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Speaker: Honourable P.J. McNicholas

Monday

30 May 1988

The House met at 2:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (Greening):
Order, please!

Statements by Ministers

MR. TOBIN:
Mr. Speaker,

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

MR. TOBIN:
Mr. Speaker, it is a great privilege for me to rise in this House today to inform hon. colleagues that this is National Access Awareness Week. To familiarize myself with it, I had intended to be in the House today, in a wheelchair, as requested by the people who are involved in this. Unfortunately, I had a commitment this morning and was late getting back to the office from my district, and had not been able to do so. But I would have been honoured to be here today in a wheelchair in observance of this very valuable week. I think my colleague and friend for St. John's East (Mr. Long) is here today in a wheelchair, so we do have someone here observing this week.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to the attention of the House today that this week, the week of May 29th to June 4th, 1988 has been proclaimed as National Awareness Week.

For those of you who may not be aware, the idea of this particular week was conceived by Rick Hansen during the last part of his Man in Motion Tour. In describing this idea of such a week, Mr. Hansen

noted that he had a dream; a dream of dismantling barriers that would exclude disabled people from community participation. National Access Awareness is about this; identifying and removing any such barriers.

This Province has had a long history of providing services which would allow all people to participate fully with society. Such examples could include my department's rehabilitation programme as well as our policy on de-institutionalization. In view of this, it is not surprising that this Province has not only endorsed the concept of Access Awareness Week but has also been very active in arranging events to take place to highlight individual abilities. It also highlights the need for accessibility.

Under the auspices of the Consumer Organization of Disabled Persons and the Secretary of State, a provincial coordinating committee has been formed which has been very active over the last few months in organizing this Province's contribution to this week. This committee was a joint effort involving some fifteen different agencies and government departments, including, I might add, the Department of Social Services.

This week is to highlight five main areas affecting the disabled and five different sub-committees have planned events for this week. These areas are:

- (a) Housing
- (b) Recreation
- (c) Education
- (d) Transportation
- (e) Employment

Yesterday, the Deputy Minister of

Social Services represented the Province at the opening ceremony and official signing of the proclamation by His Honour The Lieutenant Governor, Mr. James McGrath. In addition to signing this proclamation, His Honour The Lieutenant Governor also took the opportunity to officially unveil a new ramp constructed at Government House.

Mr. Speaker, this is indeed a significant event, because now, for the first time ever, the House, which belongs to all residents of this Province, is now accessible to all residents of this Province. This example, I might add, is, I am sure, what Mr. Hansen had in mind when he conceived the idea of Access Awareness Week.

I believe such a week of awareness is indeed needed and I would like for the House to acknowledge its significance and endorse its principles. In conclusion, it is my personal hope that awareness achieved during this very special week is retained in the minds of everyone for years to come and that all barriers to persons with disabilities quickly disappear in our society. I thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. EFFORD:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. EFFORD:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we, on this side of the House, as all hon. members of

the House of Assembly, I am sure, certainly support the Minister of Social Services in National Access Awareness Week. There is no doubt that many members on this side of the House, as well as other members, and yourself, Mr. Speaker, are well aware of it, because we have family members who are placed in this unfortunate position. There is nothing we can do to make up for the unfortunate situation these people are placed in except, as the Minister of Social Services just said, to support them and to make all areas accessible - transportation, employment, education, recreation and housing - in the best possible way.

As you will remember, over the last couple of weeks we, on this side of the House, asked the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth (Mr. Butt) about the accessibility of parks. He came back in support of that and showed that his department is making the parks and recreation facilities accessible to all handicapped people.

We asked each minister on the other side many times to, in his own portfolio, create employment in the civil service of this government for the same reasons, because we just cannot do enough. Certainly, Mr. Speaker, we support the Minister of Social Services. Anything we on this side can do to co-operate in making more legislation or more rules to help the handicapped and the disabled, we will certainly do. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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.

The microphone does not move, but I will stay in my chair. I want to say thank you to all hon. members, on both sides of the House, for allowing me leave to be able to fulfill my commitment to the Board of Directors and staff at the HUB, perhaps one of the most important institutions for the physically handicapped in the city, that I would today go to work and carry out my responsibilities all day long in a wheelchair so that I might be able to, in a very literal way, come to a better understanding of the point of view of handicapped people.

I can say, from having been in the chair, being picked up at home this morning and being driven to work in one of the buses in the city that is available for handicapped people - I also had a meeting at City Hall at lunch time with residents from the Battery which I had to attend - that I have already learned many, many things about the special point of view that disabled people have; elevators, doors and drinking fountains are among some of the very real concrete problems these people face every day.

I want to thank the Minister of Social Services for the statement and for the initiative by the government in acknowledging the National Access Awareness Week. I might say the minister might have mentioned that the theme for the week is 'Independence, That Is Living'. I think everything this government is doing, and

everything both parties on this side are calling on the government to do more of, is working toward the goal of allowing disabled people to achieve independence.

I might also take the time to mention that the member for Stephenville (Mr. K. Aylward), from the Liberal Opposition is in his riding today, I understand, and is also in a wheelchair, doing various activities in his riding.

Other than that, Mr. Speaker, I think we will continue to bring forward in this House the concerns of disabled people, and raise questions particularly with respect to the difficulties of transportation, access to buildings, and employment programmes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, the increasing demand for female caplin in the lucrative Japanese market has led to the development of a very successful commercial caplin fishery in this Province. The value of our caplin fishery in 1988 will likely approach \$70 million. Over the past ten years this fishery has become an increasingly important factor in the overall viability of many of our fishermen and processors. This government has long recognized the growing importance of this industry and its value to our people.

The very nature of any fishing industry is that it generally has

a cyclical character dominated by fluctuations in landings, but our caplin fishery seems to have generated an unusually high degree of uncertainty and instability. The 1987 caplin fishery was characterized by some difficult market conditions, uncertain production and relatively low economic returns to both fishermen and processors. This followed on the heels of our most successful year ever, in 1986.

Recognizing the importance of this industry to our fishermen and processors, this government made a very serious commitment to increase the stability of this fishery. A number of initiatives have been carried out by my department in an effort to effect a more organized commercial caplin fishery. I personally led a government and industry delegation to Japan last year to view first-hand market conditions in that country; my deputy minister submitted a very comprehensive report on stability in the caplin fishery and numerous discussions have been held between government and industry officials to analyze what measures may be taken to stabilize this very important fishery.

These combined efforts have resulted in creating a higher degree of confidence in the marketplace for Newfoundland caplin. In 1988 the market requirements in Japan and Taiwan will be 34,500 tonnes as compared to approximately 15,000 tonnes in 1987 and, for the first time, there is a commitment on the part of Japanese buyers for a minimum of 25,000 tonnes in 1989.

I believe we can feel very confident that our 1988 caplin fishery will be extremely

successful.

Mr. Speaker, a great deal of progress has been made since I addressed this House in March with a number of recommendations designed to improve the overall performance of the caplin fishery.

In a further effort to improve the performance of this industry, my department has adopted a number of new enforcement and monitoring procedures for this coming season. As minister responsible for the licencing of fish processing plants in this Province, I have sought and received approval to amend the fish inspection regulations which outline the operating requirements for establishments processing caplin into frozen products.

These requirements will establish standards for packaging, freezing, and labelling of female caplin. All female caplin packaged shall now be required to contain not less than 95 percent female and the contents of the container shall not exceed the weight indicated on the container by more than 10 percent. In other words, the over-pack cannot be greater than 10 percent.

Additionally, my department will monitor, on a daily basis, individual plant production to ensure that overall production does not exceed the established market quota in our most important markets in Japan.

These measures were taken after full consultation with the industry and with the Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans which will be responsible for enforcement of those regulations.

These regulations will be strictly

enforced during the 1988 caplin season and I urge all processors to ensure they comply with these new regulations. All processors prior to the commencement of the caplin fishery, will receive an information package fully outlining the amended regulations and monitoring procedures.

Mr. Speaker, these amendments to our existing regulations are indicative of our firm commitment to ensure a successful caplin fishery for 1988 and beyond. This government recognizes the need to regulate the industry in the areas of quality control, packaging and over-pack regulations. These are vital aspects of the industry which must be closely monitored. We have an excellent working relationship with the federal government in this area and I feel extremely confident that industry will offer their full co-operation on this matter. Furthermore, Newfoundland processors have made some real efforts to expand their range of caplin products and markets in Japan and other areas which augers well for the future utilization of this resource.

Since the caplin fishery is scheduled to open on June 1st., we are all anticipating that the processor/union collective bargaining process will finalize caplin prices for fishermen very soon. Perhaps as early as today.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, all indications point to a very successful caplin fishery for 1988. The caplin management plan announced by the federal government on fishing indicated the highest market TAC, or total allowable catch, in our history, confirming our best year ever in the commercial caplin industry in Newfoundland. I fully intend to

ensure that my department will do everything in its power to bring about a very successful caplin fishery for 1988 and for many years to come.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. W. CARTER:
Mr. Speaker.

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

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

The minister, in his statement, mentioned that the caplin fishery this year will represent approximately \$70 million into the economy, Mr. Speaker. That is a rather amazing fact, because who would have thought five years ago that the caplin fishery, which up to that time was pretty well of practically no commercial value, or very little anyway - caplin were used mainly for fertilizer and that sort of thing by Newfoundlanders - would today be a very important segment of our fishing industry?

The regulations announced by the minister today are very necessary. We realize that quality, for example, and packaging and the over-pack, itself, are very important considerations which must be addressed. I am glad to know the minister and his officials have now addressed those problems, because in the past couple of years, certainly, I think, in 1987, I heard a number of stories coming out of my district which would indicate that buyers, maybe, were given a little bit too much leeway in the requirements they

were demanding of our local fishermen; I know of cases where longliner loads of caplin had to be dumped because some buyer would not accept the quality of the caplin and, in many cases, the decision on the part of the buyers in that regard were questionable. So I think the regulations are important.

Mr. Speaker, the minister here talks mainly about the Japanese market and the small market, I believe in Taiwan, for caplin. I do not know what markets exist in the world for caplin, but certainly I think the department should explore other markets and should expand where possible, because it is not a healthy situation to be totally dependent on one or even two markets. So I would strongly suggest that maybe we explore new markets now for this very valuable industry.

Mr. Speaker, when we talk about the processing of caplin we are talking about the processing of female caplin, which leads to another question. What, if anything, can be done to better develop a male caplin industry? I was interested in an article in The Evening Telegram on the weekend which talks about FADA, the Fish Aid Development Agency. It has a market for, I believe, twenty tonnes of dried male caplin.

I believe areas which I know very well, Branch and St. Bride's, in Placentia Bay, the people up there have been given an undertaking that if certain funds can be made available, they can provide markets for at least, as a start, 20 metric tonnes of dried caplin. Having read the article itself, I think it is pretty obvious that with a little bit of foresight and planning, there is a market for

male caplin. Mr. Speaker, I would again strongly urge the minister to maybe increase his efforts to ensure that everything possible is done to provide markets for male caplin, as well.

I have heard other stories in recent days, Mr. Speaker, to the effect that while we are going to have a good caplin fishery - that is obvious, and we are very happy and very pleased that that is so - maybe the prospects of a good caplin fishery are have a detrimental effect on the chances of negotiating a decent price for groundfish this year. I have been told, and maybe this is only rumour, that a lot of the processing plants in anticipation of a good caplin fishery and good prices, are now sort of dragging their heels, as it were, or not showing the kind of interest they should be showing in the groundfish processing sector. That would be unfortunate, because a lot of Newfoundlanders depend, of course, on the groundfish fishery.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The hon. member's time is up.

MR. W. CARTER:
May I conclude, Mr. Speaker, by saying not every Newfoundlander has the licence or the capability to involve himself in the caplin fishery. We welcome the announcement, Mr. Speaker, and commend the minister for it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. FENWICK:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker, we are pleased to see the prospects of an excellent caplin fishery this year. We appreciate the fact that the minister's department has done a considerable amount of work to identify the problems and now, hopefully, we will have a smooth fishery and, at the end of it, will end up with a few dollars in the pockets of our fishermen.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to confine my comments to the part of the caplin that is not used, the male caplin, and, quite frankly, other than the roe, the female caplin is not as heavily used as well, and it seems to me that we have an opportunity in this Province to break out of the stereotype and the small thinking that we tended to confine ourselves to in the past.

I remember several years ago, when the government of the day responded to requests that we made about contributing money to help Ethiopian famine relief, and I think for the very first time in living memory we actually contributed funds to Oxfam in order to help with the famine relief in Ethiopia.

Mr. Speaker, I am not saying that we have a particular famine to address in Africa or elsewhere in the world today, but surely throwing away thousands of tonnes of male caplin because we have not been able to develop a market for it is not a particularly moral thing for anybody in this world to do.

Maybe what we should do, with organizations like FADA, the Fish Aid Development Association,

which, I understand, is having some financial troubles now and may actually go out of existence, is take a much more active role there to provide a market for our fishermen, but really more importantly, to say to the rest of the world that even though we do not have a lot of material goods in this Province and we do not have a tremendously high standard of living by comparison to other places, we do have a heart and we have an obligation to other parts of the world that are much worse off than us.

So, I would strongly urge our provincial Department of Fisheries, the Premier's office and everyone concerned, to help organizations like FADA which have tried to put in place a system of delivering this unused protein to places in the world where it is needed. I think it says something about us as a people if we can do it, and I strongly urge both the Department of Fisheries, and the government as a whole, to try and do everything they can to move that fish out to where it belongs, to people who are starving in this world. Thank you, very much, Mr. Speaker.

