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Speaker: Honourable Thomas Lush

Monday

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The House met at 2:00 p.m.

Mr. Speaker (Lush): Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Placentia is on Orders?

Mr. Hogan: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: We will move back to Statements by Ministers afterwards.

By leave. The hon. the Member for Placentia.

Mr. Hogan: I was slow rising, Mr. Speaker. Pardon me.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in this hon. House to beg the indulgence of the hon. Chair and all hon. Members to pay tribute to a very brave young lady, a heroic young Newfoundlander who met with a tragic and violent death on Thursday past. I wish to support, in concurrence with my colleagues, in extending sympathies in public to a bereaved and saddened family and community.

Mr. Speaker, Mary Angela Griffiths of Ship Harbour, age 23, died tragically following a motor vehicle accident just a short time after she graduated from Memorial University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in folklore. She was diagnosed with Cystic Fibrosis at the age of 18 months. As we all know many CF patients do not reach adulthood.

'Sis' to those of us who knew her well, or followed her career through her early school years in St. Anne's All Grade School in Dunville, and then through University, knew her as a charming vibrant young lady ambitious with long term goals, despite her illness.

Sis took up to sixty pills a day and injections of insulin for diabetes. She visited the hospital every six weeks and was required to be hospitalized once a year. She had undergone major surgery a number of times. Still she accepted the joys that each day provided.

Sis sat across from me not long ago in my office, and I knew, Mr. Speaker, from being told about her illness, I can see her now in my mind as she sat there full of life and vitality and with great expectancy of what the future held and her ambitions to get her Masters degree in folklore.

Mr. Speaker, hon. colleagues, let me share with you a recent comment she made, 'It is easy enough to sit on my haunches and do nothing but feel sorry for myself, but where does that get me?'

Her life, her hard work, her trials and tribulations, particularly her attitude, could be an inspiration to all of us. It certainly is a legacy to family friends and communities. Those of us who knew her ever so slightly are better people for having her touch our souls and our lives.

Mr. Speaker, a beautiful person, a young brave Newfoundlander whose comments should inspire all of us, and it is worth repeating, 'It is easy enough to sit on my haunches and do nothing but feel sorry for myself, but where does that get me?'

Mary Angela Griffiths - Graduate Memorial University, May 24, 1990 - dead, age 23, May 24th, 1990.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Simms: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to assure the Member for Placentia and all hon. Members of the House that we heartily concur with his request that you, Your Honour, send a message of condolences to the bereaved family of Miss Griffiths. I can tell hon. Members from personal experiences, that while I did not know Mary Angela, I had some involvement in the CF program through my association with the Kinsmen Association of Canada, and that of course is a national program of that organization, and I had many occasions in fact, an opportunity to meet many CF patients. I must also say that I did have an occasion or an opportunity I think to see an interview, a television interview with this young lady just a few days before the tragedy occurred, and I watched it because of my interest in CF and I must say, she expressed a fantastic outlook for her future, when you consider the fact that CF children really don't have longevity to look forward to in terms of life, and she reminded me of so many other young CF children that I have met in my days of involvement with the Kinsmen Association, so I was struck by that interview.

I remember her having a great outlook, a very bubbly personality, talked about getting her university degree and then moving on to get her Master's, and depending on that, what her future would be in terms of work and all the rest of it, so she had a great outlook, a very positive outlook, and I am sure I speak for Members on this side of the House, as well as everybody else for that matter, that we share in the request from the hon. Member that a message of condolence be sent to the family concerning this very sad tragedy.

Oral Questions

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Rideout: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

My question is for the Premier. Would the Premier confirm for the House whether or not the effect of Section 39 (2) of the present Constitution Act is to place in effect a three year time limit on amendments to the Constitution?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Premier Wells: If he does not mind, it may take two or three minutes to explain where the time limits are. There are three types of amendments to the Constitution: One which can be put in place by seven out of the ten provinces provided they have 50 per cent of the population, called a general amending formula; another type of amendment which requires the approval of all ten Legislatures; and a third type of amendment which can be done with the approval of Parliament and the Legislature of the only Province affected, such as an amendment to the Terms of Union.

I do not have the text of it in front of me, but my recollection of it is that Section 39 (2) provides that any amendment put forward in accordance with 38 (1), which is the general amending formula, seven out of ten, in such a case the level of approval required, that is the seven of the ten provinces, must be reached within three years, otherwise the proclamation that implements the amendment cannot be implemented after the passage of three years. The provision in Section 41 that

provides for amendment based on unanimity has no such provision, and, if my recollection is correct, 39 (2) does not incorporate Section 41 type amendments.

Mr. Rideout: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Rideout: Mr. Speaker, would not the Premier confirm that Section 39 (2) starts the time clock ticking when the first Legislature, either the Parliament of Canada or another Legislature, when the first Legislature gives approval to a constitutional amendment, that Section 39 (2) then puts in place a three year time frame and that time frame will expire on 23 June? Is that not a fact? That is what I am trying to establish.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Premier Wells: It depends, Mr. Speaker, on whether the amendment being put forward is an amendment that is being done with seven out of ten, or unanimity. If it is an amendment that requires seven out of ten, if that is what is put forward, an amendment that requires seven out of ten, then it starts the time clock ticking on the day when the first Legislature, whether it is provincial or federal, passes the first resolution approving the amendment. Now, what does the Meech Lake Accord, for example, require? That is the question. What kind of approval does it require? Everybody knows it requires approval of all ten provinces. Some of the components of the Meech Lake Accord can be amended on the basis of seven out

of the ten provinces; other components of the Meech Lake Accord require unanimity in order to effect the amendment.

So it is all put together in a single package, the Meech Lake Accord. It is put forward as a single package proposal of amendments. Now what does it require? Some of the components are seven out of ten, some of them are unanimous. So what does Meech Lake require to pass? Obviously, it requires unanimity. Why? Because some of its components require unanimity. And if you require unanimity you are at the very least going to have seven, so you meet that test. But you cannot implement the Meech Lake Accord when seven out of the ten approve it, because you have put together a total package, some components of which were agreed to on the basis of agreeing to others. So you have a total package that requires unanimity.

In the case of the Meech Lake Accord, my judgment and the judgment of a great many constitutional scholars is that the time clock does not start ticking because it is an amendment that requires unanimity. They do, however, clearly recognize that there is another argument. There are those who say, because some of the components can be amended on the basis of seven out of ten, therefore, you really have to start the time clock.

Well, we do not know what a court will say because it has never been tested. There are those who say that if that gets to court the court will say no, it does not require the time limit. And there are those who say well, no, we think the safest way to go is that the court will conclude that it

does require. Nobody knows with absolute certainty. But, in any event, if the Meech Lake issue is to be addressed, it is clear that the Legislatures will again have to address the add-ons or the parallel accord or whatever it is. So legislative action is required. And if legislative action is required, then June 23 really means nothing because the Legislatures must act to resolve the impasse. June 23 only has significance if you start from the proposition that it requires approval within three years, which is very much an uncertain and debatable position, and secondly, if the Meech Lake Accord is going to be passed as it is, without any further change or add-ons.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Rideout: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

Would the Premier tell the House whether or not it is his view that if there is to be an extension of the June 23 deadline, and if it is to be done properly constitutionally, would it take the consent, again, of all ten Legislatures and the Parliament of Canada, in his view, to extend the deadline beyond June 23?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Premier Wells: If you first operate from the assumption that the deadline is, in fact, a constitutional requirement, and for purposes of the question I will make that assumption, although I disagree, I do not think it is, and I think a court in the end will say this is an amendment that requires unanimity, so the three years does not apply, but let us assume that the other

argument would be upheld by the courts and it would apply. That being so, then in order to extend it it would require the action of all the Provincial Legislatures and the Federal House of Commons and Senate, because, of course, it is an adjustment to the amending formula and you can only make adjustments to the amending formula with the unanimous approval of all. So, yes, if you start with the assumption that the three year time limit is a constitutional requirement, then it would require that level of approval.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Simms: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Premier as well, on the same issue.

Can the Premier confirm for the House whether or not he has had a public relations firm engaged for several weeks now doing video clips and preparing an advertising campaign, and so on, for a Provincial referendum on the Meech Lake issue?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Premier Wells: No, Mr. Speaker. By no, I do not mean no I cannot confirm it. I can confirm that it is totally false, it is without validity. I have not engaged a public relations firm to do clips for preparing for a referendum on the Meech Lake issue. That is wrong.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Simms: Mr. Speaker, a quick supplementary to the Premier. Does he intend to do so?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Premier Wells: Mr. Speaker, I have asked a public relations firm to consider what will be necessary, what kind of actions would be necessary to ensure that two things are achieved: the people of the Province will be fully informed on both sides of the issue. Not to carry on a campaign, no. A campaign is out of the question. I would not participate in it. To ensure that the people of the Province are fully informed, and to ensure that the people of the nation are accurately informed, what would be necessary to ensure that to be done? I have received an outline or a recommendation; I have considered it and I have prepared a reply to say I do not like what you suggest. That is as far as it has gotten.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Simms: Mr. Speaker, perhaps I can move along to a different sort of idea.

Can the Premier advise the House the estimated cost involved of running a provincial referendum through the Chief Electoral offices? Obviously I would assume he has had cost estimates done.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Premier Wells: No, Mr. Speaker, I have not had full cost estimates done, but I will be asking the Chief Electoral Officer to advise me of that. Because, of course, if we proceed with a referendum, we will have to make adequate provision for it, and I would want to bring the proposal before the House to do that. I don't know what the cost will be. The only

step I have taken in that direction at all so far is to say to the Chief Electoral Officer, It is possible you may be called upon to conduct such a referendum on very short notice. Would you please ensure that you have examined everything that would be necessary in order to carry out such a referendum and be prepared to implement it on short notice if a decision is made to conduct such a referendum? But do not take any steps whatsoever towards implementation of such a referendum.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Simms: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

Would the Premier, when he looks into this, check into some actual figures, or some figures I have been able to determine from consultation with certain people who would know, and perhaps he would then be able to confirm for the House that the actual cost of holding a provincial referendum would be somewhere in the area between \$1 million and \$1.2 million? Would he check to confirm those figures?

Premier Wells: Mr. Speaker, I will try to get some idea from the Chief Electoral Officer as to what the actual cost of a referendum might be. I don't know who the certain persons are the hon. Member contacted. It may be the Chief Electoral Officer for all I know. But I will certainly ask the Chief Electoral Officer and I will advise the House of the estimated cost.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Port au Port.

Mr. Hodder: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Social Services.

As the Minister is aware, the Newfoundland Association for Community Living have asked for increased funding this year. Without this increased funding, they say, they may be forced to close their doors. He is also aware, no doubt, that the Association, which is a volunteer organization, was responsible for placing the children from Exon House around the Province and are now busy integrating these children into communities around the Province.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister depends on those volunteers. Without those volunteers, he cannot carry out his mandate. My question to the Minister is, why did the Minister not follow through with promises and implied promises of increased funding to this group, funding which was well deserved?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

Mr. Efford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am surprised the hon. the Member for Port au Port had to read the question. Because this is not a new problem, it has been an ongoing problem with the Association for quite some time, back when the Member was part of the Cabinet.

Let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, very clearly, I have been very, very heavily involved with the Newfoundland Association for the Disabled over the past twelve months.

An Hon. Member: Community Living.

Mr. Efford: Community Living. We have been totally co-operative. In fact, we increased the funding from \$260,000, in last year's Budget, to \$900,000. In fact, I was the only Minister of Social Services from across Canada to attend the conference in PEI last October. So I am very much aware of the value -

An Hon. Member: That is the time you were (inaudible).

Mr. Efford: Yes, I remember that, especially when I got back home. But that is another matter. And I am not hanging my head in shame about anything. I am very concerned and very aware of the request they have made of my Department.

This Government is not turning its back on the importance of the Association. We are reviewing what's taking place - the request of funding. We also found out that the former Administration was funding the Labrador Association of Community Living more than they were funding the whole Provincial Association, which doesn't make any sense.

An Hon. Member: Geography, boy! Geography!

Mr. Efford: It's not the geography. I would think the Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Community Living would receive more or an equal amount. Nevertheless, there is some discrepancy there. Mr. Speaker, in answer to the Gentleman's question, I am aware of the request, I am concerned about the request and we are reviewing the request. In fact, it was only about an hour before I came to the House of Assembly that I received a call from the

President to arrange a meeting, and I have arranged to sit down and meet with the President of the Association.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Port au Port.

Mr. Hodder: Mr. Speaker, the funding the Minister is talking about: Last year the Association received \$50,000, this year they have received \$37,000. But, Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons the increased funding was asked for this year, and the amount was actually \$110,000, is because of the fact that there are 200 people at the Waterford who are not in psychiatric care, they are not psychiatric patients, they are mentally handicapped, developmentally delayed. Does the Minister not agree that these 200 people I mean, it is a crying shame should be re-integrated into the community? Certainly the Waterford agrees and certainly the Association for Community Living agrees. Does the Minister not agree? And how could the Minister do this? I mean, an extra \$60,000 this organization is asking for to help fund a five year plan, help them obtain some funding from Ottawa, to re-integrate these people who are now in the Waterford into the community, as happened in Exon House and various other facilities of the Province. How could the Minister even consider denying these people that \$60,000 for this cause?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

Mr. Efford: First of all, Mr. Speaker, we haven't come to a final decision as to whether we are going to allow the extra funding or not. That decision has not been made. It will be made in

the very near future. And I have already agreed to a meeting.

But let me tell the hon. gentleman and everybody in the Province, and this hon. House of Assembly, that we have great concerns about the rapid move in which the deinstitutionalization of Exon House and the Children's Home was done and we are not totally satisfied that all the children and all the residents who have been moved out into the Province are totally taken care of. So what we would like to do is work cooperatively with the organizations and all the people, the experts in the Department of Social Services, to ensure that these people are properly taken care as far as job supports, as far as education programs, as far as co-operative apartments are concerned. When we do all those and we are totally satisfied, then we will consider deinstitutionalizing the Waterford. But we are not ready, we are not prepared and we are certainly not financially prepared to deinstitutionalize Waterford. We are interested in working in cooperation with the Newfoundland Association for Community Living, in making representation to Ottawa to get some funding. When the Province is ready to deinstitutionalize, I am sure it will be done. But we are not going to rush into it, and we are not going to be forced into it and make the wrong decisions.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Port au Port.

Mr. Hodder: Mr. Speaker, at the Waterford, at the present time, we have one student who lives in the Waterford and works outside, and is actually an advocate to try to get himself out of the Waterford.

That is the kind of situation that is going on in this Province.

Mr. Speaker, we hear about in excess of \$1 million for a referendum tossed around in this legislature today. Mr. Speaker, we are talking about -

Some Hon. Members: By whom?

Mr. Hodder: Well, the Premier has been talking about a referendum, and admitted that he would have a referendum. Don't be stupid.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

I suggest to the hon. Member that he is on a supplementary. I would ask him to get to the supplementary very quickly, please.

Mr. Hodder: Mr. Speaker, the Minister is trying to nickel and dime that organization, an organization without which the Minister could not operate in this Province. The Minister was up in PFI bragging about how good they were.

Mr. Speaker, my question is, is the Minister or is he not going to restore funding to that organization? Is he or is he not? Stop beating around the bush and answer the question.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

Mr. Efford: Take that between the two eyes.

Mr. Speaker, let me tell the hon. Member one thing, that the 174 people who are now in the Waterford, most of them were there for the last seventeen years, while the past Administration

completely turned their backs on them. We are concerned about the residents of Waterford. We, as well as all other people in the community, recognize the fact that they should have an equal and fair opportunity for community living. But we do not want to proceed, to rush and take those people out to put them into the community without having the proper supports in place. Unlike the former Administration, we are planning for the future, what is best for the people of this province. Whether you have a disability or not, everybody should have an equal and fair opportunity to live in the community, and we intend to do that.

Will we meet with the group? Yes. I have already agreed to meet with the Association. And the Member can stand there from daylight to dark but he is not going to get a commitment out of me in the House of Assembly until I see an opportunity for the people in my department to assess the needs, to meet with the organization. And each and every time I have had an opportunity to meet publicly or to discuss, I have always bragged about the job those people are doing. They are doing a fantastic job. Government would not be able to do the job those people are doing. They have my total support, and it will continue. I can assure hon. Members opposite, much to their despair, that they are going to see some positive action take place over the next several years with the Association for Community living, in cooperation with the Department of Social Services.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Fogo.

Mr. Winsor: Thank you, Mr.

Speaker.

My question is to the Minister of Fisheries. Last Thursday, in Question Period, I asked the Minister about storm damage done to fishermen's gear: nets, traps and so on. The Minister indicated that his officials were, as of that day, assessing the situation. Does the Minister now have the reports, and is there going to be compensation for the affected fishermen?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

Mr. Carter: Mr. Speaker, the officials from my department were instructed to visit the area and to do an assessment of the damages. I have not received a report yet, but I will undertake to have it ready in time for Question Period tomorrow, in the House.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Fogo.

Mr. Winsor: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

I had a conversation with several fishermen this week who indicate they have not seen any officials from the Department of Fisheries. Have the officials visited any communities and talked to the fishermen? If so, what communities did they visit?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

Mr. Carter: Mr. Speaker, my instructions were to have my officials investigate the problem and report back to me. Now, I cannot tell the Member what people they talked with or what communities they visited, I can

only tell you that when I say I am going to have them do it, they will do it.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Fogo.

Mr. Winsor: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

The Minister assured us on Thursday that time was of the essence in getting this report. Has the Minister considered eliminating the \$7 cost of the traps in the lobster trap bank to the fishermen, since they have had no opportunity to make any money so far this year?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

Mr. Carter: Mr. Speaker, we have not considered eliminating the \$7 charge; we have not been requested to eliminate it. As I said before, we will look at it and we will have to judge almost every case on its own merit. We would be certainly willing to have a look at it, but, certainly, up to now we have not.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Menihek.

Mr. A. Snow: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Environment and Lands. Western Labrador residents and, indeed, residents of Churchill Falls, were horrified last Friday when witnessing the local news they saw that non-residents displayed about 150 slaughtered geese from northern Labrador, illegally shot geese. Can the Minister tell me if his Department and other Government officials were forewarned that illegal hunting or poaching was to occur in the Menihek Lake area?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Environment and Lands.

Mr. Kelland: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I had no forewarning that illegal hunting was about to take place, Mr. Speaker. The waterfall is Federal jurisdiction. However, we do work in conjunction with them as best we can to try to enforce wildlife regulations. With respect to what transpired, whether or not there was some advanced notice to the media or the media were aware, I will have to check it out and advise the Member later.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Menihek.

Mr. A. Snow: Mr. Speaker, the media were involved. There was a press release issued by the five people, I believe, that they were going to do this. I would emphasize to the Minister that while enforcement may indeed be under Federal jurisdiction, the protection of the wildlife is indeed all of our responsibility. I would ask him if he, indeed, would investigate more fully and report back to this House what they will do with regard to this matter?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Environment and Lands.

Mr. Kelland: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Yes, I have already responded to the hon. Member's last suggestion, Mr. Speaker. What bothers me about any abuse of wildlife, no matter who the perpetrators are, is if anyone is attempting to make any sort of a political point, or a point other than what might be

accepted under existing wildlife regulations. I believe it is a blatant abuse of our wildlife resource when someone will slaughter just to make a point, if that was the case. In this case, Mr. Speaker, and I have no knowledge that it might have been until I investigate, I think we can probably support our federal colleagues in whatever action they wish to take. However, I do not have the details, Mr. Speaker, beyond that. I would be happy to undertake to find out what they are and report back to the House.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Simms: Thank you, Mr. Premier - Mr. Speaker. A bit premature, Mr. Speaker.

I have another question for the Premier, Mr. Speaker, related to a different topic. Can the Premier tell me whether or not he was aware that the 140 or so Wooddale Nursery workers out in central Newfoundland had called his office last week, in advance of his trip to central Newfoundland, and requested a meeting with him? Was he aware of that request?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Premier Wells: There was a request came in I believe from the Wooddale group, from the union steward. I may be talking about another group; I am just speaking from recollection, but I will check. My recollection is that there was a request from somebody who was an employee of the Wooddale Nursery. I thought he was a member of the union, and somebody told me he was the shop steward of the union. It is not appropriate for the Premier to interfere with the normal

operations of collective bargaining, so I referred to matter to - I believe that is the matter I referred to the President of Treasury Board. I will have to check it, but I have a recollection of something like that.

I also spoke to the Minister of Forestry and he told me he was going to meet with a group. I do not know whether it was when I was in Grand Falls last week they sought to meet, but I remember something like that and somebody told me it was a request from the union shop steward. So it would be inappropriate for me to meet with them. I may be wrong. That may have been in respect to some other group, but I have that vague recollection.

Mr. Speaker: The Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Simms: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I believe the Premier might have it confused with something else. The individual, I think, who called was a spokesperson on behalf of the workers. It had nothing to do with collective bargaining or anything else, it has to do with the situation that exists at Wooddale and their concerns and all the rest of it. They did, in fact, have a meeting with the Minister of Forestry and the Member for Exploits on Wednesday night, but on Thursday night I met with them and they told me they were totally disillusioned and dissatisfied with the meeting they had the night before.

My point is this, and they have asked me to ask you the question directly today in the Legislature, would you be prepared to meet with

a representative group of the workers at Wooddale to discuss their concerns if they were to request such a meeting of you in the next week or so?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Premier Wells: I will meet with any group, anywhere, at any time it is appropriate for me to meet. Now that includes a representative group from the Wooddale Nursery, provided it is not discussing any aspect of a collective agreement with it that is properly managed by the President of Treasury Board. I will not interfere with the Government employe/employer management relations. Assuming it has nothing to do with that, I will meet with that group, most certainly. I would never refuse to meet with any group. I am the most responsive Premier in the history of the Province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Simms: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

That is precisely why I asked the Premier the question, because I have heard him say many times in the past that he would meet with any group. However, they asked to meet with him last week and, as far as they are concerned, the Premier refused to meet with them. That is why I raised the question. I want to say to them that if they wish to meet with the Premier to discuss matters relating to the long-term planning of the Wooddale Tree Nursery, planting projects, planting programs, and things like that, then I am assuming the Premier is prepared to meet with them. If they wish to talk to him about

long-term planning of the Wooddale Nursery, the future of the Wooddale Nursery, that kind of thing, he is quite prepared to talk to them, but not collective bargaining issues, as he suggests. Is that what he is saying exactly?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Premier Wells: I am prepared to talk to any group and explain our long-term planning but, frankly, I suggest to you, the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture is a much better informed person on the issue than I am; he can give them much better advice and have a much better discussion. However, he has met with them, and if as a result of a subsequent meeting with the hon. House Leader he has so obfuscated and confused the issue that it is now necessary for me to meet with them and straighten it out, I will be very happy to do so.

An Hon. Member: They will be doubly confused after meeting with you.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Grand Bank.

Mr. Matthews: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health and it concerns the health care situation on the Burin Peninsula. The holding beds which are now left at Grand Bank and are capable of holding between four and six patients before they are transferred to the Burin regional health care centre, is the Minister aware that there has been a directive now and patients are only to remain in those beds for twenty-four hours, after which they must be transferred to the Burin regional hospital?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Health.

Mr. Decker: Mr. Speaker, I cannot refer specifically to the holding beds in Grand Bank or in St. Lawrence, but the whole concept of a holding bed is exactly that, that the person stays there until he or she is stabilized. I am surprised that it was as much as twenty-four hours. I would have thought twelve hours would have been a more reasonable amount of time.

The idea of a holding bed is not that of an acute care bed, where a person receives treatment. A person is rushed to the health care centre with chest pains, stomach pains, or whatever, and the doctor who meets the patient has a few hours to decide whether a higher level of care is needed, or if it is simply a result of the night before, high living or something, and the doctor has a judgement call, to send the patient home to rest because there is nothing wrong, or take it to a higher level. I would be surprised if they are being kept there twenty-four hours, Mr. Speaker, when the person needs a higher level of care. But if that is what is being done, it is not in any way contrary to the intent of the holding bed.

The hon. Member should not confuse a holding bed with an acute care bed or a chronic care bed, it is simply a place to stabilize the patient and for the attending physician to determine whether or not there is a higher level needed, or whether or not the patient is free to go back home.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Grand Bank.

Mr. Matthews: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Now the real question here is that in a judgment of a physician a patient may need more than twenty-four hours before they are fully stabilized to be moved, and there is a directive that the nurse in charge now has to call the Burin Hospital after twenty-four hours has expired to notify the Burin Hospital that a patient has been in the bed for more than twenty-four hours. Now the patient may need to be there for thirty or forty-eight hours. As a matter of fact, some physicians are very, very concerned about it and they are now asking patients to sign a form relieving them of any responsibility because of this situation. And what is happening, Mr. Speaker, let me tell the Minister, is that they are being moved to the regional hospital and, in a lot of cases, they are left in the corridors on stretchers. So they would be much better off in the holding bed, as you referred to it, at the Grand Bank or St. Lawrence Hospitals. I am wondering if the Minister would check into this, because physicians are telling me that it is really interfering with their proper care of their patients.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Health.

Mr. Decker: Mr. Speaker, of course I will certainly check into it. But I think what the hon. Member is saying is exactly what I was saying about the reason the holding bed is there. And physicians are right to be concerned if the people are staying in these beds any more than twenty-four hours. Because if they need a higher level of

care, the community health care centres are not equipped to deal with that.

Now, obviously, you have to use a fair amount of common sense. If the danger of moving a person is going to be higher than keeping them in the bed for an extra six hours, I am sure judgment will be used; and the people who use this judgment have a degree of expertise and experience in health care. Their first aim, I am sure, Mr. Speaker, is to attend to the well-being of the patient. And there has to be certain common sense. I am sure that if in twenty-four hours someone is still not fit to be moved, they are not going to move them. I mean, as far as I am concerned, that is foolishness the hon. Member is getting on with. Common sense has to prevail, and we are dealing with medical physicians.

Mr. Speaker: Question Period has expired.

Answers to Questions for which Notice has been Given

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Premier Wells: I don't waste time, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Premier Wells: The question asked by the hon. the Opposition House Leader about the meeting of the workers at the Wooddale Nursery: I don't know with certainty whether or not that was the same group that related to the NAPE question, but the individual who requested the meeting was the past President of the NAPE local at the tree nursery.

The simple fact is, I was going to Grand Falls to address the Newfoundland meeting of the representatives of the Chambers of Commerce in the Province. I had agreed, prior to that, to meet with the Town Council of Bishop's Falls on the way from Gander to Grand Falls, and there just was not any time. I just went right through. And the people were notified that I could not meet, but the Minister would be available to meet, and they agreed to meet with the Minister and the hon. the Member for Exploits (Mr. Grimes). And they did. It wasn't that I refused to meet with them, as the hon. Member suggests; that wasn't at all the case.

Mr. Simms: That is not what they told me.

Premier Wells: Well, they are ill-informed. The simple fact is I just could not do it and, at the time, there wasn't the time available on that particular day. They were notified. The simple fact of the matter is, the Minister had a two-hour meeting, they didn't like the results and they would like to meet with me, and I am, of course, prepared to meet with them.

Mr. Speaker: Further Answers to Questions for Which Notice has been given.

The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

Mr. Efford: Mr. Speaker, I don't know if I should give it now or stand on a point of order, but what I want to do is correct an answer to the question that was asked me in Question Period.

Mr. Speaker: No. The hon. gentleman can only stand up here

on answers to questions for which notice is given.

Petitions

The hon. the Member for Menihek.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. A. Snow: I rise in my place, Mr. Speaker, to present a petition on behalf of residents of Labrador City and Wabush and residents of Menihek. The prayer of the petition is: 'We, the residents of western Labrador, are concerned that the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has cut the Labrador Air Passenger Subsidy Program, and has thereby unacceptably increased the burden of transportation costs to the residents of this Province who live in Labrador.'

