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VERBATIM REPORT
(Hansard)

Speaker: Honourable Thomas Lush

Thursday

[Preliminary Transcript]

8 March 1990

The House met at 2:00 of the clock in the afternoon, pursuant to adjournment.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS:

Mr. Speaker, His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor has arrived.

MR. SPEAKER (Lush):

Admit His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor.

Mr. Speaker leaves the Chair.

His Honour, the Lieutenant-Governor takes the Chair.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS:

Ladies and gentlemen, it is the wish of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, that all present be seated.

Thank you.

HIS HONOUR, THE
LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR:

Mr. Speaker, and Members of the Honourable House of Assembly:

I welcome you to this Second Session of the Forty-first General Assembly of the Province of Newfoundland.

On April 20th, 1989, the people of this Province gave My Government a mandate for change - one involving renewal and revitalization of our society, our economy and the way in which Government itself operates.

In My address to you on May 25th of last year, I outlined in some detail the manner in which My Ministers intend to address this great challenge during the life of this Assembly. In particular, I noted that priority attention would be given to economic reform,

renewal of the educational system and revitalization of the health care system during the term of My Government's mandate. These three critically important areas of public responsibility constitute the building blocks to a physically, socially and economically healthy future for the whole of our society. Other areas of grave importance to the general welfare of the Province were also addressed in My Speech last year, together with new directions and alternatives for serving the needs of our people.

My Government remains committed to and wishes to reaffirm its overall objectives, policies and priorities that were presented to this Honourable House last May 25th. This is a bold and ambitious agenda and one which will take time to fully achieve. The problems and difficulties we currently face are deeply-rooted and addressing them will require strong leadership and fundamental change. But address them we must - the alternative is simply not acceptable.

Over the past ten months, My Ministers have taken the first steps towards the building of a better future for our people. Considerable progress has been made on all fronts. A multitude of new initiatives have been introduced by My Ministers, and in the First Session of the Forty-first General Assembly, My Government placed fifty-seven separate legislative proposals before this Honourable House for the consideration of all Members. This level of effort and action will continue and accelerate over the term of My Government's mandate.

Mr. Speaker and Members of The

Honourable House of Assembly:

The fishing industry is the lifeblood of the Newfoundland economy. This industry is presently experiencing one of the most difficult periods in its recent history. Major groundfish quota reductions have led to severe dislocations in the economy of our Province. We are faced with plant closures in single industry communities, the tie-up of a significant portion of our offshore fleet, and over the past two years thousands of Newfoundlanders have been thrown out of work at a time when our economy is not sufficiently strong to absorb the full impact of such employment reductions. While the offshore sector of the fishing industry has borne most of the impact of these quota reductions to date, it is clear that the inshore sector of the industry will not escape the fishery resource crisis. The magnitude of the announced and projected quota reductions is in essence undermining the very structure of our economy, particularly our rural economy.

While the cause of and primary responsibility for addressing this crisis lies with Federal Government, My Government is deeply concerned that we find the right solutions to the problems in the fishing industry. To this end, My Government has been engaged in extensive discussions with the Federal Government to find a lasting solution to the problems which have resulted from these resource declines. While the immediate needs of workers and communities most affected by the current crisis will be addressed on a priority basis, the primary objective of governments must be directed towards the building of a

viable fishery over the longer term. New approaches will have to be adopted to address fundamental structural weaknesses in the fishery to ensure the evolution of a stable and competitive industry. My Government is fully prepared to co-operate with the Government of Canada in developing a comprehensive approach to achieve this objective.

My Government also fully recognizes that the objective of building a viable fishery must proceed hand in hand with the development and diversification of the entire Newfoundland economy. This will serve to broaden the Province's economic base and thereby lessen our dependence on the fishery as a whole. In the absence of such a broad economic strategy, the fishing industry will continue to be characterized by low productivity levels and excessive unemployment, and will not generate its full economic potential. My Government is hopeful that a formal agreement in these areas can be reached with the Federal Government as quickly as possible. The Province has already indicated to the Government of Canada that, within its financial capability, it is prepared to share in the cost of a comprehensive fisheries revitalization and economic diversification program.

My Government also remains committed to the principles of resource conservation and to a fisheries management approach that will reverse the decline in fish landings at the earliest possibility and which will permit the rebuilding of fish stocks within a reasonable time frame. The long term interests of our people and the fishing industry must not be compromised by a

resource management approach that does not address conservation concerns. This, by definition, means that a broadly based economic response program must be implemented to address the social and economic adjustments which will flow from the stock rebuilding process. It also serves to emphasize the importance and urgency for the Federal Government to take immediate steps to end foreign overfishing in our waters, and to seek international approval to bring the Nose and Tail of the Grand Banks within Canadian fisheries management jurisdiction. Such measures will require the direct and personal involvement of the Prime Minister. My Ministers will continue to encourage that involvement.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Honourable House of Assembly:

Since my last address to this Honourable House, My Government has proceeded to establish an Economic Recovery Commission. Its mandate is to identify programs and other measures that will contribute to a sustained reduction in the chronically high unemployment rate in the Province. The Commission also has been mandated to identify, develop and promote employment opportunities for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador by stimulating and fostering enterprise and economic development in all regions of the Province.

The Economic Recovery Commission and the Department of Development have recently submitted significant new proposals for a vehicle through which to accomplish these business and economic development objectives.

This includes the restructuring of the Newfoundland and Labrador Development Corporation into a new Crown Corporation which will consolidate the existing activities of NLDC and certain functions of the Department of Development. The intent is to provide a single agency for all local development and business support programs offered by My Government. Emphasis will be placed on the expansion and development of small to medium sized enterprises through this new Crown Corporation, whose services will be delivered through a system of regional offices located across the Province, with accompanying decision-making being decentralized to the regions. This new agency will also provide an overall planning and co-ordination function for government departments, agencies and other organizations which have an impact on economic development in the regions. You will be asked to pass legislation to facilitate these proposals during the coming year as a first step in providing the infrastructure for the implementation of a broader program of economic diversification. Further initiatives emanating from the work of the Economic Recovery Commission will be announced over the next several months.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Honourable House of Assembly:

My Government remains committed to the Hibernia project. As Canada's first offshore oil development, the Hibernia Project offers the opportunity to diversify the provincial economy, enhance regional oil security and strengthen the Province's economic base. It will also provide the necessary infrastructure and technological capability to assist

in maximizing local benefits from future offshore developments such as the Terra Nova and White Rose fields. While a successful conclusion to the current negotiations cannot be assured by the Province alone, My Ministers are hopeful that with the co-operation of the Federal Government and the oil companies involved, a final agreement on the Hibernia Project, acceptable to all parties, can soon be reached. It must be emphasized, however, that My Government is not prepared to enter into an agreement which does not assure to this Province an appropriate level and quality of industrial and employment benefits.

In this regard, My Ministers also wish to reaffirm their commitment to a major expansion and upgrading program at the Marystown Shipyard which will enable it to participate fully in Hibernia related industrial activity. This is a strategically important project for the Province, having the potential to generate substantial long term industrial and employment benefits from offshore developments generally. My Government intends to continue to press the Federal Government for an immediate release of monies from the Canada - Newfoundland Offshore Development Fund Agreement so that the required engineering and design work for the facility enhancement program at Marystown Shipyard can proceed without further delay.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Honourable House of Assembly:

Over the past several months, My Ministers have been actively engaged in discussions with the Government of Quebec respecting the potential development of hydro

electric resources in Labrador, including further developments at the Upper Churchill site. While these discussions are complex and difficult, My Government is prepared to continue to seek a negotiated arrangement with Quebec that will benefit both provinces, as long as there is a demonstrated willingness on the part of Quebec to pursue such discussions in a manner which recognizes the fundamental right of Newfoundland to fully benefit from and use these resources to meet the legitimate needs of its residents.

My Government also plans to continue its co-operative efforts with the Government of Canada on the funding of cost-shared economic and regional development agreements. A number of such agreements have been successfully concluded since the election of My Government on April 20th, 1989, including major initiatives focusing on rural development, Labrador development and forestry development. It is anticipated that further progress in other important areas can be achieved over the next several months.

In addition to the foregoing activities, My Government intends to continue to support existing and expanding military operations at Goose Bay and to pursue with the Federal Government the establishment of a NATO Tactical Weapons Training Centre at the Base. It is my Government's position, however, that these activities must be carried out in a manner which recognizes the legitimate concerns and interests of the native peoples in Labrador.

My Government intends to pursue new legislative initiatives in the mining and forestry sectors in this Session, to solidify and

strengthen their current and future contributions to the provincial economy. New funding programs also will be proposed on a cost-shared basis with the Government of Canada in these areas.

Priority will also be placed on funding a comprehensive new development agreement with the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, which will incorporate tourism marketing and promotional activities as well as major new thrusts in historic and cultural resource development. The potential for increased year round tourism activity constitutes one of the economic bright spots in the Province, and my Government intends to vigorously pursue these opportunities during the term of its mandate.

The report of my Government's recently established Task Force on Agrifoods will be available later this year. This work is expected to provide a solid foundation upon which to pursue more aggressive and effective policies and programs in the agricultural sector - a sector which My Ministers believe has been wrongly ignored and which is largely underdeveloped at the present time.

In recognition of the increasing importance played by science and technology in the changing global economy, My Ministers will soon be revealing a broad statement of policy on science and technology development in Newfoundland. It is anticipated that this policy will focus My Government's support for research and development in a number of priority areas in the Province, and will serve to stimulate a wide variety of new research and development initiatives so that we may better

prepare ourselves for the technological challenges of the decade and the century ahead.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Honourable House of Assembly:

The process of economic development is one which has, until recent times, generally proceeded without the full extent of checks and balances necessary to ensure the maintenance of a healthy environment. Our lack of extensive industrialization in Newfoundland has meant that, compared with most other jurisdictions, our physical environment has not been unduly threatened to date. In recent years, however, My Government, along with other governments and individuals around the world, have come to recognize the important linkages among ecosystems and the cumulative and wide ranging effects of pollution. As well, the potential exhaustion of our natural renewable resources constitutes another form of environmental threat to which this Province's resource-based economy is particularly vulnerable, as has been clearly shown in the current fisheries crisis.