Oral Questions

MR. WELLS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. WELLS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, my question is for the hon. the Premier. Now that the Premier has advised the House

that he has not given any specific approvals for the contracts and the renewals of the contracts for the premises rented to the government and government agencies by Terra Nova Enterprises Limited, and recognizing the fact that government is paying to that company in total something exceeding \$380,000 per year, and that the Deputy Premier has a 25 per cent interest in that company, will he now recognize that a serious conflict exists and require the Deputy Premier to either dispose of his interests in that company, so as to remove that conflict, or to resign as a minister?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I dealt with that matter last week here in the House, that the Deputy Premier did all the things that he had to do under the Conflict of Interest legislation and guidelines as they exist, back to 1979. The Deputy Premier is now just checking out why his name appeared again even years after he had the shares put in trust. So the Deputy Premier having had nothing to do whatsoever with the company from 1979 to this very minute, to this very hour, there is no conflict of interest. The Deputy Premier has carried out all of the necessary requirements that existed under the Conflict of Interest legislation and under the regulations.

MR. WELLS:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. WELLS:

Do we conclude then, Mr. Speaker, from the hon. the Premier's remarks, that he approves of the situation where a minister can continue to hold an interest in a company doing business with the government so long as he transfers the title to the shares to somebody's name in trust, and that that company can continue to do significant levels of business with the government, that that is what the Premier approves of?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

I approve of the truth and the facts as they come out. We have a system in place whereby this is handled, and this system, that is now in place, is being reviewed, as the Throne Speech said a couple of months ago. At the present moment, as it stands, the truth and the facts are that the Deputy Premier was not in conflict. He put the shares in trust in 1979 and had no more to do with the company from that time, when he became a minister of the Crown. So the facts and the truth are that the minister is not in conflict.

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Gander.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

On Thursday in the House the Premier, in answer to a question about the dumping of cucumbers, indicated to the House that there was a certain limited amount of dumping involving culls and some of the vines that had outlived

their usefulness, and some organic material that was being sold to farmers, and that this was the extent of the dumping of cucumbers. Contrary to the Premier's statement in the House on Thursday on the weekend we all saw, in living colour, some packaged large, cellophaned cucumbers that had been dumped somewhere around Conception Bay.

I would like to ask the Premier, how much of this approved, package cucumber was dumped and if he could enlighten the House as to why it was dumped?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
Mr. Speaker, I have indicated that I have given all the answers that I am going to give on this project. If the hon. member wants more questions answered he can direct them to the company.

MR. BAKER:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. BAKER:
Mr. Speaker, it is rather strange that the Premier, who had taken over complete control of this project from his office, now all of a sudden has passed it back. I wonder why?

We all see, Mr. Premier--

MR. TOBIN:
Question! Question!

MR. BAKER:
I will listen to the Speaker and not the hon. minister.

Is this dumping the result of the

intemperate, ill-advised and extreme statements by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Power) last week? Is this dumping the result of that? If so, how much has it cost the Province?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
Mr. Speaker, I have answered all the questions I am going to answer on that project.

MR. BAKER:
A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. BAKER:
When is the Premier going to stop sloughing off the responsibility he took for this project so completely and come clean and give us the answers to questions we have been asking day after day after day in this House? It is our business, it is the people's business, Mr. Premier, you have taken the interest in this company, so when are you going to come clean with it?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
Mr. Speaker, I think the question was when am I going to come clean. I have always been clean, am clean, and will continue to be clean.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Career Development and Advanced Studies (Mr. Matthews). It is in relationship to the bankruptcy of the Harbinger School of Business, which went bankrupt last year. This bankruptcy ostensibly has perpetuated a terrible and an unconscionable act of injustice on many students throughout the Province, particularly students who withdrew from the programme before the bankruptcy situation had developed.

And my question is this: Are these students, particularly the students who withdrew from programmes through various circumstances before bankruptcy, are these students who were caught up in this bankruptcy situation liable for and responsible for the portion of student loans issued directly to the school, student loans amounting, Mr. Speaker, to \$4,000, \$5,000, or \$6,000, monies which these students did not receive?

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker, what we are talking about here again is a private business, a private training school that students entered into knowing full well what monies they were to pay up front in the form of tuition and other fees. The Department of Career Development, at the request of those concerned, became involved in this particular problem to try and facilitate accommodating students in other

schools around the city. And, as I said, we did that only upon request. We did it and we felt very good about placing students in other locations to continue their studies. It is a private concern, a private enterprise that has failed, as I said at the time. Our only involvement was to facilitate placing of students in other locations.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:

I point out to the minister that the government advanced these monies to the school. I ask is the minister aware - I use the example of a young, unemployed lady from my own district, and I think that is pretty typical - that a student, from the district of Bonavista North, received a student loan amounting to \$5225, \$1400 of which paid the first part of the tuition, and the school gave her \$1000 for cash, and now she has to pay the total amount of \$5225 to the bank, \$2800 of which she never saw? Is the minister aware that the problem is that grave?

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker, all I can say to that is if the hon. member has a specific case like that that he wants me to check into and see the details, and see if it can be resolved in some manner, then I very much welcome the opportunity to do so. But I just want to reiterate that the student entered

into an agreement with the school. It is very unfortunate what happened with the Harbinger School of Business, it is not something that we look upon very favourably; but we do have a piece of legislation that we are introducing here in the next day or so that will strengthen the Private Training Schools Act to give students greater protection. Of course, the Act was brought in first back in the '70s and there have been a lot of changes since then. We want to strengthen and put some teeth in the Act to give students greater protection in case of failures such as we saw with Harbinger. If the hon. gentleman has a specific case that he wants me to look into, I will be more than glad to take it up and see if there is some way to resolve it, without, of course, giving him any guarantees in the House today that that can be done.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:

I thank the minister for his answer. I ask the minister this: Does his department or the government not feel any sense of obligation in helping these students who were innocently caught in this bankruptcy situation, thereby losing thousands and thousands of dollars? Does the minister or the government feel any sense of moral obligation, political obligation, Mr. Speaker, to help all of those students who were innocently and faultlessly caught in the bankruptcy of this private school?

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker, we have done everything we could in this very difficult situation of facilitating accommodations elsewhere. We arranged meetings with Keyin Technical College, and Lawrence College was consequently established to carry on with courses students had been receiving at Harbinger. These schools, I might say, were very, very accommodating in that they did not charge the students anything above and beyond, which we thought was a tremendous show of faith and good will on their part.

We are very concerned about future happenings along similar lines, and that is why we are strengthening the legislation in the next day or so to build protection into the act for students. We are going to increase the amount of bonding that has to take place, so that in the case of failures like this students are protected, Mr. Speaker.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, the minister knows very well I am not talking about the students who were placed in different courses, I am talking about the students who were forced to withdraw. And my question is this: Since it was sloppy regulations by the government, slap-dash regulations that caused this to happen, is the minister

going to publicly state that he will do something to help those students to restore their confidence in the financial, democratic and social structure of this Province, Mr. Speaker?

MR. MATTHEWS:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. MATTHEWS:
Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. gentleman is getting a little excited about this particular matter. I might say that this particular issue is six or seven months old, I think. I believe it is six or seven months since this particular issue arose, and we tried to deal with it as best we could. I do not know why the hon. gentleman today, six months late, has brought up this matter as being tremendously urgent. We have dealt with it on a consistent basis, Mr. Speaker. We have facilitated the students, accommodating them elsewhere to complete their studies. We had the curriculum checked out at the Keyin Technical College and the Lawrence College to see that they indeed fitted what had been happening at Harbinger. And if the hon. gentleman has a specific case, I said let me know and I will check it out to see if something can be done, without making any guarantee.

MR. GULLAGE:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the member for Waterford - Kenmount.

MR. GULLAGE:
Mr. Speaker, a question to the

Premier, in the absence of the Minister of Consumer Affairs and Communications (Mr. Young). Last year we saw drug patent legislation come into being under Bill C-22, and this legislation was encouraged and looked for by the drug companies, which were promising extra spending on research and development over a ten year period, which was never legislated but certainly promised, and as a result of that request, during the start of the free trade negotiations, we have seen excessive drug costs result in Canada. My question is Why would this government encourage and back up that bill at that time, which has seen these excessive costs take place?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
I know the hon. member is a new member of the House, and before becoming a member of the House he was, and still is a member of the City Council, and is, one would presume, an informed citizen of Newfoundland and Labrador, but his question leads me to believe otherwise. We objected to the introduction of this in the House of Commons.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

PREMIER PECKFORD:
We objected in this House, we objected outside this House, we wrote letters, we had meetings with the federal representative in the Cabinet of Canada, I wrote the Minister of Consumer Affairs in Ottawa myself. The Minister of Health objected to his counterpart in Ottawa, the Minister of Consumer Affairs wrote his counterpart in Ottawa three times

from here. We objected to it in every way, shape and form, and completely opposed the legislation, because our best assessment was that we would not, here in Newfoundland, for example, get a countervailing amount of money in research and development and jobs that would offset what we saw as an increasing burden upon those who are least able to pay for drugs in our Province, and I think it looks like it may be coming true. There have been some who said there would be some R and D money coming to the local hospital here, but I do not think it is going to be so significant as to offset our original objections, and we continue to object to the initiative taken by the federal government.

MR. GULLAGE:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the member for Waterford - Kenmount.

MR. GULLAGE:
Given all of that activity last year, what does the Premier now plan to do? Now that we see the debate about to heat up on the free trade agreement once again, no doubt this condition is still part of the condition that was in place at the time, what does the government now plan to do to see that an amendment takes place in the legislation?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
I think the hon. member is very confused. I think he is automatically concluding that the drug patent legislation had something to do with free trade.

MR. GULLAGE:
That is the implication of it.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
No, not from anything I have seen.

MR. GULLAGE:
Let us see what happens this Summer.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
Well, you are guessing. The hon. member has either got to produce evidence, and then reach a conclusion based upon that evidence and therefore the conclusion is valid, or otherwise he makes a statement based on no evidence that is not necessarily valid.

MR. DECKER:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. DECKER:
Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. the Minister of Forest Resources (Mr. R. Aylward). This minister was not the Forestry Minister two years ago, but he might recall two years ago that because the Forest Rangers in the Strait of Belle Isle district were not hired early enough, I accused the government of possibly having something to do with the forest fire which took place up there at the same time this was going on. I ask the minister now is he aware that the five Forest Rangers in the Strait of Belle Isle district are not yet hired for the season?

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

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

No, I am not aware right now, Mr. Speaker, but I will certainly take it under advisement and report back to the hon. member.

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. DECKER:

I thank the minister for his promise, and I ask will he undertake to have these five people hired immediately? I understand, and the minister could probably correct me, that the other Forest Rangers throughout the Province have been hired. So I am asking will he undertake to see that, before the day is over, these five men have been reinstated?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Forest Resources.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Mr. Speaker, I told the hon. gentleman I was not aware of the problem. I will take it under advisement and I will certainly report back to him.

MR. LONG:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. LONG:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I have a question today for the Minister of Social Services, and it concerns the fact that this is

National Access Awareness Week. Mr. Speaker, I am in a wheelchair today but, of course, at the end of the day I will leave my chair and be back to work in regular capacity tomorrow, but for many people that is not the case.

I would like to ask the minister is the government considering a proposal, in light of a commitment from the city of St. John's, to provide another van to the HUB? There is a 50/50 cost-sharing agreement, so is the Province committed to doing everything it can to ensure that the HUB will be able to purchase two new vehicles for the transportation of the handicapped?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, the provincial Department of Social Services extends a substantial amount of money every year to the HUB. Our programmes are ongoing. We have met with the people from the HUB over the past few months, discussed several issues with them, and, yes, we are committed to doing everything we can to help the handicapped people in this Province.

MR. LONG:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. LONG:

Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for that commitment. I am sure the HUB will look forward to the purchase of the vans.

I would like to ask the minister

about the status of the monitoring procedures on building accessibility and the important work that the government has committed itself to. Specifically I would like to ask the minister is he aware that the government's own Howley Building, just here on Higgins Line, is in no way accessible to citizens of this Province who must go there to do land registration work in search of their deeds? Would the minister give an undertaking to look into that situation?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, I think that question would probably be better directed to my colleague, the Minister of Labour, whose jurisdiction that comes under.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Labour.

MR. BLANCHARD:

Mr. Speaker, I think I got the gist of the question. It is the first time it has come to my attention. I have had no complaint on it. I will take it under advisement and I will report to the hon. member what the situation is.

MR. LONG:

Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. LONG:

My final supplementary is again to the Minister of Social Services, who is responsible for government's activities with respect to the needs of

handicapped people. Will he give a commitment to the House today that the government will continue to put in place measures to implement the employment equity report, especially in light of the needs in transportation and physical accessibility, which is to say that these other two issues that I have raised are critical to employment equity in this Province? Could the minister speak to the principle of transportation and physical access in light of the employment equity programme that the minister is committed to?

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, we have never backed away, as a government, from supporting anything that we could support within the fiscal capacity of this government. I think if you look at the budget of the Department of Social Services and other agencies and other departments, Mr. Speaker, we have a pretty good record in this Province as it relates to supporting various groups around the Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Twillingate.

MR. W. CARTER:

My question goes to the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Rideout) and it

concerns a statement made by the minister on May 16 wherein he announced that his department would provide a \$20,000 grant to the Fish Aid Development Agency, FADA. The purpose of this grant, he said, was to pursue market development initiatives in West Africa. Mr. Speaker, on the weekend it was speculated in **The Evening Telegram** that the Fish Aid Agency might fold for lack of funding. Was the minister aware of these problems within the Development Agency, Mr. Speaker, when the \$20,000 grant was announced?

MR. RIDEOUT:
Mr. Speaker,

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

MR. RIDEOUT:
Mr. Speaker, I have been aware for several months that the Fish Aid Development Agency is having financial difficulty. I have had numerous meetings with Mr. Foley, who is active with FADA. I have had numerous meetings with representatives from CEIC, the federal government, through which FADA has been trying to access some funding. And I do not have the number right off the top of my head here today but I can get it, but, Mr. Speaker, it is generally correct to say that it has been my department and this government that has kept FADA alive over the last year or so with several thousands of dollars worth of grants.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. W. CARTER:
Mr. Speaker,

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the member for Twillingate.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, in the article, Mr. Foley, the President of FADA, was quoted as stating that his agency has applied for a \$100,000 grant from the Federal/Provincial Inshore Fisheries Development Agreement, and that the provision of that amount of money would certainly provide a number of jobs, in fact, he states twenty jobs in the Placentia Bay area, for the processing of male caplin. Mr. Speaker, given the fact that Newfoundlanders are now endeavouring to secure markets for male caplin, has the minister made representation specifically to his federal counterpart with a view to having that amount of money made available to the agency to enable them to pursue their objective of processing and finding a market for male caplin?

