs to the community stage; Lawn, replace ceiling in the fish handling facility; Keels, extension to the community stage wharf and canopy; Princeton, maintenance on the gear shed; Plate Cove West, reshingle and repair the wharf canopy; St. Brendan's, construct cribbing around the community stage; Duntara, repairs to the boat storage area; Summerville, repairs to the gear shed; Harbour Deep, repairs and painting to the community stage; Red Bay, boat shed, repairs and painting; Williams Harbour, repairs to the slipway; Virgin Arm, upgrading and new decking on the wharf; Morton's Harbour, repairs and decking to the slipway; Harbour Round, extension to the slipway; Burlington, complete construction of the fisherman's wharf; Brent's Cove, repairs and upgrading to the fisherman's wharf; Purbeck's Cove, repairs and upgrading to the fisherman's wharf; Fleur-de-Lys,

repairs and upgrading to a fisherman's wharf; that is a great district. Campbellton, repairs to the slipway; Harry's Harbour, a new decking for the fisherman's wharf; Beachside, wharf and breastwork extension; Jackson's Arm, interior/exterior painting to the baited trawl unit; Baine Harbour, interior/exterior painting to the baited trawl unit; Nain, exterior painting to three buildings in the fish plant complex; Hopedale, exterior painting of two buildings to the fish plant; in Cartwright, we will be extending the utility building at our Marine Service Centre; in Bartlett's Harbour, there will be a concrete floor and electrical upgrading to the community stage; in Rushoon, concrete floor and painting in the community stage; in Makkovik, renovations to our departmental office building; in Mary's Harbour, we will be constructing a new storage shed; in Fleur de Lys, we will be installing a hoist at the landing wharf; in Jerryseaside we will be doing wharf repairs; and in the constituency of Grand Falls, Mr. Speaker, we will be contributing 10 per cent to the Exploit's Salmon Enhancement Project, \$100,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:

To the Exploit's Salmon Enhancement Project which serves Windsor-Buchans, and Exploits and Grand Falls, Mr. Speaker, a total of \$100,000 to create 75 jobs over a five month period.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, as I indicated

earlier in this statement, these 38 projects will create 373 jobs and will cost \$567,000. My department intends to sponsor other worthwhile projects under this programme as well, and in that regard, further announcements will be forthcoming.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Twillingate.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for giving me a copy of the statement, and I am sure we welcome his announcement on all of these jobs that are being created for a grand total of \$567,000.

Mr. Speaker, I understand a lot of these jobs are already completed. I understand some of this work has been done.

MR. RIDEOUT:

No. All new projects. Do your homework.

MR. W. CARTER:

I see.

It is interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that some of the work being undertaken involves work to government wharves. Now I am wondering, is this a new departure or is the Province now maybe accepting responsibility for something that would normally be a responsibility of the federal government? Because as we all know public wharves are the responsibility of the federal

government.

I notice in this list that the minister has read there are a number of jobs here that in my view would normally be the responsibility of the Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans or Small Craft Harbours.

Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to note that the government will be spending \$567,000 to provide 373 very short-term jobs.

I am told, Mr. Speaker, that if the government today were willing to spend an amount of money to put in a water system in Port au Choix, for example, that there would be 450 almost permanent jobs created. So we have a case here where we are spending \$567,000 for 373 short-term jobs when with the expenditure of probably less money we could provide 450 jobs almost on a permanent basis in the Port au Choix area. Mr. Speaker, I wonder can the minister indicate, too, if these jobs are being done under a federal/provincial cost sharing programme, for example, section 38?

MR. RIDEOUT:
All provincial.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. W. CARTER:
So it is 100 per cent provincial. Mr. Speaker, we welcome the announcement. Again I remind the minister that there are things that can be done in the Province, as in the district of my friend from St. Barbe (Mr. Furey), that could provide long-term jobs.

Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:
Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to thank the minister for giving me a copy of his statement. It is interesting that Spring cleaning and a little bit of touch up of paint is released by this government as a make-work project. I notice he indicates that the \$567,000 will be only providing a few jobs in the sense that it is 373 for short periods of time. We would have been, I think, a little bit more instructive if the minister had had the courtesy to tell us the number of man-weeks involved here, since he says a lot of it will be for materials for paint, and so on and so forth. My estimation is that if, say, half of it was for materials, then we are down to probably looking at maybe a three weeks average work for all the 373 people involved.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is appropriate that we do our Spring work, that we paint up these facilities, that we do the minor amount of repairs involved. I think it is pretty pathetic on the part of this government that it is used as an introduction of a make-work programme when it is just minor maintenance that has to be done anyway.

MR. SPEAKER:
Before calling Oral Questions, there are a number of announcements.

This is dated April 6.

Members of the First Draft, Royal Artillery volunteers, who sailed for overseas April 14, 1940, wish to express their loyalty and devotion to the Province of

Newfoundland and Labrador and ask that the Speaker of the House of Assembly would convey these sentiments to the Government of the Province. That is signed by H.E. Long, secretary.

I thought hon. members would like me to read that to them.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

I would like to welcome to the visitor's gallery twenty-six Grade XI students with their two teachers, Fred Framp and Harvey Jackman, from St. Michael's High School in Arnold's Cove.

I would like to welcome also Mr. Mickey Devine, Vice-President of Operations, Abitibi-Price Canada.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

Oral Questions

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Premier. It concerns a package that was sent by the provincial government to Cumberland Farms on September 5, 1986. I think these issues were also dealt with in a meeting of August 20, 1986, between officials of the government and officials of Cumberland Farms. That package, as the Premier knows, contained statements about the quality of the Newfoundland work force. Let me ask was the Premier aware of this package being sent, was he aware of its contents, and does he agree with the statements

contained in that package?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

It so happens that I have this package here before me today and the package that went is one that I was aware of. I was aware of everything that was in it. It is a package that goes out to all potential investors who can be attracted to the Province, which gives a run-down on the Newfoundland economy and upon the labour force in the Province. The statement to which the hon gentleman refers, from the media over the last couple of days, had to do with two particular areas. One had to do with welders and the other had to do with crane operators. It also deals with electricians, sheet metal people and other tradesmen in the Province. The statement that the hon. gentleman refers to is under welders: 'At present there are 850 journeymen welders, 140 apprentices and 300 non-classified welders in the Province. The present rate of employment is 55 per cent. The future growth of this occupation is anticipated due to offshore industry demands in the 1990s. Quality: A major problem of this sector is the level of quality available. Few local welders are used to strict tolerance levels in their welding because they have not had that experience. Local training institutions have not kept abreast with technological changes. This category will require significant upgrading since offshore work also requires numerous welding skills.'

Mr. Speaker, over the last couple of years, with the Minister of Career Development (Mr. Power) and the Minister of Labour (Mr.

Blanchard), we have identified this. If the hon. member remembers, under an announcement that the Minister of Career Development made some time ago, we have established a number of courses dealing with high pressure welding and welding which involves high tolerance levels in order to overcome what may be some problems. So we have already instituted, and are in the process of instituting, those training programmes.

Secondly, there was a problem in the licensing of some of the welders who could do this work but did not have the licensing. Through the good offices of the Minister of Labour, he was able to expedite with the federal government the licensing procedures so that those welders, who did not have that particular certificate, have been now expedited and they have qualified and now have the kind of training and certificate that is needed. So, all of the extra work has been done to ensure that there are sufficient welders with those high tolerance levels that are needed to supply not only Come By Chance, which now has 300 jobs out there, 300 people working there today in Come By Chance, but also for the offshore.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, what a confession for a Premier to make! Let me ask him about one other quotation that is contained in that statement. It

says about the pipe-fitters in this Province that there has been a lack of work which has caused the trade to deteriorate in skills. But, more importantly, it goes on to say, that poor employer attitude and employee attitude related to technology change is adversely affecting the occupation.

Let me ask does the Premier indeed agree with the statements all in there that basically say Newfoundland workers are inferior to their mainland and North American counterparts.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, it does not say that the workers of Newfoundland are inferior. It says that, because of lack of work over the last number of years, they have not been able to stay in the work force so that they are not at a level that would be desirable. Of course, we are taking actions on that score as well.

The whole thing is there are 400 certified and 200 non-certified pipe fitters. We do not intend to put out to potential investors lies or half-truths about the question of where we stand, Mr. Speaker. We are going to tell the truth. There are 400 certified and 200 non-certified pipe-fitters in the Province. There was little demand for pipe-fitters in recent years and unemployment is at about 70 per cent. A major demand for pipe-fitters will occur with the onset of offshore oil development. Then it says, 'Lack of work in this category has caused.' It is the lack of work that has caused, not that our workers cannot, if given the opportunity to work, be just as

good as Canadians or North Americans or people elsewhere.

MR. TULK:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
A final supplementary, the hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:
Mr. Speaker, the Premier has constantly said in this Legislature that outside investors and people from outside the Province will not invest in this Province because of various weaknesses in our economy, including the labour force. How, in the name of the Almighty, I ask the Premier, can you expect that to change when the government of this Province, in a meeting of August 20, and in a subsequent package sent to Cumberland Farms, was carrying out its own espionage plot and conspiracy plot against the workers of this Province? How can you expect that to change?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
Mr. Speaker, we have been very successful in the last couple of years in attracting quite a few investors into the Province. We have attracted Newfoundland Energy, with 300 jobs at Come By Chance today. We have attracted in Minworth from the British Isles, who are down redeveloping the fluorspar in St. Lawrence. We attracted Kruger Inc. in here to take over from Bowaters, which has provided more work at Corner Brook than they have had for years and years and years, with a modernization programme of \$200 million of which \$150 million is already committed. We have attracted in BP-SELCO to start our

first gold mine. We have attracted in the fishing industry a whole range of people all the way from China and Hong Kong to America to Canada. So, Mr. Speaker, we are very proud of our record in the people that we have attracted into the Province. If we have a problem in one part of our labour force we intend to correct it. We are doing that now in welders, we are doing it now in crane operators, we will do it in pipe-fitters, we will do it wherever it is necessary to ensure that they have the qualifications that are needed to carry out the work as a result of all the investors that we have attracted to the Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. TULK:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
That was a final supplementary.

MR. CALLAN:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. CALLAN:
Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Labour. Mr. Speaker, we have seen the kind of documentation that went down to Cumberland Farms, that was sent down by the Minister of Development and Tourism (Mr. Barrett), we know the kind of confrontation that existed at Come By Chance in a big way for a couple of months and is still going on there to a lesser extent, so let me ask the minister, Mr. Speaker, in view of these two disturbing facts, the kind of stuff that went on the Cumberland

Farms and what is happening, particularly at Come By Chance but all around the Province, this confrontation over labour matters, does he not see himself as being the cause of this labour unrest around the Province and what is the minister prepared to do about it, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Labour.

MR. BLANCHARD:

Mr. Speaker, obviously the hon. the member for Bellevue is very short on something to ask for a question today, my being the cause. Mr. Speaker, I have had an excellent career in labour relations, I am there to assist -

MR. CALLAN:

Had.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. BLANCHARD:

He is playing to the gallery, Mr. Speaker. There is a group of people in the gallery who know me, have known me for years; I have worked with them, I am available to meet with them at any particular time, have met with them on a number of occasions; anything I can do I have done, and it is rather ridiculous, Mr. Speaker, for the hon. the member for Bellevue to ask that question. I suggest he ask something intelligent.

MR. CALLAN:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Bellevue.

MR. CALLAN:

A supplementary, let me ask the Minister of Labour, Mr. Speaker,

how does the Minister of Labour propose to deal with the documentation that was sent down to Cumberland Farms? How does the minister intend to deal with that, especially in view of the fact that it means a loss of credibility for the Minister of Labour? The minister tries to squirm around that and will not admit it, but what is the minister prepared to do about the documentation that was sent down to Cumberland Farms to get back and retain some of his credibility?

MR. BLANCHARD:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Labour.

MR. BLANCHARD:

Mr. Speaker, as usual the hon. member seems to be a little bit confused. I have made my position very clear to the media. I was called Sunday night at about 11:15, Mr. Speaker, about the item that appeared in *The Sunday Express*. I made a clear statement to the media that I would stack our tradesmen in this Province against any tradesmen anywhere in Canada, anywhere in North America -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. BLANCHARD:

- anywhere in the world, Mr. Speaker. They go abroad and they make a name for themselves. They are the cream of the crop. Mr. Speaker, he is confused somewhat. It is not within my departmental jurisdiction to deal with training now, he is about two years behind the time, because that resides now in the Department of Career Development and Advanced Studies, and we all know the good work that

is being done there to put on courses, which have been announced over recent weeks. He is somewhat confused, Mr. Speaker, but in case he thought that we have some doubts on this side of the House about the quality of our tradesmen, there are absolutely no doubts. There are people in this gallery today, Mr. Speaker, who have asked me over the last couple of years -

MR. FLIGHT:

Who are laughing at you.

MR. BLANCHARD:

They may be laughing, but it is not at this side of the House. There are people who have asked about consultations with my colleague about the putting on of courses to update trades for the extra kinds of skills that may be needed. We know where our tradesmen came from; they came up through the apprenticeship system, Mr. Speaker, most of the people in the trade today, and it is a time-tested, very much of a traditional trade. It is part of the British system. They get a certain level of mark, Mr. Speaker, they have a red seal on their diploma, and they can take that and it is presentable anywhere in Canada, and it is recognized, Mr. Speaker. So he has gotten the wrong answer, I know, because he wants us to say we do not respect our tradesmen.

