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(Hansard)

Speaker: Honourable P.J. McNicholas

Tuesday

15 March 1988

The House met at 3:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):
Order, please!

Statements by Ministers

MR. WINDSOR:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. WINDSOR:
Mr. Speaker, not wanting to keep the house in suspense and knowing that the Opposition are so interested in money, I am pleased to advise that the budget will be brought down Tuesday, March 29.

MR. RUSSELL:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of Environment and Lands.

MR. RUSSELL:
Mr. Speaker, I would like to advise members of the House on events relating to recent oil spills at Come By Chance Refinery.

At 11:05 p.m. on Saturday, March 5, between 15 and 20 barrels of light crude oil were lost onto the deck of the offloading tanker, South Angela. (This vessel is registered in Liberia, is owned by the Wallemship Management Company of Hong Kong, has a primarily Indian and Korean crew, and has accident insurance coverage through a British group of companies.) Most of the spilled oil entered the saltwater at the Refinery Dock. A prompt and efficient cleanup was undertaken by Newfoundland Processing in accordance with arrangements which

have been made with representatives of each of the tanker companies involved in servicing the Refinery.

On Monday, March 7, at 12:35 p.m. almost 500 barrels of crude were spilled by the same vessel as offloading operations were concluding. The containment and cleanup efforts were begun immediately, but were hampered by winds of high velocity and unfavourable direction, high seas, other weather extremes, and the fact that most of the available boom had been deployed for the March 5 spill. Using some equipment from the Canadian Coast Guard, Refinery workers had recovered by Thursday of last week (within 54 hours) 180 barrels of oil from boomed areas using high capacity skimmers and vacuum trucks. On Thursday no loose oil could be seen in the Bay; just some oily sheens which are not considered recoverable. It should be noted that in cases such as this there can be evaporation of up to 50 per cent of the volume spilled. From March 9 to 11 the heavily oiled beach sections had undergone an intensive manual cleanup and only isolated patches of beach now show significant contamination.

My department recognizes the role of Federal Agencies in most spills affecting the salt water and especially spills involving marine tankers. Appropriately, the Canadian Coast Guard has taken the lead in the investigation and has promptly supplied additional cleanup equipment until refinery supplies can be restocked.

The Canada Shipping Act requires that each such spill be reported by the crew of the vessel concerned. Also my department,

under The Storage and Handling of Gasoline and Associated Products Regulations, requires the immediate reporting to a twenty-four hour spill report number for this province, 772-2083, which is staffed by the Canadian Coast Guard as a service to Provincial and Federal Environment. Newfoundland Processing has undertaken the responsibility of reporting all spill incidents involving their operation.

The March 5 and March 7 spills were reported in forty-one minutes, and fourteen minutes, and appropriate staff of my department were involved in response decisions within forty-nine minutes, and twenty-five minutes respectively. Although these times are considered quite good, there was concern about the largest spill being initially reported to involve just five barrels of crude oil. This was caused partly because of the haste of the Refinery workers to attend to urgent duties resulting from the spill and partly because the staff member normally reporting such spills was in transit on Refinery property (actually he was on route to meet with the Environment Canada staff member that was investigating the previous spill).

I am fully satisfied that there has never been an attempt to down-play the extent of any spill incident at this Refinery and my staff have received full cooperation from their response personnel.

A typical cleanup of a spill of crude or bunker to a water body results in oily debris consisting of approximately ten percent oil and ninety percent gravel, rock,

absorbent, kelp, flotsam, etc. There could be more than 200 tonnes of such debris due to these two spills. My department has carefully considered the alternatives for disposal and on Friday advised Newfoundland Processing that they can proceed to landfill this material in one of the trenches on the new hazardous waste disposal site which is in a late stage of construction. This debris will be capped in the trench in accordance with established guidelines.

I am fully satisfied that this disposal method will be more than adequate to protect the environment. However, I have asked my senior officials to meet the President of Newfoundland Processing at the earliest possible date for further discussions on the matter of oily debris disposal. The need to address debris disposal (especially for mid-size spills) in the Company's Spill Contingency Plan will be expressed.

Yesterday my officials met with representatives of Newfoundland Processing, Environment Canada and Canadian Coast Guard. This was a first step toward the firming up of recommendations that would see an improved response to future spills from this industry. A more formal debriefing is planned as it is always an objective to learn from such experiences and apply what is learned in actual spill situations to any reoccurrences and also to contingency planning and spill responses involving other sources.

Areas where my department will have recommendations or requirements along these lines (in addition to those already stated) include reporting communications,

training, and response equipment.

In addition, staff of my Department will continue to oversee the shoreline cleanup and debris disposal operations, and, on conclusion, will do the usual accounting to recover from Wallemship Management Company the extraordinary costs incurred by my department for our response to the spills.

Finally, my department will continue to coordinate the confirmation and reporting for appropriate cleanup of oiled beach sightings. Local fishermen committees have been advised that the phone number for this, 576-2250 or 2551, is available at the Come By Chance council office. I would welcome support from both sides of this House for the continued active participation of Department of Environment and Lands staff in aspects of the Newfoundland processing spills response per the stated jurisdiction and in the manner that I have outlined.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Fortune-Hermitage.

MR. SIMMONS:

I, first of all, thank the minister for giving me an advance copy of his statement. I want, on behalf of our colleagues here, to commend the refinery workers for the expeditious cleanup. I commend federal and provincial officials for, it would appear,

taking all the appropriate steps in good time to contain and to clean up the spill. I understand these two latest spills are just two of six that the refinery has experienced since the restart of the refinery by Newfoundland Energy.

There is one curious aspect, and the minister touched on it ever so briefly. There was some reporting of the second spill, which was that it was of the order of five barrels rather than the figure approaching 500 barrels, which is the actual amount of the spill, I understand. Now, the minister's statement makes reference to this discrepancy but he dismisses, I suggest to him, too easily. As he does suggest, there probably was not any deliberate effort to downplay the seriousness of it but I submit to him that an error of that magnitude, that is between five barrels and 500 barrels, is one that, however innocent the intent, could have very serious ramifications in terms of the preparedness or lack of preparedness of the cleanup crew.

Mr. Speaker, there are three or four issues we want to raise here which arise from the minister's statement and one very important one is the question of who has the lead responsibility. Now, under law it is clearly the Coast Guard, but in practice, as was the case in those two spills, it was the operator on the site, in this case the Come By Chance refinery people, who actually took the lead responsibility in doing the cleanup. There are arguments for that, as there are arguments for having the Coast Guard do it, considering the state of their equipment and their expertise. Some have suggested that some valuable time might have been lost

in that some of the people involved in the cleanup, as well-intentioned as they were, were not nearly as skilled in the endeavour as would have been the Coast Guard people, themselves, because the people who work at the refinery are not first and foremost trained in the issue of cleanup of spills.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, there is the question of disposal. The minister has indicated quite satisfactorily, from my vantage point, as to how the current debris is being disposed of, or the debris in the current circumstance. I am told, nevertheless, that a refinery of this size can expect a mid-size spill every four years or so, and I am told, also, that the present secure hazardous waste landfill at Come by Chance would not be adequate in the long term to handle mid-size spills as often as they can be expected with this size operation. I understand that the alternative, and I hope one the minister is actively contemplating, is for the refinery to select and prepare a site for these mid-size spills to take care of the disposal, the storage of the shoreline debris which, as he indicates, only has a 10 per cent oil component, but, nevertheless, is something that needs to be put away in a secure site. So, the second point I raise, Mr. Speaker, is the question of making adequate provision for disposal, and I submit that that adequate provision is not in place at this time.

Thirdly, and finally, Mr. Speaker, there is the question of what impact such spills will have on the fishery and, more to the point, what safeguards are in place to ensure that the fishery

and the fishermen, themselves, and the fisherwomen, are adequately compensated for any such spills which, of course, are no fault of their own.

So, in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would submit to the minister that these two latest incidents put the lie to the rhetoric that we have been hearing from the government. Contrary to the rhetoric, the responsibility for cleanup of spills is not clear, as we have seen in these incidents. Contrary to the rhetoric the long-term capacity to dispose, to store, the debris from the shoreline does not exist. And contrary to the rhetoric, the fishermen and the fishery are vulnerable.

Mr. Speaker, fortunately those spills have been small. I would appeal to the minister to show the leadership required to resolve the issues I have raised so that when and if, God forbid, there is a larger spill, we will not be nearly as exposed as we could have been on this occasion. Having said that, I return to my original note: We are impressed by the manner in which federal and provincial officials moved on this one, and my last comments are meant to be instructive not critical.

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.

I would like to thank the minister

for such a thorough statement in such a short period after a very serious spill. However, unfortunately, I am not sure it was an oversight that we did not receive a copy of the statement in advance, so I was doing my best here to take notes and keep up with the information the minister was providing to us today.

In that spirit, I would, for our party's part, indeed give support from our side for the efforts his department is making not only in co-ordinating the agencies of the Coastguard and the industry and the efforts of the provincial government, but also in bringing in his statement today. We would welcome a continued openness on the part of the minister and his department to bring the public all information possible on such situations.

And in that spirit I would hope that from the minister's statement, when he talks about further recommendations and consultations that are happening between the agencies, the Coast Guard, the Federal Environment people, Newfoundland Energy and his own department officials, that when these discussions proceed we can expect a report, again from the minister to the House, on some of the outstanding questions concerning problems of jurisdiction when such an event occurs and which agency is to take the lead. I guess there would be some real questions in these two spills. Exactly what was the role that Newfoundland Energy was expected to play in something that was occurring on water? There is no reference in the minister's statement as to whether he is satisfied with the capacity this company had to play such an immediate role in dealing with the

spill, and whether the resources and the material it had on hand were adequate to the task.

I think it is clear to everybody in this Province that the potential development of more offshore activity in light of these two recent spills certainly raises the question of the capacity of not just the industry but both the provincial government and the federal government through its two agencies, the Coast Guard and the Environment Department, to deal with such events, and I think those concerns are certainly going to be on the minds of the people of this Province.

Environmental issues are something that are increasingly capturing people's attention and concern for our natural resources.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. LONG:

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would hope that we could all learn from this event that there is an absolute need to bring forward an open process of review of environmental protection in the event of any potential offshore development.

I would thank the minister for his statement and look forward to further updates on some of the unanswered questions that are left concerning these spills.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

Oral Questions

MR. KELLAND:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Naskaupi.

MR. KELLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I suppose because I sprung so quickly to my feet I was recognized for it, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Power), at least the minister responsible for that portfolio on the Island, from what I understand.

The minister has publicly promised to release all relevant information about the Sprung operation. Would he tell the House why this has not been done so far and when he will do it?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Rural Development.

MR. POWER:

Mr. Speaker, as promised the government does intend to release all pertinent information that has not already been released. We do not intend to release any information that in any way jeopardizes the project. We have certainly realized in the last twelve months or so that there are a lot of people in this Province, some with vested interests, maybe members opposite, who would love to see that project fail. We do not intend to do anything to allow that project to fail. When the time is right we will release all information that is pertinent to that project.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. KELLAND:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the member for Naskaupi.

MR. KELLAND:

It seems the time may never be right, Mr. Speaker.

The minister publicly disassociated himself with the extra \$2 million in funding that was guaranteed by the government for Sprung. He laid it squarely in the lap of the Premier, in fact. Everybody in the Province read and heard that. Does the minister disagree with the Premier on that government guarantee? And why does he?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Rural Development.

MR. POWER:

Mr. Speaker, obviously the member read into something something which was not there. The Premier and all members on this side, particularly the Cabinet, are very supportive of the Sprung project. It has been in the past and will continue to be. The \$2 million working capital guarantee which we gave is designed to make sure that the project does get off the ground as quickly as possible and that it does work. I guess if members opposite wish that it fails or hope that it fails and want to read anything into any statement that I or some other Cabinet Minister makes on this side of the House, they can read into it whatever they wish. The fact is that we have in this project a very significant project which is now presently employing over 300 people in the construction phase.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. POWER:

It is going to employ at least 150 people full-time at this facility, to say nothing of the research and development capacity of that Sprung project. If the member opposite is going to do what his district deserves, then he should be like people in some of the other districts in Labrador, particular Wabush and Lab City, and get the mayors and some of the businesspeople in their community to come in and see the project and see if we can get one for Labrador as well.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. KELLAND:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A further supplementary.

MR. KELLAND:

I guess 'to say nothing' was the key phrase in that, Minister, Speaker and Members.

Because of the obvious differences between the minister and the Premier, perhaps I should direct my supplementary to the Premier. According to Hansard, on May 11, 1987, the Premier clearly promised to provide all relevant information on the Sprung operation, production costs, figures, market surveys, even a climatic study that he had done. Now, the Premier has not done that. Why has he not lived up to that promise after almost a year? That was May 11, 1987. What is he trying to hide? Why does he continue with his policy of secrecy on the Sprung project? Would he rise and tell us what the real deal was on the cucumber fiasco?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I guess the real deal is that I have \$800,000 in a Cayman Bank. I guess that is the real deal that the hon. member will not say directly. He will just innuendo it, Mr. Speaker. We have provided the details as to the arrangement between the Government of Newfoundland and the Sprung Group of Companies. That was released a long, long time ago. Obviously, as it relates to marketing, we do not want to give the competitors to this project information which is going to jeopardize the project. As the minister has just said, as time progresses and as we establish those markets and are feeding those markets, then the competitors will not be able to get in there ahead of the project and we will be able to release any additional information.

