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Speaker: Honourable Patrick McNicholas

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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.

MR. RIDEOUT:
Under the authority of the Newfoundland Fish Inspection Act, my department is responsible for the licensing of lobster buyers within the Province. Again this year all lobster buyers' licences are issued conditional on buyers paying fishermen 70 per cent of the Canadian dollar equivalent of the Boston wholesale price. Lobster prices are monitored on a day to day basis by the Fishing Industry Advisory Board.

During the first few weeks of the lobster season, there have been a number of complaints from fishermen that the price received was below the minimum requirement. My department, in conjunction with the Fishing Industry Advisory Board, has monitored the situation and verified that, initially, prices were somewhat below the minimum price requirement. I am aware of the instability and uncertainty of prices during the first week or so of the season and that possible fluctuations in price may occur from the time lobsters are purchased from fishermen to their final marketing, particularly in the Boston market.

I am pleased to not that, based on our latest monitoring, prices now

paid to fishermen adequately reflect the 70 per cent requirement as reflected in the Boston market price.

I strongly urge lobster buyers to take appropriate action, as many did in previous years, to retroactively adjust the earlier prices where the 70 per cent guideline was not met. Furthermore, my department will carefully review the buying practices of all lobster buyers during the course of this fishing season and individual buying practices could affect lobster buyers' licence eligibility during the renewal process.

I am relatively pleased with the overall stability in lobster prices to fishermen during the period that government has imposed the 70 per cent base price requirement. Notwithstanding this consideration, however, it is my hope that lobster prices in future years will be negotiated under the Fishing Industry Collective Bargaining Act as indeed most other fish prices are established in this Province. I intend to pursue this matter with the Fishermen's Union at an early opportunity.

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 his statement before reading it in the House. It is quite obvious that there is a weakness within the system, and I suggest to you that the weakness is probably in the Fishing Industry Advisory Board.

The information we have is that the board is not competent. I do not know why, and maybe it can be explained, but they are not able to keep tabs on the Boston price and consequently our lobster fishermen are, in many cases, caught short. I would strongly suggest to the minister that maybe he should take a look at the inner workings of the Advisory Board to see if, in fact, there is need for improvement in their monitoring, the system they employ in finding out prices and that sort of thing. In his statement the minister said he is urging the buyers to take the appropriate action, as in other years, in that maybe fishermen would receive increases retroactively because of the shortcomings of whatever, maybe the advisory board, maybe the minister's department, I do not know. But certainly I think that is an important aspect of the minister's statement. I would again strongly urge him to take whatever action he can as minister to ensure that lobster buyers do adjust the amount paid lobster fishermen retroactively to match the current Boston blue sheet price.

Mr. Speaker, lobsters are becoming a very important commodity in this Province, a very high priced commodity, and sometimes I wonder if maybe we should not be spending more time and maybe paying more attention to finding ways and means of holding lobsters and allowing them to go into the marketplace spaced over a period. What is happening now is that once the lobster season opens, we find that the fishermen, who are anxious to get going and make a few dollars, put out their lobster pots and all of a sudden you find a lot of lobsters going into the market and, of course, we all know

what that does to the price. I am sure it does have the effect of depressing the prices that they get. The minister told me, before the House convened, that some effort is being made now by certain lobster buyers to provide holding pounds where lobsters can indeed be purchased and kept and, as I said, allowed to go into the markets in a more systematic way and spread over a longer period.

That, I believe, will have the desired effect of maybe getting more for lobster, and certainly will have the effect of sustaining a much better price for lobster.

In his statement the minister also mentioned that maybe the fixing of lobster prices will become the responsibility of the union. I see nothing wrong with that. Maybe the union, representing as they do the lobster fishermen, as other fishermen, would probably be better equipped to come up with a price than the Advisory Board would.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The hon. the member's time has elapsed.

At this stage I would like to welcome to the Speaker's Gallery Sir Eric Day, the British High Commissioner to Canada, accompanied by Mr. Frank Smith, the Honorary Consul for Britain.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. POWER:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of Career Development and Advanced Studies.

MR. POWER:

When government announced its re-organization of the Province's post-secondary institutions last Summer, an Automotive Technology Programme was identified as one of the new programmes to be added to the programme offerings at the Cabot Institute of Applied Arts and Technology.

I am pleased to inform hon. members that a new three-year Diploma Programme in Automotive Technology will begin at the Cabot Institute this September. The programme will emphasize a thorough knowledge of the advanced technology in the modern automobile.

Mr. Speaker, there is an ever increasing need to ensure that individuals in this Province have access to this type of training in order to enable them to pursue job prospects in today's highly technical automotive industry. The introduction of this programme is in accordance with the feedback received from the industry as well as recommendations from the Cabot Institute's Automotive Technology Advisory Committee.

Some of the jobs for which the Automotive Technology Programme provides training are service managers, service advisors, district service managers, service analysts, parts department managers, sales representatives, and motor vehicle mechanics.

Mr. Speaker, significant strides have been made all across the post-secondary education system over the last couple of years. The introduction of the Automotive Technology Programme is indicative of our ongoing effort to upgrade existing programmes and introduce new programmes designed to bring

our course offerings more in line with today's labour market demands.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, I realize that the Minister of Career Development and Advanced Studies has been preoccupied by the consequences of his wrong decision, not to listen to the polls and run in St. John's East federally, but that should not explain his lapse in not making available to us the statement today. I have to respond on the basis of what I heard him say; it was a brief statement and I think I got the gist of it.

MR. POWER:

You did not get a statement?

MR. SIMMONS:

We do not have one today, no.

I got the gist of it, and I say to the minister that we welcome the initiative on the new Diploma Programmes and, indeed, we welcome any initiative that broadens the educational opportunities available to young Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

Mr. Speaker, let me, on behalf of my colleagues in the official Opposition, express a concern which relates at least peripherally to the announcement the minister has made this afternoon, and by way of example I refer to his recent announcement in respect to first year courses in Lewisporte and Grand Falls. I

say to him in all kindness that there is a growing concern among educators, particularly those involved directly in vocational education, that policy decisions with very long-term implications are being taken without adequate study, and the Grand Falls and Lewisporte issues are two cases in point. There are quite serious ramifications for that kind of a decision. We would hope that the ramifications are all positive. But that is more a hope than any direct knowledge that is the case. And only a study, only some direct involvement of the people who will be affected by way of maybe a White Paper first, I would suggest to the minister, would have been a much better route to go here.

We are hearing the most snide motives being attached to the reason for the announcement of Lewisporte and Grand Falls. A lot of people in Gander would at least like to have some answers.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The hon. member's time has elapsed.

MR. SIMMONS:
In conclusion, I say to the minister, do not jeopardize what has the potential of being a good initiative by giving it the connotation of being partisan in its nature.

MR. LONG:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. member for St. John's East.

MR. LONG:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to say a few words of appreciation in welcoming the minister's statement, particularly inasmuch as it is a new programme for the Cabot Institute here in St. John's. We, in this party, have argued the importance of the reorganization of the vocational community college system to provide more access outside the city, although we have also raised concerns about the institution that was announced for the Grand Falls area.

There is a problem in the number of announcements that have been coming into the House in the last couple of weeks, in that there is virtually nothing for the Capital City of St. John's in the way of municipal works, job development programmes and the University in this city. There are student leaders from all across this country now putting forward Memorial University as an example of an institution that is facing an incredible crisis; a terrible example to be putting forward when we consider the importance of post-secondary education in this Province. So we welcome this announcement inasmuch as it seems to represent at last a recognition by this government of the importance of having programmes available, especially in post-secondary education in the Capital City.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DR. TWOMEY:
Mr. Speaker.

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

DR. TWOMEY:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I wish to make a statement today on the current situation in the Province

regarding ambulance services.

As most hon. members are aware, the President of the Private Ambulance Operators Association has indicated that he and some of his members may be withdrawing services on Friday of this week.

To put this issue into perspective, there are approximately thirty ambulance services in the Province, twenty-eight of these are community based operators, operated by municipalities, service clubs and other community organizations; twelve are operated by hospitals; and twenty-four are operated by private operators which is the group represented by the Private Ambulance Operators Association.

In October of 1985, the government received a comprehensive report on road ambulance services in the Province. This report was prepared by a study group appointed earlier by government. All parties that were known to have an interest in the ambulance services at that time were included as part of the study group and had an opportunity to contribute to the report.

Since the report was received about a year and a half ago, the government has given serious consideration to its recommendations and has taken and continues to take steps to deal with some of the problem areas highlighted in the report.

In essence, Mr. Speaker, the recommendations of the report are being used as a guide for the development of ambulance services in our Province. That is ordinarily the basic thrust of most reports of this type. These

reports are not inflexible blueprints but a guide for the rational development of a service or a programme.

One of the major recommendations of the report was that new legislation governing ambulance services be introduced in the Province. Recently, I wrote the President of the Private Ambulance Operators Association and advised the Association that it is the intention of government through my department to proceed with the development of legislation to provide for the overall operation of road ambulance services within our Province. The legislation and regulations under such legislation will deal with all facets of ambulance operations including the setting of standards.

The process of drafting such legislation will begin in the immediate future. My department will be seeking the input from hospital, community/volunteer, and private operators within the system in the preparation of this legislation.

I acknowledge to the Association that there may well be financial implications arising out of any legislation developed. These implications will be reviewed and presented to my colleagues along with my department's recommendations with respect to ambulance legislation.

In recent years, the Department of Health has been very active in promoting the training of ambulance attendants and, as a result, over 500 people have received training in recent years, mainly through the St. John Ambulance Attendant Training Programme. Government supports training through the St. John

Ambulance Programme because that organization is recognized for its expertise in the field of emergency training. They have a long history and tradition of training in this area. The Department of Health will continue to support and encourage further training of ambulance attendants in the future. The St. John Ambulance personnel travel to strategic locations in the Province where people wishing to be trained can have greater access to their courses.

The Private Ambulance Operators Association's spokesman has made serious statements concerning the lack of attendants on ambulance trips. While all ambulances do not carry attendants on all trips, they do on about 75 per cent of the trips. The qualifications of the attendants depend upon the nature of the illness or injury of the patient and can vary from a family member, in the case of somebody with a minor illness who may have to be transported by ambulance for a specific reason, to a physician, in the case of somebody with a serious illness. Ultimately, the physician will decide the type of attendant that is required. It is generally recognized that, on a number of ambulance trips, patients transported are not critically ill as we would be led to believe.

Mr. Speaker, I mentioned earlier the breakdown of ambulance operators in the Province under three categories - community based, hospital based, and private operators. I want to point out to hon. members that government supports all three types of operators financially under separate arrangements. The hospital services are supported through budget subsidies as are

other sectors of the hospital's operation. The community based ambulance services are supported through a payment per kilometer plus assistance toward replacement of vehicles. The private operators are paid an allowance of \$9,000 per year per approved vehicle plus 52 cents per kilometer travelled. In total, the Province spends approximately \$4 million a year on road ambulance services. In the recent budget, government announced a 4 per cent increase in the kilometer rate which is reflected in the above rates for private and community operators.

Mr. Speaker, the Private Operators Association spokesman has made a number of serious statements about patients carried in ambulances and the quality of the ambulance services in our Province which are not supported by fact. When people use anecdotal information which is often not substantiated to support their cause, it is difficult to deal with this type of approach except to hope that reasonable and clear thinking people will not give too much credence to these statements.

Mr. Speaker, this government is committed to the orderly and the progressive development of the ambulance services in our Province, and we will, as I have already stated, be using the recommendations outlined in the Ambulance Report as a guide to the development of future services. We are not going to be pressured into taking actions in this regard by a few people in the ambulance system. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, I want to make it clear today that it is my understanding that a number of private operators, while recognizing that our system is not perfect, may not be prepared to

refuse services to the public.

The private operators are private business people and, if they choose to withdraw their services, as regrettable as that action is, there is little I can do to force them not to take that action. What we will do, of course, if they take that action, is implement a contingency plan to ensure that services are provided to the areas that will be affected by any withdrawal of services. I would hope that the Private Ambulance Operators Association would recognize what is now being done by government and would try and deal with this matter in a more reasonable manner. My department is in contact with the ambulance operators and, should any of them decide to withdraw their services, I want to assure the House and the people who might live in areas covered by the operators that we will be implementing a plan to ensure that ambulance services are available to the people of those areas. The bottom line is that these people will not be left at risk if the operators decide to withdraw services from the public.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SIMMONS:

First of all, for the second time in a row we again did not receive a statement beforehand. I am not sure if this is part of a deliberate plan. We heard the

essence of the minister's statement, and it was not difficult to hear the essence because it had very little essence, apart from being a further rationale for doing nothing.

Now, let us be clear on what we are talking about here. We are talking about a report that the minister himself commissioned. It is a report that was done for the government. It has been in the government's hands for two years. Let us be clear on what the people are asking for here. They are not asking for more money in their pockets, they are asking for a plan for ambulance services. They are asking that the three or four recommendations of the report be adopted, that there be minimum standards. That is not too much to ask for. They are asking for a second trained attendant on those ambulances; and they are asking for some more funding for ambulance services. Now, these, Mr. Speaker, are all quite reasonable requests.

Mr. Speaker, today the minister has indicated to us what the real problem is. For him, a trained and respected physician, to stand in this House and agree to read that bafflegab that was prepared for him by somebody, that absolute, unadulterated bafflegab, gives us great insight into the kind of clout he has at the Cabinet table. That is the problem here, Mr. Speaker. It is not ambulance service as such, it is that Health has no effective voice in Cabinet. And that is why health services are going downhill, that is why we have beds closed in this Province. That is the issue, right there.

The minister may well be and he is

a first-rate physician, but he has also demonstrated that he is not necessarily a first-rate Minister of Health. That is why he answers to this House as a Minister of Health. If he cannot do better than this for ambulance service in this Province, he should resign the portfolio and put somebody there who can bring health service at least back to where it was when this motley host took over a few years and began pork-barrelling. You see, Mr. Speaker, this is not a good issue for pork-barrelling and that is why it is getting no priority from this government.

This government takes two years on a study and wants more time because it is a matter affecting the health and safety, the life and death of people in this Province. What did they do on the Sprung fetish? They only needed six or seven months to shell out \$13.5 million on this particular scheme, but if you are talking about the health of people that is a different issue, that takes two years and then some more.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, hear him say, 'Some people are not as sick as we are led to believe.' Mr. Speaker, is the minister, through the backdoor, saying what he does not have the courage to say through the front door? Are some people giving him misleading information? Is he saying that the ambulance service is being used beyond times when it should be used? Is he saying that the service is being abused by those operators? If that is what he is saying let him say it, but let him not use those cloaked expressions about, 'as we would be led to

believe.'

Mr. Speaker, he talks, also, about doing things in an orderly fashion. I say to him, funeral processions are orderly, but that does not make them very desirable. But that is where he is headed here in terms of ambulance service, he is planning one great big funeral for the people of this Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS:

Orderly is not enough! Let us be effective. Let us respond to those reasonable requests from the people who operate the ambulance service. I say to him, if there is a withdrawal of service, Mr. Speaker, it will be on his head. He has had two months and he has fiddled with this one, fiddled, fiddled, fiddled, and today he stands up in the House and reads that excuse for a statement, that unadulterated baffle-gab about why they need more time before they address the health needs, the safety concerns of ordinary Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. Mr. Speaker, this is not good enough. This is absolutely shameful!