My Government has recognized the importance of these threats and in My last address to this Honourable House, I announced that My Ministers would develop a conservation strategy to ensure the protection of our environment and our renewable resources. To this end, my Government has established an Executive Committee on Sustainable Development which will, in part, ensure that the management and development of our natural resources is carried out in an integrated and sustainable manner. In addition, My Government has taken steps toward

the establishment of a Newfoundland and Labrador Round Table on Environment and Economy - a forum of senior decision-makers and leaders in the Province who will be mandated to identify, advance and promote strategies to better integrate economic and environmental planning, as a means of ensuring that our economic development is indeed environmentally sustainable. Appointments to the Round Table will be announced in the very near future.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Honourable House of Assembly:

At the outset of My address, I noted that My Government has attached high priority to the renewal of the education system and to the revitalization of the health care system. I am pleased to report at this time that substantive progress has been made in these critical areas over the past ten months, notwithstanding the limited fiscal flexibility that currently restrains My Government and the negative financial impacts resulting from a weakening commitment by the Federal Government to education and health care across the nation.

On the education front, My Government has implemented a series of initiatives designed to improve the quality and accessibility of educational opportunities in all areas of the Province. In this regard, operating grants to school boards were increased in 1989. School tax equalization grants were also enhanced, from \$4.5 million in 1988 to \$10 million in 1989, to assist in reducing disparities between the levels of services available in urban and rural areas. A pilot project to deliver

advanced mathematics courses through distance education technology has been expanded from thirteen to twenty small rural schools. Funding for the Teacher Aide Program for severely handicapped students has been increased, as well as bursaries for students in remote areas and communities who must travel to larger centres to complete their high school education. A concerted effort to address the Province's acute illiteracy problem was also launched in 1989.

In a time of severe fiscal restraint, these and other initiatives introduced over the past year are a direct testament to My Government's commitment and determination to address on an urgent basis some of the past failings and current inequities in the primary, elementary and secondary school system. The time has come, however, to review the performance of our basic education system and put in place specific measures to improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the overall system. In this regard, My Government is pursuing its assessment of the existing school tax system to determine whether it should be abolished altogether or be substantially reformed to address on a more equitable basis local education financing needs. These and other appropriate measures will be adopted during the term of My Government's mandate to ensure that all our people in all areas of the Province will be able to participate fully and fairly in economic and social renewal in the Province.

At the post-secondary level, recent proposals have been made by My Government, in a White Paper, to greatly improve the quality,

excellence and efficiency of the overall post-secondary education system. The successful implementation of these bold new initiatives will ensure that our citizenry is well prepared for the challenges that face this Province and indeed Canada as a whole in the next century.

With respect to the health care system, My Government has already taken the first steps to alleviate the considerable pressure that has been exerted on the system in recent years. In this regard, planning is now underway to develop a framework for a comprehensive new community home care program. As well, funding was provided in the 1989 Budget for a significant increase in the number of personal home-care beds in the Province. Special funding was also allocated in the 1989 Budget to enable hospitals to reopen high priority beds in a number of locations and to maintain and develop key specialty services in regional and provincial health care facilities. Additional resources were also provided in 1989 for significant adjustments in the funding for road ambulance services, and in the past year My Government embarked on a program to provide a substantial increase in nursing and resident care positions throughout the Province.

These are significant and positive measures, reflective of My Government's determination to achieve progress in the enhancement of the health care system during the early years of its mandate. Within the limits of overall fiscal responsibility, further progress will be made in the months and years ahead.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the

Honourable House of Assembly:

In recognition of the important influence that a productive and amicable labour relations environment has on economic development and worker productivity in the Province, My Government is determined to address a host of difficult issues that have emerged in the labour relations area. Principal among these issues is the matter of essential workers in the public sector. I am pleased to report to the Honourable House today that My Government intends to introduce legislation in the immediate future that will substantially amend The Public Service (Collective Bargaining) Act, commonly known as Bill 59, and bring it under the ambit of The Labour Relations Act. The specific provisions of these amendments will fully reflect the consensus that has been reached by labour and management on the resolution of this long-standing and emotionally charged issue. In this context, My Ministers also wish to reaffirm their confidence in and commitment to the collective bargaining process in the public sector, notwithstanding the difficult financial circumstances currently faced by My Government.

In addition to substantial reform to the public sector collective bargaining process, My Government also plans, in this Session of the House of Assembly, to introduce significant amendments to the Fishing Industry (Collective Bargaining) Act to address particular difficulties that have emerged in this important sector of our economy.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Honourable House of Assembly:

The work of the Royal Commission into the Response of the Criminal Justice System to Complaints, otherwise known as the Hughes Inquiry, will be concluded later this year. My Government will respond promptly to the findings and recommendations that may be presented in the Commission's Report, to ensure that public confidence in the criminal justice system of this Province is fully restored to the position it rightfully demands.

My Ministers are also sensitive to the revelations made during the work of the Commission respecting the extent of the child abuse problem which it would appear may exist in our Province. Without attempting to pre-judge the findings of the Inquiry, My Government considers it appropriate to adopt preliminary measures at this time to ensure that we prevent to the maximum extent possible sexual and other forms of abuse of children. As was noted in My Speech to you last year, it is My Government's intent to address this disturbing problem primarily through the enhancement of 'front-line' services offered by the Departments of Social Services and Justice. Details will be announced in this Honourable House in the coming weeks and further action may be necessary following the receipt and consideration of the Report of the Royal Commission. All Members of this House can be assured that My Government attaches great importance to the family as an institution in our society, and on the need to protect and provide for the basic needs of our children.

My Government is moving forward on this matter and is resolved to come to grips with this problem.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Honourable House of Assembly:

During the course of this Second Session of the Forty-first Federal Assembly, My Government will be adopting new policy directions to improve and provide for fairness in the administration of municipal government. To this end, an assessment of amalgamation as a possible solution to a more efficient and effective form of local administration in some municipalities is underway.

My Government also intends to ensure that a reliable, efficient and equitable transportation system is developed and maintained for the benefit of our people in all areas of the Province. In this regard, My Government recently announced the construction at Marystown Shipyard of a new \$24 million marine ferry for the Fogo Island area. This will address a long-standing transportation problem facing the people of that area of the Province, and will at the same time provide employment and economic benefits to the people of the Marystown area. Further initiatives in the transportation sector will be announced in the months and years ahead.

My Government fully recognizes the important contribution of the arts community of this Province to our cultural and economic development. For several months now, a Provincial Arts Policy Committee has been meeting with artists throughout the Province to identify new policy directions that will enhance the vitality of this important sector of our society and ensure that funds are directed to program areas of greatest benefit. My Ministers look forward to receiving the

Committee's final report later this month and will be giving it serious consideration at the earliest opportunity.

My Government remains committed to addressing the particular needs and problems confronting the women and the youth of our Province. Specific measures will be introduced over the course of My Government's mandate to alleviate these problems.

In conjunction with the Federal Government, with which government constitutional responsibility resides, My Ministers will continue to co-operate in addressing the legitimate concerns of our native peoples through land claims negotiations.

Mr. Speaker and the Members of the Honourable House of Assembly:

As part of My Government's comprehensive approach to economic and social renewal in the Province, My Ministers have achieved important successes in streamlining the operation of Government. Over the past months this Honourable House has approved legislation reducing the number of Government Departments, thus providing for a more efficient Government operation and a more effective and responsive Executive Council. The goal is a simple one - to eliminate waste and unproductive activity in order to free resources to provide more direct benefit to our people. This is particularly important in consideration of the fact that the existing financial condition of the Province is not strong and there are few additional opportunities to raise new revenues to support the myriad of legitimate and pressing needs confronting My Government. This

overall situation has been further exacerbated by the recent Federal Budget and other actions of the Federal Government which have had the effect of placing even greater demands on our limited resources. The process of streamlining and improving government operations will therefore continue, with specific additional measures to be announced in the next Budget to be tabled in this Honourable House.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Honourable House of Assembly:

My Government has received the confidence of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador at a time in our history when many are questioning the structure of the federation of which we are a part, and the place of this Province in that structure. These are important questions and My Government has joined the national debate on these matters with constructive proposals for fundamental change. Indeed, it is My Government's view that the process of constitutional reform is vital if Newfoundland is ever to become a full participating province of Canada, with public services, quality of life and economic opportunity comparable with that currently enjoyed by Canadians in other provinces.

My Government is fully cognizant of its responsibilities to ensure an adequate level of employment and economic opportunities and an acceptable level of services and well being for our people. It is for this reason, and in recognition of our responsibilities to the nation as a whole, that My Government strongly objects to certain provisions of the Meech Lake Accord. The social and economic deprivation historically suffered

by certain provinces in this country demand that any amendment of our constitution be such as to ensure that the smaller provinces will enjoy the fairness, balance and equality of opportunity which My Government has pledged for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. Under no circumstances can we ever accept changes that would exacerbate the present situation by entrenching forever the regional economic disparities that now exist in Canada.

Accordingly, at the First Ministers Conference last November, My First Minister took the position that the Meech Lake Accord must be substantially changed if this Province is ever to attain its rightful position as a full participating member in the federal state of Canada and shed its status as a have not province. Notwithstanding this position, My First Minister agreed to refrain from immediately seeking rescission of the resolution of approval of the Meech Lake Accord which was passed in the prior General Assembly, in order to facilitate further discussions on constitutional reform. This Honourable House subsequently endorsed the position and action of My First Minister. My Government is satisfied that not only does its position on the Meech Lake Accord enjoy the widespread support of our citizens, it enjoys as well the support of a substantial majority of Canadians.

While there have been extensive discussions over the past months on constitutional reform, the Federal Government and certain provinces have not as yet indicated a willingness to change any part of the Meech Lake Accord. On the contrary, all

indications are that their position remains that the Meech Lake Accord must be approved without any change. Accordingly, you will be asked to pass, in the manner authorized by Section 46 of The Constitution Act (1982), a resolution to rescind the approval of the Meech Lake Accord given by the Fortieth General Assembly.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Honourable House of Assembly:

My Government plans to place a number of important pieces of legislation before you this Session in addition to the legislative measures already referred to in this Speech.

In My address to you last year, My Government committed itself to the task of reforming the electoral process in this Province to ensure that it is fair and open to all citizens who wish to seek public office. Work has progressed steadily on the review of existing legislation and on research into reforms which have recently been introduced in other provinces and at the federal level. This work has now been completed and the new legislation is currently being drafted for introduction in this Session of the House of Assembly.

A new Act respecting the Office of the Auditor General will be introduced to confirm the independence of that Office and to ensure that public monies expended by My Government are made more fully accountable to this Honourable House.

Amendments to The Financial Administration Act will be introduced to improve existing legislation relative to the financial management of the

affairs of My Government.