But the information relevant to government's participation with the Sprung Group of Companies has already been made public. The agreement has been made public. We cannot release information relating to the technology, and at this point in time we cannot release information relating to the marketing because that would jeopardize the business opportunities of this project. Mr. Speaker, that is the long and short of it. It is only the technology and the marketing, and those two areas are areas which if released would jeopardize the project. Right now 10,000 cucumbers per week are being produced, if hon. members want to do some extrapolation, out of less than one half of one production zone. And if you extrapolate that over a year on six or seven or

eight production zones, one will easily see that we have a very viable project on our hands here, and that it will not be long before we will be able to prove that in the statistics of sale and the kind of revenue coming back in. Then, of course, as the agreement states, the Sprung Group of Companies will buy out our interests, and then it will be a completely private sector operation.

We did the same thing as it relates to Fisheries Products International. The federal government and the provincial government both took a participation in the operations of the fishery. I forget how many millions, but tens of millions, \$40 million to \$50 million was put into Fisheries Products International, and the federal government put in \$110 million. Then, once the operation got up and got working and got viable, they bought out the Province's interests and the federal government's interest, and now FBI is a viable private sector company. In the same manner as we did in the fishery, we intend to do in this operation. But we are not at this point in time about to give away a technology which is the most advanced technology in the world, bar none, or to give away the marketing efforts that are presently underway to ensure its viability.

MR. WELLS:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. WELLS:
Mr. Speaker, perhaps while the Premier is giving information in

relation to Sprung, he might tell us how much money has been paid to the Sprung Companies under the terms of the construction contract. As that construction contract determines the rates at which certain other funds are paid in by the government to Sprung, would the government table that construction contract?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
The hon. the Leader of the Opposition is asking me for information that I cannot give. If the hon. member wants to put that on the Order Paper, well, then we will process it in the normal way, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. WELLS:
Would he also advise how much of the \$3.5 million that the government was required to advance, transfer directly to the company, has been paid to date.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
Once again, I cannot answer that question off the top of my head. I do not know the details every day of how much is being spent out on the project, but it is all done in accordance with the legal agreement that is signed between the Province and Sprung, as with the other \$99 million that we have out in loan guarantees all around the province, the Marystown Shipyard, or Baie Verte mines or to a fish plant in Notre Dame Bay or White Bay or whatever. The question is relevant not only to

Sprung but is also relevant to the other \$99 million which the government has out for which I am awaiting questions.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. WELLS:

We do not want to be diverted with statements on the other \$99 million that the Premier is talking about. We will deal with those when the time comes. But I would ask the Premier if he would advise the House what security, if any, the government sought or obtained in respect to the additional \$2 million that was guaranteed by the government recently, and advise the House whether or not the government has been advised if further sums will be required by the Sprung Group of Companies.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, as we understand it today, the \$2 million loan guarantee that is put in place will be sufficient to provide the working capital. The problem here is the same problem as you have in the fish plant. If the owner of a fish plant is getting ready for the Spring or Summer season, and he has not had too good a season in the past, especially, we advance money for working capital so that they are ready when the fish comes in. In the same way - it is just the opposite here - until the full facility is up and producing, they still have to hire people as if it were fully producing, train them, and that is why the loan guarantee was needed in the beginning. But we do not believe that there will be

necessity for any additional money in the way of loan guarantee on working capital for the project. Because, each week or so now, we will be bringing on additional production areas as the seedlings are grown, and put into those production areas, so that as our production gets up higher and higher and is sold, therefore, more revenue will be coming in until the project is viable. So we do not perceive that we will need any further advance of loan guarantees to the company.

MR. WELLS:

A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. WELLS:

I would ask the Premier to answer the direct question, What security, if any, did the government seek or obtain for that \$2 million loan guarantee?

PREMIER PECKFORD:

I would have to get the information. I do not know off the top of my head, Mr. Speaker, what the security is, but I will get the information for the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. TULK:

He does not know.

MR. FUREY:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for St. Barbe.

MR. FUREY:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of the Environment.

The Environmental Assessment Act states in Section 3(b) that the

purpose of this Act is to protect the environment and the quality of life of the people of the Province.

I would like to ask the minister, will the Minister of the Environment tell the House whether an Environmental Impact Statement was prepared with respect to the Sprung greenhouse project, as required by the Act?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of the Environment.

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, to the best of my knowledge, it was not felt that an Environmental Impact Statement was necessary for the project, the construction of the Sprung greenhouse and, therefore, no Environmental Impact Statement was carried out.

MR. FUREY:

A supplementary, to the same minister.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. FUREY:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the minister, on what grounds the requirements of this Act, the Act that he administers, were completely waived for the Sprung project? Because he will know that under Section 11 of the Act that he administers, there is a call for an environmental preview report, which comes before the Environmental Impact Statement. Now, can he tell us, was an environmental preview report done for this project by his department in compliance with the Act he administers?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of the Environment.

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, as I understand it - and I might have to get some information for the hon. member, because those things were dealt with prior to my getting into the department - the project was filed, as all projects are. The matter was registered and it was put out for input. And, based on the information that flowed back, from any governmental departments or anybody else, after all this information was received and looked at, it was felt, I guess, that there was no need for an environmental preview report or an EIS.

MR. FUREY:

Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER:

A final supplementary.

MR. FUREY:

From the information culled by the minister with respect to this report, can he tell the House what was the impact of those lights that are used in the greenhouse on the local residents? Can he tell us what the impact of the waste disposal from that project is? And can he tell us from the information culled, what the impact was of this project on the value of properties in the surrounding area?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of the Environment.

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, the project is not fully operational yet, and the impact it will have on real estate values, positively or negatively in that area, I do not think has

been or can be determined yet.

The other part of the hon. minister's - hon. member's question, Mr. Speaker, I will get some information for the hon. minister - hon. member, rather. He will never be a minister.

MR. EFFORD:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. EFFORD:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

One of the greatest problems facing our Province today is the number of people who are on social services and the number of social service recipients who are living far, far below the poverty line, according to the guidelines in Newfoundland and in Canada. My question to the Minister of Social Services (Mr. Tobin) is that I had expected, when he took over the department, with his experience and his energy, that we would have seen some changes but we have not seen any to date or heard of anything. I would ask the minister if his reason for being silent on any new things coming out of the Department of Social Services is because he has found that his department is disorganized, in complete disarray and if this is the reason why he has been so silent. Does he plan to do anything about it, or is it that he does not know how to do anything about it?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

MR. TOBIN:
Mr. Speaker, if the hon. gentleman

wants to talk about the Department of Social Services let me tell him that the Department of Social Services is not in disarray. It is in good direction, Mr. Speaker, and has been for a number of years. We have brought in programmes, Mr. Speaker, such as employment opportunities, which we have had people from other provinces and other jurisdictions come down to look at, which they have implemented in other provinces similar to our own. We have a good child welfare programme in place and we have been dealing with a lot of issues which relate to that. We have several programmes that are in place. The day care programme was brought into this Province under which regime, Mr. Speaker? We are continuing to negotiate with the federal government as it relates to a good day care strategy programme. The number of people in Newfoundland, Mr. Speaker, on social assistance rolls has not increased like in other provinces. We have increased the budget in the Department of Social Services, Mr. Speaker, in the past nine years by something like 159 per cent. Mr. Speaker, we are on a good direction and we intend to keep it that way.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. EFFORD:
A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. EFFORD:
Mr. Speaker, let me say to the Minister of Social Services, very clearly, that all of those issues that he has so clearly pointed out we will deal with at a later date

and we will point out where he is not falling down. Let me ask the minister: This is a copy of an ad that was advertised in The Evening Telegram this week where the Expenditure Review Committee is calling proposals -

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:

Mr. Speaker, it is clearly in the rules and in Beauchesne, as I think Your Honour will know, that you cannot preface a question by reading a newspaper extraction, an advertisement of anything of that nature. Those types of questions are definitely out of order, Mr. Speaker, and I suggest you call that to the attention of the hon. member.

MR. TULK:

To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

I would remind the hon. gentleman opposite that the member for Port de Grave was not reading from a newspaper article, he was just referring to it and pointing to it.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, hon. members are not allowed to read to preface a question, but I do not think that at that particular time the hon. member was reading.

The hon. the member for Port de Grave.

MR. EFFORD:

Mr. Speaker, now that this article has been brought to the attention of the Minister of Social Services, let me ask the minister: Will the minister explain why this Expenditure Review Committee has found this to be so and taken steps which will cost the taxpayers of this Province thousands of dollars in advertising all over the Province to correct? Is this committee telling us that the minister is not competent and that the department is really in disarray?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, I can say to the hon. gentleman that the Department of Social Services, like most departments of government under this administration, have always looked to see if there are ways we can improve, if there are ways that we can streamline the operations of government. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to say yes, there are going to be people come in to look at the entire operations of government. Things change in Social Services. I am sure, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition knows that when he was in government I believe they had to turn in their license plates, were not allowed to drive their cars in order to receive social assistance. That has changed.

At that time, Mr. Speaker, people had to be segregated. They were given orders. They had to go to the supermarket with something to get groceries. They could not get cash the same as other people. That has changed, Mr. Speaker. We treat the people who require our

services with dignity, Mr. Speaker. We intend to continue to do that, and if we can find anyone to assist us, to show how we can improve, we will do that as well.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. EFFORD:

A further supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. EFFORD:

Probably the Minister of Social Services will follow the precedent set by all of his other ministers and have all the reports done at the taxpayers' expense, and then put them on the shelf and not even listen to them.

My question to the minister is, very clearly, that in his first reply there were no problems with the Department of Social Services. He named a number of issues that were going onstream and were going to prove that he had everything in hand. Now, my question to the minister is: How can he give one answer to one question and then give a totally different answer to another question? Was he aware that this was being done, that the Expenditure Review Committee was doing this and, if so, if he was aware of this, how could he answer the first question and say everything is okay in the Department of Social Services when everybody around this Province know it is not okay?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member obviously has difficulty in comprehending what it means to have progress. I think that is the biggest problem facing the hon. member right now. What I said in the answer to the first question is the Department of Social Services is moving in a good direction. We have increased their funding, Mr. Speaker, by several millions of dollars every year as it relates to programmes. We have implemented new programmes. We are continuing in that direction. We have asked now, Mr. Speaker, that this committee or these consultants be brought in to look at our department to see if there is any way that we can improve. The hon. gentleman, Mr. Speaker, should know that. The hon. gentleman was listed in the paper recently as one of the richest men in the House of Assembly. Obviously he must know that you have to streamline, you have to look at progress. But for some reason, Mr. Speaker, things seem to roll right by the hon. gentleman.

MR. FENWICK:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Menihek.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. FENWICK:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I wish to address my question to the Premier, who I believe is responsible for matters concerning energy now. I wish to actually take him up on his invitation to look at some of the other loan guarantees. Specifically I would like to ask a question about the

loan guarantee of \$8.3 million given to CHC Helicopter Corporation and the \$4.2 million grant from the Canada - Newfoundland Offshore Development Fund. While I have questions on Sprung, clearly the defense has always been that there are 300 construction jobs and 150 permanent jobs afterwards. Would the Premier give us some explanation why we are into this helicopter company for what looks like \$12.5 million, and give us some assessment of what economic benefits and spinoffs and employment aspects there are for the project itself?

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

I thank the hon. the Leader of the NDP Party for his question. I can get a more detailed answer over the next twenty-four hours, but I will attempt to answer it. In the same way as we are trying to be on the leading edge of technology as it relates to agriculture, we also want to do it in other areas. And, of course, one area is in this business of a helicopter simulator, which is what this project is all about.

An assessment was done both by the federal and provincial governments, and the Offshore Development Fund, which is federal/provincial, will be providing so much money to it, and we will as a government. Because what we will be doing here is building a helicopter simulator, and I think there are two others in the world, one in Europe and one in Texas - I think it is down in the Southern United States - to

train people in the helicopter business especially for offshore development.

So what this will do, this new facility will be the state of the art and the latest, it will be more advanced than the one they have in Europe or the one they have in the United States, and it will be somewhat like what we are doing at the Marine Institute with a flume tank, which there is none other like in the world, like we are doing with the ice tank at Memorial, which there is none other like in the world. So we are doing it now in training pilots for sophisticated, large helicopters that will go offshore. So the aim is to have the latest state-of-the-art technology in this simulator and we will be able to bring people in, both from Europe and the United States, to do training here in Newfoundland. So that is the concept. That is the idea. And it will be the latest of its type in the world and we will obviously get most of the Canadian market and we will be looking to the United States market and the European market. So that is the whole concept, to build a state-of-the-art helicopter simulator for these large helicopters - whatever they are called, I forget the name on them now.

MR. SIMMS:

The Super Pumas.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

The Super Pumas. And to have a simulator here which will not only train people for the offshore off here but also off Nova Scotia and, you know, for the Americans and the Europeans as well. So that is the whole aim. We will have the only one of its kind in Canada,

and it will be further advanced than the ones that are at present in the United States and in Europe. I will, however, undertake, because it is an excellent question, to get more detail for the hon. member over the next couple of days, to give him a more specific answer to the question he asked, because it is a good one for which an answer must be given.