Wherefore, your petitioners urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to reconsider its decision and reinstate the Labrador Air Passenger Subsidy Program to its original levels.'

Two hundred and twenty people signed this petition.

Mr. Speaker, it is again another petition registering the complaints and the concerns of the people of western Labrador, people who live in Labrador City and Wabush, who are concerned about the additional burden which has been placed on them by the removal of this particular subsidy, which was in place for twenty-five years.

Last week, or two weeks ago we heard the Premier in response to another petition, we heard the Premier present a few arguments as to why this particular program was

not continued. And one of his first arguments was the fact that there had been abuse to the program. In fact, that some employees of the larger corporations have an airfare paid for them by their employer, and they then submit a claim for twenty per cent of the cost of that particular transportation.

I do not know of any abuse occurring, Mr. Speaker, but if indeed there is abuse, the abuse has to be removed or cut out. What you do not do is remove the program.

We have seen in recent years abuse of the UIC program. We have seen people charged in court with fraud. We did not see the Federal Government remove the complete UIC program because there was abuse to a particular section of it. We saw them charge the people that did abuse that particular program. So that argument does not hold any water.

Secondly, we had the Premier suggest that one of the reasons why the program, the Labrador Air Passenger Subsidy Program was discontinued, was the fact that residents of Labrador who worked for the Provincial Government received, and I quote from Hansard of May 18, "To begin with, all Government employees in Labrador get fully paid trips. I do not know how many a year, a number." I want to correct the Premier's statement. I am sure he did not deliberately mislead the House. It is my understanding that Government employees of the negotiated settlement with the Government, will receive over the next period of three to four years a paid trip for themselves and their family, but right now it is only a portion. It is not numbers

of trips, it is a portion of the travel of air costs to the Island portion of the Province.

A third argument that was raised by the Premier in response to another petition presented by me was the fact that there was \$700,000 a year subsidy to an airline operating on the coastal portion of Labrador. That is indeed a subsidy and I agree that is a good move by this Province, this Government, to subsidize air transportation in Labrador. But what must be remembered by all Members of this House is that for a good period of the year that is the only mode of transportation that is available to the residents of Labrador, and there is no road.

So everywhere else in this Province either has a subsidized ferry service throughout the year or a highway network that is heavily subsidized by the Provincial Government, whereas in Labrador we do not have that opportunity. We only have air travel. That is the only mode of travel on the coastal portion of Labrador. So, really, \$700,000 is very, very little. If you wanted to really make it equal or equitable to all the residents of this Province, you would indeed have to subsidize it by a tremendous larger amount than \$700,000.

The other argument brought forward by the Premier and the Minister of Finance, is the fact that this Province loses revenue under the northern allowance, because of the travel subsidy. This is again a misstatement. I am sure it was not deliberate. But what occurs, and I will quote what the Premier suggested May 18, in Hansard. He says, "The northern allowance applies to the whole of Labrador,

and this Government contributes to that because we give up tax revenue in the northern allowance."

Mr. Speaker, that does not occur. What happens is that in the northern resident deductions or the northern benefits package there is no deduction on the travel, except that what happens now is that you get a deduction on the travel which is entered in and entered out. Previous to that it was not taxed and that is what the Federal Government did and that is only in place until 1991, that particular benefit, if it is a benefit.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. gentleman's time is up.

Mr. A. Snow: So I would urge this Government to reconsider its position, and reinstate the Labrador Subsidy Program.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

Mr. Warren: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I rise in support of the petition signed by some 222 residents of the western part of Labrador.

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues and I said here some weeks ago that we will keep on day after day, after day, presenting petitions to this Government which is really cutting the life blood from the people of Labrador. In fact, if we read the editorial that was in the paper a few days ago, in the Evening Telegram, it was not too complimentary at all to this Government or to the Government Members for Labrador. Mr. Speaker, it just shows again the

disregard that this Government has for the people in Labrador.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if a person goes down to Portugal Cove and gets on the ferry and goes across to Bell Island it does not cost that much. The only way to get to Labrador this time of year is to fly into Labrador, you have to fly. If the Government say that they want to treat everybody equal, then I think they have to look at their transportation system within the Province.

Mr. Speaker, we have people in Labrador this year who will be visiting our neighbour Province, because of this subsidy being eliminated. They can go to our neighbour province instead of coming to the Island portion of this Province, and spending the few dollars they do have in our Province, which would give the Province some return. Instead of that, Mr. Speaker, they will be forced to go to our neighbour province.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that this Government has to ask itself a very serious question. The question is not a matter of \$300,000 or \$400,000. The question is what they have done now. They have divided the rich against the poor in Labrador. That is what they have done, Mr. Speaker, they have divided. They have not only divided, Mr. Speaker, Labrador from Newfoundland, but now they have divided the people in Labrador. They have divided and conquered. Where is the Premier on fairness and balance?

I say this, Mr. Speaker, I think if the Premier is ever thinking about a referendum I would think he will have a little bit of

trouble in the Labrador section of this Province on a referendum, because the people in Labrador realize what this Government is coming to. They realize, Mr. Speaker, that this Government has socked it to them left, right and center. Only last week they announced they are postponing now the two nursing clinics in Hopedale and Davis Inlet, another thing that this Government is up to in their mischievous manner, in their very mischievous manner. The Whole Budget was mischievous, the way they cut out the air subsidy was mischievous, and everything they do is down right mischievous and is hurting the people of Labrador.

I would say, Mr. Speaker, that what we see here is the real possibility that the two seats the Government presently hold in Labrador, the two seats they have their fingers on in Labrador, will be gone when the next time rolls around.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, I support this petition and we have many more petitions to go.

Orders of the Day

Mr. Baker: Motion 1, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Motion 1. To Move that the House resolve itself into Committee of the Whole on Ways and Means to consider the Raising of Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

The hon. the Member for Harbour Main adjourned the Debate on the Budget, so one assumes that he wants to carry on.

The hon. the Member for Harbour

Main.

Mr. Doyle: Thank you, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, as I said in the adjournment on Friday, there is very little in the Budget that the average person can really get excited about, that is on the positive side. There is plenty really that the average person can get very excited about on the negative side. The Minister of Finance labelled the Budget, when he brought it down, as the people's Budget. And we are still waiting to see how the people are any better off as a result of the Budget. Development in the Province is virtually at a standstill. There is really not a lot for people to look forward to in this Budget in the way of development. And unless we get a Hibernia development going or a hydro development going, then we can expect to see the unemployment rate rise even higher, and the unemployment rate is already at a very, very serious level.

We saw just last month, as a matter of fact, the unemployment rate go up by approximately 1.4 per cent over the same time period last year.

An Hon. Member: That is a shame.

Mr. Doyle: And we can expect to see the unemployment rate go much higher than that, if we do not get into the development of, not only long-term jobs, but of short-term jobs as well. The Minister of Employment really does not seem to have any programs to address that issue. Before she is prepared to recommend to the Government that they put more money into the Employment Generation Program, she says she is going to have to monitor the situation and see if

the need is there.

Recent developments on the Hibernia end of it tend to discourage one into thinking that even Hibernia, where everyone is hoping the total benefits package will be signed by the end of June, everyone is hoping for that. But it is quite possible that the Hibernia development might be placed on hold because you have to look at whether or not a consortium like Mobil Oil and Petro-Canada and Chevron and BP would be willing to put over \$5 billion into a development in a country that is presently as unstable as our country appears to be.

And we badly need an economic shot in the arm. If there is one province in Canada -

An Hon. Member: A kick in the rear end.

Mr. Doyle: - that needs an economic shot in the arm right now it is Newfoundland.

An Hon. Member: A kick in the rear. That is what this Province needs.

Mr. Doyle: So, Mr. Speaker, we need the short-term as well as the long-term development as well. It is fine and dandy to say that an Economic Recovery Commission is going to be the answer to the employment woes in Newfoundland. Well they have a ten year mandate, but people need to eat right now, and people need jobs and development going on in the Province right now. And that is where we see the practical side of - I am not getting into the Meech Lake Accord - but that is where we see the practical side of having the Meech Lake Accord passed by

that June deadline, so that some stability can be put back into the country again.

So, Mr. Speaker, there are a number of megaprojects like Hibernia and the Churchill project that will probably die in the short-term, and possibly the long-term if we do not see some stability developing. And I do not know how the Minister of Finance is going to hold his credit rating if there is no hope of these developments taking place. And we see in this Budget, Mr. Speaker, brought down by the Minister of Finance, a Government that has done more in one year to affect the lives of the average individual in the negative way, than has the previous Government in a ten year period.

You see cuts in the Recreational Capital Grants; you see the PDD subsidies over a three year period amounting to \$30 million being eliminated; you see the Employment Generation Program going from \$7.5 million down to \$2.9 million, at a critical time when the unemployment rate is continuing to go up. You see the payroll tax introduced by the Minister of Finance, which is going to have a very negative affect on business in the Province. It is going to have a negative affect on tourism in the Province.

You see fish plants closing all over the place and you see a Government that just recently brought down the axe on the Ombudsman. All of these things are negative moves by the Government, and how the Minister of Finance could possibly say that this is a people's Budget, and that the people are better off as a result of this Budget, I will never know, Mr. Speaker. We do

have the Minister of Finance bringing in a very crafty document which at first glance, one would say, was a good Budget. It is only when you get down to really analyzing what the Government has done here that you are really able to determine the negative and devastating effect it is having on the people of the Province.

One month after the Budget Speech the Minister has finally admitted that he does not understand the implications of that tax. When he introduced it in the Budget it was a hurried type of thing, and the Minister was trying to raise approximately \$25 million annually, taxing the health care institutions, the school boards, the post-secondary institutions, the homes for special care -

An Hon. Member: This is repetitious.

Mr. Doyle: Yes, and we are going to keep repeating it until the Government finally sits up and starts to take notice as to what they are doing to the people of the Province.

Mr. Speaker, this health and education tax is really a tax on health and education. As I said, taxing school boards, post-secondary institutions, homes for special care, nonprofit organizations, even churches and charities and private social service agencies, so, the so-called health and education tax is also a tax on health and education in the Province. How the Minister, as I said a moment ago, could possibly have the gall to call this a people's Budget I will never know. The Minister of Finance has refused, on so many different occasions, to provide the details of the proposed tax.

We repeatedly questioned him on this tax, to give us some indication of where the money was coming from, but the Minister of Finance refused on so many different occasions to give us any details, and that indicates that the tax was really a poorly thought out tax.

It was rushed into the Budget at the last minute, and I have a feeling that one of the reasons that the Minister of Finance rushed into that particular tax was because the Government knew at the last moment there was a Budget leak, and that the Opposition disclosed a Budget leak in relation to the proposed changes in the retail sales tax regulations, and this was why the Minister, at the last moment, had to rush into this health and education tax.

What has the Minister done here, Mr. Speaker? In taxing the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation does it not stand to reason that that tax will cause the cost of serviced land to increase a great deal? Does it not stand to reason that if you are going to tax the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation there will be an increase in the cost of serviced land, and the ordinary taxpayer will be hit again?

Also, Mr. Speaker, taxing Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro, as the Minister is doing: does he not agree that is going to increase the cost of electricity in the Province? Where will hydro make up the difference if the Minister is imposing this payroll tax upon them? They have to pass it along to the consumer, and the people who are using electricity every day are the people who will

in the final analysis have to pay. This is how the Minister is getting at the people once again. The Minister told us under questioning that there was going to be no increase in the cost of beers, spirits, and wines in the Province.

At the same time of course, he has taxed the Newfoundland Liquor Corporation with payroll tax and as a result they have to pass that along to the consumer, so this is the people's Budget, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister is talking about. Newfoundland Farm Products: I do not believe we have gotten a straight answer from the Minister of Finance yet as to whether or not Newfoundland Farm Products will be subject to that tax. Will Newfoundland Farm Products be subject to the payroll tax? We have asked him on a number of different occasions and we can't get an answer from him, but if Newfoundland Farm Products will be subject to the tax from what we have been hearing, Mr. Speaker, that's going to result in a cost to the consumer, a cost in the price of eggs and poultry and the other meat products upon which people depend.

At a time when you have the highest number of people I suppose in the country, below the poverty line, and the lowest wages in the country and the highest unemployment rate, the Minister should be ashamed that he would hit the people in that way. Taxing hotel buildings, for example, the Holiday Inn and the Holiday Inn properties are going to be taxed by the Minister's payroll tax, and of course that's going to be detrimental, that's going to be detrimental to tourism in the Province, and all other tourist facilities in the Province

are going to be subject to the payroll tax again and I am surprised that we have not heard more from the Minister of Development on that, and how the tourism industry in the Province is going to be negatively affected.

Taxing Marble Mountain development: we see the Government giving with the one hand to the Marble Mountain development in the Corner Brook area, but at the same time they are taking away with the other hand by imposing the payroll tax as well. So all of this, Mr. Speaker, is going to be detrimental to the tourism industry, and it's a good example, as I said, of Government giving with the one hand and taking away with the other hand. We see the Marystown Shipyards and Newfoundland Hardwoods, these crown corporations are going to be subject to this 1.5 per cent payroll tax, and you are going to find that they are going to be at a 1.5 per cent disadvantage as compared to their competitors from the other parts of Canada and around the world, competition that's very, very stiff and who don't have the 1.5 per cent payroll tax with which to contend.

You are going to see that 1.5 per cent payroll tax applied to Marystown Shipyard and Newfoundland Hardwoods will put them at a decided disadvantage when trying to compete with their mainland counterparts who don't have to be subject to that tax. Municipalities: that will mean an increase in municipal taxes for communities affected. You have thirty larger communities around the Province that are going to have to pay that tax and that of course at a time when the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs is trying to offer some

incentive to the various towns and communities around the Province to get involved in the amalgamation process, we see the Minister of Finance throwing the monkey wrench in that whole process.

So, Mr. Speaker, taxing teachers' salaries and school boards and the post-secondary institutions, will either increase the cost of education, or it's going to lower the standard, possibly lower the standard of education in the Province. Memorial University, we are told by the Finance critic, we are told for Memorial University alone, that's going to mean an estimated \$1.6 million in lost educational power, \$1.6 million additional funding that Memorial University will have to pay as a result of that payroll tax. Not only Memorial University, but we have the privately operated educational institutions around the Province who are going to be subject to that 1.5 per cent payroll tax and they, in turn, will have to pass that along to the consumer. And we are told, they are taxing the Workers' Compensation Commission, a direct tax on the working people of the Province, as well. Mr. Speaker, these are very negative things flowing out of the payroll tax, and all, from a Minister who said that this was the people's Budget.

Taxing utilities, such as Newfoundland Light and Power and Newfoundland Telephone, will increase the cost to the consumer as well, because they will be able to go to the Public Utilities Board now and make the case that the Minister's Budget, imposing the 1.5 per cent tax, is going to cause them to look for a rate increase. Mr. Speaker, all these things are having a very negative effect.

Everyone expected big things from this year's Budget. Last year, of course, when the Government brought down its first Budget, nobody could really expect the Government to come in with a document that was distinctively theirs, because they had only been in power a couple of months and you could not expect from a first Budget that they would be able to do the things they had promised. But now the Government is into the second Budget, they are into their second year, they are no longer a new Administration. They are rapidly becoming an old Administration - the honeymoon will soon be over. We see the Government coming in with their second Budget, which really was not a whole lot better than the first Budget they brought in.

I remember, for years, sitting on that side of the House and listening to the now Minister of Social Services every single day making a scathing attack on the Government for its lack of concern about the welfare recipients in the Province. And we saw that Minister, on a number of occasions, laying out his plans as to what he would do if he were ever in a position to do it, that welfare recipients should receive a 15 per cent or 20 per cent increase each year for a number of years, to bring them up to just the poverty line, instead of below the poverty line. And, lo and behold, of course, what did we see in the Budget from the Minister of Social Services? Was it a 15 per cent increase, as he promised, or a 20 per cent increase? No, Mr. Speaker, it was a 4 per cent increase, given to social service recipients here in the Province.

School tax was another area the Government was going to get into.

They were going to cut out the school tax. Now, I remember, when I was Minister of Municipal Affairs, going to a Federation of Municipalities Convention over in Corner Brook, and I remember the Leader of the Opposition, at the time, was invited over to that convention, as well. I remember, Mr. Wells, the now Premier, standing in Corner Brook on the stage and announcing to the Federation of Municipalities that he would be eliminating the school tax. And, I believe, probably, the Member for Placentia was probably there at that convention over in Corner Brook; I believe it was around three or maybe four years ago. I remember the Leader of the Opposition, the Premier of today, standing on the stage over in Corner Brook announcing to the Federation that if he ever formed the Government, he would eliminate the school tax. I remember, at the time, the President of the Federation, I believe, was Jerome Walsh, he questioned the Premier on how he would make up that revenue, and The Premier said education should be financed from general revenues, and that one of the first acts he would become involved in would be to eliminate the school tax.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Doyle: I am not criticizing the Federation for wanting the eliminating of school taxes, but what I am doing is criticizing the Premier for saying that he would do it and now he has not done it. So I am looking forward for the Member for Placentia impressing that once again upon the Premier. The Promise that he made to the Federation.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Doyle: You are against the elimination of school taxes?

An Hon. Member: No, I am for it.

Mr. Doyle: Oh, you are for it.

Well, the Premier was for it. The Premier was for the elimination of school taxes about a year ago or two years ago. But now today, he seems to have a lapse of memory. There were all kinds of promises made by the previous Administration, by the current Administration I should say. We saw a brochure that was put out during the election campaign by the Premier promising legislation on double-breasting, industrial standards, pay equity, minimum wage, all of these things, and we have yet to see any legislation, any meaningful labour legislation come before the House of Assembly.

Of course, when we examined the Estimates of the Department of Employment and Labour Relations, back a few months ago, low and behold the Minister, at that time, made the announcement that insofar as pay equity is concerned it could take approximately five years for pay equity to be implemented. That is probably closer to the truth than the Minister thought.

It was the former Government who began the whole process of pay equity. All you have to do is read the Federation of Labour's Brief. I have a page from it right here, where they said, 'The previous Government has laid the groundwork on the equal pay issue, and in consultation with the workers, a first-rate system has been developed of addressing the concept of pay equity.' That is what the Federation of Labour said in presenting its brief to the

Government just -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Doyle: Pardon me?

The problem is that the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations, in the examination of her Estimates, told us that there could be a five year period before pay equity even gets off the ground.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Doyle: Well, I do not know. That is what the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations told us. If you cannot believe the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations - so it will take five years to -

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

The hon. Member's time has elapsed.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Port au Port.

Mr. Hodder: Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure for me to take part in the Budget Speech.

I am surprised, very surprised, Mr. Speaker. I think this is probably the third session that the Government has not put up a speaker to defend the Budget. Mr. Speaker, it is very unusual, highly unusual. I have been in this House for fifteen years and this is the first time I have ever seen one side of the House refuse to speak on the Budget.

Mr. Speaker, I happen to be on a Committee, known as the Privileges and Elections Committee, in which we are trying to prepare for television in the House. One of the complaints I often get from

Members of that Committee, all of whom are backbenchers on the Government side, is that the ordinary Member does not get much chance for exposure in the House of Assembly. And that is one of the things that has come up, not only from Members of this Legislature but Members of other Legislatures which we have visited.

I find it very strange that there are two important speeches in the year, there is the Throne Speech and the Budget Speech, and any Member, particularly new Members, I would think, would like to take part in those debates. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, in the old days, in the days of Mr. Smallwood, every Member used to take part in those Speeches, every Member was duty bound to take part. And, Mr. Speaker, there are presently: the Member for Burgeo, Bay d'Esoir, Naskaupi, Carbonear, LaPoile, Harbour Grace, Gander, St. Barbe, Mount Scio - Bell Island, Pleasantville, Bellevue, Trinity - Bay de Verde, Buchans, Waterford - Kenmount, Humber West, the Minister of Education, the Minister of Labour Relations, the Minister of Mines and Energy, St. John's South and St. George's, Mr. Speaker, all of these people have not spoken on the Budget.

Supposing Members only had ten minutes to speak on the Budget: I cannot understand, and I do not want to stay here any longer than any other Member, but I just do not understand why it is that the majority of Government Members - you know, Mr. Speaker, for the past five years I sat on that side of the House and I listened to Members on this side of the House shout at us, 'you want to get out of the House, you are afraid to take the heat'. On two occasions now I have spoken to Ministers on

that side who said, 'Hodder, when are we going to get out of the House? Boy, we have to get out of the House.' And I said, 'Go away, you have to be out of your tree. We only came in here on, I think it was the 28 of February. We took two weeks, an unprecedented two weeks, three weekends for our Easter holidays, we have only been back a few weeks since that.' And Members on the other side, every time you get in a little conversation with them, twice today I heard it, 'When is the House going to close?'

An Hon. Member: Name them.

Mr. Hodder: Mr. Speaker, I could very easily name them, but the only thing is private conversations I have with individuals -

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Hodder: I prefer not to, but yes, I could name them. I will certainly name them for the hon. Minister after I finish speaking, and he can go and see his colleagues. I will certainly do that. But it is just that if I have a private conversation I keep it private. But, Mr. Speaker, I sometimes think that perhaps we should have television in this House because - and my colleague to my left here told me that in the newspaper of this weekend there was a ruling of the Supreme Court which said that we could not keep television out. And the reason I say this is, not that I want television, but perhaps that would get Members like the Member for Naskaupi, and the Minister of Mines and Energy, perhaps that would get them to their feet to adequately debate. You know, Mr. Speaker, when we are debating the Budget Speech we make allegations

to Government about what is wrong with it. We would like to see Government come back with their counterarguments - then we have some sort of a debate going. But there is no debate, Mr. Speaker, when one side gets up and there is no answer to their charges. And that is what we have been hearing for three full days, not a soul on the other side are responding. Now, Mr. Speaker, the Premier was always a sort of person who said, your duties in the Legislature are important. And he seemed to be a person over here that advocated that people should discharge their parliamentary responsibilities. Well how can we consider a proper discharge of parliamentary duties when about 60 per cent or 70 per cent of that side of the House has not even responded, and Members on this side get up one after the other.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if Members want to get out of the House after being only here for about a month or a couple of months, if you take out the Easter holidays, if Members want to get out of the House that bad, if this is so irritating to them, perhaps they could spice it up a little bit, back and forth. I mean, Mr. Speaker, I do not think the House closes quicker because Members do not take part in debate, I mean it just makes Members on this side decide to fulfill the time anyhow. But if we had a proper debate here it might be fifteen minutes, ten minutes, I recommend to hon. Members that we would get out of the House just as quick. But that is obviously the feeling over there, Mr. Speaker, is that they want to get out of the House, they want to fly out of the House as fast as they can and I cannot believe it. One thing that I truly believe is that the House

should be open as long as possible, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Hodder: I believed that when I was in my own Government. Many of my own side did not believe it when they were in Government, but I believe it because if Ministers were on their toes, and if Ministers are accountable for everything they do on a day to day basis, moment to moment, I think that makes for good Government. And I think that the stronger the opposition the better the Government. And if Members are going to sit back and ignore the opposition, ignore the points of the opposition, ignore debate of the opposition -

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

Mr. Hodder: Mr. Speaker, I am serious about what I am saying and hon. Members are over there like a bunch of - Mr. Speaker, I am going to ask the Leader of the Opposition to move me up to the other end, because there are three or four Members there who are totally - they do nothing, they never speak, or very rarely. Now I do not mean the Member for Stephenville, I do not mean the Member for Eagle River, and I do not mean the Member for Placentia. But, Mr. Speaker, there are two or three of them over there that never stop. They interrupt you when you try to speak, they are inane comments, and it brings out the worst in me. I just wish I were farther away up the road from them.

Mr. Speaker, having said that, the first topic I wanted to mention today in terms of the Budget

Speech has to do with the disaster which has happened right across the Province concerning the lobster fishery. Sometimes we forget here in this House what is going on around us. But I can tell hon. Members that in large parts of this Province at the present time there are people who are in a very sad state indeed.

Mr. Speaker, last weekend there was a storm which hit a large area of Newfoundland and many fishermen - I can talk from experience about Port au Port - they watched from Thursday to the following Sunday as pieces of their nets and lobster pots drifted ashore. Most of those fishermen have lost everything they own.

Mr. Speaker, sometimes I think that Members, you know - and a Member like the Minister of Finance might not realize what that means - but sometimes a Minister, like the Minister of Finance, should perhaps get out and talk to these people and look at it because, Mr. Speaker, what are they going to do?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Hodder: What was that?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Hodder: Well the Member has been talking to them and the Member, when he was on the Government's side, the same thing happened. And just to tell the Minister that these are not partisan comments that I am making, we had to wrestle with the problem too. And when a lot of the fishermen phoned me over the past couple of weeks I said to them, you know there is nothing very much that is going to be done. There is no gear insurance

in place, emergency measures will only help you if it is a massive disaster, something like an earthquake or something like that, there is nothing in place to help you. However, I will raise the matter in the House of Assembly, and I will do what I can. But that is basically what they were saying. That is what we are asking you. We know the situation.

But, Mr. Speaker, that does not mean - and the Minister sits over there and says what is the Member doing, well the Member is bringing it up in the House of Assembly, and the Member is going to try to make a couple of suggestions.

Mr. Speaker, not only is there a problem with lobster traps and the gear insurance program, I would like to see and we tried it when we were over there. I would like to see a gear insurance program and I would like the Government to pursue and hammer at the Federal Government as much as possible for a gear insurance program of some sort.

As well, Mr. Speaker, there was a study done recently, I would like to tell the Minister of Finance, by Mr. Aidan Maloney who is a former Minister of Fisheries, and it was a lobster study of the Province. Some of the problems that he identified - by the way that study I hope did not fall between the cracks, because it was released just about the time the Government changed. One of Mr. Maloney's recommendations is that we, and do not say that the Provincial Government is not responsible for marketing, that we as a Government, you as a Government, must actively pursue the European market. We cannot remain forever dependent. It has been so easy to be dependent on

the Boston market, to be dependent on the American market. That market is very changeable, and that is the reason that people are getting very low lobster prices. That is one of the problems with the lobster traps now. A person cannot go ahead and buy another two or three hundred lobster traps to replace one's he just had destroyed knowing that the price is so low, and he is aware as well that it's market conditions, but we must somehow forge a link with the European markets and the far east markets. Now, Mr. Speaker, that is something that we can do. As well, one of the other problems we have here in the Province is that Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and PEI have two lobster seasons and very often, when the Newfoundland lobster season opens, the market is already glutted. And that is what happened essentially this time. Last year, when our season closed, the fishermen got a good price for their lobster. The next season in New Brunswick the market became glutted, their second season. That problem still exists, because so much of the lobster goes into the canning industry and so much goes into the frozen industry. So that is what happened.

The only way we are going to be able to market our lobsters, and hon. gentlemen may not feel there is any importance in this, but I can tell you that lobster is a very, very valuable resource in this Province and we are losing money on it year after year after year. But if you are going to maximize your return from your lobsters, we must hold them here in the Province. Now, Mr. Speaker, Clearwater, which is a company that started about fifteen years ago from the back of a truck, in Halifax, and is now one

of the largest companies in Eastern Canada, you would think of Clearwater now as being in the same league, maybe not as big as, say, National Sea, but it is in that league. Just last year I think they bought a marketing company in Breton, one of the largest marketing companies; they are very visible in Europe, they are very visible at the seafood shows at Cologne, and at Nugaro, I think it is, in France. They do big business. They are moving around the world, but they started by holding their lobsters for the right market price. That is where they made their money. They are present, for instance, in my own district and in the Districts of many hon. Members who happen to live in lobster areas.

