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Speaker: Honourable Thomas Lush

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The House met at 2:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (Lush):
Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

MR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker, I do not know if it is a point of order or not, however, I just want to make a couple of comments, Mr. Speaker. It would be appropriate for you, Sir, to send a telegram as, - naturally we all realize that tomorrow is a very important day for the Premier of the Province while at the First Ministers' Conference - at the same time, there is a very important event in Labrador. Mr. Speaker, the old OKalaKatiget Society, in short, the O.K. Society - in the native broadcasting facility that is located in Nain - tomorrow will be given the rights and the privileges of being the C B C formal transmitting station in Happy Valley, Goose Bay, to transmit native broadcasting to all of their people. Mr. Speaker this is a very, very important day in the life of the Native people of Labrador, and subsequently Mr. Speaker, I would ask you Sir, as the Speaker of this House, on behalf of all of us here, to send a congratulatory letter to those people, who have for the last number of years been trying their best to transmit, in a bilingual form, in the Inuit language and also in the English language, to all of the Inuit people scattered throughout Labrador. Broadcasting, particular during the summer time, the events and the newsmaking stories of the day, happening in the Province and throughout Canada. It is going to be a big special day for those people, who worked so hard to

bring the Native people of this Province in line with the activities that are going on in our Province. Subsequently Sir, I ask you to send a congratulatory letter to those involved.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Environment and Lands.

MR. KELLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We endorse the sentiment expressed by the hon. Member for Torngat Mountains. The OKalaKatiget Society has been a very significant factor in Labrador in bringing information to the people, and since its initiation, it has also been the recipient of awards for the quality of the work it does. I would like to announce to the House, in endorsing the suggestion of congratulations by the hon. Member, that my hon. colleague - representing the other Liberal seat for Labrador - will be representing me at that particular period of time in the functions involved, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker I just want to take a few moments to briefly say, on behalf of all of our colleagues on this side of the House, that we would like to be associated - I know our colleague spoke for us - but we want to, as a Party, ensure that we are associated with this historic day in Labrador. It is only through appropriate communications that the Native culture, the Native language of the Inuit people of Labrador can

prosper and stay alive and stay vibrant. I have had a number of occasions, as a Minister in the former Government, to do interviews with some of the volunteers who work with the O.K. Society. They make a tremendous contribution to native life in Labrador and I think it is only right and proper that this House recognize and endorse the historic occasion that will take place tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Chair will acquiesce in accordance with the wishes of the House related to this significant and important event.

Oral Questions

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Grand Bank.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My question is for the Minister of Fisheries. In light of the Minister's statements in the House yesterday, and in view of his statement in the public media this morning, that he was still waiting to receive the guidelines and criteria for the Fisheries Emergency Response Program, and in view of his statements in this House that his own Department's assessment shows some 3,500 Newfoundlanders and Labradorians need assistance under the program, would the Minister confirm for the House that he has now received the guidelines and criteria for the federal program? Can he confirm for the House if the federal funding announced, \$5 million,

will adequately service the needs around the Province?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, the staff in my Department are now in the process of gathering all the information that is available from the local office here.

With respect to the second part of the hon. Member's question, we will certainly have to wait and see to exactly what extent the amount announced will respond to the program. I understand there is about \$5 million altogether that has been announced by Ottawa. We know there are a number of fishermen who are in desperate need, and certainly the thing we are going to do is wait and see just to what extent that program will respond to their needs.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Grand Bank.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

This is the fifth year for the program. The crisis in the fishery this year is worse than last year. Last year there were some \$7 or \$8 million put into the program, so it is obvious that you do not need to do an assessment. If the Minister's own figures show 3,500, that \$5 million is going to be about \$5 million short.

My question to the Minister is has he under active consideration now coming forward with additional funding to top up the federal component of the Fisheries Emergency Response Program? The Minister did not answer as to whether or not he has received the

guidelines and criteria. Well, let me tell the Minister here is a copy of the guidelines and the criteria, and most of the people who need assistance under this special Response Program will not qualify this year, most of the 3,500 people will not be eligible under this program. I ask the minister, what he is going to do about that?

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, I can only repeat what I have been saying now for about two or three days. The Province is not prepared to panic. The fact of the matter is, the Federal Government has recognized the problem, they have made a certain amount of money available, in this case \$5 million, and until there has been a full assessment of what it will cost to alleviate the problem, then all we can do is wait and see what happens.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Grand Bank.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker, judging from the telephone calls we have received over the last two or three days from around this Province, people cannot wait; people cannot afford to feed their families; people cannot afford to send their kids to school. I mean, that is obvious. Members on the other side over there are nodding their heads in agreement, as well as on this side. People from all over this Province cannot afford to live. The problem is more aggravated and exaggerated than it has been in the last four or five years, and this is the fifth year of the program.

I would like to ask the Minister, will he make a commitment to this House today and to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador that he and his colleague, the Minister of Employment, will immediately bring in a Provincial program to deal with the people who are left outside the federal guidelines? Will he do that today?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, the answer is no, I will not make that commitment.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, I have listened to the responses given by the Minister of Fisheries over the last two or three days both in this House and outside, and I can only draw the conclusion that really what the Minister is saying on behalf of the Government is that the Provincial Government has reached the conclusion that matters related to the fishery, in all respects, are a federal responsibility and it is the Federal Government that must respond in any and all ways. May I therefore ask the Minister whether or not that accurately represents the policy of the present Government?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, the Federal Government has by its actions in recent days, and in the course of conversations we have had with them, acknowledged some responsibility for what has happened to our fishery, as evidenced by the fact that they have just announced an Emergency Response Program. Also, by the fact that there are ongoing discussions between officials of the Provincial Government, including officials from my Department, and the federal officials, discussing ways and means of finding a response program to alleviate some of the problems that will result from the quota reductions.

In light of that commitment on the part of Ottawa, in light of their obvious willingness to accept their responsibility and to do something about it, is he suggesting that we should tell Ottawa to keep their money, that we will pick up the tab for whatever programs it takes.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

No!

MR. MATTHEWS:

Where is your money?

MR. W. CARTER:

If that is not the case, then why are they not satisfied to wait and see just to what extent Ottawa is prepared to help?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, perhaps the answer to the Minister's question will be found in the following quote, and let me quote just very briefly: 'It cannot be the role of the Provincial Government when thousands of Newfoundland citizens are utterly strapped and beset, to take a neutral wait-and-see, business-as-usual role. The Provincial Government has a political and moral obligation to intervene. Nor is it available to the Province to take the line of excuse that the inshore fishery is under Federal jurisdiction.' Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Caucus Committee Report on the Fishery, 1985, of which the hon. gentleman was an author.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. WARREN:

What! What!

MR. RIDEOUT:

And, with respect, Your Honour was also an author, and the former Member for Fogo was an author of that report.

Now let me ask the Minister, Mr. Speaker, by what convoluted logic, constitutional or otherwise that we have been listening to those days, can the Minister say today that this Government and this Province will not participate with the Federal Government in a co-operative Emergency Response Program to a crisis in the fishery, when his own words, when they were in Opposition in 1985, were begging as Liberal policy that the Government would participate in that kind of program?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Shame! Shame!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, I do not know if you would call it convoluted logic or what, but the fact still remains that Ottawa has indicated a willingness -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. W. CARTER:

Laugh if you want to.

Ottawa has indicated their willingness to accept responsibility, and certainly we are going to take them at their word and wait and see what happens. If it is found that the amount of money allocated is not adequate to respond to the program, then, of course, other action will be taken.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Oh, sure!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, what a dismal lack of display of responsibility by the hon. the Minister.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, in the same report that I referred to, the hon. gentleman went on to say that it was not good enough to ask Ottawa or to request Ottawa to make changes in the UIC Program for fishermen and plant workers. Well let me ask the hon. gentleman, now that he has been in office for six or seven months, now that he has

the responsibility to govern, has the Minister gone to the Federal Government and done what he said he would do in this report, and that was demand immediate changes in the UIC Program for fishermen and plant workers in this Province, this year? Has he done that, Mr. Speaker?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, I find it rather strange that the hon. the Leader of the Opposition would be quoting from a report, and using the information contained in that report as the basis for an argument against what, as he says, we are not doing, when the fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, that when the then Opposition introduced that report in the House, he and his colleagues would not accept it. They did not agree with it. They wanted nothing to do with it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. W. CARTER:

I have lost your last question.

MR. W. CARTER:

Have I talked to them about it? Yes, we have. In fact, my leader is in Ottawa today and I expect this will be on the agenda for the First Ministers' meeting over the next few days. But certainly we have made strong representation to Ottawa to have some changes made in the UI program, and to remove some of the inequities that exist as they relate to fishermen. We have talked about the need for some kind of a catch failure

insurance, and I, myself, talked to the Minister of Fisheries in Ottawa, no less than three weeks ago, about the response program they announced on Saturday.

MR. RIDEOUT:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. the Minister of Fisheries is just a colossal failure in the portfolio so far. Mr. Speaker, let me ask the hon. gentleman -

MR. W. CARTER:

(Inaudible) White Bay North and White Bay South.

MR. WARREN:

He won it before.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Yes, I heard all about the Minister's visit down there. He - well, I will not tell it in this House.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman just indicated to the House that they were requesting Ottawa to make some changes to the UIC Program for fishermen and plant workers this year. I remind him that their policy position as an Opposition was that they would quote "see to it that changes were made". Now, will the hon. gentleman tell this House, have they seen to it that changes will be made to UIC Programs, for this year, for fishermen and plant workers?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, yes, we will 'see to it' that strong representation will continue to be made to Ottawa.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, we will talk to the hon. Member's soul mates in Ottawa - Mr. Crosbie, Mr. Siddon, Mr. Mulroney, and others. We have already talked to them and made a strong case, and we will continue to talk to them and we will, I tell you, 'see to it'.

MR. HEARN:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for St. Mary's - The Capes.

MR. HEARN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My question is also to the Minister of Fisheries. The Universal Group of Companies have made a request to the Government for financial assistance so that they can continue to operate. This company operates plants in five different communities in the Province. I ask the Minister, in light of the fact that the Minister of Finance, the famous Dr. No, is not present today, has the Government dealt with this request? If so, what decision has Government made?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, yes, we did receive a request from Universal Fisheries to -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! Order!

There is some talking going on by Members on my left here, and I cannot hear what the hon. the Minister of Fisheries is saying, and I am sure the hon. Member to my right cannot hear the answer to the question.

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, we did have a request from Universal Fisheries for a loan guarantee. The request, by the way, was not accompanied with too much information on the financial background of the company, and because there was insufficient information provided, Cabinet had no choice but to reject that request.

At the request of the hon. the Member for Ferryland, the Minister of Finance and I and our officials met with the principals of Universal Fisheries on October 13th. We discussed at length the problem facing the company. We instructed the principals that up to that time we were not in possession of sufficient information on the financing of the companies to make a decision. Then, a day or two later, in fact on the 17th, we wrote the principals, outlining the type of information we required. That information arrived in my office on, I believe, Monday past. My people went through it and it has been found that all of the information required is still not there. The matter is being reviewed, but it is difficult when the information on which you can base a sound judgement is not there.

But in reply to the question, their request is being reviewed again. Mr. Speaker, I am sure

hon. Members both from Ferryland and St. Mary's - The Capes will understand that the company is in pretty serious financial trouble. And I would not want to convey the impression this afternoon that their request will be approved; all I can say is that we are willing to have another look at it on the basis of the limited information they have made available to us.

MR. POWER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Ferryland.

MR. POWER:

I want to add a supplementary to the Member for St. Mary's - the Capes, but I would like to phrase this as a new question, because I want to give a little preamble, especially for all Members and all Ministers opposite.

I am not sure that people in this House realize what Universal Fisheries is to the Southern Shore and the southern part of the Avalon.

If we were here today and the Member for Corner Brook was saying Kruger are going to go bankrupt unless they get Government assistance, or the Member for Grand Falls was saying Abitibi-Price are going to go bankrupt unless they get Government assistance, there would be a tremendous amount of pressure placed by this party on the Government, and there would be tremendous public pressure from the media, the workers and the unions in that part of the Province. But people fail to realize that in places like Fermeuse and Ferryland, St. Mary's and Riverhead, the largest

employer, who employs in excess of 1,500 people, just as many as are on the payroll for Abitibi-Price, is going to be out of business unless they get Government assistance.

I want to ask the Minister of Fisheries: Knowing the lengthy detail of its financial troubles, is this Government going to be able to help Universal Fisheries, and, in particular, is this Government going to be able to assist Universal Fisheries to pay off in excess of now, I think, \$3 million worth of Newfoundland unsecured creditors? If Universal Fisheries goes bankrupt, probably fifteen or twenty other small Newfoundland companies will go bankrupt. Is this being considered by the Government, and are not only Universal Fisheries going to be helped, but all these small, unsecured creditors?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, I guess my answer will be essentially the answer I gave the Member for St. Mary's - The Capes. On the basis of the information provided initially, the Government had no choice but to reject their proposal for a loan guarantee. On the basis of the most recent information we have received - which is far from complete, by the way - my people and people in the Department of Finance are reviewing the application. But, again, I want to stress - and I would not wish to convey the impression that it will be almost automatically approved - that the company is in very serious trouble, and I do not want to go into too much detail. It is a private company. But it does owe the Province right now

\$2.6 million, unsecured. I understand they are very much in debt, as well, to the Canadian Saltfish Corporation, with which we have some responsibility as a Province.