MR. CALLAN:

A final supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER:

A final supplementary, the hon. the member for Bellevue.

MR. CALLAN:

Mr. Speaker, let me say to the same minister, then, that we do not know the names of the

shareholders of Newfoundland Energy. I assume that the Premier tabled the documents that he was reading from earlier, Mr. Speaker, the documentation that was sent to Cumberland Farms. Let me ask the Minister of Labour, Mr. Speaker, does he not agree that the deal that was made with Newfoundland Energy and Cumberland Farms was a sweetheart deal, a deal made, Mr. Speaker, at the expense of Dor Chemicals, and, Mr. Speaker, also at the expense of the people of this Province, especially the people of the Come By Chance general area? Would the minister answer that question?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Labour.

MR. BLANCHARD:

Mr. Speaker, I am not certain that that question deserves an answer, but I will tell him in any case. He just heard the Premier say in this House that there are over 300 people working. Now not everybody is pleased with the way that thing has gone, but nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, there are over 300 people working and his opinion that it is a sweetheart deal, that is his opinion, he is entitled to his opinions.

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Consumer Affairs (Mr. Russell). It has to do with the recent court decision in which a decision to allow people in subsidized housing to avail themselves of the Landlord Tenancy Act has been overturned by the Newfoundland

Supreme Court of Appeal. My question to the minister is this: Since there are a number of elements of this Landlord Tenancy legislation in the procedures there that are helpful to people in subsidized housing, such as notice of eviction and mediation between the landlord and the tenant and so on, what is the government's new position, now that the legal position is clear, with regard to including the residents of subsidized housing under his legislation to protect tenants?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Consumer Affairs.

MR. RUSSELL:

We have been recently made aware of that court decision. I am presently having my officials review it. As I mentioned in the last session of this House, I think we are in the final draft stage now of a new Residential Tenancies Act, and we will certainly take into consideration this latest court decision.

I am not in a position at the present time to comment specifically on it.

MR. FENWICK:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

I understand how you cannot comment on a court decision that has just recently been released, but I would like to know what the thinking of the Cabinet, or the thinking of your department itself is with regard to the general principle that all tenants in our

Province should be covered by legislation that protects their basic rights.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Consumer Affairs.

MR. RUSSELL:

Well, as I said, Mr. Speaker, bearing in mind that officials are still looking at this court decision, being against what the hon. member asked is something like being against motherhood. Certainly I think that all consumers in this Province have a basic right to be protected, and if it is feasible and possible and legal and practical to do it in any piece of legislation within the jurisdiction of my department, then we will certainly take a serious look at it.

MR. FENWICK:

A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A final supplementary.

MR. FENWICK:

My final supplementary is this: Since there is a review ongoing, could the minister give us some indication of what time frame we are looking at to see new legislation that may indeed effect these kinds of changes?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Consumer Affairs.

MR. RUSSELL:

We are certainly doing everything in our power to try to perhaps have it introduced and passed, hopefully in this session of the Legislature. I cannot be any more specific than that at the present time.

MR. FUREY:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the member for St. Barbe.

MR. FUREY:
Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a question to the Premier. Now that government has given this American company, Cumberland Farms, a full and comprehensive briefing about labour in Newfoundland, will the Premier now give Newfoundlanders and Labradorians information about this American company, Newfoundland Energy? Who are Newfoundland Energy? Are there any Newfoundlanders involved in this company? Why are they located in Bermuda?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
Those questions have been answered before, Mr. Speaker, many times, inside and outside this House. As the principals of Newfoundland Energy have indicated there are no Newfoundlanders or Canadians involved in the company. It is a group of Americans who have invested money in Newfoundland Energy and registered their company in Bermuda. So that is the story, Mr. Speaker, and if they need any more information they will have to go ask Newfoundland Energy.

The difference between now and when the Liberals were in power, Mr. Speaker, is that now we have a company that is not asking for any money from government. We have 300 Newfoundlanders working out

there, we are presently paying off a \$50 million bill that was left over from the Liberal Government when they did their first fiasco at Come By Chance.

MR. FUREY:
Mr. Speaker, a supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the member for St. Barbe.

MR. FUREY:
Mr. Speaker, that answer is not good enough. That just is not good enough.

Mr. Speaker, we are talking about a company that has first call on Hibernia oil. Now who is Newfoundland Energy that it has first call on our birthright?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
Mr. Speaker, Mr. Brown, the President of Newfoundland Energy, and some of the other investors who are involved in Newfoundland Energy were down here when the announcement on Come By Chance was made. The hon. gentleman had an opportunity to meet some of them, if he had wandered down to Hotel Newfoundland on the day that we made the announcement, Mr. Speaker, and he could have been there and I would have introduced him to some of the investors. If he wants to find out, like any other company, he can go and pursue it with that private company. They are here, Mr. Speaker, reactivating a Liberal white elephant. They have done a real good job on reactivating a fiasco, a scar on our past, that was propagated by the Liberal Government of the day, the largest bankruptcy of its time in the history of Canada. They left a

\$50 million bill on the table, which Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are still paying off, that was taken by Shaheen's companies from the operating company at Come By Chance. Now we are there with a company that is a private sector company, they need no money from the Government of Newfoundland or from the taxpayers, and we have 300 people working. If they want to find out about Newfoundland Energy or any other company, they can go and find out through enquiring of that company.

MR. FUREY:

A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A final supplementary, the hon. the member for St. Barbe.

MR. FUREY:

Mr. Speaker, the Premier is not telling all. Now we would like to ask the Premier why is this company, using our provincial name, Newfoundland, located in Burmuda and how this affects the tax or revenues generated from this company to the provincial coffers?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, that has nothing to do with the taxes that they pay here in Newfoundland at all, but they have registered their company in Burmuda for their own reasons, I guess, for various reasons, the same reasons that other companies register in Burmuda. That does not concern us. That has nothing to do with taxes to the Newfoundland Government at all. I am sorry if the hon. member does not like this deal. I just tell him that it is 1000 per cent

better than his colleagues did when they were in government.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, I want to pursue the same subject. I heard the Premier say that he is sorry about certain things.

MR. PATTERSON:

Tom Hickman is your bagman.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. PATTERSON:

(Inaudible) I would not hire you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS:

The gentleman for Placentia (Mr. Patterson) should know that I only heard one of the three things he said and that was incorrect; it related to the bagman, and that is incorrect.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

It is impossible to conduct the Question Period if there is continuous interruption on my left.

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SIMMONS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I want to come back to the

Premier. He said he was sorry and I would suggest that if he is not a little more careful in some of his answers he is going to have more things to be sorry about.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
A threat!

MR. SIMMONS:
No. You can get excited if you want.

MR. PATTERSON:
You are trying to get back at him.

MR. SIMMONS:
No, Mr. Speaker. What I am saying to the Premier is that I believe -

PREMIER PECKFORD:
Watch yourself closely.

MR. SIMMONS:
I shall watch myself very closely. If the Premier did not hear my statement, I will say it again. I believe in some of the answers he gave a few moments ago he might have been less than forthcoming, and I am going to give him an opportunity again. Mr. Speaker, I suggest that the Premier knows who the effective owners of Newfoundland Energy are. I suggest he knows that.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The hon. the member is making a speech. I ask him to ask his question.

MR. SIMMONS:
I ask the Premier to indicate for the record whether he is saying categorically, no, he is not aware who the beneficial, the effective owners of Newfoundland Energy are?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
Mr. Speaker, as a preamble to my answer, I just say to the hon. gentleman, who is the new interim Leader of the Opposition, that if he is going to stand in his place and in a preamble to a question threaten me -

MR. SIMMONS:
Not true.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
Well, the wording will come out in Hansard, Mr. Speaker. I say to the hon. Leader of the Opposition now that if preambles to his questions are going to be threats to me then there will be no answers from this side. I do not deal by digging trenches and putting myself down in the trenches. I do not deal that way. Now, to deal with the substantive issue of the question, Newfoundland Energy Limited negotiated a deal with Petro Canada and the Government of Newfoundland, and they are a private sector company reactivating a white elephant, a scar on Newfoundland's industrial past, and they are being highly successful.

Newfoundland Energy has investors from the United States involved in their company who are putting up money to rehabilitate the refinery. If the hon. the Leader of the Opposition wants to find out more, I am not in the habit of getting up and giving information to the Opposition about private sector companies, whether it be Newfoundland Energy, whether it be Marco Limited, whether it be anybody else.

MR. SIMMONS:
A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
A supplementary, the hon. the

Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, first of all, I understand that the government might want to squirm on this but I want to clear the record: There was no threat. I said carefully to the Premier - if his colleagues want to hear it - that I found his first answer surprising and I invited him to answer more carefully. We have dealt with each other for twenty years and I have never found it necessary to deal in threats with him and I am not about to start now. I just want him to understand that.

Now, Mr. Speaker, published reports indicate that the Premier and his government might have played less than straight with Dor Chemicals' proposal to reactivate -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMONS:

Now I am saying 'published reports.' I am giving him the opportunity to correct the record if necessary.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition is beginning to make a speech instead of asking a question.

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Premier, given that published reports have indicated that he might have played less than straight, less than fair, with the Dor Chemical proposal, does it not concern him that such an

allegation has been made? Secondly, does it concern him that, if the allegation has any smidgen of truth in it, there is a concern that such treatment of potential corporate citizens might have a major negative impact on the attraction of industry and capital to the Province?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I would be very pleased to answer that. Just let me say in answer to the hon. gentleman's preamble my record is clean.

MR. SPEAKER:

Hear, hear!

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I am concerned about the published reports.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

PREMIER PECKFORD:

The answer to the first part of the hon. the Leader of the Opposition's question, I am concerned about the reports because they are completely unfounded. Now if I could just have a minute and a half or two minutes to go through the scenario - I can do it in more detail at another time in a written answer, so I will not take up too much of Question Period -

Dor Chemical had for two years almost an exclusive, really, monopoly on dealing with Come By Chance. Okay. They came to us in 1984 and we negotiated until 1986 with Dor Chemical and nobody

else. What it really boiled down to was a monopoly upon the opportunity of Come By Chance. I met with Mr. Dankner, the Minister of Development (Mr. Barrett) did, the Minister of Energy (Mr. Marshall) at the time, and we negotiated day in and day out, week in and week out for two years. One of the key components of Dor's proposal was to get a petrochemical complex; they were not interested in a refinery, but they wanted to get the refinery for a petrochemical complex based upon Hibernia gas. After that was assessed it was found that there was no guarantee that there would be any Hibernia gas at all through the whole production series. There likely would be some available in 2002 - 2005, and we were not going to be doing something in 1986 or 1984 or 1985 which would prejudice the kind of tendering that we would like to have on that gas in 2002 - 2005. There could then be a whole bunch of people around looking for it. So let us get the best deal at that time, and not give somebody in 1986 or 1985 a monopoly on the gas that may be available in 2002 - 2005.

And all through the two years they were interested in that and not in the refinery. When they start getting into the refinery, Mr. Speaker, their new proposal was they wanted \$58 - point - something million in soft loans, which means they wanted the interest rate subsidized, and they wanted a \$18 million grant. Then we asked them did they have any crude supplied, did they have any people who could operate the refinery, and did they have a market? They said, yes, we have a company associated with us. It took a trip to Switzerland and to New York, or Chicago, to confirm

that they had not told us really the facts of the matter because the company that they were dealing with, which we tracked down and finally got a meeting with, had no association with Dor whatsoever. So they had no crude supply, they had no expertise at running the refinery, and they had no market. And yet they wanted \$58 million in soft loans, and a \$18 million grant. Then along came Cumberland, and we told Dor we were deal with Cumberland and dealing with them. Then, when it came down to the crunch, we had two proposals: One from Dor, with no crude supply, no expertise to operate, no market, \$58 million in soft loans, and a \$18 million grant; and we had Cumberland, which said, we do not want thing from you, here is our crude supply, here is our expertise to operate the refinery, and here is our market. Which one would you choose, Mr. Speaker?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, they can cast all the personal aspersions they want, I am sticking to the subject. I suggest that the Premier, in his preamble, 'doth protest too much.' The word on the street is that he is covering up for some Newfoundland Tory buddies at Come By Chance.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS:

That is the word on the street. I give him an opportunity -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Name them! Name them!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS:

No, Mr. Speaker, I will not name them. I am telling him what the word on the street is, that there are shareholders at Come By Chance whom he is protecting by refusing to name them. I ask him to comment on that and to deny it if he will.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, now the truth comes out. It gives me great pleasure to inform this hon. House that neither I, my family, my friends, my P.C. friends or Tory buddies, or anybody in Newfoundland that I am associated with, and besides which there are no Newfoundlanders whatsoever involved in Newfoundland Energy Limited. I can say that categorically.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Table it! Table it!

MR. PECKFORD:

I know it to be true, because I know all of my friends.