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

MR. RIDEOUT:
Mr. Speaker, on the particular request that the hon. gentleman is now referring to, I think it was only a day so ago, certainly one day last week, that that particular request reached my office, so obviously we are assessing it now and will act on it as best we can.

But in the past, Mr. Speaker, I have made numerous representations to various agencies and departments of the Government of Canada on behalf of FADA. And I say again to the hon. gentleman and to this House that it has been my department and this government that has kept FADA alive financially for the last several months.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. EFFORD:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Port de Grave.

MR. EFFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My question is to the Minister of Social Services. In light of the fact that the Premier of this Province has been boasting about the economic conditions and the number of jobs created, and the well-being that his government has brought to the people, and the minister himself has said that his department is doing everything possible for the people of this Province, would the minister explain to the House of Assembly, in his own words, why lineups at food banks in St. John's and around the Province are growing at such a rapid rate?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, it is not only the Department of Social Services, because when the hon. gentleman makes reference to the economic conditions of the Province under this administration he is exactly right, that things are growing, growing very fast, Mr. Speaker. Economic conditions in this Province have changed drastically. We are on the road to an astounding recovery, Mr. Speaker, and the people on social assistance, the people on the lower levels of unemployment, I think, in a matter of time, will see this Province changing

certainly for the benefit of all of us.

MR. EFFORD:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. EFFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Obviously the Minister of Social Services did not understand the question I asked him. I ask him again, Mr. Speaker, why are the lineups growing not only at food banks in St. John's, but food banks have been extended to Lewisporte, Freshwater and Placentia? Why are these lineups taking place at food banks while the minister says that everything is okay in the Province? Give us an explanation on why this is happening!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, you know, the hon. gentleman gets up and talks about the food banks in St. John's, and now they are extended to Placentia and to Lewisporte. Why is the hon. gentleman, Mr. Speaker, against the people of Placentia and Lewisporte having the same type of access to these things as the people in St. John's?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. EFFORD:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. EFFORD:

Mr. Speaker, it is absolutely disgraceful for the Minister of Social Services to stand in his place and make a statement like that this afternoon.

I ask the Minister of Social Services when is he going to take his job seriously enough to implement some new policies and increase the allowance his department is now giving to recipients to at least a decent amount so they can at least buy groceries and buy some decent clothes to put on their children, or is the minister going to resign and let somebody else who is going to do a better job fill the seat?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, I take my job as minister very seriously, and that is why Wednesday evening past we had about 750 employees of the Department of Social Services attending a conference, Mr. Speaker, whereby we had various workshops and training programmes on for them. The Premier was there, Mr. Speaker, as guest speaker. He got a tremendous reception, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. TOBIN:

He was able, Mr. Speaker, to advise or inform or announce to the gathering that an additional thirty permanent positions have been created for the Department of Social Services in this year's budget, and we are going to work

very closely with all of the people in the field, a very dedicated group of individuals. Despite the hon. gentleman, Mr. Speaker, things in this Province are getting better.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. EFFORD:

Mr. Speaker, did they have Kraft dinner for supper?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. GILBERT:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Bay d'Espoir.

MR. GILBERT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I have a question for the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Doyle). Now that the federal government has introduced legislation to privatize Air Canada, has your government developed a position on privatization and have they had any discussions with the federal government concerning the privatization of Air Canada?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Transportation.

MR. DOYLE:

No, Mr. Speaker. The hon. gentleman would be aware that this matter is not under the provincial jurisdiction of the Department of Transportation, but is a federal matter. No, Mr. Speaker, we have not.

MR. GILBERT:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir.

MR. GILBERT:

Mr. Speaker, if it is not under his jurisdiction, is the minister sure that air service to Newfoundland will not be downgraded if Air Canada is privatized? That is a point he should be interested in!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Transportation.

MR. DOYLE:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman can be assured if anything like that happens that the Government of Newfoundland will be swiftly making representation the federal government to ensure that that does not happen.

MR. GILBERT:

A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A final supplementary, the hon. the member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir.

MR. GILBERT:

It seems to me again to be a case of where they close the gate after the horse has escaped. Has the minister discussed with the federal government the effect of privatization on the airports in, say, Gander, Deer Lake, and Stephenville, the airports outside St. John's? What effect will it have? I ask has the minister done any planning on that?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Transportation.

MR. DOYLE:

We have been given assurances that

there will be no downgrading of the service, and, as I indicated to the member a moment ago, if and when this happens we will be making representation to the federal government on it.

MR. HISCOCK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Eagle River.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. HISCOCK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My question is to the Premier. When the Premier was visiting the district last Fall, he promised water and sewerage to the people of Cartwright and Mary's Harbour, the Labrador Straits area. The list is still not published, but my question to the Premier, is will money be allocated this year for water and sewerage for the three communities mentioned?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I do not think I promised water and sewer. I met with a number of councils there and we discussed some of the problems they had, especially in Cartwright, in completing their system. It might have come up in the discussion we had with the Development Association and the council in Red Bay. The hon. member said I had promised water and sewer to all the communities I visited in the area. In Cartwright there was a discussion about the fishery, there was a discussion about ongoing jobs at the new development that is going

ahead there, and there was a discussion about another phase of water and sewer. In Red Bay a number of things came up, including tourism and so on, and finishing the road to Red Bay, which was then under reconstruction, and construction will continue until it is completed. Water and sewer might have come up at that meeting. There was no promise made. I was in West St. Modeste and it never came up. I was in Forteau and it never came up. I was in L'Anse au loup and L'Anse au Clair and I do not think it came up in either of those places.

MR. HISCOCK:

In Mary's Harbour.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

I am coming to Mary's Harbour in a second.

It was raised in Cartwright by the local leaders. I did not promise it. It was raised in Red Bay and I did not promise it. In Mary's Harbour, Labrador, we had a discussion on many things, and I would not like to prioritize one over the other, whether it be water and sewer or some other work to be done on the crab plant there in Mary's Harbour. It was not promised, but we listened to their concerns and their problems, and said that we would take them back with us and review them, and obviously they would be part of any ongoing discussions we would have with the Department of Municipal Affairs. I think the hon. member is incorrect when he says that I promised something to them.

MR. SPEAKER:

The time for Oral Questions has expired.

Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees

MR. BUTT:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. BUTT:

Thank you, Your Honour.

I wish to table the annual report of the Newfoundland and Labrador Youth Advisory Council. In doing so, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to tell hon. members in the House I recently met with those very intelligent young people down at Max Simms Camp for the handicapped. They have taken on a lot of new initiatives this year and are involved in some pretty serious discussions, such as teenage pregnancy and illiteracy problems in youth. They are establishing a new communications link with government through a communications group within the Advisory Council, and they are also now, Mr. Speaker, publishing and intensifying their efforts in making this newspaper, **The Troubadour**, a true success and a true voice of youth in Newfoundland and Labrador.

I have great pleasure in tabling the report, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

Answers to Questions for which Notice has been Given

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, this afternoon the hon. gentleman from St. John's East asked a question about transportation to the HUB. I have checked with my colleague, the Minister of Transportation, who is responsible. In the last few years, Mr. Speaker, the provincial government's Department of Transportation has spent in excess of \$250,000 in that transportation system in the City, Mr. Speaker. At this particular point in time, a replacement for a HUB vehicle is on order, a vehicle which will once again be cost-shared by the federal and provincial governments.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

Petitions

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker, I have a petition from about 300 people from Croque and St. Julien's area. The prayer of the petition, Mr. Speaker, is: "The undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to instruct the Department of Communications to make assistance available to residents or cable companies so that cable television can be available to the residents of Croque and St. Julien's."

MR. SJMMS:

That is totally a federal matter.

MR. DECKER:

Obviously the hon. member is not listening to the prayer of the petition. I suggest, as soon as it is tabled, he get a copy and read it and then he will be able to make an intelligent comments on it, Mr. Speaker. It would be rather unusual for that member to make an intelligent comment on anything.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MORGAN:

Get 'Rompkey' to do it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. DAWE:

That petition is out of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. MORGAN:

It is out of order.

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker, as hon. members will know, most Newfoundlanders today have access to cable television in this Province. Over the last couple of years the Great Northern Peninsula has been fortunate enough to get most of the communities on that Peninsula access to cable television. It is not necessary, I am sure, to tell hon. members about the excitement and the hope that went along with the installation of cable television on the Northern Peninsula.

Mr. Speaker, when the majority of the communities and towns received cable television, there was also a great deal of disappointment among

people who live in a few of the smaller places where there are less than some fifty subscribers, less than fifty hookups for cable television. Whenever a company goes into a small place to hook up, Mr. Speaker, they have learned that it is not viable to give this service unless there are at least fifty hookups.

Croque and St. Julien's do not have enough hookups to make this a viable venture. Eddies Cove East over on the West Coast of the Northern Peninsula, Gunners Cove, Ship Cove and Shoal Cove East are also in the same situation.

What the people are asking for is if this government could come to some understanding with the Cable Television Company. For example, Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro is a Crown corporation. I know government does not exactly tell them what to do, but I am sure it would be in order if the government could influence Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro to lower the rate they charge for their poles in St. Julian's, Croque, Gunners Cove or wherever the case might be.

If the retail sales tax applied to companies setting up cable television could be waived or at least reduced in places like St. Julian's or Croque, I am sure it would be an enticement for companies to go in and set up.

I also understand, I have learned through the grape-vine, Mr. Speaker, and I hope I am not wrong, and if the Minister of Consumer Affairs and Communications (Mr. Russell) were here he could either contradict me or backup what I am saying, but I understand there was some interest shown by the Department of

Communications in this Province. There has been some interest shown in at least making it possible to have cable television made available to the places where there are less than fifty families.

If that is the case, I want to be among the first to commend this government for taking this action. If I am hearing something which is not the case, I also want to be among the first to suggest to them that there is nothing wrong with the Department of Consumer Affairs and Communications finding some way, either by a direct grant or, as I said, by giving Newfoundland Hydro to drop their rate for the poles, or to do something with the retail sales tax.

If the Department of Consumer Affairs and Communications is not already doing something, then I want to be among the first to suggest they should do something because people in St. Julian's and Croque, where there are less than fifty families, I believe deserve access to cable television. People in Eddies Cove East, Shoal Cove East and Ship Cove deserve access to it.

I hope, with the way technology is improving, that within just a few years then it might well be viable for cable television to go in where there are less than fifty households. But, in the meantime, in the interim, while we are waiting for technology to catch up, surely we can answer this petition to the people in St. Julian's and Croque and tell them at least the government is listening and that the government will find some way to assist the companies so those people can have access to this great service.

I see the Minister responsible for the Status of Women is nodding his head in agreement. I believe, as a concerned minister, he certainly will use his influence when this comes up before Cabinet.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be able to support this petition and I appeal to other members to likewise support this petition.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. LUSH:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:
Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to stand and support the petition so ably presented by my colleague, the member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Decker) on behalf of constituents in his district. His constituents are looking for the right to have that very important service of cable television provided to their area.

Mr. Speaker, it is one thing to ask for a service. It is one thing to put in a request for a service, but when people suggest how it should be done, I think, they should be commended. These people have suggested a couple of methods whereby they can be provided with this service.

I was surprised by the comment of the member for Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan) suggesting this was not a provincial matter. Mr. Speaker, we all know it is not a provincial matter, but that does not mean the government buries its head in the sand and does not take

an interest in seeing all the communities in Newfoundland are provided with this service and any other services federally supplied or come under federal jurisdiction.

Certainly, it is the duty of the government and the duty of all hon. members to ensure that our people are provided with all levels of services, be they television, be they provincial jurisdiction or federal jurisdiction. Certainly, the Province should be very concerned about this.

They should be concerned about the rates. I wonder if members of the government have ever officially undertaken to see, for example, whether the rates being charged by these television cable companies are fair rates, and whether the rate charged by Hydro for the use of their utility poles is a fair rate.

I think this is one of the things we could look into in terms of putting television into smaller communities; communities which do not reach the population quota. This is certainly one way by which it could be done, looking into the rates Hydro are charging customers. One could find out that maybe it would not have to be a substantial reduction to allow the company the margin of profit they would want to get to get into these areas.

I am sure there are all kind of things that can be done to provide television to smaller communities, particularly communities which are adjacent. I know, for example, in some areas, if you take two communities close together, one community large and the other one small, the license is granted on

the basis they go to the small community. They service the big one, but as a condition, the license is granted on the basis that they service the small community. The idea being, of course, the larger unit will pay for the smaller area. These might be things that we can look into.

Certainly, the notion or idea of asking Newfoundland Hydro and Newfoundland Light and Power, for that matter, whoever it is owns the utility poles in a particular area, to look at reducing the price is good, because really it is of no cost to them. It is gravy, because the utility poles are there and they have to maintain them, even if there were never any cable television. The cable television does not put any great extra stress on the poles and the poles are there. If the cable never came, they are going to need them so the monies Newfoundland Hydro gets from this is just gravy, absolute gravy.

So, as a means of providing service to underprivileged people, particularly with respect to television services, cable television, in particular, this is an area the minister could look into.

He might be surprised, just by looking at that measure, how many communities could be provided with cable television throughout Newfoundland with that one little concession.

I do not know what the rates are now but I do know at one time they were rather exorbitant. I believe the Public Utilities Board might now control it in some way. I am not certain but I do remember, first when the cable television company started using these poles,

the prices they quoted were rather exorbitant. Mr. Speaker, that certainly is a noble suggestion.