Revisions to The Electrical Power Control Act will be introduced to ensure that My Government has the legislative wherewithal to effectively regulate the generation, distribution and supply of all electricity in the Province, consistent with the needs of its residents.

A full listing of My Government's legislative agenda for this Session of the House of Assembly will be tabled at the earliest opportunity so that all Honourable Members can properly prepare for the upcoming proceedings.

During the course of this Session, you will also be asked to grant supply to Her Majesty.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Honourable House of Assembly:

I invoke God's blessing upon you as you commence your labours in this Second Session of the Forty-first General Assembly. May Divine Providence guide you in your deliberations.

Motion, the hon. the Government House Leader to introduce a Bill, "An Act Respecting The Office Of The Auditor General And The Auditing Of The Public Accounts Of The Province," carried. (Bill 1)

On motion, Bill No. 1 read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER:

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, has been pleased to make a speech to the Members met in General Assembly and for greater accuracy I have obtained a copy and it will be presently distributed to all hon.

Members.

MR. RAMSAY:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. RAMSAY:
Mr. Speaker, I wish to extend my best wishes to His Honour on the occasion of his second address to this 41st General Assembly of Newfoundland. I would also state without any reservation that I stand firmly in support of the policies and initiatives of His Honour's Government, under the distinguished and capable leadership of the hon. the Premier. The attention now paid across this great nation to the disparate economic situation in which we find Newfoundland is in no short measure because of the esteem with which our new Premier is held from coast to coast. The focus is no longer on just the antics and actions of our Province's First Minister, but on what our First Minister has to say.

Mr. Speaker, I feel proud to represent the District of LaPoile in this hon. House of Assembly. LaPoile is a District with a rich community heritage. Although the current boundaries being newly established do not allow me to use the prefix historic, the culture of the area and history of the various settlements and towns are varied and rich. The community of LaPoile, the namesake of the District, is an isolated fishing area which in past years has provided an extremely good fishery to its residents, contributing significantly to the overall tonnage of fish landed on the southwest coast of our Province.

Over the past two seasons, and now

with the current fishing season, the fishermen of LaPoile are catching little or no fish. The total collapse of the Gulf region cod stocks on the south and west coasts of our Province is near. Fishermen in LaPoile, and those in most other communities in the District, are constantly giving the effort in setting their gear, but are coming up short regularly. Often the bait in fishermen's boats outweighs their catch.

Federal Fisheries scientists recently visited the area and reported that the stocks of this region are in significantly worse shape than those of the northern cod. One fisherman I spoke with, from Diamond Cove, set nineteen tubs of baited trawl which could normally allow for a catch of between 4,000 to 6,000 pounds. He caught five small codfish and two catfish. A ninety year old retired fisherman from Rose Blanche, who has fished since he was a boy, stated that he has never seen it so bad in all of his years.

The story of fishing despair goes up the coast to the communities of Petites, Harbour Le Cou, Isle aux Morts, Burnt Islands and Margaree. Port aux Basques and Cape Ray are also suffering, as there is a lowered amount of fish available to the fish plants in the area for plant workers to process. There are inshore hook and line fishermen in each community who have no weeks of work or stamps this fishing season. The bounty is often so poor that skippers are not getting enough to even pay for their fuel. A complete collapse of our inshore fishery, which is possibly one of the most successful inshore fisheries in the Province, is upon

us.

Mr. Speaker, it is a shame that all efforts of the Federal Government have been directed towards the northern cod and have not taken into account a situation which could put in excess of 2,000 people in my District out of work. Mr. Speaker, I am not content to sit idly by while the people of my District are having such difficulty. People I speak with in various communities have had little or no income for months and they are getting desperate. I commit here today to lead their fight for fairness and balance from the Federal Government who have the primary responsibility for the management of the fishery, and also to our own Provincial Government who have committed their assistance where possible. In consideration of our Province's difficult financial situation at this time, it will not be an easy road to travel. But I will leave no stone unturned until I have helped restore dignity to the fishermen, plant workers and their families, the dignity that makes us all proud to be Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

Mr. Speaker, I am cautiously optimistic that some relief will come in the next few months. I am working closely with Federal and Provincial authorities to develop programs which are not just make work projects. As tough as it might seem to create meaningful employment and industry in rural and isolated communities, we, the people of LaPoile District, will do it. We will endeavour to improve our area of the Province and provide it as an example after which all others will be patterned.

Current initiatives being developed in other areas of the Province to

offset fishery displacement are already in place in LaPoile District. This head start will assist us in maintaining the population as it now is in our communities, and to help us offset the problems that will be created while the fishery recovers.

We must diversify to broaden our economic base for the long term. The fishing industry in my District is the major employer, but beyond that we also are blessed with the Marine Gateway to the Province, Port aux Basques, a town which, while I grew up, was possibly more prosperous than most any other of its size in the Province, a town which has taken more than its fair share of economic bumps and bruises over the past number of years. The closure of the railway, layoffs at Marine Atlantic, fish plant difficulties and general problems with the fishery have all taken their toll. The railway in its heyday employed in excess of 1200 workers in Port aux Basques, and now we have barely 100 employees with rail and related rail companies. Thirty more families are soon to be forced to relocate to Moncton, as it seems the often touted railway deal has failed to protect them and keep them home in Newfoundland.

Mr. Speaker, I feel that on this occasion maybe I should not tell such a desperate story, but it is a story that must be told. To get where we want to be in this Province in the future, we must assess and understand where we have been in the past and exactly where we are now. LaPoile District has a future. With hard work and perseverance it will be a bright future. In Port aux Basques we can possibly construct the most economically feasible

offshore fabrication yard in the Province; this project subject, of course, to successful Hibernia negotiations. Utilizing the abandoned railway yard, facilities and infrastructure left by Canadian National, we would be able to realize a savings of the order of \$10 million in comparison to the construction of a totally new facility anywhere else in the Province. This makes solid economic sense in a time of business and public sector financial constraints.

I am confident that with the support of both levels of Government, and a new joint venture partner which is considering the facility, Port aux Basques will regain its rightful place on the potential Hibernia map.

Mr. Speaker, over the next few months I will be meeting with people throughout my District to get more of their ideas and input into our diversification plans. We have to move swiftly to put our fears to rest. We must keep hope alive in striving to make our Province strong and viable, a team player in the global economy, this global economy which we must join with a fervor. The Province's commitment to improving education and in establishing a policy on science and technology in the near future, will help us achieve this goal.

I have tried today, on this most auspicious occasion, to give a brief capsule of my District to show a picture of LaPoile District exposing its strength and current weaknesses. These weaknesses are things which we must overcome together. I, as the person empowered by the people of LaPoile, and the people

themselves, must represent and assist them in developing LaPoile as a place second to none in this Province and country.

Mr. Speaker, I love this wondrous Province of ours, the Province of Newfoundland, and our vast and varied country of Canada. I feel this love for Province and country deep down in my soul. Canada is now in question by many of her people. We must do all we can to express our view of the nation, a view that will help us as Newfoundlanders and Labradorians become full participating partners in Confederation and not just the Province that is consistently less well-off than the rest of the country. Newfoundlanders and Labradorians as a people and as a member of the Canadian Federation, must recommit ourselves to the future of both our Province and our country.

Mr. Speaker, I will close this afternoon with the words of Sir Cavendish Boyle, "When blinding storm gusts fret thy shore,/And wild waves lash thy strand,/Thro' sprindrift swirl and tempest roar,/We love thee wind-swept land... As loved our fathers, so we love,/Where once they stood we stand,/Their prayer we raise to heav'n above,/God guard thee, Newfoundland..."

I believe these words must serve as a guide to all Members of this hon. House in the difficult weeks and months ahead. We indeed stand where once they stood, and have been entrusted by the people to preserve, protect and develop the many attributes of our Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Mr. Speaker, again I want to thank His Honour for his attendance here today to open the Second Session

of the Forty-first General Assembly, and I move that an Address in Reply to the gracious Speech from the Throne be drafted by a Committee of this Honourable House.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. HOGAN:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. HOGAN:
Mr. Speaker, hon. Colleagues and Members of the House of Assembly, I am most appreciative and honoured to have the privilege to second the motion of my hon. Colleague to draft an Address in Reply to the Speech from The Throne so graciously delivered and articulated by His Honour today.

I would also like to say that I am delighted to see all of my Colleagues on both sides of the House back to this Hon. House in apparent good health, and would hope that aside from the burdens of their elected positions they and their families have weathered the rigors of winter and time in good health and happiness and, despite our political differences, that they enjoy success and progress in attempting to attain a better way of life for their constituents in their respective districts.

Mr. Speaker, it is also my wish, and indeed my prayer, that we collectively have the strength and will to provide solutions or at least alleviate the problems that our people face in the short term, and design an economic framework

by which, in the long term, they can enjoy prosperity and comfort as they so richly deserve. Mr. Speaker, providing that framework will be no easy task, but it is and will be incumbent on each and everyone of us to work towards that goal.

Mr. Speaker, I say nothing new to this hon. House when I state that there is a crisis in the fishery. Despite the opinion of others, this not only creates a crisis in our economy, but in the very vital fabric of our whole way of life. I would encourage each and every Member of this House not to look to past mistakes of whomever, not to point the finger of blame, but to constructively discuss, with criticism if necessary, the fisheries-related crisis with a view to identifying solutions. It has now reached a magnitude where it has gone far beyond where blame even matters. Nobody walks on water in this House, Mr. Speaker. The Government nor Members opposite can make magic. There are no quick fixes. But through constructive debate there may be successful solutions. I feel confident that the debate will be knowledgeable, it certainly can be constructive, and together with the Federal Government and all those who participate in this important and vital sector of our economy, solutions can be found.

Mr. Speaker, the Government in the last Session initiated its first steps in its plans to revitalize the economy of our Province. I am delighted today with the Throne Speech's outline of further infrastructure to carry on with that plan. Economic recovery will not be easy, it will take innovative, imaginative approaches to do what has to be done. These efforts have been much criticized

and maligned probably not without justification, because change brings resistance and criticism; something new, something different will always draw the attention of the skeptics. We must undertake these initiatives positively, we must strive to leave nothing undone that will somehow, sometime improve the quality of life for our people. The initiatives outlined in this regard in this Throne Speech is the direction chosen by this Government, this Government which has the support of the electorate in introducing these initiatives.

Mr. Speaker, during the last Session of this hon. House we continuously received up-dates on the progress of talks and discussions regarding off-shore and hydro development. We have followed closely the progress reports of Government as released publicly in the media and otherwise. Again, today, in this Throne Speech, these projects are put in their proper perspective. I feel confident that all Members of this hon. House will join with me in wishing for a successful conclusion to these talks which will provide the economic shot in the arm so badly needed in this land of ours.