We have heard from that minister again and again those reasoned approaches to every single problem. I say to him it is going to take more than his marvellous oratory today to cure the problem that is out there in health services. Mr. Speaker, he is now going to have to put-up or shut-up on this one. He is either going to have to be a Minister of Health worthy of the name, or he is going to have to do the honourable thing and say, Look, I am getting no support from this Cabinet for

health. They are to busy running around producing cucumbers, tomatoes, and so on and so forth, producing pie in the sky issues, to be concerned about ambulance services, to be concerned about people in rural Newfoundland who have need to get to a hospital in a hurry. And, Mr. Speaker, when they get there, sometimes they are put out in the corridor in beds. I saw it a few nights ago, where they were out in a corridor in beds waiting to get into a hospital room because the minister, because of his lack of clout in government, in Cabinet, because there is no effective voice at the Cabinet table for health and health services, has closed down beds so that these people who race in here in a life and death situation are put in the corridor until they can find a bed.

MR. TOBIN:

The hon. member's time is up, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SIMMONS:

I know that member hopes my time is up, but I say to him that his time will be up a long time before my time will be up.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. TOBIN:

The groundhog speaks.

MR. SIMMONS:

The gofer, he talks and talks and says nothing, but what else is new about that particular member?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS:

If that member is telling me that he subscribes to the despicable things that are being done to

ambulance operators, if that is what he is saying by his interjections, I will report that to the few constitutents who even know what his name is down there in Burin - Placentia West.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS:

What would that member know about fact, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order!

The hon. member's time has elapsed.

MR. SIMMONS:

Thank you very much, Sir.

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker, in the minute I have left I want to put a few more comments in. I think the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Simmons) generated enough heat and energy on it and I would have done the same thing, but without the time I cannot. Just two or three points, Mr. Speaker: I am very disappointed to hear the minister's response to this. A broken back that is badly treated at an accident site means a person can be paralyzed for the rest of their lives. Surely the cost of handling that for the next fifty years is much more than the small amount required to put the proper training in place.

Furthermore, the minister also

said that at least 25 per cent of the trips do not have attendants, and even more do not have trained attendants. We know of incidents where individuals unattended in the back of ambulances, although not seriously ill when they started out, ended up getting sick on the ride and throwing up and choked to death as a result of it. Mr. Speaker, we have to that second person in the ambulance and they have to have the proper training. It is not the kind of investment that is a waste, it is the kind of investment that will save us a fortune in the long run. And the private ambulance operators are right, they need that, they need a plan, they need dates and they need a timetable they can count on as to when these things will be done.

The minister has had the report for a year and a half to two years. It is time to implement it with some solid dates in it, and I think all these problems could be resolved.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

It is now 3:30 p.m. and Private Members' Day. It is time for Oral Questions, according to our Standing Orders. Unless the hon. minister has leave to make a statement, we shall proceed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
No leave.

Oral Questions

MR. SIMMONS:
Mr. Speaker,

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

MR. SIMMONS:
Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health must have anticipated our particular concern for ambulance service because we had decided among ourselves that we would raise this at the top of Question Period. Having heard the minister's response, I tell my colleagues that I am going to change the strategy a bit because I do not see any point in asking the Minister of Health the question. It was indicated by his statement that he is prepared to get up and read this nonsense prepared for him by somebody. If he was prepared to tell us about his concerns for ambulance service, we would ask him the question, but we are going to ask the Premier, Mr. Speaker, because I am sure he has got some answers as to why this report has been in the hands of government for two years. Would he indicate to the House whether the report has yet been dealt with by Cabinet?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
We are dealing with it, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SIMMONS:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
A supplementary, the hon. the member for Fortune - Hermitage.

MR. SIMMONS:
After two years, now they are dealing with the report.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Premier how can he justify allowing the

situation, insofar as ambulance service is concerned, to deteriorate to the point where people, not one or two but people generally involved in the ambulance service in this Province, are considering withdrawing their services because of a lack of response - that is the stated reason - by government to its own internal report? How can the Premier justify taking so long a period to come to a determination on this important matter where as in a situation such as the Strung matter, for example, he indicated to the House that it took the government just six or seven months from the time they first heard about it until the time they decided to commit \$13.5 million of the taxpayers' money? How can he justify such a long delay in what is clearly a life and death issue?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I can understand the hon. the Leader of the Opposition, because obviously he and his colleagues have not read the budget or have not paid much attention to the budgets over the last few years. The hon. the Leader of the Opposition says that we have allowed the ambulance service in Newfoundland to deteriorate. Now, Mr. Speaker, in 1979 \$1,018,000 was put into road ambulance service in this Province. Today it is \$2,905,000, almost a 200 per cent increase, Mr. Speaker, in the amount of money that has been put into the road ambulance service. So how can the Leader of the Opposition say a 200 per cent increase is a deterioration?

MR. SIMMONS:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, if we take that particular answer at face value, is the Premier saying that those ambulance operators who are en route here to demonstrate their concern are completely out to lunch, that they do not know what they are talking about, that not only have the Opposition not read the budget according to the Premier's intimation, but that maybe other people, including ambulance operators, are not familiar either? Is the Premier saying, Mr. Speaker, that these concerns are not well founded? Is that what he has been saying? Further, Mr. Speaker, will he give an undertaking to the House, is it possible that the Premier will arrange to meet with - and it is pointless in having his Minister of Health meet because he has demonstrated why that is pointless - these people when they arrive in town tomorrow to tell them how wrong they are in those baseless concerns they have been expressing in the media?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, obviously we must be concerned about ambulance service, otherwise we would not have increased the budget by 200 per cent over the last eight years.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:

I have a question for the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development. I wonder if the minister is aware that hydroponic technology has been around longer than the minister. It is not a new technology. It has been in the Bonavista North area since 1981, being used successfully by two farmers to grow tomatoes and cucumbers. Both of these farmers have either been discouraged from applying for government assistance or rejected outright by the minister's department.

In view of this, Mr. Speaker, can the minister explain or rationalize why he and his government have ignored and defied the emphasis and thrust of the House Commission, Building on Our Strengths, in sponsoring and subsidizing this greenhouse project by defying and rejecting the recommendations of the Royal Commission on two fronts, firstly, by pursuing the development of a dubious and questionable megaproject and, secondly, Mr. Speaker -

MR. SIMMS:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

A point of order, the hon. the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, Beauchesne is quite clear with respect to the purpose of Question Period. "The question must be brief. A preamble need not exceed one carefully drawn sentence. A long preamble on a long question takes an unfair share of time and provokes" an

unnecessarily lengthy reply.

We have seen members opposite, Mr. Speaker, frequently get up and criticize ministers on this side on their answers being too long. Clearly, the member's question is much, much too long.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, I have requested hon. members on many occasions to try and keep their questions and their answers as short as possible.

The hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:

My question, Mr. Speaker, to the minister is why did he and his government reject the recommendations of the Royal Commission by rejecting and dismissing outrightly the proposals and applications made by local farmers, made by farmers in rural Newfoundland?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, very much.

Mr. Speaker, yes, I am aware that the hydroponics technology has been available in Newfoundland since 1981. As a matter of fact, it has been available through a young engineer at the university who has been doing some research on it since 1974. I am well aware that it has been available in the Province since before I was minister. I am more familiar or more aware that it will be

available in the Province after the member is a member.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. LUSH:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:

Can the minister tell this House why a particular Rural Development Association in this Province, a Rural Development Association located in one of the largest agricultural areas of this Province, had its proposal rejected by his department, Mr. Speaker, a proposal that contained an advanced technology of using wood chips instead of electricity to reduce the cost of high electricity in this Province, yet, Mr. Speaker, they were rejected in spite of the fact that they got a grant of \$86,000 from the federal government?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. LUSH:

Now, why were they dismissed and rejected?

MR. SIMMS:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of order, the hon. the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, if the hon. members are going to abuse Question Period then that is their privilege, I guess, if they want to try it.

MR. CALLAN:

You are the one who is abusing it.

MR. SIMMS:

I am not. I am trying to point out to hon. members what the rules of the House are.

MR. SIMMONS:

That is the Speaker's job.

MR. FUREY:

You are not the Speaker. You were thrown out of the Chair.

MR. SIMMS:

They got rid of you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, if hon. members opposite think that I am trying to delay proceedings, let me just quote Beauchesne for them.

MR. SIMMONS:

We can read.

MR. SIMMS:

Well, the hon. member obviously cannot or he would not be doing what he is doing, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SIMMONS:

The Speaker can.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, could you tell the Leader of the Opposition not to be so rude and ignorant when somebody else is standing?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, the purpose of the Question Period, among other things as Your Honour knows, is to seek information, not to provide it, and the hon. member for Bonavista North continues to abuse

the rules of the House in Question Period. There are only thirty minutes for it. I would suggest the hon. members in supplementary questions be asked to put their supplementary questions, not waste the time of the House.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, I have already said that questions and answers should be brief. Particularly, I would like to point out to the hon. member that a supplementary question should be brief.

The hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:

Can the minister tell this House why this proposal from this particular Development Association was so expeditiously and so callously rejected and dismissed, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Mr. Speaker, that proposal was not expeditiously dismissed. I met with the Development Association in question several times on this issue, and the reason I met with them is because the local people in the area where the Development Association operated asked me to go there and talk to them and see if they could come up with a different proposal for their greenhouse operation.

MR. LUSH:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A final supplementary.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, could the minister tell this House and the people of Newfoundland why he, his department, and his government chose to go this megaroute project when they could have generated many more jobs and stabilized and enriched the rural economy of this Province by supporting the local farmers in the Province of Newfoundland, in the rural areas, who have been engaged in this hydroponic development for four and five years? Why did he choose to go the megaroute, Mr. Speaker? Why did he choose to go this route?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Mr. Speaker, the government of this Province has supported, and will continue to support, the farmers of this Province. We have just signed a \$4.8 million forage agreement for the farmers of this Province, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. R. AYLWARD:

We have also, Mr. Speaker, because of the lack of an agricultural agreement in this Province for the past two years, put \$1.5 million per year into the agricultural industry, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are helping the dairy industry in the Cormack area by allowing a dairy to set up in a building that was owned by my department, Mr. Speaker, in encouraging them to move out there and set up jobs in the Deer Lake-Cormack area.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Mr. Speaker, this department is supporting the farmers of this Province. A quote from a farmer in this Province, Mr. Speaker, who happens to be a constituent of one of the members opposite, said in a phone call to me, "This greenhouse operation is magnificent, a wonderful opportunity to get Newfoundland on the bandwagon and will improve our economy." That is what that farmer thinks, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. EFFORD:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Port de Grave.

MR. EFFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier and it is concerning this major project that is presently going to be developed in Newfoundland. Mr. Speaker, the Premier stated very clearly his confidence in this project. He has also stated very clearly how competent the Sprung Group is. The question is: If they have so much confidence in them, and the banks have so much confidence in them, why does the Government of Newfoundland have to put up \$13.5 million and the Sprung Group put up less than \$4 million?

MR. FUREY:

A good question!

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, we are not putting \$13.5 million. There is \$3.5 million in equity, \$1 million of that \$3.5 million is in land and the other \$2.5 million is in cash. Sprung are putting up \$3.5 million cash. Then there is a guaranteed loan, which is not cash out of the government's pocket.

Now as the papers have reported, thankfully, and other media in the last number of days, the Sprung Group of Companies have spent \$35 million on research in the last ten years on this technology. And, by the way, as the Opposition tried to pretend yesterday about the gentleman whom they spoke to, Mr. Snellen, he has since confirmed to us that he did not say that he had a superior technology to Sprung's. He did not say it at all.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

PREMIER PECKFORD:

He called my office this morning to say how he was hoodwinked by the Opposition.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

PREMIER PECKFORD:

He called me this morning to say how he was quoted out of context, quoted wrongly and so on.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. EFFORD:

That is what you think.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

He said that he did not say that

he had a superior technology to the Sprung's, as the Opposition said yesterday, that he is involved in growing romaine lettuce and some other commodities

MR. DINN:

They are misleading the House.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

- that he has no monopoly upon high technology. He has not come to government yet because he was not ready to come to government yet, and that he knew that when he came to government he would get a sympathetic hearing, and that if he had a proposal it would be supported the same as other proposals would be supported, Mr. Speaker.

So, you know, the hon. member's question is wrong in the beginning because he is not being factual in the support that we are providing to this company. They have run into a problem in Calgary which was not of their own making, when they went on land there that was a former refinery site. Mr. Speaker, may I say for the umpteenth time that this project is business and research and development. And this government is very, very eager to put, as the House Royal Commission recommended, into place 'joint venture equity infusion into new technological advances to help this Province have a multifaceted', as they said, 'multi-sectored, balance approach to the development of our future.' We are proud of it. We are doing it right, and we are doing it for blueberry farmers in Bonavista North, providing them with money. The hon. member opposite was talking about a proposal by the Development Association. How much money have

we put into Bonavista North on blueberry development over the last ten years, Mr. Speaker? Hundreds and hundreds of thousands of dollars, if not millions. We are doing it all over the agricultural spectrum in rural Newfoundland or wherever it makes sense, and we will continue to do it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. EFFORD:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Port de Grave.

MR. EFFORD:

The Premier is saying because the Sprung Group got in trouble out in Alberta we are going to bail them out.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

No, I am not.

MR. EFFORD:

That is what you just said.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. EFFORD:

And he also said a \$7.5 million guaranteed loan against \$500,000 that they are guaranteeing. That is seven times as much as we are guaranteeing.

My question is to the Premier, Mr. Speaker. If this company secured monies from a bank, there must have been a study done on the sale of their produce. Can the Premier indicate if there was a study done on exactly what the market cost would be of the products that they will produce?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
Yes, Mr. Speaker. Unquestionably!

MR. EFFORD:
A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. EFFORD:
Would the Premier, Mr. Speaker, table that report immediately on the cost of the produce to the Newfoundland people and for export?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, the reports show that the products are going to be cheaper -

MR. TULK:
No, they are not.

MR. PECKFORD:
- than the comparable products that are now brought in from the mainland and other places.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Table it! Table it!

MR. PECKFORD:
As I indicated to the members of the Opposition over the last number of days, as soon as all the legal agreements are signed and so on we will table them in this House.

MR. EFFORD:
In a few weeks' time is no good!

PREMIER PECKFORD:
Mr. Speaker, we were elected to govern, not to report to the hon. member.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. K. AYLWARD:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. K. AYLWARD:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development. I would like to ask the minister: What were the recommendations of his department's officials to him and to the Cabinet as to the prospects for such a development by the Sprung Group, and if he accepted their recommendations or did he turn down their recommendations?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development.

MR. R. AYLWARD:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, my staff, when reviewing this project, had concerns about production levels and marketing of the product. What we insisted on as a government to satisfy these concerns was that lighting systems be put into this complex so that production levels would stay the same. Letters of intent, Mr. Speaker, were shown to us from major supermarket chains across this country, that they would buy the excess of what we do not market in this Province.

