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**VERBATIM REPORT**  
*(Hansard)*

*Speaker: Honourable P.J. McNicholas*

Wednesday

22 June 1988

The House met at 2:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):  
Order, please!

### Statements by Ministers

MR. RIDEOUT:  
Mr. Speaker,

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:  
Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, this government is aware of the potential of the aquaculture industry to the fishery of this Province. Significant progress has been made in the culture of various species but we realize that local growers must compete with other provinces and countries who have been producing these same species for years and on a much larger scale. We are, therefore, striving to diversify and increase our efforts towards commercial aquaculture production.

Beginning in 1971 the Department of Fisheries embarked on a long term study to determine the feasibility of scallop culture in this Province. This involved importing technology from Japan and adapting this technology to our local environment. At that time, two principal impediments to the development of a commercially viable scallop industry were identified.

First, the inconsistent supply of juvenile scallops or spat from the natural environment, and secondly,

excessive marine algae growth on the net enclosures reduced growth of the scallops and increased the labour required to keep the nets clean.

Mr. Speaker, although initial results were somewhat discouraging, it was believed that the problems identified could be resolved through a concerted and focused scientific research program. Over the past thirteen years, this government has continually provided research funding to Memorial University's Marine Science Research Laboratory in an effort to overcome the impediments to a commercial scallop industry. The research conducted by the marine lab focused on methods to provide a consistent supply of juveniles which is a fundamental requisite to achieving economic viability.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to inform hon. colleagues in the House of Assembly that, following many years of research, some of these major technological impediments now appear to have been resolved.

In 1987, after ten years of work, Dr. Patrick Dabinett, a researcher at Memorial's Marine Science Research Lab identified the delicate balance between water temperature, light and the type of feed required to get young scallops to begin feeding, grow and settle. He has now been able to repeat this experiment with reasonable reliability and low mortality rates.

Members of the House will be pleased to note that this early success in the production of scallop spat is a significant breakthrough in the aquaculture scene and that researchers in

several countries have been trying to solve this problem for many years, but without the success achieved by Dr. Dabinett and his colleagues.

I am, therefore, Mr. Speaker, very pleased to advise that my department is now providing additional support of \$100,000 to Memorial University's Marine Sciences Research Lab to aid Dr. Dabinett in the construction of a pilot scale research facility to be established at the laboratory.

This facility will carry on with the necessary research to perfect the science required to provide consistent quantities of juveniles to scallop growers in our Province. In addition, my department will be providing technical assistance and equipment to shellfish farmers throughout the Province to assist in evaluating the grow-out results from these laboratory reared juveniles.

At this point, Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge a number of determined individuals who have worked closely with my department to grow scallops without the benefits of hatchery supplied spat. These individuals have invested considerable time and effort in defining the grow-out requirements of farming scallops and evaluating new growth technology, thus addressing the second major impediment towards commercial feasibility.

Mr. Speaker, in light of these developments, I am pleased to announce that my department, together with Memorial University's development group, Seabright Corporation, is now embarking on a multi-year study utilizing the results of recent

scientific knowledge, techniques and new grow-out technology. In 1988, assistance will be provided to existing scallop farmers to grow out significant quantities of hatchery reared juvenile spat for culture, using this system. The growth, mortality, and effectiveness of these systems will be evaluated to assess the economic potential of this form of aquaculture.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend the perseverance of Memorial University, the Research Laboratory, and particularly Dr. Patrick Dabinett and his colleagues, in achieving this significant breakthrough, which has not happened anywhere else in the world. I am confident that all members of this House will support me in congratulating the researchers on this accomplishment and look forward to the additional positive results of the five year research activity now being embarked upon.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. W. CARTER:  
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. W. CARTER:  
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the minister for providing me with a copy of his statement prior to the House opening. The efforts, I suppose, are commendable, in that the minister is obviously attempting to explore new technology and new ways and means of being better able to produce scallops. But I would caution him not to be too

optimistic, in that I am told that in certain parts of the Province where scallops are being harvested, markets are unavailable.

MR. RIDEOUT:

(Inaudible) scallops, the Atlantic scallops are not.

MR. W. CARTER:

I see. I know that in this case, Mr. Speaker, markets are not available. And even where they are available, the price is such that it is almost uneconomical to pursue the harvest.

When we hear the minister talk about the great initiatives being taken by his department to encourage aquaculture, it is difficult to take the minister too seriously, considering what has been happening with respect to the Bay d'Espoir Salmon Producers Co-op. My colleague for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Gilbert) has brought this to the minister's attention and to the attention of the House on numerous occasions. Granted I give the minister credit in that they did assist in the hatchery in that area, but it appears that once that phase of the operation was over and done with, their interest in the actual production of salmon, the phase that would be labour intensive, was lost, the result being, of course, that progress in that particular field, in an area where employment is at a premium, unemployment is rampant has been hindered; it appears that the minister's department has not been too forthcoming when it comes to providing the necessary financing to help make that co-op a successful operation.

And I while I commend the minister for his initiative in this respect, I condemn him and his

colleagues for ignoring the pleas of my colleague for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir to do something meaningful to assist the Salmon Producers Co-op in Bay d'Espoir. It does have great potential. We all know that aquaculture is probably the thing of the future. Just as we see Sprung being alleged by the Premier as being the new technology in the production of cucumbers, aquaculture, no doubt, will be the new technology in producing products from the sea.

I would only hope, Mr. Speaker, that the minister and his colleagues would take the aquaculture industry as seriously, especially the Bay d'Espoir aquaculture industry, as they have taken the growing of cucumbers in Mount Pearl. They refuse assistance to this very worthwhile project in Bay d'Espoir, growing a product that will be in abundance and for which there is a ready market, yet they are prepared to spend anywhere from \$15 million to \$20 million producing cucumbers in Mount Pearl for which there is no market. And even where there are markets, the price is so low that they are selling them probably at a dollar-something below the actual cost.

Now these are facts, Mr. Speaker. I would suggest that the minister pay close attention to these facts, and the next time the Bay d'Espoir Salmon Producers -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. member's time has elapsed.

MR. W. CARTER:

I request funds, I would expect the minister to accord them the same treatment they are according



the Sprung people in Mount Pearl.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. LONG:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for St. John's East.

MR. LONG:

Mr. Speaker, we welcome the statement by the minister inasmuch as it is a fairly exciting development in the efforts of all concerned in this Province to develop new technologies and to expand and develop research into the development and production of all species in the industry.

We would have some concerns, though, when the minister says that he will be committing \$100,000 to the Marine Sciences Research Lab. We certainly wish the folks there all good wishes in developing their work further, but there is the question of the commitment that the government is making to further research the development of this technology, and not a whole lot being said about what happens to the small producers who are out there currently trying to develop the industry on their own terms. The minister says that there will be some support given to them, but in the long run there is a real question about the mode of development that will come to make an industry of this kind of production.

We, as does the member who just spoke, have some real concerns about the model the government seemed to take in the Bay d'Espoir example, in which the government was only really interested in

assisting a corporation in the efforts of developing aquaculture in this Province. In this case there was a community interest, a small producers group, who wanted to get support from the government in their efforts to control their own production and the pace of development of the industry with a lot of energy and enthusiasm, and government was able to do nothing for them.

So we would say, Mr. Speaker, that if government is not able to give a stated commitment to small producers and to co-op forms of development, it will really be quite pointless for government to put public monies into research and development which down the road are only going to be designed to assist large scale, private industry and do nothing in the way of community development for small scale producers and communities themselves. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. POWER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. POWER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Today I would like to provide hon. members with an update on the special drought assistance program announced earlier this year. This \$750,000 interest free loan program was introduced in an effort to assist farmers in the Province who experienced crop losses due to unusually dry weather conditions in 1987.

Mr. Speaker, to date the Farm Development Loan Board has

approved thirty-five applications totalling \$631,433. This leaves a balance of \$118,567. Most of the requests for assistance have come from the Central and Western areas of the Province. All applications received to date have been processed.

Mr. Speaker, agriculture in Newfoundland is still in the developmental stages with a great deal of potential for further development. This government is committed to assisting the industry wherever possible as is evidenced by this special \$750,000 drought assistance program, along with the \$3 million allocation to the Farm Development Loan Board in this year's budget.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, we have in place a \$4.8 million livestock feed initiative program and our recently signed \$8 million agriculture agreement.

In the months ahead we intend to work closely with the Provincial Federation of Agriculture in an effort to ensure that our farmers are given every possible opportunity to capitalize on the developmental potential which exists in the agriculture sector. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, the minister has actually addressed three initiatives here today, the loan program for drought assistance,

the \$800 million agriculture agreement, and the \$4.8 million livestock feed initiative agreement which was entered into some time ago.

Mr. Speaker, I am reminded of the statement made by Dr. Johnson when he was viewing the dog walking on its hind legs. He said, 'It is not so much that it was done awkwardly, but that it was done at all.' Mr. Speaker, that is my response to these three initiatives taken by the minister today.

First of all, with respect to the loan program, we should remember that it is just a loan program. It is interest free, but it was too late in coming. The farmers went through a lot of frustration, so much so that they would have taken anything, because this Loan Program was already on top of the existing debts and loans they already had to encounter.

Mr. Speaker, it is not such a great effort, and, particularly, it came very, very late. With respect to the \$8 million agriculture agreement, again this is too little too late. If the minister says that he is committed to developing the agricultural potential of this Province, he has certainly not demonstrated that to the farmers of this Province by signing this \$8 million agreement. Mr. Speaker, this meager, paltry, measly amount of \$8 million will not go anywhere in terms of meeting the potential and the development assistance needs of this Province.

Mr. Speaker, if the minister had shown the same kind of commitment to the agriculture industry of this Province, to our own agriculture industry as this

government has done to Sprung, I can assure you that the agricultural needs of this Province would be met in a far better way than they are going to be met as a result of these initiatives taken here today.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for St. John's East.

MR. LONG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

A very brief statement by the minister today in which, in a throw-away sentence at the end, he refers to the recently announced \$8 million agriculture agreement signed yesterday. It is unfortunate that ministers do not take as much pride and a more forthright approach in bringing news into the people's Assembly as they do in bringing it to the press and to the media, so that we could have some opportunity to debate what is in these very important agreements.

I would suggest to the Minister of Agriculture that he is unable to generate any kind of confidence in the agriculture industry in this Province, because it is clear, in the agreement that was signed yesterday, that neither this government nor the federal government is really very interested in expanding and promoting the work that is being carried out with great difficulty by many of the small agriculture producers in this Province.

The agricultural community is small, but there is tremendous room for growth in the agricultural sector in this

Province. There are a number of areas where assistance is needed, and new initiatives, creative ideas that people have out there are in desperate need of financial support from government. There was nothing in the way of the announcement of that \$8 million yesterday that gave a commitment by this government to take new and creative measures in the agricultural community, and the statement by the minister today is sadly wanting in that regard, Mr. Speaker.

### Oral Questions

MR. WELLS:

Mr. Speaker,

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. WELLS:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. Premier a couple of days ago tabled what he said was a legal opinion indicating that Newfoundland did not have any constitutional rights with respect to the railway or transportation matters.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what was tabled is a document entitled **A Synopsis of Legal Ramifications of Proposed Agreement with the Federal Government Regarding Possible Closure of the Newfoundland Railway**. It was said to have been submitted to the Railway Committee, and it was prepared by John C. McCarthy and Ann Marie Rose, presumably of the provincial Department of Justice.

So I ask would the Minister of Justice (Ms Verge) advise the House of what Railway Committee is referred to there? Is this the

Railway Committee in Ottawa, or is it a Committee of the Newfoundland Cabinet that was the Railway Committee? Who is the Railway Committee that is referred to here?

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

MS VERGE:  
Mr. Speaker, I would have to defer to one of my colleagues for an explanation about the composition of that committee. But there is no doubt about the fact that the lawyers with the Department of Justice have advised the government, and the government accepts their opinions, to the effect that the Terms of Union between Newfoundland and Canada do not impose any ongoing obligation on the Government of Canada to operate the Newfoundland Railway.

MR. WELLS:  
A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
A supplementary, the hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. WELLS:  
Would the minister table those opinions? This is said to be a synopsis of legal ramifications. Would the minister table the opinions? Would the minister indicate which other minister could indicate who this Railway Committee is?

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

MS VERGE:  
Mr. Speaker, opinions have already been tabled. I would think the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Doyle), if not the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs (Mr. Dawe), who is not in his seat right now, would probably be able

to inform the House of the composition of the Railway Committee.

MR. BARRY:  
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the member for Mount Scio - Bell Island.

MR. DOYLE:  
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
Would the hon. member defer to the hon. the Minister of Transportation?

MR. BARRY:  
Yes.

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

MR. DOYLE:  
Just to clarify some of the points referred to the Minister of Justice, this Railway Committee being referred to here was an Interdepartmental Railway Committee of officials within the provincial Department of Transportation, from the federal government as well, and also from Intergovernmental Affairs. Legal opinions were submitted. Legal opinions were asked for by the provincial government on whether or not Newfoundland had any protection under the Constitution with respect to the ongoing operation of the Newfoundland Railway. Mr. McCarthy and Miss Rose in the Department of Justice put together legal opinions and they were given to the Railway Committee, and other opinions were sought as well, Mr. Speaker, which indicated that Term 31 of the Terms of Union provided in 1949, at the date of Union, that there

would be a takeover of the Newfoundland Railway, but that there was no obligation upon the federal government to operate the railway in Newfoundland in perpetuity.

So that committee was from Intergovernmental Affairs, federal representatives, as well, looking after the federal government's interests, and also the provincial Department of Transportation.

MR. WELLS:

A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. WELLS:

Mr. Speaker, would the minister then tell the House why this government would produce to the federal side authorities that argued against Newfoundland's position in February of 1988, even before they negotiated this railway agreement? Why would they admit they had no position whatsoever?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Transportation.

MR. DOYLE:

Mr. Speaker, it was not a matter of arguing against Newfoundland's position. I mean, the reality was there. In Term 31 and in Term 32 of the Terms of Union it was clearly stated that the federal government had absolutely no obligation to operate the railway in Newfoundland. It was provided for in Term 31 that at the date of union with Canada that certain services, including the Newfoundland Railway and the steamship services and the lighthouses and the Newfoundland

Hotel and the Newfoundland Broadcasting Corporation, and what have you, would be taken over by the federal government at the date of union. It was not stated in the Terms of Union that they had any obligation to operate that forever. That provision states that Ottawa does not have any obligation to maintain those services.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is a red herring that the hon. gentleman is bringing up here today, and he knows he is badly losing on it.

MR. BARRY:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. BARRY:

Mr. Speaker, it is interesting that there is no reference to the St-Laurent letter. I think we all know that you can get different opinions depending upon the question that you put. Maybe the minister or the Minister of Justice or the Premier, at some point, can indicate just what is the question that was put to the lawyers of Justice in soliciting that opinion. Was, for example, the St-Laurent letter and the effect of that letter referred to the Department of Justice for an opinion?