MR. FENWICK:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

My supplementary is that the other examples from the offshore fund went to institutions. This is an example of \$4.2 million as a grant going to a private company, which I think is a qualitative difference here. My question for the Premier is: Since we as a province, not with the Federal Government, are in for I think an \$8.3 million loan guarantee, which is a complete initiative on our part and is usually put in place when it guarantees jobs, would the Premier confirm that in fact the amount of job creation on this project is not likely to exceed about ten or eleven individuals working on the entire project, and, therefore, the amount of money committed in grants and loan guarantees is in the range of a million dollars per job?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

I will have to take the question under advisement. In the early years the price per job may be higher than anything else we are

doing, but that is one of the prices you pay for research. Let me also point out to the hon. member that we have provided money to other private sector companies through the Offshore Development Fund. This is not the first, we have others that we have provided money to. As a matter of fact, in the last several months we approached the federal government and they agree to provide a block amount of money that can be used by the Province so that we do not have to go through the long red tape process of getting approvals for other private sector companies. And there have been several announced by the Minister of Development (Mr. Barrett) in the last couple of months where we have provided money to private sector companies. The Offshore Development Fund is just not for provincial or federal institutions. It is also for the private sector to get on with their work. As a matter of fact, I just came, a couple of hours ago, from a facility on Duckworth Street, where the Singer Sewing Machine Company is located. The building is now owned by Rapid Design Consultants Limited, who have the only -

MR. LONG:

In my district.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Yes, in the hon. member's district.

- CAD system of its kind in Canada and are now doing work for St. John's dockyard on the frigate programme, and for a ship building company out West, in Vancouver. Lavalin does not have it, Flouries does not have it, nobody else has the engineering capability in-house that this company has. They got money from the Offshore Development Fund because they are

doing work for Mobil and others. So, in the early years - this is the whole concept of research and what I have tried to get across as it relates to the Sprung Project that nobody will listen to me on - when you get into the field of research as well as job creation - as we have done at the university with our tele-medicine and remote medicine; as we have done with our ice tank and so on, there is a lot of money going in there - to protect the jobs you have now and to over time create other jobs, if you do not go the technology route you are going to be left behind. It could possibly be that in the early years of this research facility the amount of money put out per job will be very high, but if you do not do that then you run the risk of not getting any research facilities in the Province, and that over time you will not have the opportunity to build more and more jobs on the original facility, which in the early years might not have that many jobs.

MR. FENWICK:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
Final supplementary.

MR. FENWICK:
By the way, I find it difficult to see the analogy between the research aspects of a helicopter trainer versus a flume tank, which is very much research oriented. My question to the Premier is this: In the initial response he gave me, at the beginning of the answer he indicated that studies were done by the federal and provincial governments to indicate what kind of spin-off affects were there. Obviously there will be assessments of employment, the number of pilots coming from all

over the world in order to be trained, and so on. What I would like to ask the Premier to do is, since we have \$12.5 million in this private company, would he table the reports that we have that indicate what spin-off benefits we are getting for the city, also what kind of employment benefits we are getting, and any other aspects that may have been included in those reports?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
Mr. Speaker, I will table as much information as I can which is not already precluded by some kind of a legal contract. I will table as much information as I can for the hon. member.

MR. K. AYLWARD:
Mr. Speaker.

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

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

I would like to ask a question of the Minister of Career Development and Employment, who was the former Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth, who was responsible for youth in the Province.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
Career Development and Advanced Studies.

MR. K. AYLWARD:
Career Development and Advanced Studies, I am corrected. Thank you.

I would like to ask the hon. minister a question about what plans his ministry has for the

youth unemployment problem in this Province coming up the Summer. The federal government has just increased its proportion of government spending upwards of 92 per cent, so they are starting to realize the extent of the problem that we have. I would like to ask the minister what plans his ministry has for the Summer to deal with the catastrophe that we have in youth unemployment in this Province.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Career Development and Advanced Studies.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for his question and just go on record as saying to him that yes, we are very, very concerned about the unemployment rate in general in the Province, and in particular youth unemployment. But there is a very encouraging trend in unemployment rates in the Province in that it is on a downward trend. We have tracked that for the last eight to ten months. I am very pleased to say that, when we look at the last eight to ten months, the unemployment figure for youth in this Province has gone down some 2.5 per cent.

Now, albeit, there is a long way to go and this government is committed to seeing that it is further reduced. Last year we brought in two employment programmes particularly that impacted on youth unemployment in this Province, namely the Provincial Employment Programme and the Private Sector Employment Programme. Of course, in both these programmes we had requirements for a youth component. I am very pleased to say that in the Private Sector

Employment Programme itself the youth component there was 55 per cent, where our requirement was 40 per cent. So we exceeded our requirement by 15 per cent. Consequently, when we look at students, there were some 598 students employed under the Private Sector Employment Programme.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:

So, Mr. Speaker, we are very pleased with what is happening with our employment programmes. Last year we did not rest on our laurels. Since then we have been very thoroughly re-evaluating and assessing the employment programmes to see if we can further improve them in the future.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

There is just time for a brief question and answer.

The hon. the member for Stephenville.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

'On a downward trend'?

I would have a great argument with the minister but I would like to ask him a question. Is this provincial government going to double the amount of funding that they put in last year to deal with the major problem of youth unemployment that is presently in the Province but will even be more exacerbated this Summer? Are you going to double the amount of funding, as the federal government has, over the next few months?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Career Development and Advanced Studies.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker, that is a matter to be dealt with in the budget. My colleague, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Windsor), announced the budget date for 29 March, so I guess we will see the details for that programme and many others at that particular time. Let me just say to him that we are very pleased with the federal allocation of money for student Summer employment, some \$11.6 million, doubled over last year. So we should see a lot of students employed in the Province and that, coupled with the initiatives that we hope to take, again dependant on the budgetary process. I want to say to him that we are evaluating our programmes and, based on the amounts of money that were put in last year, if we are fortunate to get that in the budget this year, which we do not yet know, then we may be able to redirect that amount of money and get greater benefits and a great many more jobs for youth. So, these are the things that we have been exploring and I would like to say to him that as Minister of Career Development and Advanced Studies, with responsibilities for employment in total in this Province, we are committed to continue our record of bringing the unemployment rate down in general in this Province, and specifically for youth.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The time for Oral Questions has elapsed.

Presenting Reports by

Standing and Special Committees

MR. WINDSOR:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

MR. WINDSOR:

Mr. Speaker, a wealth of information today: I table the report of the Newfoundland Liquor Licensing Board for the year ending March 31, 1987 and also the 1987 Annual Report of the Newfoundland Liquor Corporation.

I also table the Report of the Auditor General for the fiscal year ended the 31 March, 1987, Public Accounts for the year ended in the 31st of March, the Accounts of Crown Corporations Boards and Authorities for 1987, and the Departmental Observations on these reports.

MR. SPEAKER:

Are there any further reports?

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table today the financial statements for the Fisheries Loan Board for the year end of 31 of March, 1986 and for the year ending 31 of March, 1987.

Notices of Motion

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the President of Council.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, I just like to make members Opposite aware of the fact that we will be providing them tomorrow, and the honourable members down there in the corner, with the list of our legislation. That list will include the legislation that we have finalized and will be introducing during this session.

There may also be the possibility of some extra legislation as we progress, but this will be, for the most part, most of what we will be doing, with that caveat that there could be a couple of others. There is always that possibility as we progress. The reason I wanted to make the point now is we will be giving some notices of legislation now shortly and I did not want them to think that we were forgetting them or anything of that nature. We did not want to offend them or make them too upset. So I wanted to mention that. While I am on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I will give notice, if I may.

I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce a Bill entitled, "An Act To Amend The Internal Economic Commission Act". (Bill No. 16.)

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow move that this Honourable House of Assembly adopt the following Constitutional Resolution:

WHEREAS the Constitution Act,

1982 came into force on April 17, 1982, following an Agreement between Canada and all the provinces except Quebec;

AND WHEREAS the Government of Quebec has established a set of five proposals for constitutional change and has stated that amendments to give effect to those proposals would enable Quebec to resume a full role in the constitutional councils of Canada;

AND WHEREAS the amendment proposed in the schedule hereto sets out the basis on which Quebec's five constitutional proposals may be met;

AND WHEREAS the amendment proposed in the schedule hereto also recognizes the principle of the equality of all the provinces, provides new arrangements to foster greater harmony and co-operation between the Government of Canada and the governments of the provinces and requires that conferences be convened to consider important constitutional, economic and other issues;

AND WHEREAS certain portions of the amendment proposed in the schedule hereto relate to matters referred to in section 41 of the Constitution Act, 1982;

AND WHEREAS section 41 of the Constitution Act, 1982 provides that an amendment to the Constitution of Canada may be made by proclamation issued by the Governor General under the Great Seal of Canada where so authorized by resolutions of the Senate and the House of Commons and of the legislative assembly of each province;

NOW THEREFORE the House of

Assembly of the Province of Newfoundland resolves that an amendment to the Constitution of Canada be authorized be made by proclamation by Her Excellency the Governor General under the Great Seal of Canada in accordance with the schedule hereto.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. WINDSOR:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

MR. WINDSOR:

Mr. Speaker, I give notice of I will on tomorrow move that the House resolve itself into the Committee of the Whole on Supply to consider certain resolutions for the granting of Interim Supply to Her Majesty. (Bill No. 17)

MR. YOUNG:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Consumer Affairs and Communications.

MR. YOUNG:

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce the following Bills: "An Act To Amend The Trustee Act, (Bill No. 3.)

"An Act Respecting Judgment Recovery (NFLD.) Ltd. And The Compensation Of Victims Of Automobile Accidents", (Bill No. 4.) and

"An Act To Amend The Consumer Reporting Agencies Act". (Bill No. 5.)

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce a bill entitled "An Act To Amend The Fisheries Loan Act". (Bill No. 13.)

MR. DOYLE:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Transportation.

MR. DOYLE:

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce a bill entitled "An Act To Amend And Consolidate The Law Relating To The Use And Operation Of Vehicles". (Bill No. 14.)

MR. HEARN:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Education.

MR. HEARN:

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce the following bills: "An Act To Amend The Education (Teachers' Pensions) Act", (Bill No. 8.) and

"An Act To Amend The Schools Act". (Bill No. 7).

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Career Development and Advanced Studies.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce a Bill entitled, "An Act

Respecting The Regulation Of
Private Training Institutions".
(Bill No. 2.)

Petitions

MR. SIMMONS:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. SIMMONS:
Mr. Speaker, it is my great
pleasure to bring to your
attention a petition from about
800 people in my district of
Fortune - Hermitage, particularly
the people of English Harbour East
and Grand Le Pierre, whose
communities are located on a very
bad gravel road, as the Minister
of Transportation (Mr. Doyle) will
know from his recent meeting with
the people from those two
communities, which people he
promised to visit personally
within ten days following March
3. I remind him the ten days have
elapsed, but I say to him as well
that we have faith in him, great
faith as a matter of fact that,
notwithstanding his being unable
to do so in ten days, we hope he
will be able to do so in the next
few days. I say to him that was
the sentiment expressed to me in a
conversation earlier today by the
mayor of one those communities.

Mr. Speaker, the prayer of the
petition is that funding be made
available to upgrade the
thirty-kilometer section of road
connecting those two communities
with the Terrenceville Highway.
Mr. Speaker, this road is one of
four roads in Fortune - Hermitage
that I have repeatedly brought to
the attention of the House: this

one, the one connecting Harbour
Mille and Little Harbour East, the
one connecting the Pool's
Cove/Coomb's Cove area and the one
connecting the Seal Cove/Hermitage
area. They really must be
addressed altogether. All four
sections of road need to be talked
about as a unit.

As I pointed out to the House
before, there was a time about
four or five years ago, when I was
involved in federal politics, when
the money was made available for
the upgrading of those roads. But
it was diverted by the then
minister and the Premier to give
the people of Seal Cove,
Conception Bay, a third four-lane
highway while the people in the
communities I have mentioned have
hardly a single gravel track.

Mr. Speaker, just to highlight the
seriousness of the matter here,
last Friday on one of those four
road sections, namely the one that
connects Harbour Mille and Little
Harbour East to the Bay L'Argent
area, there was a washout of the
most serious proportions. Indeed,
it took the highway's people
eighty-three loads of gravel fill
to fill the hole sufficiently to
allow the traffic to get by. It
occurred in a place called Bay
d'East which is a couple of miles
from the community of Harbour
Mille and the community of Little
Harbour East. The miracle, I say
to the minister, is that nobody
was seriously injured. Two school
buses had gone over that spot
literally minutes before the
cave-in, the washout, occurred.

It draws attention to the very
hazardous road conditions that the
people in all of these communities
have to rely on in order to get to
school, to get to medical
facilities, to get to their jobs,

and to get to their leisure activities.

Mr. Speaker, if I did not know this administration well, I would characterize the situation here in terms of need. But Round Pond Road - and who in this Province does not know about Round Pond Road? - taught all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians a very valuable lesson: Do not waste your time talking to this honourable crowd about need. They do not know how to spell it. They do not know what it is all about. The only need they see is the need to placate political supporters, the need to build roads to wilderness areas, the need to lay pavement where no pavement is required, to provide residential roads where there are no residents.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

I would ask the hon. member to confine his remarks to the petition.