As to the unsecured creditors, Mr. Speaker, I do not think anybody gets any joy out of seeing bankruptcies, especially bankruptcies that result from another bankruptcy. But certainly the question is hypothetical. The company has not gone bankrupt yet and, therefore, even if we had some plan to assist, I do not think it would be right and proper to announce it now. Again, I am not suggesting we do have a plan. It is a hypothetical question I do not think I would care to answer right now.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Ferryland.

MR. POWER:

Mr. Speaker, let me ask another question that is not hypothetical. In the meeting we had with the Minister of Fisheries and the Minister of Finance, to which they kindly agreed at very short notice, to deal with the Universal principals, who were in here from Portugal to see if they could get some Government assistance, one of the things that came out in that discussion from the Minister of Fisheries and some of his officials, was that because of the fish stock problems in Newfoundland, both offshore and inshore, there is - and I cannot quote the Minister of Fisheries - certainly a feeling that there are too many fish plants in Newfoundland, that there are too many people depending on the fishery to make a living. I ask the Minister of Fisheries: Is the Universal Group of companies with

four, and part ownership in a fifth plant, going to be one of the companies used to rationalize fish processing in this Province, to reduce fish processing capacity and, hence, close down four or five communities?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, I can tell the hon. Member now in the House, and anybody else who is listening, that that is not the case. Certainly we have no intention, no desire, no wish to endeavour to rationalize the overcapacity in the processing sector of the fishery by eliminating the five plants operated by Universal Fisheries.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, my question, as well, is to the Minister of Fisheries, and flowing from the questions just asked by my colleagues on plant closures.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister and the Government have been briefed by FPI and National Sea on plant closures for 1990. The Minister and the Government know, they have been told, what plants will close if there is a TAC of 235,000 tons, as it is this year. The Minister, the Government and the Federal Government have been told what plants will likely close if there is a TAC of 190,000 tons; if the TAC is 150,000 tons there will be additional closures, or if it is 125,000 tons, which is, in fact,

the figure that Dr. Harris and others have talked about.

What we do know, Mr. Speaker, for 1990 is that there will not be an increase in the TAC, so the possibility is there will be a decrease; there certainly will not be an increase. So under either scenario there will be plant closures, and the Government has been told.

What I wish to ask the Minister, Mr. Speaker, is will the Minister tell the House whether or not the Provincial Government has agreed in principle to a list of possible plant closures, and that the number of closures and the location of the closures will be determined by the 1990 TAC?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

Sir, I can tell the hon. Member, no, we have not agreed to any such list. In fact, we have not seen any such list.

MR. RIDEOUT:

What a sham!

MR. W. CARTER:

Oh, no, we have not.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Yes, you have.

MR. W. CARTER:

If the hon. gentleman knows, why is he asking me the question?

MR. RIDEOUT:

Why do you ask questions?

MR. W. CARTER:

We know that under a certain scenario plants will have to be closed.

MR. RIDEOUT:
Right! That is what I am saying.

MR. W. CARTER:
That is public knowledge. Mr. Vic Young, of FPI, has announced that with the 190,000 TAC scenario probably there will have to be three plants closed and maybe sixteen vessels tied up. We have not given our approval for the closure of any plants. In fact, they have not identified the plants; they have said maybe Grand Bank, maybe Gaultois, maybe Trepassey; a whole wide range of maybes, but certainly nothing definite.

MR. RIDEOUT:
A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. RIDEOUT:
Mr. Speaker, the Minister has confirmed, then, that under certain TAC scenarios for 1990 the various companies have said that if the TAC is this, then this is what has to happen. So the Minister has confirmed that for the House.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Minister travelled the Province recently to meet with fishermen and, I assume, plant workers, as well. Can the Minister tell the House when he intends to embark on another provincial tour so that he can tell the plant workers and community leaders, in the communities that are going to be affected by the reduction of the quota in 1990, that their source of employment is going to cease to exist in 1990 as a result of plant closures? When is the Minister going to get on the road so that communities and plant workers know

beforehand what they are facing after January 1, 1990?

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

MR. W. CARTER:
Maybe, Mr. Speaker, the hon. Leader should contact his soul mates in Ottawa, Mr. Crosbie and Mr. Siddon, and impress upon -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:
Ottawa again. Slough it off on Ottawa.

MR. W. CARTER:
Oh, no!

- those gentlemen the need to announce what the TAC will be for 1990. At the present time there is no announcement, and there is no indication, Mr. Speaker, that it will be forthcoming before the year end. But until that TAC is announced, and you can play with all the scenarios you want, the telling one will be the final figure when it is announced.

Until that is done, the two big companies, National Sea and FPI, in fairness to them, they are not able to really make the type of decisions that have to be made, and it is going to be difficult to do it until the 1990 TAC has been announced.

As to when I am going to travel the Province with the bad news, hopefully, Mr. Speaker, I will not have to.

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

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, whether the Minister will do it or not he certainly knows that somebody is going to have to do it, because there is going to be a reduction in quota in 1990. He knows that as well as I do. Everybody knows it.

Mr. Speaker, to the Minister: Since the Premier told the House just a few days ago that the Province is supporting the principle of last in first out - LIFO, I think, is the bureaucratic term that refers to it. I do not know what kind of life it means. It must mean life after death. It does not mean life with last in first out, but that is the principle that the Province is putting forward to the Federal Government, last in first out, in eliminating present user groups of the northern cod resource. Will the Minister tell the House what inshore plants that depend on the Resource Short Plant Program, because that will be one of the first out in the last-in first-out scenario, are going to be affected by that principle in 1990? And when is the Minister proposing to tell recipients of the Resource Short Plant Program that they cannot expect to receive any quota from northern cod in 1990? When is the Minister going to get on the road and do that, Mr. Speaker?

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, I do now know if the hon. Member is aware of it or not, but these decisions do come from Ottawa. There is a gentleman in Ottawa who carries the title Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Mr. Tom Siddon, and it is his prerogative, by the way, to decide and to make that kind of an announcement.

As to his comments with respect to the so-called provincial position on LIFO, last in first out, that is an option. Because we have been saying now, and the hon. member agrees I am sure, that we get little joy out of seeing plants in Burgeo and other parts of our Province being closed, while the owners of those plants have their ships catching fish in the northern waters and taking it to Nova Scotia, for example. Our policy is that all of the fish in the northern areas, 2J+3KL, should be landed in Newfoundland. Now, if we are going to support that position, given the political implications of it, then we are going to have to do it on a principle. And if we are going to ask the Federal Minister to remove the Nova Scotian effort from the 2J+3KL area, then we are going to have to have something to back it up. LIFO is one principle on which maybe - I say maybe - it could be backed up. Because if we are going to ask them to leave the waters and to cease fishing there, then it will have to be on the principle of last in first out, because they were one of the last ones in.

Now, then, with that, of course, goes certain problems, one of the problems being that the Resource Short Plant Program was one of the last in, as was the mid-distance quota one of the last in, as was the otter trawl, the over sixty-five foot sector, one of the last in. There is nothing firmed up on that, Mr. Speaker. It is an option that is being looked at. By doing it that way, and if the Government in Ottawa agreed, it is conceivable that we could reduce the Nova Scotian catch from approximately 23,000 tons down to less than 8,000 tons, and we would be saving 15,000 tons of fish for

Newfoundlanders. If the Province were then able to reallocate that fish to the Resource Short Plants, to the otter trawlers, then there would be no problem. But unless we are sure we can do that, there are problems and I am sure we are going to be very much aware of them.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the hon. the Minister. Is the Minister not aware that using the LIFO principle National Sea will continue to land significant quantities of northern cod in Nova Scotia, which will not come to this Province under LIFO? Is he not aware that Mersey Seafoods will continue to land significant quotas in Nova Scotia? Is he not aware that the northern shrimp companies, based in New Brunswick, will still land significant northern cod in their province?

Getting back to his question about political soul mates in Ottawa, let me ask the Minister this: Is it not a fact that the Government of Canada and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, including the two Ministers involved, the two Ministers of Fisheries, are marching cheek to cheek and bum to bum on what to do with rationalizing the Fishery in Newfoundland and Labrador?

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, I would walk cheek to cheek and bum to bum, as you say, until the day they put me under, I suppose, if it will get what we are trying to get for the

Newfoundland fishermen.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. W. CARTER:

Believe me, Mr. Speaker, we will do what we have to do, as distasteful as it might be sometimes. We will not go, by the way, stripped to the waist, ballyragging, calling down the Ottawa people, making bad friends. We will not be doing that. We will be taking a very rational approach.

AN HON. MEMBER:

You will give it all up. That is what you will do.

MR. W. CARTER:

And, Mr. Speaker, much to their surprise and maybe disappointment, I think time will prove that the position we are taking is the right one.

MR. RIDEOUT:

I hope to God you are right.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

Question Period has expired.

On behalf of hon. Members, I would like to welcome to the galleries today the thirty-student Democracy Class from E. J. Pratt High School, in Brownsdale, which is in the District of Trinity - Bay de Verde. Also their teachers Mr. Kevin Bussy and Mr. Reg Button. Accompanying these students are two exchange students, Akemi Ono from Japan, and Gabreilla Medillen from Mexico.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

Notices of Motion

MR. GULLAGE:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce a Bill entitled, "An Act Respecting The Department Of Municipal And Provincial Affairs." (Bill No. 29).

MR. FLIGHT:

What a Minister!

Answers to Questions
for which Notice has been Given

MR. GULLAGE:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

Mr. Speaker, concerning the question put forth by the hon. the Member for St. John's East (Ms Duff) in the House yesterday concerning the request of the Resource Centre for the Arts for funding for technical equipment in order to upgrade the LSPU Hall, the response given by my Department to officials of the Resource Centre for the Arts concerning this request was that the Cultural Affairs Division of my Department does not have a capital grants program, and is therefore unable to honour the request.

I might point out, Mr. Speaker,

that the previous Progressive Conservative Government did not provide the \$45,723 which was originally requested. The record shows clearly that on June 7, 1988 the hon. John Butt, former Minister for Cultural Affairs for the Province, wrote a letter to the Executive Director of the Resource Centre for the Arts in response to the Centre's request for funding. Mr. Butt's letter states, and I quote, "As per your request for approximately \$46,000 towards the purchase of technical equipment for the upgrading of the LSPU Hall, I regret that my Department does not have a capital grants program for the arts. There is also no other Budget subhead from which such funds could be provided."

On the same day, Mr. Butt wrote the Federal Government's Department of Communications expressing his support for the LSPU Hall project. He did not suggest that one dollar of assistance could be forthcoming from the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

MR. TOBIN:

What are you going to do? Do not be going back over (inaudible).

MR. GULLAGE:

Mr. Speaker, there never has been a capital grants program for the arts in this Province.

MR. FLIGHT:

What a Minister!

MR. GULLAGE:

The hon. Member would know that the original request from the Resource Centre for the Arts for this \$45,000 was turned down and denied by the former Government.

MR. FLIGHT:

A good Minister.

MR. GULLAGE:

To place blame on us at this stage of the game, Mr. Speaker, is nothing short of hypocritical.

MR. FLIGHT:

Right! Hypocrite. Hear, hear! Hypocrite. You hypocrites. You bunch of hypocrites.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:

You would think, being new, that you would be more innovative and more forthcoming than we were.

MR. GULLAGE:

Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that it is not true that the Federal Department of Communications will not provide a grant unless the Province contributes financially to the project. The Federal Department of Communications can and will provide a capital grant without Provincial input.

However, I would point out that in this case the Resource Centre for the Arts in its application to the Federal jurisdiction indicated that it was expecting \$45,723 from the Province. With no Provincial grant forthcoming because of a lack of a program, it is only natural that the Federal jurisdiction would be hesitant and ask why should we provide a grant to this project if the remaining finances required to complete it are not in place?

It is obvious, Mr. Speaker, that Federal funding, where a capital grants program does exist, should have been requested without attempting to involve the Province, which has never had a

capital grants program for the Arts.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of order, the hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West.

MR. TOBIN:

I was wondering if it is the Minister's intention to amalgamate the Arts groups as well.

MR. SPEAKER:

That is not a point of order.

Also I wanted to remind all of the Members that I was trying to figure out what part of the Orders of the Day the event that was just taking place transpired, and I cannot find any place for it.

Orders of the Day

This being Private Member's Day, I call upon the Member for Fortune - Hermitage to introduce his Private Member's motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

I just wonder if the Member for Fortune - Hermitage would permit me just to welcome one more person before we get into his debate. We have in the galleries today, Ms Audrey Tan, a student from Malaysia who is visiting Canadian Legislatures.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

And that time will not be taken out of the hon. Member's time.

The hon. the Member for Fortune - Hermitage.

MR. LANGDON:

Number 15 on the Orders of the Day, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS there is increasing demand and need for post-secondary education in the Province.

WHEREAS the present structure for attaining student aid is antiquated and excludes a large portion of the student population.

AND WHEREAS parents are required to contribute heavily to these education expenses.

AND WHEREAS parental financial obligation prevent them from providing these funds to attend post-secondary institutions.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Government establish a Select Committee of the House to address the whole issue of student aid to reflect today's reality, and thus provide financial relief to students and parents.

First of all I would like to thank this particular party for having this resolution brought forward to the House today. And, Mr. Speaker, I am privileged, and honored, and elated, to be able to present this Private Member's motion to the legislature.