I would like to ask the Minister of Justice: In light of the fact that her department has been involved in the preparation of the agreement to close the Newfoundland Railway, would she tell this House whether, in her opinion, Clause 8 of the Memorandum of Understanding provides any real assurance - this is the so-called reopener clause -

that this Province will see any further financial assistance from the Government of Canada?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Justice.

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, I can certainly assure all hon. members that this agreement is in the best interests of the people of our Province, and gives people in the future a kind of protection that was not built into the dastardly Upper Churchill contract that a previous government entered into back in the 1960s. This agreement allows for a review in seven or eight years time to evaluate the state of the transportation system of our Province relative to the Maritime provinces, and if deficiencies are identified at that time, then to remedy the situation so that the standard of transportation in Newfoundland and Labrador will be brought up to the level then prevailing in the Maritime provinces.

MR. BARRY:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the member for Mount Scio - Bell Island.

MR. BARRY:

Is the minister familiar with Term 29 of the Terms of Union of Newfoundland? Is the minister aware that in that Term 29 it was specifically provided that the commission that would be appointed to reopen or review the Terms of Union would recommend the form and scale of additional financial assistance? There is no such reference to any such recommendation for additional financial assistance in Clause 8

of the Memorandum of Understanding. I wonder if the minister could give us an opinion as to whether Clause 8 is as strong as Term 29? We know what happened as a result of Term 29.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Justice.

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, again I reiterate that this agreement provides quite adequately for the future transportation needs of our Province. In the circumstances it was the best deal that our Province could get. It recognizes the inevitability of the failure of the railway. This administration made every effort to persuade the Government of Canada and CN to rehabilitate the railway. I think the member was a member of this administration back in 1979 and 1980 when we put every effort into getting the kind of capital upgrading to our railway so that it could be marketed successfully. We were successful in persuading the federal government and CN to make some changes at that time. The Containerization Program was brought in, and for a short time it appeared that that was having successful results, but unfortunately it failed. Now, we had to face facts and we proceeded to negotiate with the federal government a very generous package assuring substantial improvements to road transportation and water transportation in every part of Newfoundland and Labrador. The agreement provides for a reopener in a few years time so that at that point a comparison can be made between this Province and the Maritimes and, if necessary then, to arrange further funding from the federal government.

A point that keeps getting lost in the debate is that the package of funding negotiated is incremental to, is on top of ongoing regular federal funding through transfer payments and EPF and ERDA agreements. So over the next fifteen years we are looking at close to \$2 billion worth of road improvements in our Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. BARRY:  
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
A final supplementary.

MR. BARRY:  
I ask the minister whether in obtaining legal opinions from members of her department she asked them to direct their opinion to the question that they were asked. If so, I would like to ask the minister whether she would direct her response to the question asked, which is, is Clause 8 of the Memorandum of Understanding with respect to the closure of the Newfoundland Railway as strong as, not as strong as, or the same as Term 29 of the Terms of Union?

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

MR. SPEAKER:  
Order, please!

A point of order, the hon. the President of the Council.

MR. SIMMS:  
I want to bring to Your Honour's attention - I do not know if Your Honour has overlooked it - that in Beauséjour, Paragraph 3 -

MR. SIMMONS:

She needs to be bailed out. Go ahead.

MR. SIMMS:  
I was not thinking of that. I was thinking of bailing out the hon. the member for Mount Scio.

MR. SIMMS:  
Paragraph 360, page 133, clearly says, a question which asks or seeks "a solution of a legal question, such as the interpretation of a statute", or anything along those lines, is out of order.

MR. BARRY:  
Do not be so silly.

MR. SIMMS:  
Do not be so silly? Beauséjour is the one that is silly. If you want to tell the Speaker Beauséjour is silly, that is fine, you can say so. But the fact of the matter is it is a question that is out of order. Either we follow the rules, Mr. Speaker, or we do not follow the rules.

DR. COLLINS:  
They do not understand the rules.

MR. SIMMS:  
It does not matter to me. But the hon. member should be aware of them, and so should the House and so should the public.

MR. BARRY:  
To the point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
To the point of order, the hon. the member for Mount Scio - Bell Island.

MR. BARRY:  
If I were looking for a legal opinion there would be others I would go to on this point. I am asking the minister for her

opinion, as I have said, as to whether as a minister she believes that Clause 8 of that Memorandum is more in Newfoundland's favour than Term 29, less in Newfoundland's favour, or is it the same?

MR. SIMMS:

He did not speak to the point of order, Mr. Speaker, he merely repeated his question. He ignored totally the reference in Beauchesne. That is a question that is out of order. Your Honour, I am sure, has now had a chance to look at it and will be prepared to rule on it.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, it does not appear to the Chair that it is a legal opinion. As far as I can understand, the hon. member is asking for a comparison of one particular thing against the other.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Justice.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. BARRY:

Is the minister going to answer the question?

MS VERGE:

It is out of order. The Speaker said it is out of order.

MR. BARRY:

The Speaker did not say it is out of order. The minister, I think, is confused again.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member asked a question and the hon. minister does not have to reply.

MR. BARRY:

She does not have to, but it is in order.

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of order.

MR. BARRY:

The minister has stated she does not want to respond because she thinks Your Honour has said the question is out of order.

I wonder if Your Honour would clarify that Your Honour has ruled that the question is in order. The minister can then answer or not answer, as she sees fit. The minister is now operating under an error of fact.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, to the point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

To the point of order, the hon. the President of the Council.

MR. SIMMS:

There is simply no point of order.

Your Honour quite rightly pointed out that the parliamentary references say ministers may answer questions, may not answer questions, and they do not have to say why or why not. So the hon. member is simply trying to play a bit of politics with it.

Why does he not sit down and give somebody who can ask a sensible question, a question which falls within the rules and guidelines, an opportunity to ask one.

MR. BARRY:

Thank you for your advice.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!



There is no point of order.

The hon. the Minister of Justice.

MS VERGE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I quite agree with the points made by the Government House Leader. Before he stood, I was quite prepared to get up and answer the question from the member opposite. Obviously, it is seeking a legal opinion.

What I want to say in response is the Opposition are missing the boat entirely. The Opposition are splitting legal hairs when what is relevant to the future of the people of our Province is how best can and should their transportation needs be met. That has been provided for in this agreement.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development (Mr. Power).

Mr. Speaker, the minister knows that he came into this House today to make a statement announcing three initiatives to try and deflect the discontent, the dissatisfaction, and the utter devastation demonstrated by the agricultural industry of this Province in reaction to and in response to the agreement just yesterday announced, Mr. Speaker.

I refer to the Canada - Newfoundland Agri-Food Agreement.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. member is making a speech.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, I refer to the \$8 million five-year Canada - Newfoundland Agri-Food Development Agreement. Now, is the minister aware that his own colleague, our federal Cabinet Minister (Mr. Crosbie), today acknowledged the fact that he thought this was too little?

Now, if the minister believes that it is too little, will he not get together with his federal counterpart and renegotiate a new agreement for the farmers of this Province?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. POWER:

Mr. Speaker, I am quite aware of the comments made by our federal counterpart. I am quite aware of the approach of this government to agriculture in the Province. As I said in the statement, we had some farmers this year in trouble because of the drought problem. We have made available to those farmers \$750,000 in interest free loans. We have a \$4.8 million agreement with the federal government for a livestock feed initiative. We have an \$8 million agreement to obviously assist farmers to improve their farms they now have and to expand their operations and to get persons into

the farming business.

We are also working with our Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs (Mr. Dawe) and the federal Minister responsible for Newfoundland, to make sure that we can access a ACOA funding as well. We are hoping to be able to get that there. If that then happens, we will certainly have plenty of money to access or to be able to give to farmers to do the kinds of things they want to improve farming in this Province.

MR. LUSH:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, is the minister not aware that the agricultural industry in this Province has been working for this agreement for four long, lean, frustrating years? Four years, Mr. Speaker! Will the minister not acknowledge that if he were willing to have committed more money to this program the federal government would have committed more money accordingly and according to the formula used?

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. POWER:

Mr. Speaker, I am quite aware. It has actually been five years that we have been negotiating this agreement for agriculture. I am also quite positive to be able to say, on behalf of this government, that if the federal government had been willing to put more money into a cost-shared arrangement,

then this government would certainly have come up with our share of that funding. Our funding has been available for several years.

While there was not an agricultural agreement in this Province, this government, out of the meager resources that we have, did do the kind of things that were needed in the agricultural industry. We did make sure that farmers did have opportunities to expand and money, \$3 million, made available to them through our Farm Development Loan Board. If we had been able to negotiate a larger agreement, then obviously we, as a provincial government, certainly had our share of that money available.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to reiterate that with the three or four initiatives that we have in agriculture in this Province, and if we are able to access ACOA funding for farmers, as in other areas of our resource development, then we will have a very good farm community five years from now in Newfoundland.

MR. LUSH:

A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, would the minister not agree, would the minister not acknowledge to the farmers of this Province, that if he and his government had shown the same commitment to the agricultural industry of this Province as they did to the Sprung project, that they would have gotten more for the farmers of this Province in this agreement?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. POWER:

Mr. Speaker, no, I am not willing to acknowledge some of the misguided concepts of the member opposite. We in this Province are trying to broaden the economic base, which everyone says we are supposed to do. We have found over the years that when members opposite criticize us for our unemployment rate, our traditional industries, the fisheries, forestry, agriculture and tourism, were not able to employ all of the people in this Province.

When we take a bold initiative, something that relates to research and development, a new industry in this Province, all we get is criticism from members opposite. They do not want us to try Sprung. They do not want us to try some of the things we are doing at the University, which is now showing that there will be economic and business benefits from some of the research and development at the university. When we try something different they criticize us. When we put money into agriculture, like we did yesterday, they criticize us. When we sign a transportation agreement for \$800 million, they criticize us. God help the people in Newfoundland, Mr. Speaker, if those persons ever get over here!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. LONG:

Mr. Speaker,

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for St. John's East.

MR. LONG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to put a question to the Premier, in the absence of the Minister for Intergovernmental Affairs. It is a question concerning the government's policy with respect to land claims, and in particular the present process that has been underway for some months since the publication of the government's own policy in December.

Would the Premier give an indication as to whether the Province is reviewing its stated policy, issued some months ago, in light of difficulties that federal officials have admitted have been brought to the fore because of the Province's negotiating position?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. LONG:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the member for St. John's East.

MR. LONG:

I appreciate the frankness of the Premier's response.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

I am always honest.

MR. LONG:

Are we to take that to mean that the Province will continue to put in the way of a tripartite negotiating process immovable

obstacles that will allow the federal government, which has a primary responsibility in this country for negotiating land claim settlements, to move towards resolution of an outstanding claim that has been underway for the last five years with the Labrador Inuit Association?

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:  
No, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. SPEAKER:  
A final supplementary, the hon. the member for St. John's East.

MR. LONG:  
I would ask the Premier if what the Premier is saying today is that the Province will maintain a commitment to the principle in its policy that denies Native groups in this Province access to sub-surface resources or water management rights in the negotiating process?

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:  
Our policy has been enunciated and the hon. member understands part of it pretty well.

MR. EFFORD:  
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the member for Port de Grave.

MR. EFFORD:  
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the

Minister of Social Services (Mr. Tobin), I have a question and I will refer my question to the Minister of Justice. It is concerning the Boys' Home and the layoffs that took place in the Boys' Home last year.

I would ask the Minister of Justice: Is she aware, because of the layoffs of security at the Boys' Home in Pleasantville, that recently we have had a total of five people escape from the Boys' Home, three of whom have not been captured? There is a problem with security at the Boys' Home, and the small staff at the home is very concerned, because they cannot even counsel them properly during the daytime.

MR. SPEAKER:  
Order, please!

The hon. the Minister of Justice.

MS VERGE:  
Mr. Speaker, the Boys' Home at Whitbourne is the responsibility of the Department of Social Services. The whole area of youth corrections falls within the Department of Social Services of our provincial government.

I will take the question as notice, and discuss it with my colleague, the Minister for Social Services. I am sure he will get back to the hon. member with a response, with the information.

MR. EFFORD:  
A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. EFFORD:  
Mr. Speaker, I ask is the Minister of Justice aware that a judge in

Provincial Court is quite concerned about escapes from the Boys' Home, because of layoffs and the lack of security there is a major problem down there, and he is not willing to sentence boys to the Home, since they are sent down there for closed security, but everything is all open and they can come and go when they feel like it?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Justice.

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, I will refer the Hansard transcript of the member's remarks to my colleague. I am sure, as he responds conscientiously to everything, he will take into account the member's comments and expressions of concern about the operation of the Boys' Home at Whitbourne.

MR. EFFORD:

A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. EFFORD:

It is not the Boys' Home at Whitbourne, it is the Boys' Home at Pleasantville.

I ask is the Minister of Justice aware of the lack of security at the Torbay Center, which is shared by boys and girls, and is she aware that there is an investigation ongoing because one of the girls, after being released from the Boys' Home, was found to be pregnant? So there is an investigation ongoing to see if she became pregnant while serving her sentence at the Home.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Justice.

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, the member knows full well - I told him so in answer to the first question - that the whole area of youth corrections falls within the responsibility of the Department of Social Services.

I just want to add, though, that I think it is very irresponsible for the Opposition critic for Social Services to refer to individual people with problems in his questions in the House of Assembly. If he genuinely has concerns about particular people, the responsible thing to do is to take them up with the Social Workers who are part of the staff of the Department of Social Services, or indeed the minister, not to air them for the whole public in the House of Assembly. This is the place for questions about policy and funding, not about particular problems of the people.

MR. GULLAGE:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Waterford - Kenmount.

MR. GULLAGE:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Transportation.

The minister knows that there has been a problem down through the years with uninsured drivers being involved in accidents, their victims only recourse to compensation being judgement recovery.

Will the minister take a position now with the automobile insurers to make it mandatory for insurance companies to advise his department when a person cancels his car insurance or is moving insurance

from one insurer to another, thereby ensuring that insurance is mandatory for public liability and cannot be cancelled, only transferred from one insurance company to the other?

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

MR. DOYLE:  
Mr. Speaker, I will take that question as notice and get back to the hon. member with some information on it. I do not have all the information immediately available to me, but I would point out to him that the bill that we currently have before the House for the operation of motor vehicles takes into account some concerns on judgement recovery and sets it out in legislation right here. The specific parts of the bill I can point out to the hon. member this afternoon, but the rest of his question I will have to take as notice and get that additional information for him.

MR. GULLAGE:  
A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
A supplementary, the hon. the member for Waterford - Kenmount.

MR. GULLAGE:  
Will the minister also initiate a high schedule of fines for operating a vehicle without the minimum prescribed amount of public liability, thereby insuring that a person cannot cancel or transfer coverage without the minimum amount?

MR. MORGAN:  
Would that help your insurance business?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Transportation.

MR. DOYLE:  
Mr. Speaker, as far as I am aware right now the present schedule of fines that we have laid out in legislation is adequate. The hon. gentleman, in his opinion, says the schedule of fines are not adequate to address the problem. Well, as far as I am aware right now, the schedule of fines that is laid out in legislation is quite adequate to address the problems that he brings up.

However, Mr. Speaker, again I will take that as notice and provide the information when I can.