MR. SIMMONS:
Yes, Mr. Speaker. I shall certainly do that. These people know only the need not to provide roads unless down at the end of the road there is potentially a piece of land to be developed or a relative to be made happy.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I will not then characterize it in terms of need, I will come to something else that these people know all too well, and that is the question of politics, not that they have been practicing it very well lately, but they know it pretty well. So I say to the minister in blunt politics, in blunt, political terms, the administration has got to begin doing something about the English-Harbour-Easts, the

Grand-Le-Pierres of this country, of this Province, because the message is out there loud and clear that however desperate, however extreme the need, this government is unmoved.

In terms of politics though certain events of recent date might move this government to act, to realize that as the Round Pond examples get spread across this Province people are becoming increasingly cynical with this particular administration. So in blunt, political terms, if they would like to restore some of their credibility they can start by reaching out to English Harbour East and to Grand Le Pierre and the other communities that I have mentioned.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS:
In the interests, Mr. Speaker, of shoring up their own political fortunes and, in the process, my people will have some of their very real needs met.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. GILBERT:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. GILBERT:
Mr. Speaker, I will speak because it did not look like the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Doyle) wanted to speak. He wanted to make sure that he had the last word, I guess, in this. It usually went back and forth across the House, but I guess they have changed the rules for that too. I

will be only too happy to speak.

I have no problem at all in supporting the petition that is put forward by my colleague, but I feel his plea is falling on deaf ears because I have asked questions in the last three years on the Department of Transportation about the gravel roads in this Province. The question I have asked is: How many kilometers of gravel road are there in this Province? The answer I have consistently received for the last three years is that there are 3,300 kilometers of gravel road.

They say that there is no money to do it but there is money to do it if it is in one of the opposite member's districts. I think my colleague touched on the root of the problem when he talked about priorities. That is where the problem has been with members opposite. They have a strange sense of priorities. The priorities are established so if it is in a government district, we should try and do something about it, but if it is in an Opposition district, it is going to be left. My colleague gave the examples from his district. I can give you classic examples in mine. The Burgeo Road would possibly be the most salient one that would come to mind.

I have letters from the superintendent of the school board down in English Harbour West about the community of McCallum where the road is so bad they cannot use wheel barrels to get oil to the school. They have to bring oil in buckets. I have made the members and the minister aware of the situation in McCallum.

So I feel that the time has come

for members opposite to now establish a priority list on a need basis and forget the fact that it is not in a government district. If there is a road that needs to be paved, let us make sure that the government establishes a priority list and make sure that the taxpayers of Newfoundland receive the common decency they are entitled to by the people who are forming the government at this time.

I support my colleague and the paving of this road and I ask the minister to put some fairness into the priority list for the paving of all the other roads in the Province. If the roads are in an Opposition district, they have been left out of their list when they make them up for the year.

Instead of scurrying up and down stairs making priority lists for their districts, let us put a real priority list in this year and give the people of Newfoundland a break.

MR. DOYLE:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. DOYLE:
Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to speak to the petition presented by the member for Fortune - Hermitage (Mr. Simmons) and to say as well I am thoroughly familiar with the problem he outlines. I did meet with a delegation from his district approximately two weeks ago and indicated to them, at that time, that I would be going into that area to have a look first-hand at the problems that the hon. member has outlined in the petition.

Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, of course, this time of year the department is faced with many, many washouts all around the Province and I do not need to tell hon. members it is due to the fact that you have the Spring run-off which has taking place, and temperatures going up and down which causes very soft road conditions, in areas where there are gravel roads. However, as I said to the hon. gentleman a couple of weeks ago, I would be only too happy, if I can, to address these problems and to make monies available at some point in the future to address the problems.

Mr. Speaker, this government is very, very concerned about the needs of people around the Province with respect to gravel roads. Since 1979 the department has built 2,200 kilometers of road, costing approximately \$234 million. We have laid 1,700 kilometers of pavement, costing \$145 million. The department has a budget of approximately \$180 million a year, which indicates that this government does, Mr. Speaker, try to the best of its ability to look after the needs of the people in the Province.

The hon. gentleman kept referring to the fact that there is no money spent in his district and that most of the money goes into PC areas of the Province. I would like to remind him, if he would like to have the figures associated with his own district of Fortune - Hermitage, that since 1972 approximately \$37 million has been spent in the hon. member's district since 1972, not all on roads, but on maintenance of roads, ferry operations and roads in English Harbour and other areas of his district, like Little Bay, Gaultois, Round Harbour, Furby's

Cove, Seal Cove and all kinds of areas in the hon. gentleman's district - \$37 million in total.

So I think that should indicate to the members of the House we have not been playing politics with the hon. gentleman's area.

I would like to indicate to the member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Gilbert) as well that he has had quite a substantial amount of money spent in his own district since 1972, approximately \$27 million, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The hon. minister is straying from the petition.

MR. DOYLE:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Sorry, I strayed from the petition itself, but it is tempting to let hon. members know exactly how much has been spent in their own respective districts when they stand up and say the government is not spending any money there.

Mr. Speaker, in view of the aging of many of the Province's paved roads, it has been necessary in recent years to concentrate a significant portion of the Province's capital dollars on the resurfacing of older highways, refurbishing older bridges and what have you. That certainly does not take away from the need in areas like the one the hon. member brings up, English Harbour being one. The only thing I can indicate to the hon. gentleman is I will certainly have a look at the petition and if any funding can be made available in that particular area, I would be only too happy to address the problem.

MR. KELLAND:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. KELLAND:
I have a petition, Mr. Speaker, signed by 186 residents of the North West River/Sheshatshit area in my district.

"Petition of the undersigned, being residents of North West River in the Electoral District of Naskaupi, humbly showeth,

"That the road between the Upper Lake Melville area and Churchill Falls, commonly called the Freedom Road, is a provincial government responsibility, and

"That the general condition of this road for most of the season is in a deplorable condition because of rough surface conditions, narrow stretches, poor forward visibility, blind hills, crests and turns, several bridges in deteriorating condition and no warning signage or other normal traffic signs as might be considered appropriate, and

"That the regular annual maintenance is inadequate to the needs and offers no permanent solution to the generally poor condition of the road, and

"That there are no services along the 300 kilometer road, nor any emergency shelters or communications, and

"That the road has become an increasingly important transportation link to those who use it from social, commercial, wildlife and tourism perspectives,

"We pray the the minister

responsible take the necessary steps to address all of these problems and ensure that adequate funding is allocated to bring the road up to acceptable standards and institute an annual maintenance program designed to keep the road in the best possible condition for the entire season."

As I said, Mr. Speaker, that is signed by 186 residents of the North West River/Sheshatshit portion of my district because even though, I suppose, the road actually starts and ends on the one end in Happy Valley - Goose Bay, it is important to every resident of the Lake Melville area and every resident of my district that something is done about the road.

The minister's predecessor had given me a commitment that some time when the road opened for the coming 1988 season he would accompany me up over the road to have a first hand look at the conditions and to give a first hand assessment as a minister, along with his officials and so on, and I would like to think that his successor, the present Minister of Transportation (Mr. Doyle), would honour that commitment and come along with me as well. We will not require government vehicles or anything of that nature, or even to purchase gas at public expense because I make the trip on a fairly regular basis myself. He is more than welcome to travel in my vehicle.

As has been indicated, it is 300 kilometer stretch and the road is in terrible condition, not from the point of view of the effects it has on a vehicle, but there is a very, very large safety hazard involved in that the underbrush and the undergrowth along the

sides of the road have allowed to grow to such an extent that forward visibility creates a very, very serious hazard. There have been some very narrow scrapes on that road, narrow escapes from potential accidents. Although there was some work done on cutting back the brush, it was nothing near adequate and it started a little too late in the season.

Happy Valley - Goose Bay, in the Upper Lake Melville area, has become a very important commercial link also to the residents of Churchill Falls which, as Mr. Speaker will be aware, is a very closed and isolated community with very limited shopping and other social activities, compared to other parts of the district, such as Happy Valley - Goose Bay. My constituents in that particular community are continually telling me that if the road was in much better condition, as it should be - I am sure the minister would agree with that - you would see much more of a social and commercial link being developed by those people. By the same token, as we do have a beautiful country in Labrador, the possible beneficial effects that an improved road would have on the tourism industry, for example, is something that cannot be sneezed at or snickered at. We have to address that and consider what that will do for us, Mr. Speaker.

The whole thing is that at the moment the budget allows, I believe - up to now at least - something like \$150,000 a year for annual maintenance, and over a 300 kilometer stretch of road, which is in pretty poor condition anyway, that does little more than give one full length grading over a season.

I would like to suggest that when the minister does assess the road and when he looks at this petition that he consider substantially more funding for maintenance in that the crews and the money spent now are not adequate to do the job. Perhaps he might consider operating transportation crews from both ends or perhaps from one end and the middle so they can take the road in sections and do a better job.

Before all that, before maintenance can be adequately carried out and the road can be used to the fullest extent for the entire season, some very serious money has to be put into the road itself, in the reconstruction, resurfacing, upgrading, and re-routing, in some cases, of that particular stretch of the Trans-Labrador Highway that runs from Happy Valley - Goose Bay to Churchill Falls.

What seems to be happening right now is that that is the last part of the road government wants to pay any attention to. That has the affect, Mr. Speaker, intentional or not, of turning the residents of Churchill Falls Westward and out of our Province which, I suppose, is okay if you are going on vacation through another province. There is nothing wrong with that. But in a general sense, in a complete sense, to make the people of Churchill Falls go Westward means they go out of the province to carry on their commerce and their social contact when they should perhaps be considering doing that right in our own Province by coming Eastward from Churchill Falls. But they cannot do it in a reasonable manner as long as the road is in that condition.

I implore the minister to honour the commitment made by his predecessor and accompany me on a trip when the road opens this season to look at that particular road.

Perhaps the new Minister of the Environment (Mr. Russell) should come along and have a look at the delapidated trailers, the debris, and the lack of attention that has been paid by that department to the condition of that road. When we talk about beautiful Labrador, the great land we have in Labrador

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The hon. member's time has elapsed.

MR. KELLAND:
If I may conclude with my final sentence, Mr. Speaker - that beautiful land is scarred by the condition of the road, but also the deplorable condition that the Department of Environment has allowed to happen and continue.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. HISCOCK:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the member for Eagle River.

MR. HISCOCK:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I support the petition from the member for Naskaupi. I was quite pleased to hear the Minister of Transportation when a petition was presented before quoting figures from 1972. I am quite pleased that the government goes back to the record of 1972 and takes the good as well as also take the

record of bad things that have happened. For years we have not mentioned the Moores years although many of the Cabinet minister are still here.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to have the attention of the Minister of Transportation, because when the member for Naskaupi was up talking, the Minister of Development was interrupting him. Now I am talking on the petition and you have the Minister of Health and the Minister of Development interrupting again. I think this is a slight to the residents of Northwest River who took the time to draw up this petition. I would hope that the minister would afford them the courtesy of at least listening to the petition that was presented by the member for Naskaupi so that when he does go down to the area he will know what is happening in the area. I also hope, Mr. Speaker, that other ministers in this House will be listening to issues that are brought up by myself and my colleague on this side from Labrador, and not be interrupted by the Minister of Northern Development (Mr. Warren) so they will get to know what is happening in Labrador personally and first-hand, instead of waiting with every question or petition we present for the Minister of Northern Development to rush up to them and try to score political points. I would hope that each ministry will find out the needs of Labrador.

Again, as pointed out by the member for Naskaupi (Mr. Kelland), this road from North West, Happy Valley - Goose Bay to Churchill Falls and Labrador City, is in deplorable condition. It needs upgrading. It needs extra money for maintenance and annual

repair.

The people in Southern Labrador, in the district of Eagle River, support this, even though, the communities of Norman Bay, Pinsent's Arm and Paradise River do not even have roads at all. There is no road even across the bridge to Lodge Bay. Yet we support this petition, and we support it very strongly because we look upon it in the South also as the a Freedom Road, breaking the isolation of Labrador. Once the road is done from Labrador City to Churchill Falls, Goose Bay to North West River, it will then come on out to the Coast and, as I pointed out, it will break the isolation of Labrador.

The minister got up and talked about all the money that was spent since 1972. I would like for the minister to quote how much money has been spent that is 100 per cent funded by the provincial government in Labrador since the Conservative Government under Mr. Moores and Mr. Peckford, not federal monies that have been given by Mr. Jamieson, Mr. Rompkey and Mr. Trudeau, but entirely by the former Minister of Fisheries, Mr. Goudie, Mr. Walsh and Mr. Rousseau.

We hope that this government, even with its lack of funding, and with the help of the Minister of Northern Development (Mr. Warren), now that he is raised to the ministerial status, that more money will be forthcoming to do the repairs to the road in the North West and Churchill Falls area, and once this is done, to extend the road out to the Coast. Also, while this is being done, residents in Southern Labrador still expect basic maintenance to be done on these cowpaths the

minister has now inherited.

The member for Naskaupi (Mr. Kelland) asked the minister if he would come down and visit that area. I am glad that he can say "naturally" because with the interruptions from the Minister of Health (Dr. Twomey) and the Minister of Northern Development (Mr. Warren), it was amazing he even heard what the member said. We can at least look upon him as being a very talented man.