Mr. Speaker, the presence of his Honour in this hon. House, his great personal work and initiatives in addressing family life, has to draw our attention to and remind all of us of the ever increasing violence and abuse in our society, particularly that violence and abuse directed at women and children. This hon. House and its Members must be ever cognizant of this sickness, of this evil that is amongst us. We must strive through education, we must strive through new and

innovative programs, we must strive to see that justice is swift and tough to put a stop to this disease that is creeping into our society. This abuse, this violence is not in the streets and homes and bedrooms of Detroit, Chicago, Toronto or Montreal, it is here in our society. It must be stopped. It must be stamped out and it must be crushed through every educational, rehabilitative and legal means at our disposal.

Mr. Speaker, the Throne Speech referred too many other initiatives and undertakings by this Government, not the least of which are the programs introduced to us by the Hon. the Minister of Education. One of many innovations to be undertaken by this Government will provide the same high standard of educational opportunities to all of our people in every corner of our Province no matter where they live.

Mr. Speaker, many aspects of the Throne Speech address areas of interest to my District of Placentia. The subject of the fisheries is vital to some communities entirely, and partially to others; the entire economy of communities like Southern Harbour, Fair haven, Little Harbour, Fox Harbour, Ship Harbour and now Long Harbour. I can relate to Members of this House who see entire communities, families and friends, close friends, their entire lives, their dreams, their hopes and aspirations threatened, and in the case of Long Harbour, wiped out. To other Members of this House I say it has to be experienced to really know and feel the impact of such devastation, such havoc, such trauma created in homes and communities. I will ask that when you discuss the fisheries and

economic relief and recovery to imagine returning home to wife and family, to mothers and fathers helpless and broken with no hope, with just anger and the gut wrenching loss of a lifetime of hard work gone down the drain with no relief in sight. If you can imagine that, then maybe we will cut through the rhetoric, stop finding fault, get to the crux of the matter and identify solutions.

Economic development to the Industrial Park at Argentia, development of the Port of Argentia, development of tourism in the Placentia inter-town area and amalgamation are all critical to the future of my District. I have every confidence that amalgamation of these communities will come about, I have every confidence that there will be one large community that will include the Industrial Park and the Port of Argentia. In some way, shape or form, that will provide strong and new economic benefits to the communities involved. You see, Mr. Speaker, amalgamation is not a new subject to us. We know what we want. We have our own game plan to economic recovery and working with this Government on these ideas the game plan will succeed, let there be no doubt about it.

Mr. Speaker, let me also refer to one other matter of great interest to all Members of this House and, indeed, to all residents of the Province. I have to refer to the work of the Public Accounts Committee during the last Session of the House, under the able Chairmanship of my colleague, the hon. the Member for St. Mary's - The Capes (Mr. Hearn). He will undoubtedly present a report of work done by this Committee. However, I have to express to

Members of this House my satisfaction in working with this group and the dedication of the Committee to carry out its function in a businesslike manner. Free as much as one can be of political bias and prejudice, with our underlying theme of holding Government and their representatives accountable for their financial practices, and as we did in all hearings, Mr. Speaker, we put everybody on notice who comes within our jurisdiction that they will be held accountable and we will monitor financial activities and practices very closely, reporting same to this hon. House and to the public.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. Members for their patience and attention. I wish them well in their work and deliberations, and health and happiness to their families and their constituents.

It is with a great deal of pride that I second the motion of my hon. colleague, that a Committee be appointed to draft a Reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. RIDEOUT:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, first of all, on behalf of my colleagues in the Official Opposition, let me extend

our congratulations to the Mover and the Secunder that an Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne be drafted. The hon. the gentleman for LaPoile (Mr. Ramsay) and the hon. the gentleman for Placentia (Mr. Hogan) have spoken eloquently, Mr. Speaker. They have spoken from the heart I am sure, and on opening day, on this kind of ceremonial day it is always, I think, a difficult thing to do, so my colleagues and I certainly extend our best wishes to those gentlemen and compliment them on a job well done.

I would also like to, on behalf of my colleagues, welcome representatives of church and state who are here today. Again, we have a tradition in this Legislature that on opening day such dignitaries are here. I think it adds to the overall decorum, and certainly we are delighted as a Legislature to welcome such dignitaries amongst us.

Mr. Speaker, I also wish to note that today is International Women's Day and it is appropriate, I believe, that on this International Women's Day a new Session of this Legislature is starting. I am not sure that is why the Premier picked this particular date, but I believe it is important and significant and allows us to be able to join and recognize the tremendous contribution made by women to our society.

Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to speak at any great length today. I believe I said last year when, for the first time as Leader of the Opposition I responded on opening day, that I do not believe this is the kind of day when one needs to take forty-five minutes

or an hour with all the other ceremonial things that have to be done on this opening day. So I do not intend to speak at any great length. My colleagues and I over the coming days will certainly go through this Speech from the Throne in great detail and in the coming days, when we are here doing our regular work, we will be pointing out to the Government the deficiencies we see in this particular document. We will do that in more detail at another time.

I would like to as well, Mr. Speaker, thank the Premier and the Government for providing me with an advance copy of the Speech from the Throne. I got it a couple of hours before the House opened today, and as I got to Page 12 I said, well, something must have happened here. They have not sent it all to me. There must be a mistake. I could not believe, Mr. Speaker, that a Government entering its second year, a Government preparing its second Throne Speech, a Government opening up a new Session of a House, for the second time, would only take twelve pages to outline its plans and programs for Newfoundland and Labrador.

Mr. Speaker, I have not had an opportunity to check, but I do believe that this Speech from the Throne will go down in history as perhaps the shortest Throne Speech ever delivered on opening day in this Legislature. I have not had a chance to check, but I do know that year, for example it was twice as large. Really, Mr. Speaker, this is double-spaced, and it is only typed on one side of the page. Every other year the document members got was typed on both sides of the page, so it is only half a document. And, Mr.

Speaker, I can see why. Because there is not one single new initiative outlined in this document today. Not one!

MR. SIMMS:

It is the same as last year's.

MR. RIDEOUT:

The Government, Mr. Speaker, talks about electoral reform. That was in the Throne Speech last year. They talk about a new Auditor General's Act. That was in the Throne Speech last year. They talk about amendments to the Financial Administration Act. That was in the Throne Speech last year. They talk about a new Electrical Power Control Act. That was in last year's Throne Speech.

Mr. Speaker, there is not one new legislative initiative in this particular document, and I believe that is criminal for a Government entering its second year. The people of Newfoundland and Labrador expected more. The people of Newfoundland and Labrador were promised real change. Mr. Speaker, where has the real change been? Today in this Province, Mr. Speaker, the fishing industry is facing a crisis the likes of which it has not faced in decades. The Government's response, Mr. Speaker, on Page 2 of this document is 'new approaches will have to be adopted to address fundamental structural weaknesses in the fishery.'

Mr. Speaker, there are not structural weaknesses in the fishery of Newfoundland and Labrador. There is a resource problem. To solve the drought problems in the agricultural industry, governments in the Western provinces did not take

farmers off the farm. But this Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is embarking on a program that will take fishermen out of the boat and fish plant workers out of the fish plants. This Government, Mr. Speaker, is embarking on a fundamental pattern of forced resettlement in this Province. If you downsize and restructure the fishery in Great Harbour Deep, in Gaultois or in Trepassey, what do you replace it with, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SIMMS:
Diversification.

MR. RIDEOUT:
Diversification is the big buzz word. It is in this document, and it was in the document His Honour read last year. But, Mr. Speaker, where is the beef? Where is the diversification? The Economic Recovery Team has not produced any master plan, or the Government certainly has not brought it to this Legislature in this document today. One would have expected it. There does not appear to be a plan. There does not appear to be an agenda. I would have thought, Mr. Speaker, that a new Government, in office for almost a year now, would have been just brimming over with new ideas, new initiatives, new programs, new legislation. But, no, Mr. Speaker. And laced throughout this document, Mr. Speaker, are the buzz words fiscal restraint. I suspect the real document, the real bad news will come this day next week when the jolly Minister of Finance rises to present his Budget.

Mr. Speaker, there is no program or plan to deal with the crisis in the fishery. The Government fully admits in this document that they have not yet reached any final

agreement with the Government of Canada on a program to respond to a crisis in the fishery.

Mr. Speaker, the Hibernia project gets passing reference, and so it should, but the buzz word in the industry today is that the Premier has put conditions on the Hibernia project that will perhaps see the project doomed. That is the word in the industry today, 'the Premier has put conditions on the development,' not conditions that are going to bring new industrial benefits to Newfoundland and Labrador, these are the kinds of things that you would expect the Government to be going after, but political partisan conditions, Mr. Speaker, that will perhaps see that project scuttled. And that is the only bright light on the horizon in this Province at the moment, Mr. Speaker. The only bright light is the potential development of the Hibernia oil field. If this Province ever needed it, Mr. Speaker, it certainly needs it now.

We get reference to school taxes in the Throne Speech, just as we did last year, just as the Government did in their election document a year or so ago. But what is the reference in the Throne Speech again today? Another period of study, another period of assessing, another period of looking at what to do about school taxes. Well, Mr. Speaker, when the Government were campaigning for office, they were absolutely certain about what they were going to do about school taxes - they were going to abolish them. Some Members of the Government, Mr. Speaker, even took out paid ads on radio to tell their constituents about this great reform. Well, school taxes are still here, the problem is

still here and the Government is going to study it further.

Mr. Speaker, there is another burning issue in this Province today and that is amalgamation. The Government makes very brief reference to amalgamation in this document, but whole towns and communities are upset, not with the concept of amalgamation, we support that, but with the process by which the Government used the hobnail boot, the process by which Government said, 'You will do it, or else!' That, Mr. Speaker, is wrong. The Premier then tries to get too smart by half by saying, 'Oh, no, the Government will not do it, Cabinet will not do it, but the Legislature will.' Well, who controls the Legislature, Mr. Speaker? The majority is on that side. If the Government brings in such a move or such an amendment, then obviously it will pass. So it is the Government that is doing it, but the Premier tries to distance himself from the responsibility.