Mr. Speaker, the Mahoney report suggested that lobsters should be held in Newfoundland until such time as the market became better. Now, it would be a fantastic thing if we could do that at this particular time, because prices are low for various reasons, as hon. Members know. They are low because of the problem with the environmental regulations in the States, that small lobsters can't go into the States, that sort of thing. We do have facilities in this Province where we can hold lobsters. For instance, Mr. Speaker, in my own district, and it was recommended in the study actually, there was a company which was put into being during the time of the former Liberal Government, in Mr. Smallwood's time, and was known as sea mining. It was a very good concept. They used to take magnesium out of the water. For whatever reason, the parent company went bankrupt and then the other company went bankrupt, but it did operate for awhile. But

they left massive tanks, steel tanks six and seven inches thick, probably larger than would be really required, because the water used to be pumped into those and pumped out. Now a lot of the equipment is no longer serviceable, but the tanks are there and they can be sand blasted and they can be used.

Clearwater has done this, and they do it in a lot of cases where they have dry land storage. All that's needed to keep lobster is the fact that you have to have some way of cooling the water. These are not technical things that are hard to overcome. We don't need new technologies for this, the technology is in place. In those two tanks, and I am sure if someone - you know, in the District of my hon. friend for Placentia, I am sure there are facilities which could be redone to hold lobsters. I don't know if his area is a lobster area. I suspect it may be. But the technology is there and once we start being innovative and once the Recovery Commission wants to get their nose into something that might be worthwhile, there is a good one for them to get involved in. But I would suggest the Minister of Development is the best person to do it.

Mr. Speaker, there are facilities already existing in this Province which could almost hold every lobster we catch today. There would be some of expenditures of money, yes. You need massive pumps, you need cooling systems, and you need a way to keep this water cold through pumping the water. But for many times of the year, especially with the climate we have here in Newfoundland, you do not need state of the art type of facilities.

Mr. Speaker, that is the sort of thing I would have liked to see in the Budget. I would have liked to have seen some initiatives which would help the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, instead of things like the health and education tax and all the other things.

Mr. Speaker, speaking of the Economic Recovery Commission, I understand that instead of getting involved, in my District we had a company come knocking on the door of the Department of Fisheries saying we are here and we want to take over a plant in Fox Island River. When they got there they found they did not have a saltwater supply but they had a freshwater supply, and there had to be some work done. They did not want any money from Government, they wanted to rent this facility to harvest clams and mussels, of which there are a lot in the area. They are putting in a depuration system because, as hon. Members know, for some reason or other, most of our mussels and clams, particularly on the west coast, have to be depurified. A depuration system is a system where you pump water through and clean the mussels out with clean water. Because, for some reason or other, wherever you go, even on the south coast, as my friend for St. George's knows, if you go down to Burgeo, in almost pristine waters, under the Shellfish Act the clams have to be decontaminated. Why we don't know. It is not that there are many along the south coast of Newfoundland; there are no massive towns there. But in Burgeo the underlying water has more points of coliform than is required, and DFO Canada will not allow those clams to go to the mainland market, or to anywhere else, so

they have to be depurified.

An Hon. Member: Depurified?

Mr. Hodder: Depuration is the name of the system, and basically that is what they are, depurified. That is a word, yes. It is called a depuration system.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Hodder: Yes.

Mr. Speaker, that operation is not going yet, but that is the sort of thing that people have to become involved in. I understand that the Recovery Commission is going around the Province talking to this group and that group about data systems - data systems in Bay St. George? Any business coming to Bay St. George, without data systems or not, the infrastructure is so small I could give them whatever information they wanted.

Yet, I do notice that there are a number of businesses with which I am familiar, which were started under the former Administration. For instance, and I will name one, the Lower Cove operation, they are very interested in that, and so they should be, and they are also very interested in a sand and gravel operation that is underway in the hon. Member's District. They monitor this all the time and I suspect, Mr. Speaker, that when the thing is announced, they will say we did it, and they will list it as one of theirs. But that is not the kind of an operation we need. We need some people who are going to try and innovate what we have. Even though the Premier says we cannot live on the fishery alone, and all that sort of thing, and I agree with him, there are lots of ways, without making cod au gratin, or whatever, out of

fish, there are lots of ways to innovate, as I suggested, with our clam and shellfish, making sure there are proper depuration systems around the Province for our shellfish, and making sure we can hold our lobsters until the market is right.

Mr. Speaker, I have seen no thrust by this Government to do anything at all except argue about Meech Lake and tax people. Basically, I have not seen any useful legislation or any useful suggestions in the Budget or in the Throne Speech which would help to carry forward the dream of this Government, which was to bring Newfoundlanders back home. Instead of doing that, they are driving Newfoundlanders away by droves.

As far as social legislation is concerned, we heard here in the House today the Minister of Social Services has been asked for an extra \$60,000 in order to - and this Government was supposed to be a Government who cared about individuals, a great Liberal philosophy, caring about individuals, and they are the most right wing Government this Province has ever seen.

Mr. Speaker, here was a chance, here was an opportunity to bring about a reform and the Minister gets up today and he says, 'Oh, the hon. Member was in power for seventeen years.' Well, I was not. I was only over there for five years; the Government was in power for seventeen years. And these people are still in the Waterford.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Hodder: Yes, and there were Governments in power when Mr.

Smallwood was in, there was no Public Tendering Act, and there was no this or that. But it takes time to do things. But it was the former Government in power which decided to close Exon House; it was the Association for Community Living that helped to get the students, or the developmentally delayed children out of Exon House. Now it is time to take the next step, and I am totally surprised that this Government would not go along for \$60,000.

You see, Mr. Speaker, if I could just tell you something about what the Association for Community Living does. Maybe I should order my speech a little better rather than rambling around so much. But, Mr. Speaker, the first time I met them was throughout the period when Exon House was closing. Mr. Speaker, I know of one case of a child who was in Exon House playing with his shoe in a padded room, behind bars for about ten years with no help whatsoever. I think the Premier has seen him, actually. The Premier was out there, and I am sure the Minister of Social Services has seen him. This kid, his name is Ken, he now owns his own business. The Abitibi-Price Mill needs nuts and bolts cleaned every so often, and this boy who, up until the time he came back to Bay St. George could have been considered a vegetable, he actually has his own business now, he has helpers, he has learned to operate the equipment, has a work ethic like you would not believe. If he is sick, he will crawl to work. He runs a successful business.

We have another case of a person who came from Exon House who is now, with help, running a school cafeteria. That is the kind of work they are doing. People were

taken from Exon House, they were put in group homes for a period of time and now they are being integrated back into the community. That is the sort of thing the Association for Community Living is doing.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the goal of the Association for Community Living, what I was trying to get across here today in Question Period, is to take the people, now that Exon House is done - this cannot be done overnight. And the Minister gets up today and says, 'Ah, you were in there for seventeen years.' It cannot be done overnight. You cannot do it. But they now have a five year plan to do the same thing with the people who are at the Waterford. Mr. Speaker, all they have is an office downtown with one person as Executive Director. Because there are funds from Ottawa to help deinstitutionalize students, to help these students get out of the Waterford, his job as Executive Director would be to access funds from Ottawa. It is a totally volunteer organization except for that, very dedicated to helping these people. They will access funds from Ottawa, and over a five year plan start bringing out those 200 people who are in the Waterford who should not be there. The Waterford is for psychiatric people. These are not psychiatric people. The Waterford knows it. Any Member who talks to anybody in the Waterford, who talks to psychologists or psychiatrists in this Province, will tell you there are 200 people there who should not be there. They should be out doing as students I was telling you about. They should be out in the communities, and the communities would be better off for it.

I cannot believe, Mr. Speaker, that this Government had an opportunity to go ahead with that kind of program for \$60,000 and did not do it. I cannot understand it, Mr. Speaker. I appeal to the Premier. We will take no credit for it, or anything like that. I appeal to the Premier that when the Minister sits down with this group - they are thinking now they will have to close it up. As the Member for Stephenville knows, they are such a useful group of people, to turn off these people in any way, shape or form, when you are talking about such a small amount of money, to turn them off and to disappoint them, because they are such committed people, I think is a travesty of justice. I know, as the Minister said today, there are still people from Exon House in certain parts of the Province who are not being looked after properly, but, Mr. Speaker, they are certainly a hundred thousand times better looked after than they were at Exon House.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Hodder: Presumably? The Minister says 'presumably'?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Hodder: Oh, I am sorry, Mr. Speaker. I was going to say, I couldn't believe what I heard.

Mr. Speaker, I can't believe it. I started to speak and here I am, my time is up and I haven't even started to speak on my notes. I just started.

Mr. Speaker, now that the Minister is back, I just want to say to him -- and I don't know if the Minister heard the comments I was making - that this organization we talked

about in Question Period today is one of the finest organizations I have ever, ever come in contact with.

Mr. Efford: Up until today.

Mr. Hodder: Up until today! Today they are not a fine organization, Mr. Speaker, because they issued a press release saying they were disappointed in the Government. And, Mr. Speaker, if I were the Minister of Social Services at this moment, I would accede to their request and I would spend some time saying 'I'm sorry'.

Mr. Efford: (Inaudible).

Mr. Hodder: Well, I hope so. I think the Minister is going to do it. I really do believe, and I really hope he will. Mr. Speaker, he will go up in my estimation if he does. I think if he weren't so saucy, and if he weren't so arrogant, he has the potential of being a good Minister of Social Services. But, Mr. Speaker, he can't be nice. I used to be a nice fellow, but since I became Social Services critic, I find myself getting up now and being nasty when I shouldn't be. But I expect the Minister to be nasty when he comes back, and I find myself being nasty before he does.

Mr. Efford: Being a good Minister of Social Services has nothing to do with being (inaudible) Tories.

Mr. Hodder: There we go, Mr. Speaker! The most partisan man in the House of Assembly. There's his problem, just illustrated. As I said, partisan! Nasty!

Mr. Simms: One of his greatest assets is (inaudible).

Mr. Hodder: Yes. And, Mr. Speaker, he is trying to let Newfoundlanders know - and he did when he was over here - that he really cares.

Well, Mr. Speaker, my final word - and I don't know how much time I have left, I had my five-minute notice some time ago - but my final word, Mr. Speaker, is let the Minister show us how good he really is and give these people their \$60,000; give them that amount, but give them all the support you possibly can. Because without them you are not going to be able to be a good Minister of Social Services, you are not even going to be a good Government. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for LaPoile.

Mr. Ramsay: I think if the hon. Member would look at Hansard he will see that although he chose not to highlight me as being one of the more frequent Members who speak here in this Chamber, a list of the number of times I spoken on a majority and a variety of issues, he would see that such was not the case, as was mentioned in The People's Paper recently.

With regard to the Budget debate, it is interesting to note that Members who, in the past, advocated closing of the House when the per diem allowance was used up, would now want to maintain, of course, that the House stay open forever and a day, really a total change and an about-face in their position as to how the House should be run.

We also must look at their contention that Members over here aren't standing and speaking. Now, in debate, of course, you put

forth both sides; you debate an issue and then you decide, based on the evidence given, or as the amount of evidence has come out, as to who would put forth the winning side in the debate and then a vote is held.

An Hon. Member: Bill, (inaudible).

Mr. Ramsay: Do you want five?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible) to do that.

Mr. Ramsay: I have five.

Mr. Tobin: Is that ferry going to Argentinia?

Mr. Ramsay: The ferry is to Argentinia? I will talk to you later.

Another thing I wanted to mention: They also talk about the Budget as if they are up and speaking about all the issues, but we know they may be contemplating amendments to the Budget, possibly the variety of different things they usually do, and in that we will have plenty of opportunity to speak I think, Mr. Speaker. And to imply that we are not willing participants in the proceedings here today and in the future, does not give credibility where credibility is due.

I also want to note what the Member was mentioning about developmentally delayed individuals. I had the privilege of being involved with a group similar to the Bay St. George Community Employment Corporation. I do support the Member's comments that people do need to be integrated into the working society but, still, to say the way things have been done in the past is the way we should do them in

the future, certainly doesn't allow us the gravity of improving situations, be it an arrangement of the way things were done, to say that the structure that now is with the group homes which are receiving funding for supported work, along with the Association for Mentally and Physically Handicapped, as it was once called, now the Newfoundland Association For Community Living, to say that the way these things were done in the past would continue -

Mr. Hodder: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: A point of order.

The hon. the Member for Port au Port.

Mr. Hodder: The Member just cannot stand up and take words out of my mouth. Now, Mr. Speaker, when I was speaking the Member - for instance, the idea of group homes has gone out. They people are moving the deinstitutionalized back to the community. That is something that is being done all across North America. It is a move of the future. We started doing it, and the Minister is doing it. So the Member should speak to the Minister before he gets up and stating what is totally wrong.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

There is no point of order. When a Member rises on a point of order -

Mr. Ramsay: Mr. Speaker, if the Member -

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!
Order, please!

Mr. Ramsay: Sorry!

Mr. Speaker: When a Member rises on a point of order, he should immediately state what the point of order is. In this particular case, the Member did not rise on a point of order, it is just a matter of clarifying what he said, or trying to put an interpretation on what he had said. There is no point of order.

The hon. the Member for LaPoile.

Mr. Ramsay: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The hon. Member makes a point as to whether or not what he had to say about supported employment was correct. Now the group home situation with developmentally delayed individuals is often used as a delivery vehicle. If the Member was aware of the programs when his Government was in power he would understand that often the Community Employment Corporation would facilitate the provision of funding for the developmentally delayed individuals who were residents in group homes. Now if he would listen to the full story I had to tell, he possibly would not jump on a single part of it.

Now, as for newspapers, it was mentioned to me by that hon. Member some point of note, and with regard to the Budget debate I think it is worthy of note, a letter to the Editor in the Western Star on Saturday, May 26, a good day, it was the day I came to be, and in there is this letter to the Editor from a lady, Patricia Jesso. She noted: 'Incidentally, James Hodder, the electorate of Port au Port have not forgotten your many election promises regarding jobs. During the last Provincial election you

were able to convince a slim majority of voters that they had to vote Tory in order get jobs because there was a Tory Government in Ottawa.' Now that is the kind of attitude that is typical of the previous administration, that everything would be honky-dory if we had likened parties in power, here as well as in Ottawa.

Well, as we well know, that is possibly not the case.

Mr. Tobin: Tell us about the ferry for Argentia. Do you support it, or don't you?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: Tell us about it. Have courage!

Mr. Ramsay: It does not take courage. What have you said about it?

Mr. Tobin: I support Argentia.

Mr. Ramsay: Oh! Good for you.

I also note that the Senate, which the opposite side speaks of as being a non-entity, they also utilize the services of Tory Senators many times, including the election campaigns.

I also, Mr. Speaker, want to look at the situation he spoke of with the Waterford, where possibly an institution will soon need to be deinstitutionalized, where some people who can be reintegrated into the work force can be taken out of that institution through a supported work type program, through the assistance of co-workers, through the supported Employment Program the Minister was very much legitimatizing by increasing the funding in light of

last year's Budget; they increased it up to \$900,000. This is the kind of thing, Mr. Speaker, this Government is doing. It is looking at programs, assessing them on their merits and seeing if the structure and the current delivery system being used for supported work programs is the kind of thing we can support.

Now, the way we go about it it is obvious the former Administration was more intent on administration than actually providing the necessary improvements to our economy. So if we concentrate on institutions and the method of delivery as opposed to the problem at hand, which is the quality of delivery of services to the people of the Province - that is what we are all here for, to improve the quality of service to the people of the Province, to make sure that every dollar is spent wisely and is spent in such a way that we will give people the best bang for the buck. As the hon. the Minister of Education often says, the best scholar for the dollar in education, the best service for Social Services for the dollar, and also the best health care for the dollar in the department of health.

So, Mr. Speaker, based on that I have a few other comments I would like to make some other time, as I well realize the Opposition has problems with our Budget. They are in the minority, not only in the House but possibly within the Province, in their assumption that the Budget needs some changes. So I will, no doubt, have an opportunity in the future to speak again during amended portions, and I will, at that time, have further to say. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member

for Humber Valley.

Mr. Woodford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

First, Mr. Speaker, when the Budget came down this year, when the Minister read his Budget, when I got up that evening and left for home I said, My God, how am I going to get up and have anything to say about this when the time comes?

Then, the first weekend I was home trying to peruse different sections of the Budget, over the next hours and days and weeks, as time went by, different things started to surface. And the report card, if I had to bring in one even since that time, would have been all Fs, meaning failure. If you spoke on it three or four days after the Budget was delivered, or even a week after the Budget was delivered, I would say that Members on both sides of the House would have to say it is probably a hypothetical thing; he is probably playing partisan politics. But having looked at it, what we thought might have been hypothetical at that time all of a sudden, over time, becomes factual, very factual.

Now, I am not going to be able to get in in a half hour all the concerns I have pertaining to different Government Departments, and some of the particular Budget Highlights, as highlighted in the Budget itself by the Minister.

Now, I know doing a Budget is something like playing a game of pool: you are always behind the eight ball, and every time you look up, all you have in front of you is a bunch of open pockets. So, it is not an easy job. I agree it is not an easy job. But,

in any case, if you are going to do up a Budget, if you are going to put on taxes, add taxes to this, add taxes here, there or wherever, you should be man enough, I suppose, and up front enough, to say just what it means and where it is going to be applicable.

Now, to say we are going to put on a payroll tax in order aid education and health is one thing, having that tax - the amount of the tax supposed to be in the Budget is \$15 million for this year and, I think, \$25 million for next year - actually collected is another thing. Mr. Speaker, 1.5 per cent on all employers in the Province - all employers in the Province - to me is sinful. We have a Government which has an Economic Recovery Commission in place, which states unequivocally an categorically that they are out to help all business in the Province, more specifically small business.

I will give you one example of what a 1.5 per cent payroll tax will do for a small business. In my area a small business, mainly seasonal but doing a very good business during the tourism season, has a payroll of anywhere from \$700,000 to \$900,000 a year.

Now \$7,000 to \$9,000 out of their pockets is a lot in the run of a season, especially when it is seasonal. That is where it is going to hurt. It is not going to be much, I suppose, to the likes of Newfoundland Light, Newfoundland Hydro, Newfoundland Tel., Newfoundland Capital Corporation, any of those companies, it certainly is not going to hurt them. All they have to do is walk into the PUB in a month or six weeks time or two

months time and say boys, I am sorry, we need an increase.

They can pass their increase along to the consumer as simple as that. That is also factual because history has shown that pretty well every time, with the exception of once in the last years, ever since the PUB was dealing with the controls on hydro rates, they had passed without exception. Then again, on the other hand, when you are talking about hurting small businesses in this Province, I know full well, because I talk to business people in our area, and as I said are going to be hit with anywhere from \$7,000 to \$10,000 to \$15,000 just placed on seasonal things. When we talk about Newfoundland Tel and Newfoundland Light and a few of the others, Newfoundland Light and Power, they paid out approximately, I think it is between \$150 and \$168 million last year in salaries. Now you don't have to be a mathematician to get the total of 1.5 on that amount of money, and you don't have to be a politician to know from where that money is going to come. Besides the increases already established to Newfoundland Light and Newfoundland Hydro, those increases will be passed along and then, sooner rather than later, they will be collecting it off the consumers in this Province who have already been hit with many other taxes which are buried in the very Budget itself. For instance, inspections on new homes is not mentioned in the Budget. If you are going to build a new home today or make any renovations and changes in the electrical system, you have to go for an inspection. That's not mentioned at all, but that went up 100 per cent. 100 per cent, Mr. Speaker, and that is not mentioned at all.

Here again the consumer and the person out there who is trying to scrape and scratch and scrounge for a living today, has got to take another thirty or forty dollars out of his pockets just for that. It all adds up.

One of the points I am trying to make is, that it has a snowball effect and over a period of twelve months it certainly hurts. Now I looked at the Budget, I looked at some stats and I suppose any Government, this one being no different, when we look at some of the problems which we have as regards unemployment in this Province, we look at the Budget itself and the total figures that are allocated for each Government Department, we have a total, a total of 6.7 per cent of the Budget that is going through the real resource sectors in this Province. The sectors that are supposed to be the catalyst and the resource generators in order to provide employment in the Province - 6.7 per cent. 27 per cent of the Budget goes for general Government services, 65.7 per cent of the Budget goes for the Social Sector.

Now, Mr. Speaker, you don't have to look at it for long to know where our problems are, and as I said before, this problem is not only new to this Government, it was evident and also there for previous Governments. When we have such a small percentage, we know deep down where our problems are, 6.7 per cent of our total Provincial Budget goes for resources and that includes Forestry, Agriculture, Tourism and anything to do with Mining, anything to do with what I call the employment generators in the Province.

But, Mr. Speaker, one of the things I want to mention, and I don't want to go too far without mentioning it, because it is very important, especially to my District and more specifically I suppose all over the Province today, and that is the fishery. We have a fishery in the White Bay south part of my District, very important really to the communities of Jackson's Arm, Sop's Arm, Pollard's Point and Hampden, further up towards the Trans-Canada. Owned by P. Janes and Sons, the plant in Jackson's Arm has been operated by them for years, always depended on the shellfish industry, mainly the crab and the pelagics, caplin, mackerel and herring.

But now the shellfish industry in that area, like I said before, crab is gone, it is non-existent, the only thing they can depend on now is a few supplementary licences in the fall of the year. Now, Mr. Speaker, they have tried over the past year to have some allocations made for that plant out there. They talked to the Minister of Fisheries, they have even talked to the Premier, in trying to have something done with regards to a baiter machine for out there, for instance, or some help in obtaining one, some help with regards to the seal fishery, to try to save that community.

We hear every day about other communities around the Province, about whole communities being wiped out, dying or dead. This community is no exception, but we never hear of it, of this type of thing. We, as individual Members do because we are in the Districts pretty well every week for two and three days in some cases, and so we get it firsthand. But until there is a crisis, and the crisis

I suppose is not until the actual closure of the plant itself, does something like that be highlighted.

To help the fishermen in that area two years ago - the Minister of Fisheries is in his seat and he knows full well what I am talking about - we started a marina down there to help out the fishermen in that part of the bay, further down the Northern Peninsula and even some fishermen in the hon. Minister's District, his own District. I think it is in the Comfort Cove area.

So we started that. We spent around \$150,000 or \$175,000 and we were suppose to go in different phases, the fishermen were patient and said we will wait and will do it in phases each year. But all of a sudden, after the last election, in the institution of this real change in the fairness and balance part of their policy, all of a sudden the construction on the marina was stopped. That was not instituted because they were in a P.C. District. That was instituted and conceived and started based on need, not only by the fishermen down there - granted it was in my area and granted it was in the Jackson's Arm area of the Province - but it was going to help other fishermen around the Province, and would have helped them - rather than carry their boats for long, long distances to try to get something done and repairs made - to get ready for the fishing season. I appealed to the Minister last year and again this year to try to see if it is possible for anything to be done, and I am sure that if the Minister said to them, we can only spend \$50,000 or \$100,000 or whatever, I am sure the people would probably accept it, and over a period of two or three or four years try to

get the project completed. And I say here again today to the Minister, seeing he is in his seat, to try to look at it seriously in next year's Budget, and see if anything can be done for the community because of some of the other problems in the area, which would be a generator in itself, because of what is happening in some other parts of the fishery there.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in other sectors, I suppose namely forestry and agriculture, tourism and what have you: We have a thriving tourism business in this Province as mentioned by some - when I look at the Budget I do not see a hell of a lot there for tourism. I would hope that the Minister, in his wisdom, I know he has tourism on the brain, he has always been an advocate of tourism, and I am sure he will make sure that some of those programs are instituted. And in conjunction with that I would also like to stress to him today the importance of trying to get that new sign policy in place before the tourist season really takes off, because it is very important.

Last year we had cases, and the Minister knows exactly what I am talking about on that, and he does not agree with it, I know he does not agree with what was done, he is a human being. Because I am sure some of the people that did it could not have been human to do what they did, and that is to take a chain saw and cut the signs down - the signs those people had put up to try to advertise their business for such a short period of time. We cannot afford the luxury in this Province to go around taking down anybody's signs. I do not care what District they are in or where they

live or what it pertains to, we cannot afford it. We have people out there, small businesses in this Province trying to scrape and scratch and scrounge to make a living while the dollar is there. It is bad enough when the tourists are not coming. But when we do have them coming, and they manage to put up a sign saying: we have a water slide in here, I have a little restaurant there or a little home there or whatever, cabins, and all of a sudden they come out some day and everything is wiped out, taken down and thrown into the back of a pickup. That to me, Mr. Speaker, is unconscionable. We had it done to a couple of small signs a few short years ago and I went after our Administration at that time and they were put back up. I notice a new policy about to be announced and I stress the importance of that as well to the Minister, so that the people will go and get their proper signage done up, instead of going and getting small signs and spending money where it is only going to be wasted in two or three months time, or five or six weeks time, especially now that the tourism season is on. I know when you look at the weather it would not seem that way, but as of today I would say it is probably the kick-off for the new tourism season in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Also we have to tie in tourism, as I mentioned earlier, about the small business part of it, with regards to the payroll tax and some of the other things. But tourism in the area always depended upon this, for the past couple of years, private employment program. I just forget the exact name, but I think that was what it was. Now the new

employment program instituted this year was the Employment Generator Program of which I think \$2.9 million was put into the program.

Now, Mr. Speaker, despite what some hon. Members said on the other side, and more specifically the Minister responsible for employment, that program was a failure and it was no good, anybody employed on that program - it was not a meaningful thing.- it was a degrading thing. I challenge anybody to go talk to anybody in my District and if they are going to be offered fifty or sixty weeks work for the year or at a time, I think, sixty in the program on twenty, twenty and twenty, and tell them because they are employed on that project that it would be demeaning or degrading, I can assure you you had better step back a little ways before you say it.

The Minister stated in the House, only a couple of weeks ago, and I have it here in Hansard, I will not quote it, anybody employed on that program - that we did not want to put people in that kind of a program because it would be degrading and demeaning. That to me, as far as I am concerned, Mr. Speaker, is wrong. To have something like 1300 or 1400 applications come in for the program and to give out \$2.9 million is also wrong. There are business people there waiting to hire people and to try to help out, because of the downturn in the economy, and to try to help out with their business depending upon that program, sent it in, well intentioned, then all of a sudden, were told just a few short weeks after the Budget came down there was no money there.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the unemployment

rate in this Province, nobody has to tell anybody what it is, is serious. In order for us to address it, I do not think there is anybody here naive enough to say that all of a sudden, within a year or two or three, we are going to have all full-time jobs. We are not. We are living, like I said, on an Island in which not only tourism but even the fishery is seasonal. Even the woods operations now in Forestry are becoming seasonal, because of the deep snow and other things, in a lot of the areas of the Province a lot of the companies are cutting down on their winter cut. So, all those small businesses and companies used that program over the years to try and help their businesses and let them survive.

So, I would ask - the Minister is not here, but there are other Cabinet officials here - I would say some of the best dollars they will ever spend would be in a private sector program or an employment generator program. And it is like everything else, Mr. Speaker, it is not going to work unless it is policed. A program can only be as good as the people running it. I go back and I use a prime example, agricultural land over the years and crown land, the only problem with some of the policies that were changed, their problem was no policing.

Now, to have anybody say or any Government Member to say, or Cabinet Minister especially, to stand and say that this was one of the best Budgets that was every presented, and some of the reasons for not having monies in it in other Departments, and some of the cuts was because of the Feds.

All I hear is the Federal Government this, and the Federal

Government that. How can you, on one hand, Mr. Speaker, say that we do not have to have jurisdiction, and we cannot have jurisdiction over our resources because we cannot afford to manage them, and then on the other hand blame the Federal Government for not doing this or not doing that. You cannot have it both ways, and you cannot speak through both sides of your mouth - one or the other. If we had such jurisdiction over it, such a small province, we as a people could dictate to the rest of Canada and the rest of the world that, look, we have this resource or that resource, we are going to police it. You do this, you do that. We will set our quotas.