I do not want to sound like I am belabouring the point too much, but to me that is a very significant suggestion, one of the best suggestions I have heard in a long time and it is certainly worthy of the government's probing just to see what that measure alone will amount to and just to see if the offsetting of that charge could not help the cable companies to move in without losing money.

Nobody expects cable companies to move into areas and lose money. That is not the idea of it, but certainly we, as politicians, must be concerned our people are provided with all of these services, particularly this service of cable television as we are approaching the 1990s. All of our people throughout our Province naturally want to have that service, a very valuable service, and particularly these people as it could be very educational for these people to receive television. So I certainly hope the minister will give the suggestion the serious consideration it warrants.

Mr. Speaker, I support the prayer of the petition and certainly hope the minister will investigate the request and the suggestion made by the hon. member's constituents.

Thank you.

MR. SIMMS:
Mr. Speaker,

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

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, I will just have a brief word on this. I believe the minister did, in response on another occasion to some other type of representation from the member for Twillingate (Mr. W. Carter), I believe, on a similar topic, I think he indicated he was sympathetic in his position as Minister of Consumer Affairs and Communications. On behalf of the government, I will refer the petition or the case presented by the hon. member to the Minister of Consumer Affairs (Mr. Young) and ask him if there is anything that he can do.

Might I suggest also through, maybe the member might want to take the initiative himself, in addition to presenting the petition, to write the Minister responsible for Hydro (Mr. Windsor) perhaps and put forth the question you asked rhetorically in your presentation about a reduction of the pole attachment prices. Maybe if you wrote the Minister responsible for Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro, at least you would get a response in writing to see whether or not that is feasible. It is a suggestion.

In the meantime, I will take the representation and ensure that the Minister of Consumer Affairs and Communications gets it. I guess that is where the Clerk, I would assume, would refer the petition to the minister in any event and he would eventually respond. Usually it is to the first name on the petition, which may I just mention as an aside, I have to be careful how I say this because I do not want to give the impression I have any problem with the people from Croque, St. Julien's and those other places making a

presentation on their own behalf with respect to a problem they have.

Surely it is the responsibility of members of the House to ensure it is properly done. I know it is an old issue we debated and debated and generally speaking we have already agreed to accept almost anything that comes in. But having been here for nine years and watching some formal petitions come forward, properly put together with the assistance of the member and so on, it sometimes is a bit irritate, I suppose, to see the actual petition, the proper petition the hon. member presented, is really this first page, and that is a petition from John Efford, Beaton Tulk, and Chris Decker. I think that is stretching it all a little tiny bit. I think the petition, and I am making a general observation -

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

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

MR. TULK:

I am not going to waste the hon. gentleman's time, but this petition did come from the people in the member's district. In order to get their voice before this Legislature, three of us felt it was necessary, as there has been a ruling about the prayer of petitions, we felt it was necessary to put it there.

So let us not have any inferences about anything else at all.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. SIMMS:

I am not inferring anything at all, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TULK:

Yes, you are.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. SIMMS:

Of course, there is not, Mr. Speaker, it is a genuine concern I have as a member of the House. I think members have the responsibility to help their constituents and work with their constituents to present petitions properly. That is all I am saying. I do not think there is anything wrong with that.

I already prefaced my remarks by saying I have no problem with the right to do it or anything. If we are going to do it, then let us do it properly. If we are not going to do it properly, then we should not do it.

The hon. member should not be over anxious. He is over anxious. He was anxious to get up today and speak on a point of order, there was no need to do that.

Mr. Speaker, I will, as I said, take the representation and pass it on to the Minister of Consumer Affairs, but I would also suggest that the member himself might wish to write the Minister responsible for Hydro and see what response he gets to that specific request.

I believe I heard these people on CBC, somebody from Gunners Cove -

MR. DECKER:

No, that was not Gunners Cove.

MR. SIMMS:

Oh, that was another one. Anyway, they were talking about a similar problem and I believe one of the responses made by somebody responsible for cable television, or somebody who owned the cable television business, mentioned the fact that there are literally 100 communities around the Province with the same kind of problem and difficulty, and I guess from their perspective it is whether or not it is profitable to do it and that kind of thing.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, I will make sure the representation is made to the minister.

AN HON. MEMBER:

You will also write them, will you not?

MR. SIMMS:

I have asked him to write. It is his responsibility as the member for the area. I would suggest he do that.

AN HON. MEMBER:

It is up to the government now.

MR. SIMMS:

I said I would pass it on to the Minister of Consumer Affairs for the the official representation from government on this issue. But, with respect to the aside issue - well not aside issue, probably pertinent issue, related issue - I suggest the member write the Minister responsible for Hydro.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Why can you not do that?

MR. SIMMS:

You fellows over there have secretaries and typewriters and everything-like that.

AN HON. MEMBER:

That means you are not going to do anything about it.

Orders of the Day

MR. SIMMS:

We will continue now with debate on Order 11, Bill No. 7, "An Act To Amend The Schools Act."

MR. SPEAKER:

Bill 7, Order 11.

The hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker, I was quite pleased on Thursday, when I originally started my comments on this, that I had ten minutes left today. Because, as you know, over the weekend our party had its biennial convention and at that convention we debated the whole question of school board organization, the way in which our educational services should be delivered and so on, and I am happy to say that the comments I was making on Thursday are now the official policy of the provincial New Democratic Party. Mr. Speaker, I have provided a copy of them here for any members of the House who may wish to have them, because I think it is very important that this debate actually continue on between all parties in the Province so that we can concentrate on the problems in our educational system.

Mr. Speaker, I will table a number of copies here for any members who may wish to have them, but I will read it into the record as well.

Here is the resolution which was adopted, by the way, close to unanimously. I believe it probably was unanimous.

MR. LONG:

Yes.

MR. FENWICK:

I cannot recall.

It is headed, "DUPLICATION IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM". It says:

WHEREAS the student population of our school system has decreased by over 10 per cent in the last decade - that, by the way, despite the introduction of Grade XII - and

WHEREAS the projected increase in the student population for the next decade is another 30 per cent - going from about 140,000 down to approximately 100,000 by 1996 - and

WHEREAS the resources of the Province are stretched to provide an adequate education for our students at today's levels; and

WHEREAS the present duplication in our school system is costing millions of dollars each year - and that is a matter of debate, but it certainly is in the millions - and

WHEREAS combining schools in areas where duplication exists will increase the educational opportunities available for all students; and

WHEREAS the present system greatly limits much needed religious and ethnic diversity of exposure enabling students to better cope with modern society in Canada and North America in general;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that

duplication in our educational system shall be eliminated as a matter of policy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that where the choice is between two substandard schools or one common school that can accommodate all students in the area, that the only option funded by government shall be the common school; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, in these common schools, the various religious denominations will provide their own religious instruction.

Mr. Speaker, that was adopted at our convention just two days ago, and now represents our position as a party and is one, of course, since I have been speaking to the issue for the last couple of weeks, that I have a tremendous amount of concern about. It seems to me, given the situations which are outlined here, and there are other arguments that could be made to it, that we as a Province must start making some very painful decisions about the future of our educational system. The fact, Mr. Speaker, that the Department of Education and this government have failed to even acknowledge the depth of the problem and, therefore, have done nothing, is a policy option that we are currently taking; it is sometimes difficult to understand, but doing nothing is sometimes a course of action that you can take.

In this situation, Mr. Speaker, the \$20 million we spend each year will continue to be split into various groupings - four different groups at this point which receive part of the capital construction and, therefore, go out and build their own schools with their own degree of

independence, and with a lack of co-ordination with the other denominations and, as a result, we get less school for our money. We can perpetuate the duplication and we end up with a situation in which our students, our children, are being denied the preparation they need to exist in the Twentieth and the Twenty-First Centuries, and we are doing it in its name of a denominational system that clearly needs major modification. We are not suggesting, Mr. Speaker, that this is the end of the denominational system. What it is is a new level and a new format into which it will have to go. That format is necessary if we are to avoid a duplication which is variously estimated by the Department of Education to be in the range of about \$10 million or \$20 million, to the NTA's estimate of about 25 per cent, which, by current estimates, would be something close to \$90 million.

I would suggest perhaps the truth is somewhere between those two numbers and, quite frankly, the fact that we do not have definitive numbers from the Minister of Education is probably another indication of a lack of initiative by this government in defining the policy options that we have to follow in the future.

Mr. Speaker, we put ourselves clearly on the record. We have said what we believe in. We have said the direction we wish to see the educational system move in the future; we believe it is one which will more appropriately accommodate our needs and, in the long run, will be the one which will be in the best interest of all of us, not only our religious denominations but also our children, who are, obviously, the

highest priority in our school system.

So having said that, Mr. Speaker, I will sit down and welcome any comment that might be made by other members in this debate.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMS:

I am speaking on behalf of the minister, if anybody else wishes to speak.

AN HON. MEMBER:

He is here.

MR. SIMMS:

Oh, he is here. I am sorry!

MR. SPEAKER:

If the hon. member speaks now, he closes the debate.

The hon. the Minister of Education.

MR. HEARN:

The bill itself covers four different areas.

MR. HISCOCK:

You are closing the debate, are you?

MR. BAIRD:

Yes.

MR. HISCOCK:

Excuse me!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. HISCOCK:

I would like to speak in this debate.

MR. SPEAKER:

If the minister speaks now he closes the debate. The minister has already spoken.

MR. DINN:

When you are in the House, you should be awake.

MR. HISCOCK:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of order.

MR. HISCOCK:

I do apologize, but I would ask for leave to speak to this bill.

MR. SIMMS:

To the point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, we have no problem with it. It is just that I did in fact get up and say that I was closing debate on behalf of the minister if anybody else wanted to speak. Nobody responded, then the minister came in himself. Anyway, it is up to the minister, but we have no real problem with it.

MR. HISCOCK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Eagle River.

MR. HISCOCK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The reason I want to speak on it is because it is An Act To Amend The Schools Act. The two boards I have in my district, the Strait of Belle Isle School Board and the Vinland School Board, are going to be joined together by 1989 and I have some concerns, as have as the teachers, the parents and students in that area of our Province, from L'Anse-au-Clair to Cartwright,

Labrador. Overall, I think, any advancement with regard to co-operation in education is extremely needed in this Province.

I do not necessarily take the approach the NDP takes, which is, basically, do away with the denominational education system and all education needs in the Province will be satisfied. Mr. Speaker, with that principle, and even with the boards co-operating together, the question has to be asked, are we going to save money by integration or are we going to save money by having one system of education? Does it necessarily follow that the money that is going to be saved will be poured back into the school system, or will it go into the general revenue of the Province?

For example, the provincial government has had a programme on the go for the past number of years in which \$20 million is allocated to build new schools, an excellent programme, long needed. The NTA, the School Board Trustees and other educational groups, figure we need about \$200 million to bring our schools up to an adequate standard. What did the provincial government do this year, which many people applauded? They did away with the 10 per cent on building new schools.

On first looking at it, everybody was quite pleased. But then what happened? Prior to that the boards had to come up with 10 per cent, not the Labrador boards, Vinland or the Strait of Belle Isle, but other boards in the Province, for a total of \$22 million. But now that they have done away with the 10 per cent, instead of having \$22 million to spend on school construction, the

boards only have \$20 million. So if government was going to do away with the 10 per cent, they should have allocated a further \$2 million to the boards, under their present programme.

I am not really sure, Mr. Speaker, about the idea of integrating school boards, and schools in co-operation, if it necessarily means the money is going to be pumped into libraries, science labs and the other specialties that are needed.

I attended a meeting down in Forteau, Labrador, with Dr. Tom Pope and Mr. Wayne Russell of the NTA, as well as the Roman Catholic School of Our Lady of Labrador teachers, from Red Bay to L'Anse-au-Clair, and there were many concerns raised at that meeting. One of the concerns in particular was the joining of the Vinland and Strait of Belle Isle school boards. I would hope I get the attention of the minister on this, because Northern Newfoundland and Labrador, in particular, are probably the most neglected areas in our Province not only in education but in other fields, but particularly with regard to education, because it costs so much to heat and light the schools; they need extra money allocated to them in order to have the basic necessities we take for granted in urban areas.

What has happened in the past, Mr. Speaker, is Vinland almost went bankrupt. If school boards were private businesses, technically, I suppose, you would say that Vinland and the Strait of Belle Isle and some boards on the Burin Peninsula were bankrupt. The Province realized this need several years ago after representation was made in the

House of Assembly, and they gave the boards extra money for heat and light.

In joining Cape Freels with Terra Nova, Burgeo with the Bay of Islands, Deer Lake with St. Barbe South, and now the Strait of Belle Isle with Vinland, particularly the last ones I mentioned, and other schools that are going to co-operate and join together, there is a need to have more money allocated over and above what is available, Mr. Speaker. Otherwise, there is a fear on the part of school board members, teachers and parents that students in Labrador and on the Northern Peninsula are going to have greater difficulty in catching up with regard to having proper schools, proper libraries, science labs and computers.

We also know, Mr. Speaker, if you are going to have two boards come together and supervisors have to travel to Norman Bay, Pinsent Arm, Red Bay, Lodge Bay, Charlottetown or Paradise River, those areas, Mr. Speaker, the last one in particular, which is in Labrador, East of Goose Bay - the others are operated by the Vinland and Strait of Belle Isle Boards - to work with some of the teachers in this isolated area of our Province, particularly in the Fall, Winter and Spring when they are completely isolated and the only means of travel is by airplane - they want to feel they are part of the education system and they need specialists and supervisors coming into the area - it means more expense money has to be given over and above the operating capital they now receive, otherwise, they are going to be taking money from general revenue, money which should be spent on libraries, science labs, computers and other

programmes which are needed to enhance the students learning, and money is going to be taken from general operating costs, such as heat and light.