The other thing I noticed today, Mr. Speaker, and I am disappointed but I cannot say I am surprised, is that the Government is going to move to rescind this Legislature's approval for the Meech Lake Accord. Now, Mr. Speaker, I have said on numerous occasions in this Province that I do not think that Meech Lake is a perfect document. Of course, it is not. I suppose no document devised by men or women is perfect. But, Mr. Speaker, it is a constitutional building block in the constitutional evolution of this country. I think it can be improved. I can see areas where I would like to see it improved. But as one present Federal Liberal Member of Parliament was quoted as saying recently, 'With its lumps

and all, I think it should be approved.'

Now, Mr. Speaker, this Legislature is going to do something that will be precedent setting in nature if the Government proceeds with its intention. Another duly elected Legislature ratified the Meech Lake Accord; a duly elected Government brought it in and the Legislature ratified it. Our word was our bond, Mr. Speaker. But our word will never be accepted again in Canada if this Government proceeds to do what it has announced today.

The Atlantic Accord, Mr. Speaker, is not enshrined in the Canadian Constitution yet. What will stop some other Government, the present Government of Canada or some other Government of some day, deciding to tear up the Atlantic Accord? If we can do this, which we can legally, I appreciate that, I understand that, Mr. Speaker, we will be the banana republic of Canada. That is exactly what we will be. But, Mr. Speaker, even worse than that -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMS:
You might laugh.

MR. RIDEOUT:
Laugh all you like.

- even worse than that, look at the Premier's headline today in the Toronto Star. "'U.S. link looking better,' Wells says." Well, Mr. Speaker, I do not want to be part of a country that has no universal medicare, I do not want to be a part of a country that has conscription, I do not want to be part of the United States. I want to be part of

Canada. Our Premier, Mr. Speaker, is playing with the future of my country. That is what our Premier is doing. This country will be fractured, of that I am certain, if the Meech Lake Accord is not approved. And the Premier is willing to take that gamble, he is willing to gamble with the future of my country and I do not like that. I am not prepared nor do I want to join the United States of America. They are great neighbors, they are great friends, but I do not want to be part of them. I want to be part of Canada.

MR. WALSH:

(Inaudible) free trade and (inaudible).

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman from Mount Scio - Bell Island talks about free trade. Your leader supports free trade. Be careful! Mr. Speaker, that is the problem with the Government, there is all kinds of talent in the backbenches, there is talent in the Cabinet, but the Premier runs the show and that talent cannot surface, it cannot rise. It is there, but he will not let it happen.

Mr. Speaker, I noticed in the Throne Speech, as well, that the Government took a great deal of pride in a rural development agreement that was signed in 1989, it took a great deal of pride in a native people's agreement that I believe was signed in 1989, it took a great deal of pride in re-announcing the Fogo Island ferry, it took a great deal of pride in re-announcing the expansion to the Marystown Shipyard. All of those agreements were left on the Government's desk. All they had to do, Mr. Speaker, was dot the i's, cross

the t's and sign it. There is not one new initiative - not one new initiative - in this document today. The people of Newfoundland and Labrador expected more, Mr. Speaker, the people of Newfoundland and Labrador deserve more.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier,

PREMIER WELLS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I would echo the comments, just the early ones, of the Leader of the Opposition in congratulating the Mover and Secunder of the motion that a Committee be established to prepare an Address in Reply to the gracious Speech from the Throne. I think that both those gentlemen not only did this House and this Province proud, but I am sure they greatly increased the level of pride in the two districts they represent, and I say to them a most sincere congratulations.

I also join in welcoming people from Church and State who have joined us on the floor of the Legislature this afternoon, and those in the galleries. Not alone, as the Opposition Leader has said, is it good to have them here, but it reminds us, in case our heads ever get too swelled with the kind of power we have in this House, that we are answerable to the people. We are here today speaking through you to the people of this Province and setting out what our pattern is, what our proposals are and what our policies are as to the way we will put them forward in the future, and the Opposition, of course, is

given the opportunity to say also to the people what they view of it. But primarily the great function you do here today, and I express gratitude to all of you for it, is you remind us of our responsibility to the people of this Province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, of everything that the Leader of the Opposition has said about the Speech, the thing that struck me was he got through twelve pages and he said, there are only twelve pages. He is not alone. A lot of people mistake quantity for quality, and a lot of people think if you have a lot of pages in a Speech from the Throne you have something of value. It took His Honour a half hour to read it, and I expect His Honour felt it was long enough, bearing in mind that he has a bad back. I must express publicly appreciation to His Honour for his diligence in attending today in the circumstances of being propped up by a brace on his back. I am grateful to him for that. But you cannot mistake quantity for quality.

Mr. Speaker, this new Government took office ten months ago. We are barely completely incubated in the conventional sense, and we are just underway. But we took office with the objective of restoring viability to the economy of this Province and ensuring that we put in place a system whereby we could develop and put forward for our people the quality of public services in the social field, in the transportation field, in all other areas where Government is obligated to provide public services to its people, to put forward the kinds of public services that our people deserve and need.

We expressed our priorities and they were three. We did not give any one of the three a ranking ahead of the other, but we said we had three priorities: To restore the economy of this Province so that we could generate the revenue Government needs, secondly to rebuild the education system of this Province so that all of our people, in all parts of the Province, could fairly and fully access the opportunity to be educated and develop the ability to be full performing citizens of this great country, and the third one we mentioned was we had to restore our health care facilities; we had to put back in place the hospital beds that over prior years had been closed; we had to put them back into operation.

We felt that we had no possibility of developing our economy if we could not maintain a healthy population, and we could not produce educated, trained and qualified citizens to perform and compete with others in the rest of the country and in the rest of the world. We could not achieve economic development without good quality health and education. Equally, we could not achieve good quality health and education without the economic input that made it financially possible. So those were our three priorities.

In the first Session of the House, Mr. Speaker, when we brought in the Throne Speech last year it was considerably longer than this Speech by about 50 per cent more, as I recall. It was considerably longer because it detailed our overall program for the life of this Legislature, whether that be three, four or five years - its maximum is five. But we detailed or spelled out a plan and

guideline for our general plan, and that is what the Speech from the Throne in the first Session of a new Legislature should be. This year, we only had to relay the groundwork for a few areas and tell you and the people of Newfoundland where our emphasis would be in this year, and that is precisely what we have done.

During the first Session we had to bring in a Budget because the Province was left in slings, without a Budget as late as May and no guidance for the year, so we had to rush to have that in place and pass the legislation that was necessary to enable Government to function on a normal basis, which we did. And then we had the first fall Session, the first one for a number of years because the former Government had apparently been afraid to meet this House as needed, and only came when it was essential for them to get funds. Then, in the fall Session, we did what was necessary to restructure Government and reduce its size from twenty-two departments down to fourteen departments. It is a great saving to the taxpayers of this Province and improves the efficiency. And we put in place certain other fairly substantial and significant pieces of legislation. We also put in place the legislation that was the foundation for the establishing of the Economic Recovery Commission. That is what had to be done during the first Session, so it is not surprising. You are not going to achieve your whole plan for five years within the first Session.

Now, we are going to start and build on that, and we have elaborated in this document today the manner in which we intend to expand on what we did in the prior

Session. That is why there is some repetition or restatement of what was in the first Speech from the Throne. That should not come as any surprise to anybody, unless the proper functioning of Government is not thoroughly understood.

Then, in December and January, we were faced with the worst crisis this Province has been faced with for quite some time, and that is the massive reduction in the quantity of fish available for our fishermen to catch and for our fish plant processors and workers to process. The Opposition Leader has made a great issue of the fact that there is no legislative program there to deal with the fishery, and he is right. There is no legislative program. But then he went on to say the problem is the resource. Of course it is the resource. I do not know if he genuinely expects us to pass laws and that will cause the fish to increase the stocks offshore. It is a resource problem. You do not deal with that problem by passing laws, you deal with that problem by ensuring that in the future management is done in a proper way and that in the immediate future we reduce the catching effort on those fish stocks to a level that will allow them to properly develop and expand over a reasonable period of time so that our people will have a good and solid future in the fisheries a number of years from now. We cannot solve that by legislation today, so you are not going to find anything in this Speech from the Throne to deal with that issue. It is a resource problem.

We identified it last summer and we put in place a committee to deal with it. We took the proposal, a fairly firm proposal,

to the Federal Government on August 23. Bear in mind, Mr. Speaker, this is exclusively a matter of Federal jurisdiction under the Constitution. The Federal Government made the decisions as to how much fish would be caught, who would catch it, when, and under what circumstances and conditions. Do not forget that. So we took a proposal to the Federal Government to deal with the problems that are caused by their mismanagement of the fisheries. Here I must emphasize that when I use the word 'mismanagement' I do not use it in a blameworthy way. I suspect that if the Provincial Government had had the same jurisdiction we would have relied on the same scientists, made essentially the same decisions, with substantially the same disastrous economic consequences. I do not say it in a blameworthy way, but the fact is they did have responsibility for it and they must take responsibility to provide the financial resources to deal with those consequences.

When they blamed God for the drought on the Prairies, they rushed in with \$1 billion. We have a disaster of the proportions of a natural disaster off our shores in fisheries. It was not caused by God, it was caused by the mismanagement of the Federal Government. They have an even greater responsibility to respond with the financial resources necessary to deal with the consequences of that mismanagement.

We put the proposal to them and we said to them very clearly, We do not ask you to just throw money at our people and sustain them for a period of time without any effort on our part or on the part of the Provincial Government, we say to

you if you are prepared to put in the financial resources you are obligated to do, the Province will work with you and put whatever financial resources it has available and together we will try and respond to the real problem, we will try and diversify the economy of this Province so as to reduce the pressure on our fisheries, to provide job opportunities for our people. There is such great pressure on the fisheries because there are so few other alternative job opportunities for our people in this Province, so let us deal with the fundamental problem and ensure that we rebuild our economy in such a way that there are alternative opportunities. That is what we asked the Federal Government to do, and we pressured them to do it in a good time so that we would be ready to respond when the inevitable closure of the plants was announced, as everybody knew it would be.

The Federal Government dragged its feet and they did not respond in the way in which we asked them to, and when December and January came and plants were closing the Governments were not in a position, not due to any failure on the part of this Government, Mr. Speaker, but the Governments were not in a position to respond to the people affected. That is why this Government put up the funds that are necessary and were coming to ask this House for approval of that action, put up the funds that are necessary to extend the notice period to give governments more time, so that we do not simply say to our fishermen and fish plant workers, I am sorry, you are out of a job in eight or ten weeks from now and there is nothing more we can do about it. We have a

responsibility to do something about it. Not the Federal Government, even though it is their primary responsibility, but so far only this Government has really put up any funds to deal with the matter, and people ought not to forget that.