Now, Mr. Speaker, furthermore if the hon. member is going to make certain accusations about me or my friends, there is an obligation upon the hon. member to put up or shut up.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Leo for leader! Leo for leader!

MR. FLIGHT:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

There is just about a minute left in Oral Questions.

The hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT:

My question is to the Premier, Mr. Speaker, on the same subject.

Mr. Speaker, does the Premier expect the people of Newfoundland, the people of this Province, to believe him when he tells them that he does not know who owes the refinery, who owns Newfoundland Energy, or that he does not care to know, when he has negotiated a multi-million dollar deal -

MR. PATTERSON:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

A point of order, the hon. the member for Placentia.

MR. PATTERSON:

The hon. gentlemen opposite, if they know anything about Cumberland Farms and who the directors are, the shareholders, should name them. Do not ask us. Evidently you must know.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

There is no point of order.

The hon. the member for Windsor-Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT:

Does the Premier expect the people of the Province to believe him when he tells us that he does not know who owns Newfoundland Energy, or that he does not care to know, when he negotiated a multi-million deal that will affect thousands of Newfoundlanders? Now who owns Newfoundland Energy?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, Newfoundland Energy is owned by a group of American investors. Cumberland Farms is owned by the Haseotes family, all whose names have been mentioned in the press over the last while. Cumberland Farms is a family owned business. They are the people who are providing some of the crude to Come By Chance and who are marketing it in the United States. They are a family owned company. Mr. Jim Haseotes is the chairman of the board, Mr. George Haseotes is on the board, his sisters are on the board, a couple of more of his brothers are on the board.

MR. SIMMONS:

Who is hiding behind the board?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Newfoundland Energy is a group of other investors including Mr. Ken

Brown, who is the President of Newfoundland Energy. They are a private sector company, they did not want any money from the Government of Newfoundland. We are not involved with Newfoundland Energy. They are just as private as the Lundrigans are or as the Crosbies are, or as the Ayres are, no different, Mr. Speaker. They are a private sector company and they have taken over a defunct white elephant and made it work. I know it grates the members of the Opposition that now Come By Chance has 300 jobs. All I can say to the hon. member is, too bad, Come By Chance will be a success in spite of the Liberal Party.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The time for Oral Questions has elapsed.

Presenting Reports by
Standing and Special Committees

MR. DINN:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Mines and Housing.

MR. DINN:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to present the list of mineral licenses issued during the fiscal year April 1, 1986 - March 31, 1987.

Notices of Motion

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Justice.

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce a bill entitled, "An Act To Amend The House Of Assembly Act."

Answers to Questions
for which Notice has been Given

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, in the Estimates Committee meeting yesterday morning there were a number of questions asked by members opposite, and the member for Menihek, I think, asked one particular question. I have got four of them here. I do not think I will read them. I will just table them, and the hon. members can refer to them.

Petitions

MR. HISCOCK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Eagle River.

MR. HISCOCK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition on behalf of 148 residents of the district of Eagle River, in the community of St. Lewis.

"We, the residents of St. Lewis, petition the House of Assembly of Newfoundland and Labrador, to make

representation to the Government of Canada that we, the residents of St. Lewis do not want to see any changes made in the Unemployment Insurance Act, as recommended by the Forget Commission. For either government to do so would have a devastating affect on the fishermen of Labrador. We have only four months to fish at the most, and for the remainder of the year we have to rely on U.I.C. benefits. If these benefits were taken away, what would we have left? We are not happy with the Forget Commission Report and we will oppose it in every way we can.

"We ask that the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador make every effort to stop the implementation of the Forget Commission report and make representation to the federal government."

The federal government, as you know, Mr. Speaker, brought in this report. If they accept the recommendations, it is going to have wide-ranging impact on our fishermen. In actual fact, the fishermen will not even be allowed to qualify and will be phased out over a five-year period, and any new entry into the fishing industry will not be allowed to even qualify for U.I.C.

This government has said that they have set up a Committee to look into the idea of a guaranteed annual income. The residents in Labrador feel that there is a surplus in the Unemployment Insurance Commission now of almost \$1 billion, that the act itself is okay, so why change it? They hope, Mr. Speaker, that this House of Assembly will say to Ottawa, and say in a very loud and clear voice, that whereas in Central

Canada the unemployment is only about 6 per cent, here in Eastern Canada, particularly the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, unemployment is 24 or 28 per cent, and, among our youth it is even more. The idea of taking U.I.C. benefits from our people would have a great affect on the amount of income coming into the communities.

The fishermen also say, and I am sure the Premier would agree, that the fishermen down in Southern Labrador, in the district of Eagle River, are not asking for ten week stamps. The federal government has told the Labrador Shrimp Union Company to go buy their own boat. If they have to buy their own boat, the fishermen would like a groundfish licence so they can take the groundfish licence and go on and extend fish plant operations in Cartwright, in L'Anse-a-Loup and in other areas. We have seen on the Coast of Labrador, since I have been representing them, scallop licences developed in Forteau, thus extending their jobs, we have seen fresh fish developed in L'Anse-a-Loup and in Cartwright, and we have seen crab finally being more developed in Mary's Harbour. The former Liberal government allocate \$15 million to upgrade their plants and extend the fishing season. That \$15 million, of course, was taken away by the Conservative government. We have seen cutbacks in post offices, we have seen Newfoundland Telephone downgrade its service, and we have seen Canada Post downgrade its service. So now the people of Southern Labrador, particularly the community of St. Lewis who have sent this petition in, are concerned that the quality of life, the way they live, the way they have always lived is now

being jeopardized and, if they take away this supplement, then the end result is that they will have to go back to the old days when the Premier was down there as a social worker. He realizes the poverty that was there at times when there was a poor fishery, he realizes the hardship. In this day and age, Mr. Speaker, particularly in Labrador, you have to maintain two homes, a truck, a skidoo and your boat. There is also the high cost of fuel, food and electricity in those communities.

So I ask the Premier if he would support this petition and make sure that the federal government is careful when adopting these recommendations. Because we have seen, time and time again, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Crosbie get up and say, 'You do not have to worry, everything will be okay,' and the opposite happen. Once he told us that CN fares were not going up on the Gulf, but they ended up going up. They will be bringing down their decision on the Forget recommendations in May. I am rather surprised. When this report first came out you had the unions, you had the government and you had everybody else up in arms about it, but gradually opposition to it has been allowed to die a very, very slow death. The decisions on the report will be coming out sometime in May, and we may find, Mr. Speaker, that it is too late then.

So, in conclusion, I ask that petition be tabled and referred to the correct department. I ask the Premier, the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Rideout) and the Cabinet to impress upon Ottawa, in the strongest possible terms, that no changes be made to UIC as recommended in the Forget

Commission Report.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to address myself to this petition presented by the member for Eagle River and first of all say that I have fully endorse the prayer of the petition. I would say to the hon. member that the presentation of his petition and the prayer of the petition I think was quite accurate, but from my point of view some of the statements that the hon. member made in support were not quite accurate. He sort of lost his trend of through there in talking about other things like post offices. There has been no final decision on the whole question of post offices, yet he made the statement in the past tense as if something had already been done to close our rural post offices. We are fighting that, too, as a government, on behalf of all of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. So there are a few inaccuracies in some of the statements that the hon. member made. The prayer of the petition is what is important here and what we are supposed to be supporting, that is, that the Forget Commission in its present form, as presented to the the federal government, is completely unacceptable to this government. We have said so. We made such statements at the time, it is true, as the hon. member says. It is too bad the press are not here again now because what I am going to say applies to them. Like in the rural post office thing, it is

a funny thing, because I do not know what clicks people onto a certain issue to be highlighted. Back a couple of months ago, in January, I made several statements from my office, through Information Services or who however it went out and released information about the rural post office thing and how the government was opposed to it, but it never, ever got carried. Similarly, ongoing representations that we have made, on the Forget Commission and so on, statements that we have made have not been carried all that widely by the media, which is not to say that we have not continued our efforts to see that this kind of report does not get adopted and we will continue our efforts to do so. As it relates to the origin of the petition and the community of St. Lewis, formerly called Fox Harbour, the hon. member is right. If there is an area of Newfoundland where hard work and good fishermen go together it is in that part of the unknown coast of Labrador which the hon. member has the honour to represent. I am talking about Port Hope Simpson, Square Islands, Charlottown in the North part of that sort of unknown coast up so far as, I guess, Black Tickle, and coming down into Port Hope Simpson, Williams Harbour, Georges Cove, that whole area and Sandy Hook, Triangle, and into Fox Harbour and on into Mary's Harbour and out again into Trap Cove, Matty's Cove, Battle Harbour, Cape Charles and Lodge Bay. They are very, very hard workers, and obviously any change to the present system as we know it would be very disasterous, not that they want to live, as the hon. member said, on ten weeks. Some of the hardest and most successful individual small business fishermen in the Province reside

on that part of the Labrador coast, as do quite a few Islanders who go to Labrador in the Summertime, traditionally from the Carbonear area and now from many other parts of the Province. So, on behalf of the government I want to say to the hon. member that he can be assured that this government stands fully behind the prayer of this petition, fully behind the people of Fox Harbour and surrounding areas in opposing this Forget Commission and its recommendations to the federal government. We will leave no stone unturned to try to protect the interests of the people of St. Lewis.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Twillingate.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, the people of Fox Harbour, or St. Lewis, are obviously worried about the possible impact of the Forget Commission Report and, knowing the mentality, Mr. Speaker, of the Upper Canadian bureaucrats and politicians, then I suggest to you that they have cause to be concerned.

We all know, Mr. Speaker, that the Forget Commission Report was far-reaching in many respects. It would have had, I believe, a very adverse impact on the Unemployment Insurance Commission and on the people who are forced, through no fault of their own, to depend on UI for part of their livelihood.

Mr. Speaker, where there is smoke there is fire, and I would suggest to you, Sir, that even though the powers that be in Ottawa have

down-played the Forget Commission Report, and have tried to allay any fears that might be expressed by people who will be affected by their recommendations, Sir, that all is not well.

We know that the Commission itself, even though it did have as one of its numbers a Newfoundlander, that by and large the Commission was influenced by Upper Canadian, Mainland oriented people, and that being the case, then I would again suggest that the good people of St. Lewis, as indeed all the people of Newfoundland, have good reason to be concerned.

MR. FENWICK:

Remember, the labour representatives on the Commission protested.

MR. W. CARTER:

Yes.

Mr. Speaker, unless and until a better system is devised and explained and approved by the people affected, then I believe Newfoundlanders should resist at all cost the implementation of the Forget Commission Report. It will have a devastating effect.

For example I believe that the report says after five years unemployment insurance, as we now know it, will be completely abolished, phased out. I believe in that report there is a recommendation that new entrants into the fishing industry, young people who are getting into the industry for the first time, will not qualify for unemployment insurance benefits during that five year period, during the five-year phase out period.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we all know what

impact that will have on the fishing industry. It is difficult enough as it is to encourage young Newfoundlanders to get involved in the fishery - God knows it is difficult! - but if the umbrella of unemployment insurance benefits is removed, then I suggest to you, Sir, that it will be all the more difficult to get the right kind of young Newfoundlanders to take part in the fishing industry.

Mr. Speaker, it is rather shameful, I suppose in a way, that we have become so dependent on unemployment insurance benefits but it is through no fault of the people who are depending on it.

It is no fault of the fishermen in St. Lewis, for example, or indeed in any other part of Newfoundland and Labrador that through circumstances beyond their control they are now becoming so heavily depend on UI benefits that even the mere suggestion, the mere thought that there will be changes made that will have a serious impact on the benefits causes people, as in the case of St. Lewis, to find it necessary to circulate and to present a petition objecting to any changes. Mr. Speaker, like the Premier pointed out, and so well said, these people are the salt of the earth. My father fished in that part of Newfoundland for a large number of years, and I know as a boy I heard some of the stories that he brought back with him from that part of the Coast of Labrador. These are good, decent people, Mr. Speaker, who ask nothing more than to be given a chance to earn a livelihood, and, if necessary, to be able to draw UI benefits and to be able to keep body and soul together. Mr. Speaker, I take some pride, Sir, and pleasure in supporting this

petition and adding my voice to the hon. member for Eagle River and the Premeir in demanding of Ottawa that there be no changes made as recommended in that report unless and until a better system is in place and until it has been approved by the people who will be affected.

MR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker, with leave of the House?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! Is the hon. member presenting a petition?

MR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker, I am just asking for leave as it pertains to the Labrador Coast, and the district of my friend from Eagle River district.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. FUREY:

No leave!

MR. SPEAKER:

I understand leave has not been given.

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker, I stand on behalf of some people in Raleigh.