I often referred to the country of Iceland. Anybody who has ever looked at the historical part of their economy in Iceland - they were told they could not do it - look at what they did. They drove away the big country of Britain that was over pillaging off their shores and raping their resources. Look at what they did in a very short time. Look at their economy today.

Another example is in agriculture in Iceland. Per capita consumption of milk 32 to 42 liters per year. Today Iceland has the biggest per capita consumption of any country in the world of 267 liters per person. All self sufficient, all done within the boundaries of that little country, and now today they are pretty well self sufficient in everything. They dictate who comes in and does what. They dictate what goes out and for how much, because they have control of their resources.

And I am a firm believer - the day

will probably never come in our lifetime - but I am sure you will see that if this Province does not have control over all of its resources, we are going to be here struggling to do a Budget forever and a day. We have to have control, I do not care in what sector, and I mean in every sector, all of it, before we are ever going to be a 'have' province.

Business is business, and when you have someone in Ottawa, and I do not care what they are, PC, Liberal, NDP or anything else, telling us down here, or sitting behind a desk telling us what and what not we are going to do or meeting with a Minister saying no you cannot do this and you cannot do that. The Minister knows or the Member knows because he is living here. The fellow up sitting behind the desk does not, and he does not care. He is getting his paycheck every Friday evening and that is it. And let's face it, the bureaucrats mostly in that particular form of Government, and part of Government, dictate, and I use the word dictate, because most of the time when you send up a proposal they base their decision on that.

Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to touch on the resource part of it because, like I said, you cannot cover everything in half an hour. The hon. Member for Port aux Basques was just up talking about an editorial in the paper, I do not know what paper it was, something about the promises made, and again the feds, and the Tories for seventeen years - well I would just like to remind the hon. Member that you only have another fifteen years and eleven months left, and if the record is the same for the next fifteen years or so, as it was for the last

thirteen months, you are in deep, deep trouble.

I would like to caution the Member, as it progresses towards the next election, to take it easy, because I would not want, as a person or as someone campaigning, to have to go back and eat my words. You usually roll them around in your mouth before you spit them out. The other thing I would like to caution the Member on, especially, is the situation with regards to the Joseph and Clara Smallwood which is coming into Argentina. I know his hon. colleague on his right has already taken a stand, and I have already taken a stand, so I would like for the hon. Member to publicly come out strong, even in the House of Assembly, and on behalf of his District say, this is it, this is where I stand, because I have not heard him say it. It is a very serious problem, and you just do not realize it.

I am also interested in the position Government is going to take. I understand it is an awkward one, but we have been promised by the Minister that we will have Government's decision on or before the end of May, so there are only another couple of days left, then, I am sure, we will have the position taken by the Province.

In the Budget there is not too much difference, if anything, on the Agricultural part of it. I asked the Minister a lot of questions during the Estimates and he answered them forthrightly, I must say. There are no big changes there, but I am looking forward to some real changes when the Task Force brings down its report. I can understand where he

is coming from with regards to not too many changes now because I believe, as he did, that there should have been some kind of study done to see exactly what should, or should not be done, with regards to the long-term planning on agriculture in the Province. I understand that report should be in by December.

An Hon. Member: It will be in by September or October.

Mr. Woodford: Well, that is better still, because that was my concern, that the thing would come in, probably at the end of December or January, and then it is too late to institute anything for the next year. If the report is going to come in in September or October, or sometime early fall, that will be a plus, because then you will be able to plan for the actual season, because the Agrifoods Agreement and the ALFI Agreement, now, for this year, would pretty well, I suppose, look after anything with regards to an established operation, but new farmers are my concern right now and I am sure the Minister has been approached about that.

Anybody who wants to get into any part of the agricultural sector in the Province today will not only have problems before he ever gets to the Minister's desk, or anybody else involved in agriculture, I would say he would have to go through a real, I do not know what, through Crown lands to probably obtain some land, whether it is Crown land or privately owned land, before he ever gets to the point of looking for funding.

That is the problem we still have there. We have had it for some time and we still have it. When you go back to the Commission on

Employment and Unemployment, one of the things mentioned in pretty well every sector there by Dr. House at that time, and now, I suppose, he has the opportunity to try and institute them under the Economic Recovery Commission, agriculture was one of the strongest and one of the most mentioned areas, especially in the resource sector, that could be improved upon.

We have a small percentage of the land in the Province, namely 1 per cent of the total land base in the Province, that is suitable for agriculture, but there is a lot more that could be made suitable at some expense. Then again, even if we could get that 1 per cent in production it would be a real economic boost for the Province. It is one of the areas we can expand upon and it is one of the areas, I am sure, that when the Task Force brings in its report, will be a positive one. The only thing about it, as the Minister mentioned earlier this year in his speech to the Humber Valley Agricultural Association, no matter what recommendations the Task Force bring in, it is all going to cost money.

An Hon. Member: Everybody's problem.

Mr. Woodford: Well, therein lies, I suppose, the problem with pretty well everything, but when you have a renewable resource such as agriculture, I am sure the Minister will get all kinds of support from the other Members in his Cabinet, I am sure he will, for putting money into that particular program to try to let him implement some of the policies that would be beneficial to the Province, as a whole. As I said, it is renewable, and the sad thing

about it is the people in Ottawa and a lot of the people, I suppose, in our Government Departments here, think they are giving someone a block of land, or a so-called farm in this Province, when they are really giving them a piece of wilderness; that is what they are giving them. I have said it here before and I say it again. And it is sad to say, but they still think it. And the point has to be made to the people in Ottawa, as well. The Minister is going to have to be very vocal, very strong, and he is going to have to have a lot of support in order to go through to pick up funding for a new program for agriculture in this Province. They all think we have been farming down here for years and we are all second, third and fourth generation farmers; we are not. They are looking at the rest of Canada that is already cleared, cultivated and passed along from generation to generation, and we don't have that luxury here.

Mr. Speaker, just to wind up on the Budget. I am sure we will have lots to say on another opportunity at a later date. We have to be vigilant, as Members, and I, as I said, in getting around the District, have been talking to different people over the last number of months since the Budget came down. And it is only now it is coming to light - I mentioned before some of the other sectors, the fishery - I didn't mention education, but education is another concern, not only with regard to the school boards in the area, but also in regard to Fisher Tech in Corner Brook.

On Saturday, I attended a Humber joint council meeting in Coxes Cove, and it was brought up again that the Minister was requested to

meet with the Humber joint council, and I hope that in the next little while, he get a chance to meet with those people. Because, before I finish, Mr. Speaker, I was saying - and I think I already said it in a letter to the Minister - that I don't think autonomy should be taken out of Fisher Tech in Corner Brook, I really don't. They have a five-year-plan, they have some of the courses put in place, and I don't think for one minute that it should be taken out. If there are some other reasons that I am not seeing in that paper, then I might be able to go along with it, but right now, I don't see anything in the White Paper.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

The hon. Member's time is up.

Mr. Woodford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West.

Mr. Tobin: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I certainly want to have my say on this Budget, as well, this document that was presented before the House.

Mr. Baker: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the President of Treasury Board, on a point of order.

Mr. Baker: The Member has spoken before in this particular debate and I think he is trying to speak again.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please! Order, please!

The Chair will check with the Table Officers to see if the hon. Member has already spoken in the Budget debate.

The Table Officers indicate that the hon. Member has already spoken on the Budget debate.

Mr. Tobin: May I have leave to speak again, Mr. Speaker?

Some Hon. Members: No!

Mr. Simms: Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Simms: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West was our lead-off speaker after our critic responded. It seems so long ago. I just checked my notes. I guess it was so long ago, he forgot, or it slipped his mind.

I am sorry, the President of the Council, Sir? The President of the Council is going to take notes. Good. Finally. It is about time!

Mr. Speaker, I want to rise in this debate to address a number of issues of concern that have been articulated to me by not only my constituents out in Grand Falls District, but people all over the Province. Particularly, it applies to the responses to decisions of this Government of a budgetary nature, in particular, for the past year or so since this Government has been in power.

We have for the last year or so in this Legislature, attempted to concentrate on economic issues and trying to recognize the failure of the Government to respond to the

devastation in our economy, the negativity in our economy, particularly, in a number of areas such as the fishery sector.

We also have seen over the past year or so, Mr. Speaker, the state of labour relations in this Province deteriorate to the extent that, at the present time, we are on the verge of some very serious labour problems in the Province. The President of Treasury Board would be well aware of that. All you have to do is listen to any news media, listen to reports and comments by the Newfoundland Teachers Association recently, listen to news reports and comments from the Newfoundland Association of Public Employees - the largest public employees union in the Province - listen to the response of the same union representing its lab and x-ray workers, who are now threatening to pull their workers out on an illegal strike, I guess, as the President of Treasury Board described it, on June 4. So we are facing some difficult labour problems, and I think the Government would only be burying it's head in the sand if it were to try to get up and say that is not the case, or do not acknowledge that in fact there are serious problems, so over the last number of months, of course, the debate has centered on the Budget.

The Budget introduced by this Minister of Finance sometime ago now, back in March or whenever it was, a couple of months ago I guess, or it seems like it was a couple of months for sure: in that Budget document Members will recall the approach taken by the Minister of Finance and the way he delivered his Budget. You would swear, Mr. Speaker, if you did not know better, that was the best

thing since sliced bread. Take your minds back to the day the Budget was presented. Members opposite in particular were pounding on their desks furiously, and frequently, Mr. Speaker, and they gave everybody in the Province the impression that this was the best thing since sliced bread, this Provincial Budget. Well, Mr. Speaker, I think the people have seen over the last couple of months, because of a concerted effort on behalf of the Opposition, and interest groups out in the Province who have considerable concerns about a lot of the things that were in that Budget, that finally the Budget has been exposed. The Budget has been exposed for the document that it is, that it was.

Mr. Baker: Marvelous.

Mr. Simms: Well we will see how marvelous. We will have a chance to go through some of the items. I intend to highlight some of the items, and we will see if the President of Treasury Board considers those decisions I will highlight to be marvelous decisions. I have a funny feeling that he will back down somewhat from that general kind of statement, throughout the course of this debate, I say to the Minister of Social Services.

Mr. Speaker, as I said the Liberals were elected to power a little over a year ago. They are into their second year now. I believe in just that one thirteen month period I think this Government has a lot to answer for. I say that the Government will eventually end up answering a lot of questions, Mr. Speaker, that people have, a lot of questions.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is fair to say that quite frankly the people of this Province have never been kept in the dark more by any Government than they have by this Government in only a one year period, thirteen months in power. Now, Mr. Speaker, that kind of a statement may sound strange to those of you who are used to seeing the Premier on television day and night - to say that we have been kept in the dark, the people of the Province have been kept in the dark. But I believe the presence you see on television day and night is really only an apparent presence, because what is missing in all of these press statements, all of these press conferences, what is missing is the real truth about what is happening in our Province today. In reality, Mr. Speaker, the truth of the future of the Province is really being carefully hidden, carefully masqueraded by a team of carefully selected public relations officials, beneath a barrage of alibis that we have heard from time to time, half truths, and an abundance of legal mumbo jumbo.

That's what we've been seeing, Mr. Speaker, for the past thirteen months in reality, that's the truth of the matter. Mr. Speaker, I believe that Members Opposite will acknowledge one of these day - they may not do it now, they are pretty cocky these days - but they will find a time will come, I can tell them from experience, the time will come when they will have to acknowledge that indeed there are serious problems in this Province.

Mr. Efford: You won't be around.

Mr. Simms: I may very well be around a lot longer than the hon.

Member for Port de Grave. I may very well be, you never know. He would never know it. I have already been here a lot longer than he, twice as long. So what I am saying, Mr. Speaker, is that, there are serious problems in the Province and the sooner this Government acknowledges this serious situation the Province faces, particularly with respect to the economy, the better off we will all be, instead of nonchalantly, and in a humourous way, instead of a nonchalant and humourous way constantly laughing everything off, every issue that is raised by Members on this side of the House.

Every time an issue is raised, Members opposite, nonchalantly cast off the Opposition, cast off the interjections or the questions and say don't worry about it. Now one thing they have been famous for, yes, they have blamed it on the opposition, seventeen years of Tory rule, we hear that time in time out. When they don't blame it on that, they blame it on the Federal Government, when they don't blame it on the Federal Government, they even blame it on Kentucky Fried Chicken, or the Member for La Poile blames it on the Banks, so they are great, Mr. Speaker, they are great, they are great at blaming all of the problems of the Province on everybody else without taking responsibility themselves for any of the problems.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Members opposite, who don't believe it, I can tell them that there is in this Province today, a fundamental crises, a fundamental crises, and I am not talking about only the crisis in which we find ourselves with respect to the fishing industry, where, by the way, it's

my belief that in many parts of rural Newfoundland and in particular, a real true way of life for many people in the rural areas is disappearing, where our own very heritage in many cases is disappearing and crumbling as a result of the devastation and downturn in the fishing industry. We have a fundamental crisis with respect to our unemployment situation, we have a fundamental crisis, and the response you get is the kind of response that you get from Members opposite, from Ministers opposite.

We have a crisis, to a certain extend, in the forest industry. There is a downturn in the forest industry, as the Minister of Forestry will recognize I am sure, and will accept his responsibilities, he knows there are serious problems in the forest industry. But, Mr. Speaker, all of those types of crises that I am talking about, I think really underlines the fundamental crises in the Province today and the fundamental crises, Mr. Speaker, I submit is with respect to the Government's lack of leadership, the Government's lack of leadership in the Province today in responding to these serious issues and serious problems that we face. Somehow, they don't wish to acknowledge these serious concerns that we have. They want to slough them off. They want to pass them off with a humourous comment from the Minister of Finance, or pass them off with a humourous interjection from the Minister of Social Services. They treat it all as a big joke. They treat it all as a big joke, Mr. Speaker. They can't seem to come to terms with the fact that there are serious problems in our Province today, many serious problems, and a lot of them have

been initiated as a result of decisions by the Government, by the Provincial Government, who seem to have sloughed off all their responsibilities and try to pass them on to somebody else, the Federal Government as I said, or the Banks, or blaming it on the previous Administration. That seems to be their standard patent response.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I believe that eventually the people of the Province will see through this camouflage. Now for a good period of time there the Liberals, as they went around the Province, used to frequently say, oh well, we have only been in power now for a little while, we have only been in power for a few months and so on, but now eventually they are into their second year, of course; I guess they recognize and realize they cannot carry that excuse much further, because, Mr. Speaker, the people have seen through that excuse and they are getting a little tired of that excuse.

Mr. Speaker, to substantiate some of these comments that I am making it is important that we understand what the people of the Province expected from this Government when it was elected on April 20, 1989. You have to understand what the expectations of the people were. You have to understand their feelings; their expectations; their wishes; their desires; and that is important, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Simms: But anyway, Mr. Speaker, as I said this is a perfect example of what I have been saying for the last ten minutes, they treat everything as a joke. They are not prepared to accept their responsibilities.

They are prepared to blame everything on everybody else except themselves, they are not prepared to accept any of their own responsibilities and all you get, Mr. Speaker, when you raise serious issues, is interjections of a humorous nature from people like the Minister of Social Services and the Minister of Finance -

An Hon. Member: That is a fact.

Mr. Simms: Interjections, that is all they can do, Mr. Speaker. And the people of the Province will see it. They will see through it, I tell the Minister of Social Services.

Now what did the people of the Province expect on April 20? What did they expect? Well they expected a water and sewer corporation for the Province. That was one of the big promises that I recollect and remember. They expected university campuses around the Province. They expected that hospital beds would not close.

An Hon. Member: What?

Mr. Simms: They expected that hospital beds would not close. They expected that even the potential for conflict of interest would not be tolerated; and there are a few over there I guess that he forgot to tell that too. They expected that the Hydro Centre would stay in Bay d'Espoir, Mr. Speaker. They expected that political patronage would never play a part in a Liberal Government. They expected, Mr. Speaker, because Members opposite argue that, they expected that the School Tax Authority would be abolished. That is what they expected, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Simms: Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Government promised all of those things -

Mr. Doyle: And more.

Mr. Simms: And they promised much, much more.

Mr. Doyle: I can show you what they promised.

Mr. Simms: Mr. Speaker, what has happened is that this Government or this party now as a Government, have set standards I think which they now realize they do not have the ability to reach. It is not possible for them to meet the expectations of the people which they gave them over a year ago.

Now, Mr. Speaker, remember -

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Simms: If it was quiet enough, I do not like to shout.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please! Order, please!

Mr. Simms: Mr. Speaker, remember their infamous promise to bring home every mother's son.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Simms: Now who can forget that promise, Mr. Speaker?

An Hon. Member: My mother had two sons and four of them are gone.

Mr. Simms: That, Mr. Speaker, is a promise that no Liberal can or will ever be able to deliver. The promise to bring home every mother's son, it cannot possibly be delivered. It is a promise that no Liberal or anybody else

can deliver upon. Not only that, Mr. Speaker, it is pretty clear from the results of the Statistics Canada information we had here a few days ago that things are going exactly the other way. We had a report from Stats Canada six months after this party came into power as a Government, six months from July to December, the net out migration was 770 odd people, I think. 770 odd Newfoundlanders in the six months just following the Government's election have left Newfoundland more than have come home. Now that is the reality.

Yet, a year ago they promised to every Newfoundlander - we will bring home every mother's son. That is the expectation that the people had. That is the expectation that the people had. That is what the people expected, Mr. Speaker, and unfortunately what we are going to see, and I say this regrettably, unfortunately what we are going to see is that all those mother's sons who are gone away and still away are unfortunately going to be -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: You see, the Minister of Social Services, he is continuously interrupting, and he responds to serious problems and serious issues by making jokes. The people who have left Newfoundland to go away are on vacation he says, Mr. Speaker. Now what a joke. If there is a joke in this House, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Social Services knows where it is sitting. I am not being nasty, but the hon. Minister of Social Services will irk anybody with a comment like that concerning a serious issue in a serious situation. We have people leaving this Province,

leaving their homes!

An Hon. Member: In droves.

Mr. Simms: Rural Newfoundland is devastated. It is crumbling. A way of life for Newfoundlanders out in rural Newfoundland is starting to fall apart. Just starting.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what you have to understand is what the expectations of the people were, and the expectations from this party in the last election campaign were - bring home every mother's son. That was what they lead the people to expect, and that is a folly, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the other thing. What do we have then in response to all of these negative situations?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: You see, there he goes, Mr. Speaker, he is at it again. I do not know why the Minister of Social Services does not go out in the common room if he cannot take it, if he cannot listen to what I am saying, cannot take it, why doesn't he go out and have a cup of coffee? If he cannot listen to what I am saying, cannot take it, why doesn't he go out and have a cup of coffee? As the Member for Ferryland said here one night in the House, you have the spectacle of that Minister of Social Services making ninety-odd thousand dollars a year, and every time he got up and spoke in debate all he talked about was a pickle factory. That is his contribution as a \$100,000 Cabinet Minister in the Province. That was his contribution, according to the Member for Ferryland, and I thought he made a pretty good

point. And here he is today, Mr. Speaker, and if he is not doing that, he sits in the House and interjects, and throws across foolish little comments. That is his contribution as a Minister of the Crown, Mr. Speaker.

I have talked about some of the difficult situations Newfoundland faces today, and Newfoundlanders face. I have talked about some of the expectations the people of the Province had as a result of the platform of the Liberal Party in the last election campaign. Do we see evidence of this Government trying to resolve those problems, trying to address those problems in a serious manner? Do we see any evidence of it? I do not know. But I see lots of evidence of the Premier travelling all across the country talking about Meech Lake. There is lots of evidence of that. What is happening is the people of the Province are being Meeched to death. That is what is happening, Mr. Speaker. That is the bottom line, they are being Meeched to death.

That is one thing they have been successful in doing, this Government, they have been successful, as I said, in camouflaging the real issues and problems facing the people of Newfoundland and Labrador today, very successful! They have camouflaged it with all the debate, and all of the limelight going to the Premier on the Meech Lake issue. Has he been going across Canada telling the people of Canada how serious our problems are in Newfoundland with respect to the fishery? No. He has not been going around telling people that.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Simms: Mr. Speaker, it is very difficult to yell over their interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Mr. Simms: They seem to have decided to make a concerted effort, I guess, to try to shout me down. But I say to them that is not going to work, Mr. Speaker. I intend to say what I have to say whether they like it or not. They can interject and joke all they wish, but it does get difficult from time to time, shouting over all their interjections, Mr. Speaker. It really makes you surprised and a bit taken aback, because when the Premier is here in the House, those Members, particularly the Minister for Social Services, does not open his yap. He will not open his mouth, will not open his gob.

An Hon. Member: What?

Mr. Simms: It is a Newfoundland word, boy. When the Premier is here, they do not open their mouths. When the Premier is gone, they do not shut up. It is rather interesting, Mr. Speaker. And the people of the Province, thanks to the use of electronic media, will know all that, because it will get out. And it will show the Premier's position on decorum in the House as the charade it really is. It is a charade, Mr. Speaker. It is a charade. They have not stopped interrupting, they have not stopped interjecting since I stood to my feet. But if he thinks and if they think that is going to deter me or bother me, I have news for them, Mr. Speaker. I have a lot of news for them. I have a lot of things to say.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have not even touched on some of the things in the Budget, by the way, which I will in due course. I have not even talked about some of the things in the Budget, some of the dastardly decisions taken by this Government opposite, but I will get to that when the time comes, Mr. Speaker. I will get to that when the time comes.

Mr. Speaker, I want to touch on the unemployment statistics, the unemployment statistics I hear this Government try to rebut from time to time, when we raise the fact that for every month during the past year with one exception, I think, with the exception of one month, the unemployment rate has increased from last year to this year. Every single month the unemployment rate has increased. That is since this Government came into power, Mr. Speaker. That is since this Government came into power, in the last year. And they get up and try to rebut it by saying, yes, but what did you do for seventeen years? and all that kind of stuff. They seem to forget, somehow, that they are the Government. They forget they are the Government and they try to slough it off in the same way as they slough everything else off: they blame it on the previous Tory Administration, or they blame it on the Federal Government or something like that. But you cannot sustain that kind of argument forever and a day, Mr. Speaker, eventually you have to recognize and accept your responsibilities as a Government and respond to the concerns of the people.

Mr. Speaker, I know if the unemployment stats were up every month for a year from what they were the year before when we were

in the Government, we would be strung out. We would be hung out to dry. Somehow or another the Government here seems to be getting away with all that negativity. I think, Mr. Speaker, the Government and the Premier, the Leader of the Government, are running a very significant risk, they are running a very significant risk by continuing to ignore a response to the serious problems which face this Province today.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think a smart person or a smart group of people would probably recognize this problem.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Mr. Simms: A smart and responsible group of politicians, if they had any kind of a social conscience at all, instead of just laughing it off and making a joke about everything would probably respond to it. That is if they were smart and responsible politicians.

I think it is important for the Government to recognize its responsibility for a change. They have been there for over a year, but they have developed in that one year more arrogance, Mr. Speaker, than any Government before it, including our Government, which was in power for seventeen years. I say that to Members opposite having been in the House for almost twelve years, watching Governments act, including one from within, our own Government. I have seen more arrogance from this Government in only one year than I saw develop in any other Government. It is absolutely unbelievable, Mr.

Speaker, what is happening.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Simms: Well, let us see what this Government has done. Let us just touch on some of the things this Government has done in that one year, Mr. Speaker. They have raised personal income taxes - both last year and this year your personal income tax has increased; not only have they closed hospital beds, they have, in fact, closed entire hospitals; they have raised gasoline taxes; they have dropped the hydro subsidy, which increases light bills; they have increased tuition fees; they have cancelled capital projects which were approved by the previous Government; they have increased registration/driver's licence fees; they have brought in the infamous Bill 53, which we would not bring in; they have boxed themselves in and created a lot of friction, so much friction with our public servants that we are in for a lot of trouble in the days ahead, I can tell you; they purged the public service when they came into office; they have created the lowest morale in the public service I have seen in decades; they have created new meanings for the words 'patronage' and 'pork barrelling'.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Simms: Electricity rates have skyrocketed; unemployment has increased; travel costs out of Labrador have skyrocketed, thanks to the withdrawal of the air travel subsidy, Mr. Speaker. The problem is, Mr. Speaker, they have done it with the blink of an eye and they are getting away with it.

Mr. Speaker, I have to speak on behalf of those people who put us

here to represent their points of view and, in so doing, I want to move a non-confidence motion, an amendment to the Budget, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Member for St. John's East, that all the words after 'that' be deleted and replaced by the following: 'that this House lacks confidence in the financial and economic policy of the Government.' Mr. Speaker, I move that amendment.

I think, Mr. Speaker, if Your Honour rules the amendment is in order, I have a further hour to speak in the debate. I will just give Your Honour a moment.

Mr. Speaker: It is in order.

Mr. Simms: Your Honour has ruled that the amendment is in order, Mr. Speaker.

So, as I have said, the few remarks I made in the first half hour, of course, were very preliminary. I did not get into any of the details; I did not touch on very many specifics or details until just at the end.

Mr. Efford: There is nothing to touch on.

Mr. Simms: The hon. the Minister of Social Services says there is nothing to touch on. If he would like, I will repeat again what I just touched on, but which I cut short. I can assure him I cut short, because there are oodles and oodles of other negative decisions by this Government.

Let me just tell him, Mr. Speaker, if he thinks the people of central Newfoundland are happy with the negative decisions of this Government in only one year along these lines, all in one year:

Exploits Valley area, including the Member for Windsor - Buchans and the Member for Bishop's Falls, first we had cancellation of the water treatment plant out in the central Newfoundland area; we had cancellation of the funds for the recreation complex; cancellation of the funds for the youth diversion program; cancellation of the pediatric hospital teachers; twenty or twenty-five jobs gone at the Wooddale Tree Nursery; two or three more jobs gone as a result of the elimination of the tax inspector jobs out in central Newfoundland; moving Rural Development personnel to Gander; moving Newfoundland and Labrador Development Corporation personnel to Gander. Now we hear they are cutting more jobs by eliminating the regional fire fighting service, the helicopter attack service out at Bishop Falls - six more jobs gone there. We now hear Government is eliminating the Provincial Books by Mail Program, which sent books to Labrador and all kinds of rural places in Newfoundland. This Government has now cut the funding out of it and has eliminated that Program, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, all those things happened on the heels of a commitment by the Premier. In December when the no. 6 paper machine closed in Grand Falls, he was setting up a super task force, a Cabinet task force, headed by the Minister of Forestry, to respond to the loss of these jobs. Well, I say, Mr. Speaker, after having just outlined those eight or ten items in the Exploits Valley area alone, what a response, Mr. Speaker! What a response! And that is the kind of response we have been seeing.

Mr. Speaker, seeing it is five

o'clock and I have the floor, I guess I will move that the House adjourn until tomorrow, Tuesday, at 2:00 p.m. and that this House do now adjourn. I adjourn the debate.

Mr. Speaker: The motion is that this House do now adjourn until tomorrow at 2:00 p.m.

All those in favour of the motion please say, 'Aye'.

Some Hon. Members: Aye.

Mr. Speaker: Those against the motion please say 'Nay'.

Some Hon. Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion defeated. The Speaker will be in the Chair at 7:00 o'clock this evening.



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VERBATIM REPORT
(Hansard)

Speaker: Honourable Thomas Lush

The House resumed at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Grand Falls, the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Simms: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Grimes: It was 6 per cent.

Mr. Simms: Mr. Speaker, no, it was 10 per cent. Not 6 per cent, it was 10.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible) per cent.

Mr. Simms: That is right. My campaign manager, the Member for Exploits, knows it was 10 per cent.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I hope Members opposite in particular had time over the supper hour to digest the words I presented here for the last thirty-five minutes before the House adjourned.

Mr. Gover: Yes, we did, and it is time to sit down now.