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

MR. SPEAKER:  
A final supplementary, the hon. the member for Waterford - Kenmount.

MR. GULLAGE:  
Incidentally, Mr. Speaker, there were some comments over there from the backbenchers about my involvement. I had absolutely no connection at all with vehicle insurance. Absolutely none!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. GULLAGE:  
Will the minister have Motor Vehicle Registration insist that drivers applying for vehicle or driver licenses

MR. SPEAKER:  
Order, please!

Would the hon. member please pose his question?

MR. GULLAGE:

That is what I am doing.

Will the minister have Motor Vehicle Registration insist that drivers applying each year for either driver or vehicle licenses be required to show an actual policy document showing that they have public liability for both licenses and not just mention the insurance company's name and policy number on the driver application or vehicle application form?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Transportation.

MR. DOYLE:

Again, Mr. Speaker, I would refer the hon. member to the legislation that we presently have before the House for the operation of motor vehicles. He will find in that legislation there is an obligation upon the individual who is applying for a license to have proof of insurance as stated. I think there is something about that in the bill, as it relates to applying for a driver's license and for judgement recovery as well.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The time for Oral Questions has elapsed.

MR. WARREN:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of order, the hon. the Minister of Northern Development.

MR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker, roughly twenty-five minutes ago the hon. the member for Port de Grave (Mr. Efford) asked me if I could find out something pertaining to the Boys'

Home. I told the hon. gentleman I would do my best to find out the answer to questions he asked me concerning the problems at the Home in Pleasantville. Subsequently I did, Mr. Speaker, find out -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

That is not a point of order.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker, my point of order is, Mr. Speaker, that he has -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

That is not a point of order.

MR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker, I will change it to a point of privilege.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, it is not a point of order.

MR. WARREN:

I will change it to a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Hear it first.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman never gave anybody a chance to find out the kind of thing that he wanted to find out. Secondly, the biggest, most important thing that that hon. gentleman did was practically destroy the credibility of an individual in the Province. That is the danger

in what this gentleman did today, Mr. Speaker, and it is a point of privilege.

MR. SPEAKER:  
Order, please!

I cannot see how the hon. member's privileges are affected by that. There is no prima facie case.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

### Private Member's Day

MR. SPEAKER:  
Today is Private Member's Day, I will call on the hon. member for Stephenville.

The hon. the member for Stephenville.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

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

It is a pleasure to rise today to discuss the Private Member's Motion I have put forward on the Order Paper. The resolution, Mr. Speaker, -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:  
Order, please!

MR. K. AYLWARD:  
The resolution concerns unemployment in the Province. It concerns employment programs in the Province. It concerns I think, Mr. Speaker, everybody in the Province, and there is a great number of people

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:  
Order, please!

MR. MORGAN:  
That is not stupid.

MR. K. AYLWARD:  
Anyway, Mr. Speaker, the resolution, which I believe is very important and which a lot of people out there in the Province would like to hear some discussion on, concerns employment policies and the unemployment problem we have in this Province, which we all know is a grave problem. It is a problem which has been around for quite a lengthy period of time, but more so and increasingly so in the last number of years, since this administration has taken office.

In putting forward the resolution, Mr. Speaker, it gives this House a chance to focus on that problem, the unemployment problem in this Province, and it gives us a chance to debate and put forward ideas and to also look at the record, Mr. Speaker, to make this government accountable for what has been done in this Province. That needs to be done so if they are going in the wrong direction, they will know where to go in the future.

Mr. Speaker, it is alarming to look at the state of this Province when it comes to its people and what is happening all over. In the last three years, Mr. Speaker, the population of this Province has declined steadily. That is a significant fact which nobody can dispute. It is something that is astonishing when we hear the provincial government advertising the great number of jobs they have



created. They advertise this in the newspapers, Mr. Speaker. I do not mind them announcing projects and I do not mind them announcing the different initiatives for they are welcome most of the time, Mr. Speaker, if they are good. They are welcome.

But when you go out and you advertise and you say every thing is hunky-dory and there is not really a problem out there, and the unemployment rate out there that is put forward by Stats Canada is really not the unemployment rate, as the hon. Minister of Finance (Mr. Windsor) said just a few weeks ago, when he said it is really not that high, really it is only half of what is stated in the Stats Canada figures, when you hear this kind of stuff you kind of say to yourself, is the message in government out there? Do they really realize what the problems are out there? Or is it just, Mr. Speaker, 'We will put the best face on it for now. We are not to sure what we are going to do about it, but we will put the best face on it for now.'

If that is the case, then it is unfortunate, because we have some serious problems which have to be dealt with, and they are in a variety of sectors, where these problems are, in trying to improve the resource sectors we have to develop our economy. Initiatives have to be taken, Mr. Speaker.

My reason for putting this resolution forward is to get a discussion going in this House on the issue. I will be putting forward at the end of the debate, next week I hope, some of the initiatives we would like to see started.

But one of the first things that you must do is to get a picture of what it is out there. What is the situation in this Province when it comes to people being employed and unemployed, Mr. Speaker? What is the real situation?

That is something they have tried to cover it up, Mr. Speaker. I think people realize a few press releases from the hon. Premier's office saying he is pleased the unemployment rate this month went up or down, maybe a thousand, or down a half a decimal point or something, I do not think that people really accept that things are getting, or should be going where they should be, and that we are on an improving trend, a trend that will see our people not have to leave this Province, like they do and like they are doing now, Mr. Speaker, more than they ever did. So there are some major problems there which have be addressed.

I will read the resolution into the record, Mr. Speaker:

WHEREAS the unemployment problem in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador has become progressively worse; and

WHEREAS the population of rural Newfoundland and Labrador has been declining, and also economic activity has declined, and

WHEREAS Newfoundland and Labrador has by far the worse record for private sector job creation among the ten Provinces, and

WHEREAS the labour relations climate in Newfoundland has become progressively worse, thus keeping investors from setting up new enterprises, and

WHEREAS during this Administration's years since 1979 the number of recipients of unemployment insurance has grown by more than half;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this House condemn the present administration's employment record and request that new initiatives be started immediately to re-start economic activity all over the Province."

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
hear, hear!

MR. K. AYLWARD:

I think, Mr. Speaker, that fairly well sums up the way I feel about it, and I think the way a lot of people feel about it in this Province.

They can come out and put out these little press releases from the Office of the Premier, but I do not think it is convincing people. The real facts show, since 1979, what is happening. It is astonishing!

You go to show people exactly what the trend has been and this is from the budget books put out by this government and they look at it and say, "You know, I never thought -

MR. HODDER:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of order, the hon. the member for Port au Port.

MR. HODDER:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to have some guidance from you, Your Honour. The resolution says: "Whereas the unemployment problem in the Province of Newfoundland has become

progressively worse".

Mr. Speaker, normally statements made on a Private Member's motion, and I would ask you, Your Honour, for a ruling on this, but normally statements made are correct.

Mr. Speaker, Statistics Canada since last year has shown that the unemployment rate in Newfoundland has dropped 1.4 percent from 1986 to 1987. Now, Mr. Speaker, that is a true statistic, and it was the largest absolute decline in the unemployment rate by any Province. Mr. Speaker, I am just wondering if Your Honour could rule on that because the member is starting his speech on a false premise.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

I accept the hon. member's resolution.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The phrase says, 'WHEREAS the unemployment problem in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador has become progressively worse.'

Let me tell you what that means.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

The unemployment rate has dropped (inaudible).

MR. K. AYLWARD:

The unemployment might have dropped one or two percentage points, but the problem of getting a job in this Province has become progressively worse!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Not, only that, the population has been declining, hon Premier, so this thing here is very true as far as I am concerned and as far as a lot of other people are concerned. The rate goes down for one year out of nine while you have been Premier and you are over there bragging about it. Well, I have to tell you that is not the way it is out there.

It is a problem to get a job out there, a very big problem to get a job out there and that is why the resolution is on there and that is why the words are put that way. You interpret them your way and I will interpret them mine but, I think, they are going to believe us more than they are going to believe you, by the way.

I think it is time that the message got out there in this Province that something has to be done about it. These minuscule little releases from the hon. Premier's office and his deputy governor up there saying that everything is okay and the unemployment is getting a lot easier and things are getting better, they can all come home now, things are getting better, there is no problem, they can come home whenever they want.

I can tell you that it is not that way out there. It is time the message was brought home, and a debate is held in this House on that matter. You can dispute those facts but if you want to dispute the facts, then I would ask the hon. Premier to go back to 1979, in his budget books -

MR. FUREY:

Give him his own quarterly report.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

It is in the Department of Labour's quarterly report.

MR. SIMMONS:

1988.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

A government report for 1988. "The Unemployment rate for the Province in March was 21.9 per cent which is an increase of 2.3 points over the January figure of 19.6."

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. K. AYLWARD:

"The number of unemployed males in the Province increased from 22,000 in January to 28,000 in March, causing the male unemployment rate to increase by 3.5 percentage points, from 17.9 in January to 21.4 in March."

Now, this is their own report, Mr. Speaker, the Department of Labour, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, and I would hazard to guess we are not going to see another one in the next few years -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. K. AYLWARD:

- as a matter of fact, because it speaks the truth, with the government's money, not the PC's money, the government's money, the taxpayers of Newfoundland and Labrador! It is unfortunate.

You can question what the wording says but the problem is still there, so you can deal with that. As he once said, it was a deception at that time because I had to do that when it comes to the railway. Well, this is not a deception anymore, Mr. Speaker, and the message is getting home.

You can throw around the figures, but when your own government report tells you what it is, then I do not think you have an argument. You can get up and tell us that for the last year or so that it might have went down by two points, or it might have went down by one, and that type of thing, but I would ask that when he gets up to speak, and I hope he speaks on the resolution, I hope he goes back to 1979 and looks at the record of employment for this Province in the last seven or eight years. That will be a shocking statistic to show people in this Province, because the trend goes up, and up, and up.

We never heard of 20 per cent unemployment until the hon. Premier and his administration came into office.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. K. AYLWARD:

So when it goes down to 19 per cent, they are as happy as a lark! It is not a problem at all! We never heard of that until 1979 and it kept moving up.

The youth unemployment rate in this Province is atrocious! When that goes down by a percentage point they do the same thing, Mr. Speaker. The unemployment rate for March month dropped from 35 per cent to 33.5 per cent. We are very happy it is going down. The next month it goes up by 3 per cent and you do not see any press release. We do not see a press release saying, 'We are concerned that the rate went up.'

Well, that is pure deception, Mr. Speaker, but it is not deception to the young people in the Province who have to leave and who

have to leave now more than they ever did in the history of the Province. That is something that is a legacy of this government.

They can get up and they can talk about the stats all they want and say, 'We are doing really well in the last year and a half,' and two years ago in the budget they were going cap-in-hand to Ottawa looking for money to get bailed out because we did not know if we were going to go bankrupt within the next couple of years. So we are really coming a long way, Mr. Speaker.

MR. FUREY:

Tell us about the youth trends.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

The youth trends are a shocking fact, Mr. Speaker, and these are Stats Canada figures. I tell you, we can have the leverage of saying it is off by two or three. In 1987, Newfoundland, 29.4 per cent; Nova Scotia, our next door neighbor, 19.8 per cent; New Brunswick, 20 per cent; Quebec, 14.9 per cent; and right on down the line, to goes to 12 per cent, 15 per cent. There is nobody within ten points of us in Canada when it comes to the youth unemployment rate, not a province, not even the ones next to us in Atlantic Canada! In 1979 the unemployment rate for youth was 25 per cent.

MR. FUREY:

It went up 4 per cent.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

It went up 4 per cent, but it has reached levels in the last couple of years of 35 and 40 per cent. Not only that, Mr. Speaker, we have had a population decline in rural Newfoundland by over 5,000 in the last four or five years.

Recent stats show the population has declined in rural Newfoundland. So, where are the people going, and where is the economic prosperity of the great policy initiatives of this government?

We are not the government. They bring forward an initiative and we try to deal with it as best we can and make sure that the concerns of the people out there are addressed. We are Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition. That is our role. That is our job. We have to do that.

I will pat them on the back when they bring in good programs. Mr. Speaker, there is a youth entrepreneur program that was brought in by this government which, by the way, we helped because we had some debate on in the last three years. It was something that was debated in this House and it was finally brought in last year. I was one member, as many here, Mr. Speaker, who welcomed that type of approach, who welcomed that program. But the only problem is there is not enough of that program, there is not enough money in that program, and it is far less than needed to deal with that problem out there right now.

So, there was a pat on the back for that, and they got the pat on the back, but there is also a major problem out there that requires major action. It is time this government look major action on these initiatives, instead of practicing a deception. You cannot deceive the people anymore, Mr. Speaker. They can believe for so many years. You know, 'We will give them a chance and we will give them a chance and we will give them a chance,' but how many

chances do you get?

If I was the hon. Premier or his government, or if I was in government, after four or five years I would want to look at my record when I was ready to leave and I would want people to say, 'When that fellow, or whoever it was, was in government, the unemployment rate in the Province, the amount of people getting employed and the population of the Province, was doing well. People were getting employed and the economy was doing okay and we made that contribution. We left with a good legacy.'

Mr. Speaker, when you look at the figures since 1979 with this administration, we are seeing figures we thought we would never see. I think that has to be brought home.

While we welcome the unemployment rate drop in the last year or two years, they say it dropped by one and then by another one, and then it has been fluctuating back up again and down, while we welcome that, Mr. Speaker, we are at such a high level you have to wonder if this is exactly what they are shooting for, if that is exactly the way they want it.

You have to wonder if the drive is still there, Mr. Speaker, to deal with the these problems out there. And they are major. It is time that this government became serious about it and attempted to deal with the problems out there.

MR. FUREY:

Have not could be no more.

MR. K. AYIWARD:

Yes, have not could be no more. There comes a time when people have to say and I think a lot of

people out there are now thinking. They are thinking very hard and they are saying, you know, what have we really accomplished? We have some agreements here and there. We have a few things.

But we have seen the economy just become unravelled in this Province to the point, like I said, Mr. Speaker, where just two years ago we were cap-in-hand to Ottawa saying, 'Rail us out, give us a break, we deserve special consideration.' And we do deserve this special consideration. That is fine. But, from what you read and what you see, it is like everything is hunky-dory and we are off and running and things are wonderful.

Well, things are not wonderful, Mr. Speaker, and the recent agreement signed on the railway, I have to tell you, is not going to be the way to future economic prosperity. I just want to touch on that for one minute. I want to read something here and I will read two things and they both sound the same.

"Transportation priority of the agreement of Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is a re-surfacing and a reconstruction of our highways. The Province submitted a comprehensive proposal for joint funding of several highway projects to the federal government in February 1984. While we had hoped to sign a highway's agreement as part of the FRDA Agreement, we were not successful. This proposal covers three systems, the Trans-Canada Highway, the Trans-Labrador Highway, and the network of secondary highways.'

Mr. Speaker, this document is a

discussion paper on major bilateral issues between Canada and Newfoundland put forward by the hon. the Premier of the Province, Mr. Brian Peckford, in September, 1984.