WHEREAS the Raleigh Road, Route 437, has been completed twenty-one years ago, and it is in very poor condition; and

WHEREAS the people of Raleigh and Ship Cove must travel this road to

reach St. Anthony, and facilities such as the hospital, banking, shopping, garages, fish plants, etc.; and

WHEREAS high school students are bused over this road to St. Anthony; and

WHEREAS several million pounds of fresh fish are trucked to the plant in St. Anthony annually; and

WHEREAS several hundred people from Raleigh and Ship Cove travel to St. Anthony to work in the fish plant; and

WHEREAS many tourists visiting Pistolet Provincial Park complain about the terrible conditions of this road; and

WHEREAS many vehicles get damaged while using the road; and

WHEREAS the Eastern Brook Bridge is in need of replacement; and

WHEREAS wholesalers, truckers, damage their vehicles while delivering produce to Raleigh; and

WHEREAS the Raleigh area is an economically depressed zone;

THEREFORE we the undersigned, citizens of Raleigh, do hereby request the hon. House of Assembly to instruct the hon. Premier and the hon. the Minister of Transportation to begin the process of upgrading and paving Route 437, the Raleigh Road, immediately.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker, I have a great deal of empathy for the people of Raleigh when I stand to present

this petition. Over the past couple of months I have been living on the outskirts of this city, living out in Manuels. Every morning when I leave to come to the Confederation Building, I drive totally over a paved road. I have been wearing my shoes for the last two or three weeks, whereas the people in Raleigh are wearing goat rubbers, Mr. Speaker, and going up to their ankles in mud. The road from Manuels out to downtown St. John's is a four lane excellent highway. I would say it would compete with the 401, the great section of Trans-Canada Highway in Ontario. When I compare the differences in the two roads, the road from Manuels into St. John's compared with the road from Raleigh into St. Anthony, it is almost a shame to mention the two roads and refer to them both as roads. Because they are so vastly different from each other, there is no way that both can be called roads. One is a road maybe, but the other is definitely not. They cannot both be.

Mr. Speaker, standing to support this petition, I am reminded that last year the ministers in this administration spent \$2.5 million gallivanting around the world, enjoying themselves, bathing in the sun of China, walking on the old Chinese Wall. Mr. Speaker, a bunch of globe-trotters spent \$2.5 million last year. If they had cut back on this gallivanting around by one-third, they could have completely upgraded and paved that particular section of road that I am talking about today, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the ministers in the Cabinet spent \$250,000 of our money on entertainment, on taking their cronies out and treating them to Chinese food and T-bone

steaks and what have you, with the cocktails that go along with it, Mr. Speaker. In a matter of three years, if those gentlemen and lady could restrain themselves - I must say in fairness, the Minister of Justice (Ms Verge) only spent \$3500, which is a pretty fair amount - if they could only control their appetites, Mr. Speaker, in a matter of three or four years they could pave the road into Raleigh, Mr. Speaker.

MR. J. CARTER:
A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
A point of order, the hon. the member for St. John's North.

MR. J. CARTER:
Mr. Speaker, the member for the Strait of Belle Isle or the Narrows of Belle Isle, what else can you eat in China but Chinese food. How foolish is that!

MR. FUREY:
Mr. Speaker, let the record show that the hon. member for St. John's North is alive.

MR. SPEAKER:
To that point of order, there is no point of order. I would say to the hon. member that he is straying a bit from the petition he is presenting.

MR. DECKER:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That interruption probably cost the taxpayers of this Province about \$2,000, if we are going to pay the hon. member on the amount of time he speaks in this House. These few words probably cost Newfoundland about \$2,000, another bit of money that could have gone towards the Raleigh Road.

Mr. Speaker, eight Cabinet

Ministers have -

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The hon. member's time has now elapsed.

MR. FUREY:
By leave.

MR. WARREN:
No.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

Before recognizing the hon. member, I would like to welcome to the Visitors Gallery fifteen girl guides with their leader, Debbie Peckham, from St. Andrew's School.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

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

MR. W. CARTER:
Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the petition so ably presented by my colleague and friend from the Strait of Belle Isle.

I have a special interest, Mr. Speaker, in supporting the petition. In fact, I asked the hon. member if I could support his petition. I believe he had somebody else lined up to do it, but I said I must make a special request that I be given the opportunity to support this petition. Because it was during my term as the member for White Bay North, as the district was then called, and part of the great Liberal Government of the time headed by that outstanding Newfoundlander, the hon. Joseph R. Smallwood, it was during that

period, Mr. Speaker, that I arranged with my good friend, the Minister of Highways of the day, I believe it was Harold Starkes in Lewisporte -

MR. SIMMS:

You were Liberal then, too?

MR. W. CARTER:

The hon. the member for Grand Falls (Mr. Simms) was a Liberal in those days, now he is a P.C., and I suspect after the next election he will be out of politics all together.

So, Mr. Speaker, I can say this, that it was during that very interesting period in my life that I had the privilege and pleasure of recommending to my colleague, the Minister of Highways, as he was called then, that the road to Raleigh be completed. And I recall having gone down to Raleigh, which is on the most Northerly tip of Newfoundland, I suppose, up by Cooks Harbour and Griquet and Quirpon, I recall going to the community the day that the bulldozer removed the last barrier, when the bulldozer removed that last shovelful of gravel that ended 450 years of isolation for the good people of Raleigh.

Now, Mr. Speaker, only a person who has lived in isolation can understand just how important that road was to the people of Raleigh, and I take some little credit for it having been completed or at least bulldozed through when it was, back in the early 1960s.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is with some pleasure that I support this petition and some regret that there has not been more attention paid to that very important road. Raleigh is a fishing community and

a good fishing community, I might say. Over a million pounds of fish being hauled over that road annually certainly does very little to improve the quality of that product and that is all the more reason, Mr. Speaker, why there should be some special attention paid to the upgrading and the eventual paving of the road from Raleigh to St. Anthony.

Not only that, Mr. Speaker, not only is the road important in terms of transporting the raw material to the St. Anthony plant, but, of course, you must bear in mind that you have people who that had to travel frequently to St. Anthony for medical services and to high school. In fact, St. Anthony is the centre of trade and commerce in that part of Newfoundland, and the people of Raleigh, not at all unlike the people of Quirpon and Griquet and St. Lunaire, have to travel to St. Anthony frequently to conduct business.

So, Mr. Speaker, I support the petition that was so ably presented. I am sorry my hon. colleague found it necessary to interject some comments that obviously got under the skins of the gentlemen opposite, they hate to be reminded of their \$2.5 million travel bill or their \$250,000 entertainment bill. They hate to be reminded that there are eight or nine of them now hiring press secretaries at a cost of - how much?

MR. FUREY:

A quarter of a million dollars.

MR. W. CARTER:

More than what that road would cost to be completed.

So these are the things that the

members opposite, I am sure, do not want to hear about, but I am afraid, Mr. Speaker, that as long as we have roads in this Province like the road from Raleigh, then they are going to need to be reminded of their wastefulness and how they can better spend the people's money than the way they are doing it.

Thank you very much, Sir.

MR. SIMMS:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands.

MR. SIMMS:
I just want to speak for a moment to add some degree of support to the petition presented by the member. We support all requests that come in for road improvements or whatever and indeed we do as many as we possibly can. I think the member for the Strait of Belle Isle will know that there is a considerable amount of support and sympathy for the predicament in which this particular area of the Province finds itself. I did find it somewhat amusing that the member would have taken up most of his five minute allotted time to attack the government on expenditures for travel, entertainment and so on. I found that amusing. But I found it even more amusing when the member for Twillingate got up and talked about how much he had done when he was, I presume, a Liberal member. I was not even aware that he was a Liberal provincial member in White Bay North. I am delighted to hear that news. It certainly adds to the political background that the hon. member has, which is certainly wide and varied and perhaps greater than anybody else

in this Province has ever had. That kind of a wide and varied background in politics I must say is very interesting. I do wonder, though, since he had such a bit of sympathy for this particular group, why, when he was a minister in the cabinet on this side, he did not lobby and exert more effort to get work done then?

MR. W. CARTER:
I did.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
He did.

MR. SIMMS:
Was he successful? He was not successful. So you see things have not changed since he was a member of this cabinet and since he got out. Since they are trying to inject comparisons about travel, entertainment and so on, I would be most interested, in fact I must pursue this, and must look back into the budget and the estimates of the day when the hon. member for Twillingate was a cabinet minister, and I wonder did he have an entertainment account?

MR. REID:
Tell me about it.

MR. SIMMS:
We are checking. I wonder if he had an entertainment account and I wonder if he went over? I wonder if he had a travel allowance? I wonder if he travelled when he was a minister? The hon. the member for Twillingate says he never travelled when he was a minister. Now, I really find that difficult to believe. I am sure that when he was a minister, and he had a great reputation as being a minister, that he got that reputation by working hard for the fishermen and on behalf of the fishery in the Province. He did

that, so he had to travel. He knows that. I am sure he did but I will check it further. I am also going to check the member for Mount Scio - Bell Island (Mr. Barry) to see if he had an entertainment allowance or if he did any travelling when he was a minister. I have a sneaking suspicion that maybe he might have.

MR. PEACH:

And the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Simmons) when he was in Cabinet for ten days.

MR. SIMMS:

I might even check that just to see if they provide ministers with a travel vote. The way the hon. member opposite was speaking to the petition, he was sort of giving the impression, to the people in the gallery and elsewhere, that ministers should not have a travel allowance and they should not have an entertainment allowance. I am sure that there are members on that side who do not support the Strait of Belle Isle member when he makes those kind of comments.

MR. FUREY:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of order, the hon. the member for St. Barbe.

MR. FUREY:

I wonder if the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands would tell us in his research on the previous Minister of Fisheries, the member for Twillingate (Mr. W. Carter), do you think that maybe his travel budget climbed by 100 per cent, from \$60,000 to \$123,000 like that of the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands did?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

That is not a point of order.

The hon. the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, I do not know, it might well have. Does the hon. member know? He does. Well, what are the figures?

MR. FUREY:

Fund your own. You have eight press secretaries?

MR. SIMMS:

No, I do not have any press secretaries. I wondered if the hon. member had the information. I did not think he did when he made that interjection. Anyway, Mr. Speaker, when the member for Twillingate said that we were reacting to some interjections from that side, obviously the same thing is happening now. When you make a good point members opposite will do anything they can to interrupt you, to take away your time in speaking, and that is pretty obvious, I guess, to anybody who is listening. Anyway, Mr. Speaker, all of that stuff is totally irrelevant.

MR. FUREY:

As you know. How come?

MR. SIMMS:

Well, it is.

We are talking about a petition presented by the member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. TULK:

Well, get into it.

MR. SIMMS:

Well, I already have gotten into it and indicated that there is a

lot of sympathy and moral support for all parts of this Province when they look, Mr. Speaker, to have improvements made to the roads. I am sure when the time comes to consider all the requests that are in that all those requests will be given due consideration.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Orders of the Day

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Motion 2.

MR. SPEAKER:

Motion 2.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, for simplicity I will refer to this document as the budget throughout my few remarks this afternoon, because, as I said yesterday, this is -

MR. SIMMONS:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of order, the hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SIMMONS:

I apologize to my colleague. Before he gets in stride, as he will be within three or four minutes, I ask him to remember that we are leaving here on Friday, but he has got all the

time he wants to make some of the points that need to be made. Mr. Speaker, on a point of order first, if I may.

I want to say to the House and to the Government House Leader (Mr. Ottenheimer) that in the Estimates Committees the process is not served unless the public of Newfoundland know what is going on there. Now, last year the complaint from the press was that there were two at one time. The minister, in his wisdom, has arranged it so that there are not two at one time. So that excuse or reason is gone. I would hope, Mr. Speaker, that the press would recognize - we have to commend The Evening Telegram, this year, last year, every year, they have been there. But the reason we got from the press the last time was that they could not be two places at one time. So I commend the minister for ensuring, in collaboration with my colleague from Fogo (Mr. Tulk), that there is only one committee on at a time.

I would hope, Mr. Speaker, that now, if there is to be blame for this, that it not rest on the shoulder of the government or on the shoulders of the Opposition or the members of this House and that the record show that we have had some good debate. Some of the ministers have been forthcoming. There is one who has not, and we will come back to that at another time. But the ministers, by and large, have been very forthcoming. I have dropped in on a couple of the Committee meetings. I have heard them out in the Common Room or downstairs. My colleagues on this side have indicated that the process itself is maybe a bit of an improvement over last year in that we tend to be getting some answers. So we

commend the Committee Chairmen for that.

The overall point perhaps is not a point of order. It is perhaps it is time to emphasize that the process is not very well served unless we can let the press become aware that there is some important information coming out in there, thanks to the directness of the ministers on these matters and the probing of the members. Could we somehow, I say to the House Leader, send out a signal to the press that the time has come for them to report the Estimates Committees as faithfully and regularly as they report Question Period. It is not a long, drawn out process. It will be over in a matter of days almost. I would invite the Government House Leader, if he is so inclined, to verbalize about this issue too with a view to drawing attention to the importance of having the people of Newfoundland informed on what is going on in those committees.

MR. J. CARTER:

To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, the hon. the member for St. John's North.

MR. J. CARTER:

To that point of order, Mr. Speaker, the provisional Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Simmons) is quite right. There has not been interest by the press in our Committee meetings. In our particular meeting this morning, it is our wish and our view that it be an Opposition exercise. The only members that we really hear from are members of the Opposition. The government members more to out vote the

Opposition than than to out talk them, but on the other hand, the questions are a bit dull and the members are not perhaps as exciting as they might be otherwise and there is not the controversy that so often the press expects. I think that that is a plus for the committee not a minus. I do not know what one does to get all the members of the press to come in here and I do not suggest that we sensationalize these meetings, but it is a fact that the press do not seem to be terribly interested in these committee meetings, and that is understandable. However, I do hope that they will change their mind.