MR. K. AYLWARD:
A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the member for Stephenville.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Could the minister explain why he decided to tell his officials not to answer any questions that the press were asking about their recommendations, why he told them to 'Be quiet, keep your mouth shut, because we do not know how we are going to handle this issue in the press'? Could he tell us why he put the gag order on expert officials in his department whom he depends on all year round?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Mr. Speaker, the one incident that was reported had my staff misquoted or misinterpreted. The actual case was that before this was announced last Friday this gentleman in my department was getting calls from the media and he phoned me and asked me what he should do. I asked him if he would rather I handled it and he said he certainly would.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A final supplementary.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Mr. Speaker, he handled it so well! He is handling it so well! Did the minister and Cabinet overrule his own officials on this thing or not? Was it himself or the Premier's Office or the President of Treasury Board (Mr. Windsor), who decided to overrule his officials and not put it in rural Newfoundland but bring it

into St. John's? Could he tell us if he overruled his own people?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Mr. Speaker, I just answered the question of the hon. member. The concerns that were given to me were addressed by Cabinet. That is all I can say to that question, which is a repeat of the first question, Mr. Speaker.

MR. FLIGHT:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT:

Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development as well. I just say that Mr. Sprung, in defending his project, pointed out the reason why he selected Newfoundland over other provinces was what he saw as an unlimited supply of cheap power. Less than a month or so ago Abitibi-Price was looking at closing down their mill because, number one, they did not have the water capacity to generate electricity.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

Would the hon. member pose his question?

MR. FLIGHT:

Number two, Hydro was not in a position to provide the electricity that they would have needed. So, would the minister tell the House where this

unlimited, cheap supply of electricity that Mr. Sprung is talking about is in Newfoundland?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Mr. Speaker, that is not a very hard question to answer. If the hon. gentleman was thinking at all, what Mr. Sprung said when he addressed that question was that he saw unlimited supplies of power in Labrador and he would like not only to build one facility in this Province but he is looking into the future for more facilities.

MR. FLIGHT:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT:

Mr. Speaker, my understanding and the general public's understanding is that the Sprung project is going to be put in Mount Pearl, and the unlimited supply of Labrador power will not be available to him for the next six or seven months, I would not think. So, I would ask the minister whether or not Mr. Sprung has requested subsidized electrical power from this Province? Has he requested an electrical subsidy?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Mr. Speaker, first of all let me clear up one misconception that the hon. member has.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

One?

MR. R. AYLWARD:

One to start off with. This project is going to be built in the St. John's Metropolitan Area Board's jurisdiction as a municipality, not in Mount Pearl. It is going to be built in the agricultural zone on land that was marginal agricultural land, which is good to promote the agricultural industry in this Province. And it is going to be built in the district of Kilbride, which I am very, very proud of.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Mr. Speaker, the power required for this project is available and will be supplied. There is no subsidy, if I can clear that up. The hon. member had it in writing yesterday, so they do not know how to read, obviously. There is no subsidy and there is not going to be a subsidy on electricity.

MR. FLIGHT:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A final supplementary.

MR. FLIGHT:

Then would the minister tell us, while Mr. Sprung is waiting for his unlimited, cheap supply of power from Labrador, where the hydro power is going to come from, recognizing the shortage of hydro power in this Province, recognizing what Newfoundland Hydro has stated? Now will the minister tell us where Mr. Sprung

is going to get the unlimited, cheap supply of electricity while he is waiting for Labrador power?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Mr. Speaker, the same question again. When the hon. members get answers to questions they cannot think of another question, so they keep asking the same one, as has happened twice on this occasion.

Mr. Speaker, the Sprung Corporation has dealt with Hydro and Light and Power and they have a supply of power for this operation. The unlimited supply of electricity that they are talking about is in Labrador today. If they get this one working they look forward to building more greenhouse operations such as this one in our Province. Now that is not too hard to understand. And if there is unlimited power in the Churchill Falls/Goose Bay area, why would they not consider those areas?

MR. CALLAN:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Bellevue.

MR. CALLAN:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development as well. A couple of days ago the Premier talked about recommendations out of the House Royal Commission Report and I want to table, Mr. Speaker, twenty-nine

recommendations here, out of that same House Report, which talk about the development of rural Newfoundland.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. CALLAN:

Let me ask the Minister responsible for the Department of RAND, Mr. Speaker, why was it the minister abandoned these at least twenty-nine recommendations that I referred to and there are others, which talk about developing the rural areas of this Province, and abandon the central theme of that report, the theme being, of course, to develop the Province, in co-ordination with small business and local entrepreneurs and the rural areas of this Province, and to expand this Province and to encourage local industry? Why is it that the minister abandoned rural Newfoundland and decided to accept this proposal from Calgary, which is costing the taxpayers \$13.5 million and will be placed in Mount Pearl, in the district of Kilbride?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

It will not be in Mount Pearl, Mr. Speaker. Last week, or during Easter week, I announced \$1.3 million worth of programmes for rural Newfoundland out of my department, which are separate from the regular programmes in my department. In coordination, Career Development and my department announced \$1.3 million for 340 jobs. Mr. Speaker, besides that, what we are doing? A statement that I would liked to

have read out today but I will just mention now, indicates that last year 220 applications through the Rural Development Authority Loan Board provided \$4,479,350 for rural Newfoundland.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Two hundred full-time jobs and 339 part-time jobs were created, while maintaining 256 full-time jobs and 1,242 part-time jobs.

Mr. Speaker, that is what this department is doing in rural Newfoundland. This programme, along with our programme through Career Development this year, will put, I would estimate, some \$9 million into rural Newfoundland, Mr. Speaker, just between my loan programme and Career Development, just those two alone.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I was going to ask another question on the greenhouse but I figured that everybody is laughing at the minister now, anyway, so there is not much point in ridiculing him further.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. FENWICK:

My question is for the Premier. The Leader of the Opposition, the former Leader of the Opposition, the Premier and myself have all condemned the upcoming practice of paying the new Leader of the Opposition, after the next convention, a subvention or a subsidy on his salary of an undetermined amount. We feel, as the Premier does, that this is unacceptable since we do not know where the money is coming from and we do not know how much it is. My question to the Premier is this: Since if we had an Election Expenses Act or an Elections Act which had full disclosure provisions in it, we would know how much Clyde Wells is receiving and where the money is coming from. Will the Premier promise that he will implement -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. FENWICK:

I am sorry, Mr. Speaker. It is a question of speaking over the Yahoos on the left of me.

Will the Premier commit himself to bringing in an Elections Act with full disclosure provisions over the next couple of months so that we will know who is buying off the new Leader of the Opposition?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, first of all I have to address the hon. member's preamble, and it is this: I take exception to the hon. member trying to characterize a minister of this administration the way the hon. member did. It just so

happens, as everybody in this House knows, and the people in the galleries who know anything about the Minister of Rural, Agriculture and Northern Development, that he is one of the most decent, honourable and committed Newfoundlanders to rural Newfoundland that ever went in that department.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

PREMIER PECKFORD:

How easily hon. members opposite demean 320 jobs in rural Newfoundland when every day they are talking about the unemployment rate in Newfoundland. How they themselves demean rural Newfoundland and attack the minister here who just indicated over \$9 million went to rural Newfoundland, and yet we are not supposed to out and create another 150 jobs for Newfoundlanders. This is a government for all Newfoundland, rural Newfoundland, and Kilbride, Mount Pearl, St. John's, Corner Brook and Labrador West, and I take exception to the hon. member, in his sanctimonious way on CBC and in this House, to on the one hand condemn us for unemployment and on the other hand demean 328 jobs in rural Newfoundland, and then go on to say that the hon. gentleman is no good. I will not dignify the hon. member to answer the other part of his question.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The time for Oral Questions has elapsed.

This is Private Members' Day.

Last day debate was adjourned by the hon. member for Stephenville, who has twenty minutes left.

The hon. the member for Stephenville.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Again I rise to speak on the Private Members' Resolution which was so ably put by my colleague, the member for Bonavista North (Mr. Lush). I feel the resolution has many significant points which should be considered by the provincial government; they should undertake to take these initiatives which my colleague has spoken so well about and has brought to the attention of members of the House of Assembly.

It is my feeling that government has not looked at the problems facing this Province in the proper manner, they have not incorporated the proper policies. It is about time they got around to dealing with the biggest problem we all face, our high unemployment rate. Mr. Speaker, I was looking at the recent statistics for the West Coast of this Province and it is up around 36 per cent. That is the figure that was given in the newspapers, but it is not the real figure. It is a shocking, shocking figure to have to comprehend in this country of ours. The West Coast of this Province is being obliterated, the young people are leaving in droves because they do not have a prayer of getting a job, going away to big Ontario to try to find employment. We see a government that does not mind taking care of itself, but when it comes to dealing with this situation, which has been in existence since they have been the government and which

has gotten progressively worse over the last five or six years, we see a lack of action.

You can welcome new initiatives, Mr. Speaker, and you can say, 'Yes, that is a good job. That is a good start', but what you have to look at is the overall impact of what you do. You can say I am going to throw \$500,000 over here at this programme or \$500,000 over there at that, but when at the end of the day you have 36 per cent unemployment in one area of this Province, your job is not done and you can never be content with it, you should be working harder to do something about it.

When I look at the lack of action that has been taken to address the problem it makes it very difficult to support any initiatives this government takes. They have been in power now a long time. This Peckford Administration has been here for eight years and it is about time the people of this Province began to take a good, hard look at what is being accomplished. It is about time we all sat down and said, Let us have a good, hard look, let us get the report card out. If you look at the trend of unemployment in this Province you will see that it did not go down, you will see it has remained consistently high, and has gone even higher in certain parts of the Province.

It is a dismal situation. It is a situation where we have the Premier of the Province getting up and saying, 'We are doing this and we are doing that. We are not to blame. The feds are to blame. They are treating us bad. They are doing this and they are doing that.'

Two short years ago it was

co-operation and consultation, Mr. Speaker, and 'have not will be no more and it will not be a problem.' Well, I have to tell you they have given up on that one. They are on their own again, with their own employment programme for \$12 million, while they are giving \$13 million to somebody from outside the Province. I have real problems with their intention of dealing with the unemployment problem in this Province. It is about time they got down to serious business. It looks like they are not going to bother with it, Mr. Speaker. They are now looking for another issue to call an election on. That is what they want to do, Mr. Speaker, every two years or so.

Well, I tell you, there is 40 per cent unemployment amongst young people in this Province. In some areas on the West Coast it is 75 per cent. People are leaving this Province in droves, and these people on the other side of the House are saying, 'Well, boy, we are doing this and we are doing that. You have no right to question what we do.' Well, it is about time people began questioning what this government is doing. Because we are not going to have any young people left in this Province in another four or five years. We do not have a lot now.

Population figures released just a while ago showed that there was a decrease in the population of this Province over the last five years. Well, way to go government! We need a way to bring people in and a way to keep them here. We have had a population drain in this Province in the last four or five years of this administration. That is unbelievable! And they get up and

talk about the good job they are doing and the jobs they have created.

Two weeks ago we saw 2,100 jobs advertised in the newspaper, paid for by government with taxpayers' money, 2,100 jobs they created. Well, way to go, boys! Way to go! But you have a long way to go yet.

A few years ago we heard the rhetoric of this Premier concerning 40,000 jobs. We have an unemployment rate that has gone up consistently and they do not want to accept responsibility for it. Then the Premier gets up and talks about, Well, we are the government. Do not tell us what to do. Well, he has had eight years of doing what he is supposed to do and you can see what the results have been. It is unbelievable that they can get up and take credit and have the gall to advertise the fact that they have created 2,100 jobs in this Province. The gall! I mean, to spend your money. Why do they not put it in an employment programme, the one they had to start on their own because they could not agree with the federal government they helped elect, by the way, in this country. Two years ago - if you did not see the quotes and the headlines you would not believe it - it was, 'Come on, boy. Have not will be no more.' 'Brian Mulroney is a nice guy'. Well, it is not that way any more. They are on their own. They have \$12 million in an employment programme that the Department of Career Development and Advanced Studies is putting out, and they are giving \$13 million to some group from outside the Province. And when we ask questions about it, they look at us and say, 'We do not know what they are getting on

with.'

MR. FUREY:
(Inaudible).

MR. K. AYLWARD:
Well, what can you say. I mean, it is incomprehensible. Why would the Opposition ask questions of this Premier who has such a great record of employment creation - Hibernia, the oil, the great saviour of how everything is going to go. Way to go! Way to go! We have everything on the move. I do not know why people are not coming down here in droves and buying houses and waiting for this great job creation programme to take over. Well, it is about time the people started looking at the report card, Mr. Speaker.

Here they are talking about calling another election. They do not want to govern the Province, Mr. Speaker. 'Give me three weeks and as soon as I get people thinking I am doing a decent job, let us go for it.' Three weeks every five years, or every three and a half years is not the way to go, Mr. Speaker, when you are elected to govern this Province.

AN HON. MEMBER:
You are nervous today.

MR. K. AYLWARD:
I am not nervous, my son. Come on with the election. At least the people of the Province will have an option. I will tell you I am sick and tired of hearing -

MR. FUREY:
'And have not will be no more.'

MR. K. AYLWARD:
- 'This Opposition do not ask questions. What are you guys doing over there? Why are you not asking questions about what we are

doing? You know, our job creation is so good' I have seen people my age having to leave this Province for too long, or staying away, not coming back. And there is no way you are going to get them back with the way this government is going. They can talk all they want about how they are dealing with the problems. I heard last week that there will be some layoffs in Social Services, possibly, and layoffs in different departments, and they talk about dealing with the problems, they talk about all the initiatives they are taking.

The thing is, at the end of the day you have to look at what you have done and where you are, and you have to decide where you are going. We have to ask ourselves, Are we going to keep believing this gentleman? this gentleman who, for a few years ago, by the way, I thought was going to be okay. I thought he was serious about trying to tackle the problems of this Province.

I have a situation out in Stephenville where they were trying to get a Sea Cadet Base for this Province. Not for Stephenville, for the Province. However, members of the other side decided, because a Liberal member brought up the idea, or they can associate it with him, 'We are not going to bother to push it. It is in our budget that we need defence spending, but we are not going to bother to push it. We are not going to have a meeting. We are not going to have a press conference to announce that we are going after it. We do not want to do that, because, you see, it might give credit to somebody who is not with this government and we do not want to do that. It is a real problem. We do not want to

do that.'

This is when I see that there has to be a change of government: When I see these people getting on with this type of stuff and talking about dealing with the unemployment problem when in Stephenville, on the West Coast, I have to deal with young people coming to me asking for help to get a ticket to Toronto. And that is when I get tired of seeing the creation of 2,100 jobs advertised in the newspapers. And when you ask the Minister of Career Development and Advanced Studies, and the Minister of Finance, and the Minister of Public Works who paid for it, they do not know. 'We do not know where the money came from to pay for it. We do not know how much it cost. We could have done something else with the money, but we decided that we are the government and we have to tell you what a good job we are doing.' Well, I have to tell you that if they are going to advertise creating 2,100 jobs, they should also print the unemployment rate in this Province. They should show what they have done, because unemployment and how it is dealt with is a good factor in determining whether an administration is good, bad or indifferent.