Mr. Simms: Well, I say to the Member for Bonavista South, those were only my preliminary remarks. But on the way out I overheard some conversations from Members opposite on what a great speech I made.

Mr. Tobin: What?

Mr. Simms: Yes, Members over on that side.

An Hon. Member: You were asleep then (inaudible).

Mr. Simms: And some of them over there were disturbed by the fact that I was constantly interrupted and heckled and jeckled.

Mr. Murphy: By your own people.

Mr. Simms: No, by Members opposite.

Mr. Tobin: Like the Minister of Social Services.

Mr. Simms: So, to satisfy those who perhaps did not hear everything, because there has been a two hour break and I want to make sure Members opposite are able to digest what I am trying to say, I want to just briefly summarize what I said for the first thirty-five minutes.

An Hon. Member: That is not necessary.

Mr. Tobin: Say it all over again.

Mr. Simms: No, I will not say it all over, but I will try to summarize it and then get on with some other topics.

Mr. Speaker, I tried to point out, first of all, that what we have been doing over the last year as an Opposition is trying to emphasize the Government's lack of response to the economic difficulties we face in the Province today - that was one point I made - and that we spent a considerable amount of time pointing out some of the things in the future that are going to be of concern to all of us. I particularly mentioned labour relations, because I honestly think, unfortunately, that we are in for some very difficult times with some major public service groups in this Province, and the President of Treasury Board will know of which I speak.

I also indicated that we spent a considerable period of time, three or four or five weeks, hammering

away at the budget presented by the Minister of Finance, and I think successfully. We exposed a number of items which were not easily identifiable in the budget presentation, nor were they even mentioned in the Budget Speech; there are many items which I will allude to now in a moment. So for the past few months, that is what we have been trying to concentrate on.

Now I say to the press in particular that I think they have treated us very fairly on the issues we have raised day after day, despite the looks from Government Members, casting eyes up to the press gallery in the hope that the press gallery will see them smiling and laughing and will think oh, there is nothing to this; and hearing them shout out to the press gallery, Oh, what terrible questions! and things like that. I say the press have reported accurately what has gone on in this House for the most part, particularly over the last number of months.

Indeed, we noticed with some great interest that the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation television, one night, did a summary of the efforts of the Opposition in trying to drag out of the Government some answers with respect to the Budget, and what the Government has done in the Budget. They gave a very good presentation, and summarized the items we have been raising. The impression, I think, was given that we in the Opposition have done a good job in trying to expose these failures and these faults for the benefit of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, so that they were fully aware of what was going on. I hope that kind of accurate

journalistic reporting will continue into the future, because we certainly have a lot of other things that will be brought up from time to time, and it is important for the people of the Province to know what exactly we are talking about.

For example, you remember in the Budget speech, as I said, there was -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible) we cannot hear a thing.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

I was just calling for attention from Members to my left so that we can hear the hon. Member.

Mr. Simms: Thank you, Your Honour. I appreciate it very much.

Mr. Speaker, I said earlier, before we adjourned at 5:00 p.m., and I repeat now, that the presentation of the Budget by the Minister of Finance on Budget day was nothing short of a great show, I thought, on the part of the Minister, supported strongly by Members opposite, who banged their desks, I suppose, more times on that day than they have in the last year in total.

Indeed, you would have thought, if you were a member of the public, the initial reaction and response to the Budget was relatively positive; people thought it seemed like it was a good Budget because there wasn't anything identifiable in there that would hurt the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. But then we came to find out, over time, that the only things the Minister mentioned in his Budget were the good things, or the things that were not negative. That is what was

highlighted and articulated by the Minister of Finance.

The bad news it appears, we now find out, was all carefully camouflaged and not mentioned at all. For example, the closing of the hospital schools, the pediatric hospital schools, that was not mentioned in the Budget. That came out eventually, after persistent questioning on information passed on by people involved.

The issue of the payroll tax was mentioned in the Budget, but only very briefly. It was never indicated who and what groups would be responsible for paying that payroll tax and what kind of negative effect it could have on the consumer, or school boards, or hospital boards, or any of these kinds of groups. That all came out only after persistent questioning. None of that was covered in the Budget, other than the fact that it was going to be a payroll tax, Mr. Speaker.

It was not highlighted in the Budget that the Minister of Recreation's Capital Recreation Grant Program was gutted, and gutted and gutted. No funding was in the Budget for the Capital Recreation Grant Program except whatever was carried over, left over from previous years. That was a program that was very popular throughout the Province. The Minister of Finance did not highlight that or articulate that in his Budget, which we find passing strange. That was another example.

There was some reference made to education funding, and everything sounded hunky-dory until we heard the school board superintendents, until we heard the school board

trustees, all kicking up a big fuss.

Mr. Baker: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: Well, I say to the President of the Treasury Board, they are Provincial organizations. The Provincial organizations were the ones that publicly said they were not happy at all with what was in the Budget for education. But that was not pointed out in the Budget at all, Mr. Speaker.

The elimination of the Labrador Travel Program: I do not recall hearing the Minister shouting out or announcing during Budget day that we were going to eliminate the Labrador Air Travel Program. If it was, I do not remember the Members pounding their desks for that.

Mr. Speaker, my point is that there were a lot of things in the Budget that were not easily identifiable until a fair bit of scrutiny had taken place. The Minister of Finance, therefore, gave the impression that everything was great and fantastic. But we have seen since, of course, that that is far from being the case.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to divert for a moment, since I came across a piece of correspondence I received during the supper break, when I was reviewing my copious notes for tonight's presentation. I asked the Minister of Development one day, and he may have thought I was - well, I do not want to suggest motives from the Minister of Development's perspective, but I did ask one day, or one evening, if he would give us an update on the new project out in Donovans, I think

it is - I am not sure where they are located, but I believe that is where they are - which was opened by the Premier one day, the Sunnyland Juice Company; I asked him if he would give us a bit of information on it and tell us what it was all about. Because it seems to me, from a bit of correspondence I have received and from reading some newspaper accounts of it, that it is a very unique idea. I think the company and the principal of the company are to be commended for undertaking such a very unique and interesting idea, to develop an industry or a business that will create jobs. In fact, the more I read about it, the more I think there is probably very good potential there for much greater things, when you combine the use of Newfoundland water with the concentrated juice from Florida, from the southern States. It seems to me that is a very unique idea, a great idea, and I could see that really catching on across Canada. I would not be surprised but he could market it down in the States, because they do not have very good water down in the States, as we all know.

But one day I asked the Minister of Development if he would give me a little idea about the project itself. Since then I have had a chance to get some information myself, but the point I want to make here is that that individual has written the CRTC. Members opposite might be aware of it; I think the letter was in the weekend paper. But I received a copy of the letter he wrote to the Premier myself, in which he points out that Newfoundlanders building and promoting a new industry in Newfoundland, especially those utilizing our own natural resources, that it could be

accomplished with the support of the Newfoundland people and a more positive attitude by our local media. He makes the charge that the opening of that plant was given very good coverage, first-rate coverage in fact, and he mentions VOXM and the Evening Telegram and so on, but he pointed out that CBC did not attend the opening at all. He found it disheartening, I guess, to know that the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation did not seem to be interested, from his perspective at least, they did not show up, in promoting local industry. He went on to point out that NTV had also covered the thing but apparently they did not air the story, which again I find very surprising. I would sure like to hear a representative from NTV, Mr. Stirling or somebody, explain why they would have done some footage of the opening -

Mr. Furey: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: I must say to the Minister of Development that NTV generally is very good in that respect, and they report the news fairly accurately. I don't think they do a lot of editorializing, but apparently he says they did not air their story. And he makes a good point. Newfoundlanders need to be encouraged not discouraged by our local media. So he has written the CRTC, he has written me, and I presume other Members will have received the letter asking for support on that particular issue.

I wish I had received a bit of an update from the Minister of Development. Perhaps if he speaks in the Budget debate he could tell us about this project and this industry. I presume the Government is quite familiar with

it; the Premier officiated at the official opening of the project.

I have not seen it. I know Mr. Burseley quite well, but I have not seen the operation. I am not sure, but I believe the news story said eight or ten people are employed at the operation, quite a number of people, and it sounds like an excellent project. So perhaps when the Minister speaks he can give us a bit of information on the project itself and from his own perspective, from the perspective of speaking as a Minister of the Government, how he feels about the content of Mr. Burseley's letter.

Mr. Murphy: The hon. Member should encourage all hon. Members (inaudible).

Mr. Simms: Well, I am not quite finished yet. The hon. Member for St. John's South is trying to rush me. I am taking my time. I want to make several points. One is on the project itself, that we should hear -

Mr. Tobin: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: One is on the project itself, which I would like to hear more about, secondly, I would like to hear the Minister's response to the charge he makes in his letter concerning the lack of support from CBC in particular, and NTV, because I think he makes a very good point about a new business, a new industry starting off. I think our Provincial media should encourage him all they can by doing a story on the operation.

Mr. Baker: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: I have raised an important matter, I say to the President of Treasury Board. He

should not trivialize it. I am raising an important issue. The Minister of Development knows what I am talking about, and hopefully he will comment on it.

Now, Mr. Speaker, before we adjourned I summarized some of the other decisions taken by the Government which have negatively affected the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. I do not wish to repeat all of those again; Members opposite have heard them from time to time.

An Hon. Member: Read them all out again.

Mr. Simms: No, I will not read them all out. I mentioned about closing the pediatric hospital schools, I mentioned about no funding for the capital recreation program and all those of kinds of things, and I do not want to repeat all of those things. But the point I was making -

Mr. Winsor: Is the Minister afraid to table the list?

Mr. Simms: Yes, the Minister of Recreation had made a commitment to table the list of recreation grants. They attempted to pull the wool over our eyes here one day and do it under Answers to Questions, where the Opposition has no opportunity to respond, but we caught them on that one. But that must be weeks ago, a couple of weeks?

Mr. Winsor: We get dribs and drabs in the paper, \$20,000 for (inaudible), \$20,000 for Bonavista South, I know that much.

Mr. Simms: Perhaps the Minister can tell us when he is going to table this list he was prepared to table two weeks ago under Answers

to Questions. It will soon be time to table it, since we have been asking for it about two months now.

Mr. Speaker, before we adjourned at 5:00 p.m. I was pointing out a number of negative decisions the Government had made, some pretty dramatic ones: the reduction of the hydro subsidy which means a significant increase in electricity rates; the fact that income taxes had been raised in the last budget for this year and for last year; they have closed a couple of hospitals on the south coast; they have eliminated the recreation capital grant program; cutbacks in forestry out at Wooddale; the hospital pediatric schools. I mean, these are very negative decisions, very serious decisions.

But the point I was trying to make before we adjourned at 5:00 p.m. is it never ceases to amaze me, it seems as if they have made all these negative decisions and they have gotten away with it with the blink of an eye. Now I wonder why they have been able to implement all these negative decisions without there being hardly a whisper from the general public. Do you think it is because the general public accept and approve all these negative decisions, or do you think, maybe, it is because they have not grasped it or have not heard clearly what has transpired? Is that possible? Do you think they understand exactly what all the -

Mr. Flight: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: Well, I say to the Minister of Forestry, they did not know in Central Newfoundland about all the cutbacks that have been announced out there in the last

several months. They were not aware of that.

Mr. Flight: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: No, I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, quite honestly, that the real reason for it is because of all the hype on the Meech Lake Accord issue. I do not think there is any question about it. There is certainly no question about it in my mind. That is the reason they have been able to get away with all these blatant, negative decisions. Everything has been overlooked or covered up, I suppose, by the Meech Lake Debate.

I remember. I made some notes here. When the Premier was confronted by the interference allegation of the Minister of Social Services with respect to the shipbuilding issue, the Premier, you will recall, openly agreed that what the Minister had done was wrong and he threatened that in the future he would not tolerate such behavior again. That was his answer on that issue.

When he was asked about censorship, he said he did not approve of it, and he stated it is offensive to free-thinking people and to the concept of democracy. That was his response, 'offensive to free-thinking people and to the concept of democracy.' However, he added there was nothing Government could do about it. That was his answer there.

On the fishery crisis, in the lobby of Confederation Building he gave a similar response to the people of Grand Bank and other communities who were there protesting the Government's lack of action on funding. His answer there was, I would if I could but

I can't. So his responses are all consistent.

Some of the media began reporting that this particular Government seemed very comfortable with shining light on all those issues they, themselves, cannot seem to control and blame it on others, like the Federal Government, the previous Conservative Administration, and so on and so on.

Mr. Speaker, I guess the question I want to ask as one Member of this Legislature is when is all this negativity going to end? When are all these negative decisions going to end? They just seem to be going on day after day after day. When is it going to end? When are the people of the Province going to wake up and realize -

An Hon. Member: They did wake up. They did wake up, last year.

Mr. Simms: As I was saying, Mr. Speaker, before the howls from the other side came across, I want to know when the people of the Province are going to wake up and realize what a serious situation this Government has placed the people of the Province in. That is my question, Mr. Speaker. I have every legitimate right to ask that question, if I wish.

I am really repeating questions that have been put to me out in central Newfoundland, in particular over the last week, when people have made the same comment to me. People have made that comment to me and said, when are the people of the Province going to realize that they are really being put into the ground by the Liberal Government here in the Province? When are they going

to wonder about it? When are they going to do something about it, Mr. Speaker?

It appears they are going to have to wait a long time. I believe it is time for this Government to clear the air. It is time to get the half-truths and the deception out into the open. The time has come, Mr. Speaker, for that to happen. I think it is time for the people of the Province to get a really good look at what they elected in 1989, on April 20th. I think it is time we showed the people of this Province that there is no Liberal master plan, as they used to talk about, to rescue this Province from economic collapse. There is no such plan in place, Mr. Speaker. There is no plan to bring every mother's son back home, there never was and there never will be.

Mr. Speaker, I will tell you the war and the battle against Liberal arrogance, the arrogance of this Government, will not only be fought, I say to Members opposite, in this House of Assembly, in this Legislature, it will be fought out there on the ground; it will be fought out there by other people as well, such as those people who responded to the Government's intention to introduce Bill 53. The crusade against Bill 53, Mr. Speaker, was led by the grass roots of this Province, by people who had an interest and a concern about what was happening. And that will continue on many other issues, I say to Members opposite.

And, Mr. Speaker, we saw it again on the amalgamation issue. The Minister of Municipal Affairs was wondering how come I had not mentioned it in the last hour. But we saw it in the amalgamation issue, where communities were

being forced, certainly at the outset, to amalgamate without their approval. That was the original intent of the Minister, until the Premier brought him down several notches, way back when. And we can all follow the dates and the correlation of the program he tried to put in place last summer. And we see more and more of it. We saw a community just the other night, out in the Clarendville area I believe, I forget where it was exactly, but a community out there has now come out opposed to amalgamation. So of that hundred and forty names, initially a hundred and forty-odd names or whatever it was, a hundred and forty communities that were grouped for amalgamation, I am not sure what the number is down to now but I suspect that there is a sizeable reduction from the original hundred -

Mr. Gullage: It has gone up.

Mr. Simms: It gone up? It is over a hundred and forty that are going to amalgamate?

Mr. Gullage: (Inaudible) beyond that.

Mr. Simms: I suspect Minister is, as he was back last August, dreaming, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Tobin: And they cannot get a meeting with the Minister to discuss it. He refuses to meet with them.

Mr. Simms: Well, that is because there has been a change in their policy over there, you see, in that Department. If you want a meeting with the Minister now it is no good to get down on hands and knees. That is useless. It is no good to haul off your shoes and go in barefoot. That will not

work. I guess you have to be a good Liberal. You might have a chance if you are a good Liberal. But, no, you can not get to see the Minister. You have to meet with the regional person, out in the region. You cannot get in to see the Minister. Don't be so foolish. And the reason for it, Mr. Speaker, is as clear as a bell, the reason for it is, as we were saying months ago, that that Minister, in that particular portfolio, has too much on his plate and is not able to give fair service to all the different divisions in that portfolio. It is not humanly possible. I do not care what a fine gentlemen the individual is, it has nothing to do with that. The portfolio itself is too overbearing. How can he possibly meet with all the Municipal Councils, all the recreation groups, all the cultural groups, all the youth groups and all these other organizations that want to meet with him?

Dr. Kitchen: (inaudible)

Mr. Simms: No, I say to the Minister of Finance, he is not supposed to be a greeter, although that, in fact, is part of his responsibility as Minister of Provincial Affairs. He is the Minister in the cabinet who, on some occasions I guess, would have to be the greeter.

Dr. Kitchen: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: That is not the point I am making, and the Minister of Finance knows full well that is not the point I am making. He has not got time to breath.

Now the Minister of Finance just confirmed what I have been saying all along, that the Minister of

Municipal and Provincial Affairs does not have time to breath. That is exactly my point. The Municipal Councils and recreation bodies out there are all trying to get in to meet with the Minister but they cannot do it, they have to go to the regional offices; do not bother the Minister, he has too much on his plate. We know that is the message that is being sent down the tube. We know it, I say to the Minister. We know it full well.

Mr. Grimes: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: Was the Member for Exploits out for supper or what? He has not stopped since he came back at seven o'clock. Mr. Speaker, I also want to make reference -

Mr. Doyle: Good speech. Good speech.

Mr. Simms: Yes, if you could only hear it.

I also want to make reference to the bankruptcies in the Province. Now, Mr. Speaker, I know a lot of this is repetitive, but there is only one way to get the message out.

An Hon. Member: You did not repeat yourself once.

Mr. Simms: There is only one way to get the message out, and that is to repeat, and the point here, Mr. Speaker, is that another item that bears repeating is the issue of bankruptcies and the number of bankruptcies in this Province. Many businesses in this Province are in deep, deep trouble, Mr. Speaker.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: Well, Mr. Speaker, the Members opposite, particularly the Member for Exploits tonight, do not seem to want to take any responsibility for anything this Government has done, obviously.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: Who is talking about us not being responsible for some of it? We are prepared to accept our responsibility, but the Members opposite, particularly the Member for Exploits tonight, who seems to have had something unusual for supper and cannot seem to be quiet at all, is not prepared to accept any responsibility.

An Hon. Member: He had orange juice.

Mr. Simms: We caused that. We caused that, you know! I mean, that is so silly. The response is so silly it is amazing, coming from a former President of the NTA. I don't know how much time he spent in the classroom, but I am not sure he learned much. He should listen to his colleague, the Minister of Employment, the former President of the NTA who always chastises Members for interrupting across the House. He has been at it the whole night. I do not know what he had for supper. Whatever it is he should pass it around, and maybe everybody else will brighten up.

Mr. Speaker, the statistics on bankruptcies in this Province, this year, during -

Mr. Efford: (Inaudible).

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Mr. Simms: - during the first quarter -

Mr. Doyle: It is no trouble to know Clyde is not here.

Mr. Simms: You can say that again, Mr. Speaker. When the cat is away, the mice will play.

And tonight, by the way, it is being led by the Premier's Parliamentary Assistant.

Mr. Doyle: Ah ha! Showing bad example.

Mr. Simms: He is showing the example. The Premier has said about decorum in the House, no interruptions, no shouting.

An hon. Member: (Inaudible).

An Hon. Member: The peanut gallery down there.

Mr. Simms: What a charade, Mr. Speaker. We have been saying for the last year that it was a charade, and now we see more evidence tonight by the Member for Exploits -

Mr. Doyle: Shame!

Mr. Simms: - who is the Premier's right-hand man. Go out and pick up his suitcases, get ready for the next trip. Do something productive, instead of sitting in here yelling and interrupting.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, I am trying to pass on information that is very relevant to you, as I know you will want to be aware of all of this, and that is the issue of bankruptcies. I was trying to say that in the first quarter of 1990, January, February, March, the first three months of the year, there were one hundred and five bankruptcies in this Province compared to forty-four the year before, in the same period. One

hundred and five! I think the increase, therefore, is somewhere in the area of 150 per cent - a one hundred and fifty per cent increase in bankruptcies this year.

Mr. Doyle: Shameful! You should resign en masse. You should all resign, every one of you.

An Hon. Member: Winston should resign.

Mr. Simms: A hundred and five bankruptcies in the first quarter this year compared to the first quarter last year. Now that is the period of time this Government has been in power, the first quarter. They came into power last April, over a year ago, and the bankruptcies have increased by 150 per cent in the first quarter of the year.

Now, Mr. Speaker, are Members opposite trying to tell me all is well, there are no difficulties, no problems out there? Every time we try to raise a concern the answer always seems to be, oh, that was you fellows, that was the Tories, or it is the Feds, or, in the case of the Member for LaPoile, it is the banks. Whoever it is, that is not the point. The point is you are now the Government, you have been there for over a year, you are into your second year, when are you going to respond positively to the situation, to the high unemployment, to the high electricity rates, to the enormous increase in bankruptcies? When are you going to respond to all of these things? That is what the people of Newfoundland are asking and will continue to ask and will ask more loudly as days go on, let me assure Members opposite of that fact.

Mr. Doyle: They are whistling past the graveyard.

Mr. Simms: Mr. Speaker, I want to address two serious issues before I adjourn: I want to talk for a little bit about the fishery, and then I want to talk a little bit about Meech Lake.

Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege, I guess, or the occasion to serve on a caucus fishery committee chaired by our fisheries critic, the Member for Grand bank, and with my other colleagues, the member for Fogo and the Member for Green Bay. We had occasion, a couple of months back, to go around the Province and meet with large representative groups of people in these communities who are going to be seriously affected.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Speaker: Order, Please!
Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Grand Falls.

Mr. Simms: Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, I had occasion to go around the Province with the fisheries committee, where we met with representatives in all those communities to be affected, the most of them at least that we did get around to. I have never been one who portrayed any great knowledge of the fishing industry or the fishery, although I have always had an interest in it from a political perspective, at least, and I have tried to treat it as a serious matter, particularly this past year, having gone around the Province with the caucus committee to talk to people.

Mr. Speaker, I will tell you it was an experience worth its weight

in gold. When you sat around the table out in Piccadilly, or you sat around the table in Gaultois, you sat around the table in Grand Bank, around the table in St. Mary's, Ferryland, Trepassey, Renews, you sat around the table here in St. John's with Linda Hyde and the representatives of that particular union, which we did, there was no way, Mr. Speaker, in all of those seven, eight or nine meetings that we had with representatives of those communities to be affected, that you could come out of any of those meetings with your tongue in your cheek, or making any wise cracks. No way in the world. Because, I say to you, Mr. Speaker, those people we met were very, very concerned about their future and about the future of their co-workers, very concerned.

They asked us questions. Obviously we offered to do whatever we could to help them. We are limited, obviously, in an Opposition role, but certainly we can help them in some way, and we offered to do that. And the point they consistently made, and this was not in a partisan way, was that they felt let down by the Federal Government and also by the Provincial Government. They made that point consistently.

The Member for St. John's South shakes his head. I am telling him this is what the people told us. They were concerned, not only with what the Federal Government had done, which we all agree with, but they were concerned that the Provincial Government did not appear or did not seem to be taking the matter seriously, and did not seem to be responding, themselves, to some of these situations that exist. Now, I can only tell you what they told us.

It is not me saying it, that is what they told us.

The chairman of the caucus committee, the Member for Grand Bank, our fisheries critic, has detailed documentation of all of those meetings, and he, or the Member for Fogo, or the Member for Green Bay can confirm everything I have said.

Sitting in on those meetings as an elected representative of the people for one particular constituency in this Province, even though I have been here for twelve years, made me realize what a serious situation we face with respect to the fishing industry - what a serious situation we face.

Mr. Efford: It is only now you are realizing that?

Mr. Simms: No, it is not only now, I say to the Minister of Social Services. If he wishes to speak in the debate, I would be interested in hearing him.

Mr. Speaker, I said that as an elected Member, because of the situation currently I learned more in that year, I will admit that, and in those few months, when we travelled around the Province, about the importance of rural Newfoundland to the people who are involved in rural Newfoundland, and to the people who have no other choice but to make their living in rural Newfoundland, and to the people who have no other choice but to make their living from the fishery, I learned more in those two months about those kinds of situations and the kind of situation that exists than I did, I suppose, in the ten years before. I admit that. I admit that. We have faced lots of problems in the fishery over the

past number of years, but none, I do not believe, quite so serious as those we face these days, and during the past number of months.

And, as I said, the people in the communities were asking for some help, they wanted some help. They knew, on the one hand, the Federal Government was going to have to come through with some kind of a response program, they knew all of that, but they also felt that the Provincial Government should take some responsibility. That was the message we kept getting over and over, and that is why the Member for Grand Bank consistently got up in Question Period day after day and said, look, we agree that the Federal Government is not doing enough, or is not doing as much, or is not doing what they should be doing, but that aside, what about the Province? What is it going to do? What kind of a response does it have to fulfill the needs and the yearnings of the people out there in rural Newfoundland who are crying out and begging for some help? They do not care where it comes from, but they know and they are wise enough to know that it is either one of the two levels of Government that is going to have to be able to respond in some fashion, in some way. And they were very disappointed with the responses they received, both from the federal level and from the provincial level.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I do not know if what has transpired in the House of Assembly over the last number of months, since we travelled around the Province and met with those fishery committees, I do not know if what has happened here in the House will alleviate their concerns any. I doubt it very much. I doubt very much if the

people of rural Newfoundland feel any better, although they did make one point about us going around and meeting with the groups. At least we had the conviction to go out and sit down and listen to the concerns for two or three or four hours, in some cases, listen to what they had to say, listen to what their problems were, listen to what their concerns were, and listen to their suggestions and to what we could suggest, Mr. Speaker.

And I say with quite a deal of sincerity, I say this in all sincerity as a matter of fact, that the people of rural Newfoundland are still out there today as they may have been in '85 and as they may have been in '82. Members opposite continuously forget we accept our responsibilities and we paid the price. We are now talking about what this Government has done. We are talking about what this Government has done, I say to the Member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir. They are still out there crying out for help and asking this Government to show some responsibility, to show some leadership and to help them out of this crisis. Now we have not seen much response yet, Mr. Speaker, from the Provincial Government.

Mr. Efford: The Federal Government (inaudible).

Mr. Simms: Now, now, the Member should not get too excited. Boy, he has an awful habit of getting excited about any little thing at all, Mr. Speaker. He was not listening earlier, obviously. I told him we were not satisfied with the response of the Federal Government. At least they made a response.

Mr. Efford: Your leader was

satisfied.

Mr. Simms: Our leader did not say that, Mr. Speaker. That is what Members opposite have been trying to use, but they did not get anywhere with it. Mr. Speaker, they have tried to pound it to death. But at least they made some response. I ask the Minister of Social Services to tell me what the response of the Provincial Government has been to this fishery crisis in all those communities around the Province that are going to suffer. Perhaps he could tell us when he speaks in the debate, if he gets up and speaks in the debate, exactly what the Provincial Government has done in response to the fishing crisis. Other than blame it on Ottawa, or blame it on the previous Tory administration, or blame it on this one or blame it on that one, what has it done? When has it exerted its responsibilities and shown a response to the people of the Province who have been looking and begging for help - begging for help!

The Minister of Employment, Mr. Speaker, does not have any money to create jobs.

Mr. Grimes: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: The Member for Exploits should relax now, just relax and get up and speak in the debate

An Hon. Member: He should not only speak, he should tell the truth.

Mr. Simms: Well, Mr. Speaker, if he is going to speak, he should get up in this debate instead of shouting across the House. It is very hard to concentrate, Mr.

Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!
Order, please!

I have noticed that there has been a lot of nattering from Members to my left and I have had difficulty listening to the Member to my right. As I have said so many times in the House, Members are extended their opportunity to debate and that is the time to do it, when they have the floor.

The hon. the Member for Grand Falls.

Mr. Simms: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, very much. Normally I do not mind a few interjections, but when they start raising their voices loudly and shouting and yelling while someone is speaking in debate, it is, quite frankly, very difficult. And I am surprised that the Member for Exploits again continues to be the culprit, the man who personifies the Premier who makes so much about decorum in the House. Now has the Premier's assistant -

Ms Duff: He will not open his mouth when the Premier is in the House.