MR. LONG:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Further to that point of order, the hon. the member for St. John's East.

MR. LONG:

The point was raised in our Committee meeting this morning and I just have some concern that there may be an inclination to blame the reporters. I think the signal that we want to send is to their editors and to the people who make the assignments. The reporters that I have spoken to have an interest in coming to the meetings, but it is a question of where they get assigned to go. I do not think there should be any suggestion that it is the reporters that are at fault but rather their assignment editors.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

To that point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

Further to that point of order, the hon. the President of the

Council.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Briefly on the matter, Mr. Speaker, I think the points made by the Leader of the Opposition and by others are well taken. Last year there were complaints by the media because the meetings were concurrent, more than one committee met at the same time. We have, by consultation with the Official Opposition and also without any problems from my hon. Socialist friends, worked out a schedule which eliminates concurrent meetings. The meetings are at reasonable hours, they are in the mornings from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and in the evenings from 7:30 to 10:30, but I understand this evening it is from 8:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. They are at quite reasonable times and I do not think there is much more the House can do.

MR. BARRY:

To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Further to that point of order, the hon. the member for Mount Scio - Bell Island.

MR. BARRY:

There is something the house can do and that is what was done last year which did have significant effect. We saw after the first couple of days last year, the CBC particularly, showing up at almost every other committee meeting after it was brought to their attention quite forcefully by a joint three-party letter, I think, it was last year, written to the various media indicating that it simply just was not good enough that we had one reporter, The Evening Telegram - and they should be complimented for the

fact that they did have a reporter there on a regular basis over the last two days - but the CBC is financed by the taxpayers dollars. The estimates committees are designed to scrutinize the expenditures of government for the benefit of the taxpayer and there is an obligation, particularly in that Crown Corporation, to cover this important part of the parliamentary process. So I would strongly recommend to the Government House Leader that there be joint letter go to the media indicating the conspicuous absence of the media, other than The Evening Telegram.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

I would like to make a brief reply to that, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Further to that point of order, the hon. the President of the Council.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

I am not opposed to following through on that suggestion. Perhaps what we will do is leave it a day or so and see if the remarks here have any benefit and if not obviously we can -

MR. BARRY:

The press are not listening right now.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

That could well be. Well, perhaps I will undertake to draft a letter and consult with both sides and then we can all three sign it or somebody can sign it on behalf of everybody. For tomorrow, we will get a draft of a letter prepared. While we are at it, perhaps I would just inform members of the schedule for tonight and today. Actually, the meeting which was scheduled for tonight has been

cancelled. I understand the Vice-Chairman, the hon. the member for Port de Grave (Mr. Efford), has an important engagement in his constituency which came up rather quickly, rather suddenly. Of course, that committee did meet this morning. On Wednesday, tomorrow, at 9:30 A.M. the Government Services Committee will consider the Department of Public Works estimates. Wednesday at 8:00 P.M. the Resources Committee will consider the estimates of the Department of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development, and Thursday at 9:30 A.M. the Government Services Committee will consider the estimates of the Department of Consumer Affairs.

MR. SPEAKER (Greening):

To that point of order, there is no point of order, certain members took the opportunity to express their concerns with regard to Committee meetings.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Sorry! Sorry! If I may, on Thursday night the Social Services Committee will consider the estimates of the Department of Health,

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I started out by saying that for simplicity and for identification purposes of hon. members and the press I would refer to this document as a budget even though, as I said yesterday, it is hardly a budget. It is the most unusual and the most unique document ever

presented in this House and disguised as a budget. What I said yesterday was that it was a political document or a political treaties that could be properly titled 'Lost Opportunities' or, more appropriately, 'Paradise Lost'. It is an attempt, Mr. Speaker, by government to excuse and exonerate itself from its total lack of performance in terms of dealing with the economic problems of this Province, it is an attempt to excuse itself and exonerate itself from the financial mess in which it has placed this Province.

No illusions, Mr. Speaker, in this particular document to the literary phrases and the heroes of old, no belief in the lofty and noble notion contained in the lines "There is a tide in the affairs of men if taken at the flood, leads on to fortune." No such optimism like that, Mr. Speaker. But confidence and exuberance behind "To seek, to strive, and not to yield" - all gone. No references to these phrases and heroes of old, no more desire and ambition to be motivated by the spirit and achievements of Ulysses, no desire to seek a newer world, no desire, Mr. Speaker, to man the ships any more, no more buoyed up by Tennyson's ambitions and his desire to seek a newer world. All of this is gone. We are now reduced to the morbid thought and the morbid lines of other poets, like Donne when he said, "He also serves who only stands and waits".

MR. DAWE:

John Milton said that.

MR. LUSH:

John Milton is right. I am sorry. 'He also serves who only stands and waits.' Indeed, Mr. Speaker,

they have been reduced to the morbid and eternal hope and optimism that is contained in the lines of 'Crossing The Bar', 'Sunset and evening star and after that the dark' / 'And may there be no moaning of farewell when I embark.'

I want to tell the hon. gentlemen there will be no moanings of farewell when they embark, there will be joy, exuberance and jubilation. And I am not talking about their physical embarkment, I am talking about their political embarkment, their political demise that will surely come, Mr. Speaker, after the people of this Province get the message of this particular budget.

Mr. Speaker, the budget brought down just recently by the Finance Minister (Dr. Collins) is a pathetic and a frightening document. It is an enormous flip-flop, a blatant admission of incredible incompetence and failure.

That is what it is, Mr. Speaker, a blatant admission of incredible incompetence and failure. The budget revealed that this Province's economic performance following fifteen years of Conservative stewardship was the most miserable in Canada. In what has become typical of this provincial government's brand of politics, the budget looked around for someone outside to blame for the Province's desperate financial health.

For fully half the budget - this is what I referred to when I talked about the uniqueness of this budget, the unusualness of this budget - Confederation and the federal government were pictured as villains who had not

played their proper part in promoting and keeping up development in Newfoundland and Labrador. Yet, irony of ironies, Dr. Collins explained that the provincial government have a plan to kick-start the Province out of its deep disparity, but it must have the federal government's full co-operation. With Premier Peckford's recent wrangling and rancor with his federal colleagues, one wonders about and questions the immediate success of this plan.

Relations with the federal government, Mr. Speaker, and I am sure you will agree, have never been more rancorous or more acrimonious, they have never been more acidic and more ascerbic, and any other uncomplimentary adjectives I can find. They have been at their lowest ebb, Mr. Speaker, the lowest ebb ever, yet they expect the federal government to come and bail us out. It seems as though they believe that you can slam a person in the face, you can kick them in the stomach, and then immediately after you can ask them for hundreds of millions of dollars. Mr. Speaker, that is their approach to federal/provincial relations.

They do not believe in the philosophy of the Prime Minister who believes in civility, who believes in reconciliation, who believes in harmonious relationships. No, Mr. Speaker, it is to slam them in the face, kick them in the stomach, beat them about, beat them from post to pillar and then go and ask them for a meal, then go and ask for dinner, after we have done that.

Mr. Speaker, I am afraid that the level of provincial/federal relations that this government now

has with the federal government is hardly the kind of relations where they can expect to get their \$172 million deficit taken care of. It is hardly the kind of relationship that would prompt the hon. the federal Minister of Transportation to have any real sympathy for the mess that this Province finds itself in at this particular time.

It is strange, again, Mr. Speaker, in all of this litany, in all of this rhetoric that nowhere did the budget make mention of the provincial government's own key and large responsibility for managing the fiscal affairs of this Province, for managing its economy, for promoting development and, more particularly, in combating unemployment. Nowhere did they assume this responsibility. It was blame it all on Ottawa. It was shift the blame onto the shoulders of the federal government. Nowhere did it recognize, nowhere did it acknowledge its own responsibility for the economic development of this Province and for combating unemployment, for creating jobs for the people of this Province.

The budget clearly portrays a government that has lost its initiative, that has lost its creativity, a government with absolutely no ideas, a tired government, Mr. Speaker, a government that is, indeed, ready to cross the bar, a tired, worn out government with no new initiatives, no creativity, and no ideas.

Mr. Speaker, this budget comes exactly two years after a general election in which the Premier obtained the mandate to create jobs. That is the mandate the Premier requested, as if he needed that mandate. The Premier went

out and said to the people, "Do you want me to create jobs? If you do, elect me." Well, they elected the Premier and where are the jobs? Where's the beef? I will tell you what the Premier did after he received that mandate to create jobs. He said, "I do not know how to create jobs, so what we will do for a further delay is set up a Royal Commission on Employment and Unemployment."

Well, Mr. Speaker, they did that but, unfortunately for the Premier, it only took a year to complete. I am sure the Premier and his Cabinet Ministers would have wished that this Commission would have taken -

MR. DECKER:
Five years.

MR. LUSH:
Well, I was going to say three years so that they could have run another election and said, "Now, the jobs we have to wait for. We have the commission set up and if you will elect us when that commission report comes in with its many recommendations, then we might create jobs.

Well, Mr. Speaker, to put this budget now in context, it comes two years after the Premier received a mandate to create the jobs, it comes some months after the completion of the Royal Commission on Employment and Unemployment.

Mr. Speaker, imagine the expectations of our people two years after the mandate they so willingly gave the Premier to create jobs and after the completion and the presentation of the Royal Commission on Employment and Unemployment to the government. Imagine the

expectations of the people. This was to be the budget of all budgets. At last we were going to have the solutions to unemployment in this Province. At last we were going to have a plan for employment strategy in this Province. But alas, Mr. Speaker, what happened? They totally let the people of this Province down. They have been deflated, Mr. Speaker, immensely disappointed by the lack of any employment strategy in this particular budget.

Mr. Speaker, despite the Premier's commitment to create jobs, despite the many and several sound practical suggestions and recommendations made by the Royal Commission on Employment and Unemployment, the budget's chief failure was the absence of any substantial comprehensive programme to attack the Province's scandalously high rate of unemployment, to address the absolutely critical area of long term job creation for the between 30 per cent and 40 per cent - for close to 100,000 I expect - unemployed Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

The unemployment is so bad in this Province today you could almost quote any percentage, any number, and people would believe you. The government will not even refute them. If you say there are 100,000 unemployed people in Newfoundland today they just believe it because, Mr. Speaker, they know that it is so excessively high that it is very difficult to put a figure on it.

It is very difficult. Just about any time there are about 50 per cent of the work force in this Province unemployed. It is so vicious, Mr. Speaker, you can practically use any percentage or

any number and the government - not only the people, we know they believe it - believe it because they know the unemployment in this Province is so outrageously high. I am glad after years and years of using the expression myself I got the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) to admit it in his budget. I have said for years and years that the unemployment problem in this Province was a national disgrace. Finally, after all of those years, we got the minister admitting that it is a national disgrace. Now, that is a good sign, because you cannot solve a problem until you recognize you have one. Now, after fifteen years, they have come to the recognition that we have a problem. But the people of this Province are not willing to wait for the solutions offered by the members opposite, they are not willing to wait because they know they are going to be waiting a long, long time. This, then, Mr. Speaker, was by and large one of the major failures of this budget, the failure to come up with any kind of a substantive, long-term job creation programme. This was the callous side, this was the insensitive side of the budget.

After years and years of waiting with great expectations, waiting for a ray of hope, alas, the unemployed Newfoundlanders have no ray of hope, the unemployed Newfoundlanders and Labradorians have no more expectations from this government with respect to developing a long-term job creation programme. More and more then, Mr. Speaker, in the face of our fatally high unemployment and the desperate need for job creation the present administration, as this budget so clearly illustrates, presents the spectacle of a government throwing

up its hands and making the lame and feeble plea, 'We do not know what to do about job creation but do not blame us, it is someone else's fault.'

Mr. Speaker, this is where we have arrived, this is the situation to which we have come in this Province, a government with a defeatist attitude. In the number one responsibility that any government has, which is to create jobs, they have admitted failure, they have confessed failure but, Mr. Speaker, that is not the worst side of it, they have indicated that they also have no plans for the future. This is what they have said, this is the message of this budget, 'We do not know what to do about job creation but do not blame us, it is someone else's fault.'

Mr. Speaker, I do want to address the few job creation initiatives taken by the government. Let us look at them. What specifically were the job creation initiatives? Just how effective is the job creation strategy which hon. members opposite so feebly and glibly try to praise, laud, and commend? What are they? Let us look at them, Mr. Speaker. I am referring to Budget Highlights, 1987.

"To stimulate economy, government will be allocating \$44 million in funding as follows:" Let us look at them and analyze each one. Forty-four million is not a small amount of money, Mr. Speaker. It is only small in terms of the gravity and the enormity of the problem that we have with respect to unemployment in this Province.