The demand for post-secondary education is paramount, and the need for post-secondary education is vital. The world has become, in Marshall McLuhan's words, "a global village, and academic excellence, has transcended a globe to make it a reality." And

if we as a Province, and society, are to compete on the Canadian and world scene, then the access to post-secondary institutions has to be there to give every last person in this Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, the opportunity to choose a career that will bring them and enable them, to engage in a life long process that will bring them economic independence.

I suggest to the Legislature, Mr. Speaker, that this is not the case in this Province. Even though the demand has been determined, and the need carefully demonstrated for post-secondary education, not everyone who wishes to avail of post-secondary education is successful. There is no coincidence that we have the lowest disposable income in Canada, and the highest rate of illiteracy. One is synonymous with the other. The present principal of the Grenfell college, Dr. Poole, was quoted in a local paper a few days ago, questioning whether we have the highest standard quality of education in our post-secondary institutions, because we have too much concern with quantity. That certainly begs food for thought, and that might very well be, Mr. Speaker. But our concern today is whether our post-secondary students have the chance to attend these institutions to attain what we have to offer them. And I want to indicate to the House today, and to the young people in the gallery, that we are denying too many of our young Newfoundlanders and Labradorians the opportunity to attend our post-secondary institutions and the reason, without question, is the lack of financial resources.

It would be remiss of me if I did not recognize the improvements

made to the student aid package from Government contributions over the years. But, Mr. Speaker, the fact remains that there is a dire need for a complete overhaul of the whole student aid program.

I see there are too many groups of post-secondary students, who through the aid failure, the inadequate bursaries, the insufficient scholarships, and the student fellowships, are discriminated against by the present inadequate system. There are those who attain the highest academic achievement and are wooed by mainland institutions. I have seen representatives of institutions and universities from the mainland, come here weeks on end to contact our brightest and best students and woo them to mainland universities with scholarships and bursaries that we cannot match. And in many instances these students never return again. And also those from lower middle and lower income families whose parents have sufficient income to support their families basic needs and maintain a certain lifestyle, but do not, and I repeat, do not have financial resources for their post-secondary educational needs. That, Mr. Speaker, is a human atrocity, a millstone that suppresses the level of academic achievement in this Province, and we cannot allow that to happen.

Students from well-to-do families are not seriously affected. They attend the post-secondary institutions of their choice, which is generally an institution outside of the Province. The May 1983 submission by the Council of Student Union to the Provincial Government says, and I quote, 'High unemployment and debt load can only act as factors to

discourage students in lower and middle income brackets, thus making university attractive only to the more financially stable sector of society. Eventually, with fewer students obtaining accessibility, universities may well become elitist institutions for the wealthy.

But, Mr. Speaker, there is a real dilemma in the Province, a real crisis situation. As I repeat, we are allowing students, who have high academic standards, to slip through our fingers to maintain the Mainland universities, and we stand idly by and shrug our shoulders and say we cannot do anything. That, Mr. Speaker, is an abdication of our responsibilities as Legislators in this Province. There are literally millions of dollars, and I re-iterate, millions of dollars in duplication of services by this Province, by our present educational system, that the Provincial Government could use to supplement student aid in this Province.

It angers me, Mr. Speaker, when I see parents and students snowed under with educational expenses that are increasing annually, and as an example, in this present academic year an increase of 10 per cent in tuition fees and other incidentals by larger amounts were imposed on post-secondary students, and yet we spend needlessly on an educational system that could be questioned as being neither monetary nor fiscally prudent. Frankly, Mr. Speaker, with our limited resources we cannot afford to waste any money whatsoever, not one penny. This Province is allowing students, who should be in our post-secondary institutions receiving a quality of education

to improve the standard and quality of life here, to become permanently unemployed, and relegated through social welfare lines, or, forced to leave the Province, and that has to stop.

We are asking parents, students, and taxpayers as a whole, to contribute beyond their means for post-secondary study, while we allow taxpayers money to be mis-spent in duplication of services in the primary, elementary, and secondary schools of this Province. I am not advocating a demise of the denominational education system. But, if we as adults can work together on the job, attend the same social gatherings, entertain mixed marriages, play on the same sports teams, then what is wrong with our children sharing and attending schools together?

There are \$10 million to \$15 million, Mr. Speaker, that could be squeezed from the Department's budget because of duplication, that sharing and cooperation could address.

Mr. Speaker, if we are to improve access by students to post-secondary institutions, then we have to put money in students pockets, and that is where I believe we have to be cognizant as to what two or three more separate universities will do to the sparse number of dollars to be used in this Province. The squeeze will be on. It will cost massive amounts of money to administer the additional structures, once they have been built. The amount of money to be regulated will not be related to size. I would suggest that we could improve access of money available at a lower cost, by providing students the aid, rather than spending it on

separate and independent entities.

May I suggest to you that students who live outside the particular entity, or university or post-secondary institution, outside a twenty-five or thirty mile radius, will see little or no appreciable allowance in post-secondary institutions, no matter where they attend the post-secondary school.

In its submission to the Provincial Government on Student Aid presented by the Council of the Student Union, May 1983, the Chairman, Mr. R. Dornan, now the Premier's Assistant, said, "One of the objectives of student assistance is to allow all qualified financially needy students to engage in post-secondary education without undue financial hardship." And secondly, it says "To encourage participation in post-secondary education of all Canadians who have potential to benefit from such participation regardless of financial capacity."

In the over-view, Mr. Speaker, the report states that 'Education is a right. It is one that Government must ensure is protected in advance. Thus it is essential that accessibility and opportunity for all students, who have the desire, ability and constitutional right, to pursue a post-secondary education.'

A headline in The MUSE paper, university paper, February 27, 1987, page 3 stated, "MHA Unhappy with Student Aid Regulation. The hon. the Minister of Health, the Member for the Strait of Belle Isle, stated categorically the need for student aid overall." I would quote 'To me', he says, 'eighteen year olds are considered

self-responsible adults, can vote, may enlist in arm forces without parental consent, therefore they should be able to apply for a student loan without involvement from their parents. As it is now though, students are not considered financially independent of their parents until they have been out of high school for four years.' He also feels that 'the criteria for determining whether a student gets a loan and the size of the loan, does it not always accurately reflect his or her actual financial situation.' And he also goes on to say, Mr. Speaker, that 'it is generally the middle class that gets hit the hardest, the wealthiest can afford to do without aid,' as I suggested earlier, 'and those who have less money qualify for loans. This is unfair since it is the middle class who contributes most in the form of taxes.' In summation of that he says: "I would like to issue a challenge to the students of post-secondary institutions. They should try and improve the situation through such methods as petitions. This should be a nation-wide concern, and that any student who wants help with doing something along these lines should contact me and I will be glad to give them assistance."

AN HON. MEMBER:

Who said that?

MR. LANGDON:

The former president of the student council, Ms. Ann Marie Vaughan was quoted in The MUSE, April 1, 1988, as saying 'One of her last official acts was putting together some serious proposals for changing the student aid system. Her number one concern was the lack of an appeal Board.' And Vaughan said: 'Student aid should make information about the

policies and criteria better known to students - many', she says, 'have no idea that they can even make appeals.'

Today, Mr. Speaker, I am asking the Government to establish a select committee of the House, to address the whole issue of student aid to reflect today's reality. I honestly believe the Minister of Education, a man whom I have known, a man whom I have the utmost respect for, a long time friend and colleague, will further put his stamp on education in this Province by adopting this resolution. The Minister, in his Royal Commission Report in 1967, suggested sweeping changes in education in this Province. Many of his 188 recommendations have been implemented, while others have not. To quote the Minister, he says in that report: "The past cannot be looked to for either a measurement or a guide in planning immediate aims, there must be enlightened and progressive Government policy. Nothing less than a complete revision of our ideas in every phase of education, its goals, content, organization, administration and financing will be satisfactory. What is needed is a fresh, critical, open-minded approach, enlightened, indeed, by the mistakes of the past but unprejudiced by successful expedients.'

An editorial in the Evening Telegram, April the 7th, 1967, referring to the Royal Commission said and I quote: "It is to be hoped that the royal commission's report on education and youth does not become a subject of partisan debate but will be regarded generally as a forthright and realistic effort to ensure the best and fullest use of the process, the plant and the

personnel involved so as to produce the most worthwhile results for those who will be moulded by them, and be given due consideration in that light." That is how I feel today, Mr. Speaker regarding this Resolution. There has been a demonstrated need for a complete overhaul of the Student Aid in this Province, and it has been demonstrated time and time again. I see a spirit of co-operation existing already in this Legislature with the Legislative Committees that have been piloted by the Government. The beneficiaries, I have no doubt, will be the Newfoundland populace. Bills will be fully scrutinized before they become law.

That same spirit of co-operation can exist here. There is no place for political points when the lives of our post-secondary students are at stake, along with the future of our Province. An editorial in the Evening Telegram, April 10th, 1967, stated that the re-organization of the Education Department was 'not a matter of application of Parkinson's first law in which work multiplies to fill time. After all, a department that is responsible for the future of the Province's youth and the annual expenditure of hundreds of millions of dollars cannot afford to be deficient in organization and efficient staff. That is the first thing that must be recognized in the approach to the development of education for the new age.'

This Resolution, Mr. Speaker, parallels that same trend of thought to the Select Committees' role to look at the whole gamut of Student Aid. The setting up of a review Board, an emergency fund, tying summer earnings to Student

Aid, single parent eligibility etc., is not just to fill time but to insure the maximum value for the scarce commodity. What is needed now is positive leadership, that will show full realization of the importance of the changes needed in the Student Aid Program.

In an editorial entitled 'A study of MUN', June 23rd, 1971, the editorial writer says this: '...the Warren Commission failed to make what many people thought was the final and necessary step, a study of Memorial University'. They disagreed with the hon. Member when he said the university should study itself. The editorial suggested, '...if an examination is needed it should be done by an independent commission'.

Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that the Student Aid Program in this Province has been weighed in the balance and found wanting. Nothing less than a thorough study by a select committee of this hon. House to address the whole issue of Student Aid to reflect today's reality and thus provide financial relief to students and parents is needed at this time. Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MS DUFF:

Good show!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Education.

DR. WARREN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Perhaps I should first congratulate my hon. friend on his excellent presentation. I really enjoyed it. I guarantee him that I am not going to look to the

past, I am going to look to the future and plan for the future.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

DR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge, in the gallery, the students from E. J. Pratt, in Trinity Bay, for people do not know where the school is. I am delighted to see them and I welcome them specifically as Minister of Education.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

DR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker, before I deal with the Resolution specifically I would like to make a few general comments. First I want to restate this Government's commitment to providing greater equality of educational opportunity throughout the Province. We believe as a Government that expenditure on Education is the best investment a society can make, not only in terms of the development of individuals, but in terms of the development of the economy of the Province and the Country.

The kind of education we have will determine our competitiveness, as our hon. friend said, and our productivity. There are no safe markets for our products anymore; there are no places to hide in the competitive wars that are raging around the world with free trade and with the changes in the international economic situation. We must compete as a Province and as a Country, and I believe, Mr. Speaker, we Newfoundlanders can compete. Given the opportunity, given the educational background and given the economic opportunities, we can compete. We

cannot have a world-class economy without a world-class labour force, and we cannot have a world class-labour force without a world-class educational system.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

DR. WARREN:

Providing such programs, Mr. Speaker, may be expensive, but I would argue that the provision of such programs at all levels is not nearly as expensive as not providing these programs.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, another general comment is in order. We must expand post-secondary opportunities in this Province. While post-secondary enrollment has a portion of our eighteen to twenty-four age group, and I have some figures here on this, while that proportion has increased in the past few years, we still have the lowest percentage participating in post-secondary education in this Country.

I want to pay tribute to my hon. friends opposite. We did have some improvements from 1981 to 1987. In 1981, approximately 12 per cent of the eighteen to twenty-four age group in this Province attended post-secondary institutions full-time. My hon. friend who was Minister of Career Development in the later years is nodding. In 1987, that percentage hit about 17 per cent. In 1988, our 17 to 18 per cent compared with 35 per cent for Quebec, 25 per cent for the Country as a whole, 25 per cent for Ontario, 24 per cent for our friends in Nova Scotia, 23 per cent in Alberta. We have made a great deal of progress, but we have only begun. We must continue to increase the proportion of our people who

attend post-secondary education institutions, not just universities. I am talking about post-secondary programs and institutions.

In fact, it might be suggested, Mr. Speaker, that this Province should set as a goal that by the year 2000 we should reach the Canadian average, whatever that average is. Over the next decade, we, perhaps, will have to run much faster than we would have otherwise in order for us to close that gap, that we reach the Canadian average by the year 2000. That is a tremendous challenge. Now, how are we going to do that? I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that we have to remove or dramatically reduce some of the barriers to post-secondary education. One of these, of course, is the financial barrier, and I will deal with that in a minute. There are other barriers, and I think these would include, very briefly, eliminating some of the inadequacies in our elementary and secondary system, as my hon. friend indicated, so that more people can proceed through the high school program. We must make it possible for more of our students to finish high school, with the courses and programs necessary, and guidance for entrance to our colleges and to our institutes and to our universities.

I think another barrier we have to eliminate, Mr. Speaker, is an attitudinal barrier. We must dispell, and I think we are dispelling to a degree, the myth that post-secondary education can only be completed full time, that it can only be completed on campus, that it can only be completed by the young. I wish my hon. friend for Grand Falls (Mr.