People talk about Joey Smallwood. I was born in 1960. The man was Premier for twenty-three years but when he left in 1972, when they had to shove him out, the unemployment rate in Newfoundland was 9 per cent. At one time he was able to get on TV and say there was hardly any unemployment in Newfoundland.

Well, I challenge this administration to one day get up

and try to say the same thing, if one day we will ever see it again. The way we are we are never going to have a prayer of seeing that again. So when they talk about the past bad Liberals, they might have made some mistakes, Mr. Speaker, I was not around then, but they might have made some mistakes and God knows a future Liberal Government might make some too, or whatever government, but at least they dealt with the unemployment rate of the Province, they dealt with having people doing meaningful work in this Province. That was dealt with by the administration. We had problems, no doubt about it, but at the end of the day you could sit down and you could look around the Province and in certain areas you could say, people are working. They are doing something. They have ideas, they are coming to us, we are bringing in investment, we are dealing with the problem, we are tackling the problem, Mr. Speaker. At least then we could do that, at least then they could look at that.

It appears that this government has decided that political games are the way to go. You know, if it is not our idea, we are not going to deal with this. We will get around to it when there is an election coming around. Let us see if we can drop the unemployment rate three or four percentage points just for about three or four months, line up everybody again to go to the polling booth, get in there and take it easy for four or five years. Okay? That is the philosophy.

I hear rumours of an election. I wish they would call it. Go ahead and call it. I mean really, go ahead and call it. What is the

issue I wonder? What is the next one? The mandate to create jobs was the last one. What else can they have now I wonder. I would like to know.

MR. FUREY:

Mandate to cucumbers.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Mandate to cucumbers, whatever, I do not know. But I would like to know what the mandate in the next one is going to be. I wonder what the mandate is going to be the next time, Mr. Speaker. I wonder what it is going to be.

They have a mandate now to do what they were supposed to do and what they are supposed to be doing, a five year mandate. We have had three elections and you have an unemployment rate that is going up or down - it is not going down. It goes down by a half a percentage point and the Premier comes in with a Ministerial Statement. The next month it goes up by 4 per cent, he decides, "I am not going to bother with that. I am not going to tell them how bad a job he is doing. I will tell him how good a job he is doing though."

I do not mind them playing politics, Mr. Speaker, I do not mind him playing politics but, by gee, at the end of the day, when the unemployment rate is going up, they are coming in and taking credit and printing advertising. Then they do not know who has spent it or what department it comes from. When you ask them in estimates, you do not know where it comes from. You do not have a clue where it is going. They are spending all this money telling us how good a job we are doing and we have 45,000 young people in the Province walking around with their

hands in their pockets trying to figure out what they are going to do.

Where is the tackling of that problem? I could understand it if they were a new administration. I could understand it if he just got elected as Premier and there was a new mandate where he set out a plan where we were going to have this by next year, May of next year, we are going to have the unemployment rate down to 22 per cent or 21 per cent or 20 per cent or whatever. I could understand if there was a plan of action to deal with the problem. I could understand it.

But it is so haphazard! It is just like as soon as I can get the wind, I will see what the air is saying now. As soon as I grab an issue, let us go for three weeks, twenty-one days, hit the streets, let us go for it again, get in with our nice cushy twenty-two ministers, take it easy, and rest easy for a few more years.

Well, I think it is time, Mr. Speaker, this administration got around to dealing with the problem. They can accuse us of everything. I do not care what they accuse me of - whatever they want to, Mr. Speaker, I have no problem with that. But we are an Opposition, duly elected to make sure that this government acts accountably and brings forward good policies to the people of this Province to deal with the real issue in this Province. If they are not going to do that, then they are going to get me standing up here every day, whenever I have the opportunity, and I am sure my hon. colleagues will do the same thing, and let them know where we stand on the issues and where we think they

should be going. We are going to continue to do that. They can call us what they want, I do not care, Mr. Speaker, but I can tell you, they have not been doing a good job and they deserve a telling off, Mr. Speaker.

The only figure that matters to me at the end of the day, the only figure that matters is the 25 per cent unemployment figure. I see it going straight up and they talk about the good job they are doing.

The \$10,000 it costs for a big ad in The Evening Telegram for three or four weeks I have no problem with, Mr. Speaker. I wish they would advertise the nice unemployment rate they have because one of these days the people of Newfoundland are going to say, 'I am not too sure I believe them anymore. I think he has had his chance. He has had eight years.' God knows when he will call another one, Mr. Speaker. I think people are starting to look at it real hard and I am looking forward to them looking at it real hard. As long as a government in this Province deals with the problem, Mr. Speaker, they will have the support of people but I do not think that this one is and I think it is about time they took a hard look at what they are doing.

I think, in the future, Mr. Speaker, in the very short term, they are going to be in a lot of trouble with the people of this Province. I am looking forward to that, Mr. Speaker. They can say what they want about us but we have some ideas and we are going to continue to put them forward. They may be harebrained, they can call us what they want on them, but we have some good ideas and we

are going to keep on telling them what they are doing wrong. We will give you a pat on the back when you are doing something right but, Mr. Speaker, it is about time you look at what you have been doing.

Twenty-five per cent unemployment is not performance, Mr. Speaker, and the phrase 'have-not will be no more,' I am afraid is going to be around a long time with Brian Peckford as Premier of this Province. So I think it is about time that we got after this government and kept after them.

AN HON. MEMBER:
(Inaudible)

MR. K. AYLWARD:
You can call me what you want but that is not performance. It is about time you got off these \$60,000 or \$70,000 jobs and started doing your work. Come up with policy instead of rhetoric to talk about 'we are doing this and we are doing that.' I could go on all day but I am going to sit down. I am looking forward to the policy initiatives they are going to announce God knows when.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. TOBIN:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the member for Burin - Placentia West.

MR. TOBIN:
Mr. Speaker, if we ever witnessed an act by an hon. member! He was talking about unemployment when just a few weeks ago he was part of the coup that created

unemployment in this Province. It was not that long ago, Mr. Speaker, that he was part of the bedroom coup that put the shaft to the Leader of the Opposition, created an opening, went out, Mr. Speaker, and could not find anyone to run. Talk about unemployment! They could not find anyone to run, so what did they do? They got a group of business people together. We may disclose who they are one of these days.

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

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, Please!

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

MR. CALLAN:
Mr. Speaker, there is a rule of relevancy and I would suggest that the member for Burin - Placentia West be asked to obey that rule of relevancy. He is not addressing anything close to the private member's motion that is on the floor today. I think he should be called to order and asked to stick to the topic at hand and stop talking nonsense and fabrications.

MR. TOBIN:
To that point of order, Mr. Speaker, obviously there is no point of order. We are certainly dealing with what the hon. member for Stephenville said when he was talking about unemployment in this Province. I was talking about the member creating unemployment. The member for Bellevue is a little bit embarrassed because the blood is not dry on his hands and he is sitting next to the member he came after.

MR. FUREY:
To that point of order, Mr.

Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for St. Barbe.

MR. FUREY:

My hon. colleague for Bellevue simply raised in his place to point under the Standing Orders and to Beauchesne where it is very clear that when a member rises in his place to debate, he confines his remarks to the actual text of what is being debated. A very simple suggestion was his submission to the Chair which makes his counter to the point of order absolutely irrelevant, like his speech.

MR. SPEAKER:

I have heard enough on that point of order. The Chair rules that there is no point of order. I am going to ask the hon. member for Placentia West to continue.

MR. TOBIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As we are dealing with unemployment, I just want to mention that and I understand that the salary is quite high. I see the member is now going out to wash his hands and he should. He was part of the coup, led the coup as a matter of fact.

Mr. Speaker, when we look at this resolution put before the House today and we talk about stimulating the economy, and ways to stimulate the economy as put forth by the member for Bonavista North, I wonder, Mr. Speaker, where they are coming from.

We, as a government, over the past number of years have been doing an ample job with the resources that are available to try and stimulate this economy. All you have to do,

Mr. Speaker, is look at the announcements that have been made by the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development, the announcement, Mr. Speaker, that dealt with creating jobs in rural Newfoundland. The member for Bellevue (Mr. Callan), Mr. Speaker, was asking questions today. There were jobs created by that project dealing with his own district. I would suspect, Mr. Speaker, he is not aware of it because he is not aware of too much that is going on in his district. It is no wonder the polls indicate that both himself and the member for Fortune - Hermitage (Mr. Simmons) are the two weakest members in the House of Assembly. It is no wonder the polls are indicating that.

I am not at all surprised with the attitude that has been displayed by the member for Bellevue. I think today is a good opportunity for me to expose the member for Bellevue. I have done it before, Mr. Speaker, and I will do it again, as it relates to the way he got on with the Auditor General and the Marystown Shipyard constructing the ferries for the Department of Transportation. We all know where you stand on the construction, and the tender call. Oh, yes, Pictou would build the ships and you would love it. And he talking, Mr. Speaker, about what is happening in this Province! It is too bad we have got members in this House with that type of an attitude who want to exploit the resources of Newfoundlanders and create jobs elsewhere. But again I believe that exemplifies the reason why they are in the Opposition and we are in government.

The Minister of Fisheries just a few weeks ago announced 250 jobs

with the fishery sector of this Province. That is nothing to laugh at, Mr. Speaker. Again, a significant number of these jobs being created in the districts of members opposite. I think the member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Gilbert) did fairly well. I am sure he did well in the forestry sector.

MR. GILBERT:

How did he do in polls?

MR. TOBIN:

What is that?

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:

He did well in the polls? Yes, Mr. Speaker, indeed he did do well in the polls! But I will tell the member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir one thing, I can say in the House that I received more votes from Newfoundlanders in the last election than anyone else who occupies a seat in this House. The hon. gentleman cannot say that.

Mr. Speaker, having said that in my humble manner -

MR. CALLAN:

That has nothing to do with you.

MR. TOBIN:

Well, it has a lot to do with what the hon. member for Fortune - Hermitage said this afternoon. I cannot divulge what he got in Burin - Placentia West in the last federal election.

Mr. Speaker, the bottom line is that this government is on the right course for job creation. In my district, for example, in the district of Burin - Placentia West, over the past month we have announced in excess of \$100

million worth of work. What about the hydro development in Paradise River, down in the bottom of Placentia Bay in Monkstown? My colleague from Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir I am sure is very familiar with that area, being originally from Haystack. He is very familiar with what we are talking about. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that the people in the area are very familiar with what we are talking about. There are going to be jobs created and there are going to be people from these isolated communities and from the smaller communities in that area who are going to receive work.

That is very important to me, Mr. Speaker, and I am very proud to be associated with a government that has that type of foresight and has that type of an agency as it relates to the hydro development.

MR. EFFORD:

Would the hon. member permit a question?

MR. TOBIN:

Sure.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Port de Grave.

MR. EFFORD:

Thank you.

The question is: You just said is your district got \$100 million worth of work this year. Would the member agree then, considering the amount of money his district got and that the district of Port de Grave in two years has gotten a total of \$80,000, that it is definitely not done a political basis?

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, the member for Port de Grave raises a very valid point. I make no apologies, Mr. Speaker, for the fact that the people of Burin - Placentia West elected me, and I have produced. The people of Port de Grave elected him and he has not. That is the problem.

Mr. Speaker, I have produced in my district. I have been elected to represent them. I went out and I have gotten projects and you sat back here and pretended to be representing your district when you are like the rest of your colleagues. Now, with your new unstabbed leader, you have done absolutely nothing in terms of representing your district.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, the member for Port de Grave (Mr. Efford) do not know how to find half the departments.

MR. CALLAN:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. CALLAN:
Mr. Speaker, I contend the member for Burin - Placentia West is deliberately misleading this House. He talked about all of the money that is going to his district when much of it is going to the Marystown Shipyard, which was put there by J.R. Smallwood, some of it without public tenders, as we saw happen in the Auditor General's Report last year.

But, Mr. Speaker, for the member to stand in his place and say that the money went to his district because he stood up and fought for it is utter nonsense as is the reason the member for Port de

Grave is did not get anything for his district because he did not fight for it, that, Mr. Speaker, is misleading the House. I say he is doing it deliberately and I would say, Mr. Speaker, that he should be asked to withdraw these remarks and set the record straight.

MR. SIMMS:
To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
To that point of order, the hon. the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands.

MR. SIMMS:
First of all the hon. member is a veteran of the House and should be well aware that he is not allowed to accuse another member of deliberately misleading the House. He is not permitted under the rules to do that. All he has argued under the point of order, of course, is a difference of opinion, that is about all he has, a difference of opinion with the hon. the member for Burin - Placentia West. It is certainly not a valid point of order. Anybody can see that.

In any instance, Mr. Speaker, in any case, the hon. member has no choice but to withdraw the term deliberately misleading otherwise Your Honour will have no choice but to name him and the hon. member will have to leave the House.

MR. SPEAKER:
To that point of order, I have been listening to the member for Burin - Placentia West and looking at the private member's resolution that was put before this House by Mr. Lush. It deals with jobs, it deals with unemployment, it deals

with finance and I have not heard the member from Placentia West get away from that argument.

I would have to rule that the member for Bellevue was out of order and I ask him to withdraw that comment of misleading the House.

MR. CALLAN:

Mr. Speaker, with humility I assume the member for Burin - Placentia West is not deliberately misleading the House. He is inadvertently misleading the House however, Mr. Speaker, and that is not unparliamentary. I withdraw the part about deliberately misleading the House, he is inadvertently misleading the House, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

I am going to have to ask the member to also withdraw the statement 'inadvertently misleading the House' because it is in the same context and I think that it means the same thing.

MR. CALLAN:

Your Honour, no, I am quite familiar with Beauchesne and the former Speaker who spoke on this point of order will concur with me when I say that inadvertently misleading the House is not unparliamentary and for that reason, Mr. Speaker, I have withdrawn deliberately misleading but I have substituted for it inadvertently. Obviously it must be inadvertent on his part and I do not see any reason to withdraw that and neither do I intend to, Your Honour.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, with due respect to what the hon. member says, I may or may not agree with the hon. member for Bellevue, but that is

not the point here. The point here is that the Speaker has instructed a member to withdraw a remark which he considers to be unparliamentary, which the Speaker can do, and no member of this House can disregard the authority of the Chair, whoever is occupying it. If the hon. member asked me to withdraw any kind of a word or comment, then, with respect to the authority of the Chair, I would withdraw it, whether I agreed with it or not. I know what the hon. member is saying and I do not have any big argument with it, but the Speaker has asked him to withdraw. The simplest way would be simply to withdraw and not make a big deal out of it.

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker, to that point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, the hon. the member for Gander.

MR. BAKER:

I know what has happened here and I would suggest, to avoid any problems, that Your Honour take the matter under advisement and check the record, check Hansard, check Beauchesne and come back with a ruling tomorrow perhaps. I suggest that that would be a proper way out of this situation.

MR. SPEAKER:

I have heard enough on the point of order. I will take the advice of the hon. member for Gander and take it under advisement and come in tomorrow with a ruling.

The hon. the member for Burin - Placentia West.