Now, Mr. Speaker, at this point in time I am totally dissatisfied with the manner in which the Federal Government has responded. However, I met last week with Monsieur Valcourt, the new Minister of Fisheries, and in fairness to him we must give him adequate time to take hold of the problem and respond in a proper way. We will do that, without further public criticism of the Federal Government's failure to properly respond up to this point in time. But there is only a limited amount of time left. The people of this Province paid the money necessary to buy that extra time, and I am not going to stand by and see the Federal Government waste that time as they wasted last summer and fall and failed to take the kind of action they were obligated to do.

But, in fairness to Monsieur Valcourt, we will give him the time it takes to properly respond.

Now, besides fisheries there are other matters. Life goes on in this Province. As important as the fisheries are, there are other matters to which Government must attend. We have been doing that with the Economic Recovery Commission; and I know the Opposition laughs and snickers because, apparently, in their record they are not used to doing things in a planned, orderly, logical way to deal with the root cause of problems instead of putting band-aids on the symptoms

of the problem. We have been doing that for too long.

This Government took the deliberate decision, even though we knew it would not produce results immediately, not to just cover up the problem with band-aids and make work projects of that kind, but that we would deal with the underlying fundamental problem and eliminate the symptoms in the long term. Now, that takes time to do.

The Economic Recovery Commission has done a great job to date in putting itself in a position to do that. The Speech from the Throne has indicated generally the direction in which we will be going and the legislation we will ask this House to pass to facilitate the consolidation of the present Newfoundland and Labrador Development Corporation with certain portions of the Department of Development, and the decentralization of those efforts through this Province to enable the development of small and medium-sized business enterprises and co-operatives, partnerships and individual activities, whatever will create a job here, or two somewhere else, or twenty somewhere else, to build and broaden the base of the economy of this Province. That will continue.

The Hibernia effort is continuing, again, in an orderly and logical way, and I am confident that with good will and determination on the part of the parties involved, we will be able to put it in place within the time frame that was expected. I cannot, again, assure this, no one party can. It depends upon the approval of all of the parties involved. But I have a greater level of confidence today than I did a few months ago

that Hibernia will become a reality, that the start on it will become a reality in this year.

I undertook, Mr. Speaker, last September, to keep the people of this Province advised as to progress, and to advise them if we were in any manner falling behind. I did that last December when we fell behind the schedule we had set out to achieve certain of the components of the negotiations. It considerably upset at least one Minister in the federal Government, and I am sorry it did that, but I have no apology to make for doing it, because I undertook to be honest and frank with the people of this Province and not to lead them to believe something was going to be put in place in June and then, come next June, say it is going to take another year. I do not intend to do that.

I intend, today, to indicate generally that for the most part it is on schedule, but in terms of a couple of areas of the negotiations, we are as much as six to eight weeks or more behind where we expected we would be on those aspects right at this time. But I do not anticipate that that will delay the overall conclusion of it. I still think we should be able to achieve conclusion of it by mid-year. But if a month or so from now we have not resolved those things in respect of which we are behind, I can say to the people honestly I will not have confidence at this stage that we can achieve conclusion of the agreement by the middle of this year. So I am letting the people know honestly where they are so people do not rush out and make the kinds of decisions they were induced to make by the former Government, to their financial

detriment.

In the economic area, Mr. Speaker, discussions are continuing with Hydro Quebec, and, again, if there is good will and determination on the part of both parties to achieve a satisfactory result, it can do. But we have no intention of carrying on interminably negotiations with Quebec by having Quebec hold out the carrot only to walk away from us. Only so long as we are satisfied there is genuine good faith on the part of Hydro Quebec will we have anything to do with it. In the meantime, the Province is proceeding to look out to its own interest in the matter of Hydro electric development, and we will be taking steps to ensure that we are in a position to do that.

One of the three areas we gave priority to, Mr. Speaker, was in the field of education. Now, in the field of post-secondary education the Minister just recently released a White Paper setting out what Government proposes to do to handle the needs in post-secondary education. I do not say to the people of this Province that what is proposed is the only possible plan. We put it out in the form of a White Paper so that we could invite the comments of the public generally, and people with particular interest in the field of education, so that we could incorporate any good suggestions that came forward. We do not say that we have the absolute answer, however, we have looked at all the other possible solutions we could think of and we are of the opinion that what is proposed is the appropriate answer in these circumstances. If it is not, we are prepared to make whatever adjustment is appropriate. And we

have no doubt a variety of suggestions will come forward and there will be people who will think other approaches are more important. All their suggestions will be considered, but we want to put in place a post-secondary education plan that will leave our people, when they finish the post-secondary institutions, second to none, not only in Canada, but in the world, in terms of being equal.

The next major area we have to tackle in education, Mr. Speaker, is in the field of the primary, elementary and secondary education. That is a major problem in this Province. It is a major problem because it has aspects to it that it might not have in other jurisdiction. We have a constitutionally entrenched denominational education system that a great portion of our population today question the wisdom of maintaining. We cannot ride roughshod over the constitutional rights of any group, whether they be groups of Churches or other groups, where rights are entrenched in the Constitution. Legislatures cannot simply bring in laws to wipe out constitutional rights, otherwise constitutional rights are meaningless. So we must proceed with caution and understanding. But proceed, Mr. Speaker, we must, to deal with the inequities that exist in our primary, elementary and secondary education system in this Province today. We have to proceed in a manner that will allow us to better use the limited financial resources that we have, and a greater degree of co-operation amongst the Churches and the denominations, some of whom are represented on this floor today. A greater degree of co-operation is the first

essential step to ensuring that we are able to provide a greater quality of education for our people within the limits of the limited financial resources that this Province has. We are determined, in any event, to ensure that there is an equality of opportunity to the maximum extent that that can be achieved.

Now, I know that in a very small community, perhaps like the fishing community of Gaultois, there will never or could ever exist the kind of educational opportunity that exists in the City of St. John's or the City of Corner Brook. I know that. I accept that. That is not the kind of equality I am talking about. You cannot put a university necessarily in Gaultois and every such community, I understand that, but, Mr. Speaker, what we can do is make sure that we do not maintain in place a system that will see \$600 per student paid to the Board for the student in St. John's and \$192 per student paid for the student to the Board that manages the Burgeo schools. We cannot any longer tolerate that inequity.

We intend, in the field of education, to provide for equality and efficiency, and I am confident the Minister of Education and his staff will be able to put forward proposals to achieve this.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the third area we gave priority to was in the field of health. That is a matter that can most appropriately be dealt with in the Budget, and I have no doubt the Minister of Finance will express the Government's decisions and the Government's proposal when he delivers his Budget here one week from today. It is not a matter

that is going to be solved by legislation. All we do with legislation is a framework to achieve it. And the problems in health are not because of the legislative structure of the system that delivers it, the problems are because inadequate resources have been assigned to it and because the resources that have been assigned have not being used in a most efficient manner. And that is the manner in which we intend to tackle the health problem.

We must also address another looming matter in our society. A greater portion of our population is to be found in the aged portion of it. All of us, everyone in this room, is headed there. Some of us may be a little closer to it than others, but we will all be in that position in a few short years from now, and I have no doubt that we will all expect to have reasonable accommodation and consideration from our fellow citizens at that time. We owe no less responsibility to those who are there now, and this Government, Mr. Speaker, is determined to address that question as well.

The other area that was mentioned by the Opposition Leader was the question of municipal services and amalgamation. He suggests that somehow the Government is being deceptive, that we are not going to force amalgamation, or we say that we are not going to force amalgamation, although his earlier comment said that that was what was wrong with our approach, we were ramming it down people's throats, which is not at all accurate.

The Government has made the statement clearly, and for those

of the Opposition who have not heard it before now, or have not wanted to, the position is clear. We are not going to force towns and municipalities to amalgamate if they do not wish to amalgamate. Now I have one qualification on that. There may exist, and I would expect it to be a most unusual situation, and it may not even exist at all, or, if it does, it may be one or two isolated incidents, in this Province a situation where the continued separate identity as a municipality of some unit is so offensive to good reason, the financial resources of the Province, the maintenance of health within the community, that it does not make sense to do it. Now, what I have said is if that occurs, Mr. Speaker, we will not sit in the secret conclave of a Cabinet Room and make the decision, we will bring the proposal to the House of Assembly for public debate.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there are a number of other things in the municipal area, but the fundamental direction that this Government will take in municipal reform is in providing fairness to all our people in this Province. We are not any longer going to tolerate a situation where, for political reasons, the Government will give some municipality all kinds of money to develop its services that it wants, even though it maintains a two or three mill tax rate, while other municipalities have to apply a 15 and 16 mill tax rate. Every municipality in this Province will be treated on a fair and proper basis, but we are not going to take more money out of the pockets of those citizens in the municipalities that are already paying their way to subsidize

those who refuse to pay their way. We intend to be fair to all our people.

Now, Mr. Speaker, those are the three areas, and I draw your attention to the fact that I mentioned those three areas of economy, health and education. I commented on some others, but those three in particular. I expect every predecessor who has ever stood in this seat and made a speech on opening day, or made his first speech in this House, came with the commitment to deal with those three problems and we have not really solved them. But I came across something last week, when I was making a speech in St. Anthony, that I should draw to your attention today. Mr. Speaker, back in 1892, when Sir Wilfred Grenfell landed on the Coast of Labrador in response to a request to see what he could do to help, he had three problems to deal with - he identified three problems that needed to be dealt with. Economy: Fishermen were caught in circumstances where they caught the fish, sold them to the merchant at a price decided by the merchant, bought from the merchant the goods and supplies they needed at a price dictated by the merchant, and they were stuck in an economic situation they could not rise above or could not cope with, and had no means of doing anything with. That was the economic situation.

Health care was primitive to say the least. To the extent that it existed at all, it was primitive and there needed to be a genuine response in health care.