I also would like to extend an invitation to him to visit Eagle River district. The Premier was there and the Minister of Municipal Affairs. He made a promise to them last Spring. Eagle River district is really looking forward to this budget as the Premier and the Ministers of Municipal Affairs and Transportation visited last Fall, and altogether we are after adding up about \$22 million that the Premier promised the people in Southern Labrador and Eagle River district. We know the Premier is a man of his word and we look forward to seeing the roads and water and sewage in this forthcoming budget that is going to be brought down on the 29th.

We ask for immediate action, -

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. HISCOCK:
- Mr. Speaker, for this upgrading of the road from North West to Churchill Falls. We ask that the Minister of Transportation take it seriously. Give Labrador its due rights and let 100 per cent support come from the Provincial Government without always having to go to Ottawa with cap in hand to ask that Labrador be given some

things, instead of helping itself as part of the Province to get rid of the isolation.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. WARREN:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of Northern Development.

MR. WARREN:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to respond to the petition so ably presented by the hon. member for Naskaupi, signed by 186 residents of Northwest River and Sheshatshit. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that the petition does illustrate that there is a need for the continuation of the Trans-Labrador Highway.

I do not refer to it any further, Mr. Speaker, as a freedom road. It is not a freedom road. It is a part of the main highway from Happy Valley - Goose Bay through Churchill Falls, connecting with Labrador City/Wabush. I believe the hon. member, when he spoke, should have also said that there has been major construction on a number of rivers between Churchill Falls and Happy Valley - Goose Bay of which the provincial government paid 100 per cent. I would think if the hon. gentleman is going to present a petition, surely goodness at the same time he should give credit to the government where credit is due.

Mr. Speaker, also concerning brush cutting along this route, last year, through the Department of Social Services, there were an extensive number of dollars used to assist with brush cutting.

Mr. Speaker, naturally I support any petitions that will assist with improvements to a highway system through Central Labrador and through the West. But I think, Mr. Speaker, that one thing should be made known, and I think it should be made known now.

A number of years ago, when government made a decision to start at the Western end of the Trans-Labrador Highway, it was a unanimous decision by the Joint Councils of Labrador comprising of Wabush, Labrador City, Happy Valley - Goose Bay, and the present member was on that council. I want to say this loud and clear: The member who just spoke now, asking that the road start at both ends, was on the Joint Councils of Labrador that unanimously approved that the Trans-Labrador Highway would begin from the West and work towards Happy Valley - Goose Bay.

Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. gentleman should make it clear to the people of Labrador that government has taken a decision that he, as a member of the council in Labrador, had agreed to.

MR. SIMMS:
There must be a mistake.

MR. WARREN:
No, Mr. Speaker, there is no mistake. In fact, Mr. Speaker, to advise you, I was also a member of that same council. So let the hon. gentleman now get up and say, no, he was not a part of that decision. Government listened to the Joint Councils of Labrador at that time and said, 'We will start at the West and work towards the East.' I believe too that we should start at both ends, but the decision was made in consultation with the three Joint Councils of

Labrador.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure government has made a commitment that the Trans-Labrador Highway will be completed. This government and the government in Ottawa will make sure that this commitment is carried out. In fact, I believe there are not too many miles now between Happy Valley - Goose Bay and the West that need to be completed. Maybe there is thirty-five or forty miles with a number of bridges, a very expensive area to complete, but I believe this government is committed to it and the Government of Ottawa is committed to it.

I should say, I suppose, in closing, we will see the Trans-Labrador Highway completed much quicker than we will see the Liberal Party running this government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker, that is a commitment that will be carried forward and will be completed before the hon. gentlemen on that side get the opportunity to sit on this side.

I support the petition. Naturally we want to see improvements to the highway. I am sure this government will address those issues in due course.

Thank you, very much.

MR. SPEAKER:

Are there any further petitions?

MR. DOYLE:

Mr. Speaker, the honourable gentleman wanted me to have a word on the petition that the member for Naskaupi presented.

MR. SPEAKER:

The honourable the Minister of Transportation, by leave.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

By leave.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Transportation.

MR. DOYLE:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to go on record also, as Minister of Transportation, supporting the petition presented by the member from Naskaupi, and to say also that government recognizes the need for the Trans-Labrador Highway and certainly so does Labrador itself.

But the hon. member has to realize also that such a large undertaking is well beyond the province's financial capabilities and it certainly needs a lot more extensive federal participation in the project.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that a very good effort, both by the federal and the provincial government, is presently being put forward in order to get that road completed. Hopefully, in the not too distant future, it can be completed. I hear timetables of approximately five years to complete the Trans-Labrador Highway. I do not know if that is a realistic time frame or not, but to date the province has acquired approximately \$24.5 million dollars for the Trans-Labrador Highway. Under ERDA, \$15 million have been spent to date and \$9 million will be spent between 1989 and 1990. This is in addition, I might add, to the \$16.1 million dollars in an earlier agreement to construct the Tote Road from Wabush to Ross Bay Junction.

However, Mr. Speaker, as I said a moment ago, the \$24.6 million dollars falls short of the required funding to complete the Tote Road to Churchill Falls from Wabush, which would be approximately \$19 million dollars. But also for the hon. gentleman's information, I am sure he knows already, the contract has already been awarded for the construction of kilometer 112 to kilometer 138 this year and that work will be undertaken by Western Construction; it has already been publicly announced, as a matter of fact.

When Western Construction's project is completed, a total of \$15.69 million dollars will have been spent out of the \$24.6 million dollars allotted under the ERDA Agreement and the remaining \$9 million dollars, as I said, will be spent in 1989-90.

We are also estimating within the Department of Transportation that an additional 30 to 35 kilometers of road can be built with that remaining \$9 million dollars, depending on the availability of the gravel pits and what have you, along that road. When the \$24.5 million dollars is expended, 27 to 33 kilometers of road will have to be constructed in order to complete the connection to Churchill Falls. Included in that, of course, is a major bridge structure on the Ossokmanuan Lake and the estimated cost to construct that bridge on that section of road is \$19 million dollars.

Mr. Speaker, we are making considerable progress to date on the Trans-Labrador Highway. As I have said, it is a considerable undertaking and not one which the provincial government can

undertake alone; it can use federal participation. Hopefully, as I have said I do not know if a time frame of five years is realistic, however, hopefully it can be achieved within that time period.

MR. SPEAKER:

Are there any further petitions?

Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER:

Order No. 1, Address in Reply.

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Gander.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. BAKER:

I am very pleased to speak in the Throne Speech debate. I notice there are still quite a few members sitting on the opposite side at this hour in the afternoon. It is strange to see, if you compare with previous years. I can guarantee them that if they stay they will hear some good things, and I am sure they will learn an awful lot, Mr. Speaker.

However, it has been so long since I stood and spoke in this hon. House that I may indeed be a little bit rusty. It has been close to nine months since I last stood here. Come to think of it, Mr. Speaker, that is too long; the people in the Province believe it is too long; I believe it is too

long.

I believe that back in 1985 it was a good idea to have a session in the Spring dealing with the Throne Speech, Budget, and so on, and a session in the Fall dealing specifically with legislation. I think that is a tremendously efficient way to proceed, and I would like to see that approach taken once again by government. Of course, we all know what happened, Mr. Speaker. The two session idea got torpedoed because they could not stand the heat. That is why.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. BAKER:

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, as I sat here and listened to the Throne Speech, some feelings came back that I had experienced before. I remember the first time sitting in this House and listening to the Throne Speech. There is a certain feeling about Throne Speeches, Mr. Speaker, their structure, the formal language and the formal presentation, the listing of what has happened in previous years and hints as to what is to come in the year ahead.

I find myself sitting in my seat nodding my head and saying 'Yes, that is nice, that is wonderful,' and getting a feeling of goodness and of well being. That is the kind of feeling that I experienced as the Throne Speech was being read.

My mind wandered a little bit and it wandered to the idea of trust and confidence. Listening to such a speech made me wonder why it is that in this Province the word 'politician' is not the nicest word to be used. People seem to

have lost trust and confidence in politicians generally. The word 'politician' is quite often used in a very negative manner.

I could not help but wonder, as I listened to the speech, how such an occasion could generate this kind of attitude about politicians in this Province. But, after all, the Throne Speech was a formality; it was an outline of government's progress and plans for the future. It did generate in me this feeling of good will and so on.

The Leader of the Opposition spoke next and the feeling did not change, except it was obvious from the method of presentation that we were no longer listening to a strictly formal presentation. The Leader of the Opposition gave his position on a couple of major issues, expressed some disappointment that a couple of items, I think, the financial condition of the Province and the railway, were not dealt with in the Throne Speech. He dealt with how he hoped this hon. House would operate and how he planned to conduct himself in the House and how members on this side plan to conduct themselves in the House. It was a very honest, sincere, and straightforward speech. I still had the feeling and I still thought in terms of trust and sincerity.

The Premier spoke next. He first of all expressed concern about the sensible approach of the Leader of the Opposition, and the fact that he felt he was being lectured at. He felt that perhaps the way the House of Assembly has operated down through the years will always be the way the House of Assembly operates, and that things would basically remain the way they have

been, after the Leader of the Opposition, of course, learns his few little lessons. He can not change things.

The Premier went on to talk about a couple of issues, and then he came back and he, in effect, chided and rebuked the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Wells) concerning his concerns about the financial state of the Province. I believe, Mr. Speaker, - if I can find it here, I have some pages turned down - from Hansard, the Premier indicated that the financial state of the Province is not mentioned in a Throne Speech.

In his remarks that came immediately after the Premier left the impression that the Leader of the Opposition has been away a long time. He is rusty; he does not really know how things happen around here and that he will learn. Now this was the impression that the Premier hoped to create.

It was at that point, Mr. Speaker, when I knew why this element of trust has disappeared in the Province. I was brought back to reality because really, up to that point, I was suffering from a bout of idealism. I suppose you could call it that. I suddenly knew why that trust seems to have disappeared.

The Premier, in this case, and other politicians as well will say anything to make score a political point, and primarily they are aiming at the press when they score this political point. The truth of the matter, Mr. Speaker, and I want to deal with that, is that having sat through three Throne Speeches, I know that that statement is not correct. I know that the financial state of the

Province is not mentioned in a Throne Speech. That statement is simply not correct. It is the result of selective amnesia, obviously. I will not say it is deliberate. It is selective amnesia, but it is simply not correct. I looked back afterwards just to check and see and I had a look at 1979. Now I chose 1979 to have a look at the Throne Speech simply because that was the first year the present Premier was sitting in that seat.

In the Throne Speech of 1979 it says, "My government will have to take decisions in relation to both its capital and current expenditure programmes which will be far from popular. Given our fiscal situation and credit rating, unrestrained government spending would be irresponsible." Is that commenting on the financial state of the Province or is it not?

He says, "However" - This next line is beautiful, Mr. Speaker - "My government is confident that the strategies and five year plan to which I have just alluded," five year plans now, "will, within five years" - now we hope that the five year plan will do something in five years - "will, within five years, secure this Province's economic foundations and provide both employment and a tax base upon which our public service" and so on "can be supported," - 1979.

It has been a long five years, if I may be allowed to divert a little bit from my train of thought. It has been a long five years, Mr. Speaker.

But I specifically had a look at the three years that I have been sitting in this House because I have been certain that the

financial state of the Province has been mentioned in Throne Speeches. It was not just an anomaly in 1979, Mr. Speaker.

In 1985, my first year here, in the Throne Speech, "The international recession required stringent measures to keep the finances of the Province in order." The paragraph begins about the financial state of the Province. Make no wonder, considering who the Finance Minister was at that time.

In 1986, Mr. Speaker, "Over the past several years my government has grappled with the effects of serious economic recession," and it goes on to talk about the total input. "The Province's economy has recovered to pre-recession levels," and that now everything is okay. That is 1986. It was two years ago, back to pre-recession levels and now everything is okay. But a comment on the financial state of the Province.

In 1987, last year, a paragraph begins, "We have seen that Newfoundland's economy did not perform well in the first half of this decade." The paragraphs continues to talk about the economic state of the Province.

Mr. Speaker, it is obvious, in spite of what the Premier said, in spite of the cheap trick to score political points, Throne Speeches do indeed deal with the financial state of the Province. Every single one since I have been sitting here has. How, Mr. Speaker, can the citizens of this Province trust politicians who exhibit such selective amnesia when it comes to making political points?

The Throne Speech dealt with the intent to bring in Conflict of Interest legislation. I do not intend to go through the whole Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, and comment on everything, but following my train of thought, I would like to comment on that as well. The Throne Speech promised new Conflict of Interest legislation.

In the Throne Speech, the section that I am particularly interested in with regard to the Conflict of Interest legislation is a quote from the Throne Speech that, "The basis of the Conflict of Interest legislation is disclosure of a member's interests that pose real or potential Conflict of Interest. My Government will implement the advice of the Tribunal on measures whereby full disclosure of all interests is required, without leaving the determination of the existence of a conflict up to the individual involved."

The Premier, in his speech, also referred to this particular point. I think it is rather significant what he said about it. He said that he does not want to be able to allow a member to say, "I, God, do not think that this thing I am not going to tell you about is in Conflict of Interest."

Mr. Speaker, the way that the introduction of this legislation or the announcement of this legislation was put would lead me to believe that the sole purpose of bringing in that Conflict of Interest legislation, and I hope I am wrong, was to deal with specifically one individual Conflict of Interest statement where a member assumed, I suppose, that a few RRSPs did not

constitute a Conflict of Interest and could not possibly. This is a normal kind of understanding to have. It seems to me that the whole purpose of this Conflict of Interest legislation is to get at one person or one hon. member in this House.