Mr. Speaker, to go back to the taking away of the 10 per cent, again Labrador was first, in that the Vinland School Board was the board to have the 10 per cent done away with. I am quite pleased that this year St. Lewis, in Labrador, is getting a new school, and Red Bay is getting a new school next year. We have had great improvement - a new school being built in Mary's Harbour, in William's Harbour, repairs and an extension to the school in Cartwright, and upgrading of schools in smaller communities. In Black Tickle, a gym was built on. We need more and larger classrooms for Black Tickle. We have seen schools in Pinsent's Arm and Norman Bay, in particular, go from one classroom to two classrooms; we have seen outdoor toilets being replaced by chemical toilets. Overall, Mr. Speaker, throughout the Labrador Coast great improvements have been made in the physical structure of the buildings, but we have not seen great improvements with regard to the delivery of programmes because of the cost involved in getting computers and other new teaching techniques. In Forteau Elementary, for example, students had to raise money in order to get a Xerox machine, and students in Red Bay had to raise money in order to get computers, and I can go on and on throughout the district.

My concern on this as a former teacher, and one who is extremely concerned about the education of people in the district, which has been the cornerstone of my concern

as a member since 1979, is that with the two boards coming together there will be a three year phase-in period and there will be no cutback on central office staff and superintendent one will be a superintendent, and another one will become an associate superintendent. Also, from what I can gather, under Article 45 of the Collective Agreement between the NTA and the provincial government, if two school boards join forces, the successive rights of teachers, all their liabilities and responsibilities, go with them and they have seniority, and that seems to be a concern in the district of Eagle River, that if two boards join together, how will the problem of tenure be solved.

With regard to the Schools Act, I hope this government and the Board of Trustees in particular, who will allocate money, will at least realize that the aim is not to bring boards together just for the sake of bringing them together, we are bringing them together for co-operation, for more planning, for more utilization of specialists and supervisors. The Vinland and the Strait of Belle Isle school boards just hired or are advertising for one specialist who is - I believe I am correct, Mr. Speaker - an educational psychologist. In Northern Newfoundland and Labrador this is taken for granted here in St. John's an educational psychologist is one who would be welcomed by that area of our Province.

We need speech pathologists. We need more guidance counsellors. We need for programme supervisors. But the basic thing it comes down to, the backbone of this, is that it is not going to

mean anything, Mr. Speaker, toward greatly improving the educational needs of the students or the teachers of Labrador who come under the Vinland and Strait of Belle Isle if more money is not allocated for the basic, day-to-day operations that students need by way of physical facilities and by way of access to more library facilities and science equipment. We find, Mr. Speaker, that many of the smaller schools cannot carry out certain programmes because they do not have the equipment that is needed.

I mentioned before, Mr. Speaker, in this House that in the district of Eagle River, in particular, we have approximately eight schools, from Grade I to Grade XIII, after which they have to go to larger areas in the district or outside the district. We have the communities of Black Tickle, Norman Bay, Paradise River and Pinsent's Arm and to this day, Mr. Speaker, not one student of those schools has ever graduated from Grade XI or from Grade XII. Now we are going to combine these two school boards and teachers and parents, as well as myself, are concerned that the smaller, more isolated areas of the boards, which are really isolated in the winter, are going to have less access to the resources of the school board.

There is also the fear - and we hope we are wrong - that because of isolation they will be, not necessarily pushed off to the side, but it will be more convenient for a board member to get into a car and go visit Roddickton, or Flower's Cove, or St. Anthony or Plum Point than to drive 100 miles to the Airport and then fly to Coastal Labrador and perhaps be stormbound for two or

three days.

We also hope that when this school board is organized, because the rule and the law is that once it is done government always gets its way, that some school board members will be responsible entirely for the Labrador Coast and that some of them, in actual fact, will be stationed in Coastal Labrador so that we do not have the problem of travel so much.

I support the bill, "An Act To Amend The Schools Act," but I do ask the minister that his government give serious consideration, if they are going to join the Vinland and the Strait of Belle Isle school boards together, which they are - you might say it is not his responsibility, it is the DEC's, and it is the responsibility of the School Trustees to allocate more money. They can only allocate more money if the minister's department allocates it. We have seen him do away with the 10 per cent on school construction, which really took \$2 million out of that school construction amount instead of putting in \$2 million. I hope the minister will take note of the concerns of school board members and teachers and that once this is done, money will be allocated towards travel, over and above what they are receiving now, so that school board members can travel, and teachers and students in those remote areas of our Province can feel part of that school board and feel part of the educational system.

We also need, Mr. Speaker, at times, because of the school board - not only that school board, but other school boards in the Province - to bring our principals

and vice-principals out periodically and have international speakers come to address them. We need our specialists brought together periodically. We need our supervisors brought together periodically. We need to have their minds continually broadened and stimulated with new ideas taking place in their respective fields. This, of course, Mr. Speaker, can only take place if government provides the various school boards with money, over and above what is needed for their day-to-day operations. What happens, of course, is they are just given so much money and it is entirely up to the school boards to decide what they do with that money.

I have seen, time and time again in my own district, where school boards have had to take money from their day-to-day operational expenses to pay heat and light bills and, as a result, labs have suffered, libraries have suffered and, as well, travel has suffered.

We know this government has budgeted money for the equalization of school boards. We have had the NTA and the School Board Trustees say that it is not enough, that they need another several million dollars more added to it. But, not to be too localized, Mr. Speaker, my main concern now is the future education of students in coastal Labrador, from L'Anse-au-Clair to Paradise River. Once we get these two school boards amalgamated, then there is the possibility that the Roman Catholic School Board will co-operate on an even larger scale, and we can at least make sure that some day students from Black Tickle and Paradise River and Norman Bay and Pinsent's Arm

can actually say they are now going to university, or to The College of Trades and Technology, or to the Fisheries College, or other post-secondary education.

I think, Mr. Speaker, it is an amazing fact that I can say at least 2,000 or 3,000 people have gone through the school system in coastal Labrador and never had the opportunity to graduate. If we had 2,000 or 3,000 students go from Kindergarten to Grade XII in St. John's, or any other community, who did not graduate, there would be quite a lot of questions to be answered. Because an area is isolated and because opportunities for employment depend on a traditional lifestyle, the fishery, neither government nor the media nor anybody else seems to act on it.

I think by joining these two boards it is a positive way, if we give them the amount of resources they need, for them to carry out their mandate. But if we are just joining them together, Mr. Speaker, and not giving them the money to carry out their mandate, then I do not hold very much hope for students in Pinsent's Arm, Paradise River, Black Tickle, Norman Bay, Lodge Bay and Williams Harbour and some of the other small areas. In actual fact, I have grave concern that they will probably be pushed off to the side when such a large school board takes effect, and it will be easier, when that board gets into cost-saving factors, to visit those areas once a year, whereas on the Island part of the Province, where school boards will join together, all it requires is jumping in a car and driving the fifty or one hundred and fifty miles, and those schools may see specialists and supervisors and

superintendents probably twenty or thirty times during the year.

I support the bill, Mr. Speaker, with reservation. If more money is not going to be put into two boards coming together, then, Mr. Speaker, I feel it is going to be very difficult for them to carry out their mandate. I hope I am proven wrong.

I think the Minister of Education knows St. Lewis and knows coastal Labrador. He was kind enough to pick me up last year to attend a graduation. I think the minister would like to be able to go to a graduation in some community in coastal Labrador, or in some other area of the Province, and know that he was attending a graduation where a student from Norman Bay, Black Tickle or Pinsent's Arm was actually graduating. As I have said, I look forward to that day, as do their parents, and the only way that is going to take place is through more interchange, more money, and getting qualified teachers to stay there longer.

I would ask the minister if, when he is closing the debate, he could address some of the particular concerns of the Strait of Belle Isle and the Vinland School Boards, and I thank him kindly for giving me leave in order to speak on this matter.

Before I sit down, Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons I did not hear the debate was closed was I got a copy from the Minister of Development and Tourism, Mr. Barrett, of a list of Canada's Scholarships. Eight thousand are available for 2,500 outstanding men and women for undergraduate studies in Engineering and Science, and a minimum of ten. Of course, I only have one

scholarship application, and since the member for Fortune - Hermitage (Mr. Simmons) and I share the same secretary, I was asking the Page if he would take that down and Xerox forty copies so that I could send them out to the schools. It is unfortunate that the cutoff date is June 20, when, with mail going down to Labrador it takes approximately two weeks, even at this time of the year. I do thank the Minister of Development for giving me this, and I thank the Minister of Education for giving me leave to enter into this debate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

If the minister speaks now, he closes the debate.

The hon. the Minister of Education.

MR. HEARN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

One of the items mentioned by a number of speakers was the 10 per cent, which is dealt with here as part of the amendment. Our only involvement here was to eliminate the requirement of boards to have to put it in. The legislation dealt with 90 per cent funding. We have now made it possible for boards to be funded 100 per cent for school construction. That does not at all mean that the 10 per cent has been eliminated. We are still putting in the same amount of money as we did before; we have not reduced our funding by 10 per cent. The 10 per cent, up to now, was a legislative requirement and had to come, in most cases, from the school boards directly. Occasionally a parish, or whatever, would put in the funding for the board, but in 95 per cent of the cases the board had to come up with the funding. If you did a survey of boards who

are in debt, and some might say that is all of them, but that is not factual; there are a number of boards out there which have no debt, either current or capital, and some who have a few dollars to the good. Perhaps that is not proper either, because if they have, there are ways of using it, I am sure. But those which are in severe debt, especially capital debt, are there because of the fact that in the past they had to build schools, borrow 10 per cent of the cost to put in, and consequently found themselves in debt. We eliminated that requirement because boards have no way of coming up with that 10 per cent of the dollars. In order to do so, they had to do what some hon. gentlemen have suggested, and what we always said, they had to borrow from operating to put into capital.

The one good thing about eliminating the 10 per cent, besides giving boards the chance to keep their heads above water in that regard, is that in many cases, in the past, boards could not take advantage of building a school. When we do a surveys of the Province we find that some boards have all new modern facilities, and with other boards we hear about a lot of the schools being in a dilapidated situation or condition. In some cases boards will tell you, We could have availed of funding from the appropriate Denominational Education Committee, but we had to come up with our 10 per cent; we could not afford it, and consequently we dropped the request to build our school.

In relation to the other items that were mentioned about the joining of school boards and so on, so far we are only in the

recommendatin stage,
recommendations made to the IEC in
one case and studies done by the
other boards. These will all be
forthcoming and will be dealt with
at that time.

Mr. Speaker, I think everybody is
in agreement with the suggested
changes we recommend, because they
are for the good of the youth, in
particular, out there.
Consequently, I move second
reading.

On motion, a bill, "An Act To
Amend The Schools Act", read a
second time, ordered referred to a
Committee of the Whole House on
tomorrow. (Bill No. 7).

MR. SIMMS:
Order IO.

Motion, second reading of a bill,
"An Act To Amend The Education
(Teachers' Pensions) Act," (Bill
No. 8).

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

MR. HEARN:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As I sat down I heard the member
for Eagle River (Mr. Hiscock) say
he was disappointed in the
minister, I presume because I did
not address all his topics. He
did raise a number of interesting
items which would take
considerable time, but within the
next few days the different topics
he raised we certainly will get
into in detail, all of them very
legitimate and certainly topics
you could speak on for hours and
hours.

If we look at Bill No. 8,
amendments are required. The
first one, Section (1), adds to

the definition, reference the
deemed salaries of teachers who
are involved in the legal strike.
In other words, this will permit
teachers who were on a legal
strike the opportunity to count
the time for pension purposes, the
salary they would have earned if
they had not been working. The
period of absence from teaching,
that is Section (b) on a deferred
salary leave plan, will now also
be defined in this Section of the
Act. Up to now if a teacher is on
strike the time during that period
cannot be claimed or the salary
cannot be claimed for pension
purposes.

Section (2): The amendment is
merely an administrative
correction, to recognize the
pension fund.

Section (3) repeals the section
which provides for retirement when
a teacher has a combination of
years of service and age equaling
ninety-two. This is no longer
required and consequently it is
eliminating something that is no
longer relevant. Teachers can now
retire at age fifty-five with
thirty years of service.

Section (4): Undoubtedly there
will be a number of hon. gentlemen
who will want to talk about that
particular section of the Bill.
Section No. 4, this amendment
removes any unnecessary
restrictions such as a time limit
on the accrual of service at
Memorial University. A former
university teaching staff member
could not count his or her service
at the university for pension
purposes if there was a break in
service, of over three years
following termination, or if he
had not completed ten years of
service in the school system.

Subsection (b), of Section (10) has to formally recognize the service that is referred to in the amendment to the definition section, that is, the legal strike time in deferred salary leave plan. Section (10) acknowledges the types of service that may be included in the teachers pension plan.

Section (5): The whole section provides for how the premiums will be charged for the services described in the foregoing.

Section (6): The amendment, first of all, repeals Section (15) of the Act. This means that teachers who are in receipt of a pension from another government source may continue to receive that pension, plus his or her teacher pension as a matter of earned right. The section left vacant by the removal of Section (15) is now used to accommodate a new section permitting the teacher with former service who withdrew his or her pension premiums for services for which no premiums were paid to count that service upon payment of the prescribed premiums.

These amendments have been discussed, certainly, with the teachers themselves. Requests have been made to tidy up the act, as it relates to teacher pensions. Hopefully, they will be supported by the

AN HON. MEMBER:
(Inaudible).

MR. HEARN:
Yes. Basically most of the things we do, certainly, are done in consultation with the field, but, in this particular case, the amendments are requested.

MR. HISCOCK:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. HISCOCK:
Before the minister sits down, could he tell us who was on the committee that decided these changes and how it came about?

MR. HEARN:
I will have to get the names for the hon. gentleman. We have a group that constantly meets discussing pensions. I can get the individual names for the hon. gentleman.

MR. DECKER:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. DECKER:
Mr. Speaker, it seems that the bulk of this bill could possibly be referred to as housekeeping. There is no extreme action taken in it.

While I am speaking on the bill, though, Mr. Speaker, it might be an opportunity for me to give some praise to the teachers in this Province who have been out there plugging away at it over the years, unlike the minister who, every chance he gets, tends to take vicious swipes at the teachers. I witnessed the terrible **Sunday Express** article and he still refuses to get up and apologize for the way he attacked the teachers.