Mr. Simms: The Premier's Assistant shouting and bawling across the floor of the House. I would have thought that you would see a bit more of an example from the Parliamentary Assistant to the Premier; I would have expected you would see a bit more parliamentary decorum and parliamentary example from the Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier. It is obvious the Premier is gone, but hopefully he will hear about it - hopefully he will. I know there are some Members over on that side who will be happy to report to the Premier.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible)
listen to me.

Mr. Simms: No, there will be Members on that side who will be happy to report to the Premier the conduct of his Parliamentary Secretary, the man who sits behind him and who he thinks personifies him.

An Hon. Member: Yes sir!

Mr. Simms: There are a few people over there who, I am quite sure, would be willing to tell the Premier about his actions, Mr. Speaker. I will not say who they are, but I know there are some over there who have said the Member for Exploits is on his way out, by the way, which might be an interesting thing.

Mr. Parsons: Tell us where you heard that.

Mr. Simms: And if he cannot hold the decorum in the House and personify what the Premier tries to exude in the House with respect to parliamentary decorum, then I would say there are several over there who are relatively quiet and they play by the parliamentary rules, the Member for Pleasantville -

An Hon. Member: Hear, hear!

Mr. Simms: The Member for Mount Scio, the Member for Lewisporte, the Member for Bonavista, the Member for Placentia, the Member for St. John's South. I mean, just about every other private Member over there, just about every other backbencher over there has more parliamentary decorum in their little finger than the Member for Exploits, and you would not expect that, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Grimes: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: Look, Mr. Speaker, he is still at it despite your condemnations. He should go out in the common room for a coffee if he cannot control himself.

Mr. Tobin: I have never seen a Parliamentary Assistant to the Premier like him before.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Simms: What was that?

Mr. Doyle: He never saw a Parliamentary Assistant to the Premier like him before.

Mr. Simms: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I will tell you, the Member for Exploits makes the former Parliamentary Assistant to the Premier, the Member for Burin - Placentia West, look like, not Glenn Tobin, but Glen Beauchesne himself, Mr. Speaker. He was the epitome of proper parliamentary conduct in this Legislature. The Member for Exploits has gone beyond and makes him look like the epitome, I should say.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to say a few words about the Meech Lake issue.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: No, I would like to keep going actually.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: Yes. The Member for Exploits will not interrupt me on this particular topic, because he has to take notes for the Premier, right?

Mr. Doyle: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: He has to rush down and give the Premier all the notes on what I am going to say about Meech Lake.

Mr. Speaker, I am not sure how much time I have left but, anyway, I think it is eight or nine minutes.

Mr. Speaker: It is ten minutes.

Mr. Simms: Yes. Well, Mr. Speaker, what I want to address really is the current situation we face across the country, the current situation all of us as Newfoundlanders and Canadians face with respect to the Meech Lake impasse. That is what we might as well call it, because that is what it is. I was quite disheartened, to tell you the truth, over the supper hour, to watch the news reports of Mr. Bourassa's response today after his meeting with the Prime Minister, the reports of our own Premier's meeting with Mr. Mulroney yesterday, and even those of Mr. Filmon, the meeting with Mr. Filmon the day before.

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, for all intents and purposes, that with less than a month remaining, a little over three weeks, 26 days, we find ourselves at the moment, in this country, in an unbearable situation. It is an unbearable situation, I say, because the problem is that for all the rhetoric and, indeed, for all the legitimate points of view that have been put forth by all parties, this is a non-partisan issue; you have Liberal Premiers in support, you have Liberal Premiers opposed; you have Tory Premiers opposed and you have Tory Premiers supporting.

But the overriding issue at the moment, and I think this is felt overwhelmingly by the people of Canada, in the last few days, after all the polls have been done, a week or two weeks ago, I think the mood in Canada today is vastly different from what it was a week or two ago with respect to calling and urging our leaders to resolve this impasse. I think there is an overwhelming desire on the part of Canadians everywhere to do whatever is necessary, within reason, but to use a compromising attitude to try to find a way to resolve this impasse so that this country continues to be a country as we know it now - perhaps improved, hopefully improved, maybe even improved as a result of this debate over the last year. Hopefully that is what will come out of it on June 23rd or afterwards.

But I have to honestly say I share the concerns of a lot of Canadians. I share the concern that if -

Dr. Kitchen: Is that Newfoundlanders or Mainlanders?

Mr. Simms: All Canadians, Mr. Speaker, I say to the Minister of Finance. I share the view of an overwhelming number of Canadians. I remind him that his own Premier said yesterday, on Newsworld, that he was interested in the concerns of Canada first, Newfoundland second.

The Minister of Finance shakes his head, but I can assure him that is what his position is. And I suspect that is the position of his colleagues over there, as well. I can see what the hon. Minister of Finance is trying to do. Do what he did -

Mr. Tobin: (Inaudible) Quebec anyway.

Mr. Simms: Yes.

Mr. R. Aylward: (Inaudible) listened to him on the (inaudible).

Mr. Simms: This was not radio, it was television. National television.

I say to the Minister of Finance, there is no chance of changing his views on it anyway, not a chance in the world. Even the Premier said he would never have him as a constitutional advisor, and we all know why.

Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, before I was interrupted rudely by the Minister of Finance - I was trying to make a point and he, of course, was trying to make light of it, as usual. I was trying to make a point that the issue that is facing this country today is an extremely difficult decision.

Dr. Kitchen: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: See, Mr. Speaker, that is one of the problems you have. You have a mouthpiece like the Minister of Finance, who keeps shouting across and says it is all the problem of Mr. Mulroney.

Mr. Speaker, I am saying if this kind of attitude, the attitude being expressed by the Minister of Finance is now the attitude of that Government, and I do not think it is, by the way, but if it is the attitude of the Government, now being articulated by the Minister of Finance from his seat, then make no bloody wonder we can't get a resolve to the Meech Lake impasse. Make no wonder, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Simms: I think the Government would be better served not to listen to the advice of the Minister of Finance, quite frankly, particularly on the Meech Lake issue.

The point I am trying to make, and the Minister of Finance has difficulty hearing it because he does not want me to say it, is that we need some resolve now on the part of our Leaders in our country, because the Canadian people want nothing less - they want nothing less. I get the feeling, almost, Mr. Speaker, that people are saying they do not care what has to be done, but do it, resolve it.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: Well, now, Members opposite might have a different view, but that is the view that I have now. I had a telephone call, by the way, during the supper break, from a gentlemen here in the city of St. John's who phoned and told me quite candidly that he was not familiar with the Meech Lake details or not as familiar, but he has been following it like everybody else, because you have no choice these days, that is all that is on the news, but he said he wrote to a few places and he got some information, some pamphlets and whatever was on the go, and he said, quite frankly, 'three months ago I believed what Premier wells was saying.' He said, 'I believed him three months ago. I do not know all there is to know about the Meech Lake Accord. I do not have all the details and all the information about it, like a lot of Newfoundlanders and Canadians, I guess, and you would expect,

therefore, that what the Premier was saying you would expect me to believe it.' I said, 'of course I would. And,' I said, 'what the Premier is saying, I have no doubt in my mind, he believes in his own mind, he believes that his position is right.

An Hon. Member: No, he doesn't.

Mr. Simms: Yes, I think he does,

An Hon. Member: No. No!

Mr. Simms: But he did say he has had a chance to think about the points of view expressed by others, those who are in support of Meech Lake. I do not know who the gentleman was, by the way, I did not ask him for his name. I did ask him where he was calling from, and he said here in St. John's. But he told me he has come to the conclusion, after seeing everything, in the last few days in particular, that if the leaders of the eleven governments, including our own Premier and Mr. Mulroney and Mr. Bourassa and everybody else, do not resolve this matter in the next little while, then Canada, obviously, is going to suffer detrimentally. But more importantly, from his perspective he was very, very concerned about the future of Newfoundland and Labrador. Very, very concerned about it.

I said, look, Sir, I do not want to enter into a debate, I do not want to tell you. I presume you have heard what we had to say about it in the debate in the House, when the resolution was being debated. All I can say is I appreciate you took the time - this gentlemen was an older gentlemen and he took the time to pick up the phone and call. In fact, he did not ask for anybody

in particular, he just wanted to speak to someone in the Opposition Office. I presume he called the Government Office. I do not know. I suggested that he should. He took the time, and that is what I thanked him for, taking the time to look into it to try and get as good an understanding about the issue as he possibly could and then call people and let them know what his views were on the issue.

And I say, Mr. Speaker, in concluding that despite the fact that I have always felt that we should have been concentrating more over the last seven or eight months on domestic issues here in Newfoundland, that the future of the fishery is much more important to us, I honestly feel that and felt it and still feel it, and I believe there are a lot of other domestic issues that we should be concentrating on, and focusing on, nevertheless that has all been overshadowed now by Meech Lake and I don't think we have any choice but to meet that issue dead on and head on in the next two or three weeks, or whatever it takes to get the issue resolved. But I say, Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, if we do not resolve this issue and if our leaders do not resolve this issue, then I think we are all in for one hell of a hard slug over the next two or three years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

Mr. Warren: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I hope to spend the next hour speaking on the amended resolution.

Some Hon. Members: An hour?

Mr. Warren: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Because by the time my half hour is up, Members will want me to continue for the next half hour.

During the last number of days, I have attempted to put together fifteen different issues that I want to discuss in this Budget. Fifteen altogether. In fact, Mr. Speaker, this is why I might need an hour to discuss all the fifteen issues.

The first issue of great concern is an issue about which not very much has been said by the two Members who represent the two Districts in Labrador, and that is the Labrador Air Subsidy Program.

Since the Premier and the House Leader came in here last week and announced that the Government was going to cancel the Air Subsidy Program, neither of the two Labrador Members have made one peep about it. About a month ago, the Member for Eagle River did go on the local radio station in Labrador and say he was against Government cutting it out.

Mr. Tobin: What?

Mr. Warren: Oh, yes. That is right.

Mr. Matthews: Say that again.

Mr. Warren: The hon. Member for Eagle River, about five or six weeks ago, and this is true, went on the local radio station in Labrador and said he was disappointed that Government was cutting out the Air Subsidy Program.

The select Cabinet came back five weeks later and said they were going to cancel the program and the hon. Member for Eagle River

has not said one word. He was told not to say anything; he was told not to say anything further about the Labrador Air Subsidy Program.

Mr. Matthews: Shut up or leave the caucus.

Mr. Warren: Mr. Speaker, there was a reason behind it.

Mr. Matthews: (Inaudible).

Mr. Warren: No, no, no. There was a reason behind it. In July of this year, the Premier is going to have a Cabinet shuffle.

Mr. Tobin: When?

Mr. Warren: The 15th of July.

Mr. Speaker, just let me say one other thing. I think the Member for Naskaupi is a little bit worried.

Some Hon. Members: He looks worried.

Mr. Warren: That is right, you can have a Cabinet shuffle any day.

Mr. Speaker, let me say one thing, that the Ministers over there who are particularly worried are the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation and the Minister of Finance. Those two Ministers are definitely going to be in trouble. I just want to let the House know that these are some of the reasons behind my hon. colleague's move to not move.

Mr. Tobin: My hon. colleague's move to not move?

Mr. Warren: And let me just say one other thing. A couple of times now since I came back from my trip to Ottawa, I have heard

some of my colleagues opposite making different comments, like what were you doing up there? and so on and so on. Let me just tell the hon. House about four or five different things I found out. Mr. Speaker, the first thing I found was that the day before I arrived there, the Minister of Works, Services, and Transportation was up in Ottawa meeting with the Federal Department of Transport. What was the Minister up there for?

Mr. Matthews: What were you doing? Tell us.

Mr. Warren: Mr. Speaker, he was up there looking for the money for the Outer Ring road.

An Hon. Member: What?

Mr. Warren: Yes, Mr. Speaker, looking for the money for the Outer Ring road, and he wanted the money to go on the Trans-Canada, or on different parts of the Trans-Canada. I did not find anything wrong with that, so, I said, at least now I have made my position very clear. The most dangerous airstrip in any remote area on the coast of Labrador or anywhere else in Labrador, is the Nain airstrip.

An Hon. Member: That is true. I have flown in there a half dozen times.

Mr. Warren: So, Mr. Speaker, I said to the Department Officials, if the money is taken from the Outer Ring road and used elsewhere, did the Minister ask for any of that money to be used on the airstrip?

Now, Mr. Speaker, it is only going to cost \$3 million, but I made the request and I was assured that if that money moves from the Outer

Ring road at all, then a piece of that little pie will be allotted to the new airstrip for Nain

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Warren: In fact, Mr. Speaker, I do not think the money is going to move from the Outer Ring road; I think the money is going to remain for the Outer Ring road.

An Hon. Member: Hear, hear!

Mr. Warren: And I would it stays for the Outer Ring Road, Mr. Speaker, because it is money that has already been allotted for that particular purpose.

An Hon. Member: Did the federal minister tell you that? What federal minister told you that?

Mr. Warren: Now, Mr. Speaker, you have already ruled on an hon. Member for shouting earlier. It is up to you to rule on him again, Sir, but I will continue.

Mr. Tobin: Do not put any pressure on him.

Mr. Warren: Mr. Speaker, let me tell you something else I found out, and this is very, very interesting. Seventy thousand dollars was offered to the Provincial Government, to the Division of Wildlife.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Warren: Let me just tell the hon. gentleman about this. This is very important to my hon. colleague for Eagle River. Seventy thousand dollars was allotted for the Provincial Government, in conjunction with the native associations, to carry out a caribou survey and analysis in Labrador and the Provincial

Government refused to accept it.

Mr. Tobin: What?

Mr. Warren: The Provincial Government would not accept the money. I am on record here, Mr. Speaker, and it is going to go out to any media, to anybody they would want to play it to. I am saying that the Provincial Government refused to accept that money.

An Hon. Member: Why? Why?

Mr. Warren: Mr. Speaker, they said we will accept that money if we can spend it the way we want to spend it.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Speaker, that is not right.

Mr. Warren: But, Mr. Speaker, the Department of National Defence -

Mr. Tobin: It is unparliamentary to say somebody is telling lies.

Mr. Warren: The Department of National Defence said no, that money has to be spent in conjunction with the native associations of Labrador, and the Provincial Government would not agree. So, Mr. Speaker, let me tell you what is going to happen. The Federal Government is going to take that money and give it directly to the native associations.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Warren: That is what is going to happen, Mr. Speaker, because this Government has again reneged on their duties to the native people.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have about ten different items here. They have asked me about what Barbara McDougall had to say. Mr. Speaker, when I arrived in Ottawa, I got a fax about the resolution my hon. colleague presented in this House, and I want to read a portion of that resolution. "Whereas the Federal Government has refused to extend these benefits until access to the fishing grounds is made, probably within four weeks...". Mr. Speaker, this is dated May 24th.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Warren: Mr. Speaker, I am going out to get a map of Labrador and give it to my hon. colleague.

An Hon. Member: Why?

Mr. Warren: Mr. Speaker, I am going to have to. Because all the hon. gentleman was worried about in that resolution were the people in his District, because the people in my District do not get fishing until the first of July, which is almost seven weeks from now.

An Hon. Member: Oh.

Mr. Warren: Now there is an example. And I said loud and clear to Mrs. McDougall, unless it is extended for seven weeks, it is no good. So, Mr. Speaker, there you go. See, the hon. gentleman, Mr. Speaker, does not know that you get open water quicker in Black Tickle than you do in Hopedale. The hon. gentleman does not know that. Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman does not know that you get open water quicker in Makkovik than you do in Nain. But you do, Mr. Speaker. That is a fact of the geography of Labrador, and that is the way it goes.

Some Hon. Members: What did she say? What did she say?

Mr. Warren: So, Mr. Speaker, I said to the Minister if she is going to come in with a program, then come in with a program that will tie in with the fishing of the people in the various communities. If people can fish in Rigolet on June 15, Unemployment Insurance stops. So, Mr. Speaker, I am not concerned about five or six communities along the Labrador coast, I am concerned about every community from L'Anse-au-Clair to Nain - every community from L'Anse-au-Clair to Nain. Now, Mr. Speaker, I have told the gentlemen where I got there.

Let's go to the next item. What did the hon. Minister say? Let me read something, an editorial in the Evening Telegram: 'Mr. Dumaresque is inclined to make extreme statements and then expect others to go along with him.' That is the Evening Telegram, Mr. Speaker,

Mr. Matthews: What else did they say? They said more than that, didn't they? Tell them what they said about Banker Bill over there.

Mr. Warren: Oh, yes, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when I met with Ms. McDougall I said to her, Madam, I have correspondence here which I sent to the hon. Bill Rompkey in 1980. He was Minister of National Revenue then and, Mr. Speaker, I sent him a telegram asking him to extend Unemployment Insurance benefits. Do you know what he did instead? He asked to have all fishermen's books audited. That is what he did instead of extending Unemployment Insurance benefits. And he is the hon. gentleman who is now saying

on the airwaves of this Province that we need a change in Government in Ottawa in order to get Unemployment Insurance benefits for fishermen, the same Minister who had the chance to change it.

Mr. Speaker, there is something else in here I should read. 'We did not notice Finance Minister Hubert Kitchen or Fisheries Minister Walter Carter saying they were willing to step in during this crisis.' Before I go any further, Mr. Speaker, I would take my seat and I would let my hon. colleague from Eagle River get up now and tell us that he has written letters to the Minister of Finance in this Government, and the Minister of Fisheries, and table the two letters right here in this House and show the copy he sent to all the fishermen. Then what I will do tomorrow, I will make sure that my colleagues will allow me to ask a question to the Minister of Fisheries and the Minister of Finance. Because if Barbara McDougall is saying no, we do not want those two hon. gentlemen to say no. I mean, if she is going to say no, then we do not want those two to say no, because, Mr. Speaker, they have a responsibility to the fishermen along the Labrador coast. Now, Mr. Speaker, let me say this to my hon. colleague. Two years ago, I say to my hon. colleague -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible) get home, Garfield, get home.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Warren: Mr. Speaker, I should have told the little story about the hon. colleague who went into Rigolet before the last election. He went into Rigolet and he spent fifteen minutes there. He was

testing the waters to take me on, but he got out of Rigolet as fast as he could scabble.

Mr. Parsons: Fifteen minutes, round trip.

Mr. Warren: Yes, Mr. Speaker, fifteen minutes.

Two years ago, when there was a crisis on the Labrador coast, the Minister of Fisheries at the time, in the former Government of this Province, put in a substantial number of dollars to assist the fishermen. There was a substantial number of dollars to -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Warren: Well, I say to the hon. gentleman, if he wants to go to sleep, go to sleep!

Mr. Tobin: Garfield, he must be half asleep all the time.

Mr. Warren: Mr. Speaker, I will continue when all the noise dies down.

Mr. Speaker, I want to continue, because what I am trying to say to the Minister of Fisheries and the Minister of Finance is that we have a crisis along the Labrador coast. Why do we always have to wait for a handout from Ottawa? Why do we always have to wait for the handout from up-along, as we call it? Why not you, Sir, as Minister of Fisheries, put your money where your mouth is half the time?

Let me continue by saying to the Minister of Fisheries that at the present time the Northwest or Northeast Sealers Association has a number of dollars and they are buying seal skins/seal products from a number of fishermen on the

northeast coast of the Province.

We have Government operated fish plants in my District. We have fishermen who have no income at the present time. Why cannot the Minister now, even tomorrow, announce that here are two fish plants, at Nain and Makkovik, with the feeder plants at Postville, Davis Inlet and Hopedale. Why can he not institute a program, for the next three weeks at least, to purchase seal products from the fishermen from Makkovik to Nain, where this Government operates the fish plants and also the Government stores? This would be a good idea and it would not cost the Minister or the Government much money to institute that program.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Warren: Yes, Mr. Speaker, both of them together. Because the Minister of Development is the owner of the five Government stores, and the Minister of Fisheries is the owner of the five fish plants.

They are in the same communities, and subsequently what they can do, as they have done before up there, is purchase the seal skin and the products from the fishermen and that would give the fishermen an income for the next three or four weeks. By doing that, Mr. Speaker, it would not cost the Government as much money as they are saving now by cutting out the Air Subsidy Program. I say this very seriously, although some of my colleagues -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible) M A Powell to (inaudible).

Mr. Warren: Mr. Speaker, I do not care what M.A. Powell wants to do.

Let me say to my hon. colleague, who is getting a big laugh out of the concerns I am expressing on behalf of the people on the Labrador coast, it is a bit shameful for the Member from Eagle River to be acting so silly in this House.

Let me say I am serious when I am addressing the Minister of Fisheries on this issue. He has the opportunity now to assist the fishermen from Makkovik to Nain, in particular, by purchasing seal skins through the Government store, which the Minister of Development is responsible for, which was done since 1949.

An Hon. Member: Your time is up.

Mr. Warren: Mr. Speaker my time will be up when the Speaker says so.

An Hon. Member: By leave.

An Hon. Member: Tell the Minister of Development about what he said, that it was another Sprung deal.

Mr. Warren: Mr. Speaker, I think it is correct to say that the Sealers Co-op, Mark Small and them, do have markets available. Let me say to my hon. colleague again, and I thank him for the question because I think it is very important, and I am sure my colleagues on this end do not understand what is going on. However, Mr. Speaker, to my colleague over here, if, today, the Government, through the five retail stores and the five fish plants, would purchase a maximum of 6,000 seal skins and get those seal skins tanned, those seal skins can be diverted back into the communities for the handicraft industry, which is one of the biggest industries in this

Province. And that can be done, Mr. Speaker. In fact, it was identified in a craft study that was done two years ago.

Let me say to my hon. colleague, we are not in Government now. Here is your chance. I am saying to my hon. colleagues the chance is here now for you to do it; purchase the seal skins, get the seal skins tanned, and then divert them back to the twenty-seven craft councils throughout Labrador and have them use it to make handicrafts and make clothing and everything else. And that can be done tomorrow.

Mr. Carter: Would the hon. Member permit a question?

Mr. Warren: Sure, as long as I do not lose my time.

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

Mr. Carter: Has he or anybody talked to the Sealers Co-op or the Canadian Sealers Association? They are the one's who are administering the - have you done that or has anybody done that? If you have, what re-action have you gotten from them?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

Mr. Warren: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the hon. Minister for his question. I say to the hon. Minister that the Co-op has already contacted a number of fishermen in Hopedale and said they will give them thirteen dollars for their seal skins.

An Hon. Member: Did you talk to them? Did you?

Mr. Warren: Hold on now. Mr. Speaker, the cost of transportation is greater than the price for the seal skins, and this is where the problem is I say to the Minister. Because the only way to get those seal skins out to the Co-op now is to fly them out, and that is where the cost is involved. The cost is greater than what the fishermen will be paid for the seal skins. But with you people having the five fish plants there and the five stores, surely goodness - and you have freezing capacities there - you can purchase them now from the sealers. And if you want to then take them to Mark Small and his group, do so. But the opportunity is there and you can give employment, four or five weeks work, to a number of fishermen who are practically, as my colleague from Eagle River said, starving.

An Hon. Member: That is true.

Mr. Warren: So, Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. Minister for asking me the question, and I would hope now, after listening to what I have just said, that tomorrow he will talk to Mr. Wareham, who is a very important person in his Department, and I think that can be done.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say one other very important thing. Again, if my hon. colleagues down in the corner would listen, this might not be very important for Placentia -

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

I want to point out to the hon. Member again that the Chair has not interfered much, although the comments coming from my left have not been doing much to enhance the

level of the debate, I must admit. But hon. Members, when they want to call for order, they should call for order, because sometimes Members enjoy the back and forth. But they should call for order. That is why I have not intervened, but I hope hon. Members on both sides will adhere to the rules of the House when we are debating.

The hon. the Member for Eagle River.

An Hon. Member: Torngat.

Mr. Speaker: Torngat. Sorry!

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Warren: Just hearing that comment, let me say to my hon. colleague for Eagle River, do not be too cocky.

Mr. Speaker, I notice I only have twenty-five minutes left, so I better get on with it.

The next item I want to discuss is again to the Minister of Fisheries. And if my colleagues would listen, it is very important to my colleagues as well as to colleagues opposite.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Fisheries probably has two of the best fish plants in this whole Province, or they will be by the end of this summer, in Nain and Makkovik, and probably \$7 million or \$8 million it will cost altogether. Now I will ask the Minister this: With only the salmon and char fishery, particularly in the Nain plant, and I say to the Minister he has asked for leases on four of the middle-distance boats, knowing that his Department are the owners of the two fish plants, would the

Minister consider using one of those boats to supply product to the two fish plants? Because if we do not do that, Mr. Speaker, if we do not have a supply for those two fish plants, we are going to see the people from Nain to Makkovik, as in other years, continuing to live on eight, ten or twelve weeks work. That is all they can get. But if one of those boats was used to supply other species to those fish plants after September, October and November, the people in my district can get up to five months work. I say to the Minister, it is worth looking at. And if there is excess fish, then move it elsewhere.

I am glad my colleague from Eagle River doesn't want any fish to come to the Island this year before the fish is looked after up there, but surely goodness the Minister should look at the possibility of using one of those middle-distance boats to transport fish to those two fish plants, in particular in September, October and November, after the salmon and the char fishery is finished with.

Mr. Speaker, before I close I thought I would throw out something that has been bothering me for a long, long time, and that is that every time I have asked questions in the House to the Premier, the Premier has said time and time again - I think you should listen, boys - that he does not believe anything the hon. Member is talking about, he would not go as far as the door. Mr. Speaker, five or six times now the Premier has, time and time again, said different things. Apparently something is wrong. There is not room in this House for the Premier and myself, no, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Premier was never elected. The Premier is here by

acclamation; he never won an election to come and sit in this House. Now, Mr. Speaker, I will do something for him. If the Premier wants, I will resign my seat, the Premier will resign his seat in Bay of Islands, so why does he not come up to Torngat Mountains and take me on?

An Hon. Member: Hear, hear!

Mr. Warren: Mr. Speaker, by doing that there would be only one of us coming back to this House, and the people of Torngat Mountains can decide who they want. Mr. Speaker, I think it is time for the Premier to do one of two things, either answer the questions I present to him or, yes, resign and come up and take me on in Torngat Mountains; he will then know for himself if the people want to take him on.

Mr. Grimes: You resign first.

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Speaker, what about the Member for Exploits. He has been at it all night. Is he allowed to take the House on his back, or what?

Mr. Warren: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman for Exploits suggested that I resign first. I say to the hon. gentleman for Exploits, both of us should resign at the same time. You cannot have one first and one second, we both have to resign at the same time, the Premier will call the election, and then we will see who should sit in this House on behalf of the people of Torngat Mountain.

An Hon. Member: (inaudible)

Mr. Warren: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman is saying to me, come down and run in Bay of Islands. I say to my hon. colleague, it was

the Premier who said in this House that my questions about my constituents were not worth answering, so it is up to him to come down and take me on in my District. I mean, it is up to the Premier to come down to my District. Anyhow, there it is Mr. Speaker.

An Hon. Member: You are lying. That is not what he said.

An Hon. Member: It is not lies. It is not lies. He is not a liar, and, Mr. Speaker, I detest (inaudible).

Mr. Speaker: Order, please! Order, please!

If the hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West has heard somebody uttering an unparliamentary utterance then he should get up on a point of order and identify who it is, and the Chair will deal with it rather than interfering the way he is.

The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

An Hon. Member: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Speaker, I have heard unparliamentary language several times tonight. I admit I do have a hearing problem, but I did manage to hear it.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

If the hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West is suggesting that the Chair heard it and did not do anything about it, then the Chair will take the appropriate action.