Mr. Speaker, we applaud the Conflict of Interest legislation if it's purpose is good. However, we condemn the Conflict of Interest legislation if its purpose is a narrow and mean and small purpose, and indications are at this point that that is the purpose of that Conflict of Interest legislation. We would condemn that kind of approach. It is a misuse of power. This government has to learn some lessons with regard to the misuse of power.

I wonder, Mr. Speaker, and it is going to be interesting to see when this legislation comes in, if we are talking about full disclosure of any situation that could constitute a conflict of interest and then letting a tribunal decide on it. What about job offers? Would a job offer be a potential Conflict of Interest situation?

The Premier has admitted on a couple of occasions that he had job offers but he did not think much of them. Yet the people who made these offers still received large sums of money from the government. Is the Conflict of Interest legislation going to deal with that kind of conflict of interest?

It is going to be very interesting, Mr. Speaker, to see the results of this Conflict of Interest legislation. I am looking forward to it. If it

indeed covers all of these situations, then it is a good piece of legislation. As I said previously, if it's purpose is to simply attempt to embarrass one person, then it is not good legislation and it is an abuse of power.

How can the citizens of the Province still have trust in politicians who misuse their power in such a manner?

Mr. Speaker, about fifteen of the twenty pages in the Throne Speech dealt with jobs under a lot of headings and I would like to spend a few minutes talking about jobs because it seems to be a very important of this Throne Speech.

I spent a while doing some analysis of jobs and again, in the direction my thoughts were taking at the time concerning trust, because I have heard so many comments about jobs from people in this Province and in my own district. Every now and then there is an announcement about so many thousand jobs and figures are thrown around all over the place, 1,000 jobs here, 1,500 jobs there, and yet people are still unemployed. So I thought, because the Throne Speech dealt so much with jobs, I would have a look at what has happened.

I did not go back for ten or fifteen years. I do know, Mr. Speaker, that in 1979, if you want to use that as a starting point, there was a promise by the Premier of 40,500 jobs, in 1979. I did not go back that far because I have not been sitting in this House. I chose instead, as a starting point, 1985, for a number of reasons.

First of all, that was when I was

first elected and, secondly, it was just after a federal election. It was just after the federal election of September, 1984. We all remember when jobs seemed to play an important role in that election.

Do you remember, Mr. Speaker, the prosperity crusade? I am sure you do. Remember the prosperity crusade all throughout this Province where we had a show going across the Province. We had 'Brian the Greater' in his very deep voice, which I cannot hope to copy, talking in terms of, 'We are not afraid to inflict prosperity.' Everybody remembers that. We had the Premier and candidates going around this Province saying, 'The day of the make work job is over! We want nothing to do with make work jobs, with ten or twenty weeks jobs, nothing to do with them at all! Put us in and we will create the full-time jobs!'

I played a part in that election, not as a candidate, but as a candidate manager. I had people phone me and say, 'Look, there it is. You fellows are always dishing out those ten and twenty weeks jobs. They are going to give us full time jobs, prosperity in this Province.' I heard it time, after time, after time. So in that election of September, 1984, a very big issue was jobs and Newfoundlanders were convinced that the full-time jobs were coming. As I say, I do not want to go back to 1979 because that was simply a provincial Premier talking about 40,500. Now we have the Prime Minister of this Country, the man who is now Prime Minister, and the Premier of this Province, together promising full-time jobs.

Everybody remembers, 'The have not, will be no more. We are going to bring these people home, we are going to bring them home from Alberta and have not will be no more.' We all remember it.

Let us examine what has happened. What I did, Mr. Speaker, was go back through the last three Throne Speeches and had a look at a few Budget speeches and so on. By the way, we are looking forward to a budget speech, on Tuesday 29, and we hope it is a little improvement over what we have seen in the past. Anyway, I looked back through the Budget and Throne Speeches and I put together the numbers that have been used. I did not include all the numbers in press releases by governments. I just used the stuff that is on paper and that can be traced.

In 1985, Mr. Speaker, there were jobs promised, in the Throne Speech primarily. As a matter of fact, there was a total. Now get this, there was a total of thirty-five thousand jobs mentioned. If you go back through the various references, thirty-five thousand jobs in 1985.

Well, I said, that is alright now, I will go into 1986 now because obviously they have taken care of all the unemployment. Jobs are not going to be a big issue in 1986 again. 1986, eighteen thousand, seven hundred and seventy jobs were promised, with a little rider on there, 'plus thousands more.' These were the ones that they actually listed and said where they were going to be, 'plus thousands more.' So we have another 18,770 jobs, plus thousands more in 1986.

I really hope the present Minister

of Finance does not play those games with jobs that the previous Minister did. In 1987, another 21,000 jobs were promised, again with the rider there were thousands more but they were not enumerated.

Mr. Speaker, to me that gives a three year total of 74,770 jobs that were announced were being created in this province. Seventy-four thousand, seven hundred and seventy jobs, with the rider in two of the years of thousands more so that is a plus thousands and thousands more now. How many I wonder? We could round it off to eighty thousand jobs in three years. What a wonderful, wonderful thing to do, to create all those jobs, Mr. Speaker.

I did not bother to go right back to 1979, but I am assuming that the Finance Ministers and the Premier were no less effective in their promises, and no less willing to promise in the intervening years. If jobs were promised at that rate, I estimate that since 1979, there has been a total of 275,000 jobs promised by this government directly through Budgets - 275,000 jobs. That is an awful lot of jobs.

If you consider, at the same time, that in 1979 there were 171,000 people already working, then we come up with the figure of 450,000 jobs. Four hundred and fifty thousand jobs we should have in this province right now. What an astounding figure! We should have been importing labour for years. We should now have had a population of three or four million to support a work force of four hundred and fifty thousand people.

We could all have two or three

jobs, Mr. Speaker, conversely. We would not need to import people. We would all have two or three jobs. Then we could all suck on our five dollar cigars and drive around in stretch limousines. We could all do that. Two or three jobs for everybody. It is an amazing situation.

Is it any wonder the citizens of this Province have lost trust in the politicians because they have all heard the promises of these jobs and they know that there are no jobs and that we still have the highest unemployment rate in Canada. They know that. Is it any wonder, that they have lost trust?

I would like to speak, Mr. Speaker, for a few moments on some other topics. While I was speaking, the Government House Leader (Mr. Simms), when I got into the jobs, said, 'Talk about Gander.' I will divert for a couple of minutes to talk about Gander. I will talk about a government who has now guaranteed \$14 million to try to create 150 jobs out in Mount Pearl; about a government that saved jobs in various parts of the Province -

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible) Kilbride.

MR. BAKER:

It is in Kilbride district, I understand that. The Minister reminds me. It was very close, though, the people whose backdoor borders the facility are in Mount Pearl.

I think the government at one point in time, not very long ago, had an opportunity for a little bit more than the Sprung facility is costing to keep 350 high-paying jobs in Gander and they refused to

do it.

When EPA decided to move to Halifax there were several options that government had. One of the options, and I will not go into the background behind the loan that was paid, and so on, one of the options to keep these jobs in the Province, and do not forget these were not jobs moving from Gander to St. John's - I can understand government not worrying about that, jobs not being lost to the province, moving from Gander to St. John's, but these were high-paying jobs being lost to the Province - government had the option that I believe the Alberta government had of purchasing the airline - it was not a large amount of money because the planes were leased - and then selling it again to private enterprise that would guarantee that the jobs stayed in Newfoundland. Now, that was an option. I could understand the government if they examined that option and said, look, we cannot do it for these very good reasons. I could understand that. But the government's attitude at that time was, We do not want to talk about that. You are crazy! Go to the CTC and ask them to do something about it.

Now, I knew at the time, and so did everybody in Gander, that the Canadian Transport Commission had jurisdiction over the routes but had no jurisdiction over the headquarters moving and the maintenance facility moving. And the Premier knew it and the government knew it but still refused to even examine any other alternative and they brushed us off saying, Go to the CTC. That is what I am talking about, a government that allowed 350 high-paying jobs to leave this province without a fight. Maybe

we should talk about job destruction instead of job creation. Maybe that is what we should talk about. we now have about - what? - 180,000 jobs in this province. Maybe we should talk about the government that has destroyed 300,000 or 400,000 jobs in the last seven or eight years. Maybe that is what we should be talking about.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to spend a few minutes on Education. I am sure my friend for the Strait of Belle Isle will forgive me if I make a few comments on some of the remarks in the Throne Speech having to do with education. I promise not to include the whole field of education, there is just one aspect I would like to comment on:

The Throne Speech dealt extensively with education and there was great concern expressed for the alarming trend, that the failure rate in math and science has gone up in recent years. As a matter of fact, I think the Premier in his comments indicated that it had probably gone up to 30 per cent or 33 per cent in math and science, and the Premier indicated that somebody was going to have a look at what has happened because of all the money that has been put into elementary, primary and secondary education in this province and all of a sudden the students are not making it in post-secondary institutions, 30 per cent or 33 per cent of them are failing. I decided to check into it and what I found was that, in fact, at Memorial great concern has been expressed about mathematics, great concern has been expressed, and rightly so. There is a fairly high failure rate in mathematics. The causes of it are not very clear, and I

suppose that is what the investigation is going to discover.

In science the failure rate is not as high as in math, but there is still some great concern.

Based on the Premier's comments, I would get the impression that what he was going to look at was the reorganized high school programme and perhaps the university. Maybe the fault lay in this reorganized high school programme. Because with all the money that was put in there and the extra year, the Grade XII, this should have ensured that this kind of thing would not happen.

I would like to make a comment on that failure rate situation, Mr. Speaker. In the reorganization of the high school programme the intent of that reorganization was never, never to increase proficiency in math or science. That was never the intent. As a matter of fact, what used to be Grades X and XI are now spread over three years, so there is probably a little less time spent on science and math under the reorganized programme. There are more courses offered, so certain selected students can do a lot more, but, in reality, there is probably a little less time. The purpose of the reorganized high school programme was not to increase the depth of the knowledge but to broaden it, to allow for things like art and music, to allow for the introduction of new courses, like Newfoundland Culture, and so on. This was the purpose, to do in three years the academic things that were being done in two and, at the same time, add on all of these subjects that would tend to broaden a student's experience.

Mr. Speaker, let me tell you that I believe that is a very laudible philosophy. The philosophy of having a high school programme that would allow a student to broaden his or her experience, to be exposed to many more fields of study, I think is a very laudible change. But somehow confusion has set in, because there seems to be a belief that one of the purposes was to do mathematics in greater depth and nothing could be further from the truth.

Now, with the introduction of this reorganized high school programme, as I pointed out, the study was broadened but this, Mr. Speaker, started creating difficulties for the areas of the Province that are not St. John's, or Gander, or Grand Falls, or Stephenville, or whatever. It did not create difficulties in the larger centers of this Province, it created difficulties in the smaller centers. The downplaying of the stress on mathematics caused serious problems in these areas because mathematics tended to suffer a bit to get in everything else; the teachers were not there, the volume of students was not there to set up in the smaller schools the complete course offering and there were problems.

But, let me hasten to say, Mr. Speaker, I do not believe that is the problem. Because right now students have choices and the students who choose to do biology, physics and chemistry, they are much better prepared for science than students were before the reorganized high school programme came into existence.

I would suggest a possible solution though, and I do not think it has to do with the high school courses. In mathematics

there are three different levels offered at high school, so I do not believe that is the real problem. I think, instead, the government should look at what it has done, what a monster it has created up the street a little bit, at Memorial University.

The continued explosion of growth on that one campus has led to some very serious problems of overcrowding and understaffing. Maybe that is what they should look at. Maybe the quality of instruction at the university has deteriorated because of the large numbers, and maybe it has not, but the situation that these students are put into with Memorial University staying here and not expanding out there, in not developing the full potential in Corner Brook and not having a campus in Central Newfoundland, the lack of expansion and the crowding of everybody in here in this campus - everybody in Newfoundland has to come in here - has created enormous problems.

Over the weekend, Mr. Speaker, I did some checking in terms of students who left high school last year and are leaving this year and do you know what I found? I found a trend that was really interesting over the last few years - the minister of education would be very interested in this, I know - and the trend is this, at least in places like Gander and Grand Falls: All of a sudden a larger and larger number of students is ending up on the campuses of Acadia, Dalhousie, St. Mary's, UNB, you name it. That is where an increasing number of students is going. As a matter of fact, this year in one high school I checked with, where they normally have sixty, seventy or eighty students who would be going

to MUN, thirty-five of them refused to even take an application form, they already have their forms from these other universities. It is an amazing number!

I will tell you something else, Mr. Speaker, by and large a very high percentage of our top students are ending up gracing the halls of Acadia and these other Maritime universities. There are two reasons for that. One is because of stories they hear about overcrowding here, but the other reason is that there are much better scholarship and support programmes available at these universities, especially at Acadia University. Students can get \$5,000 a year as an entrance scholarship to attend that university. I guess what I am saying, Mr. Speaker, with regard to the problem with education is that we have allowed our system to become an educational factory and we have not made sure that we keep our top students here in the Province through encouragement and financial support. That is what I am saying.