Four years ago a bilateral issue in this Province was to get three agreements to deal with the highways of the Province. That was in 1984. This was an initiative that this government was carrying out. Now, this is an agreement for our highways they were searching for from the Mulroney Government in September of 1984.

I want to read to you the document that was signed in the last couple of days. 'The fifteen year package includes \$405 million for improvements to the Trans-Canada Highway, another \$235 million for regional trunk roads, \$75 million for labour adjustment; \$15 million for community adjustment; \$8.1 million the ports; and \$62.5 million to enrich the existing ERDA agreement.'

So the three things they are looking for in 1984 without giving up the railway, the three things they were looking for are right here in this document in 1984 and are the same three things they have announced. They are so happy! This is our deal! The railway is going to be shut down within three months and we have finally gotten what we were looking for four years ago.

We were not then saying then you can have our railway. We were not saying that then. We were not giving up our constitutional right to have the transportation in this Province maintained.

This is for public consumption, "A

Discussion Paper on Major Bilateral Issues, Canada and Newfoundland." Anybody who wants to have a copy can have a copy of it. I would ask them to read it because when you read it, the two things are so similar, it shocks you.

MR. SPEAKER (Greening):  
Order, please!

The hon. member's time is up.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
By leave! By leave!

MR. K. AYLWARD:  
Mr. Speaker, I had so much more to say. Anyway, in conclusion, I will have some constructive suggests next week to make to this government on some initiatives which should be taken to deal with the unemployment problem in this Province.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am pleased to have the privilege to respond and discuss this very important resolution put forward by the hon. the member for Stephenville. I would like to say at the outset that he has been factually incorrect on a number of statements he has made this afternoon, and I think he has sort of acknowledged that. 'In one way,' he says, 'the unemployment rate has gone up,' and then he says at the end, 'Well, you should not be excited about it going down

somewhat.' It cannot be both ways, it is either up or it is down.

In beginning this debate this afternoon for this side, I am very pleased to say that the proper trend has been established in the Province over the last couple of years, particularly within the last twelve months or so, and that we do see a downward trend which is very, very important.

The hon. gentleman starts off his resolution by saying, "WHEREAS the unemployment problem in Newfoundland and Labrador has become progressively worse." That is factually incorrect. Employment in the Province has increased by 2.8 per cent, again some 10,000 jobs on a monthly average basis. In 1987, as was alluded to by the member for Port au Port when he rose on a point of order, the unemployment rate dropped by 1.4 per cent, the largest absolute drop by any province in the country.

Now, in starting out, Mr. Speaker, let me say that no one is saying, particularly this minister has not said and will not say, that the unemployment rate in this Province is not one for concern, because it certainly is and we are very cognizant of that. But we do see some very positive trends, and we are going to continue with our initiatives which we feel very strongly have been a factor in the trend that we have seen over the last twelve or eighteen months.

The other thing, of course, is that in the labour force data for May of 1988, which is the last statistics we have available to us, our unemployment rate is down by 2.9 per cent from May of 1987. So in twelve months, when you

compare May of 1988 to May of 1987, the decline is 2.9 per cent which, I think in anyone's opinion, whether in Newfoundland and Labrador or anywhere else in this country, is certainly significant.

The other thing I would like to say to the hon. the member for Stephenville is if the unemployment rate goes up by 1 or 2 per cent that certainly matters, and if it drops by 1 or 2 per cent, that matters as well. The unemployment rate is a matter of great concern when it goes upwards. But it is not to be overlooked when it declines. I would think all hon. members in this House are desirous of having the unemployment rate in this Province decline, and I would like to say to him that it really matters as well when it drops.

The second clause of his resolution says: "WHEREAS the population of rural Newfoundland and Labrador has been declining, and also economic activity has declined." The biggest reason, of course, for the population trend in the Province has been the change in birth rate in the Province. I will certainly admit that there have been numbers of people leaving the Province for various reasons, and, of course, there have been people coming into the Province as well. But as long as I can remember that has been the case, and people living on the very street where I was born and raised left to go to Toronto or elsewhere for whatever reasons, one of them being to find employment. That was back when I was born, or at least when I was old enough to remember, somewhere around the 1950s. That has been a trend in this Province which no administration, either former or

present, has been particularly proud of and boasts about. It is something we prefer not to have happen, but, again, we have to face the realities and the facts of life, that it does happen.

The biggest change, or the biggest factor in population in this Province is because of the change in our birth rate through birth control and other things.

As well, he goes on to say that economic activity has declined. There are some very important economic indicators which I think the hon. gentleman is probably aware of, even though he may not admit it. In 1986, the real domestic product increased by some 2.6 per cent and employment increased by 2.8 per cent. As I indicated earlier, in 1987 the unemployment rate dropped by 1.4 per cent, the largest drop by any Province in the country, personal income was up by 7.4 per cent, retail trade was up by 11.3 per cent, which, of course, was a very big factor in the reduction in the deficit the hon. Minister of Finance was able to announce earlier this year. That is certainly a significant indicator that our economy was on an upswing for 1987, and the preliminary outlook for 1988, for this fiscal year, the first quarter, is even more encouraging than last year. So the trend is continuing, and I am sure the Minister of Finance will be saying more about that before too much longer. Looking at other economic indicators, mineral exploration doubled from \$11.8 million in 1986 to \$26.3 million last year, creating some 10,000 jobs.

The hon. member for Stephenville mentioned the railway deal, which, of course, has been uppermost in



everyone's mind these last three or four days particularly. What you have to remember is that \$800 million for a deal on the railway, to go into improvements and upgrading of the road transportation system in this Province, is certainly a very positive economic indicator, and moreso when you look at the employees of TerraTransport who are being displaced. It is too bad that it is happening, but I think what is positive, if there is any positive side to the employee disruption end of it, is that the income of these employees will be pretty well protected so that the communities where they reside will have this income of the employees, which will be very positive for the tax base of the communities and the economy of the communities. In addition to that, there will be some 800 jobs per year created in the Province as a result of the additional road improvements throughout the Province. So I think those are the things you have to combine: The income of the employees is being protected, and, as well, there will be an additional 800 jobs created. While emotionally most of us, I think, feel somewhat for the loss of the railway, because of its history and the emotion attached to it, it is a very positive economic indicator for the Province, which I think will show benefits over the next ten or fifteen years, without question.

In his clause 3 the hon. gentleman says, "Whereas Newfoundland and Labrador has by far the worst record for private sector job creation." I think the hon. gentleman, again, is very much aware that last year, through our private sector employment program, where we injected \$5 million from

the provincial government combined with \$5 million from the private sector, for \$10 million, we created some 2000 jobs in the private sector which was very, very encouraging. This year we increased our amount of money to the private sector employment program to \$7.5 million, an increase of \$2 million, and so far this year, to date, there have been 2323 jobs created with the private sector, and we are hoping that we will realize our goal of 3000 jobs before this program expires.

Again, you might say that is not very significant, but I think it is a very significant indicator. I think that program has been widely accepted by the private sector. Some 1800 applications have been received to date and we funded somewhere in the order of 1300, creating, again, 2323 jobs.

I do not think anyone can slough that off as being insignificant, and say that we are not having an impact on private sector job creation in the Province. As well, this year, we have a new graduate program and an occupational integration program for women, where, again, we are getting involved with the private sector on a fifty-fifty basis. Hopefully, that program will be kicking in very shortly to employ another few hundred people in the Province.

The hon. gentleman in clause 4 says, "WHEREAS the labour relations climate in Newfoundland has become progressively worse thus keeping investors from setting up new enterprises in the Province." Well, if you track what has happened with work stoppages in the Province, if you go back to the years 1981 and 1982

and track it up through, you will find that last year the number of work stoppages was down substantially from the years 1985 and 1986 even, and this year the total number of days lost is quite low as compared to other years.

It is one thing to have a Clause in a resolution which says that the situation is getting worse, but when you do a review and an analysis of what has really happened with work stoppages in the Province, you see there has been an actual decrease over the last number of years, particularly in the year 1987.

In clause 5 the hon. gentleman says: "AND WHEREAS during this Administration's years since 1979 the number of recipients of unemployment insurance has grown by more than half." Well, now, there is no question that the number of recipients has grown, but it has certainly not been close to 'by more than by half'. Of course, an indication of what is happening here is that there is a strong but seasonal economy. Of course, we look at the major industries of our Province, the fishery, the forestry and so on, which are very seasonal industries. They have been strong seasonal industries and economies, where we have seen more people employed on a seasonal basis. We all know what happens once the fishery closes down for the season: People are then laid off and consequently go on UIIC. It is unfortunate that these are not full-time jobs. But, of course, that is the seasonality of the industry, and that is why we see an increase in this particular area.

Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to respond to the hon. gentleman's

resolution and demonstrate some inadequacies and inefficiencies in it, and, as well, outline to hon. members that in a number of cases he was factually incorrect. As I said in the beginning, it is very, very important that we have seen a downward trend in the unemployment rate in this Province. There are more Newfoundlanders and Labradorians working today in the Province than ever before. Right now about 179,000 Newfoundlanders are employed, I think. That is the highest it has ever been. And, yes, as I admitted when I began, we are concerned about our unemployment rate. We have taken some very important initiatives in employment opportunities in the Province by working very closely with the private sector. As well, of course, there are combinations which, in this Province of Newfoundland, you have to look at for what it is, what it has been, and where we want to go. A lot of times, with trying to attract industry to this Province, the only real way to pull it off is for there to be some kind of a joint funding arrangement between the private sector, or the particular industry and the provincial government of the day.

Without that, Mr. Speaker, a lot of times you would not attract enterprise and industry to the Province, and that is the reason for it. You have to look at the kind of economy, the Province we have, and the makeup of it, before you become too critical of that kind of situation.

Mr. Speaker, as one member of government, as Minister of Career Development and Advanced Studies, I am very encouraged, actually, by the trending we have seen in the Province over the last twelve or eighteen months with regard to the

unemployment rate.

I would just like to conclude by saying that we are very committed to continuing that trend. I will be very interested in seeing the next Statistics Canada Report on Unemployment and Employment trends in the country, and in particular in this Province, because, Mr. Speaker, I am very, very convinced that when the next report comes out, there is going to be a very, very significant decline in the unemployment rate in Newfoundland and Labrador. Thank you very much.

MR. SPFAKER:

The hon. the member for St. Barbe.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. FUREY:

Mr. Speaker, I am glad to join this debate on this very important resolution with respect to the unemployment rate throughout the Province.

I listened carefully to the Minister of Career Development's (Mr. Matthews) remarks with respect to this problem. I think the unemployment problem comes right under this minister's department and it is his direct responsibility to deal with what is now, no doubt about it, a crisis throughout this Province.

Mr. Speaker, in 1986, **Maclean's** magazine at that time had on its cover our Premier, and not too many of us were very proud at that time. The cover of **Maclean's** magazine at that time said 'A Province In Despair,' and it was a very full and thorough article mostly dealing with the labour problems in 1986, but also talking about the economy throughout the Province and what has been

happening for that year and for 1985 and 1986.

I suggest that if **Maclean's** did another story, Mr. Speaker, and put the Premier on the cover they could add the word 'Still' and it would be very appropriate, 'A province still in despair.'

The minister is leaving, but I want him to know this: He blamed a lot of the problems on the population decreases. Is that what he said, I ask my hon. colleague for Stephenville (Mr. K. Aylward), he said there was a decrease in the population in births.

He should know that from Statistics Canada's own figures there were 13,000 more births over deaths in 1985, 1986, 1987 and the first quarter of 1988. He will also know, if he looks at the statistics, there was a decrease in the population of 4,200 over those same three years, 1985, 1986, 1987 and a 1,400 decrease in the population for the first quarter of 1988.

So, if you add all those figures together, the birth rates, the decrease in population for those two periods, 1985, 1986, 1987 and the first quarter of 1988, you will see that 18,700 people were driven out of this Province because of the performance of the economy - 18,700 people, Mr. Speaker.

What does that mean in the last three years?

AN HON. MEMBER:

That is the bottom line.

MR. FUREY:

That is the bottom line that we can find.

That means that 6,000 Newfoundlanders and Labradorians every year for the last three years were driven away from home. They had to pick up and pack up and leave this Province forever. I say forever, Mr. Speaker, because it seems like this government has been in forever for the last seventeen or eighteen years. The economy has been in a negative tailspin, Mr. Speaker.

They have been puffing up on hope, they have been puffing up on promise, but all the puffery is going to be busted when they have the courage, Mr. Speaker, to go to the Lieutenant-Governor and seek a writ for a new mandate.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. FUREY:

Mr. Speaker, what else did we see? We know that 18,600 Newfoundlanders and Labradorians were driven away by economic circumstances. We know that to be fact. But what happened, Mr. Speaker, to those who stayed?

If you track the poverty line, Mr. Speaker, between just two Maritime Provinces, let us say New Brunswick and Newfoundland, if you track the poverty line in 1981, the percentage of families living below the poverty line in 1981 in New Brunswick was 17.6 per cent of the families. In Newfoundland 17.6 percent were living below the poverty line in 1981, compared to 17.4 per cent of the families in Newfoundland living below the poverty line in 1981. So let us track it for those seven years.

From 1981 to 1988, New Brunswick dropped from 17.6 per cent to 14.4 per cent of the families in that province living below the poverty

line. So, there was a significant decrease in the numbers of families living below the poverty line in the Province of New Brunswick.

Now, what happened in those same intervening years, 1981 to 1988, to the families of Newfoundland? They went from 17.4 per cent, Mr. Speaker. Did it go down? Did that statistic go down to show the economy was performing properly? No, Mr. Speaker.

It rose to 21.2 per cent, a significant increase under the time period this particular administration was handling and governing the economy. You wonder what happened to the 18,600 who left in search of work. But let us think about those families that stayed here and tried to tough it out, that percentage of the families who tried to thought it out, Mr. Speaker, from 1981 to 1988. The percentage went from 17.4 per cent living below the poverty line, and increased to 21.2 per cent who are now currently living below the poverty line, as outlined by the member for Port de Grave (Mr. Efford), the Minister of Social Services (Mr. Tobin), who got up like a pre-recorded message and said, 'Our budget has increased 176 per cent since we got into power,' as though that were something to be proud of, as though you should be proud about increasing the social services budget!

You should be ashamed that people are driven, Mr. Speaker, to that last recourse, to that last refuge, to that last resort. You should be ashamed the economy is performing so badly that people have to scurry to social services.

Now, that is a very telling

statistic, Mr. Speaker. In New Brunswick the percentage of families living below the poverty line decreased in seven years; in Newfoundland the percentage of families increased by 4 per cent.

The hon. member for Port au Port (Mr. Hodder) knows what I am talking about. He will recall when I ran his campaign in 1982, and a good campaign manager I was. How many times did we discuss it driving through those different communities of Felix Cove and St. George's? His heart was breaking then for all those families underneath the poverty line when he was a Liberal. But what were his answers as a Tory?

'I got a bit of pavement. Everything is wonderful.' The economy is performing brilliantly since that economist went across that way. He has turned the economy around singlehandedly. Mr. Speaker, he knows that he should be ashamed of it. He knows. They are all ashamed of it.