MR. TOBIN:

It is obvious, Mr. Speaker, that the member for Bellevue is

smirking under what the mayor in his district had to say when she went on CBC television and said that we do not have representation, that the member for Bellevue has not delivered, Mr. Speaker. That is what she said as it related to the Department of Municipal Affairs. Mr. Speaker, he has not gone to the Department of Municipal Affairs yet to look for assistance for his district.

MR. CALLAN:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. CALLAN:

Mr. Speaker, again the hon. the member for Burin - Placentia West is not aware of all of the facts surrounding the topic that he has now brought before this Legislature. The fact of the matter is that what the Mayor of Chapel Arm, the Tory Mayor of Chapel Arm, said on public television, has no truth to it whatsoever. The town of Chapel Arm has not applied for water and sewer at least in the last three years. She has been mayor for less than two. So there is no truth to what she said and it has nothing to do with me. How can I work for the people of Chapel Arm unless I am told that they have an application in for water and sewer or for any other project? I was not contacted by the town council in Chapel Arm, and of course they did not put in an application.

So the member for Burin - Placentia West, Mr. Speaker, again is misleading this Legislature. He is misleading the House.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, to that point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, the hon. the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands.

MR. SIMMS:

It should be made clear that the hon. the member for Bellevue now persists in taking up the time of the hon. member for Burin - Placentia West.

MR. CALLAN:

He is misleading the House.

MR. SIMMS:

For the edification of people who may be listening, members on Private Members' Day have only twenty minutes to speak on a Private Members' Resolution. If the hon. the member for Bellevue wants to make those kinds of comments or accusations, then let him get up in the debate and make them. Do not use the time of another hon. member! He only has twenty minutes! That is exactly what the hon. member is doing, Mr. Speaker. It is a deliberate tactic. It is not a point of order. It is so clearly not a point of order. It is simply a matter of dispute between the member for Bellevue and the member for Burin - Placentia West.

MR. SPEAKER:

There is no point of order, just a difference of opinion between two hon. gentlemen.

The hon. the member for Burin - Placentia West.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, it is obvious what the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands has said is true, and that the member for Bellevue is

one member who constantly disrupts the rules of this House, constantly ignores the Chair, and constantly, Mr. Speaker, interrupts someone when one is speaking.

Mr. Speaker, we are talking about something that was put before us today, something, Mr. Speaker, that is without foundation. As I was saying, as we look at what the Department of Fisheries has done, as we look at what the Department of Municipal Affairs has done in job creation in this Province, Mr. Speaker - I know in my own district, Mr. Speaker, I announced something in the area of \$1 million for the water and sewer and municipal roads. I wait, Mr. Speaker, for the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Dawe) and hopefully he will be able to facilitate some stuff for my district.

Mr. Speaker, you talk about this government. What about the mining industry in this Province? What about the St. Lawrence mine? What about the Baie Verte mines? What about Kruger in Corner Brook? What about the Hopebrook gold mine, Mr. Speaker? That is not job creation! Mr. Speaker, I say to the member for Bellevue, 'So be it.' We did get money for the Marystown Shipyard to construct the trawlers, but we went and worked hard to get the money, Mr. Speaker, despite the member for Bellevue and despite the Liberal Party. We spent long enough with your leader today, we spent along enough when the member for Fortune - Hermitage was in Ottawa representing us, when they refused to let the oil rigs come in for repairs. Now, Mr. Speaker, the same type of contempt is being displayed by the member for Bellevue.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. TOBIN:

The fact of the matter is, and the fact of the matter is clear, that there is a \$60 million trawler replacement programme on the go in Marystown, Mr. Speaker, and it would not have been underway had it not been for the efforts of this government, Mr. Speaker, who encouraged the federal government to come up with the money. With a Premier, Mr. Speaker, who said - and the people of the district know, Mr. Speaker - 'Even if they do not come up with the money, I will ensure that every trawler is built in Marystown.'

Mr. Speaker, there is one other group that I want to mention and they happen to be in the gallery today, and that is the Marystown Shipyard Union, Mr. Speaker, who are leaders in this Province and who played a vital role in convincing everybody involved to become involved in the construction of these trawlers. That is the type of co-operation we have. That is the type of group that we have, unified and working together to create employment in this Province, Mr. Speaker, and no thanks from the member for Bellevue (Mr. Callan). We all know what he said; we all saw you on television, and we do not forget nor will we, Mr. Speaker.

Now the member for Bellevue, Mr. Speaker, wants to talk about other issues. He wants to talk about rural development that is going on. What about the salmon enhancement programme, the study on the rivers in Placentia Bay? Does the member for Bellevue not know that some of the rivers in his own district are being studied

for a salmon enhancement programme?

MR. J. CARTER:

No, he is lying to the House.

MR. TOBIN:

No, you do not know. I will tell you something else, if I wished, and I can tell you who told me you do not know what is going on.

MR. DOYLE:

You do not know.

MR. TOBIN:

This government, Mr. Speaker, is in the right direction in job creation with the resources available. All you have to do is look at the budget that was presented, Mr. Speaker, look at the Throne Speech that was presented, Mr. Speaker, and you will see that this government is in the right direction, creating jobs for this Province.

I can further say, Mr. Speaker, I am familiar, obviously, with the Burin Peninsula and what is taking place in the fishing industry. There is a new secondary processing plant at Burin, Mr. Speaker, and I believe that has tremendous values for this Province. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that as we develop the fishery, step forward into secondary processing of fish, Mr. Speaker, it is indeed very, very important and the Burin secondary processing will play a leading role in that operation.

Mr. Speaker, furthermore we talked about the fishery and jobs that were created in the fishery. The Minister of Forest Resources and Lands (Mr. Simms) announced a few weeks ago -

MR. SIMMS:

\$1.5 million.

MR. TOBIN:

\$1.5 million, creating how many jobs?

MR. SIMMS:

Oh, 250 jobs.

MR. TOBIN:

250 jobs.

MR. EFFORD:

Permanent jobs?

MR. SIMMS:

Yes, permanent, seasonal jobs.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to the member for Port de Grave (Mr. Efford) that the jobs that the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands announced are a lot more permanent than his is when the next election is called.

MR. EFFORD:

Where are the polls?

MR. TOBIN:

Now, Mr. Speaker, -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, he is beginning to sound like the socialist party, they are for everything and they are against everything. They are consistently inconsistent. Now, Mr. Speaker, the member for Port de Grave is trying to be as consistent as the socialist party, the member for St. John's East

(Mr. Long) and the member for Menihek (Mr. Fenwick), Mr. Speaker.

MR. SIMMS:

At least they will take a position, they will not.

MR. TOBIN:

Well okay, that is true. They will take a position while they will not. They spend more time, Mr. Speaker, running back and forth around the House, back and forth through the House than they do in the House. Maybe we should call Bill 1, is it?

AN HON. MEMBER:

Yes.

MR. TOBIN:

Maybe we should call Bill 1 again and let the galleries see how the socialists will scurry out of the House.

MR. BAIRD:

See how the roadrunner takes off.

MR. TOBIN:

See how the roadrunner works.

Mr. Speaker, the bottom line is, in all industrial sectors, in the social sector of this Province and with the resources that are available, this government has done a commendable job. I can further say, Mr. Speaker, that I am proud to be associated with this government, and certainly grateful for the support that I received from the Premier and his government as it relates to my district. I have worked in conjunction with all of the people involved in the administration, unlike the members opposite, Mr. Speaker. As a result of that, we have seen results for our district.

MR. EFFORD:

(Inaudible) somebody today.

MR. SPEAKER (Mitchell):

Order, please!

I have to ask the member for Port de Grave to restrain himself while the member is speaking.

The hon. member for Burin - Placentia West.

MR. TOBIN:

Oh, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands (Mr. Simms) reminded me that all the crowd opposite does is criticize and condemn -

MR. J. CARTER:

The member for Bellevue is always lying.

MR. TOBIN:

- and oppose.

MR. SIMMS:

The Opposition syndrome.

MR. TOBIN:

That is a good point. Have you ever seen one of them stand in this House and make a suggestion as to how something positive can happen?

MR. EFFORD:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of order, the hon. member for Port de Grave.

MR. EFFORD:

I want to point out very clearly to the member for Burin - Placentia West (Mr. Tobin), I stood in this House and made a suggestion to the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Doyle) that he would give the district of Port de Grave some money to do water and sewer and he did not do it.

That is a suggestion.

MR. SPEAKER:

There is no point of order.

The hon. the member for
Burin-Placentia West.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, the member for Port de Grave (Mr. Efford) might have stood in this House and told the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Doyle) what to do, but the member for Port de Grave never stood in the Office of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and told him what to do. Because you do not know where his office is.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. DOYLE:

He never called me on the telephone.

MR. TOBIN:

Look, not even a telephone call, Mr. Speaker, and they talk, Mr. Speaker, about what is going on in their district.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. member's time has elapsed.

MR. TOBIN:

By leave, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER:

By leave?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

No leave.

MR. BARRY:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Mount Scio-Bell Island.

MR. BARRY:

Mr. Speaker, the motion that we have before the House I must say bears very little resemblance to the contents of the speech that we just heard. One listening to the member for Burin-Placentia West I think would have a hard time find references to the per capita debt of the Province, to the financial position of the Province, to the unemployment figures of the Province, and to the proposals contained in this private member's resolution to reduce the sales tax, prepare a practical and comprehensive economic plan, and to bring in a tax credit to stimulate investment. Mr. Speaker, the preamble sets out some of the reasons why.

The member for Burin-Placentia West was discussing polls. One of the most recent polls I have seen was one that was done at the end of January. January 28 was the date that I received it, as a matter of fact. I had the opportunity of passing this on to The Evening Telegram yesterday in order to counteract the comments of the editor in his editorial last Saturday, where his thesis was that there was a change of leadership in the Liberal Party because the polls showed that the Liberal Party, under my leadership, could not win the next election.

As a matter of fact I should have that poll here today, but I will be happy to release that poll's figures. I will probably do it by a press release tomorrow. Very interestingly, that poll of January 28, 1987, showed that the Liberal Party was ahead of the Conservative Party and way ahead of the NDP. As a matter of fact, the NDP in the Province were five points behind the national party.

The poll was done on both provincial and federal issues. The question was: Who would you vote for today if there were an election with Brian Peckford, the Leader of the Conservative Party; Leo Barry, Leader of the Liberal Party; and Peter Fenwick, Leader of the NDP Party? The same thing was asked for the federal parties and the federal leaders. There were some very interesting figures, Mr. Speaker. It shows that the Conservative Party was still leading in the St. John's area, and it showed that the Liberal Party and the NDP Party were very close in the St. John's area. It showed outside of the St. John's area - I am not sure if it was eleven or twelve seats, basically the St. John's Metropolitan area - that the Liberal Party, if I can remember the figures exactly, had 41 per cent, the Conservative Party 39 per cent, and the NDP 20 per cent.

MR. LONG:

That would be misleading.

MR. BARRY:

That was outside the St. John's area. I will have to remember the figures for inside the St. John's areas by thinking up the figures for the Liberals and the NDP, because the NDP were ahead of the Liberal Party by 1.5 or two percentage points, which is meaningless, and basically we were neck and neck within St. John's. It was 29 per cent for the Liberal Party within St. John's, 31 per cent for the NDP within St. John's - what does that add up to, 60 per cent? - and 40 per cent for the Conservative Party within the St. John's area.

Province-wide, as I say, outside of St. John's, it was Liberal Party 41 per cent, Conservative

Party 39 per cent and the NDP 20 per cent or 21 per cent.

MR. SIMMS:

When was it taken?

MR. BARRY:

January 28 under my leadership. It was taken only two or three days after the Canada/France fisheries debate arose. I think the polls would indicate, my gut feeling would be, and I have not seen recent numbers to confirm it, that members opposite would have seen some increase in popularity, briefly, while those first few days of hysteria were drummed up with respect to this agreement. But frankly the issue was neutralized, as the Premier himself stated in his letter of thanks to myself and I think to the NDP leader as well, but I am not sure.

MR. FENWICK:

He did not thank me.

MR. BARRY:

He did not thank you? Anyway, he thanked us for the assistance we gave in helping see this issue resolved. So that issue did not become a partisan issue, and in fact I think the Premier, although he was gearing up possibly for an election try under that issue, quite frankly when he reassessed the numbers as he got into the campaign he saw that the issue had frankly been neutralized by the actions that were taken by ourselves in coming out very clearly in support of the Province and protecting the Province's right to be involved and the Premier's right to be consulted in discussions concerning that Canada/France Fisheries Agreement. When you combine the St. John's numbers and the outside of St. John's numbers, it was 39

per cent Conservative, 38 per cent Liberal - what does that give you when you add that up, 77? - and 23 per cent for gentlemen on my right.

MR. MATTHEWS:
Everyone had decided?

MR. BARRY:
The undecided was lower, interestingly, for the provincial issue than the federal, just over 20 per cent or 21 per cent.

AN HON. MEMBER:
It was a poll you had commissioned?

MR. BARRY:
It was a poll I had commissioned, with 501 respondents.

MR. SIMMS:
How many questions?

MR. BARRY:
It was one question which said: Who would vote for if Brian Peckford were the leader of the Conservative Party, Leo Barry were the leader of the Liberal Party, Peter Fenwick the leader of the NDP? Now, you get a response then on leadership as well as party affiliation having the two combined like that. The poll was done by Research Associates, a reputable, well-known polling firm here in the city, which has done good work, which has been proven correct in the past, and, Mr. Speaker, I have to confess that I would not mind going into an election on those numbers. I have to confess, Mr. Speaker, that those numbers showed me that the Liberal Party -

MR. SIMMS:
Did your colleagues see that?

MR. BARRY:
Yes. As a matter of fact, the Liberal caucus and the executive

board of the Liberal Party saw these numbers, were informed of these numbers.

The interesting thing, Mr. Speaker, is that those numbers showed me that an election called at that point in time would have brought in a Liberal government, either a bare majority or a Liberal minority government. Not bad!

Mr. Speaker, the reason I mention that poll at this time - I will be happy to distribute copies and to show members just exactly what is involved - the interesting thing, you see, in that poll -

MR. SIMMS:
Is that Steve Neary's poll!

MR. BARRY:
No, no. This is a legitimate poll which can be backed up. The interesting thing is that it showed the Liberal Party leading in the age group eighteen to thirty-four. It showed the Liberal Party, I guess for the first time since 1971, leading amongst young voters.

Another interesting thing is it showed the Liberal Party considerably ahead with respect to the female vote, but behind with respect to the male vote. A considerable difference in the response, I think close to 10 percentage points difference, in the position of the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party, vice-versa, in the male and female vote, which is striking.

The bottom line, Mr. Speaker, is that the Liberal Party at the end of January, 1987, if an election were called, would have won the government.

By the way, just think back now to the last election, in 1985, when members on the opposite side of the House were becoming a little edgy, I would submit, particularly the member for Grand Falls (Mr. Simms), in the last week of the campaign. Would the hon. members like to know what the polls were at that point in time, when we went into that election? Do you know what they were?

MR. SIMMS:

No. You tell us.

MR. BARRY:

Well, when that election was called, it showed the Conservatives at 55 per cent in the polls, and it showed the Liberal Party at 35 per cent in the polls.

MR. SIMMS:

What you ended up with.