Let me tell the hon. minister, Mr. Speaker, the teachers in this Province were not the least little bit amused. They know what the

minister said about them. They are not amused, but they are surprised, though, Mr. Speaker.

Just a few nights ago I happened to meet with a group of teachers representing the NTA, the Political Action Group, and I understand they are going to meet with the minister as well. The thing which they pointed out was the surprise that the minister had such gile or vile - what is the word they used for it?

MR. TULK:
Bile.

MR. DECKER:
They were surprised at the minister's bile, because they thought, to use their words, Mr. Speaker, he was a nice fellow. They thought he was a good fellow, and they had an awful lot of respect for him. What a surprise they got when they opened up their newspaper one Sunday and saw the vicious attack whereby he said anyone who is teaching in Newfoundland outports is causing the dropout rate and all this sort of thing.

So, unlike the minister, I want to take advantage of this bill, which is about the teachers, I want to take the opportunity here to praise teachers for the contribution they are making to Newfoundland society. I want to remind hon. members about the importance of education to the youth of our Province and to draw the relationship between the dropout rate and unemployment. It is a known fact people who drop out of school tend to find it more difficult to get jobs and to make careers. There is a relationship there. So the teachers have a tremendous responsibility to educate our young people.

I think it would be an opportune time, Mr. Speaker, to talk about the stress level that teachers are exposed to. Teachers are telling us about the amount of stress involved. I can say this because I am not a teacher. I never was a teachers, but how many times do teachers tell us about the stress they are under where they have to deal with from twenty to fifty children day after day. Mr. Speaker, I am the father of two children, and I know the amount of stress I experience with two teenagers. How much stress are teachers going through, Mr. Speaker, when they have to deal with twenty to fifty students day after day?

Teachers are talking about getting burned out after a relatively short career. I wonder about the effect that will have on our children, where teachers are, by their own admission, burned out and yet they are still in the classrooms. I hope, Mr. Speaker, that we listen to them when they say that.

I am also aware of the political force teachers have in this Province. I think it is probably safe to say any party, whether it is our own or the NDP or the party in power, who could count on these 8,000 teachers, could count on winning any election in this Province. I believe that. Now, I am talking about the full support of the teachers, of that block, because 8,000, what would one represent? Five people? For sure, there is the mother and the father and the grandparents and the wife and the children of voting age. So there is a tremendous political force there when we talk about teachers. I would say probably 40,000 or 50,000 votes.

So, in talking about the contribution they are making, I also have to be cognizant of the political force there. When I talk about this political force, I have to caution the minister, whom I know is just as much aware of this political force as I am or anyone is, and I refer him to the first clause, when he talks about this yearly salary being treated as a deemed salary. When he goes to Section 4 (2), where he makes allowance for the deferred salary, I hope when the minister gets up he will explain to us the extra burden this is going to place on the pension fund. I want him to address that when he gets up.

Mr. Speaker, I am concerned the minister, who knows the political force, could probably allow this to slip through without giving it enough consideration. Because, if he really wants to do something to hurt the teachers of this Province, the best thing that he could do is give them all kinds of breaks in their pension fund or all kinds of breaks in whatever they ask for, only to discover ten or fifteen years after they retire, they have put their pension fund into bankruptcy. That might be a politically smart thing to do for the short term, but in the long range it is the minister's responsibility, as it is the government's responsibility, to make sure twenty years after those teachers retire their pension fund is still sound and their pension cheque is going to continue to come in month after month. So I would caution the minister.

I am sure he has thought that through. I am sure the people he met with from the NTA have thought that through. When he gets up I would like for him to assure this

House that Section 4, sub-section (2), and the first section, will not put an unnecessary strain on the pension fund, an unnecessary strain the minister had not made provisions to correct.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I support most of the bill, but I would just like for the minister to make a few remarks on these two particular cases I have pointed out to him, because the teachers are too valuable to this society to just make some short-term political gain on them, only to discover when they become old men and women they do not even have a pension fund they can rely upon.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. FENWICK:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. FENWICK:
Mr. Speaker, I was not quite sure what was going on there. I thought the member for Bellevue was interested in speaking. I thought you were going to go back and forth. But if he is not, that is fine.

MR. WOODFORD:
How many delegates did you have at your convention?

MR. FENWICK:
Enough, boy! Enough!

MR. LONG:
Hundreds, representing thousands of people, hundreds of delegates.

MR. WOODFORD:
Eight-three (inaudible).

MR. FENWICK:
Let us just say we only need one

for your seat.

Mr. Speaker, one of the things we would like to point out, before we go into the debate on it, and I think it is more for instruction to - I am not sure whom it should be to. There is some wording in the explanatory notes of the bill itself which tend to be somewhat sexist in the sense that it uses the word 'he' without using the fact that it is he and she, and, indeed, we have a very large percentage of our teachers who are women.

I think if you look at the explanation on Clause 3, it says, 'Be retired at any time after the number of his years of pensionable service added to the number of the years of his age equals ninety-two.' Now, I know that is the old wording, but, at the same time, Mr. Speaker, we just wanted to bring that to the attention of the individuals who are drafting up the legislation so we do continue to use he and she, which is, of course, is the appropriate wording. I notice in the Act itself, I believe, that is the way it has been drafted.

Mr. Speaker, there are only one or two comments we would like to make on it. One is the delay that seems to have occurred between the time this was agreed to between the Newfoundland Teachers Association and the government and the introduction of the legislation itself.

In talking to the Director of Teacher Welfare at the NTA, they indicate the specifics in the bill are in keeping with the agreements reached between our representatives and Department of Education representations on our Pensions Administration Committee

about two or three years ago, and perhaps in the future it would be nice to see these amendments brought in a little bit earlier rather than later. I am not sure what the enactment date on this particular piece of legislation is. Maybe the minister, when he clues it up, can give us some indication of whether it is retroactive to the time it was agreed upon or whether, in fact, the provisions themselves are retroactive or whether they will come into effect at the time of the promulgation of the legislation itself.

Other than that, Mr. Speaker, I have only one other comment and it has to do in general with the teachers' pensions. As I understand some of the new initiatives from the teachers is to switch to a system whereby fifty-five years of age will no longer be the criteria, as is being brought up to date in this particular legislation, but that in future once a teacher works for a period of thirty years, they will be eligible to receive pension having put in that many years.

From my own personal perspective and having talked to a number of teachers who are approaching thirty years of tenure at that particular job, I can say that I think we could accomplish a number of very laudible objectives by making sure that comes into effect in the next little while. One of which is, of course, it would provide more openings for younger teachers, many of whom have to spend up to four or five years wandering from school board to school board trying to build up a bit of seniority and a bit of experience before they can latch on to a permanent job. Mr.

Speaker, that tends to be quite debilitating to an individual who is trying to develop a professional career.

Given that we are looking at a continual decline in enrollment, according to the Department of Education's projections, we may have some very difficult times in accommodating even the small number of teachers we are currently producing at Memorial University. I believe there is only a couple of hundred a year now being graduated. But given we are likely to lose, say 30 per cent of the 8,000 teachers over the next ten years, then that is over 2,000 teachers. At the rate they are going, that is another 200 a year. It is almost like the attrition we will more than match up with the number of new teachers going into the system. If we could have them retire from the profession, those who, of course, wish to, then that will make additional opportunities for younger teachers.

The other thing, of course, is one of the things we should be aware of. Although after thirty years of service they were looking for retirement, that by no means removes them from the Province as a force for other development, either in the private sector or in other particular areas. A lot of the teachers just find after that period of time spent in school systems, especially with high schools and elementary schools, there is a tendency to burnout to the point where it is very difficult to maintain interest in some cases.

In that respect, maybe we should look at recycling our teachers into other areas where they can bring a fresh approach to it.

They might be interested in going into the insurance business or becoming preachers or involved as house builders or any of the other various professions the people in this Legislature have been involved in in the past.

MR. FUREY:
Even as politicians.

MR. FENWICK:
Or even as politicians. The member for St. Barbe is quite right.

Mr. Speaker, having made those few short comments on it, the only thing I think we would like to know from the minister is why it took three years to bring these things to the floor and if that delay has severely limited the benefits that individuals might have seen as a result of these changes.

MR. HEARN:
Mr. Speaker.

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

If the hon. minister speaks now he will close the debate.

MR. HEARN:
I notice the member for Eagle River (Mr. Hiscock) - I think he is out behind. I am not sure whether he heard you, Mr. Speaker, I presume he did. He was hidden by the paper. No, I want to direct a few comments his way actually.

He asked who made up the pension group? It is made up of the Director of Administration from my department; the Supervisor of Pensions, people from the Pension Section in the Department of Finance; some individuals from

Treasury Board and three or four, four I believe, personnel from the Newfoundland Teachers' Association. They alternate depending upon who is in a particular position, I presume, but I know Mr. Wayne Noseworthy is basically the head person in charge of teacher pensions over there, not teacher welfare, the pensions division. Undoubtedly he is one of the members at the present time.

I noted a couple of the other things mentioned. The member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Decker) mentioned whether or not we are giving teachers a benefit they might pay for in the long run. Of course, every time you give anybody a benefit there is an element of cost. The only thing is, if we look back over the history of the Newfoundland Teachers' Association, it is an extremely responsible professional body. We have found the amount of time we would have to pay for, above and beyond regular service in the classroom, that would be time they would be off on a strike situation, has been little indeed. I would think and I would hope, into the future, we would find ourselves in the same position.

I do not think you are going to find a very professional body like the Newfoundland Teachers' Association running out every day on strike. If they go on strike, it would be for very, very serious concerns and at least while we are around we would hope to think that any concerns they would have, a common element can be found whereby we can reach an agreement on any of the issues that arise at any one time.

Hopefully, if there is a break

somewhere in service, then at least they have requested, and I think we would owe them, at least, the option of having the opportunity to avail of any time they have lost, not the option, but will be able to avail of any time they lost during the break in service. I do not think it will have any major affect upon the funding of the pension fund.

As the member well knows, and other members well know, the Teachers' Pension Fund at presently is seriously under funded and that is a problem of much greater magnitude than any affect a break in service would have on that. What he said was basically these are housekeeping issues which are factual, but very important ones.

The delay is perhaps a bit exaggerated because things have changed and as things change, you have to bring in amendments. One of the problems we have, all of us collectively, with legislation is by the time you arrive upon an agreement as to what you want done and then you get it in for the legislative draftspeople to prepare the legislation, something happens which calls for a change in the legislation, whether it be federal implications or whether it be new requests or whatever. Quite often requests that are made for legislative drafting have to be changed or altered. This sometimes delays the process and then to, quite often, the amount of work load the people involved have also has an affect.

Sometimes, also, you are waiting for other things to occur and put the two or three things you have on hold so you can tidy up the whole package.

There are a number of reasons why things are not brought forth to the House perhaps more quickly than they should. Occasionally, it is to avoid a piece meal attack on correcting or amending legislation, but perhaps we should be a little more conscious of those things. If there are specific things which are affecting people out there, rather than wait for four or five more to happen, we should deal with them on an individual basis. Usually, we can do that, even in the omnibus bills.

MR. WELLS:
Would the minister permit a question?

MR. HEARN:
Sure.

MR. WELLS:
Would he tell us if an actuarial assessment has been done of the expected impact of this on the fund so judgement could be based on some kind of an assessment?

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

MR. HEARN:
Yes, Mr. Speaker, there has been an actuarial study done on the Teachers' Pension Fund.

MR. WELLS:
And on the impact of this particular proposal?

MR. HEARN:
On this one here, I am not sure. I will check into that for the member. There was a complete actuarial study done which took in a number of factors and I would venture to guess that, yes, or if not, in the light of the total actuarial study, this could be easily factored in. We can check

on that and I will certainly get you the information.

MR. WELLS:
I take it then the minister is satisfied there would be no significant adverse impact on the integrity of that fund out of this proposal.

MR. HEARN:
The only way there would be an adverse effect would be if we had a number of prolonged strikes whereby the service is disrupted. This is really taking advantage of time you are out on strike. Hopefully, as I say, if we look at the history of the Newfoundland Teachers' Association, it certainly has not been a problem in the past and hopefully into the future it will not be a problem. The only way it could be, and I suppose we can only venture to guess, actuarial studies or not, can not determine what will happen in the future.

If we have three year contracts into the future, and every time we are into negotiations we end up with a strike situation that is prolonged, you know, involving 8,000 teachers, then we could certainly have a problem in funding the pension plan. Of course, the teachers themselves who are involved and who are paying their contributions towards the pension fund, if their time is not counted, then that time is extended. So the total cost, I presume, of pensioning X number of teachers is going to be fairly consistent anyway.

I think that covers everything, Mr. Speaker. I move second reading.

On motion, a bill, 'An Act To Amend The Education (Teachers'

Pensions) Act," read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House on tomorrow. (Bill No. 8).

Motion, second reading of a bill, "An Act Respecting the Regulation Of Private Training Institutions." (Bill No. 2)

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. MATTHEWS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Just a few background notes on this particular bill. We have had discussion over the last couple of months, particularly since this session of the House, pertaining to matters related to private training institutional schools in the Province. In early 1986, a special committee was established to review all matters with respect to the operation of private training institutions and the adequacy of existing legislation governing their operations.

The Committee was Chaired by the then Assistant Deputy or Director of Technical Education and had various representations. Mr. Eric Yetman was Chairman; Patricia Davis was the Programme Consultant; Diane Driscoll, Department of Consumer Affairs; Mr. Randy Williams from CEIC; Gwen Tucker representing the private schools, from Keyin Tech College; and Mr. Len Power from the former Harbinger School of Business.

The Committee did a very thorough review. Of course, we thought it was very, very important to have input from those people operating the private training institutions in the Province, tied in very closely with officials from the

Department of Career Development and Advanced Studies, and, of course, very importantly as well, representatives of CEIC, because of the amount of money accessed through Canada Job Strategies and so on.