Now, the first one is an amount of \$29 million for the Community Development Programme to create

long-term jobs? No, no. An amount of \$29 million for the Community Development Programme to create short-term employment for up to 13,500 people. Mr. Speaker, there are circumstances under which I could laud the government for spending \$29 million. I am not sure I could laud them in terms of creating 13,500 jobs, because we know what these jobs are. Every one of them, as a matter of fact, under this \$44 million initiative, every job under there, is either a ten week or a twenty week job, depending upon your status in the work force. If you are a first time worker or if you have exhausted your previous UIC claim, then you have to get twenty weeks. So, a first time worker has to get twenty weeks. The person who exhausted their claim and had not worked in the past fifty-two weeks has to get twenty weeks all over again. But if you are ongoing and can get a job every year, then this is the system. All of these jobs are the ten to twenty week syndrome.

Mr. Speaker, I have some suggestions for the Minister of Social Services (Mr. Brett) with this \$29 million. I should say as well, this ten to twenty week syndrome this government has condemned time and time again and they have condemned every federal government for continuously advancing these kinds of programmes to develop jobs. They have been condemning that, Mr. Speaker, left, right and center, for the past eight or ten years. Yet, when it comes to developing a programme themselves, what is the best they can come up with? Simply to emulate and copy the same kinds of programmes which the federal government have been engaged in.

MR. SIMMS:
That is not true.

MR. LUSH:
Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Forestry says, 'Not true.' Well, they are the projects that are approved in Bonavista North. I do not know what they are like in other areas.

MR. SIMMS:
Forestry projects?

MR. LUSH:
Mr. Speaker, I am into the \$29 million. This is what I would like.

MR. SIMMS:
Some of those are in forestry projects.

MR. LUSH:
If some of them are, there are certainly not enough of them.

MR. SIMMS:
Are you sure of that?

MR. LUSH:
The other point I want to make before I get into the nature of the programme, is I want to remind hon. members that they are all at minimum wage, \$5.00 an hour.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know who the Minister of Social Services thinks he is fooling. Nobody objects to putting our people to work, but on this programme, and this \$29 million programme is the one administered by Social Services, when these people are taken off social services and put on this programme at minimum wage, they are in a worse position than when they were on social services. If hon. members opposite will be honest, they will say they are finding the same problem that I am finding with this programme.

People with families go to work on this programme for a minimum wage of \$5 an hour. When they were on social services, they had a drug card, and when they got into emergency situations, Social Services usually helped them out. If for some combination of reasons their light bill became unaffordable or if their fuel bill or oil became unaffordable, they could go to Social Services and they would assist them, as they should. But once they get on this programme, they get all their associations and connections with Social Services severed. 'Now you are making money. Now you are on your own.' I find so many people, so many families with so many problems, children are sick, and they have so many needs, Mr. Speaker, because they never could never afford to adequately cloth their children and do all the things that they needed to do around their homes. They could not do that, but at least on social services there was a little bit of assistance. Now they get on to this programme at \$5 an hour and they throw them to the wolves. I meet so many people who now do not want to work on that programme.

Mr. Speaker, I was called about a month ago by a young woman from this city working on this programme. I will tell the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands (Mr. Simms) this was not a twenty week programme. Basically they are twenty weeks, but this was longer. This was a young lady renting an apartment here in St. John's, desperately wanted a job, wanted to work, young, energetic, industrious, she did not want to stay home, as any young industrious energetic person would not. She got a job with Social Services. A job she loved,

working at minimum wages, but a job she loved. She had a job as a teacher's aid, and they have been doing this with this programme, giving money to people to go in and help out teachers, particularly teachers teaching the physically handicapped. The teacher does not have the time to be adequately take care of the needs of these physically handicapped kids, so this young lady got this job as a teacher's aid and she loves it. What are the problems?

She is only going to be working until June. When June comes, she will be laid off; when June comes she will be put on UIC. Mr. Speaker, she does not want to hear of UIC. She would like to be able to continue her job as a teacher's aid. Now she has this training behind her. I understand from the teacher she works with and the principal of the school that she is a most competent person, a very industrious person and a person who can work with these handicapped children. But, what is her future? She is going to be laid off in June and back on UI for another year.

Mr. Speaker, the other aspect to the programme's jobs are that they have no future. They terminate; there is no future.

MR. DECKER:

That is one of the ones that has meaning while most do not.

MR. LUSH:

That is right. I wanted to tell, Mr. Speaker, the other side of the coin. This woman, before getting this job, was on social services. That is how she got the job. Now, what was her economic situation after she took this job?

Imagine on social services, if the woman so desired, she did not have to get up and face the snow storms that we had this Winter; did not have to get up and shovel out her car, as most of us had to do, to get on the road by eight-thirty to get to the school. She could stay home, stay in bed until ten or eleven o'clock in the morning. Get up and conveniently and leisurely get dinner ready for her one child when she returned from school, could watch the soap operas, clean her house in comfort without the frustrations of going to work. For all of the frustrations that we all have who work, particularly a single parent with a family, how much better off was she by working under this programme?

I tell you how much she was better off, Mr. Speaker, \$15.85 a week! That is how much better off she was in real dollars, to say nothing of medical expenses and all of these other benefits I spoke about earlier social services will lend a hand on when a person gets into trouble - \$15.85 a week. I tell you, Mr. Speaker, this young lady is a human tragedy. She wants to work. She wants to continue on working even though it is only \$15.85 a week. That woman is broken hearted that come June she will be laid off.

Mr. Speaker, that is this programme that this government boasts about so much. Yesterday, I got a phone call from my own district from a man who, again, you could almost tell from the tone of voice, was in tears. He said, 'Mr. Lush, I have been offered a job by social services.' He has to go up somewhere between Gambo and Hare Bay and clean away a dump for the

next ten weeks; go up shovelling the debris down into the pit. That is the great productive job he is going to be in for the next ten weeks. He said, 'Mr. Lush, it is not that. I want to go to work but I am going to work for the minimum wage and I am going to have my drug card taken away from me.' He has a family, four or five children and most of them are not all that healthy as so often happens with these people who are not able to provide adequate nutrition for the family. They do have a lot of illnesses and are not able to afford the proper nutritious food. He was complaining about having to go to work on this programme knowing that he was putting himself into a position that was worse than before, putting himself into an economic situation that was not as good as when he was on social assistance.

AN HON. MEMBER:

That is not true.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is saying it is not true. I can tell the hon. gentleman I am reporting factual stories from constituents to me.

MR. PEACH:

Well, you are not doing your job as an MHA.

MR. LUSH:

I will tell the hon. member that I do as good a job as he does any day.

MR. TOBIN:

Where were you Saturday night?

MR. LUSH:

Saturday night I was on the periphery of a group of people who would celebrate any triviality,

they would celebrate anything, and I asked what they were celebrating. I wandered into Holiday Inns with my wife to take her out for dinner and, lo and behold, I saw those people and they were celebrating the eight anniversary. I do not think it was publicized. It was not publicized very much because if they told the people of Newfoundland, there would not be much joy in Newfoundland and Labrador. Mr. Speaker, the few people, the few die hards, the few stalwarts, were down there, and I expect they had to come from all parts of the Island to get that big a crowd. They came from, I would say, as far away as Nain and they came from all parts of the Island, Mr. Speaker.

But, Mr. Speaker, this programme could be a good programme. I think the money could be spent more prudently. There are two suggestions I want to make. Two suggestions for this programme, one, the money should be spent in a way that is going to promote productivity. So therefore, it should be spent with respect to developing our resources like Forestry. I would like to see more of these monies spent in Bonavista North on forestry, reforestation, silviculture, but I do not believe, I may be wrong, I do not believe that there has been one single programme taken out of this amount in Bonavista North and spent in that area. I do not believe there has been one programme, not one.

Mr. Speaker, there is another aspect of it, again, that I do not condemn. That is the area where they work with senior citizens. I do not condemn that particular aspect, where they work with senior citizens and the physically

disabled, the handicapped. That is all right too. There are far too many of them in jobs that are not productive, far too many of them cleaning up waste disposal areas and painting garages and painting council offices and all of this kind of nonsense. That is what is going on.

Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that the two main areas in which money should be spent in Bonavista North are in forestry-related activities and in the fisheries. But there is also a place for the work they do with the senior citizens and the handicapped. That is a need that we need. Teacher aids again, that is an area I am not condemning. But I think the emphasis should be on spending money in areas that are going to increase the productivity of our resources. That is the area in which we should be spending this money.

The second suggestion I want to make is the wages should be increased. The minimum wage, Mr. Speaker, is too little. The wages should be increased. Now, I know if you do that the government is going to say, "We cannot employ as many people." Well, Mr. Speaker, at least -

AN HON. MEMBER:

The minimum wage is \$4.

MR. LUSH:

Yes, I realize that but they give \$5, \$5 an hour is normal.

MR. DECKER:

It is a minimum.

MR. LUSH:

Yes, it is a minimum. It is certainly not very generous. But, Mr. Speaker, if they increase the wages, it would have two results,

God forbid that I should say the second one, because it is not what we want. We have to face reality that some of the kinds of activities the government is getting into will not be permanent. We do not mind seasonality, provided it was every season, provided these jobs generated jobs for every season. But, there are two things. The higher wages will enable the people to enjoy a better standard of living, plus the fact that when they are laid off and they are forced to apply for UIC, their UIC will be higher. The rate of UIC is contingent upon wages. They are in proportion to the salary or wage. So, they would have it both ways. If they paid a higher wage, this would mean the person engaged in the work would get higher unemployment insurance.

Mr. Speaker, these are two practical suggestions I have made re this first job creation initiative by the government, which will be carried out by the Department of Social Services. I know the minister just recently announced one of these programmes in my own area. He just recently announced something like \$86,000 in the Wesleyville area.

Again, I think that is not too bad, the way they have directed these monies. They are going to be spent helping senior citizens and also having something to do with the Bon News Lodge, which is a senior citizens home there. So, I do not know exactly, but from the description in the paper, it does not look like it is too bad. It is not one of the totally unproductive areas in which they find themselves in from time to time.

Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that

there are ways in which this \$29 million can be spent more productively and that is if we spend it in the area of developing our resources, the forestry, fishery, agricultural, tourism, or whatever it happens to be. Mr. Speaker, the second suggestion is to increase the wages so that we are not forcing people to work for slave wages.

Mr. Speaker, the second one does not need any comment either really. It is an amount of \$2.5 million for the Federal/Provincial Employment Enhancement programme to hire up to 1,500 social assistance recipients. Again, it is basically the same programme, except different requirements. I think this is the one where they can hire young people and single people. It has a little more flexibility but, again, I make the same observation and the same suggestion that we try to have these people involved in productive jobs, jobs that will be productive to them as individuals, and jobs that will be productive to the development of the Province.

Mr. Speaker, the next two that I want to get into are the jobs that the hon. members raised all of the hullabaloo about in the Throne Speech. These were the 6,000 jobs that were lauded and commended for days after the Throne Speech. Here they are: 'An amount of \$7.5 million for the Provincial Employment Initiatives programme to enable government departments to hire up to 3,600 unemployed individuals on high priority resource related projects.' Now then, Mr. Speaker, when I was talking about the ten to twenty weeks syndrome and said this is what these jobs are about, the Minister of Forest Resource and Lands (Mr. Simms) shook his head,

'No, no,' he said, 'No way.'

Well, Mr. Speaker, I will just ask hon. members on the opposite side to engage in some simple elementary, fundamental mathematics. Thirty-six hundred workers. If you were to divide that into \$7.5 million, what do you think? If the government was just to give all of that money, split it up, \$7.5 million among 3,600 workers, how much do you think would be there? Mr. Speaker, it would be a little in excess of \$2,000 each. Now, answer this. How many weeks does a person have to work to get \$2,000 at \$5.00 an hour? Ten weeks, Mr. Speaker, that is the designation. That is it exactly. You cannot even go to twenty weeks on this one. I suppose they can manipulate it around, people work twenty well then -

MR. DECKER:

It depends on how you cut the pie.

MR. LUSH:

Exactly. That is the simple mathematics of it, Mr. Speaker.

So, so much for long-term employment on that particular programme. I suppose this was the programme under which the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Rideout) announced his project today. I wish the minister were here. I do not know whether this is the total programme. It is the only one named so far which has left out Bonavista North. Now, that is why I say I am hoping that this is not the final list. I am hoping that there are more. How could we spend money in the fisheries and leave out that traditional fishing district of Bonavista North, Wesleyville, Badger's Quay, Greenspond, and Cape Freels?

MR. DINN:

There is none there for Pleasantville.

MR. LUSH:

The minister says there are none there for Pleasantville. It may be that they have the modern facilities that they need. Maybe they have no necessity to upgrade their facilities. But certainly they do in Bonavista North.

MR. DECKER:

Why would they spend money in Grand Falls and not in Bonavista North?

MR. LUSH:

Well, that is a strange one. There are no wharves in Grand Falls. I did not see any slipways.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Salmon enhancement on the Exploits River.

MR. LUSH:

I am sorry, salmon enhancement on the Exploits River, right.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed today, but I have seen hon. members nod their heads to me and I have gotten the idea from their nodding that there are other announcements and there is going to be another list. I certainly hope when the minister makes that announcement Bonavista North will be included. I can assure the minister that there are needs for upgrading of fishing support facilities in Greenspond, in Badger's Quay, in Pool's Island, in Wesleyville, in Pound Cove, and in Cape Freels. These are the fishing districts in the district of Bonavista North. To a lesser extent, a little further up the bay, in Indian Bay, Centerville and Trinity. Golly, I

forgot! I could include Dover where we are just in the process of rennovating and revamping a fish plant there. That is a great success story, a fish plant that was on the verge of bankruptcy. It was bankrupt, but we have got a new operator in there doing a fantastic job. He did it all on his own, no thanks to government. Hon. members might remember him. He was on television sometime early in the Fall explaining how he tried to get government involvement and government assistance but he did not get it. But he is going strong. Mr. Speaker, Dover can do with monies in that area as well, in addition to the ones that I have listed. We can certainly have monies in Dover.