Simms) had been here. I gather he went back last year; he demonstrated that you do not have to be young to go back to university. I do not know what mark he got in the courses he did, but I am sure he did well.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Two A's.

DR. WARREN:

Two A's.

I think we have to dispel the myth -

AN HON. MEMBER:

Two A's in one course.

DR. WARREN:

Two A's in one course.

We must dispel the myth -

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

DR. WARREN:

He did two, yes. Thank you my friend.

We must dispel the myth that post-secondary education must be full time, that it must be on campus, that it must be for the young only. It is for everybody.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Mr. Minister, he got a C, but it was only because he did not have enough time in (inaudible).

DR. WARREN:

Thank you, my friend.

Now let me get to the financial barrier, because this is the important one that we are addressing directly today. I am delighted the resolution is on the Order Paper. We can reduce the financial barrier in a number of

ways. Mr. Speaker, I think we can reduce the financial barrier, or remove it to some degree, by decentralizing post-secondary educational opportunities throughout the Province. And we are going to do that. We are going to provide quality post-secondary educational programs throughout this Province. We are going to do it right.

AN HON. MEMBER:
What about Burin?

DR. WARREN:
Burin? I congratulate you on Burin. You are ready to go, and we implemented that program. In Labrador West you were not ready, but we are still going to do it at the beginning of next year.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

DR. WARREN:
And we will provide better programs, expanded programs in the central parts of this Province. We will, I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, examine other ways of decentralizing post-secondary opportunities.

Distance education has tremendous potential for post-secondary and other levels of education in this Province. It has tremendous potential, distance education and satellites, for literacy; we are going to explore that over the next few years. Computers, other technological aids, we have to examine the potential of this to provide quality education throughout this Province. And we must improve the Student Aid Program, particularly for certain groups of students. I am pleased to report that we have been working on this, and I want to

outline very shortly the specific measures that have already been taken or are being planned today.

Hon. Members might be interesting in knowing that I have recently received a copy of a report from the Ministerial Student Aid Advisory Committee. I have read the reports from the past two or three years, but I recently received that report. I have not released it yet. I will be reacting to it shortly. It has on it representatives from institutions throughout the Province. I will not name them all, but I am delighted that most of the people on this Committee, who wrote this report, are students from all parts of the Province, with two or three faculty members involved, and some people from our own Student Aid Division.

We are going to consider these recommendations, and I hope there are somethings we can do right away. We are going to examine these. I feel, Mr. Speaker, that any select committee establishment at this time would delay this process of examining these recommendations and attempting to implement them in the short-haul.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, the hon. Members, and in particular the hon. the Member for Fortune - Hermitage, must be aware that the Student Aid Program is a combination of the Canada Student Loan Program and the Provincial Grant Program. And I am sure all my hon. friends are aware that the administrative criteria used for assessing student eligibility are the same for both the Canada Loan Program and for the Provincial Grant system.

The Loan Program introduced by the

Federal Government a little over ten years ago is funded by the Federal Government and administered by the provinces under a common set of guidelines established by the Federal Government. I am sure former Ministers of Education are quite aware that this is a Federal program. While these criteria are reviewed from time to time by the provinces and recommendations made to the Federal Government, the final say for these criteria for the granting of student loans and grants rests with the Federal Government.

The provinces have made recommendations recently through the Council of Ministers of Education Canada for changes, and we are awaiting the results of these recommendations. It is my hope that the Federal Government will adopt some of these proposals. At the Council of Ministers recently, I strongly argued that they should, particularly for people in provinces such as Newfoundland and Labrador.

The provincial grant portion of the Student Aid Program gives students a grant of about \$1,000 per semester, and that is over and above the Canada Student Loan Program. It is given as a loan, initially - my hon. friend is smiling, because a few years ago we called it a deferred grant, and that was a way to make better use of the Federal money and to keep more money, without hurting students, for the Province to distribute.

Our Student Aid Program compares favourably, I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, with many programs throughout this Country. In fact, for a period of time we were about

the second best; you had to borrow least and still got a larger grant. And I pay tribute to my hon. friends across the way on this. The Student Aid Program compares very favourably with many across this Country. And when, last year, we heard quite a bit about the increase in fees, I made two points, Mr. Speaker: I said the fees in this Province at post-secondary institutions are among the lowest in Canada. And perhaps I should emphasize they should be the lowest in this country. The fees should be the lowest!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

DR. WARREN:

I could read from an Editorial in The Globe and Mail just a few days ago, which says: Higher fees for Needy Universities. They are asking for higher fees in Ontario, charge more fees. We are opposed to this as a Government. We want to keep our fees as low as possible and keep our Student Aid Program as rich as possible, so that more of our people can go on to post-secondary education.

Mr. Speaker, I might add one other thing for the information of my hon. friend from Fortune - Hermitage. I am delighted he mentioned the scholarship issue. I was told the other day that my good friend from Gander got the same amount when he won the Electoral Scholarship, I do not know how many years ago - many, many years ago - he got the same amount that we are now giving to Electoral Scholarships. Shame on somebody! The same amount, \$600. I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that that will be changed. Now, I will not promise anything this year, but I can assure you that is

one of the priorities. We are going to review that whole scholarship program.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

DR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker, I know my time is running out, but let me indicate very briefly some of the things that are underway or are being planned. First of all, we have introduced or implemented the automated computer base processing system planned by the former Government for student applications. We have implemented that, and I think the system was demonstrated to the Public Accounts Committee - was it not? - recently, and my hon. friend from St. Mary's - The Capes was quoted in the paper as saying it is an excellent system, and I am delighted with the system. It turns around applications generally in two weeks rather than two months. Now, there are some exceptions, I will admit that, but it is certainly a means of increasing the ease with which the applications are processed.

He mentioned the Student Aid Appeals Committee. The Student Aid Appeals Committee, in the regulations in 1987, had not been appointed. I have written the institutions, and very shortly I will announce the appointment of the Student Aid Appeals Committee that was provided for in regulations two years ago.

Number three: We are considering the establishment of a computer link between the Student Aid Office and post-secondary institutions, so that students can plug in and find out what the situation is with their loans, what their application is, and so

on.

Number four: We are going to consider all of these recommendations of the Ministerial Advisory Committee. Let me leak a little bit of what is in that Committee to my hon. friend. I am delighted that that Committee had in it some recommendations on the special needs of single parents and other groups in this Province, and I am going to consider those.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

DR. WARREN:

Number five: We have a staff at the office, and I want to pay tribute to the staff; they get hundreds of letters and calls, and at times they must be harassed, but they tell me they are trying to put a face on student aid. They answer every call. I have begged them and I have asked them to do that, return every call, answer it sensitively. I am delighted - I think we have a representative from the office in the gallery - with what has happened in the past few months in answering every letter and every call, as difficult as that is. I am going to see that it is done, and my officials are seeing that it is done.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

DR. WARREN:

We are considering the appointment of a Student Aid Information Officer. We are looking at the 1-800 line. It was in existence and it did not work. We want to take another look at it. How can we improve it? This year we have installed additional telephone lines for enquiries during peak periods when applications are

being processed, and we are going to consider that for the future as well. We did it this year - had some extra lines.

At the national level, Mr. Speaker, the Province has membership on a Federal/Provincial Intergovernmental Consultative Committee on Student Financial Assistance - that is quite a mouthful, is it not? Do not ask me to repeat it - established by the Council of Ministers of Education. We have a strong representative on that, and they are presenting our views to Ottawa on issues such as student indebtedness, part-time students, single parents, native students and the administrative criteria I mentioned earlier.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, just a few other words. Perhaps the most interesting thing I have done in the last four months, and I have done a lot of interesting things and enjoyed most of it - I have done some things I wish I had not done or done differently. Let me admit that. There are some things I did not do, and there are some I have done, but one of the most powerful things I have done, Mr. Speaker, is to visit schools throughout this Province and talk with students, and talk with college students throughout the Province. I can assure you it has been the most enjoyable and exciting experience I have had. I have been in schools and talked with students, in the urban centres mostly. I have been in Labrador West, in Corner Brook, in Grand Falls, in Gander and St. John's.

MR. WARREN:
Makkovik.

DR. WARREN:

Just wait a minute, my hon. friend.

I have really enjoyed my visits to these schools, talking with students directly and listening to them. They are as excited about it as I am. I have talked to college students about the problems of student aid. I have meetings planned for Stephenville in the next few weeks. I do not let everybody know where I am going to be, because I do not want all this popularity. It can get to you after awhile. These requests for pictures, I tell you, are getting just too much. I am going to Stephenville. I have planned to go to the Burin Peninsula; I have told my hon. friend. I have plans for Springdale, and I have already made some plans for Goose Bay. Coastal Labrador: Can you imagine a Warren and Warren show on the Coast of Labrador? That would be a hair-raising event, I would say.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

DR. WARREN:
We will both wear our caps, because it is going to be in the winter. I am looking forward to these visits to the Northern Peninsula. I have already indicated to my colleagues that I will go with them to the South Coast early in the new year.

I want to use a teleconference system in the new year to talk to students I cannot visit. I want to take the smaller communities and use the teleconference system, and send out in advance the questions I am raising with them. Some of them will have to do with student aid and post-secondary, and I will ask them to prepare their observations and then I will get on the system and talk with

them. And I am going to continue these visits. I will not be able to get one day a week or one school a week indefinitely, but I can tend to continue these over the term as long as I am here. I want to do that. I have found it an exciting experience.

Mr. Speaker, I have been encouraged by these visits. I think what the visits have done to me, in addition to giving me consumer reaction to education, is that they have put a face on education - individual stories and individual needs. We talk about statistics here, we talk about ten per cent of that and fifty per cent of that, and it sounds great. And we have all these reports. But there is nothing like talking with individuals who have individual stories to tell and individual problems, as my hon. friend is nodding. There is nothing like doing it. It puts a face on education. I want to continue that. Perhaps you will forgive me, Mr. Speaker, if I say that these visits brought back some memories. I grew up in a very small community, went to a very small school, and my parents had to scrounge every cent -

AN HON. MEMBER:
Where?

DR. WARREN:
New Perlican, a two room school, and my parents were not very wealthy at all. I do not want to leave that impression. They scrounged a few dollars for me to go to post-secondary school, but I would never have made it without the student aid. So I really identify with many of these students, and I can assure this House and the students here through you, the students of this Province, that nobody will work

any harder than I will on behalf of your needs.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

DR. WARREN:
With respect to the Resolution, Mr. Speaker, if this Resolution had come in in May, I would have said yes. It may be necessary next year. We have a lot of things ongoing at the present time. Setting up a committee right now would delay many of the things that are now being done. The implementation of this special report would be seen as a delaying tactic, so I would vote against the Resolution at this point in time. If Members of the Opposition wish to submit their ideas on paper to me, I would be delighted to have them. We have the study ongoing, we have the tour ongoing, we have the actions in the planning stage; we have to get them into next year's Budget if they have monetary implications. So, I would not want to delay any of these.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you and I thank the House for listening.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Member for Ferryland.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. POWER:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am delighted to be able to support the excellent Resolution brought in by the Member for Fortune - Hermitage, but I have to say I am very disappointed that the Minister and the Members of

the Government party are not going to support the Resolution.

There is nothing in this Resolution that asks to delay any imminent action, to slow down a process for assisting students in Newfoundland. All this Resolution asks for is that a select committee of the duly elected Legislative Members for this Province examine student aid. It does not mean that the bureaucratic system has to stop, it does not mean that the Government governing process has to stop. All we want on this side, and I am sure many private Members opposite want, is a chance to have some real meaningful input into improving and changing a student aid system in this Province which is already causing some hardship for students to attend post-secondary institutions. I suspect, and I think many persons in Newfoundland suspect, that it is going to get a lot worse as years go along.

Mr. Speaker, I will just go through the three objectives that are very important, especially to the young students in the gallery who may want to attend a post-secondary institution in the years ahead. Here are the objectives for all of you of what student aid is supposed to do, and this was outlined in a task force on student aid.

One, the student well-being objective: To allow all qualified financially needy students to engage in post-secondary education without undue financial hardship.

The second major principle is an equal opportunity objective: To improve equal opportunity of access to post-secondary education by reducing geographic,

socio-economic, and other constraints on participation.

The third one is the participation objective: To encourage participation in post-secondary education of all students who have the potential to benefit from such participation regardless of financial capacity.

Those are the three major objectives of our student aid program. I would like to say, even before I begin my comments, I notice the Director of Student Aid is in the gallery, and I think it is time that maybe in public, in Newfoundland, somebody congratulated the Director and the staff of Student Aid.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. POWER:

Having been a Minister for post-secondary education for several years, I know what an awful onerous task they have, especially in the fall when the first semester starts and all the appeals come in. And parents are at home who maybe do not have enough money to buy groceries and do badly needed repairs to their homes for the winter, and maybe they have a student at the university who is saying, 'Mom, if I do not get \$600 by the end of the week I have to go home.' And it happens every day. Mr. Snelgrove and his staff do a great job of expediting an awful lot of those appeals so that the students can stay in school and get their student aid.