The Committee, after considerable deliberations, decided to report by recommending a new act and a new set of regulations. The first regulations go back to the early 1970s, to 1970, actually. Since this particular enacting of the legislation, the number of private schools and the number of students attending private schools has greatly increased, particularly in the last four or five years.

The new act and regulations address many of the weaknesses in existing legislation and makes provision for the following: A private training institution review board; more clearly defines the conditions required for registration, which we found in the past needed some beefing up; conditions regulating the operation of private training institutions - this would further define such areas as advertisements, sales staff, student contracts, certificates, diplomas, etc; and, as well, appropriate increases in registration fees. These new fees, the first increase since 1970, would reflect the present cost of registering private training institutions by government. We thought that was very, very important, as well. The present fees are twenty dollars for registering for the first course, plus ten dollars for each additional course up to a maximum of \$200. The proposed fees will be \$200 to register the first course, plus \$100 for each additional course up to a maximum

of \$2,000.

As well, Mr. Speaker, a more realistic amount in surety bonds based on student enrollment. That has been an item of contention over the last six or seven months with what happened to Harbinger School of Business, whereby they went into bankruptcy and a lot of the students were affected negatively, in that there was not adequate protection there for them to get some of their money back, even though arrangements were made at Keyin Technical College and the Lawrence College to accommodate them to finish their particular programmes.

So a more realistic amount in surety bonds based on student enrolment, as well are incorporated into this particular piece of legislation.

Having instructor qualifications and experience the same as required for public institutions: This is another very important clause that we feel will ensure, not that we are questioning in any way the quality of programmes and instruction offered at the private schools now, but this is another way, I guess, of sort of ensuring quality which we feel is very, very important in the instruction, teaching and training of students.

As well we have new regulations governing retention and refund of tuition fees. These new regulations will clearly define the amount of tuition fees which may be retained by a private training institution should a student be unable to complete his or her training. Of course, today in the House of Assembly, in Question Period, we had the member for Bonavista North (Mr. Lush) raise a question about one of his

constituents, a student who left school for personal reasons, which I found out after. It was not in any way connected with the bankruptcy, it was for personal reasons. Apparently there are a number of others who left for personal reasons and some problems have arisen as a result of that, which I am now having checked out to see if we can resolve them, or see what the bottom line is.

These are the main items, Mr. Speaker, of the new Act which we feel was very necessary. It was brought in in 1970, and we have seen a great expansion in private schools, the number of private schools and the number of students enrolling in private schools. Like anything else, I guess, you bring regulations or legislation in first when something starts up in a province or a country, but you find that as months go by and years go on, changes take place and then, of course, the legislation needs to be changed accordingly to strengthen it, particularly in this case.

As a relatively new Minister of Career Development and Advanced Studies, I am particularly interested in the protection of students and as well, of course, the guarantee for qualifications. So, it gives me great pleasure to propose second reading of the bill.

MR. DECKER:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. DECKER:
Mr. Speaker, as the minister pointed out, these private training institutions are a relatively new phenomenon in this

Province and there has been a lot of outcry from the citizens to bring in regulations to govern the operation of those schools. Of course, the hon. minister had no choice but to listen to the outcry. I suppose education, no matter whether it is done in private schools, public schools, denominational schools, or whatever, in the final analysis is the responsibility of the provincial government. You can use various ways to deliver education, but the buck must stop at the Minister of Education. Whether they intend to tear that department to pieces, as this government has done, and make one nice solid sound Department of Education, or whether you have two hybrids, one Career Development and the other Education, the fact is that education is the responsibility of the Province and those private schools have been raising questions in the minds of a lot of people.

I notice on Page 10 the problem of advertising is addressed, this will prohibit the use of advertising relating to a private training institution. Now, some of the advertising which those schools were putting out first when they came into the Province, Mr. Speaker, I believe I could say was a bit questionable. It seems to me that people were left with the impression that if you went to a private training institution and completed your course, then you were practically guaranteed a job. Now, that was the insinuation. If you examine the advertising, individual pieces of advertising, I think there was always an out left there for the school which was advertising. They could not have been taken to court and accused of false advertising, but they were

treading a very thin line there, Mr. Speaker, and this led a lot of people to complain and say, Look, they should be controlled. I think it is time now that regulations be put in place for them.

A lot of students who went through these schools went through convinced that once they got their piece of paper as a graduate of such and such a school, then a job was guaranteed. I know of many people from my own district who spent money they could ill-afford to spend to go in and do courses and now a couple of years have passed and they still do not have a job, even though they were led to believe, or they interpreted the advertising to mean that they were guaranteed a job.

MR. DECKER:

If the House would allow me, Mr. Speaker, I would refer to a constituent who a couple of years ago came into take a course from one of those private schools. She wanted to do computer sciences, I believe, it was, Mr. Speaker. When she went down for her interview, she discovered that the computer sciences course was filled. I say computer science, but it might have been some other course. Whatever course she wanted to do was filled and she could not get into that course. So they immediately did an aptitude test on her and they discovered by coincidence she was not qualified to do the course which was already filled, but by coincidence she could do the dental assistant's course. When she told me about this, Mr. Speaker, I said, 'Ah, this is a case of a young girl who is being taken down the garden path,' just by coincidence her aptitude is good for dental assistants.

I knew the family well. She was not borrowing money. Her father was a good fisherman. He had made provision for whenever his daughter wanted to go to some school beyond high school. So he had the \$6,000 or \$8,000. I am sure he could have found some other use for it but, in his opinion, it was worth it and he gave her this \$6,000 to go. I had a very, very funny feeling. I figured that she was led down the garden path. Mr. Speaker, surprise, surprise, as soon as she finished her course, sure enough she went out and the next day she got a job as a dental assistant.

So I had to change the way I was feeling about the private school because I thought she was being led down the garden path, but it turned out she made an excellent dental assistant. She is working now in the Province. She has been working for over a year. I have no reason to think she is not going to continue on working as long as she wants on that job. So we can have all of the mistrust we like, but there are some people who are taking their courses and they are coming out and they are getting jobs.

My colleague for Bonavista North (Mr. Lush) raised a question in the House today. This issue had been raised with the minister, as he will know, in Committee where the minister told me there would be some bonding put in place so the students would be protected. That is referred to under Regulation 19 subsection (e), I think, Mr. Speaker, on page 9 of the Act. This is where I see "requiring registered private training institution to be bonded in the form and terms...". Unless the minister can point to somewhere else in this Act, I am

not satisfied the student is adequately protected with this bonding requirement in 19 (e). It does not seem to me to specifically state - now maybe I am not reading it correctly and the minister might correct me when he gets up - but I do not believe this adequately protects the student.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, this act should contain regulations to make sure if one of those schools does go bankrupt half way through, and they are private companies, and private companies are going bankrupt day after day, it is the way the economy operates, Mr. Speaker, and those schools are private companies, and I believe the onus must be on the government because the government is in the final analysis responsible for education. The onus should be on the government to make sure if a school goes out of business two months into the year or three months or five months, then the student, Mr. Speaker, gets reimbursed, gets a refund on his money. I believe it is the intent of 19 (e).

I certainly hope it will be spelled out a little clearer so a layman such as myself could understand it and see that never again will it happen where students, as in the case pointed out by my friend from Bonavista North (Mr. Lush), are left owing money because a school went out of business. Well, that is not exactly, as I understand, as the minister will know, not exactly the situation in this case because it is a case of some students quitting before the school went bankrupt. But in the actual bankruptcy, all the students who wanted to be were accommodated. That was worked out in a different

matter.

Nevertheless, I would suggest if those schools had not gone out of business and the students had quit, they would have a good argument for being refunded their money if they quite two months in the course, or three months. So I would think that the bankruptcy had some bearing on this school. If for no other reason, for goodwill I think the school would have avoided the publicity. They would not keep a full year just because a student quit half way through. I do not think they would have kept a full year.

The university and all those other courses, I believe, have a limit. You just cannot quit eight months into the season, there is a limit. But there has to be provision made, and I hope the minister can assure the students they are protected. If they pay up in advance and they drop out half way through, they will get their money refunded.

If this legislation is passed, and I have no reason to doubt it will be passed, it would seem to me the private school will be treated pretty much the same as the public school as far as government regulations go. There will be very little provision for a shoddy operator to get in there. Even the courses themselves will be monitored by a superintendent and this sort of thing. So it will give a little more certainly to students who are going in that the course is not just a scam but does have some good.

While I am speaking on the issue, and I would like for the minister to address this, I would call the minister's attention to the fact that within the next few years, if

the present trend continues, a lot of our trades will only be available in St. John's from the private schools. And the minister will know, as of 1989 in September, there will be no place in St. John's a young man or a young woman, say who lives on Patrick Street and wants to become a barber, there will be no place in St. John's he or she can do a course in barbering. I am talking about cutting a man's hair, I am talking about the course of barbering where when I sit down I get my hair cut as a man should have his hair cut. I get the hair cut out of my ears. It is not one of those unisex things where they do not realize a man needs his ears trimmed out and his eyebrows trimmed out. That course will not be offered in St. John's because the Cabot Institute has been upgraded to a technical college and there is no provision for this.

As far as I can learn, there will be no where in the Province, Mr. Speaker, that a young man or a woman can take -

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible) beauty culture.

MR. DECKER:

No, it is not beauty culture. Barbering is a totally different course, a totally different course. There is over supply of people who are trained in beauty culture in this Province. The Minister knows that, but there is not an over supply of barbers.

When I learned about this a little while ago, I telephoned manpower for the greater St. John's area. This is the City of St. John's, it goes out to Whitbourne, goes out around the Southern Avalon, not including Harbour Grace or Carbonear, the greater St. John's

area, and I discovered, Mr. Speaker, there were only five unemployed barbers in the whole area.

I would suspect if we went all throughout the Province, we would find there are no unemployed barbers in this Province.

Why the minister would take it upon him to cancel out barber's training in this Province when there is such a demand -

MR. MATTHEWS:

I did not.

MR. DECKER:

He says he did not. Well, where can the fellow from Patrick Street train to be a barber in this Province, after September, 1989? It cannot be done. There is nowhere in this Province a barber can train.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MR. DECKER:

Well, if the minister did not do it. Then, who did it? I mean, the buck stops with the minister. He is responsible for education. You know, they are great shirkers over there. They pass the buck, great buck passers.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Not true.

MR. DECKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries says it is not true, but surely he sees what his colleague is doing. I am accusing his colleague of taking away barbers training in this Province, and the minister says that he did not do it. Well, I say he is responsible for having it done, and I hope when he gets up, he will address it so in a

year or so a student will not have to go to a private training institute and fork out \$8,000 or \$10,000 to become a barber. That is what is going to happen.

The same is true of autobody or automobile mechanics. There is a whole list of trades which will no longer be available in the St. John's area, if the minister is allowed to have his way. The minister knows it. I happened to get a copy of the White Paper which suggested they were going to transfer some courses.

Then they put a new meaning on the word 'transfer' and cancelled them. They were transfer barbering, where you go to Bell Island and get it, but you cannot get it on Bell Island. You could go out in the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth's district, out in Seal Cove, but they did not transfer it out there.

The fact of the matter is one of the courses in this Province there is a demand for, people are going to have to go to Montreal to train for it. It is absolutely foolish. There is no need for it.

Mr. Speaker, I am taking advantage of this bill on private institutions because I am afraid the day is going to come when the only place you can learn to be a barber is to go to a private institution, and, when they have a corner on the market, it will probably cost \$15,000 or \$20,000 as opposed to what it would cost at trades school, \$2,000 or \$3,000.

Mr. Speaker, that is about all the remarks I have to make on this bill. In conclusion I have to say the minister has no choice but to bring in an act to control the

private colleges. We have no problem with that. They are a fact. They exist. If they exist, and as long as our system is such that the Province is responsible for education, therefore the Province, by paying the fiddler, I suppose, must call the tune.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BAKER:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. BAKER:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I want to speak to my good friend from Grand Bank, the Minister for Career Development and Advanced Studies (Mr. Matthews). We worked together once in the past, and I look back on that year with fondness.

The bill entitled, "An Act Respecting The Regulation Of Private Training Institutions," Mr. Speaker, is, as my colleague from the Strait of Belle Isle said, necessary.

AN HON. MEMBER:
(Inaudible).

MR. BAKER:
Oh, yes! I say to the Minister of Social Services the minister did an excellent job in his previous work. I think everybody was quite pleased with the job he did as phys-ed teacher. That school is still open. I think maybe for a few years they fell back a bit in the basketball standings in St. John's, but they have picked up. He had a hard act to follow there. They have picked up in soccer tremendously.

Anyway, the minister had to bring in an act and put things together. However, I have a few real problems, Mr. Speaker, with some aspects of this act I would like to go over with you.

It seems to me to be an act that provides for the registration of these institutions and the establishment of some control over the way these institutions operate. It seems to me some detail is here, but the act requires a lot more detail, especially about Section 19. Section 19 says, "The Lieutenant-Governor in Council may make regulations" and lists an awful lot of very, very important things which, in effect, cabinet can make regulations on.

It seems to me a lot of these areas should be dealt with specifically in the act, or, at least, there should be appended a list of decisions cabinet has made regarding all of these things.

The minister is shaking his head and saying it should not be in the act. Maybe he has a point. Maybe some of these things are things which should not specifically be in the act and carved in stone. But, I would say to the minister, there should be decisions made on an awful lot of these things immediately and everybody should be aware what these decisions are. I would put through you, Mr. Speaker, to the minister that really the crux of an awful lot of what has been wrong with the private training institutions is covered in this one section.

It is simply, it seems to me, passed over by saying from time to time Cabinet, in effect, may make regulations governing these things. There is no indication as

to whether there are regulations governing these in existence now or whether there is active consideration being given to regulations governing these things because an awful lot of them are very important. I will just point out a couple for the minister.