Mr. Speaker, the last employment initiative is 'an amount of \$5 million for the Private Sector Employment Initiative Programme to enable private companies to share on a fifty/fifty basis the cost of hiring up to twenty-four individuals with primary emphasis on training related jobs.' That is the one programme with which I agree strongly, this arrangement with private enterprise for fifty/fifty. But again, Mr. Speaker, I find the money too little. This is an amount of \$5 million and, of course, one expects that there is going to be \$5 million spent by the private sector as well. I suppose we are looking at \$10 million. Mr. Speaker, that, in itself, if again you work out the mathematics of this, you are not talking about long programmes. Again, you are into the twenty week syndrome. All you have to do is to divide the number into the total amount to be spent, \$10 million, and you will find out that it is not the kind of programme that is going to

last for very long.

Again, I can see that is the kind of a job that would train people. Some of these companies may indeed keep them on. Some, once they take these people on and train them in certain areas, it might very well be that some of these people will be kept on by the firms in question and get full-time work. So that probably is the best initiative out of the works that they have advanced.

Mr. Speaker, the other initiatives are those which will try and stimulate the economy by providing monies to businesses. Again, in all of these the one complaint, I suppose, is possibly not enough money. The first one with respect to the Newfoundland and Labrador Development Corporation and rural development, the initiatives taken there are not new. It is simply expanding the kinds of businesses that can qualify and that is a good move. Now that it is non-sectoral, at first you had to be engaged in manufacturing, I suppose what this now means is that just about any business can qualify for grants and loans from the Newfoundland and Labrador Development Corporation and from Rural, Agriculture and Northern Development. That is a move with which I agree by expanding and extending the classification of businesses that might qualify. I take it to be non-sectoral, which means that it is just about any kind of business will be able to qualify depending, of course, on whether they make the right case and they meet the proper requirements. So that is a good initiative. We do not know how many jobs it will develop but it is a good initiative, as is the money for capital venture. Again, it is a rather small amount, \$1

million, but for that kind of risky business, it is a start.

Coming down to the New Youth Entrepreneurship Programme, yes, an excellent programme, Mr. Speaker. But when I say too little, this is one programme certainly showing that. Now again, it is a new programme. I suppose being a Conservative Government they would have to move cautiously and conservatively here, Mr. Speaker, for youth entrepreneurship. I wonder if hon. members have worked out how many youths throughout the Province will qualify for this programme.

AN HON. MEMBER:
Hundreds.

MR. LUSH:
There is \$500,000, that is all is there and you are allowed \$20,000.

MR. SIMMS:
Some ventures might only cost \$5,000.

MR. LUSH:
Even so, let us take the maximum from this \$500,000. How many youths throughout Newfoundland and Labrador would qualify for this Youth Entrepreneurship Programme provided they were given the maximum? It would be twenty-five. If they were given the maximum of \$20,000, there would be twenty-five people qualify throughout Newfoundland and Labrador, a measly twenty-five.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. LUSH:
Multiply twenty-five by \$20,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (Greening):
Order, please!

MR. LUSH:

I am telling you this is a place to start as to the numbers of people. If you take the top figure, they were given \$20,000, there will be twenty-five if you half it, and say they were all given \$10,000, there would be fifty. If we quartered it -

AN HON. MEMBER:

Fifty businesses.

MR. LUSH:

Fifty businesses, I realize that, Mr. Speaker, but I still say that it is too little. A good programme, but too little at this particular time. It might be that the government has just tried it out, of course, as a pilot programme to see how it is going to go, and to see how it is going to fly, and next year, depending on its success, well, next year is hardly a measure, I suppose, but in a couple of years time when they see how it is going, to up the figure. But it does appear to be too little, \$500,000 at this particular point in time.

I make the same comment about Newfoundland, the NLDC and rural development. Again, I think there is too little money in them, particularly now that we have extended and expanded upon the numbers of businesses that will be entitled to apply for monies under both programmes. But, in any event, it is a good measure.

All in all, Mr. Speaker, we have no notion, no idea, of how many jobs they will create, but, by the dollar value that is on them, it is not likely that they will create thousands of jobs, but let us hope, in the meantime, let us

look on the bright side and hope that they do create a number of jobs.

Mr. Speaker, almost the only reference to the offshore is here in this particular item as well. It says, 'Government has earmarked over \$49 million to be spent in this fiscal year for new and ongoing initiatives and projects to be funded under the Offshore Development Fund.' I will allude to that a little later.

Then, the government has allocated \$19.5 million for loans and grants to help finance the \$144 million Hopebrook Incorporated gold mining development. We hope, Mr. Speaker, that these two initiatives will also create a number of jobs for the Province.

Mr. Speaker, the problem is that when you have such high levels of unemployment, as we have today, there has got to be a massive infusion of money to make any indentation into the huge numbers. Forty-four million dollars, that is only peanuts in terms of the numbers of people that we have unemployed, and the unemployment rate is growing year after year. Mr. Speaker, we are so fortunate that we live in Canada, because we have such an out-migration from the labour force in this Province every year. I would expect that it was in the hundreds in the district of Bonavista North alone this year. Young people off to Toronto, off to Fort McMurray, hundreds of them left this year.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Liberals?

MR. LUSH:

I hope not.

Hundreds of them left this year, young people, married people, old people, all in search of jobs. Mr. Speaker, I said it is fortunate that we live in Canada, but yet it is a crime, it is a shame, that so many of our people have to leave who do not want to leave, people who want to stay and make their living in their own Province. I maintain, Mr. Speaker, that they should not have to leave this Province.

From time to time hon. gentlemen get excited and talk about a previous centralization programme that a previous government had. I would say that they have the largest forced centralization programme that any government ever had in this Province, forced centralization. Mr. Speaker, it would be absolutely alarming and astonishing if we had the number of people who have left this Province in the past couple of years to get employment in other parts of Canada. As I said, there is nothing wrong with that. That is what Canada is all about. That is why we joined Confederation, so that our people could get employment in any region of Canada, in any Province of Canada.

The shame, Mr. Speaker, the travesty, is the fact that our people have to go. Many of them cannot afford to go. Now the federal government has cut out the few programmes there were in terms of helping people to relocate. What is the name of the programme I am looking for?

MR. DINN:
Mobility Assistance.

MR. LUSH:
The Mobility Assistance Programme has been pulverized now, if not annihilated entirely. In the last

couple of years they were making it so difficult, there was so much bureaucracy, so much bureaucratic red tape that a person had to go through in order to qualify for this Mobility Assistance programme, they have made it so stringent, they have tightened up the rules so stringently now, Mr. Speaker, I do not what the situation is in terms of getting it. Very few people get it. There is such stringent rules and regulations attached to it now that it has almost become futile and useless. Mr. Speaker, it is a shame that they have made this Mobility Assistance programme so hard to get. There is not a Newfoundlander or Labradorian who can afford to relocate on the Mainland, be it Toronto or Fort McMurray, without assistance.

MR. DECKER:
What programme are you talking about?

MR. LUSH:
I am talking about the Mobility Assistance programme, the one offered by the federal government that they have now reduced to being nothing, practically, reduced to being futile, and it is unfortunate. I hope that hon. members opposite will do the same as I have done, make representation to the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Bouchard) to see that that programme is carried out in the way that it was carried out before, that the rules are relaxed on it, that anybody finding a job - and God knows it is difficult enough - should have their way paid without any questions. The way the programme works, Mr. Speaker, at least in one aspect of it, is in order to qualify for this programme a person has to be requisitioned by Manpower in the

area in which they have acquired the job. They have to be requisitioned by Manpower and they cannot be requisitioned by Manpower if the skill that they have can be found within that Province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, imagine that! Most of our people get up there and they get jobs as truck drivers, just to use that. Imagine how easy it would be, how simple to get a truck driver, for example, anywhere in Ontario, but because that is a job where the skill is available in Ontario the person getting the job from Newfoundland cannot have his way paid and that of his family. He could be a good truck driver and could have a permanent job. Mr. Speaker, the tales of woe that I get from people who have taken the initiative to move from here to go looking for a job, and not knowing how this Mobility Assistance programme is given they get up there counting on getting their way paid and getting their job, they go into Manpower and find out, no, because the job you are doing can be filled here, locally, we cannot pay it - what callousness, Mr. Speaker - and that person will spend the next ten months paying off the money he spent to get to wherever he was going, taking his family.

Mr. Speaker, how badly do Newfoundlanders want to work to find some job on the Mainland and get up there and spend a year paying off the expenses they incurred to get there? Mr. Speaker, it is an absolute crime that we have a federal bureaucracy that is so callous and so insensitive. There are times that I wish I could be in that House of Commons, Mr. Speaker, to lay out that story of humanness for

Newfoundlanders, the people who have to go through all kinds of sacrifice and deprivation to get a job in this country. Yet, they get up there and they are treated callously and insensitively by a bureaucracy that does not have the slightest clue of hardship and the sacrifices that are made by those people to get jobs, Mr. Speaker. I never cease to admire the courage and the perseverance that many of our people have who go through all of this deprivation to get a job.

I know a gentleman in my own district, not a word of education, he would not recognize his name I suppose, Mr. Speaker, if he saw it on the biggest neon sign on Water Street, and that gentleman gets a job every year on some part of the Mainland, gets up there and works eight or nine months in some construction industry. I admire the courage and the perseverance of that man. Tremendous!

MR. TOBIN:

His time is up, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The gentleman has unlimited time. He can speak as long as he wishes.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, I do not mean to use this unlimited time in a frivolous and futile manner. I am making points affecting Newfoundlanders, points affecting people in my own district.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, I am finished talking about policy matters, philosophical matters and matters

relating to job creation. I have finished talking about these. I could talk about them for a long time. I am sure hon. gentlemen are as aware as I am of the need to create jobs in this Province, not short-term jobs, Mr. Speaker, but long-term jobs that will raise the standard of living for so many needy people throughout this Province, that will give them the means to live happily, that will give them the means to raise their families, and give them the kind of living they deserve.

Hon. gentlemen, I believe, realize that but they do not have the ideas, Mr. Speaker, they do not have the initiatives to be able to create the jobs that we need in this Province.

MR. TOBIN:

You are for short-term jobs. Roger is only there for two months, you said.

MR. LUSH:

Now, Mr. Speaker, if that is the level of seriousness the hon. gentleman is going to introduce into this debate when we are talking about a problem of such seriousness, of such gravity to the people of this Province, then, Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. gentleman had better look at himself, he had better ask himself why it is that he is in this House right now?

MR. TOBIN:

Apologize to Leo, boy. That is what you should be doing.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker, name them.

MR. SPEAKER:

Could we have order, please?

MR. LUSH:

If the hon. gentlemen would want me, it is quite apart from what I am now doing, but I can assure the hon. gentlemen that I was part of no coup.

MR. TOBIN:

You signed your name to the coup, boy.

MR. LUSH:

The hon. gentleman does not have a clue of what he is talking about.

Mr. Speaker, I will tell the hon. gentleman that when I am in the leadership, if I announce it in the next couple of days, I will explain to the people of this Province my role. I am not ashamed to explain my role, and I can assure hon. members now there was no coup.

MR. TOBIN:

"Lush hates coup." In the paper, look.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, I want to get on to this budget.

MR. BARRY:

I would like to stay on that prior topic.

MR. LUSH:

We will get on to that one in time.

Mr. Speaker, I will tell hon. gentlemen this, that they are as worried as can be about this leadership.

Mr. Speaker, it is likely that I am going to be into this leadership, but let me tell hon. gentlemen this: If the present leader is reconfirmed as Leader of this party I will be back with him cheek to cheek, jowl to jowl, serving here as vigorously as I have ever done before. Let me tell hon. gentlemen, do not get nervous. And I am sure if I am elected leader he will be here cheek to cheek and jowl to jowl. Let me tell hon. gentlemen to iron out their own problems, let them take care of their own miseries, because they have a lot of them. Let them iron out the problems in their own house, let them put their own house in order, because they have a lot of problems. And do not tempt me, do not taunt me, I may name some of them. Do not tempt me, do not taunt me, I will tell them the problems they are having, Mr. Speaker. I will talk about the problems they are having.

MR. TOBIN:

Name them. Name them.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, I do not want to get into that. I do not want to get detracted now, I want to keep on this budget. I know that they do not want to hear the truth about this budget.

We have not given up on those lines of old, 'It is not too late to seek a newer world. There lies the port and the vessel puffs her sails.' We are ready to go along. We are ready, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TOBIN:

For what? For what?