Mr. Speaker, and Mr. Minister in particular, you, I think, are going to have one of the most onerous tasks in Newfoundland in the next few years. We already

have the highest unemployment rate in Canada. We probably already have the lowest standard of education, certainly the lowest participation rate in post-secondary. Our economy is the least diversified. I talked to the Minister of Fisheries today, and the problem in the fishery is that we have so many people who depend upon a single industry. We need to diversify our economy. We need new, innovative ideas, new ways of developing business. How do you do it in this Province unless you do it through the mind power we have? I am very concerned that this Government is not going to be able to deal with the problems of education in this Province. I am sure they have real difficulty in dealing with the fishery and the other economic problems we have, but what do you do with the future? How do you get Newfoundland out of always being at the worst end of all the worst scales in Canada? Whatever is worse by being highest, we are highest, and whatever is worse by lowest, we are lowest. We are always on the wrong end.

One of the problems with that is our education system. It really has not, for all of the \$600 or \$700 million - I suppose, Mr. Minister, this year education totals -

DR. WARREN:
\$750 million.

MR. POWER:
\$750 million - \$750 million - for a little, small Province like Newfoundland and we still cannot seem to get a high success ratio in high school. Our sciences and our math programs are certainly not up to standard. We cannot seem to get an active or even

comparable ratio to the national average, which is low. I mean, Canada's national average of 25 per cent or so of post-secondary students is not going to beat Japan out in the world marketplace. We still have a long ways to go as a Country, and we are at the worst end of this Country's scale. So an awful lot has to be done.

When you look at the only way to really change the basic direction of Newfoundland it is through the brain power we have. I have to say, having been a Minister for three or four years, having had the opportunity to form and help form the Department of Career Development and Advanced Studies, where we did make some, I thought, meaningful changes to a very old, antiquated system; we at least got a community college system; we at least got three provincial institutes; we at least got university courses out to one of the campuses. And I do not mind saying, by the way, that some of my conservative colleagues did not support my initiatives, the ones that I wanted, or those of the former Minister of Education who wanted to go a lot of further. If I had had my way as Minister every single campus of the post-secondary system, every one of the seventeen community college campuses and vocational schools would have had post-secondary university courses, because it makes easy access for students to go to university or take a university type course.

But in April of this year, the people of this Province voted for what was called a real change. And do you know something my friend, the Minister of Forestry, whom I sat with in this Legislature since 1975, the

Province might have been in need of a real change. It might very well have been involved in need of a real change. Any political party that stays in power too long, whether it was Smallwood's time, for twenty-three years, or our Conservative time of seventeen years, or the Province of Ontario, where you had forty-one years of the same Government, who is to say that the change would not be beneficial. But I will say for those young students in the gallery, if what has happened in post-secondary education since April is an indication of real change, then I guarantee you that those young students, when they get a chance to vote four years from now, are going to want a real, real change, back to people with some ideas.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. POWER:

Because two major things have happened in post-secondary education to make it difficult for students to go to university in this Province. A 10 per cent tuition increase, the largest increase in any of the last ten years. In 1980 a 10 per cent tuition increase was the largest one there. It makes it prohibitive, it makes it difficult for students to attend post-secondary institutions.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MR. POWER:

Well, if it is not 10 per cent, then your Minister of Finance -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. POWER:

Your Minister of Finance announced a 10 per cent increase. When I was Minister we used to go out and say, 5 per cent.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MR. POWER:

Yes, I think what you get is \$500,000 for each per cent of increase, or something like that. And we always said, look, 5 per cent was tops, 7.5 per cent was as much as you could ever do, 10 per cent we thought, as Conservatives, was out of the question because this would prohibit, discourage students from attending post-secondary institutions. So that is one thing that this real change brought about. It was a real change to make post-secondary education more expensive and more difficult to access.

Second: what they did was they destroyed a Department of Career Development and Advanced Studies. Why? Because the Department was ineffectual, that it was too bureaucratic, that it was not performing the needs of the people of Newfoundland. They changed the Department of Career Development and Advanced Studies for one reason only, because it was a Conservative initiative. And now they have put post-secondary education, probably the most important aspect of Newfoundland life today, those young students who are going to run this Province five and ten years from now, who are going to hopefully have education and management skills to operate businesses, create employment and diversify our economy. How are they going to do it when we now have a large Department of Education, with all due respect to the very competent Minister, who is a very

experienced educator in Newfoundland, very well regarded by this party and by the people in the Province, but how does any one person do what is really required in the Department of Education going from Kindergarten to the School of Medicine at Memorial? How does one person do it?

My colleague from Humber East (Ms Verge) was the Minister of that large Department, and when we broke it apart and made two Departments out of it, we found that two Ministers and two Deputies and two groups of intelligent people trying to do the job properly, were still extremely busy, and still could not do all the things you wanted to do. So I know that by going back, it was a backward step. It has not helped the people in Labrador West get easier access to post-secondary education, the university courses. I do not see post-secondary university courses at all the campuses that we would have liked. There are so many things that could have been done, that you wasted time in trying to destroy something, because it happened to be put there by a Conservative Government.

When I look at the infrastructure we have in this Province - we have a fairly decent infrastructure for education - the university is pretty well capitalized, the new Earth Resources Building, the Marine Institute that we have, a lot of new facilities, a lot of new capacity, the fine Arts School in Corner Brook is the best one in Canada, if not the best one in North America. We have a lot of our welding technology courses, our computer assisted learning courses, which are some of the very best in Canada. What is the good of it all if you talk about

the sons and daughters of the people I asked the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Carter) about, during Question Period. If you asked the people whose employer is going to go bankrupt down in Fermeuse, ask them next fall how does a son and daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Brophy down in Fermeuse, how does that person go to university? Tuition increases are up, family income is down, how do they get to university? How do they get to trade school? How do they improve their own little lot in life unless something happens to student aid? And that is why I say I think the Minister has a tremendous problem, and why this select committee proposed by the Member for Fortune - Hermitage (Mr. Langdon) might have assisted it, by travelling around the Province as a group of all party politicians, bringing back -

AN HON. MEMBER:

Listening to students.

MR. POWER:

- listening to students, listening to parents, and bringing back to the Minister some forceful comments, to use him. I know how difficult it is, as a Minister of Education, to convince, in your case fourteen Ministers around the table, in my case, when I was there, there were twenty one or twenty two Ministers. It is very difficult for you to get your priorities to be the priorities of the Government, because many other Ministers have conflicting usages for money. I think the select committee could have helped. I think it really could have made the Minister of Education's job just a little bit easier.

When I looked the other day and I saw in the newspaper, already what is happening, and as the economy

gets worse next year with the fishery, and as we have more and more problems, this headline here: 'Enrollment growth at MUN is below the national average. Even though, first year students are up, the overall averages are down. And the only reason why first year is up is because of what I just mentioned, the first year courses at Lewisporte, Grand Falls, Burin, and hopefully, I guess, next fall at Labrador.

MR. FLIGHT:

And Nova Scotia and New Brunswick and the Maritime Provinces.

MR. POWER:

If you were the Minister of Forestry from Nova Scotia or New Brunswick I would accept your comments, but you are a Minister in an Administration in Newfoundland which, as I mentioned before, is at the worse end of all the scales, and is going to need education, the post-secondary version of it - graduates with ideas, with management skills to improve Newfoundland's lot in life. So do not worry about Nova Scotia and do not worry about New Brunswick.

AN HON. MEMBER:

That is right.

MR. POWER:

Our job is to catch up because Nova Scotia is ninth and we are tenth, and we should be complacent. That is not the real change that we look for, the people of Newfoundland in April of this year. We want some ideas. Go back to Joey Smallwood's time, when I got through university because I got \$100 a month and my tuition was paid. As one person from Tors Cove, Newfoundland, I would not have got a degree from university if I had not got that

assistance from a Liberal Government in Newfoundland. That is the kind of aggressive change that the people of Newfoundland are going to want from this party over there.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. POWER:

They are not going to accept the excuse that we are close to Nova Scotia and close to New Brunswick. An awful lot has to be done.

MR. FLIGHT:

A lot has been done.

DR. WARREN:

I can only say that in the student aid area - No, the Minister of Forestry is wrong. It is going to be done. We asked for a Select Committee today, a very simple process in parliamentary procedure to give the Minister and the Government some assistance. The Government Members are all going to vote against this resolution. Hopefull, you have all the ideas yourselves and you do not need our humble input or the input of the students and teachers in Newfoundland and Labrador. I suspect that in most processes any new ideas can help, and all I can say is that if we do not, as a Province, substantially improve student aid next year an awful lot of those three objectives, the objective of participation is going to be down because a lot of rural Newfoundland students are not going to be able to attend. A lot of the equal opportunity objectives of all persons in all areas of Newfoundland and from the Coast of Labrador, male and female, native and white residents of Newfoundland, if you want, equal opportunity is not going to

be there, and the student well-being objective, that you are suppose to be allowed to attend post-secondary, and financial resources should not prevent you from doing it, I believe next year you are going to find an awful lot of students, unless student aid is substantially improved, an awful lot of students who will not be able to obtain those three objectives. Newfoundland will be worse off, and a lot of those individuals will migrate to low labour type jobs on the mainland of Canada, and will never significantly improve the communities of Newfoundland which they had hoped to do.

I can only say, Mr. Minister, that I am sorry your party is not going to support the resolution. I think it would have assisted you in your objectives to improve education in Newfoundland. I can only say, that I for one, will be happy to stand and vote for this resolution because it is a good resolution.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN:
The hon. the Member for Exploits.

MR. GRIMES:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would just like to begin, Mr. Speaker, by saying it is a pleasure to rise and speak to this issue. As a matter of fact it would be a pleasure, on any issue related to education, to get an opportunity to stand in this House and to take advantage of that opportunity to reaffirm the commitment that all of us in here, I think, have to education, as the

previous three speakers have already pointed out in their comments on this private Member's motion. I am glad to see that at least so far there has been very little, if any, politics being played with a motion that for the large part, and as our Minister has indicated, has a lot of merit. I am going to stand here for the next few minutes and spend some time talking about the merits of the motion.

Now, there are some problems with it which is why, I, like the Minister and like the rest of the Members on this side, will not stand and vote for it at the end of the day. However, the issue itself is an important one. I am glad it is before this Assembly, and I am glad it is on the Order Paper, and I commend the colleague, the hon. Member for Fortune - Hermitage (Mr. Langdon), for placing it on the Order Paper.

I would like to look at a couple of things in the motion itself and then if I could, if time still permits, look at a couple of things in terms of comments that were made by some of the previous speakers.

In the preamble to the resolution it begins by stating, 'whereas there is increasing demand and need for post-secondary education in the Province' a fact that I am glad is a fact. I commend the Member for Fortune - Hermitage for taking advantage of this forum to get it in front of the Assembly for debate. We are all hopeful. We know now that it is a fact, and we are hopeful that it will continue to be a fact, that young Newfoundlanders and Labradorians will increase their demands for proper post-secondary education in the Province. There is one little

flaw in it. The hon. the Member for Fortune - Hermitage, (Mr. Langdon) when he was speaking to that issue, raised the point that universities from other parts of Canada, from the other Atlantic Provinces in particular, managed to send recruiters into Newfoundland and attract some of our better, more capable, brighter students to their institutions instead of to our own. I do not necessarily see that as being a flaw or the same kind of problem that is addressed in the rest of the resolution, because the resolution deals with the need for student aid. Those students, whether they attend here or elsewhere, are not the ones who are going to suffer because of a lack of student aid. They will qualify in other institutions, and I think we all have broadened our minds far enough so that we understand that Memorial University or the Grenfell College in Corner Brook, or any other institution that we may have in Newfoundland, is the only place that someone can get a good, proper post-secondary education. None of us, I am sure, would ascribe to that train of thought.

We would hope that as many young Newfoundlanders and Labradorians as possible, who would want to be educated in Newfoundland, could be, and that finances will not be a problem:

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. GRIMES:

So, I just point out that, with regard to the students who do qualify, I am delighted to see that there is some evidence that at least our students can compete in certain categories, with anywhere else across the country.

One of the things I have said, Mr. Speaker, in many debates about education before, is that we have failings in our secondary day school system. It is not as efficient and effective as it should be. However, those students who do find success through our system, are as good in the end product as most of those anywhere else in the country. But the problem is we do not have as many by number or by percentage in Newfoundland and Labrador that survive the system, that actually graduate. Our percentage is a bit lower than in most other parts of the country. But those who do graduate, and find that they can benefit from the system, turn out to be graduates who have to take a back seat to no one in the rest of the country.

The resolution, Mr. Speaker, then goes on to say: "WHEREAS the present structure for attaining student aid is antiquated", and I find that that part of the preamble bothers me moreso than anything else. And I cannot really pass by that statement without asking Members opposite - and I excuse the Member for Fortune - Hermitage, who placed this on the Paper, because he was not the Member at the time, and what he said here in the House today is consistent with what he has been saying as an educator in Newfoundland for over twenty years - but there is no excuse for Members who have sat opposite for some seventeen years and would have one of their own now admit that the system is antiquated.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. GRIMES:

I was fortunate to have some dealings with two Members opposite

who were both previously in position as Ministers of Education. I recognize that they always looked at the need for improvements in student aid. They acknowledged in meetings the need for student aid. They looked at committees that talked about improvements needed for student aid. And now you have a Member joining the same caucus, who will put a motion of resolution before the House that is saying, despite all the study that Members opposite, when they were in the Government, did over the last seventeen years, one of their own Members puts a statement before the House saying, 'In my judgement, the system is antiquated.' Now, what a condemnation of seventeen years of effort focused on post-secondary education!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. GRIMES:

I found it unfortunate, as well, Mr. Speaker, in the comments of the hon. the Member for Fortune - Hermitage in introducing his resolution, where he did take the time to speak for a while in what I thought was some kind of derogatory fashion about plans announced by the current Minister of Education to put campuses in other places. The one currently being discussed, for example, is in Central Newfoundland.