MR. BARRY:

No, no. We ended up with 39 - 40 per cent.

MR. WARREN:

No you never.

MR. BARRY:

Of the vote, yes.

MR. SIMMS:

I have it here.

MR. BARRY:

Well dig it out and you will see. Members should go back and dig it out. Well, you remember what your own percentage of the vote was, presumably. It was less than 50 per cent, remember. It was 47 or 48 per cent, I believe.

MR. PEACH:

Why did you leave? That is what I cannot understand.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. DOYLE:

So that was 90 per cent, 55 and 35.

MR. BARRY:

Fifty-five and thirty-five, yes. The NDP 10 per cent in the early stages. But by the last week of the election the NDP support showed 19 per cent. So the difference between where they are now and where they were then is about 2 percentage points, not very significant. But they could not deliver the 19 per cent at the polls. They only got 14 to 15 per cent on election day. Their support does not translate into votes at the polls either through lack of organization or people having second thoughts when they go in to mark their ballot. Possibly some people, feeling that they had no chance of forming the government, changed their minds.

MR. SIMMS:

You got 36.7 of the popular vote. We got 48.5 and the NDP got 14 per cent.

MR. DOYLE:

What you said was pretty accurate.

MR. BARRY:

Okay.

MR. SIMMS:

Actually you got less votes in 1985, 102,000, than you did in 1972, fifteen years before that.

MR. BARRY:

No, that is not correct.

MR. SIMMS:

Yes, it is.

MR. BARRY:

No.

MR. SIMMS:

Would you like to know how many votes you got in 1972?

MR. BARRY:

Well, I would like the member to get up, sure, and give us those figures afterwards.

The reason, Mr. Speaker, I refer to this is that it is not so hard to envisage why these numbers were there. Just think now how well we did in the 1985 election, how close we came, with that spread of 20 percentage points. Just imagine where we would be going into the election neck and neck.

MR. DOYLE:

They could reverse though, could they not?

MR. BARRY:

It could. I would be prepared to take my chances on that, sure.

MR. BAIRD:

Would the member permit a question?

MR. BARRY:

Yes.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Humber West.

MR. BAIRD:

If the hon. the member for Mount Scio had his time back there two years ago, would he have worked his butt off for some of the members now occupying a seat in this House

MR. BARRY:

Mr. Speaker, I am not sure what motivates the member opposite, but I am motivated by working to advance the cause of a party with

a certain philosophy and certain policies. That was what I was working for. It was not on behalf of any particular individual, including myself, so I would, of course, have done the same as I did because it was in the best interest of the party to so do.

What I would like to say, and how this is relevant to the present debate, of course, is that it is very understandable why the Liberal Party position, was in a position at the end of January to form the government, when one considers the abysmal economic performance of members opposite, when one considers the Minister of Finance for this Province - I was going to say having the gall but it really was a matter of just having no choice - bringing in a budget that quadrupled the deficit, a budget that in one year sees the Province going out to borrow as much money as it took Joey Smallwood twenty-three years to build up in terms of debt. For twenty-three years Joey Smallwood built schools, hospitals, roads -

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Grand Falls.

MR. SIMMS:

Just to provide the former Leader of the Opposition with an interesting statistic to fit in with his whole speech, and I cannot provide it later because I have already spoken in the debate, but we talked about the number of votes. For example, in 1949, thirty-six years ago, the Liberal Party polled 110,000 votes.

MR. BARRY:

That was about 90 per cent of the

votes.

MR. SIMMS:

Thirty-six years later, in 1985, they polled 102,000 votes so that to me indicates not an upward trend but a downward trend. The Conservative Party, on the other hand, in 1949 polled 55,000 votes but thirty-six years later they polled 135,000 votes. To me there is a significant difference in terms of trends if one is trying to argue trends, which I think the member for Mount Scio was trying to argue.

MR. BARRY:

The minister's comments are taken, absolutely. The interesting thing about trends, Mr. Speaker, as the Premier said in a comment to somebody or other - the CBC, I think - the other day, about the only thing constant in this world is change. And the interesting thing about trends is that trends change, and that is what we are seeing in this Province today. Perhaps the minister would like to give us the Conservative vote in 1982 and the Conservative vote in 1985.

MR. SIMMS:

I would be happy to. Would the hon. member would like to have that?

MR. BARRY:

Yes.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, to the point of order.

The Conservative vote in 1982 was 151,000 and in 1985 it was 136,000.

MR. BARRY:

An interesting trend.

MR. SIMMS:

The Liberal vote in 1982, which is

what I know the hon. member wants to hear, was 88,000, up to 102,000 in 1983.

MR. BARRY:

Not bad. An interesting trend.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

To that point of order, I am wondering if the hon. the member for Mount Scio - Bell Island would conclude - he only has a couple of minutes left - and show us the relevancy of this debate, where he is heading.

MR. BARRY:

I would be glad to, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the interesting thing is that, as the minister confirmed with his most recent figures, there is a trend developing, that trend started in the last election, in 1985, and it is a trend to see increasing votes for the Liberal Party and declining votes for the Conservative Party. And my friend on the right, the member for Menihek, he saw his party increasing its share of the vote, and if he keeps at it another five or six years he is going to be getting the same share in this Province provincially as his party gets federally. Right now he is about 5 percentage points behind. That is not going to be something that the Liberal Party will despair over because the figures indicate that they are Tory voters, which is very interesting, that we see the philosophic shift, the pendulum swing going from the far right to the far left.

MR. SIMMS:

The proof of that will come after the next election.

MR. BARRY:

Yes.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. member's time has elapsed.

MR. BARRY:

Could I have just a few moments, by leave?

MR. SPEAKER:

Do we have leave?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

By leave.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Mount Scio.

MR. BARRY:

The relevancy of all this, of course is that we have seen in 1985, and continuing up to January 28 of 1987, a continuing trend towards an improved political position for the Liberal Party, the Liberal Party climbing in the polls, climbing in the numbers of people associated with the party.

Do you know something? That is something I am not going to back away from. I am not going to permit that record to be set out inaccurately by Mr. Finley of The Evening Telegram and by leadership contenders in the Liberal Party -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. BARRY:

- some of whom have dared say that the Liberal Party was in a position of despair pending the arrival on the scene of certain individuals. Mr. Speaker, I have to say that I am proud of the progress of the Liberal Party under my leadership since 1984.

We had a lot of work to do, we had a lot of catching up to do and, Mr. Speaker, we have gotten there. Now I just hope that we can continue that trend and that momentum that has been built up.

DR. COLLINS:

What is happening to the (inaudible) polls on the national scene?

MR. BARRY:

On the national scene, a very interesting figure in a poll that we did, which showed the federal Liberals ahead in St. John's for the first time that I am aware of in a long, long time, showed them ahead of the Conservatives, with the NDP a distant third.

DR. COLLINS:

What was that, on the total stats for St. John's.

MR. BARRY:

It was broad ranging.

MR. J. CARTER:

It was an inaccurate poll, obviously!

MR. BARRY:

Well, the margin of error would have been greater because I think it would have been around 160 of the 501 would have been from the St. John's area.

MR. J. CARTER:

That was a slum poll! Polling slums.

MR. BARRY:

The member for St. John's North is adding traditional enlightenment, the only true Tory in this House, Mr. Speaker. He had to forgo his Tory principles in the last budget with that deficit financing.

Well, Mr. Speaker, to conclude and

finish -

MR. SIMMS:

Very interesting that you got up and criticized the member for Burin-Placentia West's speech about having nothing to do with the resolution.

MR. BARRY:

Mine is highly relevant, because one has to ask what is the reason for this trend? What is the reason for the Liberal Party's improvement since 1984 in the polls?

MR. MATTHEWS:

It is you.

MR. BARRY:

While I will take some credit for it, yes, Mr. Speaker, I have to also acknowledge with gratitude the assistance provided by members opposite, and particularly, Mr. Speaker, in terms of economic performance, because every time the Minister of Finance brought down a Budget, our fortunes rose. Every time the figures came out with respect to unemployment, Liberal fortunes rose. And Mr. Speaker, when the Premier came out and acknowledged that in another two or three years he was leading the Province back to the 'Dirty Thirties' - that was before the January 28 poll - Mr. Speaker, that statement showed that the Premier foresaw a financial disaster equivalent to the 1930s in the matter of two or three years, and that, Mr. Speaker, wiped out any gains that might have been made by his valiant fight on the Canada - France Fisheries Agreement.

MR. SIMMS:

Have you seen the recent numbers?

MR. BARRY:

No. But I am sure the member for Grand Falls has the same expertise as I have as a politician, and when you see the numbers they really only confirm your own gut feeling that you have gotten from the thousands of individuals you speak with.

MR. SIMMS:

It is down eleven points.

MR. BARRY:

Down eleven points?

MR. SIMMS:

Since the assassination plot.

MR. BARRY:

Anyhow, Mr. Speaker, the point that I would make is that members opposite, if they hope to have any chance at all of having another shot at government, are going to have to do a number of things, and we have made some good suggestions here. First, let us get a good economic plan for this Province; secondly, let us get the rate of taxation down so that we can stimulate the economy; and third, let us bring in a system of tax credit to stimulate investment. With those measures, Mr. Speaker, there might be some slight hope that the members opposite might reverse their sliding political fortunes, but that would be a very, very unusual circumstance if it were to occur.

DR. COLLINS:

Would the hon. member permit a question?

MR. BARRY:

Yes, definitely.

DR. COLLINS:

Would the hon. member not agree that at this particular time the electorate is in a rather frivolous mood, a frivolous, shall we say, jocose frame of mind,

because otherwise how could we get these results in regard to the NDP Party? I mean, everyone knows that no sensible elector, when it counts, is going to put in a NDP member. The old phrase goes that 10 per cent will always be poor. Well, say 12 per cent of the electorate will vote for almost anything, the Rhinoceros Party or whatever, and that is the sort of level that the NDP always had. They had that sort of fringe 12 per cent vote. Would the hon. member not agree that that will persist and that level of vote for the NDP will come back again once they get out of this frivolous sort of early mid-Summer madness that they are in now in casting their poll vote almost to the winds, in giving it to the NDP.

MR. BARRY:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, of course, we would agree - the electorate are hilarious every time the unemployment figures comes out. They roll in the aisles, Mr. Speaker, laughing as they see the numbers of the unemployed in this Province going over 50,000, starting to push 70,000, I think, the real figures would be now. They find that hilarious. They are overjoyed and roll in the aisles when they compare the level of taxation in this Province, Mr. Speaker, with the level of taxation elsewhere in Canada. They are splitting their sides, their bellies are aching with the hilarity and the jocosity brought on by the level of tax. And when they look at the level of per capita debt, that brings them into a screaming hysteria, Mr. Speaker. They are so happy, so overjoyed when they see those figures. Mr. Speaker, yes, they trip blithely to the polls time after time laughing in this happy Province, Mr. Speaker, as they see

what members opposite are doing to the economy and to the unemployed.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DR. COLLINS:

Do you not think people know why taxes and debt are there? They are very understanding.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. MATTHEWS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to make a few comments. I certainly will make a short speech so that the hon. member for Gander (Mr. Baker), a man who I have great respect for and I wish him all the best -

MR. BARRY:

He has not had the opportunity to give any campaign speeches so, (inaudible).

MR. MATTHEWS:

That is right. For the hon. the member for Mount Scio - Bell Island, I wish he would not go because I have got a few questions for him that he could perhaps answer. What I really cannot understand is why he did not stay on in the present campaign?

MR. SIMMS:

In face of all those good polls.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Exactly. In the face of all the polls and everything else, that certainly twelve or thirteen caucus members, for whatever reason I really cannot understand particularly if they saw the poll that the hon. member alluded to -

MR. SPEAKER:

Are you prepared to let him answer?

MR. MATTHEWS:

Yes, Sir, if he wants to answer. I must say to him - where was I? - I was out of the Province when I came back and heard that he had withdrawn. I must say and I am being very honest about it, I just could not believe it. It is probably for reasons that he does not want disclosed but I still cannot understand it because I honestly think that you really had a fair chance of winning it and you should have hung in there.

Do you want to answer that?

MR. BARRY:

I will be happy to answer that question. First of all I should deal with a little piece of yellow journalism contained in The Evening Telegram where the editor indicated there must be some skeleton in the closet that caused the resignation. Now, I would like to assure the member for Grand Bank (Mr. Matthews), as I have already passed on to the editor of The Evening Telegram, no, my decision to resign was not based upon any skeleton in my closet. God knows I am not a saint but -

MR. SIMMS:

Pretty close.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Ha, ha!

MR. BARRY:

I thank the member for Grand Falls.

MR. SIMMS:

No, I said you are close to a saint.

MR. BARRY:

Ha, ha!

Beatification has been bestowed by the member for Grand Falls.

Mr. Speaker, my decision to resign, I will be happy to tell the member for Grand Bank, again, was not based on any lack of support within the Liberal party because I think all members are realizing in this House that there was a good solid grass root support within the Liberal party but, frankly, Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in my news release, the real question was, coming out of the leadership convention, having won the leadership convention, would the air have been cleared? I believe, I still believe that there would have been a question mark, because of the actions of caucus, which might have hampered the party's ability going into the next election.

I am now making available the opportunity for the new leader to go into the next election free, with the benefit, Mr. Speaker, of the foundation that has been laid, as those poll results indicate, the foundation has been laid there, Mr. Speaker, because I want the party to have a good clean shot at the next election.

MR. SIMMS:

See the man you have lost.

MR. SPEAKER:

Before the hon. Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth continues to speak, I would like to say that we should have more decorum in the House. When members get up to speak, would they just wait to be recognized by the Chair before they rush into speaking?

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

MR. MATTHEWS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to thank the hon. member for the answer because it is a good answer and one really, I guess, that was sort of unexpected. I think he made a mistake and I think consequently his party, I think if you polled the Province today and I think there is every indication by the turn out in the various meetings around the Province now, whether it be to meet the candidates that are in the campaign, of course a week or so ago when they had meetings to elect delegates, the turn out is not all that great. I think it is because of what has happened and I think, by the hon. member withdrawing, it has been a factor in it all.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to speak for a few minutes if I could on the resolution and talk about some of the things, of course, that has been said a number of times in the debate. In the recent budget there has been about \$40 million going into direct employment stimulus in the Province. The amounts vary from the Community Development programmes of approximately \$30 million, to the Employment Initiatives programme of \$7.5 million and on and on to the private sector job creation money where are trying to get the private sector to employ more people and cost share wages up to 40 hours per week for a minimum number of weeks. So all of that is happening.

As well, alluded to by a number of previous speakers has been the forestry projects and the fisheries projects, agricultural and parks projects. We are in essence trying to create some

meaningful work for Newfoundlanders and, at the same time, doing some badly needed work to some of our provincial facilities.

My interest, of course, is parks. We have some seventy-six parks in the Province that we really have not been able to free up enough money to do the necessary improvements to. So we are trying to improve our provincial parks, while at the same time providing some meaningful employment to Newfoundlanders, both young and old, and, of course, female and male. So we are doing all this.

In the resolution, Mr. Speaker, there are a couple of things I would like to refer to, which I think is a little - whether misleading is the word or not I am not sure. We hear quite often the idea or the insinuation that lowering the sales tax would automatically see an upswing in the economy and then a reduction in our deficit.