The third area was education. Now stop and think about that, Mr. Speaker. After nearly 100 years, we are back in this Province

saying those are our three priorities. I can sort of understand it for the first sixty years, up to 1949, but why have we not solved this problem in the last forty years of Confederation? Why is it that today we are still in that same position? The last comparison I saw was in 1987, when our per capita earned income was 56 per cent of the national average, having gone all the way from 53 per cent in the prior twenty-five years. At that rate, it would take us 300, 400 or 500 years to catch up to the national average. Why is it that we are in that position? It is so, Mr. Speaker, because, and we have not been able to achieve a correction of that problem in the forty years of Confederation, because the smaller provinces of this federation do not have the means of impacting on national economic and legislative decision-making that takes place in the Federal Government. Our country is run and all the national decisions are made in such a way that in the end it must satisfy the wishes of the two great economic engines of the country, Ontario and Quebec. The Federal Government makes all its national economic decisions in a way that will satisfy the 60 per cent of the Members of the House of Commons who come from those two provinces. And that is why this Province and all the other smaller provinces are in the position they are in today, where the Federal Government has been following, and here I am not being political, both political stripes have been following that pattern, and it is not a political decision, it is a reality of the nature of our national political institutions. They have been following this national policy that decides on the implementation of national

economic policies in a way that will continue to promote the economic development of those two massive central provinces, and they use transfer payments, make-work projects and unemployment insurance to deal with the symptoms, to cover up the symptoms, without ever dealing with the underlying problems of the economy of the Atlantic Provinces, and the Prairie and Western provinces. That, Mr. Speaker, has to change. That, Mr. Speaker, is the reason why this Government cannot possibly sit idly by and allow the Meech Lake Accord to be implemented as a constitutional provision for this country and entrench forever the kind of economic disparity that we have now.

The problem with this whole debate in the nation is that everybody talks in terms of what is necessary to accommodate Quebec. I want to accommodate Quebec as much as any other citizen of Canada. I want to make sure that Canada continues in the future with the Province of Quebec and with the Quebec people participating fully, and equally and fairly with all the rest of us as full Canadians, but, Mr. Speaker, I cannot sell the economic future of the people of this Province and the opportunity to be a full-participating Province of Canada, where our citizens can enjoy, on a reasonably comparable basis, the kind of quality of life, of public service and personal well-being that other Canadians enjoy. The only way we can do that, Mr. Speaker, is to follow the proper federal principle and ensure that we have in place national political institutions that will enable the smaller provinces to be heard, and ensure that in the

future all national economic decisions and the exercise of all national legislative power will be done in a way that balances the interests of the two most populous provinces - which can always outvote the other eight - with the interests of the other eight provinces, by having equal representation in a Triple "E" Senate. That is the answer for Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I will not detain you much longer, but just in case anybody has failed to see the connection, let me tell you what has happened in the last six or eight months. In June, the House of Commons passed a statute to create the new federal Department of Industry, Science and Technology, and that Act gave that new Department two powers: Its first power is to exercise all the jurisdiction and responsibilities of the federal Parliament in industry, technology, trade, commerce and science. Now, Mr. Speaker, I will just ask you to listen carefully to those words, because they are very significant - industry, trade, commerce, technology and science. I venture to suggest, Mr. Speaker, there are no other five words in the English language that come closer to encompassing the whole economic future of any developed nation in the world than those five words. That is it. The economic future of Canada is encompassed in those five words.

The second and only other power of that new Department is to be the regional economic development agency for Ontario and Quebec.

Now, that was approved by our Senate because it is ineffective and it is outweighed, still, by Central Canada representatives, or

just about outweighed, and it is not elected. That was approved by our Senate on the 23rd of January of this year, just a few weeks ago, and it received Royal Assent on the 29th of January.

Now, that is what the national Government is saying to the Atlantic Provinces and to the Western Provinces: 'We are going to develop the future of this country in science, technology, industry, trade and commerce in Central Canada.' And they say, 'But you have ACOA.' Yes, we have ACOA, and ACOA will give us some motel rooms and water slides and a few other things that will enable us to entertain, as tourists, the people who have earned the real revenue from industry, science, technology, trade and commerce in Central Canada.

For one hundred years we have been dealing with the problems of education, the economy of the Province and health, and we have not solved them. For forty years, since we became a province of this great nation, we have been dealing with the same problems and we have not solved them. Why? Because we have been looking at them in a superficial way and putting on band-aids to cover up the symptoms, Mr. Speaker. We have to deal with the underlying problem. The fundamental problem in this nation is that there is no means of balancing the federal decision-making in the exercise of national legislative power and national economic decisions, and that is where the Meech Lake Accord comes in. It would have us entrench the existing system forever by inhibiting even the ability of the federal Government to spend money on national cost-shared programs, and preventing effective reform of the

Senate.

Our future, Mr. Speaker, lies in stopping the Meech Lake Accord and putting in place, in its place, an alternative that addresses on a fair and reasonable basis the legitimate concerns of Quebec. And Quebec does have legitimate concerns. Quebec is a distinct society in Canada. Only somebody prepared to blind himself to reality could argue otherwise. I have no quarrel with recognizing Quebec as a distinct society. My problem is with giving Quebec a special status and putting in place this kind of situation where we can never reform our national political institutions to enable the smaller provinces of this country to play their full and total part.

Mr. Speaker, I should apologize, perhaps, for detaining you and the Members and our guests as long as I have, but the comments made by the Leader of the Opposition, particularly his comment that I said we would be better off, or the U.S. link is looking better, is totally inaccurate. I cannot accept responsibility for what newspapers write in their headlines, but just read the paper. Read the news. What was said was, in fact, 'We may well be a good deal better off in that circumstance.' The two people from Quebec had suggested we would be isolated if Quebec separated and the only alternative to us was to become provinces of the United States, and where would you be then? I said, 'Well, we may be just as well off as being in Canada with the Meech Lake Accord and regional economic disparity entrenched.' The headlines do not tell the story. Be honest. Read the story. It spells it all out. It also quotes me: 'I do not want

to be a state of the United States,' he added, 'but I do not want Newfoundland to be a subordinate Province, either.'

Mr. Speaker, whether I have it or not, I have accepted for myself and the Government that I lead - and I guess the voters will tell me next time around whether it is right or wrong - a responsibility to provide for the long-term future of our children, our grandchildren and their children, Mr. Speaker, not the short-term political gain that could be made by making a sweetheart deal with the Federal Government to buy a few tons of fish or a few kilowatts of power by selling the political independent economic future of our Province for the next century.

I accept that responsibility, along with my colleagues in Cabinet and on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, and give assurance to our people that we will do what is necessary to discharge it fully, so that Newfoundland can hold its head high as a full participating Province of Canada and, above all - above all - so that our people can go home with their pay cheques with dignity and self-respect, not having to hide their heads because they have had to beg it from somebody in Ottawa, or Ontario or Quebec. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

On motion, a Committee was appointed to draft an Address in Reply to the Gracious Speech from the Throne and it shall consist of the hon. the hon. the Member for LaPoile, the hon. the Member for Placentia (Mr. Hogan), and the hon. the Member for St. John's

East (Ms Duff).

Notices of Motion

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce the following resolution:

WHEREAS the Newfoundland and Labrador economy has worsened dramatically since this Government took office almost one year ago and unemployment has increased; and

WHEREAS the economic diversification of the Newfoundland and Labrador economy is a worthy and proper goal for the Province; and

WHEREAS the maintenance of rural Newfoundland and Labrador will depend largely on the fishery, notwithstanding economic diversification; and

WHEREAS the Government has created an Economic Recovery Commission to which it intends to transfer all of its economic powers and its ability to influence the economic direction of the Province; and

WHEREAS the Government has committed that it plans to bring in an economic recovery plan but to date has not done so;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that this House a) call on the Government to immediately produce its economic recovery plan for the consideration of the House of

Assembly; and b) express its concern about the centralization of power in a non-elected and unaccountable commission.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Bellevue.

MR. BARRETT:

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce the following resolution:

WHEREAS the seven Women's Centres in Newfoundland and Labrador are a meeting place for women and a focal point for activities relating to reaching the goal of women's equality; and

WHEREAS Women's Centres have brought to the public's attention issues such as wife/family violence, equal pay for work of equal value, child care, child sexual abuse, and provided the impetus for women to become actively involved in the economic development of their communities; and

WHEREAS Women's Centres have contributed to the development of transition houses for battered women and their children; and

WHEREAS Women's Centres provide counselling and support to victims of sexual assault, single mothers on low incomes, women going through divorce or separation, and other women in crisis; and

WHEREAS Women's Centres have brought over two million dollars to this province since their inception, and created 273 jobs and/or training spaces; and

WHEREAS provincial funding for women's issues has increased over the last ten years;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that this hon. House deploras the action of the Federal Government in attempting to deprive women of their centres, and recommends the immediate reinstatement of the operational funding to the seven centres in this Province.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Grand Bank.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce the following resolution:

WHEREAS the fishery is the economic mainstay of Newfoundland and Labrador; and

WHEREAS for many parts of the Province, the fishery is the only employer and it is not possible to fully replace the employment lost as a result of the closing of a plant through economic diversification; and

WHEREAS the current crisis, with proper management, is a short term one, and the stocks will rebuild; and

WHEREAS the present Government is using the current short term crisis to downsize and rationalize the fishery, which will result in dramatic centralization and loss of population in rural Newfoundland;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this House support (a) an all plants open up policy approach; and (b) urge the Government to work with the Federal Government to develop a financial package which will enable the plants due to be closed to be kept open until the fish stocks rebuild.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Pleasantville.

MR. NOEL:

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce the following resolution:

WHEREAS the Government of Canada is preparing to implement a consumption tax on goods and services; and

WHEREAS such a tax is likely to have serious negative effects on our country at a time when our economy may be particularly vulnerable; and

WHEREAS there are preferable and more equitable means of reducing the deficit, improving our competitiveness, and replacing necessary revenue lost through elimination of the manufacturers' sales tax; and

WHEREAS the regressive effects of the proposed goods and services tax would be disproportionately burdensome to Newfoundlanders and Labradorians; and

WHEREAS the GST will be expensive to collect, difficult to administer, and confusing to consumers;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this House demands that the Government of Canada not proceed with the implementation of the goods and services tax.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce the following resolution:

WHEREAS amalgamation of municipalities in certain circumstances may well be a good approach; and

WHEREAS the Government is attempting to force the amalgamation of municipalities against the will of many municipalities and the residents of these municipalities; and

WHEREAS many of the amalgamation proposals of the Government are ill-conceived; and

WHEREAS the public hearing process conducted by senior officials of the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs is fundamentally flawed and these officials are in a conflict of interest;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this House support the principle that amalgamation should not be forced upon communities which do not wish to be amalgamated.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the Member for Trinity - Bay de Verde.

MR. L. SNOW:

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce the following resolution:

WHEREAS the Atlantic Fishery has experienced a 25 per cent reduction in the total allowable catch for Northern Cod since 1989; and

WHEREAS the Resource Short Plant Program plays a significant role in providing seasonal employment; and

WHEREAS the Resource Short Plant Program has experienced a 60 per cent cut in its allocation over last year; and

WHEREAS these cuts have not been made on a proportional or pro rata basis; and

WHEREAS the Inshore quota has been cut by 4,000 tons as a result of the quota for the Middle Distance Fleet being eliminated;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Provincial Government continue its efforts to increase the quota for the Resource Short Plant Program to, at minimum, the pro rata level; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Provincial Government attempt to get the quota for the Middle Distance fleet reinstated without a reduction in the Inshore Total Allowable Catch.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN:
The hon. the Member for St. John's East Extern.