Now, his colleague, the hon. the Member for Ferryland, indicated that had he got his way some years ago, there would have been first year offerings - not a separate campus, I recognize that - at least, first year university offerings everywhere that you could put them, a principal with which I agree, that if you can

bring the good that the people want and the service that they want to where they are, bring it out there. Do not make them come in and get it. Take it out, and then one of the great benefits of that in relation in this issue is that, of course, you would eliminate a lot of the need for student aid if the people could stay home, and not have to borrow money to come in here and pay room and board, and lodging and so on.

But the Member in introducing his resolution, suggested at least in what I heard, that he was sort of opposed to the notion of putting another institution in central Newfoundland, and that maybe we should continue to put all of our efforts into Memorial University. Maybe we should even stop now the continuation of degree granting status, and the move towards that in Corner Brook. I do not know, maybe I misunderstood the Member's comment totally, but I listened very carefully to what he said, I have listened to all three speakers because I am very concerned and interested about this issue. It would disappoint me very much so if any Member of the House would stand up and say that they are in opposition to the whole principle of accessibility, and equalizing the chance for students in central Newfoundland, western Newfoundland, northern Newfoundland, southern Newfoundland and Labrador, to be educated beyond the day school system into post-secondary courses, where they live and where they have grown up.

So, I hope that in his closing remarks, the hon. Member for Fortune - Hermitage might take advantage of an opportunity to say to myself and to all Members present, that I misunderstood him

and that he did not mean that and that in fact he is all for more universities, more course offerings, more of anything that will give a greater education opportunity to young Newfoundlanders and Labradorians where they live.

He also indicated, the hon. Member for Fortune - Hermitage in his remarks, that the need to revise the system has been demonstrated. I have found it a little strange that a lot of the things that he was quoting from, he was quoting from studies, and reports back in 1967, 1969, 1971, and he knows that those reports and studies have been there in front of anybody that was in Government for that whole period of time. And he is standing up suggesting now that these kinds of reports that were there, that right from 1971, which was one of the last reports that he quoted, to 1989, almost all of that time in which his colleagues were in power and formed the Government, that his phrase was that nothing has been done in between, and that the system remains antiquated.

I am very sorry to hear those kinds of remarks stated, and I would hope that the record will show that not in seventeen years, but in even less than four years, we will be able to go out with our Minister and show that it is not antiquated, and that we have made a commitment to post-secondary education.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. GRIMES:

I might just continue, Mr. Speaker, by mentioning a couple of things in terms of where our Minister is now. I concur totally

with the Minister's statements in a couple of areas. He touched briefly, Mr. Speaker, on the need to eliminate the barriers or reduce barriers as they relate to accessibility to student aid for the students in the Province pursuing post-secondary education. And he made reference, in particular, to the one that this resolution addresses, which is financial barriers. And all of us, I am sure - every hon. Member seated in the House - wish this Minister of Education every success in finding real ways and means, over the next few years, to eliminate some of the financial barriers that do, unfortunately, prevent some of our students from going on to the post-secondary institutions that they would desire to attend.

And I also concur with and commend the Minister, Mr. Speaker, for his comments regarding the breaking down of the attitudinal barriers, and the removal of them. Because many Members in the House will be in concurrence with the idea that we would hope that more and more in Newfoundland, we would all agree with the position, that education is a life-long experience. And we are now talking about the secondary system, and the post-secondary system, but learning and education for individuals never ever, ever, stops. And we are finding that in this House every day. Each day, a debate on a particular issue, provides new learning experiences for all of us, and we hope that in those experiences we will make better decisions, that will enhance life in Newfoundland and Labrador, for all of our residents. The Minister has indicated, Mr. Speaker, that some financial measures are already being considered and undertaken,

and that in fact the recent reports, not the ones from twenty years ago, not the ones from seventeen years ago, but the recent reports submitted, are well into the study stage and about to be considered for what ever level of action is possible, and we are confident that this Minister, with his advisors and through the Cabinet, will find creative ways to respond to at least some of the needs that have been highlighted by the student representatives. I will take the opportunity in this debate to Mr. Speaker, if I may, to commend the hon. Minister of Education on the consultative approach that he has entered into. I think he may have borrowed a little bit out of the book of the previous Minister of Education, the hon. Member for St. Mary's - The Capes who was extremely good in that capacity. I am not sure if the previous Minister did as much consulting with the students as this Minister, but certainly he believed firmly in the consultative approach and I think it showed in his very serious and well-meaning attempts to advance education in the Province, and this Minister has already learned that it is a process that is worthwhile, and that I am sure he is committed, in this House today, to continue. The student component of that is certainly, I am sure, an eye-opener for himself, because he has often gotten accused, as other people have, of once you go into the university, of hiding away in an ivory tower and reading about theories and postulating about things in books, but not being out in the real world. The previous Minister of Education knows full well, that even having come from the ranks of teaching, having been removed for even a very short

period of time, you might lose a little tiny bit of contact with how your colleagues and your former students and so on are feeling on a day to day basis, so I commend this Minister on his consultative approach, and I am sure that it will give him a firmer understanding and a greater degree of compassion when he deals with the needs of students, both at the secondary level and the post secondary level which we are dealing with here in this Resolution. The Resolution Mr. Speaker, goes on to talk about parents having to contribute heavily - that has always been the case, that will always be the case - and I think everyone recognizes that there is probably very little chance that there will be a free ride for anybody, a contribution is required and may very well be the order of the day for many years to come, it has been for many years to come. I do not foresee in the near future any possibility for anybody returning back to free everything for students. I know it would be definitely the ideal situation and if it could happen I am sure that this Minister would find a way for it to happen. The Resolution also talks about the parental financial obligation preventing them from providing these funds to attend post secondary institutions, and that statement in the preamble gets to the whole crux of the matter and points out for all of us, Mr. Speaker, why it is such a serious issue and why I said at the beginning, and will say again, that I am delighted that the hon. Member for Fortune - Hermitage placed it on the order paper. There is no doubt that all of us are saddened when we hear of cases when a student with potential is denied an opportunity to continue his or her education due to an

absolute total lack of funding. It does happen, and when it does happen it is a sad day for all of us, because most of us I am sure, if not all of us, would agree as previous speakers have said in this debate, that the most important resource that we have in the Province is the human resource, and particularly the youth, the young developing human resource. On to the problems though Mr. Speaker as to why I, like the Minister and others on this side, will not vote for the establishment of a select committee. We have had countless years of study. Every Member on the opposite side has had more than enough opportunities while they were in Government to express their opinions on how student aid could have been made less antiquated, and how it could respond on an up-to-date basis to the needs of young students in Newfoundland and Labrador. Whatever imput they had at the time obviously must have fallen on deaf ears, because the Member now rises in his place and presents a resolution, saying that we all recognize that it is still antiquated. The Committee structure in many instances provides good insights and does some good work, and I would never, ever, cast any aspersions and suggest that any committee, any select committee of this House, would operate as some committees have in other types of organizations around the Province, and that they would actually spend more time, effort, and money, on their committee meetings than they would in actually resolving the problem. The problem in this case is not enough money being spent for student aid. We have always seen instances before, and it could very well happen here, that if we do not find meaningful ways

to put an infusion of dollars into the student aid programs so that it ends up in the students pocket, then it is not much point in us spending money on ourselves studying something that has been studied over, and over, and over again, through the whole seventeen year period. All kinds of recommendations, possible solutions and proposals have been made to two previous Ministers of Education, that still sit on the side opposite in this House, and have not been acted upon in any meaningful fashion to put real dollars in the students pockets. We are very hesitant to go into the committee structure at this stage, when in fact the kinds of things that a committee would normally do have already been done, are already in front of the Minister and are already ready for actioning. They are all ready for actioning.

I would like to just spend a minute before concluding, if I might, Mr. Speaker, in addressing the concerns about our Minister being too busy, the splitting of the Department by the previous Administration, and the re-uniting it into one Department now. I think there is a misconception somewhere afoot that if you name a Minister with a particular title that means there is going to be more emphasis placed on the programs areas covered there, than if it is in some other Department with some other Minister. That can only be true if everybody believes in the assumption that the Minister must do everything in the Department. What we have in fact now is that every single staff person that was working for Career Development in the post-secondary education sector before, is still working as hard, if not harder than before, to try

and resolve some of the concerns that confront our young students. The Minister sits in what he rightfully should sit in, a policy making decision, a policy making role. The policies are sent down and the staff of the Department function to make sure that the things are actioned. You do not need forty-five or fifty Ministers to make forty-five or fifty things happen. Otherwise if you follow that to its illogical conclusion every division and Department of Government would have its own Minister, and then we would have not enough seats. We would have to expand the Legislature because we would need 300 or 400 seats, so that we could have 300 or 400 Ministers, so that we could get the work done, and pay enough attention, according to the level that the Members opposite think it deserves.

In fact there have been some moves made. Anything that is going to be done and looked at is well passed the committee stage for now. The Minister has offered the invitation that, if in fact through the budgetary process the measures that he manages and this Government on this side manages to institute for the coming year are not satisfactory, and if again, Members opposite think that there are things that have never been thought of before that a select committee could put before this Minister, that have never been suggested before in seventeen, nineteen, or twenty years of study, if there is something new that has occurred overnight, that a committee should study, then this Minister has said, bring forth the resolution again and if it is well in advance of the next budgetary process he may even consider advising and suggesting to his colleagues that they vote for it.

Under the present set of circumstances the Minister is well aware of the issues. Every Member opposite knows that the door to this Minister's office is open. The door to all of the officials in his Department to deal with this issue and all other educational matters are open, every Member of this House has equal opportunity without sitting on any committee. Eliminate the Committee, go directly to the Minister, and plead your case and give him your suggestions. He has given you that commitment already.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. GRIMES:

My final comment before closing, Mr. Speaker, is just to say that Provincial initiatives are already in place well beyond what a committee could suggest might be done. And on that basis alone, I support, as the Minister has said, the fact that we will stand on this side and vote against a very worthwhile resolution, but poorly timed and somewhat flawed in certain aspects of it.

In the meantime, I am sure that the Member opposite, the hon. the Member for Fortune - Hermitage, as I will, as the Member for Exploits, will continue along with this Government to lobby the Federal officials for the necessary change that must occur at that level. So I am very assured that everything that can be done at the Provincial level is being done and will be done, and that all of us will unite together to make sure that the lobby continues at the Federal level.

I commend the Member for presenting the issue, but I will stand at the end of the day and

vote against its passage.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the Member for Grand Bank.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It gives me great pleasure today to participate in this very important resolution that has been so ably put forward by my colleague the Member for Fortune -- Hermitage.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Be nice.

MR. MATTHEWS:

I am always nice, Mr. Speaker, not like the, I do not know if I should say the former Minister, the present Minister, or the former and current Minister, the in and out Minister, Mr. Speaker. He is in and he is out, and he is out and he is in at the same time.

But anyway, Mr. Speaker, the hon. Minister should not be prompting me because if he does that then I just might get a little bit nasty. I do not like being like that. It is too important an issue to get like that. And the Minister is too nice a guy to get nasty with.

Let me just say, Mr. Speaker, after listening to the remarks of all Members in the House this evening, and to listen to the Member for Exploits, that he has been somewhat contradictory because the nub of this resolution is to have a select Committee of the House go around the Province, talk to students and parents and

anyone else concerned with education. So he said, "education is an ongoing and continuing process" so I think the select Committee would indeed be a part of that ongoing process. I would like a number of other speakers as well to recognize the presence of the Director of Student Aid, Mr. Snelgrove. And I want to go on record, as a former Minister of Career Development, as saying that there have been significant improvements made to student aid in this Province, and that gentleman in the gallery, along with a number of former Ministers, both on this side and the other, have to take responsibility for that. So I want to go on record as having said that as well. There have been significant improvements. There were all kinds of problems with the assessing of applications and so on and that has improved significantly. The appeals process has been dealt with again in a positive manner, but I still think perhaps there will always be room for improvements to the appeal process, but that is a fact of life. I guess, it is because of the numbers of appeals and so on that these people have to deal with, particularly certain times of the year, when student aid is granted.

I would like again to refer to a comment or so by the Member for Exploits when he talked about the now Minister of Education having responsibility for elementary, and so on, in education in the Province, and talking about the staff of Career Development and how they are still working just as hard and so on. Yes, there is no doubt they are still working just as hard. They worked hard before when they were in Career Development and now since they

have been taken over by Education.

You are talking about students being looked after, well you know if the Government of the day, of which the Member sits, had not done away with the employment programs over there, students in this gallery and those out around the Province would have been more able to save money to attend post-secondary educational institutions in this Province. Because a very important part of students being able to go, and as has been alluded to by all speakers, is financial resources. And, if your Government had not cancelled the employment programs that you cancelled, more students in this Province would be able to afford to go to community colleges, institutes and university around this Province.

AN HON. MEMBER:

That is posturing.

MR. MATTHEWS:

No, that is not posturing, that is the truth.