Of course, frequent analysis and very detailed analysis will show that if the Province were to reduce the retail sales tax rate that, in essence, the Province would generate less revenue and consequently the deficit would worsen. I think that all hon. members would agree that a very popular move for the government would be to reduce sales tax, and we would love to do nothing better. But, of course, we must take into consideration the total financial position of the Province, and know full well from very reliable detailed financial analysis that a reduction, in essence, would cause a further deterioration in the Province's financial position. In the resolution it calls for a

reduction. Certainly I think it is one that we would all love to be able to implement. I guess when you are in Opposition you really do not have to weigh the other factors or what, in effect, would then happen to the revenues of the Province. So I would just like to point that out then to hon. members opposite.

As well, of course, when they talk about the decline in the economy and they talk about unemployment, there are other provinces in this country, Mr. Speaker, that have no sales tax or others that have lesser sales tax rates than we have. All you have to do is listen to the news and read the newspapers on a daily basis and you will see that those provinces that have no sales tax, particularly some in the West, or very low sales tax rates, are experiencing a downturn in their economies. They are seeing a rapid increase in the unemployment rate. So, it is not necessarily related to sales tax or the level of sales tax. Not that there is no connection, but certainly you cannot put all the blame on the sales tax rate. I just wanted to point that out, and I am sure all hon. members realize this fact.

If you look at Alberta, for instance, I do not believe there is even a sales tax there. Of course, we all know what is happening in that province, whereby the economy is certainly on a downturn and unemployment is on the increase. That is happening in a lot of provinces of the country.

When it comes to job creation and job initiatives, Mr. Speaker, I have alluded to some of them. Of course, my colleague from Burin - Placentia West as well mentioned a

number of initiatives that the government has been involved in over the last number of months to try and create employment, and, of course, at the same time to create products here in Newfoundland, Newfoundland-built trawlers, for instance, at Marystown and then, of course, we go on to the hydro projects at both Paradise River and Holyrood where, again, we are doing something that is very necessary for the Province, and, of course, trying to provide at the same time meaningful employment for residents of the Province.

Mr. Speaker, I guess it was kind of hard over the last number of days to speak in this Legislature or outside the Legislature and not have some comment about the most recent project announced with the Sprung Group where we will see some 300 construction jobs created, I think, over a period of five or six months. Then, 150 permanent jobs will be created for Newfoundlanders in a technology, of course, that we will have that will be the only one, I guess, for sure in Canada and North America, if not the world. I guess in typical Opposition mentality and I guess, to a large degree, typical of Newfoundland mentality, before something gets a chance to start we more or less tear the innards out and knock the legs out from under it.

I think really, Mr. Speaker, to be honest, as one member of this Legislature and one resident of this Province, I really think that in most cases we are our own worst enemies. We have seen it in a number of things that have happened in the Province over the last number of months. It seems that when you create employment, there is upheaval about it. We

create new projects and they are no good before they get started.

Nothing is ever given a chance, Mr. Speaker. Of course, it takes months and sometimes years before the viability of certain projects is confirmed. I am very optimistic that the venture between the government and the Sprung Group of companies will prove to be a huge success, and I am indeed hopeful, not only will we see this type of technology and this type of operation in the Kilbride area, but they will be such a success that maybe we will see other such similar operations in other parts of the Province to again create meaningful employment, of course, and provide the various products that it will provide.

I honestly think, Mr. Speaker, and I think there are members in the Legislature on both sides that will concur, it seems in the Province that before anything sort of gets on the go it is knocked off the tracks. I think it is a sorry reflection on what is happening in the Province today and I am sure if you went across this country and talked to the residents of Canada about what is happening in the Province you would get a very honest, similar, opinion about it all.

It is too bad that the member for Bellevue (Mr. Callan), and the member for Fortune-Hermitage (Mr. Simmons) left because they had certain things to say today about rural Newfoundland and the government ignoring rural Newfoundland. Of course the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development (Mr. Aylward) capably outlined what is happening in the support government is providing through

his department to rural Newfoundland. Yet, it is somewhat surprising when you see the member for Bellevue (Mr. Callan) get up, which I believe as he said himself today, and say 547 people are working in Come By Chance. I must say, Mr. Speaker, government cannot take all the credit but it certainly can take a good part of the credit for what is happening in Come By Chance that we look forward to that particular operation being a success for years to come within the Province, creating long term employment for hundreds of Newfoundlanders.

It is, as I said, Mr. Speaker, it seems to be an Opposition mentality, perhaps it is understandable, that everything is looked upon in a negative vein and yet even though as good as some things may be, some decisions, some projects that never once, or seldom, and I think the only positive comment that I have heard from any member of the Opposition as it pertains to the Sprung joint venture with government has come from the member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) when I was listening to him today. I think he had some concerns about unemployment in the rural areas of the Province, which are very legitimate concerns, particularly when it pertains to his area of the Province which probably has one of the highest, if not the highest unemployment rates in the Province, in the Bay d'Espoir-Milltown area. Yes, he has concerns and he certainly would like to attract industry in there but, at the same time, he thought that the Province was on the right track to attract this very high technology, very special technology to the Province. So I think he is the only one, out of the two Opposition parties, that

has said one word that has been positive about this recently.

MR. WARREN:
Who is that?

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

I heard him publicly today and he was fair, not that he did not have some concerns, as I am sure any member would have, but he was very fair about it.

MR. WARREN:
I think the member for Gander (Mr. Baker) is fair.

MR. MATTHEWS:
A very fair man and I wish him well as I said earlier, I wish him well in what he is undertaking to do. As I said to him yesterday, and I said to some of his colleagues, I do not know anywhere else he would go, I suppose, in the world, I do not know where else you could go in a political situation where you would have a leadership campaign open up for a party with fifteen caucus members in total, and all of them opt to support someone from outside the caucus. I do not know if it has ever happened before anywhere in the history of politics, anywhere. But certainly not in North America. I do not know anywhere in the world where that kind of a situation has happened before, only of course again with the Liberal Party of Newfoundland and Labrador. Of course we all know that the Liberal Party of Newfoundland and Labrador have been first for a lot of things in this Province.

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

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

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

MR. W. CARTER:
I can enlighten the hon. minister because I can refer him to a similar situation in 1979 when the former Premier, Frank Moores, who was then not a member of the Tory caucus, sought election as leader. I think the hon. member for St. John's North (Mr. J. Carter) was a candidate in that election. I think that Mr. Moores, in that leadership convention, did, in fact, get the entire Tory caucus supporting him.

AN HON. MEMBER:
No. No.

MR. W. CARTER:
That is my impression of what happened.

MR. MATTHEWS:
He was talking about turfing someone out.

MR. W. CARTER:
No, the fact is he said that this is the first time in history maybe that an entire caucus supported to a man an outsider.

MR. MATTHEWS:
It is.

MR. W. CARTER:
No, it is not. In 1979.

MR. WARREN:
No, 1979?

MR. MATTHEWS:
To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
To that point of order, the hon. the Minister of Culture,

Recreation and Youth.

MR. MATTHEWS:

In 1979 I think the hon. gentleman was a candidate, Mr. Speaker.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

MR. MATTHEWS:

I am on a point of order.

MR. W. CARTER:

I should correct -

MR. MATTHEWS:

I am speaking to the point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

To the point of order again.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, to correct the record

-

MR. MATTHEWS:

I am speaking to the point of order, Mr. Speaker, the first point of order.

MR. W. CARTER:

May I correct the record? It was 1969.

MR. MATTHEWS:

To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

There is no point of order.

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

MR. MATTHEWS:

I will continue. Since there is no point of order, since the hon. gentleman has gotten to his feet on two points of order now, I would just like to say to him that

certainly not, he must be talking about the -

MR. SIMMS:

How many were in that 1969 Tory caucus? Three I think it was.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, I am not interested. I was just making a point and the hon. gentleman's point is well taken but certainly not with a caucus of fifteen or sixteen members it has never been heard tell of. Perhaps he is correct in what he is saying.

MR. SIMMS:

By the way, many of those caucus members were very reluctant to do what was done. That is the latest story.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Is that right, very reluctant.

Anyway, as I was saying before I was interrupted, Mr. Speaker, the Liberal party of Newfoundland and Labrador are remembered for a lot of firsts and a lot of them, of course, they would prefer not to remember. I think what they have done with the former leader, I think it will not be too long before they regret what they did to him as well and that will be another thing in the history of Newfoundland politics that will come out as another big error. They turfed out the former leader and that none of the caucus now, I understand - and I hope they change their minds, I think they would be very wise in changing their minds to support the only member of their caucus who I guess who had the intestinal fortitude to enter the race for the leadership of his party, of course, elected in his district and being here representing them in the House. If one of the other

candidates, of course, the other serious candidate ends up winning the leadership, then he is going to have another serious problem of not being able to sit in the House because of a lack of seat.

MR. SIMMS:

The member for Gander moved ahead of buddy over there in Tors Cove, do you not think?

MR. MATTHEWS:

Good. I am glad to hear it.

Mr. Speaker, there are a couple of other things in the resolution about "THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that government set up a select committee to develop a sound, practical and comprehensive economic plan..." Mr. Speaker, I think some of the things that I have outlined in the few minutes that I have been on my feet and previous speakers before me show government really is trying to do that, to develop a sound, economic and job creating plan for the Province to stimulate the economy with the various initiatives that we have taken in this past budget speech.

It goes on to say "BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the government, as a means to promote private sector growth and expansion, give a tax credit..." Of course, we are trying to stimulate as well private sector growth by our programme for private sector whereby we are trying for incremental jobs to be created in the Province. We will cost share for each employee up to 50 per cent of wages up to a maximum of \$3 an hour, which is a big help to small business when they are trying to get off their feet and get started and create jobs within the Province.

MR. SIMMS:

The latest rumor is that the Liberals can not afford to pay delegates to the convention and the member for Gander is going to withdraw a few days before the Leadership Convention because there are no funds to pay the membership.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker, I have a bit of sore throat so I apologize for the delay. I am getting some coaching as well of course from my colleague the Minister of the Forest Resources and Lands who has never been known in the legislature of course to come next to a speaker and to try and create some gossip and rumour.

MR. FLIGHT:

Was he telling the Minister how to get money put into his district?

MR. MATTHEWS:

In his district?

MR. FLIGHT:

(Inaudible).

MR. MATTHEWS:

The Minister of Forest Resources and Lands, I would have to go on record as saying, was certainly in the top five or six members in the Legislature and perhaps in the last six or seven sittings of the Legislature in accessing money for his district. I think, in essence, a lot of us - and a lot of us on all sides - are somewhat envious of the minister in how effective he is in dealing with his district and getting things for them.

Of course, the other side of the coin, Mr. Speaker, is that the hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans knows full well of course that over the last four or five

years, to be modest, that I have not done too shocking. The hon. member was over looking for a copy of my brochure the other day with the facts and figures and he was shaking his head ever since. He said, 'How could one member get so much money for one district?' He has got it there now. He is very impressed with it. So I do not need any coaching. As good as the hon. member is, the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands, I would have to say, perhaps, that he has been a little more effective than I, but he has got more experience. So maybe when I have been in the House as long as he has been I may be as effective as he is in accessing points.

MR. FLIGHT:

Ask the member for Gander about the rumors.

MR. MATTHEWS:

There has been some work on the street as of the last couple of days that the member for Gander just may back out of the race because, in essence, the party cannot afford to pay the cost of bringing delegates to the convention and so on. They are in great difficulty.

Of course, they may not have that to worry about now because in the last seven or ten days, when they have had their meetings to elect delegates, in a lot of districts in the Province they have not been able to fill the slates. So, of course, the cost of bringing, say, half a slate in is going to be half of what it would cost for a full slate. When you are talking six, seven, eight, and eleven people in various districts of the Province, it is possible, of course, that they could.

Now, we just heard the former

leader talk about his commitment to the party and why he dropped out was concern for the party. But somehow I do not think that the member for Gander is going to feel the same way and drop out of a race because the party may be facing some financial difficulties. I think he is going to hang in there. As a matter of fact, I think when the vote comes at the leadership that the hon. member for Gander is going to surprise a lot of people in this Province.

In concluding, Mr. Speaker, I cannot support the resolution and I would like to wish the member for Gander all the best.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands.

MR. SIMMS:

Before the hon. member speaks, I wish to announce the final meeting of the Estimates Committee will take place tomorrow morning at nine-thirty here in the Legislature. The Social Services Estimates Committee will examine the estimates of the Department of Social Services.

While I am on my feet, Mr. Speaker, may I echo the comments of the member for Grand Bank about the member for Gander and just say that I am going to do everything I can, I am going to give him a little boost in a couple of weeks time in our ten kilometer walk from Bishop Falls to Grand Falls to look after our Participaction Challenge. So we are going to

give him a big boost on the twenty-seventh. I hope he does not withdraw after that.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Gander.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

I would like to just remind the hon. the member for Gander that he has ten minutes.

MR. BAKER:

I am very pleased to support this particular resolution. The key part of it, of course, is: "BE IT RESOLVED that this government set up a select committee of the House to develop a sound, practical, and comprehensive economic plan for this Province, based on the recommendations of the House Commission on Employment and Unemployment." A very sound proposal.

Before I say the few words I want to say, Mr. Speaker, I would like to, first of all, try to be of some help to the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth, as well as to other ministers opposite. In his speech, the minister seemed to leave the impression that he was a bit disappointed with the reactions to government initiatives and the fact that the government had this great initiative in terms of Sprung, the greenhouse effort. There are other initiatives the government has developed in the past and there seems to be a lot of trouble and criticism in the Province developing over it.

I would like to say to that particular minister, as well as to others, perhaps they should go a little easy on that attitude.

Perhaps they should not take the tack that we are getting criticism on our initiatives, but the fault is with the people who are criticizing, because the fault, Mr. Speaker, is not necessarily with the people who are criticizing.

I suspect, after you get in Cabinet for a number of years, your view tends to become a bit narrow and you tend to consider criticism that is coming is unjust criticism and that the people who are critical really do not understand. I think it is a danger of being in Cabinet too long and I hope to contribute to relieving gentlemen opposite of that problem in the future.

I would like to deal specifically with some of the reasons why this criticism might come. I want to use what is mentioned in this resolution, put forward by the member for Bonavista North, the House Commission on Employment and Unemployment and recommendations there in terms of economic planning.

I would like to point out to the ministers opposite, there are a few of them here now, some figures. What I am going to do, Mr. Speaker, is I am going to deal with the year 1979, because this really is the year that this administration came into power, this particular Premier, and that is when we were subjected to his likes and dislikes, he chose his Cabinet and so on. This is the starting point. I would like to deal with 1979 and see what has happened and what trends has developed since 1979.

Frist of all, let me deal with something that is fairly straight forward, youth participation and

unemployment rates. Okay, let us deal with the unemployment rates in terms of the young people. In 1979, in the fifteen to nineteen year bracket, the unemployment rate was 28.9 per cent. In the twenty to twenty-four year bracket it was 22.4 per cent. Five years later, after this government was in power for five years, the figures had gone to 35.3 per cent and 33.5 per cent, a tremendous increase in youth unemployment rates.