I would ask the hon. gentleman what precisely it was he was referring to. I never heard it, but if he wants to suggest who did say it, the Chair will undertake to see if indeed it was said.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An Hon. Member: Apologize for it.

Mr. Tobin: No, I will not apologize. I will get up and say he said it. That is what I will do.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please! Order, please!

This is what invariably happens when we have the kind of activity we have here this evening. Again I will ask hon. Members to please do hon. Members the courtesy, when they are talking, of listening without making inane statements, statements that make no contribution to the level of debate in the House. I will issue fair warning that the Chair is not going to tolerate the kind of disorderliness we have been hearing for the last little while.

The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains has about a minute left.

Mr. Warren: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I have many other issues concerning Labrador, particularly concerning my District. I think that if hon. Members, in particular down in that corner, were listening more tonight, then we would have gotten more out of the debate. It was unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, that they were more intent on disrupting me as I was speaking.

There is one more issue, on which I am going to close. Some 4,500 people in my District, and in Eagle River District in particular, will be the hardest hit by this Government's move to increase electricity rates. I call upon my hon. colleague for Eagle River to not only send telegrams to Ottawa to ask for UIC extensions for fishermen, but also to do everything in his power, verbally, to convince the Minister of Finance and his Premier and his Government to reduce electricity rates to people with the lowest income per capita anywhere in this Province, and that is the people on the Labrador coast. I thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some Hon. Members: By leave. By leave.

Some Hon. Members: No leave. No leave.

Mr. Speaker: There is no leave extended the hon. gentleman.

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

Ms Duff: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was hoping that the House was going to give my hon. colleague leave, I was so fascinated by what he had to say. He is such a fantastic speaker, that I was disappointed.

I was disappointed again, I must say, at not having the pleasure of hearing from some of the Members opposite. I find it quite astounding as a new Member that nobody on the other side has gotten up to speak. There were very few speakers; very few speakers on the concurrence debates before I left, and I feel

nothing very much has changed.

We are speaking tonight on a non-confidence motion on the budget, which I seconded, and I seconded it because I have, personally totally lost confidence in this Government because of the tangled web of deception it has practiced since it first came to office. I believe this Government is perpetrating an enormous public relations scam on the people of Newfoundland. Starting with its election promises, where are the mother's sons? Where are the jobs? Where are the viable new industries? They certainly have not happened. I think this Government cruelly manipulated the fears and the aspirations of the people of this Province during the election. That was evident to anybody during the election, but at the time I thought it was unrealistic and naive. I have since come to believe that it was a very deliberate act of manipulation, because it was continued in the first Throne Speech and Budget, continued to an even greater extent in the second Throne Speech and budget, and it has reached its highest intensity with the Meech Lake debate, which is a deliberate misrepresentation and misinterpretation of the significance and impact of Meech Lake to generate fear amongst the people of Newfoundland, when actually they have far more cause to fear the action our Premier is currently embarked on.

But this issue has certainly made a very convenient diversionary tactic, because it has taken attention away from all the broken promises, from the failures to address a whole series of critical issues in the Province: it has taken attention away from the fishery, it has taken attention

away from unemployment. Nobody has said one word about the potential economic impact on this Province of the separation of Quebec or the potential breakup of the country. I think the people of Newfoundland and Labrador certainly have a right to know the consequences of the action this Government is taking, and, at this point in time, they do not. Well, all I can say to that is you can fool some of the people all of the time, and you can fool all of the people some of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all of the time.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms Duff: Ultimately, the manipulation and the deceit will catch up with you and will result in, not only the Opposition, but the entire Province of Newfoundland losing trust in this Government.

An Hon. Member: That is pretty original.

Ms Duff: Isn't it? You are allowed to quote occasionally. You have some wonderful quoters over there.

Now this year's budget, which I wish to get into in a little bit more detail, was what I would call the ultimate public relations document. What it did was it hit on all the high profile areas and threw something at them for everyone, so that what resulted was a very good immediate response because it created a good first impression, which was great, because after the budget was delivered and the media went around and interviewed the various representatives of organizations who were here, they got very good thirty-second media clips. It was

only after the details were released, and these agencies and groups began to examine the budget in detail in relation to their own requirements, did the truth of the budget hit home.

An Hon. Member: Right on!

Ms Duff: You have had your school trustees, you have had your teachers employed in hospital schools, your home operators, your community living associations, and some of the chronic care facility operators, recreation associations, cultural groups, historic groups, fishermen in communities, operating fish plant closures, and communities in need of capital works which were denied capital works, oftentimes for partisan reasons, you have had your university students, all speaking out negatively once the truth hit home.

Even the mayor of St. John's, who is a known Liberal, a tremendous supporter of the Premier, who stuck his neck on the Meech Lake line at the request of the Premier, was shocked to death when he found out that the Premier, first of all, socked his municipality with a \$300,000 payroll tax, which he could not read from the budget; nobody could have seen that in the budget, what the impact of this so-called health and education tax was going to be. He got an even greater shock when the Premier called the citizens of St. John's parasites, and the Minister of Works and Services is doing everything he can to lobby to take the funding away from the Outer Ring road. So some of the allies are going to get a rude shock and a rude awakening.

Mr. Doyle: Where are the Members

for St. John's? Where are (inaudible)?

Ms Duff: They are silenced like the other Members on the other side of the House. I think the only reason why Members on the other side of the House are not getting up must be because they are under the thumb and the very tight control of the Premier who has told them, do not open your mouths, especially when I am not in the House, because I do not know what you are going to say. And I cannot say that I blame him. Having listened to some of the comments of the Minister of Finance, with his Kentucky Fried Chicken garbage and his short hairs remark, I just wonder how many times you have to publicly apologize and still stay in Cabinet. And, then, while I was away - I was reading some of the papers when I came back - I find -

Mr. Murphy: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: A point of order, the Member for St. John's South.

Ms Duff: I do not think there is a point of order.

Mr. Speaker: The Chair will decide that.

Mr. Murphy: Mr. Speaker, a point of clarification. I say to the hon. the Member for St. John's East, a long time ago, I declared my intentions and commitment to the Outer Ring road and I have not changed my mind.

Ms Duff: Hear, hear!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!
Order, please!

There is no point of order, there is a point of clarification. I point out to hon. Members that there is no provision for points of clarification. There is room for points of order, but not for clarification. The hon. the Member for St. John's East.

Ms Duff: Mr. Speaker, it does not bother me that it was not a point of order, because the clarification was music to my ears.

Mr. Parsons: The Member for St. John's South agrees?

Ms Duff: He is in favour, yes. I found in reading over some of the papers while I was away, that two of the Members opposite, I believe the hon. the Member for Eagle River and the hon. the Member for LaPoile, managed to get themselves royally ticked off by rather negative Telegram editorials for the nonsense they were speaking. I can say I have some sympathy with the Premier if he has put a gag order on the Members opposite; it is a lot safer that way.

Now, almost daily there are new groups who are finding out that this perfect budget, this Liberal budget, is, in fact, liberally laced with both deceit and failed promises. Perhaps that is nowhere more evident than on the revenue side of this budget, where the impression was left that tax hikes would be very minimal, when, in fact, there were, I think, something like \$83 million, new money, to be taken out of the pockets of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador in 1990 and 1991. These included the now infamous payroll tax, which was first presented under the motherhood banner of a Health and Education tax. The Opposition's role, of course, in this sort of

thing is to get behind the smoke and mirrors and try to expose the truth, and it certainly has taken an awful lot of persistent digging to get any answers and any truth, particularly with the payroll tax, where day after day, and in all the Estimates Committees, it was totally impossible to get a straight answer from the Minister of Finance, whether because he did not know the answer or because he was told not to reveal the answer, I still do not know. I am very happy, in fact, that finally we did get an answer, that the educational and health care institutions would not be subject to that tax, but I think it is fairly evident that then we have false revenue or expenditure estimates. Because if the money has not been identified to pay back the health and education estimates and the expenditures, it has got to come from somewhere. You have a zero sum game here, and if you are paying these institutions back for the tax you are taking from them, you have to take it from somewhere else.

However, it was very disappointing to find out that municipalities with a payroll of over \$300,000 were, in fact, subject to the tax. In view of the fact that the Government in its statement, and again this is all part of the deceit, the Government in its Highlights of the Budget says this Government does not take lightly a decision to raise taxes and we have deliberately avoided regressive expenditures which would impact on those least able to pay, well, I would like to ask the Government who do they think is going to pay the payroll tax that is going to be charged to municipalities, since municipalities have no choice but to put it on their municipal tax

base, which is a property tax, which is one of the most regressive of all taxes, which is just, in fact, pushing all responsibility for tax collecting onto another agency, very similar to what was done with Memorial University, by giving a hike in the student loans and then ordering the University to raise the fees? You like to get the credit, but you do not like to take the blame.

Any consumption tax is regressive. And although last year you did sneakily put in last year's Budget \$43 million of revenue which would be added on this year, including the 1 per cent personal income tax and the phase out of the Hydro subsidy, hoping that people would have short memories and would not remember it, I do not know how you can say that phasing out the Hydro subsidy, which has to result in higher light bills, is not a regressive form of taxation.

Mr. Noel: The GST is regressive.

Ms Duff: I think we are referring to the Provincial Budget at the present time.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible) because you are too blind.

Mr. Simms: Mr. Speaker, what about that weird sound down there in the corner? Is there any chance of cutting it off?

Mr. Tobin: I thought the goat spoke in Mobile, not in the House of Assembly.

Ms Duff: I think another area where the Government has been somewhat deceptive is in the constant blame it has placed on the Federal Government's freeze on

the EPF funding. Every single time questions were asked about why this could not be done, why that could not be done, the constant answer was, 'Because the Federal Government has cut back money that was supposed to have been received by the Provinces.' Well, I regret, I abhor in fact, I in no way support the Federal Government's action on the Established Program Funding, but it does tend to ignore the fact, or at least create the mis-impression in the public mind that this Government actually lost money, was cut back from where it was last year, when, in fact, it actually got \$43 million more. What we have is not a cutback, but a freeze on anticipated increases. It still hurts, because you are planning and counting on those increases, but it ignores the fact that the Federal Government does provide, I think it is, about 48 per cent of the total Provincial revenue, not even counting programs like ACOA or UIC or family allowances. And I do not know how this Government expects to have a co-operative relationship with the Federal Government, to get the kind of help it needs from a Federal Government -

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Ms Duff: Mr. Speaker, I am sorry, but I would like to ask for order. I normally do not mind disruptions, but this is getting to be a bit too much.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Ms Duff: I think they are having a party down there, or maybe they had something for supper.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

I ask hon. Members to my left if they would extend the courtesy to the hon. Member so that she can be heard. Can we have some quiet, please, on this side of the House?

Ms Duff: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I think I would like to ask the Premier to come to the rest of the night sessions, because this place just goes to rack and ruin when the Premier is not present.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms Duff: The question I was asking was how does the Government expect to achieve the co-operation of the Federal Government, which we desperately need, if we constantly beat up on the Feds as an excuse for everything that we fail to do?

If all the failures that have been blamed on the Federal freeze in EPF funding were added up, the amount would be at least ten times the total loss in anticipated funding. And that is another form of deception, as far as I am concerned.

Now I am very realistic when it comes to budgets and I know that given the economic reality of this Province, no Government and no Minister can do everything they want to do. The people, I think, would respect honesty. I do not know why you could not just tell them what the economic reality is, even if you have to blame it a little bit on your predecessors, and say that because we have so much money, we can only do so many things. I do not know why you have to deceive.

The area of health care I have had an opportunity to speak to before, in the Concurrence Debate, so I will not get into that in any great detail. But something came up today that I think I would like to comment on. It was in the form of a question from the hon. the Member for Grand Bank about the directive sent out to the primary health care centers about the 24-hour stay in holding beds. Now I had a very long conversation about these primary health care centers with some of the doctors in the Burin Peninsula, when our Caucus went down there, and they have very serious concerns about this directive and, I must say, so do I. I do not know what is behind it. I do not know if the Government felt there was some abuse going on, or what the purpose of it was, and certainly the Minister of Health did not make that clear. But it would seem, to me, rather insulting to the physicians to have their physician discretion removed by a Departmental directive telling them that they could not keep a person in a holding bed for more than twenty-four hours.

The whole idea of primary health care, and I think this Government has many times stated how important health care in rural Newfoundland is, and that is the basis, that is the bottom of the tier, that is where people first come in contact with the health care system, and the holding beds in those primary health care centers are for a number of purposes, among them stabilization, assessment and, to some extent, rehabilitation. Now if you are trying to stabilize somebody who may have had, say, a pre-cardiac crisis or a minor fracture that does not require open surgery or something else, it

may be that that person should not be sent home within twenty-four hours, but does not need to be sent to a secondary acute bed; maybe they need to be there three days or four days. But I think what it does most of all is it tends to do something negative to the physician's satisfaction in those primary health care areas. And this is what these cottage hospital doctors and these doctors who serve in remote rural areas are very concerned about. They feel the tools they need to treat their patients, and their relationship with their patients, is being undermined, that if all they are is an automatic referral to a secondary institution removed from the community, what is the point of their being there? - they are not allowed to use the skills they were trained for.

They also feel that the intent of Government over time is to remove the level of diagnostic services which are currently available, when, in fact, they should be increased. I mean, first-level laboratory facilities, x-ray facilities and other backup services that physicians need to properly diagnose, stabilize and rehabilitate patients who are ill. And I would like to say to the minister, and I am not saying this from me, I am saying this after having had conversations with quite a number of primary health care physicians in rural Newfoundland, that this is going to have an extremely negative effect on physician retention and recruitment, and that is currently one of the very big problem areas that this Government is facing in trying to provide a decent level of health care services to the remote and rural areas of this Province.

Could I ask the table Officers how much time I have left, as I have quite a number of other areas and I may have to skip some of them.

Table Officer: Ten minutes.

Ms Duff: Ten minutes? Okay. The other area I did want to touch on, and I will do so only briefly because I have already had an opportunity to speak to this in one of our debates, is the lack of emphasis that is being placed on Culture, Heritage and Recreation. They are in a Department which I have said before is far too large, which needs the directed attention of a dedicated Minister - I mean dedicated in the sense of assigned to that Department, not that the incumbent Minister is not doing his best. These areas are underfunded, there are staff vacancies which have not been filled, there have been absolutely no new initiatives and, in fact, this year there is no capital funding for recreation at all. I think it is, at least in part, related to the fact that the current Minister is overburdened and simply does not have time to push at Cabinet level and to talk to his civil servants in those areas and to devote the attention that is needed to making those areas work.

Another area I would like to touch on is the demolition of the Ombudsmen Office, or the proposed demolition, with the intent of Government to repeal the Parliamentary Commissioners Act. I think this is an extremely regressive step and one that the Government will, in time, regret. I do not like to think that this is so, but I have a feeling that the Government may have gotten the incumbent mixed up with the office and felt uneasy with an incumbent

who at one point sat in this House as a Conservative member. Whatever the reason, we are a Province that has extremely enlightened legislation in this area. This legislation, in fact, was brought in by a Liberal Government, although it was not implemented until a Conservative Government got in place. But the legislation is very important, because its purpose is to safeguard the public interest. Although I think the Minister of Finance's rationale for that was that the MHAs could do that job, I think if you look at the legislation you will know that the MHAs do not have the power that is available in that Parliamentary Commissioners Act, and it is disturbing that this would be considered so unimportant that the Government could axe that to save \$236,000 and, at the same time, double the budget of the Newfoundland Information Services, which is widely believed and was certainly attacked as a Government propaganda arm. That certainly was the way it was promoted when this Government was in Opposition.

The other area of the Budget, another area - I should not say the other area, because there are many of the Budget that concern me - is the cut in the capital funding for Pippy Park, which was never great to begin with, never enough to do the job. There is really no ability to develop that park in any sense as a recreational area, and it brings into question whether or not that park was ever intended to be what many people believe it to be as a park. The Government also has never adopted a plan for the park, and there are absolutely no safeguards that any of the open space or wilderness area within that park will ever be protected.

This Government also, I think very disturbing to the City of St. John's and to the other municipalities in this region, is currently trying its living best, having sent its Minister of Public Works and Transportation to Ottawa for that purpose, to break an agreement and a commitment made to the people of the Northeast Avalon to deal with very serious traffic problems in this area by removing the \$67 million allocated to the Northeast Avalon region as part of the Roads for Rails Agreement because this is one of the areas that lost their trains.

Now \$67 million is not a small amount of money, but the total agreement was \$860 million. What you are looking at here is only less than 10 per cent of the total funding in that agreement for a road to service one-third of the population of the Province, virtually.

The Roads for Rails Agreement, in hindsight, you can say if you like, was a total sellout, but if it was the best that could be done at the time, and the train was being lost anyway through attrition; if you had no train, you would have nothing to bargain, and you might have gotten nothing. But whether or not it was a sellout you were given \$860 million, and signed, sealed and delivered in that agreement was \$67 million for a very important component of a transportation link in this region where traffic is expected to increase, where population is expected to increase, and where safety is a very major factor.

But I am not really surprised, because this Government is a Government which specializes in recisions and breaking agreements,

in backing out of commitments. Why should we be surprised that this Government, on the pretense of reviewing the priority, is, in fact, doing everything it possibly can behind the scenes to take the funding for that road, even if it means sitting on it like a broody hen until, it hopes, there will be a change in Government in Ottawa?

What they have succeeded in doing, in terms of the funding for transportation in the Province, is going into spending that money at a time when the cost is going to be much higher. The tenders were so low when they came in for capital works this year that they were almost unbelievable; because the developers are hungry. They may not be so hungry when the Government finally gets off its pot and realizes it has to do justice to the Northeast Avalon region and to eastern Newfoundland, as well as to everywhere else in the Province.

From reading Hansard I found some extremely interesting comments by the Premier which would certainly lead one to believe that there is a bias against the urban areas in the Northeast Avalon in this Government. We had that wonderful discourse on the question of parasites which, thank God, the Premier was roundly taken to task for in The Evening Telegram, on the basis of his primitive economic ideas.

At the same time, I think it is a trend, the same trend that caused the Premier to delay the Hibernia negotiations while he tried to get the topside construction moved from the east coast to the west coast and various other areas. And this, again, is all part of the great deceit, because it is an attempt to divide and conquer. I

say the city is a parasite, but I am a parasite too, but that does not change the fact that this remark is made deliberately to feed into some of the illusory feelings people have about St. John's, that this city gets everything. And you are not the only Government which has done that. For generations, successive Provincial Governments have built that overpass higher, have tried to play rural Newfoundland and urban Newfoundland off against each other, and I think it has been to the detriment of both; you cannot bail out one end of a dory if it has a leak.

The Province is a whole. The capital city happens to have the highest population density, it happens to have been here a long time, and because of its population and its age, it has some lifestyle advantages, perhaps, that other areas do not have and cannot have because of population. But it is certainly not a parasite. Because if it was ever looked at in any rational way, it would be very clearly seen that the citizens of St. John's as individual people pay more for what they have than any other people in the Province; they pay a very high level of municipal taxes, and they do not even mind doing that. But this fraudulent argument, that St. John's gets everything, is a political smoke screen geared to simply divide and conquer, and I think it is unworthy of the Premier to feed into that.

I would like to remind the Premier and the Government of the importance of the City of St. John's in the recent election, and the fact that the St. John's vote is notoriously known to be a swing vote. And if it keeps up that the

people of St. John's are being discriminated against as the capital city on the grounds that they are parasites or the overpass, then that vote can be lost just as quickly as it was gained. St. John's is the capital of the Province, and it is a beautiful and historic city-

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms Duff: - whichever Newfoundlander should be comfortable in and should be proud of, just as the citizens of St. John's should be, and I think are, proud of the beauty and resourcefulness and lifestyle of other areas of this Province.

Newfoundland belongs to us all, and I think it is totally counterproductive to engage in that kind of rhetoric.

An Hon. Member: Why do you?

Ms Duff: I do not. I do not believe in the overpass, I do not call anyone else a parasite, I thoroughly and fully appreciate the needs of people in other parts of the Province, but I am sick to death of fraudulent politicians trying to create that kind of paranoia for their own political gain.

An Hon. Member: What about the Argentia ferry? That is in rural Newfoundland.

Ms Duff: Well, if you want me to speak for a moment on the Argentia ferry, I have not heard the Government articulate its policy on this issue, and I think there are split opinions, even on our Council. From my own point of view, I support a year-round ferry in Argentia, if for no other reason - well, there are many

reasons, but one of the major reasons is the tremendous boost that this will give to the tourism industry on the east coast.

In Sydney, I think something like 1,800 tour buses come in every year. Two hundred of them get to this island, and it has been identified by marketing studies that one of the greatest impediments to increasing that traffic is that tremendous ride back and forth, that boring ride that people have to go on. And the revenues to this Province from tourism do not go to the east coast or the west coast, they go to the Provincial Treasury.

There are other very significant reasons, too, which I think are worthy of mention, and one of them is safety. I think safety on the Trans-Canada Highway would be very greatly increased if freight was coming in on a year-round basis to an eastern port. And I think if you follow the rationale of the Premier and the Minister of Transportation with regard to the need for upgrading of the Trans-Canada Highway, and that is a rationale that is being used to take away funding for the east end arterial, he should be very concerned to reduce the trailer traffic going across and back on the Trans Canada, because that is beating the devil out of that highway at a totally unnecessary maintenance cost to this Province.

I do not believe for one minute that it is going to have that negative effect on Port aux Basques, or that negative effect on the businesses based in St. John's which are lobbying their heads off to try to convince people that they are going to go out of business if a small amount of drop-trailer traffic is brought

into Argentia on the Clara and Joseph Smallwood.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Ms Duff: I have a couple of other issues, but I will be able to speak again on the Budget, so with your leave, Mr. Speaker, I would like to sit.

Some Hon. Members: Her, hear!

An Hon. Member: Not bad. Not bad.

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

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

Mr. Hearn: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

An Hon. Member: Let's hear it for rural Newfoundland.

Some Hon. Members: Rural Newfoundland!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Doyle: Good speech, Shannie.

Mr. Hearn: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, let me congratulate my colleague from St. John's East on a wonderful speech. Covering the budget exceptionally well, she delved into most of the nooks and crannies and ferreted out all the discrepancies. We have been doing that for quite some time.

A few nights ago, I had the opportunity to speak on the main Budget speech and, at that time, covered many of the concerns I have with the Budget, going over the lack of funding in the Department of Education, the discrepancies in fisheries, and problems in the health care sector. But there are some areas

I did not cover.

One of the things I would like to mention, Mr. Speaker, is the lack of funding in the Department of Fisheries to address some of the concerns around the Province at present. A few days ago I read with interest an article in the paper where the Quebec Government reacted much as the Government here to the fisheries adjustment package; they were upset with the amount of funding identified for certain sectors of the fishery. Of course, the fishery in Quebec is not as big as it is here in the Province, but to make sure that fishermen did not want in their Province, they put in \$50 million to address the problem. That is \$50 million more than the Department of Fisheries here, the Government here, has thrown into the pot to help address some of the problems in our fishery.

The Federal Government has come up with an adjustment package. It has been heavily criticized, but as far as it goes, it might be going in the right direction. It does address the overall problem, and nobody has any argument with that, in relation to proper management of resource, in relation to hiring more observers, and doing more research, which is so badly needed. On the other side of it, it is sight specific in relation to directed funding. Now that is the area where a lot of people have problems, because the federal dollars basically zero in on the fish plants that were closed, and the communities based upon deep-sea operations, which are being put out of business, perhaps to some degree, at least, are affected. So the funding was targeted toward these areas, leaving often a vacuum.

A tremendous number of fishermen, especially inshore fishermen, who, due to bad years in their areas, and I can use as examples the southwest coast, we can use sections all around the Province, certainly sections of my own area, who over the last few years have had disastrous seasons, and consequently the fishermen just have not had any income, not even enough to qualify for UI, and certainly would accept some kind of retirement package or whatever, the older ones in particular, if offered by the Feds. The Federal Government has given some indication that they might be willing to look at this, so I presume the Province is going to press for such a package to help the fishery in such areas. However, we have spent some time on the fishery in discussing the Budget, here in the House in particular.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to mention tourism for a minute. I notice the Minister is not in his seat right now, but I hope he is listening. One of the key areas in the Province, as he will admit and as all of us will, is in the field of tourism. A lot of new dollars are being brought into the Province in recent years; we have been doing a lot more promotions than we did in the past.

People generally know more about the country, more about the world, and one of the few unspoiled parts of the world is the Province of Newfoundland. Anybody who has done any amount of travelling realizes that Newfoundland has more beauty and a whole lot more to offer per square mile than any other part of the world, that I have seen. There are very few places where you can travel short distances -

An Hon. Member: Labrador

Mr. Hearn: I am talking about the Province, certainly Newfoundland and Labrador. Labrador even moreso, if we want to talk about beauty and the preserved wilderness and so on, so far at least. Let us hope we can continue to do it, because it does offer tremendous opportunities for people who want to come here and use. Not to abuse, but to use, and certainly it is something to preserve for our own young people who are growing up.

For many years we were not conscious enough at all of the world around us, of the environment, and it is only in very very recent times that we are becoming somewhat conscious. And it is gratifying to see that the people who seem to be more conscious than any of us are the young school children. I have heard more young children, very young children in some cases, remark about the use of certain materials, whether it be sprays or styrofoam cups or whatever, in recent days than I have, certainly, older people, who usually are the ones who cause most of the mess. So maybe we are starting to change, and change begins with education. Of course, if we can get to the young people, then we do not have a problem as the years go by. But we do have a beautiful Province when we look at the Province in total, Newfoundland and Labrador, and we have a lot to offer.

One of the problems we have is getting the people in. The Member for St. John's East hit the nail on the head when she said one of the concerns people have when they come to visit our Province is that they have to land in Port aux

Basques and drive all the way across the Province, only to turn around and drive all the way back again. And that takes away somewhat, because anybody who drives the Trans Canada on a regular basis knows that except for very few areas, Gander and Grand Falls and couple of those towns, you see very, very little from the highway, because real Newfoundland is down around the nooks and crannies, all over the place. So if we had a ferry landing in Argentia, where they could come on up through into St. John's and then circle back around to Port aux Basques, or vice versa, I think you would find a lot more people interested in coming to the Province.

The concerns people have about downgrading the system, certainly I do not think are valid; I think it would be a tremendous uplift in the system generally. And, of course, looking at the Argentia area, where I was just this morning - in fact, some of the people were asking if I saw their Member. I said he is a pretty hard fellow to miss, but I told them he was alive and well. They suggested that if I saw him, tell him to write sometime. Seriously, I just passed through. But Argentia has a tremendous amount of potential itself, not only as a ferry base but as a port of entry for a number of different possibilities.

And in the area adjacent to Argentia there is Placentia's Castle Hill, a very old historic site, and Placentia itself. And if instead of coming to St. John's directly you want to take the long tour, go out the Cape Shore, which is as close to Ireland as you ever saw - nice paved roads out there now; there is the bird sanctuary

at Cape St. Mary's, a world attraction, one of the best known bird sanctuaries in the world, drawing a lot of attention. In just a few short years the road will be paved right around the loop into St. Mary's Bay, down to where you have the caribou herd, and there are very few places in this world where you can drive along and stop in your car on the side of the road and see 5,000 or 6,000 caribou looking at you, waiting to get their pictures taken. There aren't too many out there yet, there are some, but for anybody who has not seen that, as we get into July and August, some day just cruise down Salmonier Line, keep going left down through St. Mary's Bay, and between St. Vincent's and Trepassey you will see thousands and thousands of caribou; the Member for Placentia will verify what I am saying, thousands of caribou right on the side of the road, or you can go up the Southern Shore and circle around the other way. It is about a four hour drive to leave St. John's and come back to St. John's again, but, in the meantime, you will see a number of historic sites: we have a couple of good museums, we have small town parks, we have Provincial parks, we have a number of old light houses, but the caribou herd is probably the best attraction. Actually, the caribou stand right on the side of the road. In fact, quite often they come up on the road and if you stop your car, they will come up and look in through the window at you.