The Premier is concerned about the new facilities he is building and we want people to come in here and do the maths and sciences and get into these facilities. Well, Mr. Speaker, they will probably do that, but they will come after having gotten their masters degree or PhD at the University of Toronto, or Acadia or wherever, but not at MUN. So I would say that one of the reasons why in the last few years our failure rate in math and science has gone up may very well be the brain drain from this Province. I suppose it goes a little deeper than that, too, Mr. Speaker. I mentioned a while ago about have not will be no

more. When can we bring them home? The young people seem to have lost the faith in the development of the Province so many of them had that they tend to go elsewhere to look for opportunities and to start their lives.

So let us hope that the task force or the group of individuals who study this problem will also look at the implications of students leaving the Province, therefore creating an artificially higher failure rate in mathematics and science in this Province. But what else can we expect? There has been a lot of money thrown around certainly, but there has been little thought put into where best to put that money.

I remember a very short time ago the government introduced the community college system and they talked in terms of expanding first year university and offering first year university courses in many centers in this Province. It was a tremendous idea and I supported it at every opportunity. However, if we examine what happened, Mr. Speaker, the university courses were brought in all right, and I am happy that they were, but they were not necessarily brought in in the areas of the Province that were best prepared or had the greatest demand. The first year university courses were brought in in Grand Falls and in Lewisporte. Now, there is nothing wrong with that, nothing wrong with that at all, except there are other areas of the Province who were better prepared. I have talked to people who have examined all three campuses in Central Newfoundland and I have been told that the Gander campus had more space and had closer lab facilities, and so on, and that in fact that was a

better place to start. However, be that as it may, it is in the past, but I would like to point out to you, Mr. Speaker, that that decision was made not on the basis of which center was best able to handle first year university courses. It might have been Goose Bay. It might have been Stephenville. But the two centers that were chosen were chosen simply because in Grand Falls the minister representing Grand Falls was in some political trouble - I believe forty-one votes was the name of it - and the same thing in the district of Lewisporte, the minister perceived that he was in some political trouble and the first year university courses were a nice way to try to build the image of these two ministers. If decisions are made in education like that, is it any wonder that people have lost trust in the government?

The same thing holds true for many other areas, of course, and I am not going to go into them now. We have talked over the past number of years about municipal affairs, highways, and so on, and how decisions are made there, so I am not going to go into it. But the real problem, it seems to me, in the loss of the faith and trust of people - and I cannot put it any better than this - is that we do not really have in this Province a provincial government and we do not really have a Premier. What we have is a good Leader of the Tory Party. We have that. I admire him for it. He is a good leader of the Tory Party. We have good - I do not know what to call them - ministers who are Tory Party ministers, and I would hasten to say that that does not include everybody there but a large percentage, but we do not have people who have the ability,

who are big enough, to wear two hats at one time.

The Premier is Premier of the Province as well as leader of the Tory Party, and there is a difference, Mr. Speaker. There is a very big difference. As leader of the Tory Party decisions are made in the party for political advantage, and that is how it should be. As Premier of this Province, however, it is a different story altogether. Decisions, then, are not made on the basis of political stripe or on the basis of what gives a political advantage. Decisions are not made on that basis, they are made on the basis of what is good for the Province. I put it to you, Mr. Speaker, that we do not have a man who is big enough to handle both jobs at the same time.

We have very few ministers who are capable of handling two jobs at the same time, their job within the party and their job within the government of this Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

I could go on with many examples, but I am going to come back to one that, on the surface, seems petty, seems small. To be honest with you, Mr. Speaker, it probably is not worth mentioning, as such, except for the principle involved. It is an example I have used many times in the past, very simply the accommodations that members of the Opposition have. It is a very simple example. Let me say before I start that I can easily work out of the accommodations I have now, even though it is uncomfortable. Even though it is not adequate, I can do it. But we are all in this House, elected by 15,000 or so people to represent them as

members of the government of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, and every single district in this Province deserves the same service and the same treatment. We are not individuals, we represent those people. Now, then, what has happened? After three years, since I got in here, at least, of trying to improve the facilities of the Opposition, I still have to share an office with another member. Now, you might say, What is wrong with that? There is nothing wrong with it except that it is an office that is so small that with two desks in there if he is sitting at his desk I can barely get by him to get to mine. If he is talking on the phone I cannot talk at the same time. I am not talking about your big office, I am talking about little cubicles. That is what I am talking about. Now, you might say, Mr. Speaker, and members opposite might come back to me and say, We all have to put up with these problems. You are not a Cabinet minister. Mr. Speaker, all backbenchers do not have to put up with that and that is the problem, that there is a distinction made. In something as basic as an office, there is a distinction made.

The Premier of this Province that we do not have, we have the Leader of the Tory Party, has decided that people who get elected for parties other than the Tories have to exist paired up in little cubicles. Members who get elected for the Tory Party can have their own office, their own desk, lots of room, an office that is much bigger than two of us are trying to squeeze into now. They can have their office, they can have their secretarial help, they can have their comfort, they can talk

to their delegations, they can have a conversation with some semblance of privacy, they can do that, whereas because somebody is elected for another party, they are not equal.

The Premier talks about a level playing ground. He should learn an awful lot about a level playing ground, Mr. Speaker. We are all elected to serve a certain number of people, to represent a certain number of people. It so happens that the party opposite has more seats than we do, therefore, they have the extra responsibility, and the extra remuneration, of course, that goes along with it, of doing something else and, Mr. Speaker, they are not capable of doing it. Make no wonder people have lost trust in politicians.

Soon, Mr. Speaker, at the first opportunity, there is going to be a change. At the very first opportunity there will be a new government and we will get the trust of the people back. That will be the time when the trust will come back. The only way we can get back that trust that people should have in politicians is when the government changes. And we are not going to try to buy that trust. We are not going to try to threaten people to get that trust. We are not going to say to the people, look, you vote for me or you will not get your roads done, or you will not get your money for council, and so on. We are not going to do that. We are not going to either buy or threaten to get their trust. We are not going to legislate their trust. We are not going to pass legislation that says, You have to trust us. We are not going to stand up in the House of Assembly and say if you do not agree with me you are not a Newfoundlander,

you are not a patriotic Newfoundlander. We are not going to legislate the trust, we are going to earn the trust. It may take a few years, but we are going to earn it.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, if I can be allowed to quote a member of the Tory Party, a member who is not here now but who everybody recognizes quite well, I say to members opposite that it will not be long now. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Health.

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker, firstly let me extend my congratulations to the Leader of the Opposition on an official basis. It is the first opportunity I have had to speak in our new session. I extended congratulations to him on a private basis previously, but I do welcome him to the House here. We listened to his, shall we say, second maiden speech the other day with interest, and we hope that his stay on the opposite side of the House will be pleasant and -

AN HON. MEMBER:

And long.

DR. COLLINS:

Well, not too short, anyway.

Mr. Speaker, I should also say congratulations to the member who just spoke. I thought he spoke extremely well. The member, I think, himself, would have liked to have been Leader of the Opposition. He tried for the

position. He was not successful. I think he would have been a good Leader of the Opposition. This is not taking anything away from the present Leader of the Opposition, but the member for Gander is an experienced parliamentarian now and I think he would have made a good Leader of the Opposition. It is not for me to comment on why he did not make it, but some people win and some people lose. He did not happen to win, but I believe he would have done a very credible job. Certainly he would have done as credible a job, I would think, as many people before him who were Leaders of the Opposition. I guess I am long enough in this House now to have seen a lot of leaders of the Opposition. I lost count a little bit, but there was quite a large number of Leaders of the Opposition in the last ten years or so.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Nine leaders in nine years.

DR. COLLINS:

Nine leaders in nine years. That is quite a good number who have occupied that position, and I think the member for Gander would have done a very credible job there. Whether he would have lasted as long as some of the others who can say, because he really did not get in there.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I do have to make a few comments before I get into talking about the Throne Speech that we heard the other day, an extremely good Throne Speech, in my opinion. Before getting into that, I do have to make a few comments on some statements that the hon. member for Gander made.

He first mentioned the nine months since we sat as though this was

something very strange, weird or wonderful. Now, one does not have to go back in memory very far to know that in provincial Houses it is normal, usual, and commonplace to have a Spring session, do the business, and then come back next Spring. That is normal, and it goes on in many provincial Houses now. It was this present government who decided to try an experiment in having two sessions, the usual Spring session which, by and large, dealt with the Throne Speech and the budget, and then to try having a shorter Fall session to deal with legislation. I think that was a very good initiative. It was a very good thought. But it certainly was not common throughout Canada. It was almost unique. I cannot say for certain whether any other provincial House ever tried that. I do not know if no other provincial House tried it, but it certainly was not common for them to do it. It was uncommon for us to try that approach. So to say that there is something reprehensible about going back to the previous arrangement - I will make a remark in a minute or two about why we did that - to the traditional way that provincial Houses operate, I think is not very straightforward.

I mention that particularly because the hon. member did bring up this bit about being straightforward and absolutely, precisely accurate in everything you say, and be precisely accurate in every impression you give the public through speaking in this House, and so on and so forth.

So, I just want to point out that it was not really, in my view, totally straightforward to suggest that because we have not sat for nine months - I have not totted it up, I will take his word it was

nine months - that this was something that was not quite proper. I do not think that was very straightforward. As a matter of fact, some time ago I had occasion to speak to some American legislators, that is State legislators, especially from the New England States, and we got into talking about the duties of state and provincial legislators and the time they sat, and so on and so forth, and they were amazed, they are absolutely amazed that we sit long. In some of the American legislatures, they have a sort of town hall type of thing, it is a very brief meeting, it can be a matter of a few weeks, and the population of those states can be many times the population of this Province. So, it is not any way unusual to have this long session.

Now, while I am at it, Mr. Speaker, just let me comment on some remarks that were made to the effect that when the House is not sitting the Opposition members have some sort of right to ask questions or to request information from government departments and from ministers of government and that that information has to be given no matter how outlandish the request is, no matter how much bother and trouble and disruption in a department might be occasioned by the need to dredge up the information, and somehow or other the suggestion was given that they have the right to that because if the House was sitting they would have a Question Period available to them.

Now, there are a couple of fallacies to that, of course. In Question Period the Opposition members have a right to ask a question but they have no right to

demand an answer. I mean, if a minister is asked a question and in his good judgement he decides that an answer is not required or, for that matter, if he does not wish to give an answer, there is no obligation for him to do so. So, to sort of suggest that when the House is in recess because there is no Question Period the Opposition members have a right to put in any request they want to any department, no matter how large a job it is to try to find the answer, that if they are not satisfied there is something terrible about it, because if they were in the House they would have Question Period.

MR. PATTERSON:

There was no Question Period under the Liberals, remember?

DR. COLLINS:

I think this was also something that was brought in during a previous PC Administration.

So, I just wanted to make that point.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I said I would comment on just why we did not have a Fall session last time. I think hon. members know the answer to that. It really did not work out the way one would have hoped when we had a Fall session. It was hoped that by sitting whatever it was, about six or seven weeks, that legislation would be given a more thorough review. It would be done in a more detailed way, debate would be more to the point, and so on and so forth. It just did not turn out that way, which was unfortunate. It was a good try on the part of government to have it work that way, but it just did not turn out that way. The thing went on as though we were in Spring session and, as we all

know, what tends to happen in the Spring session is that the House does not proceed with its business in an orderly, expeditious fashion, it sort of wanders all over the shop quite often in debate, and at the last minute you are trying to get through necessary legislation. It just turned out that the Fall session was exactly a mirror of that, so why beat your head against a stonewall? It was decided, therefore, well, if it is of no particular value, why go to the bother?

I might also mention that certain members, and one does not say this in any pejorative way at all, said, Well, I have expenses coming into St. John's from an outlying district. It is a bit of a hardship for me to come in twice a year. And quite often the per diem offset for coming in did not extend to the total length of time we were sitting, so this was not a very good arrangement.

Anyway, for whatever reason we have reverted now to what is the usual pattern and I do not think it was very straightforward on the hon. member's part to sort of suggest that we are doing something that we should not be doing without mentioning the fact that we gave it a try. The experiment did not work, so we have now reverted to something that is normal.

The hon. member then went to some length to talk about trust in government. I am sure we are all very concerned about that. I think he said that politicians are not held in very high regard. Who can quarrel? I suppose you could say they never were, but I think that in this day and age it is probably a bit harder to maintain

in the public eye an image of trust and trustworthiness. Not that people who are politicians have changed, but people's perception of politicians has changed. You can hardly turn on the television at night now to hear the news without something being said in the United States, you know, the Iran-Gate type of thing, and there is not a straightforward Congress, and so on and so forth. As we all know, there were scandals in the House of Commons in London. If I remember correctly, the Aide to the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany was found to be a spy. Even the former Secretary-General of the United Nations, now President of Austria, is looked upon as having had a very doubtful war record. So, the public is inundated, almost, by things that perhaps have not been done as they should be in the public sector by politicians.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to make this statement and I do not think that it can be refuted. I think that this present government, and I am part of it, so in a way you may say he is patting himself on the back, but I will make the statement anyway, and I am not in anyway pulling back out of it, I think that this present government has a record of honesty, integrity and straightforwardness that is difficult to match anywhere.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

DR. COLLINS:

I will put our record up against the record of any other provincial government. I will put our record up against any federal government, within my memory, anyway, and I think we have been, without going too far, quite exemplar. Now, we

have not been perfect. I mean, who is perfect? I do not know if you would want a perfect person. But to suggest in any way that we have been particularly responsible for any perceived sense of distrust out there, I do not think is quite fair. And not only is it not fair, it is totally incorrect. I think that the members in this House, on both sides, I will say that, but we are talking about government here now, I think that members of this government can very proudly write their memoirs. There will not be any skeletons coming out of any recollections of the members of this government. If there is a feeling of distrust out there, and I am not sure there is, I am willing to believe that the public have been so exposed from these sorts of episodes that I mentioned in other areas that it is very easy to extrapolate that view from other areas to the local scene.