They are as ashamed of the economic performance they have inflicted upon this Province as each of them secretly is ashamed of the Sprung fiasco. That is the truth of the matter.

MR. DECKER:

And the railway deal.

MR. FUREY:

And the railway sellout, that rape of our Terms of Union.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. minister stood up and challenged my colleague from Stephenville's statistics with respect to the unemployment, as did the member for Port au Port with his little

flight of fantasy, using numbers that he probably cooked up.

But let us look at his own government document. Here is what the Department of Labour says in the first quarter of 1988, the hon. Minister of Labour's own report. Here is what it says. I hope the hon. member for Port au Port is listening carefully.

MR. HODDER:

I am listening very carefully.

MR. FUREY:

The unemployment rate for the Province in March was 21.9 per cent, which is an increase of 2.3 per cent over the January figure of 19.6 per cent. The number of unemployed males in this Province increased from 22,000 in January to 28,000 in March, causing the male unemployment rate to increase by 3.5 percentage points, from 17.9 to 21.4 per cent, from January to March.

Now, how can you say that the economy is performing well?

MR. MATTHEWS:

What about the female rate?

MR. FUREY:

What about the females? The hon. former Minister of Social Services wanted them all to stay home. What about them?

Mr. Speaker, the hon. minister just spoke. He had a chance to say something about the female population. He did not open his mouth about it. Is he that ashamed of those numbers too?

Maybe the hon. member advertently avoided the real stinking, shocking reality of youth unemployment. I did not hear him open his mouth about that. I did

not hear him blabber about that, Mr. Speaker. From 1979, when the Peckford administration came to power, where was the youth unemployment? Where did Mr. Moores, in the previous seven years, take us? He took us to 25 per cent. Now, that was shameful enough, Mr. Speaker. That was shameful enough that a former Conservative Premier would allow the economy to become so twisted, so torn up, so ravaged and savaged and raped, that young people would be looking around in that economy, where 25 per cent of their peers were also looking around, for a job. What happened? Mr. Speaker, we went from 1979 to the new era. "Step Forward with the Peckford Administration," or some words like that. "Have not will be no more." Was it Evita Peron he stole that from when she marshalled the poor and the peasants of Argentina and said, "Come, my friends, have not will be no more. Some day the sun will shine." Anyway, he took that Evita Peron thing and twisted it into his own little phrase that all was going to be well in Newfoundland and Labrador, that have not was going to be no more.

Do you know something, Mr. Speaker? A lot of young people, including this person at that time, believed him. We were so desperate coming out of the seven years of Torydom under Premier Moores we were bleeding for hope. We were not crying! We were bleeding for hope, Mr. Speaker, and where did that hope lead us? It led us into a tangled garden, Mr. Speaker, of deceit and contradiction.

"Have not will be no more!"  
Twenty-five per cent youth unemployment in 1979. Statistics Canada, not mine - traced us

through the last nine years of the Peckford administration to the edge of 1987 where it jumped to 29.4 per cent. As the hon. member for Stephenville so rightly pointed out, we actually went through three or four months where the unemployment rate for young people, between the ages of fifteen and twenty-four, actually reached official, unbelievable heights of 35 per cent.

MR. DECKER:

That is official. The real number is higher than that.

MR. FUREY:

Mr. Speaker, if Dr. House and his \$3 million commission taught us anything, it taught us this: We can at least factor in 10 per cent on any official numbers for those who have given up hope, for those who have abandoned all hope of trying to seek a dignified job and a full-time job in this Province. So just factor that in, 10 per cent onto the official 35 per cent of youth unemployment, and nearly half our young people were screaming for jobs, Mr. Speaker, some time during 1987.

Let us take it forward to 1988 and the complete unemployment picture. Mr. Speaker, in January of this year the adjusted figures were 17.4 per cent. Then we went through February, March, and April and May. Where did we arrive? At 17.2 per cent. Now, that is performance, Mr. Speaker. That is kick-starting the economy, is it not? Oh, boy! The hon. Minister of Health's leg - he must have worn spats, Mr. Speaker, because otherwise his leg would have been worn out kick-starting the economy!

What a joke! What complete and unadulterated hoax and joke the

former Minister of Finance perpetrated on the people of this Province! No wonder he was demoted to Health! Mr. Speaker, no wonder he was flung out of Finance after eight years of those kinds of projections. His last budget, Mr. Speaker, had him going on the knees with cap-in-hand begging for bail out for his current account deficit of \$170 million. You should be ashamed!

Mr. Speaker, let me tell you something. Let us track the hon. Minister of Finance's fiscal record. Let us walk him through what he created.

MR. TULK:  
What record?

MR. FUREY:  
His unemployment rate, Mr. Speaker, he brought us to a 1987 average, Mr. Speaker, the entire year averaged out that 18.6 per cent of the population were badly, desperately, bleeding and hurting for work. Now, how does that compare to the Maritimes? Twelve point nine per cent, Mr. Speaker, look at the gulf. It is as wide as between North Sydney and Port aux Basques. That is how wide it is, the economic factors, with this minister as the Minister of Finance.

What was it in Canada when Newfoundland was hovering at 19 per cent under this Finance Minister, this Minister of Health, under his stewardship of the finances of this Province: Canada was at 8.9 per cent. You talk about a gulf of difference! Something was going right in Canada, but something was going desperately wrong in Newfoundland.

Mr. Speaker, what about in youth unemployment? Let us take the

same year, the year the Minister of Health laid down the mantle of the Minister of Finance. What happened to youth unemployment? He has to answer, Mr. Speaker, for the youngsters between the ages of fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, and the young adults nineteen and twenty, twenty-one and twenty-two, twenty-three and twenty-four. Can the former Minister of Finance tell us why he gave us, why he gave the young people of this Province a staggering 29.4 per cent of unemployment for young people? Can the former Minister of Finance tell us why the Canadian Youth Unemployment was 13 per cent, yet under his stewardship, his guidance, his economic direction as the Minister of Finance, why was it 13 per cent in Canada and 30 per cent in Newfoundland and add 10 per cent for Dr. House's, people who have given up, who have abandoned all hope?

So you had 30 per cent under the former Minister of Finance unemployment amongst young people, add 10 per cent for Dr. House's figures for those who have given up, who were desperate, etc. He has to answer for that, Mr. Speaker. It was his stewardship, Mr. Speaker, -

DR. COLLINS:  
(Inaudible).

MR. FUREY:  
I am glad he is provoking me today because it was his stewardship that drove 18,700 people out of this Province. It was that former Finance Minister, Mr. Speaker, who drove 6,000 people out every single year from 1985, 1986, 1987. It was that Minister of Finance, Mr. Speaker, every morning when he woke up to shave, every single day that he shaved

and looked in the mirror, fifteen more left the Province. He would wake up with his alarm clock, he would jump out of bed and shave and say, 'Fifteen more gone. Too bad, what! That should look good next month on the statistics. That will show we are conquering unemployment.' Now, that is the mugs game they play, Mr. Speaker, and they should be ashamed of it.

What else did we see, Mr. Speaker, under the stewardship of this former Finance Minister? The old kick starter, remember that. All members will recall he was going to kick start the economy. He wore out the left and right leg trying to kick start it. UI recipients, Mr. Speaker, as a percentage of the 1987 labour force in Newfoundland, 28.9 per cent of Newfoundlanders received unemployment insurance, versus 7.8 per cent of the Canadian average.

MR. TULK:  
How much?

MR. FUREY:  
Let me say that again: The UI recipients in this Province under that Finance Minister's stewardship as a percentage of the 1987 labour force was 28.9 per cent, versus the Canadian average of 7.8 per cent.

Now I do not see the minister jumping in his place to show how proud he was of that. And the retail sales tax, Mr. Speaker, it climbed under that minister, climbed to that deathly height of 12 per cent which is a deterrent to the consumer and which has opened up black markets, Mr. Speaker. That is what he has done.

Newfoundland pays 12 per cent, the closest neighbour to us, New Brunswick pays 11 per cent, even

in a Province where the economy is functioning rather well, and there is Nova Scotia with 10 per cent and the Canadian average 7.9 per cent. Even little PEI only had a sales tax average of 10 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, all of these key economic indicators are going to come home to roost. This government is going to be exposed, Mr. Speaker, like its leader. It will be very much like that fairy tale **The Emperor's New Clothes**. Somebody is going to stop him somewhere along the campaign line and say, 'Sorry, Premier you ain't wearing any clothes.' Somewhere along the way, Mr. Speaker, they are going to expose this government's financial record, take it naked to the people and show the actual truth rather than the gobbledygook and all of the nonsense and garbage that they get on with.

They gave us the highest of everything bad, Mr. Speaker, and the lowest of everything good. That message is getting out there right across the land and that is why I say, Mr. Speaker, that **Maclean's** magazine in 1986 said, 'It was a province in despair'.

They could easily take a photograph of our current Premier and go right ahead and put it down with the same title except they would say, 'A Province still in despair.'

Mr. Speaker, what is the record of this government? I suppose they have not been all half bad. They actually take credit for creating permanent full-time jobs to decrease the statistics and come out with great statements like this one from the new Minister of Social Services. On June 17, he



said, "To date this fiscal year, the Department of Social Services, through the Employment Opportunities Division has created 5,000 jobs as a result of \$17 million of provincial funding."

He knows and I know and everybody in this House knows and the Province knows, the mugs game going on there. It is a lateral transfer of financial responsibility, Mr. Speaker. It is taking them off your financial rolls, the social services rolls, and directly placing them on the federal financial rolls so as not to bankrupt the provincial Treasury. It is a ten-week syndrome, Mr. Speaker. Everybody knows it.

They stand here and take pride in that. They are proud to have shifted financial responsibility because they are incompetent themselves from their own treasury over to a federal treasury.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
(Inaudible).

MR. FUREY:  
That is right. The ten-forty-two formula, I am glad the Minister of Housing is owning up to it. So he is not so proud about it. He knows it was that side of the House that was attacking a former federal Liberal administration for its make work project. What has changed, Mr. Speaker? The Tories came to power in Ottawa, they inflicted prosperity? No. They inflicted more make work projects on the Province, the very thing this administration complained and harped on during its entire life from 1979-1988.

MR. SPEAKER:  
Order, please!

The hon. member's time is up.

MR. FUREY:

By conclusion, Mr. Speaker, let me say this: The young people of this Province are literally being starved and driven away. I have yet to visit my district and get in my car and drive up through Deer Lake, up the the Northern Peninsula, Mr. Speaker, I have yet to visit my district where I have not picked up a young person hitch-hiking either on the way back or on the way to Toronto.

Now that is the shame of it, Mr. Speaker! They were either on their back because they were driven away --

MR. MITCHELL:

They got their 10 stamps, did they?

MR. FUREY:

That is right! That is right. They did get their ten stamps. This government drove them to downtown Toronto to survive. If the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Mitchell) wants to laugh and think it is funny, he ought to look in LaPoile sometime, in his own district, to see how many young people have been driven away in that district.

Mr. Speaker, by conclusion the hon. member for LaPoile should also look at what a dastardly criminal act has happened to the people of LaPoile and to the people of this Province under the railway agreement.

Reopener Clause, no, Mr. Speaker, the fog clause, Clause 8. Everybody should berate 8 because all they gave us, Mr. Speaker, in Clause 8 is, 'Come back to the table, fools, in eight years time and we will tell you what fools you were eight years previous!'

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Housing.

MR. PEACH:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I just want to make a few brief comments on the resolution put forth by the member for Stephenville. I am not sure that the motion as it is is really worthy of comment, because there is very little in that motion, Mr. Speaker, that is even close to being correct. My colleague, the member for Port au Port, stood up earlier and questioned the motion itself. Usually, in this House, it does not matter where a resolution comes from, Mr. Speaker, we find it has some facts and, being politicians, we take our own stand on it. In this particular case, pretty well the entire resolution is completely false. You can always take facts and figures and numbers and have a great bit of fun with them.

I remember, when I was teaching school, it was always great as a math teacher to have a bit of fun with numbers on slow days. That is really what a couple of members opposite have done; they have taken some facts - what they call facts - some numbers and figures, played around with them, and used them to their own political advantage.

The fact, Mr. Speaker, as stated there, that the unemployment problem in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador has become progressively worse, is totally wrong. The unemployment problem in this Province has not become worse. The unemployment rate, Mr. Speaker, has gone down, and that is a fact of life.

As well, the member for Stephenville indicated that economic activity has declined. That, Mr. Speaker, is not correct. Economic activity in this Province, especially in Conception Bay where I reside, and the member for Port de Grave as well, has increased and increased rapidly. One only needs to go into Happy Valley - Goose Bay and one can find out very quickly what we mean by economic activity. There are a lot of people from Conception and Trinity Bays, Mr. Speaker, working in Happy Valley - Goose Bay right now.

As well, Mr. Speaker, he says, 'Newfoundland and Labrador has by far the worst record for private sector job creation among the ten Canadian provinces.' That should not be allowed to be written, or to be read here in this Legislature. Most provinces in Canada are copying, if you will, our private sector program.

At the end it says, "RE IT RESOLVED that we request new initiatives be started immediately to re-start economic activity..." Well, that is a little outdated. I do not know why we even have it on the Order Paper of June 22, 1988, because there have been a lot of new initiatives taken by this government, particularly by the Department of Career Development and Advanced Studies as it relates to the private sector program.

Mr. Speaker, members have already spoken on using numbers and statistics. I guess we can all take statistics and do what we want with them, and read them the way we want the general public to hear them. If everything in this resolution was correct, Mr. Speaker, members opposite,

including the Leader of the Opposition, would have a much broader smile on their faces than they have today. When things are looking down, that is when the Leader of the Opposition begins to smile, because he figures he can crawl out from under the rocks and probably become a political hero.

It is very unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, that we have people stand in this Legislature and make comments publicly which are completely false, are not correct, and do it for their own political gain. There is such a thing in this Province, Mr. Speaker, as the bright side to life. I am sure the member for Port de Grave must get up in the morning and say, 'I hope the sun does not shine today,' because every day he comes into this Legislature, it is doom and gloom. The people in his district are getting sick and tired of hearing the garbage he puts out here, and the garbage he puts out over the airwaves.

If I had to give him some advice to get re-elected, or win his nomination - I should not be doing this - it would be if he went out and told the facts as they are, I would say honestly to the member that he would have a very good chance of winning his nomination.

MR. EFFORD:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. the member for Port de Grave.

MR. EFFORD:

The member for Carbonear is misleading the House, Mr. Speaker, with that statement he just made, 'If he had to give me some advice

to win my nomination.' My nomination is over, it is won. I am the candidate in the next election.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, it was just a matter of clarification.

The hon. the Minister of Housing.