Out of one side of the Minister's mouth he said that, I think it was in his first couple of sentences, statements, that he wanted to make post-secondary education more accessible to more young Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

I accept and respect that statement but, on the other side of the coin, you cannot take 10 per cent more out of them for tuition fees, you are being contradictory. You either want to make it more accessible or you do not. And by raising tuition fees by a whopping 10 per cent, you are making post-secondary education in this Province less accessible to thousands more Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. So the first thing

you have to get straight in your heads and decide on is are you indeed committed to making post-secondary education in this Province more accessible, or are you just committed to talking about making it more accessible? And, by the actions of the Minister of Finance, who is not here today to defend himself, I am sure he was prompted by the Minister of Education, because he talked about how low tuition fees are in this Province when compared to the rest of Canada. So, one could read into that that the Minister of Education prompted his colleague, a former colleague in university and now a colleague in Government; he prompted him, and it was the suggestion from his Department that tuition fees be raised by 10 per cent. So the Minister has to make up his mind. And it would be very interesting to hear the Minister tell exactly how this 10 per cent increase has prohibited students in this Province from pursuing post-secondary education.

Again, I would like to refer to comments made by both the Minister and the -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:

Yes, welcome, my colleague, the House Leader. It is good to have him back!

MR. SIMMS:

Are we winning?

MR. MATTHEWS:

Oh, of course! There is never any doubt. It is like I said the night of the by-election in Trinity North: Was it ever in doubt? It was never in doubt.

MR. MURPHY:
Not even a landslide.

MR. MATTHEWS:
Talking about landslides! The old One-Vote - two votes after two recounts.

Let me just say how significant those sixteen votes in Trinity North were. Three weeks before polling day, this Government, this party had a 21 per cent lead in the polls in Trinity North, and on election night they lost by sixteen votes. That is quite significant.

And, of course, the Member for Bellevue, on the day of the Liberal nomination when I met him in Holiday Inn, said, 'Bill, what are you doing out here?' I said, 'Boy, I am out here involved in the campaign. Why?' He said, 'Why do you not go home. It is all over. It is a cake walk for us.' So, you see, that is why sixteen votes indeed is a landslide in a situation like that, where a Government is five months into its term.

Anyway, that is not going to help student aid. Every student in Trinity North and all of those in the post-secondary institutions here, voted against the Government. If we had not had sixteen votes, we would not have won the by-election. And that is what is going to happen in the next election. The thousands of post-secondary students in the Province are going to turn thumbs down on this Government because of what they have done already. And, of course, they are only in their first year. What is going to happen in the next three years of the term of this Government? They still think we are not the highest taxed people in Canada, and they

still think that our tuition fees at the institutions are really too low.

MR. GRIMES:
(Inaudible).

MR. MATTHEWS:
Pardon?

Stand in your place and ask a question. Now, do not be shy over there.

The other thing I wanted to say, Mr. Speaker, in reference, again, to the Member for Exploits, is that this is Private Member's Day. The Member for Fortune - Hermitage chose to put a resolution on the Order Paper concerning student aid, and that is his right. And whatever he says in this House on this particular day, is his right. So, no one should question why he said what he said. That is a Private Member's Resolution, and do not lose sight of that. It is his own opinion and he is allowed to express it in this House.

The hon. Member, as well, talked about the cost and the downsizing of the Cabinet. The Premier saved, Mr. Speaker, about \$200,000 maximum on downsizing his Cabinet, but he established an Economic Recovery Team that is going to cost a minimum of \$3 million a year, \$30 million to \$40 million total. If you spent that money on post-secondary education in the Province and, indeed, lowered the tuition fees in the Province by \$3 million, how many more young people in this Province could go to post-secondary education institutions. Why could they not do it? Why could they not do that?

The other question I have for the Minister: The Minister of Finance

projected a \$5 million surplus in his Budget. Five million dollars. Now, if you are going to have a \$5 million surplus in your Budget, why would you -

MR. HOGAN:

That is for the slush fund.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Yes, slush fund. The Member for Placentia - now, I do not know if he means 'slush' as in glasses, fund, or 'slush' as in having money in a pot. Now, I am not sure what he means by 'slush fund'. In the summertime when it is hot, a lot of people around the Province drink 'slush'. Is that what you mean?

MR. HOGAN:

No, that is not what I meant at all.

MR. MATTHEWS:

You mean, so that people can do what they want to do with it. If they want to spend it on post-secondary education and lower tuition fees, they could do it. Is that what the Member is suggesting?

Well, my point, Mr. Speaker, is simply that if you have a \$5 million surplus projected in your Budget, why did you have to take 10 per cent from students in this gallery and those out and about the Province, who could not afford to pay the tuition fees they were then paying? Now, that is a very serious question.

We can barb back and forth across the House and have fun, which to a degree maintains our sanity at times in here, but this is a very serious issue.

AN HON. MEMBER:

We are trying to find yours.

MR. MATTHEWS:

You are trying to find my sanity? Well, you will have to look a long time yet.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:

I lost my sanity about three days after that crowd sat over there. I just could not take anymore. And do you know something? I have become so insane since, I am determined that I am going to be back over there.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Come on over then.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Oh, my God! Oh, no! I have more about me than to so easily be on the other side. Like everything in my life, I want to work hard to accomplish it. I want to assure all of you that I will work hard enough with my colleagues so that we will be over there, and we will decrease student aid by 10 per cent, not increase it. The biggest increase ever whopped upon students in this Province. The biggest increase!

MR. SIMMS:

Clyde is gone one evening and she is coming apart.

MR. MATTHEWS:

It has gone apart, with the Premier up talking about Meech Lake. Let me just say to the Minister of Forestry, who is now sitting in the Premier's seat, after he resigned his seat so the Premier could have a seat - that man - he is all about seats -

MR. SIMMS:

Batman.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Batman, yes. We should get a cake for him, too. Let me just say to him, what did you not, when you sat around the Cabinet table in the Budget preparations, say, Now boys and lady, there is \$5 million here, so why do we want to increase tuition fees by 10 per cent? But you did not do that. You supported a 10 per cent increase.

MR. FLIGHT:

(Inaudible) dollar per year per student.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Never mind that. It does not matter. Students do not have any money to waste like the hon. member does now. Every dollar counts and do not forget it. If you were ever in a post-secondary institution like I was, you would know that.

MR. FLIGHT:

(Inaudible) played soccer.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Oh, no. I played a bit of that, too. I was almost as successful playing soccer as I am at being elected to this House.

MR. SIMMS:

The Minister responsible for blackheads (inaudible).

MR. MATTHEWS:

Blackheads, yes. He is responsible for more than that. He is also responsible for spreading out hours of work over a number of weeks, I hear. But, we will talk about that another day. That is another question.

Mr. Speaker, let me just get back to the member for Exploits when he talked about decentralization of education. Let me just remind him of who started that process. Let

me remind the member of who started the campuses and offered the courses in Grand Falls and Lewisporte. Who put the courses in Burin? Who had the thing well underway for Lab City? The Premier went down in Lab West and made a statement during the election that he was forced to keep, but most of the spadework was done. I have to agree with the Minister that things were not fully in place to offer -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. MATTHEWS:

Hold on now. They were not fully in place, but this Government was committed at the time, and we were the Government, to putting it there in September. Your Premier went and announced he was going to put it there in September, then he announced it was not going there at all in this particular school year, and then he was forced into the January announcement because of the efforts of our member and the people of Labrador West.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:

Now, that is the truth of the situation. I have to commend the Minister for at least giving it to the people in January. That it a lot better than not giving it at all this year, but it still should have been given to them, as promised, in September. And if everyone had been working hard enough, it would have been done.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible) was not ready.

MR. MATTHEWS:

You do not know about the building being ready. You do not know. If

you want the information, talk to your Minister. He will tell you how things were and as they are. Mr. Speaker, my contention is that there is nothing wrong with a select committee of this House being appointed to look at student aid, to talk to students, to have more discussion with students, the ones directly affected.

MR. HOGAN:

(Inaudible) now is the time to act.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Well, what are you going to do about it? If you do not want a select committee, what action are you going to take?

AN HON. MEMBER:

Clyde will do it.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Talk to parents who cannot afford to send their children to school. There are cases in this Province where parents can afford to send their children to university, the institutes, the community colleges, they have enough wealth and income to do that, but they outrightly refuse. I would like for the Minister to listen to me, because I think this is probably one of the most important things that has been said today.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. MATTHEWS:

Hold on a second now! You have not heard what I said yet. Do not pre-judge.

MR. WALSH:

That is enough.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Old ribs and chicken up there, you should settle down and listen.

MR. SIMMS:

Super snitch.

MR. MATTHEWS:

You listen a lot to what is happening amongst your caucus, listen to what is happening over here.

MR. RIDEOUT:

And runs out and tells.

MR. MATTHEWS:

I would like to say to the Minister that there are situations in this Province where, because of the requirements for parental contribution, assessments are done on income and student aid is not granted to a student because of the parents' wealth or their income, and consequently the parents do not agree to financially support a student and the student is not able to attend a post-secondary institution. Now that happens. I am sure we have all run into that situation in this Province. Now that is one of the most pressing issues, I think, that should be dealt with, because that denies a lot of students the opportunity to pursue an education which, we all agree, regardless of political stripe, is important. You are talking about access, so I think that has to be addressed. And a select committee of the House could look at that as one of its considerations.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MR. MATTHEWS:

Just hold on a second now! Relax! You might learn something. Education is an ongoing process, and you may just learn something if you listen for the rest of the day.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

By leave! By leave!

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker, before I conclude I would say to the Minister on a very serious note that, yes, there have been improvements to the student aid situation in this Province but there are a lot of improvements that yet need to be done. I ask the Minister to please consider the last point I have raised for those students whose parents can afford to send them to school but refuse to send them to school. For those students who want to go to school, that particular point has to be addressed. Thank you.

MR. SIMMS:

A good speech.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SIMMS:

We are going to hear it now.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would sincerely like to congratulate the Member for Fortune - Hermitage for putting this very important issue before the House. I would also like to congratulate the three Members who spoke immediately after for the very serious way in which they approached the resolution. And I would like to thank the Member for Grand Bank for finally getting down to some common sense in the last two minutes of his speech.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. BAKER:

I believe the issue is an extremely important one, and I am very happy it is being debated today. I do not have the full twenty minutes, so I will try to briefly summarize the few comments I intended to make. The need and the increasing demand for post-secondary education in the Province is very real. I am pleased that all speakers have indicated that this need has to be met. I would like to relate this to the position of this Government, as it has been for some time, to make post-secondary education more available to students all over the Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. BAKER:

We now have a variety of post-secondary institutions scattered throughout the Province. The one area where there is a very serious lack is in the area of university education. I am pleased to see that Members opposite, in principle, support what we have announced we are going to do in terms of university and university education in this Province. I am very pleased that they support the idea of the development of a full degree-granting university on the west coast of this Province, in Corner Brook. I am pleased to know that they support that. I am pleased to know that they will also be on side when we announce plans for a university in central Newfoundland, very pleased!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. BAKER:

I would like to point out that this is a tremendous change in the last five or six months, because these people campaigned against us.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. BAKER:

It is amazing what a short while in Opposition can do. So I am very pleased that we are finally getting support for this proposal to make university education more available throughout this Province. The reason that this has to be done is obvious. The Minister pointed out the participation rate amongst eighteen to twenty-four year olds. The Minister pointed that out. And in Newfoundland it is shocking compared to other parts of Canada.

But if you were to look at the participation rate in this Province in terms of what is happening in this Province, you will find that the closer you get to the University the higher the participation rate is. And the conclusion is obvious. We have to bring these university services out into the Province. I will repeat again, I am glad to see that Members opposite are basically supportive of the plans that we have in this regard.

MR. TOBIN:

(Inaudible) students have to be able to afford to go with that 10 per cent increase every year.

MR. BAKER:

There are problems with student aid. There is absolutely no doubt about it. The present structure is antiquated. The present structure needs change, I will agree. Parents are required to

contribute heavily and, in some cases, that is as it should be. But there are problems, and the Members for Grand Bank pointed out one problem. Other Members have pointed out other problems in terms of this student aid. I am very glad to see that the problem of the single parent has been mentioned, and how we deal with this particular problem, especially when that single parent happens to be in the social services system. We intend to make changes in this regard, and the work is well underway. So I am very pleased that these things were mentioned.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. BAKER:

But I would like to, at the same time, point out another problem that was not mentioned, unless it was when I had a meeting outside for a few minutes, and that is that in all of this we have to be very careful that we do not overburden students in terms of what they have to pay back when they leave university. There is a very delicate balance that we have to reach here in terms of student aid, because it is not pleasant leaving university and owing \$30,000. That is not a pleasant situation. So there is a fine balance to be maintained here.

We have to come up with a system of student aid that is fair to everybody, that takes into account the special needs of the parents to support the rest of the family while they have one, two or three students in a post-secondary institution somewhere. We have to take that into account. We have to balance that against the desire not to put too great a burden of debt on the students when they

leave university.

These things we are very conscious of, and we are now working towards. And I will just simply repeat again that the proposal of going out into the Province with universities, whether it be Memorial University or a branch of some other university, the proposal of building these structures in other parts of the Province will help alleviate some of these problems, and it will make it easier and cheaper for students to go to university.

What I am saying, I guess, Mr. Speaker, is that the body of this particular Resolution has a lot of merit. However, what we are talking about here is the final statement. Very simply put it is this: "THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Government establish a Select Committee of the House to address the whole issue of student aid..."

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, as has been indicated, we have a problem with that, and I would like to very briefly go over what that problem is. First of all, I would like to inform Members opposite that it is the duty of Government to govern. It is the duty of Government to govern. Whether they realized that in the past seventeen years or not, I do not know. But it is the duty of Government to govern.