I think it is unfair to go on with that theme. If we are an untrustworthy lot, I think we should be criticized. If we are not an untrustworthy lot, I think it is unfair by source of suggestion, by sort of innuendo even, that is a strong term I know but I will use it anyway, to suggest that somehow or other we are untrustworthy. Call us inefficient if you want, call us insensitive if you want, which I do not think is true either, but if you want to do that, call us any number of things but do not call us untrustworthy, not worthy of trust, unless there is some significant evidence you can point to, because I do not think that is fair.

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition, and I give him credit for this, said we have to improve

the behavior in this House, the way of acting in this House, the decorum in this House. Well, I would suggest that that will be a good test of how this House measures up to what he says he wants it to measure up to, that we do not go on with these sort of remarks, suggesting untrustworthiness, when there is no evidence for it.

I am sure the hon. Leader of the Opposition was sincere in his remarks, but if things go on in the way that the hon. member for Gander sort of hinted at, I would think that that behaviour, this amicable behaviour that the Leader of the Opposition is suggesting we should have, will very shortly break down, because I think we would be very resentful of that sort of tarring without evidence.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member, and I do not want to go on too long on his remarks but I have to make a few comments, talked about jobs. He poked a bit of fun at Prime Minister Mulroney's deep voice. He has got a deep voice. I suppose many people talk on it. But he poked a bit of fun at him by saying, 'I do not want to inflict prosperity,' and we are all supposed to laugh at that. As far as I know, Canada is quite prosperous. As far as I am aware, Canada's economic growth has outstripped almost any other country in the Western world in the last four or five years. So I think the Prime Minister has every right to look back on his prediction when he said, 'I will inflict prosperity,' and say, 'Gosh, I did it.'

MR. SIMMS:

Inflation down. Unemployment down.

DR. COLLINS:

Unemployment is down. Wealth is up, and so on and so forth.

Now, that is not to say that we have shared in that prosperity the way we should have. Of course, you can expect, therefore, the Opposition to say, 'Well, the reason why you did not share in it - everyone else is doing great - is that we have the wrong provincial government here.' Well, fair enough! It is a good debating point, but, of course, it really does not stand up.

In Alberta they are saying, We are not sharing in the prosperity of Canada. In Nova Scotia and New Brunswick they are saying the same thing, we are not sharing the way we should. It happens that the economic growth for a number of reasons has been stimulated, has first taken off in Central Canada and it is gradually defusing itself out, but it is defusing itself out rather slowly. It is, though, defusing itself out. We are having an improvement in unemployment. We are having an improvement in economic growth. We are having an improvement in opportunities for business I might say, in my view, to a considerable extent because we recognize that we are in a difficult area. The government here recognizes that we are in a difficult area in which to stimulate economic growth and we are making special efforts to help out in that regard, and I think our efforts are paying off.

In the last budget we laid out a scheme for stimulating small business; we put in place a particular job creation programme in the private sector which I think was an extremely acceptable approach and very productive. As a matter of fact, people thought it was such a good programme we

had more applications in than we could service by the money that we put into the budget.

I do not think there is any doubt that there were a significant number of jobs created more long term than the usual ten weeks. Some of them may have been, say, only twenty weeks.

MR. SIMMS:

The hon. member for Menihek complimented the government and said it was an excellent programme, did he not?

DR. COLLINS:

I might be a little bit doubtful now. Anyway, the programme was a good one. It did tend to give longer term jobs, and the information given to me is that some of the people who went into employment under that Private Sector Programme are still employed. Not all of them, I grant you, but some of them are still employed.

Now, Mr. Speaker, EPA. The hon. member over there, he sort of suggests that we are responsible for EPA leaving the Province and that we did not put up a fight. Why would we not put up a fight for jobs going out of the Province? Did we put up a fight in Corner Brook when Bowaters was going to leave the Province? Of course we did. We broke our backs over it. Did we put up a fight in Stephenville when the linerboard mill went down and finally turned it around into a high quality paper mill? Of course we did. So why would we do it in those areas and not do it for Gander? Have we not put up a fight in the Baie Verte area? Have we not put up a fight in the St. Lawrence area? Did we not put up a fight on the South Coast when it was suggested

that some of the fish plants down there should close out when the fishery was being restructured? Have we not put up a fight to try to get NATO into Labrador because we can see the opportunities there for increased employment? We have been fighting for jobs all along. If the hon. member is suggesting that EPA left Gander and we did not do enough, it was because no matter what you did the decision was made by the person who could make the decision to leave Gander and there was nothing we could do about it.

AN HON. MEMBER:

The town council out in Gander did nothing themselves.

DR. COLLINS:

Well, I cannot remember, quite honestly. I cannot remember the town of Gander putting up a horrendous battle. It does not come to my memory that there were marches in the streets out there, so on and so forth. As a matter of fact, I think the town of Gander tended to leave it to the federal government to carry the can on that one. As my hon. friend says, the member for Gander was on the council out there. Why did he not chain himself to some fence over this thing?

MR. SIMMS:

Or lie on the runway or something like that.

DR. COLLINS:

That is right. In any case, early on in my position as Finance Minister at the time, I think I probably had the first inclination that this was coming about because Mr. Steele came in to see me. If memory serves me right, the Premier was out of the Province and he came in and indicated that he had made a decision.

Subsequently, of course, he passed on the information to the Premier and to the Minister of Transportation. But he happened to strike me on the first instance. There was absolutely no doubt when he came in there it was not to argue, it was not to be cajoled or anything like that, he came in there with a decision. He had made a business decision. I did not like it. I do not think anyone liked it. We tried to do as much as we could subsequently to change his mind, but he had made his decision.

MR. SIMMS:

(Inaudible) was closing that same night.

DR. COLLINS:

Well, perhaps some other members of the party but certainly not the member for Gander who was so wounded by that individual. It could not be. The member for Gander did, as he should have, mentioned his district. I was a little surprised he did not mention a big issue out there, the Terra Nova Tel issue. I was hoping that the member would have given his view on whether the company should be privatized or whether it should remain in the public sector. He is the man on the spot. He is the man who has contact with the people out there. It would have been very interesting to hear his view. Now, perhaps it might not have been the right vie, but it certainly would have been interesting to hear his view. Should Terra Nova Tel be privatized or not? Perhaps the hon. member at some early point will give us his view on that, go into it in some detail and tell us what is the position of the party opposite in that regard. Do they have a position on whether Terra

Nova Tel should be privatized or not?

MR. SIMMS:

The party decision may not be the same as his.

DR. COLLINS:

Well, that is possible. Anyway, I think it would be desirable to hear from him, the man on the spot, what his view is and, perhaps, how his view fits in with the party?

Now, I only have a few minutes left. Let me just turn to the Throne Speech. I thought it was a very good Throne Speech. Throne Speeches are not supposed to lay out in precise detail what we are going to do from minute to minute in this House, or even from day to day. The Throne Speech is to reflect a little bit and to give a sort of general approach for the future. I thought His Honour gave an extremely good Throne Speech, and I thought it was full of interesting points.

For instance, the first point mentioned was the Meech Lake Accord, a very important initiative by the federal government to bind up the wounds of Canada, an initiative that our Premier had a very significant role in. And not only did he have a role in the larger question, shall we say, from a Canadian point of view of keeping our Confederation in better order, or putting it in better order, he had another role which is very important to us, and that is to make sure that the fishery question, the jurisdiction, the input in the resource off our shore, that that should be examined in some detail. I think everyone in this House will agree that the jurisdictional question

in terms of the fishery is not a good one for Canada or for this province. There should be some adjustments made into it. Now, we have sometimes been accused of being totally unrealistic, we want to take over the fishery offshore. We do not want to take over the fishery offshore. We say the present regime is not good enough, it is too one-sided, it is not dealing with realities, and we just want the whole thing looked at again and come to, hopefully, some better arrangement so that -

MR. SIMMS:

In Nova Scotia, last week, the Liberal Party said they wished they had Premier Peckford.

DR. COLLINS:

I had forgotten that. I am glad the hon. the House Leader reminded me, because I had totally forgotten it, that apparently the many people in Nova Scotia think our Premier did such a good job -

MR. SIMMS:

Including the Liberal Party.

DR. COLLINS:

- for this province during those constitutional talks, that they say, My gosh, we wish our Premier over here had done as good a job.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

DR. COLLINS:

That must be a very unusual thing to happen. The Throne Speech next dealt with Free Trade. There are differences of opinion about Free Trade. In this province, I do not think anyone can bring forward any evidence but that Free Trade is going to be excellent for our type of economy. Our economy is an export economy, and most of our exports are directed towards the

United States, and anything that can be done to increase and make easier the flow of trade between Canada and the United States - it is a huge market. I mean, that is the name of the game. We have to have better access than we have now to that massive market down there. In Europe, that was the whole idea for the European Economic Community over there, that they had potentially a large market. It was broken up in all sorts of little pieces so no one could really get any value from the size of the market. They have gotten together and I do not think that anyone in Europe would ever go back. Not that there are no problems. Sure, there are problems, but they would never go back because they now have a very large market and everyone is benefitting from it. We are being given the golden chance of getting into not only a very large market but an extremely rich market, a market that every other country in the world is clamouring to get a piece of, we are being handed it almost on a golden platter. We have a tremendous opportunity here. It was not something that automatically came to us, we had to make sure that the terms were negotiated in such a way that they were in our favor. At certain points in the process some of the terms did not look as good as they should be. We fought to have them improved, and we were successful in many, many cases. It was an effort that had to be put forward, and a very important effort, and I am glad to say that it has come off.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister's time has elapsed.

The hon. the member for Nauskaupi.

MR. KELLAND:

I was hoping, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Health would have allowed me a little more time today. I do not mind listening to him for thirty minutes, I have done it on previous occasions, if he had some substance. Again, as on previous occasions, I am a little disappointed in what he had to say because it is almost a whimsical approach, I suppose which goes along with his particular station in life, that seems to create an atmosphere not quite true.

I am so pleased no one wanted to raise a point of order on that. Anyway, it creates that impression. Of course, I have not said that anything the minister has said is not true, but it certainly can divert your attention from some of the real facts, and some of the moral facts, I suppose, if you want to look at it that way. I particularly took note of his explanation of why the House of Assembly did not need to be open for those nine months.

I think we had a justifiable complaint, that we were not sitting for nine months, very similar to last year, eight months, nine months, whatever. The minister said that members of this Legislature do not have the right to have access to information which they require for the performance of their duties. Now, whether that is something that is legislated, that members do not have a right, we certainly have every moral right. In order for us to carry out our jobs and fulfill our functions as members of the House of Assembly, particularly the official Opposition, which must examine and be critical of and have a look at

what the government is doing to us, in my opinion we have the right to have information on a continual basis as to what government are doing, how they are operating, and how they are spending our money. We do not have to be in the House of Assembly in Session to have that information, because our jobs are year round.

Perhaps the government's approach is that they only work for the few days we are sitting in the House of Assembly, but I can guarantee you the Liberal Opposition and the future Liberal government does not have that attitude. We work year round and we have a right and we have a need to have the information.

So I question the minister's explanation that we do not have the right to have the kind of information that is required. There is a hidden point in that too, Mr. Speaker. The reason why we are not in session has nothing to do with the fact that we average out about the same as any other Provincial Legislature. The reason why we are charged for information is the fact that the government is taking every possible step, making every possible attempt, to prevent us from having that information.

Mr. Speaker, I notice the clock is approaching six o'clock. I would like to adjourn debate.

MR. SIMMS:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. SIMMS:
Mr. Speaker, I just want to

outline for hon. members if I could, just for a moment, for the benefit of all hon. members and to indicate again our co-operative way in this session, that the government proposes as a practice for this session to debate items such as the Throne Speech and the Budget on Mondays and Tuesdays; Wednesdays, of course, would be Private Members' Day; and on Thursday and Fridays we propose to deal with legislation. That will be the general approach, as I have discussed with the Opposition House Leader. Hopefully that will help members prepare a little better. I will also present the list of the legislation tomorrow. We will also try to give as much advanced notice as we can of the legislation to be debated that Thursday and that Friday. However, there is always the caveat that the government has the right to introduce whatever it wishes, I suppose, at the time it wishes.

Does the hon. the Opposition House Leader wish to comment?

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

MR. TULK:
Thursday and Friday are the days after tomorrow and we would like some time over here to get prepared for legislation. Could the hon. gentleman inform us whether we will be doing legislation this Thursday and Friday and just what it is?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the government House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:
Mr. Speaker, as already publicly indicated, I think, we intend to debate the Meech Lake resolution

Thursday and Friday, assuming that it will run Thursday and Friday. If it concludes early on Friday, then we will move into one of the pieces of legislation that we have already given notice of.

If there are no other questions, Mr. Speaker, I move that the House adjourn until tomorrow, Wednesday, at three of the clock and that this House do now adjourn.

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

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