MR. PFACH:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I remember now that a few weeks ago the member for Port de Grave was quite worried one afternoon and left the Legislature rather early to go home to the Port de Grave district, because he was seeking nomination. I do not think we heard any great advertisements on the airwaves or in the papers that they were having a nomination meeting out there, he was quite scared somebody might run against him.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, to get back to the resolution. The unemployment rate in this Province has decreased over the past two years. That is a fact. It is now the lowest it has been since we had the recessionary period prior to 1982. The unemployment rate, for example, in 1987 was 18.6 per cent, which was a drop of nearly 3 percentage points over the previous two years. From 1986 to 1987 the facts are that our unemployment rate dropped 1.4 per cent, the largest absolute decline of any province with the exception of New Brunswick. I remember, Mr. Speaker, I think it was two years ago, being in New Brunswick and, at that time, many of the people there were quite concerned about their unemployment rate; their unemployment rate was equal to, if not higher than, ours. Newfoundland is the only province

which has had its unemployment rate drop by more than 1 percentage point. Mr. Speaker, those are facts.

It is not what the Opposition wants to hear and to read, because it will not help them in any political victory, I am sure. Whenever we look at the unemployment rate, we have to consider what contributes to the drop in unemployment and what creates employment. There have been quite a number of economic indicators in this Province, quite a lot of things that have been done which have ensured that our unemployed have found employment.

Mr. Speaker, let us look at our tourist industry. It is probably one of the industries we quite often do not pay enough attention to. When our Minister of Development and Tourism (Mr. Barrett) is promoting this Province, whether it be within the Province, within the North American Continent, or within the European Continent, we quite often criticize him for going to those places and doing the promotion he has to do. Mr. Speaker, last year we had nearly 300,000 tourists come into this Province. They dropped, I guess, about \$110 million here, and that helped create some 10,000 jobs. We realize that in many cases those jobs are seasonal, but the fact of the matter is, we live in a Province, we live on a rock where we have to rely on seasonal employment. That is a fact of life. I would never want to go out to Conception Bay and tell the fishermen they had to fish during the month of January. It has been a fact of life for many generations that we live in a Province where a lot of employment is seasonal, and there is nothing

we can do about the unemployment rate among fishermen and fish plant workers in the winter in many parts of this Province. It happens to be a fact of life.

Mr. Speaker, this government, under our leader Premier Peckford, has taken on many projects in this Province to ensure that we have as much economic prosperity as possible. If I could just take a look at a few of those, Mr. Speaker, which quite often members opposite have condemned for political reasons. I will just pick out one, which is always a topic with a green thumb, the Sprung project. Mr. Speaker, over the past year, a lot of people from Conception Bay - from Carbonear, from Harbour Grace, from Spandiard's Bay and Bay Roberts - found employment on the construction of the Sprung Greenhouse.

MR. EFFORD:

That is misleading.

MR. PEACH:

That is not misleading, Mr. Speaker. It was only during the Waterford - Kenmount by-election that I walked into a restaurant in Waterford - Kenmount and there were four electricians sitting down at the table having their lunch who were very proud to be working on the Sprung Greenhouse.

There are many people from Conception Bay working out there today, Mr. Speaker. The member for Port de Grave drives over the road every morning, which is reasons enough for him to know why we want the highway twinned from here to Roaches Line. It is almost like driving down Yonge Street in Toronto, there are so many people driving in from Conception Bay to go to work, and

that has always been the case. The Sprung greenhouse, Mr. Speaker, has created employment.

Terra Nova Shoes in Harbour Grace: For our investment and the federal government's investment in Terra Nova Shoes, Mr. Speaker, there are many, many people from Victoria, Salmon Cove, Western Bay and Carbonear working with that company. As a matter of fact, I think more than half the work force of in excess of 100 working at Terra Nova Shoes, in Harbour Grace, come from the Carbonear district.

Hope Brook Gold Mine, Mr. Speaker, out on the West Coast: There are a couple of contractors in Carbonear who have small subcontracts at the Hope Brook Gold Mine. There are people from the Carbonear district working out there. As I mentioned a few minutes ago, I would not even want to list the dozens of people from the Carbonear district who are presently working in Goose Bay. The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, last year the military dumped some \$200 million into Goose Bay directly.

That is a lot of money, Mr. Speaker. The people in Labrador are quite proud of it. I met last week with the Mayor of Happy Valley - Goose Bay, who is not always very positive, but he was boasting that the military presence in Happy Valley - Goose Bay is a megaproject. It is just unreal, Mr. Speaker, the type of activity that is taking place down there.

Mr. Speaker, the member who just took his seat commented on the youth unemployment in this Province. Mr. Speaker, it was only about a month ago that I met

and chatted with the Federal Minister responsible for Youth, Jean Charest, at a function in the Carbonear district. He was surprised when he came into the Province to find that there were so many of our youth who were looking forward this Summer to finding, yes, Summer employment, because they want to return to some post-secondary institute in the Fall. Before this Summer is over, I think we will find, as a matter of fact, that the Youth Employment Centre at Clarenville might not even be able to fill all the positions they have there. It is somewhat of a concern.

MR. GILBERT:  
(Inaudible).

MR. PEACH:  
If the member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir was doing his homework, I am sure he would have put in for projects and his people in the private sector apply to the Department of Career Development and Advanced Studies.

Mr. Speaker, over the past month I have had several employers call me who had applied for programs and had them approved under our Private Sector Youth Program, under the Federal Challenge '88 Program. They actually picked up the phone and called me and said, 'Do you know of any students who are looking for a job?' And over the past week, Mr. Speaker, I have sent them seven or eight students; I phoned them to see if they were still interested in finding employment and I told them where to go to look for it. Three of them called me back on the weekend and said they had found a job and thanked me for giving them the information. I did not go out and take them by the hand, I just told them where to go.

Mr. Speaker, the Private Sector Program in this Province, I think, has had a great impact. Last year there was a great response from the people in the Carbonear district. In fact, I think Carbonear district was the third highest in the Province that took advantage of the Fifty-Fifty Private Sector Employment Program. I have to thank the former minister, who is sitting ahead of me, for his kind reception to having the applications that came in reviewed.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, it was only about a month and a half ago that our federal MP for Bonavista - Trinity - Conception, Captain Morrissey Johnson, phoned me; he had a concern that there were not enough programs applied for this year for the youth in the Carbonear district. I got on the phone that afternoon and called ten or fifteen businesses and told them that they should get their applications in, and I do not think, Mr. Speaker, one application in that lot was not approved. It is great that the federal government have taken the initiative to show that the private sector are the ones who should be and can be and are willing to create jobs in this Province.

Just to refer for a minute, Mr. Speaker, to what the member for Port de Grave quite often gets on to, the Department of Social Services and the Employment Opportunities Program. Mr. Speaker, that program was initiated some four or five years ago as a method of getting some of our people who are receiving social assistance back into meaningful work. I think it has a twofold purpose: It enables those people to get some of their pride

back, to become employed people who are bringing in a cheque other than a social services cheque. I do not think anyone could disagree with that.

Apart from that, Mr. Speaker, I am sure the member for Port de Grave would agree that quite often those particular projects have done some very worthwhile things in communities. I think there are many church organizations, many town councils, many recreation commissions which would not have been able to get certain things done had it not been for the employment opportunities program. Mr. Speaker, the one thing about it that has sort of amazed me is that out in the Carbonear district, and the same applies to the Social Services office in Harbour Grace, we have had a lot of difficulty this year in beginning the employment opportunities programs from the Department of Social Services because the caseload at the Department of Social Services office in Harbour Grace has declined and there are basically very, very few people to go to work.

I think it was about a month ago that the Department of Social Services approved a program for the town council of Victoria to do some work on their new war memorial park; they wanted to have it done and it was a great way to get some labour which would not cost the committee and the town any money to get the work done. They were hoping to have it done for the wreath laying ceremony, July 1, but up to a few days ago the project had not started. The fact of the matter is, there were no people unemployed, no people registered as full-time social services recipients who could

qualify to work on those projects. Mr. Speaker, I think it is great that we have that problem. In my district, we have only one housing project started under the Department of Social Services to date; we do not have the people to work on the projects; the people have, Mr. Speaker, found employment, and that is a fact. As a matter of fact, since that program has been in force a lot of people, once they got out and found meaningful employment - granted they went on UIC and they received UIC benefits which were rightfully due them - they took the initiative to find meaningful work in the private sector, and I think they should be commended for that.

The member for Twillingate is looking over and making some notes. It would be great if we had 100 percent of that, but I think, Mr. Speaker, the fact is that if only 5 percent of those people found it practical and found some way of finding employment in the private sector - they took it upon themselves, they took the initiative to go and do it - that in itself would speak well for the program.

Mr. Speaker, reference was made to the ten week syndrome. I am sure none of us are proud of that. Many construction people in my area, particularly over the past four years, found it difficult. The construction industry was down, and they did not take pride in trying to get out to get their ten stamps. Of course, in many cases they did not have much choice.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member's time is up.

MR. PEACH:

I was just notified, Mr. Speaker, that I had two minutes. I will clue up anyway.

I think many of our private sector programs have created fifty-two weeks employment. There are many in my district who have done it, and I can show the hon. member, I can table it for him. Without mentioning names in the legislature, I think last year there were four businesses which created fifty-two weeks employment for people, and they applied again this year to create another fifty-two weeks work, in addition to the those they employed last year.

That is job creation, Mr. Speaker, and I commend the Minister of Career Development and Advanced Studies for putting in excess of \$7 million into the private sector program, \$1 million into a program to get our students into the workforce, and the initiative he has taken to get some of the female population back into the workforce.

Mr. Speaker, we are moving ahead with rapid strides to overcome the unemployment problem which the Liberal Party likes to see in this Province. Mr. Speaker, it is not the way they are trying to put it out to the people, it is a matter of perception. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Bonavista North.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I just want to deal with some of

the points made by the hon. member who just took his place, and I hope he stays to listen instead of running away.

Now, Mr. Speaker, first of all he mentioned that it was not a good resolution because it contained a lot of inaccuracies. Having said that, he did not point out one inaccuracy. He talked about how one can play with figures and manipulate statistics. Mr. Speaker, it is strange how so many people indicate how you can manipulate figures and play with numbers and play with statistics. Hon. members opposite always use that when the figures are pointed in the wrong direction; they believe them when they show some improvement in the situation. Now the hon. member just defeated his own argument. He talked about how we use statistics incorrectly, that it is not always the right statistics, they do not reflect accurately what the unemployment situation is, but he was so good to latch on a little improvement in the last couple of years.

Now these are the same statistics, Mr. Speaker, that have been making the unemployment figure so bleak in this Province for the last five years. Now the hon. member cannot have his cake and eat it too.

Will the hon. member tell me how you can twist and play with the figures of 50,000 unemployed in this Province and show that they are employed? Is there some way you can play with figures and show that the 50,000 people who are consistently and continually unemployed in this Province are somehow employed? No way, Mr. Speaker! You cannot play with those statistics. The statistics are real, Mr. Speaker, as indicated by the House Commission,

that at any one point in time in this Province we have one quarter to one third of our labour force unemployed.

MR. PEACH:

And you love it! You love it!

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, you cannot play with that, you cannot manipulate that.

MR. PEACH:

And you love it.

MR. LUSH:

No, Mr. Speaker, I do not love it, but I can tell you that if I were on the other side I would do something about it. I would not stand on my feet and try to defend it, I would do something about it.

MR. PEACH:

Like what?

MR. TOBIN:

What would you do? Tell us.

MR. LUSH:

Yes, give me time and I will tell hon. members what I will do, or what we would do.

We will tell them, Mr. Speaker, soon enough. So, Mr. Speaker, enough of that nonsense and that stupidity of playing with figures, playing with numbers.

Mr. Speaker, he mentioned also that we were making rapid strides - rapid strides, mind you! - in dealing with the unemployment rate in this Province. He mentioned something about the fact that the unemployment rate had diminished by 1.3 per cent in 1986. In 1987 it went down another 1.4 per cent. Now, Mr. Speaker, that is rapid strides alright! In two years it went down and diminished by 2.7 per cent. I will tell hon.



members how it was diminished in a moment. I will tell hon. members about that.

Then he went on to say, "The greatest decrease in unemployment in all of Canada, except one province." Mr. Speaker, when you are that high, we should have had the greatest decrease, not excluding any province. So, Mr. Speaker, what nonsense, taking pride in the fact that we had the greatest decrease in unemployment levels when we have the largest unemployment levels in Canada, and we should be having the greatest decrease for the next ten years every year, Mr. Speaker. Let us not stand on our feet and make people believe that were some great thing, 1.3 per cent improvement in 1986, 1.4 per cent increase in 1987.

Mr. Speaker, will they tell us — this is the key point — by how much it will decrease in 1988? When the next member stands, will they tell us by how much the unemployment levels in this Province will decrease in 1988 and in 1989 and in 1990? That will tell us if they know how to attack the problem of unemployment in this Province, Mr. Speaker. That will tell us whether they have an employment strategy. No, Mr. Speaker! I challenge them now to tell us by how many percentage points the unemployment rate will be reduced over the next three or four years. That will tell us if this government have a systematic plan to attack the unemployment problem in this Province.

Mr. Speaker, I remind the hon. gentleman, for two years we have had a slight decrease in the levels of unemployment in this Province. There is a saying which says, 'One swallow does not a

Summer make.' I would suggest, not even two swallows, Mr. Speaker, does a Summer make. So, Mr. Speaker, we are going to have to have a lot more decreases yet before I am convinced hon. members opposite have finally grappled successful with the unemployment problems of this Province.

Mr. Speaker, one other point I would like to address. The hon. member was talking about the availability of jobs. He talked about the young people who got jobs. Well, I certainly hope, Mr. Speaker, that that abundance of jobs will reflect itself in the unemployment and employment statistics of 1988. If he is accurate they will surely be reflected, because you cannot play with the statistics.

If people are working, it will be manifested in the labour force statistics, in the Canada Stat statistics in this year for 1988. Now, he mentioned they could not get anybody to work on a Social Services project in his area and proudly talked about how that was an indicator of high levels of employment.

Let me tell you why he cannot get them, Mr. Speaker, to work on that project. First of all, in order to qualify to work on that project they must be recipients of social services. They must be social services recipients. Why are they not social service recipients? Because they were given a ten week job a year ago, working on starvation and slave wages, Mr. Speaker. They were given a job a year ago on social services projects and now they are on UIC for forty weeks, on UIC, the lowest UIC you could get, collecting that, Mr. Speaker, living practically at a substance

level], and now they cannot take that job. They would like to take that job, but they do not qualify because now they are receiving another form of government assistance. They are now receiving another form of social assistance, they are now receiving UI. Now, Mr. Speaker, that is the deception in what the hon. member for Carbonear (Mr. Peach) was talking about, not being able to get people to work on the social services projects.

I have them in my own area, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I welcome the social service projects. You have to. It is the only thing that is on the go! It is the only thing that I can get employment for the people in Gambo. I have to try and get them and I beg for them because it is the only thing that is on the go. But this is the way that we are trying to camouflage.

MR. TULK:

But it does not do much for your pride.

MR. LUSH:

Exactly. This is the way that they are trying to camouflage and disguise the high rate of unemployment in this Province, Mr. Speaker, we take them off social services and put them on the federal government social services through UI. That is what we do.

So, Mr. Speaker, that process and that process alone is why we have been able to marginally decrease the levels of unemployment in this Province over the last two years.