MR. SIMMS:

How the world turns.

MR. BAKER:

We have been put in this position for a variety of reasons, one of which is the policies that we put forward to the people of this Province. One of the policies deals with this very issue. W@

have been working for the last six months, since May 5 or whatever date it was we were sworn in, and the Minister of Education has been working and people in his Department have been working, to solve the problems mentioned here. We are well underway to solving the problems that are mentioned here.

Because we are Government, we are going to proceed with the things that we want to do in the educational system. We are going to do that. If, in a few years down the road there is no indication that we are doing anything, if the impression is that we are doing nothing, then Members opposite have a perfect right, after a couple of years when proper changes are not being made, to demand a Select Committee of the House. Because at that point they will have lost confidence in us to bring about any changes in the educational system. At that point they will have, so they will have the right to call for a Select Committee of the House. If we are not communicating with the people of the Province, if we are not going out and getting the views of the people of the Province on this issue, then they have a perfect right to ask for a Select Committee to do that.

However, some Members opposite were sitting in a Government year after year when these problems existed. The Minister of Education pointed out the situation with regard to scholarships. That has existed for a long time. Members opposite were sitting over on this side of the House, and they should have done something about that situation but did not. The problems in student aid were there

and were not solved.

MR. SIMMS:

Oh absolutely! And you will not resolve them, either.

MR. BAKER:

Well, they were not solved anyway.

MR. SIMMS:

Oh yes they were.

MR. BAKER:

You were sitting on this side when these situations existed, you did not solve them, now all of a sudden, as soon as the Government changes, right away you want us to appoint a Select Committee to put you on so you can tell us what to do. That is ridiculous! You had your chance.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. BAKER:

You had your chance, now we have ours.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. BAKER:

I am absolutely confident that after we have been here seventeen years the people of this Province will not say there has been no increase in scholarships in the Province. I am absolutely confident of that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. BAKER:

After we have been here seventeen years the people of this Province will not be able to say you have not expanded university services across this Province. They will not be able to say that. I am quite confident that with this

Minister of Education these problems will be dealt with over the next short time. In the depth that he is talking about, you have to give him a couple of years. There are an awful lot of complicated things that have to go on here. You have to give him time.

He has already started going around the Province and talking with the students and teachers, he has already done that. He is already talking to other people within the system and in the Province concerning what changes they want to see, and I have every confidence that you will see changes in post-secondary education, not only with the university but with the other institutes. That you will see changes in student aid, that you will see changes in scholarship allocations in this Province, and you will see changes that people will agree are changes for the better, and we do not intend to sit still for seventeen years, I can assure Members opposite that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. BAKER:

Now Mr. Speaker what we have to vote against, and what we are going to vote against, is the establishment of the Select Committee. The establishment of the Select Committee. This has been mentioned a number of times. We are not voting against doing anything about student aid, the record will show in the near future that, that is not the case. We are not voting against increasing scholarships, not voting against that, we are not voting against an improved post secondary system in this Province, we are not voting against any of

that, the record will show, and four years from now we will be willing to stand on our record. The record will show that we are not voting against that, what we are voting against at this time is a Select Committee to examine this, we have many things in progress and we need an opportunity to finish them.

MR. SIMMS:

A point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Simms.

MR. SIMMS:

I would not have normally interrupted the hon. Member Mr. Speaker, except that he was beginning to get repetitious. He only spoke for ten minutes but he must have repeated himself at least three times. We know what they are voting against, we understand all of that but the fact of the matter is, according to the rules of the Legislature, which the Government House Leader, of course, should be very familiar with, and should do his utmost to uphold, says, that the Member who moves the motion on Private Members Day has the right at twenty minutes before adjournment to close the debate. We have gone beyond that Mr. Speaker and I think the Government House Leader should be reprimanded and maybe even named.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. The Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

To that point of order Mr. Speaker, I agree wholeheartedly with the first part of what the

Opposition House Leader said. It is past the time when the mover adjourns the debate. The normal practice in the House has been that, if the Member speaking wants to go a minute or two beyond, by leave of the House, it happens, it happens just about every day, but I will say to the Opposition House Leader that what is unusual is to get up on a point of order and try to waste the time of his Member, who we are anxiously looking forward to hearing.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, it is a valid point of order.

I recognize the hon. Member for Fortune - Hermitage, and he will now close the debate.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. LANGDON:

Mr. Speaker, after listening to the different people speak today on the particular motion that was presented, I would like to thank Members on both sides for their comments. However, after saying that, I do not have a mean streak in me, but after listening to the Member for Exploits, I think that that particular Member, and I do not mean to say it in a derogatory term, but, after the way he picked apart the Resolution and picked on the nitpicks of things that are there, and I will comment in a few moments, I can understand why the NTA of this Province did not progress under his leadership.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. LANGDON:

The Minister of Education along with the President of the Treasury Board recognized that there was a

need for post secondary education and a demand. The Member for Exploits took it and tore it apart and said that the premise of it was faulty. I would suggest to him that if you go down to the high school in Point Leamington and look at your constituents from Leading Tickle and Glovers Harbour and Point Leamington, that you will indeed find students who have left our institution, your District, and have gone to the university in the Atlantic area, primarily because they have gotten fellowships of \$10,000, \$8,000 and \$12,000, and their parents could not afford to send them to the institution here and that is why they took it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. LANGDON:

And that is not an isolated case either.

Mr. Speaker, I taught in that school for twenty years and I know the situation, and three of the most brilliant students from that school have gone to the universities on the mainland because of fellowships, and if you do not think so phone the principal of the school in Point Leamington and ask him so.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. LANGDON:

Also, Mr. Speaker, in relation to the fact of the granting of the post-secondary institutions such as a full-fledged university. My comment to that was simply this, and I want to put it on record, my comment was to study and see if it would be better in a sense to put the money in the students pocket rather than a full-fledged

university. I would not stand in this House and suggest to you or anybody else that I would not like to see a university for the central area of the Province. I would be an idiot in a sense to even suggest that particular issue because post-secondary education is so important to this Province.

Also, Mr. Speaker, -

AN HON. MEMBER:

It should have shocked you, you were the president of the NTA.

MR. LANGDON:

- I can name students who are in Toronto today working in factories at \$4 and \$5 per hour who would have loved to have come to the university and even have gone to Grand Falls to have done post-secondary education, but their parents could not afford to send them there. That is a reality. And I do not think that we should ever take that lightly.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Right on!

MR. LANGDON:

I guess in a sense when a new person comes to the House you can understand, I guess, that there has to be political bantering back and forth, that is the nature of the game as it has already been said. But I am still amazed in the sense, if that is the right word, to realize that regardless if it is Government or Opposition, regardless if it is a good point put forward by one side or the other, we always have to, in principle, generally speaking, not support it. I guess, as a new Member in the Legislature, I have to come to grips with that and I understand, I suppose, that is the way the parliamentary system works.

But it was not my intentions in putting forth this particular motion in the House, to badger any Government or to distract from the Minister of Education (Dr. Warren) the fact of his officials within the Department not doing a commendable job. I think if you recall I said at the beginning I have a high regard for the Minister of Education, a colleague, I have known him for years and I really believe that he will do a good job. If I did not, I would not say so. I am a man of principle.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. LANGDON:

It is not my intention of attacking the Government, Mr. Speaker, or attacking a problem, or attacking the Province if you want to look at it that way, because I honestly believe that the problem is serious. I represent a District in this Province this year where a fishermen said to me only a few days ago, 'my gross income from fishing this year is \$873.' He is probably lucky. Then that particular parent also has a student that would like to come to a post-secondary institution. Even with loans that are available and with the help it is still inadequate. You cannot take blood out of a turnip. It is just not there to be got.

Also in the other situation, there are parents in this particular Province who grossed \$30,000, \$35,000, or \$40,000 a year and they have a mortgage, and they have payments, and they have got kids, and to go to the student aid, the amount of money that they get is minimal, and in some instances nothing. I can quote

you examples of people that made \$35,000 last year and they applied for student aid and they were refused because the parent was supposed to have to put up the money. It happens. These are the type of things that we as Legislators in this Province have to be concerned with and that is where I was coming from. I did not mean, to hinder or impede the work of the Department of Education. I did not mean to hinder or impede the Minister of Education or his officials. My aim, and the whole purpose of the motion was to, in a sense, study the program. It probably will not hinder next year's participation in post-secondary institutions. It probably could be done within a four or five month period. And in the long run it is not me, it is not you as individuals who are going to reap the benefit, it is the people of this Province. And I am sure the Premier has said many, many, times and also people that are sitting here, the problem with this Province is education. It is education. If we do not have educated people we will not make progress.

Let us not kid ourselves in that, we have people out there in the reorganized high school program who are doing courses, really because I know the situation, they are doing courses that will not get them to the university on purpose. They are doing courses to go to other secondary institutions where the standard is not as high because they do not want to face the reality that my mom and my dad cannot afford to send me to university. That is the reality of it. Let us not kid ourselves. If we think anything other than that we are not being candid, we are not being truthful. That is the problem in

this Province, and it is not one that we can be proud of. Let us not play partisan politics. I guess everyone of us regardless of what side we are on are not going to build a utopian society. It cannot be done. People who voted for Trudeau with the Trudeau-mania realized that he did not have all the answers for Canada either, and neither did the only living Father of Confederation, who did great things for this Province. He never had all the answers.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. LANGDON:

Neither does this Government and neither does this Opposition but we can work together to make it happen. That was the premise of that particular motion that I put forward, that we would indeed, as a Select Committee of this House, would look at, study, to make sure that every last person, every last student in this Province, whether they want to attend the University here, the Grenfell in Corner Brook, the Central Newfoundland Community College, or anywhere else, would not be denied the opportunity to do that. That is our business. We are here to look after the future of this Province and what better future would we have here, if we had every individual in this Province with a post-secondary degree from the University or from some community college. I remember during the election, the Premier was saying that we want people to stay in the Province to work. I agree with him, and there is not one person here who does not agree. It hurts when you see a person, regardless of whether he is married or single, to pack up and go to the Mainland to work. It hurts and it will continue to hurt. I want to

tell us, as Legislators here today, that if we had every individual in this Province with a post-secondary degree, I do not think that we would be able to keep everybody in the Province. People with Ph.D.s are not going to go into a fish plant under an ultraviolet light and pick out fish worms. They are not going to do it. They are wanting challenges and they are going to move out. But, I agree with the premise that if we provide the opportunity then our students should be allowed to be here to work. If for any reason we lose sight of that reality then there is something wrong with us. There is something wrong. And there is no way in the world that I wanted to make political hay out of anything that is emotional like that. That is not my intention. And if I am here for four years or eight or twelve, or for however long the opportunity is affording me to be here, my first and foremost premise and aim in life will be to help every Newfoundlander in this Province. Everyone, whether it is here on the mainland part of the Province or in Labrador. And if that is not my directive, if that is not what I am here for then I should not have gone to the people and asked them for a mandate to put me here in the first place.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. LANGDON:

And that is why today when we look at that particular motion, it is not a motion from the Opposition Member for Fortune - Hermitage, to look at the needs and to assist the financial needs and the student aid of this Province. It is not mine. It is probably pure emotional. It is not my motion.

It is for every individual in this Province that we look at it. I would challenge every Member in this House, Mr. Speaker, on both sides, and it has already been said -

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. LANGDON:
- that we as legislatures have to put front and foremost the students of this Province, and I concur with the Member from Exploits. To some extent that has been shared by both Opposition and Government Members, that has been accessed. But the final reality of it will be when the vote is called for. When you as an individual, if you can, regardless of Party, regardless of politics, regardless of how you behave or how you want to behave if you vote against it, then you are not in a sense voting against a motion that I have presented, you are against - in my perspective - voting against student aid, the right for these students to have every dollar that is rightfully theirs.

And, Mr. Speaker, with that I adjourn the debate.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:
Is the House ready for the question?

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Agreed.

On motion, the Resolution was defeated.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Division.

MR. SPEAKER:
Division. Call in the Members.

Division

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

Those in favour of the motion, please rise:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Rideout); Mr. Hewlett; Mr. Hearn; Ms Verge; Mr. Simms; Mr. Matthews; Mr. Tobin; Mr. Woodford; Mr. Hodder; Mr. Power; Mr. A. Snow; Mr. S. Winsor; Mr. Langdon; Ms Duff; Mr. Parsons; Mr. Warren.

MR. SPEAKER:
Those against the motion, please rise:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries, (Mr. Carter); the hon. the Minister of Social Services (Mr. Decker); the hon. the Minister of Environment and Lands (Mr. Kelland); Mr. Hogan; Mr. Reid; Mr. Ramsay; Mr. Crane;

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The hon. the President of Treasury Board (Mr. Baker); the hon. the Minister of Health (Mr. Decker); Mr. Walsh; Mr. Noel; Mr. Gover; Mr. Penney; Mr. L. Snow; the hon. the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture (Mr. Flight); the hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs (Mr. Gullage); Mr. Grimes; the hon. the Minister of Education (Dr. P. Warren); -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Shame! Shame!

- the hon. the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations (Ms Cowan); the hon. the Minister of Mines and Energy (Dr. Gibbons); Mr. K. Aylward; Mr. Murphy; Mr. Dumaresque; Mr. Short.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Seventeen for, twenty-four against. I declare the motion lost.

Unless the Government House Leader has some information to share with us, this House is closed until tomorrow at 2:00 p.m. in the afternoon.