MR. PARSONS:
Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce the following resolution:

WHEREAS the Government has proposed a new Crown Lands Act, which will result in the loss of the traditional rights of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to have unlimited access to the lakes, ponds and rivers of the Province; and

WHEREAS such a right has existed in our Crown Lands Act for almost 40 years; and was a traditional right long before that legislation.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this House reaffirms the traditional rights of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to unlimited access to their lakes, ponds and rivers and that the new Crown Lands Act, when it is reintroduced, be amended so as to delete the present controversial Clause 7(2).

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

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

MR. DUMARESQUE:
Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to move the following resolution:

WHEREAS coastal Labradorians are totally dependent upon the fishery for their livelihood; and

WHEREAS not one fish of the Northern Cod stock is allocated to Labrador fish companies; and

WHEREAS not one inshore shrimp license is allocated to Labrador fishermen; and

WHEREAS less than one per cent of the total provincial caplin quota is allocated to Labrador; and

WHEREAS 80 per cent of the inshore fish in Labrador is taken to Quebec and parts of the Island for processing; and

WHEREAS not one salt fish is dried on the Coast of Labrador; and

WHEREAS no Labradorian gets more than 12 weeks processing the greatest fishing resources in Canada:

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that this House endorse the principle of

adjacency as adopted by this Government and that those closest to the resource must get the greatest benefit; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this House condemn the Federal Government for its actions to date and demand that a comprehensive development and management plan for the Labrador fishery be implemented.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Opposition House Leader and Member for Grand Falls.

MR. SIMMS:
Mr. Speaker, on behalf of and in the name of the hon. the Member for Green Bay, who is not here today, I would like to give notice of the following resolution:

WHEREAS both Newfoundland Light and Power and Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro have indicated that there will be substantial increases in the cost of electricity; and

WHEREAS the subsidy for the Power Distribution Districts is being eliminated, thereby increasing the cost of electricity; and

WHEREAS the Government has stated that it may eliminate the exemption for electricity from retail sales tax; and

WHEREAS an independent Public Utilities Board is essential to ensure that increases in electricity rates are kept to a minimum;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this House (a) call on the Government to reinstate the subsidy for the

Power Distribution Districts; and (b) oppose the proposal to remove the exemption for electricity from retail sales tax.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

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

MR. K. AYLWARD:
Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to move the following resolution:

WHEREAS the skills and knowledge of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians will be a critical factor in determining the future success of our Province as a vibrant society and a viable economy; and

WHEREAS the post-secondary education system in today's challenging environment must provide the women and men in the Province with high quality advanced education, delivered in an accessible and efficient manner; and

WHEREAS the White Paper outlining a post-secondary educational agenda for the future has been announced by the Minister of Education and stresses equality, excellence, and efficiency in the post-secondary system;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Assembly express support for the White Paper Educational Initiative put forward by the Wells Administration.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Member for Humber

East.

MS VERGE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce the following motion:

WHEREAS there is an alarmingly high incidence of sexual assault and domestic violence in Canada, including Newfoundland and Labrador; and

WHEREAS the victims of these crimes are almost exclusively children and women; and

WHEREAS the rate of disclosure of these crimes to child welfare officials and the police has been rising; and

WHEREAS there is a need for immediate improvements in our criminal justice, social and health care services to give victims and survivors the assistance and support they need, and to deal effectively with offenders; and

WHEREAS there is a need for our society to develop a greater understanding of the causes of personal injury crimes against women and children, and for the Government to lead the way in preventing these crimes;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Government proceed immediately with the following steps to improve services and supports to victims and survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence: (a) the Department of Justice hire victim court workers for each of the Province's major court centres; (b) the Department of Social Services increase the number of front-line social

workers; (c) the Department of Social Services fund resource centres for adult survivors of child sexual assault; (d) the Department of Social Services increase funding for Iris Kirby House in St. John's, for the Transition House in Corner Brook, and for Libra House in Happy Valley - Goose Bay; (e) the Department of Social Services fund new transition houses for battered women and children in Labrador West, in Gander, and in any other places where there is a demonstrated need; and (f) the Department of Health expand mental health services for children and adolescents, and establish these services in each region of the Province;

BE IT RESOLVED ALSO that the Government commission a task force to conduct a major multi-disciplinary study on sexual assault and wife battering, to provide guidance to the public and the Government on changes that must come about to prevent these crimes; and to advise the Government on what programs and services should be provided to victims and survivors, and to offenders.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. WALSH:

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow introduce the following resolution:

WHEREAS the Tourism Industry is a vital part of our Province's economic recovery; and

WHEREAS Tourism is the fastest

growing industry in our Province with development potential not only during the normal summer season but with tremendous potential in the winter months through ski facilities and other winter activities; and

WHEREAS Tourism has the potential to create the much needed employment in our Province in both the near and distant future;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Government continue in its efforts to establish a new Tourism Subsidiary Agreement for the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador and thus stimulate the development of the tourism industry and tourism related infrastructure so as to meet the demands of visitors and tourism in our Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

MR. DOYLE:
Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce the following resolution:

WHEREAS many collective agreements are expiring this year in the private and public sector; and

WHEREAS a good labour relations climate in both the public and private sector is essential to economic growth in the Province and proper public administration and the delivery of public services; and

WHEREAS the present administration has failed to foster a good labour relations climate;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the House urge Government to foster a good labour relations climate in the Province and that it negotiate in good faith with its own employees to ensure that public services are not disrupted in the coming year.

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

MR. POWER:
Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce the following resolution:

WHEREAS the Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador has stated that if the Meech Lake Accord is passed then Newfoundland and Labrador will be permanently impoverished; and

WHEREAS the Premier has stated that if this happens then "we may well be a good deal better off as citizens of the United States of America";

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Newfoundland Economic Recovery Commission be empowered to immediately begin an assessment of the economic and social advantages of joining the United States of America;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if and when this Commission ascertains that these assumptions are fundamentally false then the Premier will;

a) immediately remove all objections to the Meech Lake Accord; and

b) immediately begin the process of ensuring that Newfoundland and Labrador takes its rightful and equal place within the Canadian Confederation.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl.

MR. WINDSOR:

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce the following resolution:

WHEREAS the Hibernia Statement of Principles forms a foundation for the formal legal agreements necessary for the release of the Hibernia project; and

WHEREAS the proposed design for the Gravity Based Structure has changed since the signing of the Statement of Principles; and

WHEREAS the objectives of the industrial benefits package of the Statements of Principles provide substantial economic advantages to Newfoundland and Labrador;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this House direct the Government to ensure that the objectives of the Statement of Principles are maintained in its finalization of the Hibernia Agreement, and that industrial benefits are spread throughout Newfoundland and Labrador as much as possible.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Humber Valley.

MR. WOODFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce the following motion:

WHEREAS the agricultural industry

in this Province has not been developed to its fullest potential; and

WHEREAS an expanded agricultural industry in this province would provide much of the diversification our economy needs; and

WHEREAS the present Government has not acted to expand or to facilitate the expansion of this Province's agricultural industry;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT this hon. House urge the Government to develop and implement a comprehensive plan to facilitate the growth of the agricultural industry so that this industry may fulfill its potential and take its place among the major industries in Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MS DUFF:

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on tomorrow I will ask leave to present the following resolution:

WHEREAS the present Government of this Province when in Opposition criticized the former Government for undue economic restraint in the health care sector; and

WHEREAS the present Government has promised to provide high-quality health care for all residents of Newfoundland and Labrador regardless of the cost; and

WHEREAS the need for home care services in this Province is great and has not been adequately addressed by the present

Government; and

WHEREAS the former Government had already undertaken initiatives aimed at improving the quality of health care in this Province by increasing the availability of diagnostic services to medical professionals and by addressing health care staff shortages; and

WHEREAS the present Government has failed to continue the initiatives undertaken by the former Government aimed at improving the quality of health care in this Province;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT this hon. House urge the present Government to fulfill its commitment to provide high-quality health care for all residents of Newfoundland and Labrador, the provision of which shall preclude health care staff shortages, hospital bed closures and unreasonable delays for hospital admissions and for surgery;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT this hon. House urge the present Government to ensure the provision of home care services to all residents of Newfoundland and Labrador who from time to time need those services.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Fogo.

MR. WINSOR:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce the following resolution:

WHEREAS the Government's responsibility for recreation has

been absorbed in the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs along with many other responsibilities which are not directly related to recreation; and

WHEREAS the Government has not developed a comprehensive plan for the construction of regional recreational facilities throughout Newfoundland and Labrador; and

WHEREAS funding for recreation under the present Government has been unbalanced in favour of districts which are represented in the House of Assembly by Liberal Members;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Government develop and implement without delay a comprehensive plan for the construction of regional recreational facilities in Newfoundland and Labrador; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Government allocate all funding which has been designated for recreation, according to need in a fair and balanced manner; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Government implement the construction plan for recreational facilities developed in April of 1989.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Port au Port.

MR. HODDER:

Mr. Speaker, in the name and on behalf of the Member for Kilbride, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce the following resolution:

WHEREAS the Government of Canada is responsible to provide an efficient and equitable postal service for all residents of Canada; and

WHEREAS Canadians pay for this postal service whether they reside in urban or rural Canada; and

WHEREAS the Government of Canada, through Canada Post Corporation, has resolved to downgrade postal service to many rural Canadian communities, including towns in this Province;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador lobby the Government of Canada to maintain and improve existing postal service at the Federal post offices in this Province.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

MR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce the following resolution:

WHEREAS health is of utmost importance to all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians; and

WHEREAS the health status of the aboriginal people of Labrador is below Canadian standards; and

WHEREAS the health status is closely associated with social and economic conditions;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador take steps in conjunction with the Federal Government to transfer the administration and control of Health and Social programs to the native

associations of Labrador.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker, I move that the House at its rising do adjourn until 2:00 p.m. Monday, and that this House do now adjourned.

Before announcing the final adjournment I would remind hon. Members and all guests of the refreshments at the foyer, immediately.

On motion, the House at its rising adjourned until tomorrow, Monday, March 12, 1990 at 2:00 p.m.