But if hon. have an employment program that systematically is going to reduce the levels of unemployment in this Province over the next four or five years, let

them tell us all about it. Let them tell us by how much the unemployment rate will be reduced in 1988. We know that it decreased in 1986 by 1.3 percentage points. We know that it decreased in 1987 by 1.7, but, Mr. Speaker, with that decrease that hon. gentlemen are so proud of, when indeed they should hang their heads in shame, that decrease, what is it now? What was it last year? What was the average unemployment because that is the only figure worth looking at. These mercurial develops from month to month are not the things which indicate what is happening to the unemployment. You have to take it on a yearly average. 1987 is the last figure and the only figure worth talking about. I will tell hon. gentlemen I could be using March of 1988, if I really wanted to, where the unemployment rate went up. But I will not use that one, not right now.

In 1987 the average unemployment that hon. gentlemen are so proud to talk about, that they are rapidly reducing, that they are aggressively pursuing and rapidly reducing, the unemployment

MR. FUREY:

Come back and take it like a man!

MR. LUSH:

... rate to which the member for Carbonear (Mr. Peach) refers and they are rapidly attacking and making great progress, was 18.6 per cent, Mr. Speaker. Now, is that not something to be proud of! The unemployment rate for Newfoundland and Labrador in 1987 was 18.6 per cent.

Now, tell me, what people in any other Canadian province would go about prating, and prattling, and

boasting about an 18.6 per cent unemployment rate?

I appreciate the difficulty hon. gentlemen are in today, trying to get up and trying to defend the indefensible. Mr. Speaker, let them acknowledge, let them tell the people of Newfoundland the real truth, let them tell the people of Newfoundland that they have been a total disaster, that they have been a total failure!

I suppose there are several yardsticks or factors by which one could measure the success of a government, but obviously the major criteria by which one would measure the success of a government has to be employment. The chief criteria by which a government has to be appraised and evaluated in terms of meeting its responsibility to the people, certainly has to be in terms of work for its people.

Mr. Speaker, using that yardstick this government, and I do not know which others you can use, but using that yardstick, this government has been a total and abysmal failure, totally incompetent, Mr. Speaker, and it has gone on consistently.

I know that hon. members have done it before but I just want to bring hon. member's attention to what has happened with unemployment for the past seven years. I take seven years because 1980 was really about the time that the new administration got on their feet. They came in in 1979. That is the new administration. They wanted to sever themselves from the previous administration and I find that funny. They wanted to put a distance between them and the government of Premier Moores, but consistently, Mr. Speaker, they

tried to associate this party with another party of the 1960s. I find that so strange, that they try to distance themselves, slither away from, Mr. Speaker, an administration a lot of them served in. As a matter of fact, I think it was only here yesterday on the railway debate somebody quoted the Premier to indicate that he done a flip-flop, to indicate that he has changed his policy, somebody read the statement for 1980! They said for 1980 and then in the next breath they said, 'How about Churchill Falls? What did you fellows do to Churchill Falls?'

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH:  
Mr. Speaker, another indication of how they try to have their cake and eat it, too!

I felt like saying, 'How about the railway contract of 1888 which was the biggest giveaway in our history by a Tory government?' The railway contract of 1888 was the biggest giveaway in the history of this Province by a Tory government. In 1888 they gave the railway to one man and made him richer, bigger, and more powerful than the government!

Mr. Speaker, I do not want to go back to that. I was just pointing out the inconsistency of this government and it is in the same way they say the statistics lie. The statistics of 1980, now, I do not know if they lie, but I will tell you what the statistics of 1980 were when the new administration took over. The unemployment rate for that year of 1980 was 13.3 per cent. Is that a lying statistic or a valid statistic? That was in 1980 when

they got on their feet.

In 1981, ah, this was after Mr. Peckford was going to do great things, after he was going to create 40,500, a year later 13.3 per cent in 1980 and 1981 13.9, a gain of six tenths of a per cent.

In 1982, Mr. Speaker, ah, 1982, losing control, 16.8 percent; in 1983, 18.8 percent, escalating all the time; and in 1984, 20.5 percent. It was in that year, 1984, at the end of that year that said, 'We have lost the battle. We have lost control. There is nothing we can do about it. We have got no policies to grapple with the financial and economic problems of this Province. What can we do? What can we do?' They gave up the battle. "What can we do to try and give the people the impression at least we are trying to do something." Twenty point five percent, never had a record of unemployment like that in our modern history, Mr. Speaker! They doubled it from the time that they took over in 1972, at that point.

At the end of the year in 1984, the unemployment rate was 25 percent. What did they do in desperation, they decided to set up the Royal Commission on Employment and Unemployment, and at the end of that year when they had the, now they just gave up everything. They said, "We cannot do anything now, we cannot create any work because we want to await the recommendations of the Royal Commission." They took that year off and at the end of that year, Mr. Speaker, the unemployment rate had climbed to 21.3 percent during that year.

Are these the inaccurate statistics, or are these the accurate ones, Mr. Speaker? Are

these the one we are playing with? That is what it was in 1985 the year they set up the Royal Commission on Employment and Unemployment, 21.3 percent.

In 1986 she took a little dip of 1.3 percent and in 1987 took another little dip of 1.4 to now we are in the position with an unemployment rate of 18.6 percent. So, Mr. Speaker, that is where we are, with an unemployment rate of 18.6 percent.

As the Royal Commission so clearly stated consistently, Mr. Speaker, and this is the sad statistic, a sad statistic, it is a travesty that one quarter to one third of our labour force is out of work, unemployed, people who want to work to by the way. People who want to work, one quarter to one third of our labour force is out of work, unemployed at any one time. As I am speaking now, there are at least 50,000 Newfoundlanders out of work, 50,000 Newfoundlanders out of work.

Mr. Speaker, quite obviously the measure of any government is the degree to which it can find employment for its people. Using that measure, this government is a total and an abysmal failure. Demonstrating, Mr. Speaker, that this government's programs and policies have failed. They have failed to meet the employment needs of this Province. They failed, Mr. Speaker, in a disastrous manner. The levels of unemployment in this Province and hon. members should acknowledge it, because if they do not acknowledge it, if they do not recognize the problem first, they cannot solve it.

So, Mr. Speaker, they should acknowledge it and confess that

the rate of unemployment in this Province is a travesty. It is a disaster! It is a national disgrace!

MR. SPEAKER:  
Order, please!

The hon. member's time has elapsed.

MR. LUSH:  
Mr. Speaker, if I could just conclude on a positive note.

MR. SPEAKER:  
By-leave, the hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:  
Mr. Speaker, there will be a new day. There will be a new era. There is a group of people over here awaiting with ideas and initiatives and policies, Mr. Speaker, to change the unemployment figure in this Province completely, to turn it around completely.

It will not be long now.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

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

MR. HODDER:  
Mr. Speaker, having listened to speakers on the other side today, I have not heard one constructive criticism, or one constructive idea come from any of the them. Unemployment, as I well know, and as members in this House well know, is a problem we face in this Province. The hon. member who just sat down said there will come a day. But the people of this Province will not elect that side of the House. I would say there is nothing wrong in criticizing in

parliamentary government, but we have had three members stand up on that side today and use the same statistics over and over again, with not one constructive criticism concerning unemployment in this Province. Mr. Speaker, this is a common problem to all of us. It is something that has been a common problem to Newfoundland for more years than we can think of, and if members want to point a finger and say you on that side of the House are responsible, just put us in and we will do the job for you, then, Mr. Speaker, I think members on that side of the House had better do some thinking over the Summer. Of course, they will not last the Summer, they will be gone before Summer is over.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. HODDER:  
Mr. Speaker, the type of speeches that we have heard on this very important problem here today - it is a problem, and everyone on this side of the House realizes that it is a problem, no one more than I. I represent, I suppose, a district which has one of the highest unemployment rates in the Province. It does not have the highest unemployment rate in the Province, as I have heard some members opposite say, but it does have one of the highest unemployment rates.

MR. W. CARTER:  
Sixty per cent?

MR. HODDER:  
There were times in the past when I used that figure, 60 per cent, back in 1975. I would suggest to the hon. member that 60 per cent would be very, very high if he were to do an unemployment rate in the area at the present time. You

must remember, Mr. Speaker, that if you look at the community of Kippens and if you look at the community of Port au Port East, to start, you will find that there is a lot of employment in those communities. There are some small communities on the Port au Port Peninsula, some particular communities where unemployment is a very bad problem, and our youth unemployment is very bad as well.

Mr. Speaker, I do not want to spend the whole afternoon being political, but I will say, as I have said before, that if what we have seen here today is the sum total of what hon. gentlemen opposite would do about unemployment in the Province, then I would listen with interest. There are other provinces in Canada who are trying to do something about unemployment, and this side of the House, this government, has tried to do something about it as well. We do look at what is happening in other jurisdictions and we have looked at what is happening in places like Wales, and Cape Breton, and other areas, and this government can hold its head very high as to the measures it has taken to overcome unemployment. There are areas of all countries, whole large regions of countries; even with the economic prosperity that is happening in Britain at the present time there are areas of Britain as large as Newfoundland struggling with very, very high unemployment. It is a very difficult problem. We, in Newfoundland, have always had the problem.

Hon. members opposite know that regardless of the party in power in Canada, because I was here under a Liberal Government and I made representation to a Liberal

Government while I was a Liberal to try to get something done about the problems of Port au Port. And even if the NDP forms the Government of Canada, we will have problems because we are an area of the country that is sometimes on the tail end of economic policy for the country.

Look at Iceland. Last year Newfoundland was the largest producer of lump roe in the world. The Icelanders were second. But as a nation they can adjust their currency with the German market so that they can get their lump roe into the German market cheaper than we can. But Newfoundland, with a federal government, cannot expect, and I am not an antifederalist, the federal government to adjust all. And we have the same problems with the French off our shores, and we have the same problems with our cod stocks.

But, Mr. Speaker, there are more problems associated with it than just to be able to get up and say the unemployment statistic was this and the unemployment statistic was that. It is a problem, and when member opposite speak I would like to hear them address the problem and not just throw criticism across the floor. Mr. Speaker, it is true that the employment figures are up in this Province. I mean, the thing has been thrown back and forth. It is not worth talking about.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to talk about Port au Port for a while. I would like hon. members to stand here in their places when they speak again, especially the member who follows me, because the development strategies for areas like Bay d'Espoir or areas like Port au Port are strategies which

can be used and transversed from area to area. But, Mr. Speaker, I did hear one of the hon. members, I think it was the member for St. Barbe, sort of throw something back at me and say, well, the only way the hon. member knows how to solve the problem is through pavement.

Mr. Speaker, pavement for pavement sake, pavement because you are paving somebody's driveway, I would say that is political. But pavement to promote tourism, roads to promote tourism, that is quite a different thing. Mr. Speaker, I was to attend -

AN HON. MEMBER:  
What about roads -

MR. HODDER:  
If the member would let me speak. Tomorrow evening I was to attend a meeting of ministers in Nova Scotia - which has been cancelled - concerning development of tourism for the Acadian areas of the Atlantic Provinces, where strategies are being put in place to bring the Louisiana, the New England, the Quebec and the French market to the Acadian areas. And Port au Port, thanks to the efforts of this government, has been put high on the agenda of the Acadians.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if you say pavement for pavement sake, sure. But, Mr. Speaker, the recommendations of the Society of Acadians are that the road from Cape St. George to Mainland should be built. It makes economic sense. It is something that was brought forward in the Uebel Report, which was done on Bay St. George under a Federal Liberal Government. It was a federal study which recommended a heritage trail, and it recommended that as

being a key link as far as tourism is concerned.

MR. FUREY:  
Would the hon. member permit a question?

MR. HODDER:  
Sure.

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

MR. FUREY:  
Could the hon. member tell us if the tourism factor was so important in Port au Port, particularly for Les Terre-Neuviens Francais, why in 1980 to 1985 did that Minister of Transportation spend \$50 million in St. George's and only \$70,000 for the same time period in Port au Port?

MR. HODDER:  
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. HODDER:  
That is a typical political question. I am sorry I yielded the floor. I will tell the member the Francophone themselves, as the hon. member knows, Les Terre-Neuviens Francais in Cape St. George has been strong for quite some time, but la Heritage du la Rouge in Mainland was not and now we have the the French at L'Anse aux Canard. There is a new French school going there. In the past four or five years the French groups have come together. We have a very good person here in Newfoundland I work with very closely, Mr. Paul Charbonneau. That gentleman has been very, very for the Francophones in Newfoundland and it was only last

year or the year before last that a study was commissioned. I am off the topic, Mr. Speaker, but a study was commissioned by the Francophones of Newfoundland, in conjunction with the Acadian Society, and there are some very good things happening.

But, Mr. Speaker, sometimes infrastructure, sometimes paving, sometimes things like the proposed road across the Cape, which I hope some day and I ask my own side and point it out, will come to pass.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. HODDER:

Mr. Speaker, there are other things. I heard a member a few minutes ago talk about talking people off welfare and putting them on UIC. Mr. Speaker, that is the Opposition's conception of what is happening with social services around the Province.

I would like to tell them what is happening on the Port au Port Peninsula. I will tell them what happened to me just a couple of weeks ago. I attended a graduation of a group of people who are on social services who had been to the Bay St. George Community College for twenty weeks learning to work with heavy equipment, learning to be oilers and service station attendants, some of those people are working now a couple of months later for the first time in their lives at a responsible job other than that type of job. They did life skills, they did the safety courses, they did some literacy work and they had twenty weeks. They were social service recipients, but they had twenty weeks work.

There is another one which is going ahead at the present time, just announced the other day, being aimed at the Lower Cove mine. These people are doing a course, and this will be a twenty week course with social assistant recipients to be quarry workers. Mr. Speaker, the Bay St. George Community College, and I give them tribute, will develop a quarry on their own property and teach these people blasting methods. These are people are social assistants, Mr. Speaker, and the Opposition says take them off social services and put them on UIC. They will be training for twenty weeks.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if that is not a government trying to do what they can to cure unemployment, because I do not think any member, and I did not hear it yet from anybody, that any member in this House of Assembly would ever say anything about this statement, that education is the best method of curing unemployment. That sort of thing has happened.

I would also tell members opposite -

MR. FUREY:

(Inaudible) lives.

MR. HODDER:

Oh, the hon. gentleman laughs at that. Mr. Speaker, he has a fairly affluent district. I do not think he will ever have the chance to grapple with the problem.

MR. SIMMS:

Put that in your pipe and smoke it.

MR. HODDER:

Mr. Speaker, one of the problems we have found in the Port au Port area, and as the member alluded to, but when members allude to this, they always do it with scorn



on this side of the House. But one of the problems we have found is youth unemployment. We do have the highest youth unemployment in the Province.

MR. FUREY:  
In the country.

MR. HODDER:  
It could be in the country, but I will tell the hon. member he should look at the figures.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
(Inaudible).

MR. HODDER:  
No, I mean without shouting back and forth and making his comments. It is not enough to say you have the highest youth unemployment rate. The youth problem can be looked after in Port au Port. That is something that I truly believe.