"Prescribing the minimum number of hours of instruction in a vocation that shall constitute a course of instruction of that vocation." It seems to me that would effectively set the parameters of a course and prevent courses being given as courses which are not really complete in the normal sense of the word.

"Prescribing the maximum fees that shall be paid or received for a course of instruction in a vocation." I think it is very important because the input the minister has through the Canada Student Loan Program. It is very important not only that students do not get ripped off but they are perceived as not getting ripped off. It is very important something be done about this now.

"Prescribing terms and conditions upon which money paid for or on account of instruction of private training institute shall be either retained by the payee or be repayable to the payor." Again, it is another thing it seems to me should be a basic decision which would not necessarily change over time, whereas the length to courses and so on would change over time.

"Prescribing the nature of examinations for certificates of competency, the manner, times and places of holding the examinations and the persons who shall sit as examiners." I am not quite sure what that means. Does this mean

competency in terms of the instructors and so on in the course or for the students undergoing examinations for competency in the area they are being trained in? I think the regulation of examinations is something which is a basic decision government should make. I realize these students are out of high school. It is post-secondary training. They are a little more adult and so on, but I think we have to take a more active part in guaranteeing the calibre of course offered.

There are a lot of other things in here I think decisions have to be made on now. The minister should inform the House as to what these decisions are. The reason I am saying this is we have been through a rather bad period, or at least I have. I had a number of students who were going to Harbinger. I have had a number of students who since have been handled by other schools and so on. I have had a lot of complaints over the last year or so concerning that kind of training.

I have heard complaints of equipment disappearing. The equipment was being moved out and not being used in the school. Inadequate equipment, inadequate instruction time, no exams being given over a period of a year and a half or something, no exams so at the end of one year a student went back for the second year and was still half way through the second year in a two-year course and had no concept of where he stood in that course. These things have been happening. I think it is very important the minister get a handle on that now. If he has seen fit not to include this in the bill, it is in

his hands now and I expect very shortly he will put before cabinet the proper regulations regarding these points.

A final point, Mr. Speaker, because I do not want to take up too much time, is because these students are post-secondary, because they are older, because they are committing personally large sums of money to this particular education, they are either committing a lot of their own money or they are borrowing a lot of money to put into their education which they will have to pay back in the future, I would suggest to the minister that there should be some mechanism. I will wait until the minister is finished having his conversation - the member for Port de Grave (Mr. Efford) is interrupting here. I am sure it must be an emergency if that member interrupts. No, I do not mind giving the minister time or giving the member for Port de Grave time. It does not matter.

The students who are in these schools have an awful lot of themselves invested in terms of money and time, money they are going to have to pay back or money from their parents or money they have earned.

The minister has set up a superintendent to oversee it, plus inspectors. Do I get that out of the bill? There are inspectors that go in. It is not the superintendent, but inspectors that go in and inspect the schools. Okay. He has the mechanism set up.

I would like to see it laid down a little more emphatically there be some input from the group of students doing a course in the school, because they are, by and

large, adults and they have this tremendous investment themselves. I think there should be something more definitive in terms of when a group of students from a school see there is something wrong, when they, as a group, make a complaint to the inspector or the superintendent, I assume, there be a mechanism in place to ensure a proper examination is then carried out at that school. I say it to the minister because of what happened at Harbinger.

I had occasion to check with the minister's department before he became minister concerning complaints about Harbinger and I feel the proper inspection was not really carried out. It was done, rather, on a cursory level and the problem did not become obvious until much later. I think there should be some mechanism whereby a group of students should have a more direct input into ensuring that a proper inspection is done.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. FENWICK:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. SIMMS:
The paper says you are running in St. George's. (Inaudible).

MR. FENWICK:
Yes, which is about as accurate as everything else they print quite frankly, just in case we got Ron Dawe upset or Jim Hodder upset. I do not know who it would be. That was a mistake. It is Port au Port. They got it confused with Cape St. George.

MR. LONG:
And the people out there are very

happy, the people of Port au Port.

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker, in looking at this piece of legislation, which we feel is long overdue, we have still the very uneasy feeling we have whenever we see the privatization of what was formerly a public good. This is indeed what we see with the springing up of all these private institutions.

Let us make it very clear: We are unalterably opposed to privatization of education, be it on a Kindergarten, primary, elementary, high school, technical, university, or any other level possible.

We believe it is a fundamental responsibility of society to educate its young and that education is done in a manner which does not put them hopelessly in debt for years afterwards which, in fact, is what is occurring with many of these private institutions.

We have looked into a number of these institutions in the past and, quite frankly, the best word to describe the quality of them is variable, or perhaps very variable, because, although we have had institutions we have talked to the students of who felt very good about the institutions, felt they got good value for the money they spent, felt they got a good level of education, we have other institutions who have absolutely been gyped of the money they have paid to them, have received a lousy or poor or non-existent education, in which no standards were applied. The instructors had really virtually no qualifications. As a result, they discredited not only their

own institution but, quite frankly, the other institutions which were doing a much better job.

I think many of the members of the House may have seen in the Royal Commission on Employment and Unemployment a background study prepared on the attitudes of the students towards these private institutions. The attitudes varied all over the map, Mr. Speaker.

What we had were some institutions where something like 80 or 90 per cent felt they had received a good education, felt the operation was properly conducted, felt in the future they would be able to get a job with the education they had, and, indeed, had a positive educational experience out of it. Even though they might have spent anywhere from \$3,000 to \$5,000 in order to gain it, they felt that was better than perhaps waiting for another year or two to get into one of the public institutions in the Province, public institutions, which for the most part, were oversubscribed for the courses they wished to attend.

So, Mr. Speaker, we had a number of good institutions, but we had a large number of charlatans. The previous speaker, the member for Gander (Mr. Baker), was mentioning the section in there which talks about the regulating of advertising. A terrible job of advertising was done by these institutions, terrible in the sense, Mr. Speaker, that instead of giving them an accurate indication of what they could expect out of the course, it raised expectations well beyond anything which could reasonably be fulfilled.

We looked at advertising prepared

by the Harbinger School. The Harbinger, thank the Lord, is no longer with us, it is now an extinct school, but we looked at the advertisements they put in the paper to indicate the success of their courses. They said, if I remember the course, Auto Parts Course, success rate, 66 2/3 per cent of the graduates of this programme are currently working in the field.

Mr Speaker, we said that sounds like a really good course. Let us check up on it. What we did was we called the school, we talked to some of the kids who were taking the courses and we checked it out, and sure enough, 66 2/3 of the graduates were working in the field, but there were only three graduates and two were working in the field. The ad was correct and legally there was nothing we could do with it, but the fact of the matter, Mr. Speaker, is when you say that 2/3 of your graduates are working and that is two students then clearly that is leaving out -

AN HON. MEMBER:
Which one?

MR. FENWICK:
That was the Harbinger School.

MR. LONG:
Auto parts.

MR. FENWICK:
The auto parts course they had there.

So, Mr. Speaker, it seemed to us to be almost a deliberate deception was being played on the population of the Province because it was indicating a degree of success, in that course which really did not come close to being statistically valid, if we want to use that term for it.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, we found out when the course was first subscribed there were six or seven students in the course. In fact, if you went on the success rate of those who enrolled and paid their money, you are probably talking about a 20 or 30 per cent success rate.

So, it was that kind of advertising which first alerted us to the fact there was a lot of foolishness going on in there. By the way, this was consistent with that school.

We checked on the one on secretarial science and they said something like 80 odd per cent of their graduates were successfully placed. We checked, eight graduates and seven were working. What did they start with? Approximately fifteen students paid their tuition at the beginning of the whole operation.

Mr. Speaker, a third course was checked. At this point, I do not recall which one, but essentially the same kind of deceptive advertising was being used and as a result of the deceptive advertising, people were enrolling for courses which clearly did not have the demonstrated level of performance behind them to indicate that kind of advertising can be used.

As I said before, this school evidently went bankrupt last Fall, or last Winter, I am not sure exactly when and perhaps the advertising is an indication of the other standards used in the institution as well. Perhaps they did not offer the kind of training they should have and therefore were not able to keep and develop the students they had.

The same thing, Mr. Speaker, is true today of other institutions currently out there. We have received over the last number of months or years complaints from individual institutions. Some of them, we understand, are on very shaky grounds today. The minister, who has had problems in replacing the students from the Harbinger school when it went down, is probably going to end up having all kind of problems when other institutions in the City today also go bankrupt because there are others now teetering on the brink of bankruptcy.

As a matter of fact, one of the institutions, as we understand it, was saved by the failure of the Harbinger School because they rented one of their rooms and the rental of the room was enough to keep them going for another couple of months.

So, from that point of view, bonding and obviously putting in place surities so the students who have invested in this particular education can then receive something back if the whole thing falls apart on them, is very important and has to be done as a matter of course.

Mr. Speaker, we have a number of other comments to make on the legislation. We have been in correspondence with some of the private institutions. We have received a letter from the Newfoundland Career Academy.

Lorraine Lush, who is the President of it, writes saying, "Thank you, for taking the time to send us a copy of Bill 2, An Act Respecting Regulations," etc. It says, "We had already received a copy of this piece of legislation and we do indeed have comments

about the proposed Act, however, we have already shared our criticism and comments with the Minister directly," so I am assuming that he will give us her comments on that particular piece of legislation.

We have also received, Mr. Speaker, some comments from Keyin Tech. By the way, in the evaluation done, I believe, by the Royal Commission on Employment and Unemployment, Keyin Tech's graduates seemed to have some of the kindest comments to make for their school. I would like to mention the study we looked at, the one produced by the House Royal Commission, did seem to suggest not only were the students satisfied with the course they had received, they felt they got value for their money, but they felt it had prepared them in the future for going somewhere. We would like to be very clear about that. There is a difference in value and a difference in quality. If this legislation does nothing else, it should start weeding out the charlatans, the fly-by-night schools, the ones which do not have the resources, the properly trained instructors, do not have a properly set up curriculum, and do not have the equipment of it. If we could weed them out, then this legislation will have been a tremendous step forward.

At the same time, Mr. Speaker, I think what else it has to do is it has to clearly establish a good system of monitoring these institutions on a virtually daily basis. If we do not do that, we will end up in a situation whereby the standards are variable. We will not know whether or not they continue to live up to the criteria they have established in the beginning.

In that respect I would like to read some comments I received from Wayne Russell, who is the Executive Director of the Newfoundland Teachers Association, and who has also written us with regard to this particular piece of legislation.

He has a number of comments on it, one of which makes a lot of sense. He feels any time a private institution offers a course they should produce a detailed prospectus of what is in the course, what will be taught, what methods, what equipment will be used, who the instructor or instructors will be, the qualifications of the individuals concerned, the amount of time being spent on it, and all the other parameters, and that that should be by way of a legal contract between the institution and legally enforceable under the legislation so an individual who goes to take this course can get a copy of this prospectus and have that as part of their contract, and know then what they are likely to receive in terms of education from this particular institution. I think that would be a positive step towards establishing not only good norms for it, but at least having something so we could judge what goes on in subsequent months and subsequent years against this particular criteria.

The inspector, who is set up under the legislation, could also then have an objective criteria to evaluate what is particularly being done there as well.

The other comments, Mr. Speaker, made by Wayne Russell refer to Section 7. When we get to that in the committee stage maybe the minister will be willing to look at it. He says, 'A person who

violates this section and operates illegally, a private institution is liable on summary conviction to a fine of not more than \$250.'

Mr. Speaker, if we are talking about an institution that charges several thousands of dollars per student and has dozens or fifty or sixty or a hundred, or whatever it is, students there, then it seems to me the amount of the fine is negligible when weighed against the volume of business being done in these institutions.

I have been told by individuals who have some expertise in the field the private school industry is a several million dollar a year operation, that individual students in our Province are paying many thousands of dollars in order to get this kind of training.

On that basis, Mr. Speaker, I suggest the minister look at that fine and perhaps think about raising it from \$250 as the maximum fine to perhaps \$5,000 or something in that range, so there are some teeth in the legislation. If we do have an institution which decides to not play by the rules, not become registered, not submit to it, we can have something we can use to make sure they can be coerced into obeying the regulations we set up here.

Mr. Speaker, the final comments I would like to make on this have to do with the whole question of whether or not these private institutions should be there at all, whether they should exist.

It is my strong feeling they are a symbol of our inability to provide a public system which does the kind of training our society

demands. If our individuals cannot go into the Cabot Institute or the Marine Institute or anyone of the provincial community colleges or the Fisher Institute, if they cannot go to the university and get this training in a professional environment with professional instructors and professors then, Mr. Speaker, we have to ask ourselves why they are being forced into these particular institutions in order to get this kind of training.

I would suggest to you the lack of putting adequate facilities and courses in place is one of the main reasons we see a proliferation of these private institutions and therefore is a strong indictment and criticism of the funding levels and the ability to put these courses in place that this Province has followed in terms of its policy.

Just by comparison, Mr. Speaker, if one is to go to a secretarial science course being offered at one of the private institutions, the tuition fees over the course of an entire year may be as high as \$3,00 or \$4,000. If one goes to the Cabot Institute to take the same particular course, one would pay a yearly tuition fees in the range of about \$450 to \$500. The difference, Mr. Speaker, is a magnitude of eight or nine or ten times.

Mr. Speaker, since there are a number of other comments, perhaps the most appropriate thing for me to do would be to adjourn the debate at this point. I will take it up again tomorrow.

I adjourn the debate.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMS:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. SIMMS:
The hon. member adjourned the debate, did he?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. LONG:
He was unanimously re-elected.

MR. SIMMS:
Anyway, Mr. Speaker, we will carry on with this tomorrow. We made great progress today.

I, therefore, move that the House adjourn until tomorrow Tuesday at -

AN HON. MEMBER:
(Inaudible) candy.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMS:
That is an abscess, Mr. Speaker. I do not eat candy on a regular basis in the House.

I move that the House adjourn until tomorrow at 2 of the clock and that this House do now adjourn.

On motion, the House at its rising, adjourned until Tuesday, May 31, 1988, at 2:00 p.m.

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