MR. LUSH:

'To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield. No, Mr. Speaker, we

are not taking comfort in those old lines 'he also serves who only stands and waits. We are onto more exuberant things, more jubilant things. Mr. Speaker, I know hon. gentlemen are shivering, they are afraid of the outcome of this leadership that the Liberals are into. They are afraid of the outcome, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH:

I want to tell you that Liberals in Newfoundland are not afraid, because they know that we are going to come out of this a united party, ready for election, ready to take over the government. We are ready. We are waiting for it.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please !

MR. LUSH:

If I were hon. gentlemen I would be afraid of this leadership too. Anyway, Mr. Speaker, on to the budget. The budget, Mr. Speaker, contained a number of scares and shocks for the people of this Province. Dr. Collins announced that the deficit on current account was to quadruple from approximately \$41 million to \$1723 million. Mr. Speaker, that is something like the support we are going to get in the next election, it is going to quadruple, because the people of this Province are sick and tired of the inaction, the lack of performance, the incompetence of this government and their fiscal mismanagement.

Mr. Speaker, people are coming to the Liberals in droves every day. In my own district, Mr. Speaker, it is getting so good now that I am campaigning for the Tories.

Every day people are saying to me, Mr. Lush, are you looking for votes? No, I say, I have all the votes I want now, you can give them to the other side. Mr. Speaker, there is a tremendous optimism in the land, and 'There is a tide in the affairs of men, / Which, taken at the flood...' And we are taking it at the flood, Mr. Speaker, on June 5. On that weekend we are taking it at the flood and it will lead on to fortune.

Mr. Speaker, when you hear of the array of candidates that will be running, the new blood. Oh! I just cannot wait for that convention. The exuberance of it all! Oh! the confidence we are going to instil in the Newfoundland people. It is going to be absolutely fantastic, Mr. Speaker! I can barely control myself. Oh, what a pivotal time in the history of the Liberal Party in Newfoundland.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH:

What a momentous time, Mr. Speaker. Absolutely fantastic! The decisions that will be made by these people on the fifth and sixth. It is so pivotal, it is so momentous that hon. gentlemen and lady opposite should make it a point to attend, they should make it a point to be around, at least.

MR. TOBIN:

Why are you having it at Mary of Queen of Peace Parish Hall?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. TOBIN:

Why are you having this convention?

MR. LUSH:

We are having a convention because Liberals like leadership. We like leadership conventions, Mr. Speaker. We like now and again to give the people an opportunity to speak out, to give them a chance to reconfirm the present leadership or to unconfirm the present leadership, whatever it happens to be. We like for Liberals in the Province to be given the chance to have a say in the direction of this party. We like them to have a say from time to time, Mr. Speaker, every now and again. I would suggest that there are Tories who would like to have a say in their leadership, too.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH:

There are Tories throughout Newfoundland who would like to have a say in their leadership, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (Mitchell):

Order, please!

Could we have some order? The hon. gentleman is making a very colourful speech. I think all members of the House should respect the hon. member while he is making a speech on the budget. So could we have order, please. Thank you.

MR. LUSH:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not mind hon. gentlemen getting carried away with my rhetoric and my colourful speech.

Mr. Speaker, we are talking about the deficit in this Province which

has quadrupled, gone from \$40 million to \$172 million in one year. Now, who can explain how it is that this deficit exploded to such a proportion to quadruple last year's deficit in one year? Who on the other side can explain that satisfactorily to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador? Mr. Speaker, I do not know if hon. gentlemen realize the financial mess in which they have passed this Province. The budget announced a borrowing programme of \$638 million merely for the day to day operating expenses of government and servicing the public debt. This figure, \$638 million, is almost - listen to this - equal to the entire public debt of the Province built up in twenty-three years by the first Liberal Administration. The borrowing for this year, \$638 million, is practically equal to the entire public debt of the Province built up in twenty-three years by the first Liberal Administration. How is that for performance, Mr. Speaker?

Additionally, Mr. Speaker, Dr. Collins announced that the provincial government debt has escalated to the incomprehensible figure of \$4.7 billion. I say incomprehensible because I would venture to say that there are not more than three or four members in the House, and not more than probably twenty-five or thirty people in Newfoundland who can understand the enormity, the hugeness of that figure of \$4.7 billion.

I will tell hon. members of the House that when it comes to my private member's motion I will explain more fully what I mean by the incomprehensibility of this figure. As a matter of fact, I will even demonstrate to them the

incomprehensibility of \$1 million, for the ordinary Newfoundlander. But, \$4.7 billion, Mr. Speaker, is beyond the comprehension of most ordinary people. I ask hon. members opposite to think about that, to think about how many dollars is \$4.7 billion. Mr. Speaker, that is where we will be at the end of the year. That is where hon. gentlemen opposite will have brought this Province by the end of the year, to \$4.7 billion in the hole - in the hole is the common expression used for it. That will amount to \$8,100 for every man, woman and child in this Province. There are four of us in family, and if I were to pay off my public debt, write out a cheque for the minister, I would have to give him \$32,400 as my contribution towards paying off the public debt. All hon. members can think about what they would have to give, but for my family, the four of us, I would have to give \$32,400.

That public debt is now the third highest in Canada, behind Quebec and Manitoba. Quebec has the highest, then Manitoba, and Newfoundland is next. Mr. Speaker, just listen to this, to pay off that public debt we have to pay the alarming amount of 19 per cent of the revenues of this Province - 19 per cent of the revenues coming into this Province go to pay the public debt.

MR. DECKER:

What about the current debt?

MR. LUSH:

That is up from 13 per cent to 14 per cent, in the previous five years. We used to pay 13 per cent and 14 per cent of the total revenues coming into this Province. Now, that will show how

it has escalated. It is now 19 per cent. I have a little more to say about that later, as well, Mr. Speaker.

This debt represents a tremendous shock and burden to the provincial economy and to the people of this Province. I am not sure if we can take many more shocks like this. I am not sure if the economy of this Province can take many more shocks like this, a current account deficit of \$172 million. Mr. Speaker, despite this horrendous deficit and public debt, Dr. Collins predicts that the provincial economy will grow between 2.4 per cent and 2.7 per cent, at par with the projected national average. Now, I wonder if hon. members get the significance of this?

MR. TOBIN:
What are you saying?

MR. LUSH:
The Minister of Finance is predicting that our economy will grow between 2.4 per cent and 2.7 per cent, which is the prediction for national growth. Now, do hon. members think that we are going to match the national growth? Do you think we are going to match the national growth which is predicted between 2.4 per cent and 2.7 per cent? What happens to the minister's predictions? The minister does more revisions of predictions than anyone else I know. Last year he predicted a deficit of \$49 million. In November that had escalated to \$53 million, and four or five months after he is wrong again, he is back to \$40 million.

I will tell you what happened with the growth last year. The minister predicted somewhere in the same area, somewhere around

2.7 per cent to 2.8 per cent. Do hon. members know what the growth was in the economy last year? It was 1.9 per cent.

MR. BARRY:
What did he predict?

MR. LUSH:
He predicted 2.7 per cent to 2.8 per cent growth, in that area. It was 1.9 per cent.

MR. BARRY:
That is about thirty-three and a third per cent.

MR. LUSH:
You better believe it! And that is what I am going to say. In the language or in the view of economic forecasters, that 1.9 per cent is not growth at all, it is stagnation. So, Mr. Speaker, this is where we are. This Province is in one awful financial mess. We are on a slippery slope. This government have thrown us at the mercy of Ottawa. We are almost in the situation, if not there, the one that the Premier predicted, except we threw ourselves at the mercy of the British Government back in the 1930's. We have now thrown ourselves at the mercy of Ottawa. It is fiscal mismanagement, Mr. Speaker, that has reduced us practically to bankruptcy. Yes, bankruptcy, Mr. Speaker.

Let us look at it: Mr. Speaker, just to make the illustration, if a family had a budget of \$10,000, had to make it on \$10,000, and supposing their bank manager called them and told them they had spent \$40,000, where would they be? I know if it happened to me and he told me that I had spent \$40,000, my house would be gone, I am afraid, within twenty-four hours. Mr. Speaker, this is the

position this government have found themselves in by quadrupling the deficit. Mr. Speaker, when you have to borrow money to pay for the light bill and the food bill, the day to day activities, then you are in trouble, but when you have to borrow money to pay the interest on the money that you owe, then you are in deep, deep trouble, then you are really in a financial hole. This is where we are, borrowing money to pay the interest on what we owe. This is where the Province is, Mr. Speaker. When you are in that position, you have lost control. This government has lost control of the fiscal management of this Province. They have dried up and exhausted all of our loan sources. Mr. Speaker, they are now travelling all over the world, Switzerland and Japan, trying to borrow money and borrowing money at the highest interest rates imaginable.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, this budget shows a government which have abdicated their responsibility to the people of this Province, their responsibility to run effectively the economic affairs of this Province. They have abdicated their responsibility to manage and direct the fiscal matters in an effective, responsible, and accountable manner. I say again, Mr. Speaker, they have lost control. They have lost their sense of direction. Someone has aptly said that when you do not know where you are going you are liable to end up some place else. Mr. Speaker, that is the case with this Province. I do not know where we are going to end up. When you do not know where you are going, you are liable to end up some place else.

Where are we going to end up?

What is going to be the deficit at the end of this year? With the Minister of Finance's track record, goodness knows what the deficit will be next year.

There was an account in one of the papers yesterday predicting that maybe it could go to \$200 million, and that would not be much of a margin of error for this Minister of Finance.

Mr. Speaker, if hon. members would agree, I will adjourn the debate until tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER:

Is it agreed to call it six o'clock?

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, I have been asked to remind members of the Estimates Committee meetings. There is not one tonight, that is the first reminder. There is no meeting tonight. Tomorrow, Wednesday, at 9:30 a.m., and this is particularly for the media, I guess, the press, as well, the Government Services Estimates Committee will meet and will scrutinize the estimates of the Department of Public Works. Tomorrow, Wednesday, at 8:00 p.m., by the way, not 7:30 p.m., at 8:00 p.m. the Resource Estimates Committee will meet and scrutinize the estimates of the Department of Rural, Agriculture and Northern Development. And those who are making long range plans should note that Thursday, the following morning, at 9:30 a.m., the Government Services Committee will

scrutinize the estimates of the Department of Consumer Affairs and Communications.

MR. FLIGHT:

What do you have for Thursday night?

MR. SIMMS:

Thursday night, I have been told that the Social Services Committee will meet, but I do not know if that has been confirmed. Yes, the Social Services Committee will meet to deal with the estimates of the Department of Health.

MR. FLIGHT:

What is on for Thursday night?

MR. SIMMS:

I just said the Department of Health Thursday night. The hon. member is not listening.

MR. FLIGHT:

Is that it?

MR. SIMMS:

Yes, at the present time, but there will be a further update tomorrow, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

Index

Answers to Questions

tabled

April 7, 1987

M.H.A. - Menchik Tabled by Hon.
Minister of Forest Resources
& Lands, 7 Apr. '87

Head 2.1.04.02 Forest Policy and Planning Co-ordination

(Employee Benefits)

Question

What does the 45,000 indicated as revised figures for Employee Benefits in the above Head for the fiscal year 1986-87 represent?

Answer

The 45,000 represents staff training expenses for approximately 100 employees of the Department. These were all Forestry personnel who travelled to the Maritime Forest Ranger School in Frederickton and other Forestry Institutions on the Mainland for the purpose of learning new Forestry techniques in carrying out their respective duties.

Cost shared 70/30, Federal/Provincial

M.H.A. - Windsor / Buchans.

Tabled by Hon.
Minister of Forest
Resources & Lands,
7 Apr '87

Head 2.4.01.06 - Forest Protection Administration

(Purchased Services)

Question

Would the Honourable Minister please indicate a breakdown for the amount of \$26,400 stated in Purchased Services for the fiscal year 1987-88?

Answer

The funds noted in Purchased Services will cover the following expenditures:

- (1) Vehicle repairs and maintenance.
- (2) Repairs to towers for V.H.F. Radio system.
- (3) Rental of mobile telephones.
- (4) Repairs to testing equipment relating to the Radio System.

Talled by
Hon. Minister of
Forest Resources
& Lands, 7 Apr 1987

Question What does the \$13,100 in Purchased Services represent for the fiscal year 1986-87?

Answer The \$13,100 represents the following expenditures:

a) Departmental Conferences	10,560.06
b) Entertainment expenses for the Executive Support Services	<u>2,539.94</u>
Total	<u>13,100.00</u>

Departmental Conferences

1) Canadian Institute of Forestry	500.00
2) First Annual Forest Resource Exhibition	5,584.45
3) Canadian Forest Economists	1,355.57
4) Canadian Council of Forestry Ministers	2,381.44
5) Canadian Council of Surveying and Mapping	<u>738.60</u>
Total	<u>10,560.06</u>

M.A.A. - Windsor / Buchanan

Tabled by Hon.
Minister of Forest
Resources & Lands
7 Apr. '87

Head 2.1.01.06 Forest Management Administration

(Purchased Services)

Question

Would the Honourable Minister provide a breakdown of expenditures for the amount of \$39,800 allocated in Purchased Services for the fiscal year 1986-87?

Answer

The \$39,800 covered the following expenses:

(1) Vehicle repairs and maintenance	27,600
(2) Vehicle rentals	<u>12,200</u>
Total	<u>39,800</u>