If the hon. member would take the trouble sometime to look at the unemployment figures amongst the youth and look at the statistics of the youth across the Province, in Port au Port the youth population that is ages sixteen to, and there are reasons for that too that could be criticized, but it is a fact, between sixteen and twenty-two or twenty-three years old, are much lower than the rest of the Province.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that moves are being made. While the percentage of youth unemployment is high, the number of people altogether is better, if the hon member understands.

Now, Mr. Speaker, at the present time we are trying to do something about youth unemployment in Port au Port.

MR. FUREY:  
They have all left Port au Port for the mainland.

MR. HODDER:  
Some of them have gone away, others have gone into Stephenville, Stephenville has a very high youth component. Would the hon. member would let me finish my speech?

Mr. Speaker, at the present time trying to tackle the youth unemployment in the area, one of the things we have found is there are an awful lot of high school drop outs. As a matter of fact, the Port au Port R.C. School Board, which is the major school board in the area, found the drop out rate was somewhere between 60 percent to 70 percent from the time they left kindergarten.

Mr. Speaker, we have now implemented a program with the help of the federal government called a work orientation program, the first phase came into being last year. The project was very successful, as a matter of fact, just about 75 percent successful. This year the project has been funded again, and if hon. members would like to check the figures with the Port au Port Development Association, they will find it was very, very successful last year, and on the basis of that success in counselling during the Summer and during the Winter young people who had dropped out, 75 percent of those people counselled went back to school. Again this year, that program will be funded on a much, much larger scale, Mr. Speaker, and that is the sort of thing we are trying to do.

There are a lot of problems. One of the things that I have found, Mr. Speaker, is attitude. I am a

true believer, if I had my way, there would never be another work project, as known in social services again because this hon. gentleman feels if you have to put people on ten weeks or twenty weeks, that ten weeks or twenty weeks should be educational, Mr. Speaker. With the type of flexible training institutions we have developed across the Province, these institutions have shown they are very willing and very able to be able to do this.

Mr. Speaker, at the present time there is probably more unemployment in the district than there ever has been before. The first project which I had something to do with, which I worked with from its inception, partly by luck, but the first new initiative in the district that has taken place since, I believe, 1906, is happening there.

The Lower Cove mine has had some \$30 million invested, which is not so important in itself, Mr. Speaker. The fact that we have a limestone quarry which makes aggregates for the American market. The produce is as refined there as it can be and you cannot refine that type of product anymore anyhow, but that is not the thing that excites me about that.

Mr. Speaker, I, too, have hope, and while you try to work and try to provide training for as many people as possible, at the same time, you do hope for other things. One of my hopes, perhaps a small one, has come to pass in that there is a new industry to be established in that area.

Mr. Speaker, a wharf will be provided for that industry and the wharf will be provided through

government funds. There are no funds for the company, but for the infrastructure, the wharf.

Mr. Speaker, the Port au Port Peninsula is the largest and biggest block of limestone on the Eastern Seaboard of Canada, or the United States. We are as close to it as Africa is, or Scotland is, where ships are now leaving Scotland and sailing into Houston, and leaving Africa and Spain and bringing the same type of materials to the Eastern Seaboard of the United States. We have a very, very good material and it is my hope that wharf will be the key which unlocks the doors.

Mr. Speaker, these are things that happen by themselves, except that I have taken it upon myself to make sure that a list of every skill required in that operation goes to the Bay St. George Community College and will be advertised so people in the area, before the operation starts up, will know what skills they will need. If there are people in the area who have skills which are needed in that particular construction type of job, they will be given a chance to upgrade themselves so the people in the area will be able to avail themselves of the jobs rather than have people come in from outside, because this is a high unemployment area of the Province.

It is not an easy task. I would like to hear some members opposite give their view as to how we can overcome this particular problem. It is not enough to stand up and say the government is this, and the government is that, the unemployment rate is this, and the unemployment rate is that.

I suppose Margaret Thatcher, the

Prime Minister of Great Britain, was the first Prime Minister of Britain ever to win a third term. If you go to Wales where the coal mines have been shut down, and when you go to various areas of the country, there are problems, but they are problems that are specific to those areas of the country. Sometimes we have areas of this country which are something like Toronto, where things are booming, or something like Alberta, where things are booming.

Mr. Speaker, this area can boom too. We have lots of ideas on this side of the House. It is not always easy to get where you are going but if we were going to keep this decrepit railway forever more, and follow some of the ideas that the hon. gentlemen opposite have been espousing the last few days, I do not think that we would be getting very far ahead at all.

MR. SPEAKER:  
Order, please!

The hon. member's time has elapsed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS:  
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the member for Fortune - Hermitage.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS:  
Mr. Speaker, the last few minutes have been a very rare treat. I see the gentleman for Port au Port (Mr. Hodder) leave the chamber. That is his right but I hope he does not leave the space in which

he can hear what I have to say because I have a couple of things to say about him.

I remember very fondly, Mr. Speaker, another time. I believe everybody in this Chamber has very fond memories of their association with the gentleman for Port au Port. I remember when we were political kissing cousins. We fished together on the Serpentine River, we played Riddlywinks at Strawberry Hill, we even sat around and cogitated the future of the Liberal Party at the Airport Inn one night. We thought back in 1979, and like any party in opposition, like the Tories when they were in opposition, like the Federal Tories when they were in opposition, we tend to go through our leaders more quickly than if the party is in government. That is axiomatic to the nature of parliamentary democracy.

Mr. Speaker, in 1979, we had a leader, Mr. Bill Rowe, who was in the process of stepping down and we were anxious to do -

MR. SIMMS:  
What has this to do with the unemployment resolution?

MR. SIMMONS:  
Oh, this bears very directly on the employment situation. Mr. Speaker, we were anxious to do the right thing at that time and so the gentleman for Port au Port (Mr. Hodder) and I sat around and we cogitated and we looked at all the alternatives. We talked about the late Don Jamieson, we talked about so many people. Then my good friend from -

MR. PEACH:  
Clyde Wells?

MR. SIMMONS:

Yes, we talked about Clyde Wells, that is right. He was one of a number of people who were mentioned at that time. But it was my good friend from Port au Port (Mr. Hodder) who had the idea that broke the deadlock. We had been in the room a number of hours talking about possibilities. Then he, having put forth his particular solution to the problem, not only did that, but volunteered to leave the room and act on the solution. So he went out, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the group to pursue his own idea to call the man whom he felt would make the best leader of the Liberal Party and, of course, a few minutes later, he was talking to Clyde Wells.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS:  
Mr. Speaker, I say to my cousin for Grand Falls (Mr. Simms) and my friend for Port au Port that this has everything to do with the resolution, because my friend for Port au Port threw out a challenge that the next speaker -

MR. HODDER:  
On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
Order, please!

The hon. the member for Port au Port.

MR. HODDER:  
Mr. Speaker, the hon. member's view of history is quite inaccurate.

MR. SIMMONS:  
No.

MR. HODDER:  
I would just like to point out

that the truth of the matter -

MR. SIMMONS:  
Did you call Clyde that time?

MR. HODDER:  
Yes, I did.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. HODDER:  
But I want to tell you what happened, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I got a call back, but the only thing was at that time, the minister of -

AN HON. MEMBER:  
Was he going to come?

MR. HODDER:  
Yes, he was going to come. He was going to be crowned, Mr. Speaker. He said yes, "I will take it over." I said, "Well, Clyde, you have a problem because Mr. Jamieson is coming back." "Oh, oh," he said, "okay, okay, in that case I will not go." That is the truth.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:  
There is no point of order.

The hon. the member for Fortune - Hermitage.

MR. SIMMONS:  
No, Mr. Speaker, no point of order, but a delightful insight into another time.

Mr. Speaker, I took a moment to recall that time in 1979 for two reasons: One, because I wanted to draw a contrast to the bubblyness, the enthusiasm, the purpose that that member had in 1979 where you

could not keep him in the room. He was rushing out of the room to get on with the job to call the next leader to get on with the job.

MR. TULK:

He was like that all while he was here.

MR. SIMMONS:

Did you see him today? Not a shadow of his former self, a man whose heart is not in it, and a man who is no longer talking from the gut. He fumbles with Port au Port (Mr. Hodder) like it is some far distant land he has seen on the map.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, he asked for a solution. Mr. Speaker, the solution he asked for -

MR. TOBIN:

The solution is not to close the banks on the South Coast, like you tried to do.

MR. SIMMONS:

Oh, there is Colonel Quick's buddy now.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, the solution is twofold, one to go back to the original idea the gentleman had in 1979, to make this man premier of the Province. That is the first part.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS:

The second part -

DR. COLLINS:

As soon as he gets a few policies that have any validity (inaudible).

MR. TULK:

Oh, they are there "Johnnie".

MR. SIMMONS:

The second part, Mr. Speaker, is to have a member elected in Port au Port who will know where to find the place.

MR. SIMMS:

Have you been down to Fortune - Hermitage lately?

MR. SIMMONS:

Yes, I indeed, not since Sunday, mind you, not since Sunday, and for that I apologize abjectly, but

MR. SIMMS:

According to the people down there, that is probably the first time you have been there for quite a while.

MR. SIMMONS:

Well, Oh, oh! Would you like to have the dates?

MR. SIMMS:

Yes, love to.

MR. SIMMONS:

Last Sunday, Saturday prior, that is eight days, by the way. Sunday prior, that is another six days back. Three times in eighteen days. Not bad! Not bad!

MR. K. AYLRWARD:

You do a good job.

MR. SIMMONS:

The better the day, the better the deed.

Mr. Speaker, the member for Port au Port says, 'What are the solutions?' If I were given a

little time over there, I am sure my cousin from Grand Falls, who is concerned, might hear something.

Mr. Speaker, I submit to the gentleman from Port au Port he really does not fathom what the process is all about. He gets all uptight because we criticize. Of course, we criticize. When we see here the blatant falsehoods that are spit out by this government where, on the one hand, we are told unemployment is done and where, on the other hand, we pick up their own report and we are told in the three-month period, January to March, it is up.

Mr. Speaker, we have an obligation, when we see this trite last year, the jobs, the lies contained in that ad, when we see what the editorials are saying about the Minister of Finance's view of reality in terms of the jobless, when we see this, we have an obligation to say, "People of Newfoundland and Labrador, what they say is not necessarily the truth." We have an obligation to tell them the way it is and we intend to do it.

If, Mr. Speaker, I am not as well prepared today as I usually am for my speeches, it is because I spent most of the day on the phone responding to people in Port aux Basques, who have got, Mr. Speaker, a very distorted view of reality, people who are not looked after in this particular agreement we have been talking about the last couple of days, the Marine Atlantic people, who were literally hung out to dry.

So, the people of Newfoundland, Mr. Speaker, have come to realize the reality this government talks about is not necessarily reality. That is the first half of the

program.

The second part of our response, Mr. Speaker, is to lay out a set of alternatives, as the gentleman from Port au Port so rightly says. I want him to know, and I want this whole House to know, we have our set of alternatives ready. Call the election and we will give the people the alternative to this mess.

Mr. Speaker, I watched a moment ago -

MR. J. CARTER:  
Lame ducks (inaudible).

MR. SIMMONS:  
Mr. Speaker, he is not in his own seat. He is going to hurt his brain if he keeps in that position much longer.

Mr. Speaker, the bottom line surely is we have in this country -

MR. J. CARTER:  
(Inaudible).

MR. SIMMONS:  
It is not funny, I say to the gentleman from St. John's North, that there are 21 per cent of the people under the poverty line, a number that has increased since this government took over, a government he supports, Mr. Speaker. It is not funny. It is not at all amusing, I say to him, that 28 per cent of our people drew unemployment insurance last year. That is the legacy! Four times the national average!

MR. J. CARTER:  
False figures.

MR. SIMMONS:  
Not false figures, no, the government's own figures, national figures.

MR. J. CARTER:

You are playing with the figures.

MR. SIMMONS:

That is not funny, Mr. Speaker. It is convenient for the member to talk about playing with figures. The facts are 28 per cent of our people drew unemployment insurance last year. I see the member for Ferryland wants to get back to Florida.

I will move the adjournment of the debate.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

The House stands adjourned until 2:00 p.m. tomorrow.

## CONTENTS

WEDNESDAY, <sup>22</sup>~~23~~ JUNE, 1988.

### Statements by Ministers

<u>Scallop Research Grant for Memorial University:</u>	
Mr. Rideout.....	3438
Mr. W. Carter.....	3439
Mr. Long.....	3441
<u>Drought Assistance Program Update:</u>	
Mr. Power.....	3441
Mr. Lush.....	3442
Mr. Long.....	3443

### Oral Questions

<u>The Newfoundland Railway Closure:</u>	
Make-up of Railway Committee. Mr. Wells, Ms Verge.....	3443
Requests tabling of legal opinion. Mr. Wells, Ms Verge, Mr. Doyle.....	3444
Why did government cite authorities which argued against Newfoundland position to Ottawa. Mr. Wells, Mr. Doyle.....	3445
Does the reopener clause assure further financial assistance from Ottawa. Mr. Barry, Ms Verge.....	3445
Is the reopener clause as firm as Term 29. Mr. Barry, Ms Verge.....	3446
Is the reopener clause as strong as, not as strong as, or the same as Term 29. Mr. Barry, Ms Verge.....	3447



Agri-Food Agreement:

Suggests since John Crosbie said the \$8 million program is not big enough, the Minister should get together with him to renegotiate a new agreement. Mr. Lush, Mr. Power.....3449

Suggests Ottawa would have committed more money if the Province had. Mr. Lush, Mr. Power.....3450

If Government had supported agriculture as it has the Sprung Project, farmers would be better off. Mr. Lush, Mr. Power.....3450

Native Land Claims:

Is the government reviewing its stated policy in light of difficulties federal officials say it brought to the fore. Mr. Long, Premier Peckford.....3451

Suggests Government is placing immovable obstacles in the path of a possible settlement. Mr. Long, Premier Peckford.....3451

Suggests Government policy denies Native groups access to sub-surface resources and water management rights. Mr. Long, Premier Peckford.....3452

Boys' Home:

Layoffs at the institution have compromised security. Mr. Efford, Ms Verge.....3452

Because of the lack of security, a Provincial Court judge refuses to have young people committed to the institution. Mr. Efford, Ms Verge.....3452

Says an investigation is underway to determine if a girl discovered to be pregnant after her release from the institution was impregnated while serving her sentence. Mr. Efford, Ms Verge.....3453

Vehicular Insurance:

Suggests manadatory insurance. Mr. Gullage,  
Mr. Doyle.....3453

Suggests greater fines for operating an  
uninsured vehicle. Mr. Gullage, Mr. Doyle.....3454

Suggests applicants applying for vehicle  
or driver licences show a policy  
document. Mr. Gullage, Mr. Doyle.....3454

**Private Member's Day**

Mr. K. Aylward, introduces his resolution.....3456  
Mr. Matthews.....3463  
Mr. Furey.....3467  
Mr. Peach.....3474  
Mr. Lush.....3479  
Mr. Hodder.....3485  
Mr. Simmons, adjourns debate.....3491  
  
Adjournment.....3495