In terms of male and female, Mr. Speaker, you could also break that down, but it also shows a tremendous increase since 1979, which seems to be the yardstick that we could use here.

If we look at the ratio, this is a very interesting figure, of jobs created in job creation programmes to persons employed at sometime during the year. Now, what this does, Mr. Speaker, is to compare in essence the number of ten week jobs in this Province compared with the total number of jobs during the year. We find in 1979, that famous year again, when the Premier was elected, the ratio of part-time or ten week jobs, job creation jobs to the total number of jobs in the Province was about one to twenty-nine. In other words, one job out of every thirty, we can say, in 1979 was a ten week job, one in thirty.

If we look five years later, again after members opposite had been in power for five years, we find something very remarkable has happened. Mr. Speaker, now instead of one job in thirty being a ten week job, now we find that one job in nine is a ten week job. Members opposite would get up and take one part of these figures and say, 'Look, there are

only 8,000 job creation jobs in 1979, and in 1984 there were 27,000. Is that not marvellous? Look at all of the jobs that we have created.'

MR. MATTHEWS:

That is true.

MR. BAKER:

Well, Mr. Speaker, the only way to look at that is to compare that, to compare what is happening the whole job market, and we find that in 1984 one job in nine was one of those ten week job creation jobs.

What this administration did at least in the first five years was shift permanent jobs into these ten week jobs. That is what they did. If we were to ignore ten week jobs, the unemployment rate, horrendous as it was, would be absolutely astronomical.

MR. MATTHEWS:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of order, the hon. the Minister of Culture Recreation and Youth.

MR. MATTHEWS:

It is not a point of order, Mr. Speaker, we have had a sort of a cordial back and forth across the House for the last hour or so. There is one thing that really I think that has not been referred to, at least I have not heard it today, of course, part of the problem with the unemployment rate is the number of new entrants into the work force. Even though, there are new jobs being created, of course, the number of new entrants are exceeding the number, and that is what is compounding the problem. So I think in all fairness that is what makes the figures so bad. The number of new

entrants into the work force, in the job market are increasing and they are coming in faster than jobs can be created. I think we find that not only in Newfoundland but in other parts of the country.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, there is no point of order.

The hon. member for Gander.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

You cannot escape the fact that five years after this administration took over, instead of one in thirty jobs being ten week jobs, we then had one in nine jobs being ten week jobs. That is a scandalous situation!

Let us take something simple like vocational school enrollment. In 1979, there were about 7,409 students enrolled in vocational and craft schools, full-time and part-time. By 1986 this had gone down from 7,409 to 2,266, a tremendous drop in the number of students attending our vocational schools in this Province.

Now, is that an accomplishment to be proud of? Is that something that members opposite would be proud of? Could they say that is because those young people are now going to work and not going to trade school and not going to vocational school? Certainly not because the unemployment figures show us different. The unemployment figures show that these people who are no longer going to vocational schools are, in fact, unemployed.

Mr. Speaker, I realize that my time is up and I have about another twenty or thirty charts to

go through here, but the thing that all of these charts, graphs and so on tell me, Mr. Speaker, is that since 1979, which is the period of time that members opposite are responsible for, since 1979 all of these economic indicators took a nose-dive. Things progressively got worse since 1979 and members opposite have to take some of the blame for what happened.

They take credit for every single ten week job they create, but when you look at the overall picture, when you look at all of these indicators, and I think there are twenty-nine different indicators here, when you look at all these indicators, you have to realize that when this Province started to go into the hole it is in now, that downward slide started in 1979, when this administration took over.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I gather from the debate that has taken place in this House on the two Wednesdays for debating this private member's resolution hon. members do not intend to support this resolution, one of the most practical resolutions ever presented to this House. A resolution, Mr. Speaker, which, if accepted, would result in members studying the recommendations of the Royal Commission and extracting from these recommendations the things, the projects, the activities that we can engage in, the activities, the projects that we can promote to

reduce the outrageous high levels of unemployment in this Province.

MR. CALLAN:
Outrageously high.

MR. LUSH:
Outrageously high. I am sorry about that, Mr. Speaker. I thank my colleague for Bellevue (Mr. Callan) - to reduce the outrageously high levels of unemployment in this Province. That is what the resolution is all about, to do something substantively to reduce the levels of unemployment. Because, Mr. Speaker, the efforts by the government are not doing anything to reduce the levels of unemployment in this Province.

The Royal Commission states emphatically that unless government is able to generate 10,000 jobs per year, unless the government, by its initiatives, by the steps and the measures that it will take, unless we can create 10,000 jobs per year over the next little while, unemployment will remain at critical stages. It will remain a crisis in this Province. Mr. Speaker, I am sorry to hear the hon. members do not want to see this situation improved, because if they did they would certainly accept this resolution.

The Minister of Finance, when he spoke, I think he agreed with practically everything in the resolution. I think he mentioned that there might have been an error in one part of the resolution, the WHEREAS. I would tell him that I did not spot that. I said that our per capita debt was the highest in Canada. I did recognize that in the original drafting. I had said it was the third highest in Canada. But that

the minister corrected. As a matter of fact that is what I said in my introductory remarks in the debate. So that is certainly no reason why they should not vote for the resolution.

I think he found the part of the resolution which recommended that the government move immediately to reduce the accessibly high retail sales tax. Well, if the minister found that offensive, then he could have requested that we eliminate that part of it. He could certainly have requested that, because he did agree with the part which asked the government to allow investment in local companies to be counted as an income tax credit. The minister agreed with that. As a matter of fact, he said it is an item mentioned in the budget.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I certainly hope that the minister will move and legislate that particular resolution and make it a measure that the government will not merely enunciate, not merely articulate, but something that they will do. The minister knows that that is a measure that is working well in Quebec and in other provinces in Canada and it is a measure to keep our monies here and will help the growth and expansion of local companies or businesses. Surely that is a measure that the Province needs.

Now, why would members not want to set up a commission to look into the recommendations of the Royal Commission. We have it done now. It is no good for that commission to be sitting on a shelf. It is no good for that to happen.

So, Mr. Speaker, this would ensure that the measures of the Royal Commission were acted upon. Now,

I could understand members objecting if we asked to set up a commission to look into the problems of unemployment and what we should do. But here we have a guideline, here we have a framework for the future. We have it, Mr. Speaker, the solutions to the problems of Newfoundland and Labrador; the solutions to the financial malaise that we find ourselves in; the solution to the financial abyss which this administration has forced this Province into; the solution to our financial problems; the solution to the unemployment problems, are found within the Royal Commission, "Building On Our Strengths." It is found there.

Mr. Speaker, from the initiatives we have seen so far, it looks like the government -

MR. SIMMS:

All of them (inaudible).

MR. LUSH:

Well, just about anything, I suppose, that one could do, we could say, 'It is in the Royal Commission,' because it is such a comprehensive document. It is almost impossible to do anything in terms of creating jobs outside of the recommendations.

Having said that, this hon. crowd did find a way almost to defy and contradict the recommendations of the Royal Commission by this hydroponic development that they are now supporting, Mr. Speaker, when the Royal Commission pointed out that we should not be going the route of megaprojects.

MR. SIMMS:

That is not a megaproject.

MR. LUSH:

No, Mr. Speaker, if that is not a

megaproject, something that involves \$12 million to \$13 million of the taxpayers monies of this Province, if that is not a megaproject, no, the commission recommended the development of rural Newfoundland. Now how much more practical does the minister believe that this programme would have been if the government had supported and encouraged the farmers of this Province in rural Newfoundland that are presently engaged in hydroponic developments, if they had taken twelve to fifteen of these projects, dispersed throughout Newfoundland, how much better would that have been? First of all, it would have enhanced, improved and stabilized the economy of rural Newfoundland. If only a farmer in the Bonavista North were given enough financial assistance to generate and employ ten or fifteen people this year in this project. Then there were another ten or fifteen people employed in another project and so on and so forth that we dispersed these funds to allow twelve to fifteen projects throughout Newfoundland, based on this hydroponic concept, a concept that is presently being used by many farmers, there are not hundreds of them, but there are enough. Mr. Speaker, that seems to me to have been a much better idea than the idea that is now being developed, an idea that once this thing gets rolling, it is obviously going to affect the small farm, the farmer who is now engaged in growing tomatoes on a small scale, growing cucumbers, obviously, that is going to affect the farmers.

The strange thing, Mr. Speaker, when I asked the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development (Mr. R. Aylward) this afternoon why it was that a

proposal from a rural development association was turned down, do you know the answer they were given?

AN HON. MEMBER:
What was it?

MR. LUSH:
Do you know the answer they were given?

MR. TOBIN:
Tell us.

AN HON. MEMBER:
What?

MR. LUSH:
They were told that they would interfere with other small farmers. That is what they were told. That is what the Rural Development Association was told, the one that I asked the minister about in Question Period, as to why their proposal was rejected outright. They were told that it would interfere with other farmers.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if this little rural development association, if their project was going to interfere, then we can certainly understand why people believe that this particular project is going to interfere and put out of business those who are now in that business.

AN HON. MEMBER:
(Inaudible).

MR. LUSH:
I can only say what the rural development association told me, that is what they told me. The exact words, that is what they told me.

So, Mr. Speaker, if that rural development association would have interfered with other farmers in

this Province engaged in that activity, in growing tomatoes and cucumbers, how much more is this megaproject going to affect them? But, Mr. Speaker, I do not want to dwell on that particular item.

I find it strange that hon. members would not support this resolution. Do you know the other thing I find strange, I cannot recall too many resolutions on this side of the House that they have supported. It almost appears that anything coming from the Opposition they are not going to support. It is funny the attitude that people have in Newfoundland, that the Opposition is negative.

What I would like to see since I have been the member in this House from 1975 until now is for somebody to take a record, to take an inventory of the numbers of resolutions that have been passed in this House since that time and to see which party, to see which supported the most resolutions, whether it was this side of the House supporting government ones, or whether it was government ones supporting resolutions passed on this side of the House.

I would say that the numbers of resolutions supported on this side of the House supporting government resolutions would far outweigh the other way around, would far outweigh them. Mr. Speaker, this causes me to be tremendously suspicious of the motives of why hon. members opposite do not support resolutions presented on this side of the House.

Now, Mr. Speaker, on the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands (Mr. Simms) I just want to make one comment. He mentioned that I talked about the mismanagement of this Province or he did not use

that word, he said, a lack of management. He went on to prove his point by saying that there has been no lack of management in this Province because in the last number of general elections, particularly the last three he mentioned, the people of this Province have supported, they have approved of the record by this government by electing them. Now, Mr. Speaker, what a fuzzy notion to put forward to suggest, to justify that this government has been carrying on good management.

That is the problem with this government, Mr. Speaker, they have never gone to the people asking them to support their record. They never yet had an election. They never had the courage to do that. Usually, Mr. Speaker, what the government does is that it stays in power for three and a half to four years, then they go and say, 'Will you now support our record? Will you now endorse our record?' No, Mr. Speaker, they have never done that. They have been calling snap elections every two and two and a half years. They have never had the courage to go to the people with their record, never had the courage. I challenge them to have that courage to go and ask the people whether they support their record. Snap elections based on hysteria and highly charged emotional issues, that is what they done, Mr. Speaker. That is what they have done to disguise their record.

AN HON. MEMBER:
Not true.

MR. LUSH:
I challenge them now to carry on. They have a mandate. Let them carry on for four years and then go to the people and ask them if

they will support their record. Yes, Mr. Speaker, let them go, instead of drumming up an issue. Let them go, Mr. Speaker, let them go.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. LUSH:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, they had to go.

I get amused when I hear people say this is the time for the Premier to call an election. This is the time now. He is a smart man, you know, he could call an election. What a smart man to call an election when the Opposition have a leadership call.

What dummy, Mr. Speaker, would not think of that? Call an election! That is the kind of mentality they have. I have heard hon. members say that publicly! What a mentality, should call an election now. What a mentality! It would be an unconscionable act, Mr. Speaker, an act of cowardliness that was never seen in this Province before! Now, Mr. Speaker, let this government carry on.

MR. PATTERSON:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. the member for Placentia.

MR. PATTERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I am amazed at the eloquence of my hon. friend over there. The Liberal Party was in good hands according to the poll that Mr. Barry read out to us here this evening, and they would have had a good leader and a good chance of winning the next

election but for the treachery on their part in assassinating their leader.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

There is no point of order.

The hon. member has about two minutes left.

MR. LUSH:
So I say, Mr. Speaker, let them go to the people on their record, let them carry on. They have a mandate. They have the numbers. Let them carry on. It would be unconscionable to do otherwise and the people of Newfoundland will not accept otherwise. They will not accept now some election called on hysteria and a highly charged emotional issue. That is what they are looking for, according to the record of this government.

The record shows, Mr. Speaker, 55,000 people unemployed today! That is what the record shows. It shows a deficit in excess of \$170,000 on public account. That is the record, Mr. Speaker, I would like to see them go to the people of this Province with.

Having said that, I would ask, if it is agreeable, to call the vote, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

Is the House ready for the question?

All those in favour, 'Aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Aye!

MR. SPEAKER:

All those against, 'Nay'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Nay!

MR. SPEAKER:
I declare the resolution defeated.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Division.

MR. SPEAKER:
Call in the members.

Division

All those in favour of the motion please rise:

The hon. Mr. Simmons and Mr. Callan.

All those against the motion please rise:

The hon. the Minister of Consumer Affairs and Communications (Mr. Russell); the hon. the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins); the hon. the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands (Mr. Simms); the hon. the Minister of Public Works and Services (Mr. Young); the hon. the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth (Mr. Matthews); the hon. the Minister of Education (Mr. Hearn); the hon. the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Doyle); the hon. the Minister of Labour (Mr. Blanchard); the hon. the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development (Mr. R. Aylward); Mr. Baird; Mr. Patterson; Mr. J. Carter; Mr. Tobin; Mr. Warren; Mr. Mitchell; Mr. Woodford.

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

Before you announce the vote, Mr.

Speaker, the three minute rule applies and the gentleman from Bonavista North had left the Chamber.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. BAIRD:

You can not entertain a point of order when a vote is being taken.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The motion is defeated. The vote is sixteen against and two for.

The House stands adjourned until 3:00 p.m. tomorrow.

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**Answers to Questions
tabled**

May 12, 1987

*Tabled by the Hon.
the Premier, 12
May, 1987.*

SUBJECT: ELECTRICITY FOR THE SPRUNG SYSTEM

THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND SPRUNG PROVIDES THAT THE JOINT VENTURE WILL PAY THE GOING INDUSTRIAL RATES FOR ALL ELECTRICITY CONSUMED IN ITS NORMAL OPERATION.

THE ELECTRICITY ASSOCIATED WITH THE HIGH INTENSITY GROWING LIGHTS IS TO BE BORNE DIRECTLY BY SPRUNG. IT WILL BE RE-PAID TO THEM ONLY IF THE INCREMENTAL PRODUCTION WHICH RESULTS, BRINGS THE CASH FLOW ABOVE A PRE-DEFINED THRESHOLD LEVEL WHICH PROVIDES A PROFITABLE LEVEL OF OPERATION.