An Hon. Member: Did you hear what Mr. Ramsay said?

Mr. Hearn: No. What was that?

An Hon. Member: You get lots of brown (inaudible) substance.

Mr. Hearn: No problem. You certainly can. Anybody, especially the people in St. John's who have not been around the loop, looking for somewhere to go for a drive on Sunday, it is tremendous. You just go up through the Goulds and Bay Bulls and keep on going, you can circle right around, and in four or five hours you are back home and you have seen some of the nicest country, some of the best variety you will ever see anywhere is this country, or probably in the world, from the sheltered harbors going up the Southern Shore to the rugged coastline, to the barrens, the best bakeapple picking, partridgeberry picking, blueberry picking, trouting, salmon rivers, you name it. In that four or five hour drive, you have everything you will ever want to find.

I notice the Minister of Environment is here. I mentioned partridgeberry picking. One of the concerns in the area right now is, for a number of years going back, when he was working up in the area in fact, we used to have a lot of fires and a lot of the area was burned over. We have not had any burning for quite some time, so I must write the Minister shortly and ask him if he would consider arranging some controlled burning, because burning of the brush not only provides good areas for partridgeberries and blueberries, it is also, then, a good habitat for partridge. The partridge usually were found, when they were very plentiful, around areas that were burned out, because you had new brush, not high brush that obstructed them. And quite a few berries grow around burned out areas, and partridge feed quite a lot on partridgeberries and blueberries so, consequently, some burning

might encourage, not only the return of the berries, but also help in the return of the partridge. Anyway, that is an invitation to people to drive through, and if you want to stop half way in between, in Renew's, and drop in, I would more than welcome you.

However, there are some other concerns that we have. I look around at Members when they get up to speak, and I have listened to them. Very few Government Members have spoken to the Budget Speech, and none are showing interest in speaking on the amendment. But very few people realize that this time next year we do not know what kind of situation we are going to have here in this House of Assembly.

Mr. Efford: Next year?

Mr. Hearn: Yes, next year.

Mr. Efford: What do you mean?

Mr. Hearn: What I mean is within the next month or so there may be some dramatic changes occurring in the country, and did one ever stop to think what would happen if the country starts falling apart? Are we just going to be able to go on as we do, the same way? I know we are a Provincial Government, we are elected Provincially, whatever, but a tremendous amount of our budget, of the money that is in your budget, a tremendous amount of the programs that we discuss, most of the complaints that the Government has is in relation to Ottawa. What happens if all this starts crumbling and disappearing, whether it be from the positive side or the negative side?

An Hon. Member: You cannot

believe that?

Mr. Hearn: Oh, yes. I sincerely do.

An Hon. Member: Are you calling Bourassa a separatist? Do you think Bourassa is going to separate?

Mr. Hearn: If the country starts to disintegrate, any elected Member who can sit in this House after watching and listening to what is going on around us, and everyone is, and can say do not worry, be happy, nothing is going to happen, I do not think that is acting very responsibly.

I doubt if there is a Member here who hopes that the country will disintegrate, but I also doubt if there is one Member here who does not have some concerns about what is happening.

Mr. Efford: What is your solution?

Mr. Hearn: What is the solution to it? If I had the solution, I would be Prime Minister.

An Hon. Member: He doesn't have one, either.

Mr. Hearn: No. The solution to the present impasse is a matter of people setting priorities. What is the greatest priority? The greatest priority today is coming up after June 23 with a country in which all of us live contentedly and happily as equals. If that can be done, we do not have a problem.

The problem I have with what is going on, as far as Newfoundland is concerned, is that we have one man's opinion and it is only an opinion. I saw a letter in the paper a couple of weeks ago which

I thought was one of the best I have read; I have read a number of pro-Meech Lake and a number of anti-Meech Lake, but this one letter was relatively objective and the person - it was a woman, I believe, who was writing the letter - was talking about the Premier's stand on Meech Lake and some of the things he was saying about it all, how he explained the distinct society clause and what have you, and the Senate reform, and she said at the end, "The one thing you forgot to say, Mr. Premier, was 'in my opinion'".

Originally, when the Premier started talking about these things, he would occasionally say, "In my opinion", but as he got involved and suddenly realized he was the saviour of the country, in his opinion, he began to believe what he was saying, he began to believe that how he interpreted the Meech Lake agreement was the one and only true interpretation of the Meech Lake Agreement, despite the fact that a number of other Premiers, in fact, originally all of them, and a number of constitutional experts across the country, a number of constitutional experts in the Province, much more wise than the Premier in relation to constitutional issues, did not agree with the Premier's interpretation. So maybe some people should start asking, is he right? Okay, let us say that to a point he is right, and let us look at senate reform.

An Hon. Member: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hearn: I did not say I agree, I said let us say he is, right? Let us look at his argument on senate reform. The Premier's main hang-up right now is in relation to senate reform. Sometime ago,

you know, he said perhaps with a sunset clause - maybe they should have called it a sundown clause, it might be sundown - we could get along with Meech Lake as is. If he feels that way, why go through the rescinding process we did, why cause such concern in the country, concern originally that has now led to perhaps outright indignation? And we have had a hardening of sides in the country, we have had a polarization of the issue. The unfortunate thing about it is we are getting the anti-English anti-French feeling, and that is extremely serious. Because whatever happens in relation to the Meech issue, there are going to be a number of scars that will take quite some time to heal, and, in fact, it might be too late to start healing some of them. But in relation to the senate issue, the Premier's main reason for objecting to the Meech Lake Accord was because Newfoundland will always be the poor cousin if we do not have senate reform.

Let us have a look at senate reform. As I said before, when I spoke on the Meech Lake Accord, my feeling with the senate would be abolish it entirely. Number one, if the Premier's dream comes true, that we do get senate reform - first of all, let us look at the makeup of the country. We have ten Provinces, two territories. The big Provinces of Quebec and Ontario, if anyone -

An Hon. Member: (inaudible)

Mr. Hearn: Yes, you certainly can. In fact, all of you can. Do you want me to get someone to take you out? We have ten Provinces, the two major ones Quebec and Ontario, if anyone thinks for a minute that Quebec and Ontario

will agree to have equal representation with Newfoundland or with Alberta or with Prince Edward Island, I think we are looking at a pipe dream. The Premier says, but we are equal in relation to a Province. We are a province, they are a Province, we are equal that way and we should have equal representation. What about the number of seats that are in Port aux Basques? Port aux Basques only makes up part of a seat. St. John's has several. Why isn't Port aux Basques equal to St. John's? Why isn't Port de Grave equal to St. John's?

Mr. Efford: It is.

Mr. Hearn: I knew I was going to get that. You know, why is not Trinity South equal to St. John's?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible) Province.

Mr. Hearn: Yes, they are equal around the Cabinet table? Are you trying to tell that the Member for Port de Grave has the same clout around the table as the Ministers from St. John's, the Minister of Finance and all of those heavy people?

Mr. Efford: Yes.

Mr. Hearn: Of course not. Of course not.

An Hon. Member: How much did you have?

Mr. Hearn: A fair amount. A fair amount. All you have to do is come into my District, Sir, and I can show you a lot of it. Yes, siree, a hell of a lot more clout than the Member for Windsor - Buchans, no doubt about that.

First of all, in order for it to

come true, we are dreaming a pipe dream. Let us look at the other part of the senate. Even if the senate is agreed to look at senate reform, what is it going to do? Even if we had an equal senate, where Newfoundland has equal representation to the other Provinces, we are still only one Province and, if you want to look at it, you have nine against you still. So having equal say means very little. You know, the percentage changes not numberwise. But even if that is the case, what is the senate going to do? That is the operable question.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Mr. Hearn: What is the Senate going to do? The Senate really has very little power which it uses. Because we elect to govern us in Canada: at the provincial level we elect provincial Members, federally we elect federal Members, who make decisions, who make laws and rules, and who should answer to the people for what they do, what they say and how they perform.

And sometimes I wonder. If we had a lot of people here looking upon us, they would certainly be saying whether or not we were performing the way they wanted us to perform. But if a senate is elected, what is the senate going to do unless we give the senate powers they do not have now? The Premier says oh, the Senate has the power and we will make sure the Senate uses the power. What happens then? Where is this power taken from? Somebody is carrying out the duties now, either provincially or federally. Is the Federal Government going to give

up power to the Senate? The answer to that is no. So where does the power come from? If there is power going to the Senate, the power has to come from the Province.

There are two distinct views of Canada. One, where the central Government has all the power. If we add more power to the Senate, that means we have a stronger central Government. Some people say that is exactly what we want, that is exactly what we want in the utopia where everything is done justly, properly, fairly, where everyone is treated properly. That is the way it should be, that is the ideal way, that is the way it never is in political life.

Consequently, Newfoundland's best chance of survival, Newfoundland's best chance of having input, is to have a strong Provincial Government, with a fair amount of clout and some say in decision making, especially in an area such as the fishery.

I was intrigued, in recent weeks, to see the Minister of Fisheries suggest that there should be a joint committee set up, a joint management board of the Province with the Feds, and I agree with him wholeheartedly. I support the Minister of Fisheries in his request, because it is the same thing as we have been asking for for years.

The Premier will get up and say, you know, jurisdiction over the fishery, how can you patrol the 200 mile limit? Nobody ever said anything about patrolling the 200 mile limit, all we ever asked for was a shared say in decision making in issues relating to the fishery. The Provincial

Government is asking for it right now because they know how little input we really have in such issues, and they realize how little Ottawa really knows about our problems. If we are going to solve them, then there must be some direct input from the Province. This can only happen if you have a good, strong Provincial Government with a fair amount of clout, with a good working relationship with Ottawa. What do we have right now? We have a Provincial Government which does not have a good working relationship with Ottawa. In fact, I would say has no working relationship with Ottawa, and it is quite evident in the fisheries adjustment package that came down; the Province was completely and utterly ignored in it because of the way it has dealt with the Federal Government.

The more interesting thing to watch, perhaps, is what is going to happen to Hibernia negotiations. For the sake of the Province and for the sake of the Minister, let us hope nothing negative happens. If the Minister of Mines and Energy stood tonight to speak in this debate and really wanted to express everything that is going through his mind, I am sure he would say to us, I do have some concerns about the future of negotiations, depending on what is happening, not only in our relationship with the Federal Government, which is extremely important, but what are the companies thinking right now? If you are going to put several billion dollars into an investment in a country that is disintegrating, you are going to think twice. So whatever way we turn, unless this country becomes a unified, solidified country, Newfoundland is going to suffer.

Consequently, perhaps it is time other people's opinions were looked at and listened to. Perhaps people realize that Meech Lake Accord as the Meech Lake Accord stands does very little in relation to hurting or helping Newfoundland - it takes nothing away, it gives us nothing. What it does, the Premier says, is prevent us, maybe, from changing things down the road that will effect us. Maybe we should take one thing at a time. Let us make sure we have a solid, unified country, then we can work on the pipe dreams. And maybe pipe dreams do come true. But they only come true if you have a country that is willing and Provinces which are willing to co-operate with each other to make sure that Newfoundland gets a share, not by turning off Provinces such as Newfoundland, which will easily happen if we turn off everybody else.

An Hon. Member: (inaudible) polls in my area.

Mr. Hearn: Mr. Speaker, the one thing about polls is polls are usually only valid the day of the election. I have been around long enough to see polls. I saw polls in St. Mary's - The Capes back in 1980.

An Hon. Member: Did you consider (inaudible)?

Mr. Hearn: No, they did not even put my name on it. That may have changed the poll. But the point is polls are only good the day of an election. Polls change. Don't get caught up in polls, because what it tends to do is make you arrogant, you feel you are so far ahead in the poll you do not have to worry. But one little issue: People never forget. You never

forget that you are elected by the people, and you must do whatever you can to help your people, and they will not forget you.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Hearn: I suggest to the Member, if he wants to see a good poll, do one up in my area and put his name on it. All right? Mr. Speaker, I am getting away from the topic.

Mr. Flight: I am really disappointed in your (inaudible).

Mr. Speaker: Order, please! Order, please!

Mr. Hearn: Hopefully, some of the comments on Meech Lake will get some people thinking, because I think we are at a crucial time in our history. It is a time when our budget next year will be entirely different, and hopefully it will be, hopefully it will be a lot better. But it could be a lot different because of the Federal content, and anybody who does not realize that, it is about time we stopped dreaming and got down to reality.

Why I support the non-confidence motion is that the Budget itself was smoke and mirrors. It confused the people with a lot of fancy writing. But when we got down to the facts and figures, we found out that the Minister of Finance had done a good job in confusing the people and taking money away he did not tell them about. The unfortunate thing about it, for him, is that he forgot to tell the people, because down the road the people will not forget to tell him. Thank you, Mr. Speaker

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear'

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Kilbride.

Mr. R. Aylward: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I note that the Minister of Social Services wants to get up, but he has been told by his House Leader that none of them over there are allowed to.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, Hear'

Mr. R. Aylward: They are trying to shut the House down as fast as they can, Mr. Speaker. I am surprised the Minister for Social Services would obey that order, because I know how much he loves to speak in this House, and I know how much he loves to get his \$100,000 a year to read pickle recipes to the people of the Province. Mr. Speaker. But the Member for Ferryland fixed his pickles the other day, when he was speaking.

Mr. Simms: Did you hear that? The hon. the Member for Ferryland fixed your pickle, buddy, the other night.

Mr. R. Aylward: There is another one. I happened to be away from the House of Assembly today, and where I was I was listening to the news on radio most of the day and I heard a report that there were questions in the House of Assembly today about people who provide services to handicapped people of this Province having their funding cut. They requested \$100,000 plus - I cannot remember the details - and they were offered somewhere around \$30,000 by this great Minister of Social Services.

An Hon. Member: It was cut back from \$50,000 last year.

Mr. R. Aylward: Mr. Speaker, when

the Minister of Social Services got up, and I heard the quote from the House of Assembly, it was only one hour ago he was requested to have a meeting with these people and he has agreed to it already, which is very good stuff.

The next thing I heard, this person came on again, the president of the association, who said that the Minister of Social Services had promised him money twice before and reneged both times.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Simms: That is not what he said today.

Mr. R. Aylward: No, Mr. Speaker, that is not what he said today.

An Hon. Member: What he said today was that it was the first time.

Mr. R. Aylward: Yes.

Mr. Simms: Make no wonder you would roll your eyes.

Mr. R. Aylward: It is easy to promise a meeting, Mr. Speaker, when you have your mind made up that there will be no money put forward. But I raise this issue, not to embarrass the Minister of Social Services -

Mr. Efford: They won't get anything now.

An Hon. Member: Oh! Did you hear that?

Mr. R. Aylward: That, Mr. Speaker, is the reason I raise this issue, because the people mostly affected by this, the people who will be helped the most by this, happen to be constituents

of mine, at the Waterford Hospital.

An Hon. Member: That is right!

Mr. R. Aylward: There are people institutionalized at the Waterford Hospital now who should not be there, Mr. Speaker, they should be able to avail of this program, they should be able to avail of this type of program, so that they can get out into the public and be allowed to live as much as they can.

Mr. Efford: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: You are the Government now.

Mr. Tobin: Shame on the Minister.

Mr. R. Aylward: Mr. Speaker, it is too bad the news media are not here to hear what the Minister of Social Services said.

Mr. Simms: Right on!

Mr. R. Aylward: Now that the president of this association dared to say the Minister of Social Services had refused him money twice already, this person dared to speak up in the Province, the Minister of Social Services has now threatened this association by saying, 'for sure they will get no money now.'

Mr. Simms: That is right. That is exactly what he said.

Mr. R. Aylward: Mr. Speaker, that type of tactic was used in this Province some time ago, and it was used by a former Liberal Government to give out liquor licences, and to threaten people who seemed to have an opposing view to what the Government wanted.

When I was speaking before in this

House of Assembly I made the point that there is a trend this Government is setting. And the Minister of Social Services has reinforced this trend again tonight, Mr. Speaker, by saying that if a person speaks up against the Government, certainly they will not get any money, a trend we saw in this Province before. And with the Ombudsman's office closed down, certainly a person has nowhere to go. What a shocking thing to do! This Government is going to close the Ombudsman's office, Mr. Speaker, and spend the money they save on an increased Newfoundland Information Services. They will save a very small amount of money by closing down a very vital service to the people of this Province, a service that costs some \$300,000 plus, I understand. And we will be paying most of that anyway, even if we bring a bill into this House to dis-appoint or un-appoint, I do not know which word it would be -

An Hon. Member: Un-appoint.

Mr. R. Aylward: - to un-appoint the Ombudsman. But the Ombudsman, who has a contract, can certainly go to court and probably get a settlement from the court, and then the Government will wash their hands and say, Well, there is nothing we can do about that. But most of the money we are going to spend anyway, Mr. Speaker, on the Ombudsman's office, a person who had 900 complaints registered this year at his office; he had to deal with over 400 of these complaints, complaints hon. Members opposite say the MHAs are going to handle when the Ombudsman is gone.

If that is not the biggest joke! And the Premier even said that. I respect the Premier's intellect

and intelligence, Mr. Speaker. He does give a lot of thought to what he says, and I can't for the life of me understand who advised him to say that the MHAs are going to do the job of the Ombudsman. That has to be the most ridiculous statement I have ever heard in this House of Assembly. If you are going to cut the Ombudsman's office to save money, say so. That is all you have to do. Be honest and say why you are cutting the Ombudsman's office. You do not want complaints, you do not want people of this Province to have an avenue to complain, and you are going to save a measly \$300,000 or \$350,000 to take -

An Hon. Member: \$250,000.

Mr. R. Aylward: \$250,000? Is that all it is? That even makes it worse, Mr. Speaker.

Then, on top of that, we will double the budget for a service like Newfoundland Information Services which is becoming more outdated by the day because of technology, because of fax machines, in particular.

Mr. Efford: Cucumber and wine (inaudible).

Mr. R. Aylward: Mr. Speaker, our \$100,000 Minister is back to reading his pickle recipes again. He has to knuckle down to the Government House Leader and not be allowed to speak publicly, not be allowed to express his opinions in this House of Assembly. He is muzzled, so what he is going to do is sit there and read his pickle book. It is probably the biggest book he has read since becoming Minister, it is probably the most intelligent book he has read since becoming Minister, I would say, and that is why he likes to keep

reading it over and over and over.

They are going to cut out the Ombudsman's office. I just want to show in this Budget some of the real important things they are going to spend -

Mr. Murphy: (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: Listen to the Member for St. John's South, the old dill pickle. Listen to old dill pickle.

Mr. Efford: (Inaudible).

Mr. R. Aylward: Didn't the Speaker have him out in the common room a minute ago? He didn't teach him anything.

Mr. Speaker, some of the things this Government wants to spend the money, the vital money that was provided to the Ombudsman, they are important. These things you are going to spend the money on, I think most of them are very important but they cannot be as important as people's rights to have an Ombudsman's office, where they can get an independent person to look at a complaint against a Government agency.

Some of the things they are going to spend the money on: They have increased the caribou management budget by some \$535,000 this year. Some of that money could have been saved.

An Hon. Member: What?

Mr. R. Aylward: Caribou management, this year, will be increased by \$535,000. Had they taken 10 per cent of that, or maybe 20 per cent, they would have had some money for the Ombudsman's office.

One very important thing they are

going to do this year is cut out the Ombudsman's office and spend \$1.1 million on insect control. Insects have become more important in this Province, since this Government has taken over, than people who have complaints against Government agencies.

They are going to increase building maintenance by \$1 million. A small amount of this money could be taken to save the Ombudsman's office. One small amount of this \$1 million for building maintenance, which certainly could last another year or so, and we could have had the \$200,000 or \$250,000 we need for the Ombudsman's office.

Mr. Speaker, one other thing they are increasing this year is maintenance for roads and buildings. That is increased by \$6.6 million. One small part of this money could have been saved, again to try to save the Ombudsman's office in this Province. If we had 10 per cent of all these items here, Mr. Speaker, it would have been easy, very easy to come up with the money to keep the Ombudsman's office alive.

The reason for cutting the Ombudsman's office is not to save money, it is to save embarrassment. Because when the Ombudsman gets complaints from the general public of this Province, it will be embarrassing to Ministers of this Government when he comes out with his reports and investigations.

The economic recovery support team has been increased by \$1.2 million this year. If you had to increase it to \$1 million, I would not mind. If you had to keep the \$200,000 and keep the Ombudsman's

office open, that would have been quite acceptable. It would have covered almost a year's budget for the Ombudsman's office just by cutting \$200,000 from the economic recovery support team.

We have also seen the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture, Mr. Speaker, who is now sitting in the Premier's chair there and yapping away as he usually does, closing down and cutting out the future of the forest industry in this Province by cutting back at the Wooddale nursery. If we are going to have a future in our forest industry in this Province, the most important link to that future is silviculture, silviculture grown in some greenhouses in Wooddale

An Hon. Member: We know something else that was grown in greenhouses, too.

Mr. R. Aylward: Yes. They are not grown hydroponically, but some of the tree seedlings are grown in Wooddale. Mr. Speaker, I think when I was Minister we were between 11 million and 9 million tree seedlings a year. Since this Government took over, I think we are back to 2 million or 3 million seedlings. I think the last report showed that there would be about 3 million seedlings produced this year. That is the report coming from the workers, which I see in the media.

Mr. Efford: (Inaudible).

Mr. R. Aylward: Three million bare root this year, yes.

An Hon. Member: Bob, the Premier refused to meet with them.

Mr. R. Aylward: And, Mr. Speaker, even worse than that, I understand

the Premier agreed to meet with the workers in Wooddale who are not as concerned about whether they get ten weeks or fourteen weeks or sixteen weeks this year, that is not their only concern, their main concern, Mr. Speaker, is the future of the forest industry of this Province. That is why they wanted to meet with the Premier, because they know the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture does not have the influence in Cabinet to be able to persuade his Cabinet colleagues, to show them the importance of tree seedlings and the Wooddale nursery to the future of forestry in this Province.

I understand, Mr. Speaker, that after the meeting they had with the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture they were even more disillusioned and more disappointed than ever, and more convinced that the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture does not have the influence needed to protect the future of this industry in our Province.

Mr. Tobin: They said you are paralyzed. That is what they said about you.

Mr. R. Aylward: I understand that they then had a meeting with the Member for Grand Falls, who is also a former Forestry Minister, and I believe this is why the Member for Exploits is so edgy today. I mean, he is very nervous of the Member for Grand Falls. Every time the Member for Grand Falls is speaking in this House is probably some of the only times the Member for Exploits is interrupting and interfering with the decorum of this House. But he is very nervous when the Member for Grand Falls is speaking, and he continues to interrupt.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. R. Aylward: Yes, the Member for Exploits.

The Member for Windsor - Buchans is not overly concerned about the Member for Grand Falls, except if there is amalgamation. Then he is going to be very concerned, because he is not going to have a seat in the House, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I understand that the Member for Grand Falls who, again, is a former Forestry Minister and a very knowledgeable one, I might add, I came to that Department after he was Minister, and I must say things were well organized and

An Hon. Member: You did not have very much to do, he had it all done.

Mr. R. Aylward: He had most of it done. I do not disagree with that. He did a very good job in that Department, and after his meeting with the workers at Wooddale, I understand, not only did he get a standing ovation, but at least they felt there was someone in the central Newfoundland area who was taking up their cause. And probably they figured the Member for Grand Falls would maybe have even more influence on the Premier than the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture, that he certainly could convince the Premier of the need for the tree nursery and the need to produce more and more tree seedlings for this Province.

Mr. Speaker, one of the main problems we have in the forest industry is the supply of raw material, and if we do not produce more tree seedlings than we are doing now - not less than we did

in the past. We should be increasing rather than decreasing - we will not have a sawmill industry in this Province, we will not have a paper industry in this Province. You cannot have either without having, first of all, started with good silviculture.

Some Hon. Members: Her, hear!

Mr. R. Aylward: It is not only tree seedlings that adds to silviculture. There are several things. One of the silviculture methods in this Province, which the Minister is playing Russian roulette with, in my opinion, is using 100 per cent Bt in our spray program.

I would like to be able to congratulate the Minister for doing it, I really would. Certainly it is an environmental issue which a lot of people have concerns about, when you spray with fenithrothion or any chemicals, any herbicides.

Mr. Speaker, when I know the state of the forest industry in this Province, when I know the short supply of trees we have for our future, when I know that in the next seven years or probably a bit less than that now - it was said to me when I was there that it would be around seven to ten years, and that is two or three years ago now - when I know these figures, I still feel that the Minister is playing - the Government generally, not necessarily the Minister, because I believe he has enough sense to say Well, maybe we should do 70/30, just not to take a chance. But the Government House Leader again prevailed, a very strong Cabinet Minister. I must say he was very adamant when he was on this side of the House that Bt

should be sprayed 100 per cent. Since he has become Minister, he has lived up to his word, one of the very few promises the Liberal Government has kept, by the way.

The President of Treasury Board has been able to convince his colleagues that 100 per cent Bt spray would be safe for this Province. I would suggest, if I was Minister, that it would probably be 50/50 this year. It was 25/75 the year I was there, because if you are wrong, you have saved at least 50 per cent; if you are right you save 100 per cent. So you are doing okay. At least 50 per cent would be saved.

Mr. Flight: How about 100 per cent chemical?

Mr. R. Aylward: Yes, you could do 100 per cent chemical. But you have to have at least 25 per cent chemical, because you have to do some spraying close to waterways and controlled areas. If you don't do it with bacterial spray, if it is no good and you don't do it with bacterial spray -

An Hon. Member: You said it was no good.

Mr. R. Aylward: I did not say it was no good. No, I never did say it was no good. I, myself, instituted 25 per cent spray when I was there. That was the highest while we were in Government. I am not saying it is no good, I am saying it is a bigger gamble and a bigger risk. If you have to spray sensitive areas, close to river beds and ponds and things like that, you could spray them with Bt and use that for your experimental area.

Mr. Flight: (Inaudible) spraying 600,000 hectares with Bt, and

their forest is just as valuable to them as ours is to us.

Mr. R. Aylward: Who is?

Mr. Flight: Quebec.

Mr. R. Aylward: Yes, Quebec has had 100 per cent spray with Bt for several years now. Even when I was Minister. One year, while I was Minister, New Brunswick, when they got a new Liberal Government, sprayed with 100 per cent Bt. They have turned -

Mr. Flight: They never did. Not 100 per cent Bt, no.

Mr. R. Aylward: Yes. You see Minister Green and ask him. We discussed it before I brought in my program the next year, and he said he was changing from 100 per cent Bt back to about 50/50.

Mr. Flight: New Brunswick never did have 100 per cent Bt. They had a lot of Bt and it did not work, and they went back to chemicals.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. R. Aylward: I hear an interruption from someone down in the corner there. Every now and then he comes alive, he gives us a big smile, he says something and then he gives us another big smile.

Mr. Speaker, I know the state of our forest resource in this Province and I am concerned about the spray program. I guess it is the Minister's responsibility now and I wish him well, because we cannot afford for him to be wrong. It will be disastrous to the forest industry in this Province if he is wrong. One place it is going to be disastrous is in an area where they need more

supply rather than less, and that is where our infestation is now, on the Northern Peninsula. Last year, I do not think he sprayed enough of anything, because we have a higher incidence of infestation and dead and damaged wood.

Mr. Flight: (inaudible) or the other.

Mr. R. Aylward: When I sprayed one year, I sprayed as much as I could, as much as was recommended, and all the areas they recommended, and we had a drop, a crash in the infestation the year after. So, from my assessment of it, it was successful, Mr. Speaker. And I don't make my assessments from my knowledge, because I am definitely not an expert in forestry, I base my assessments and knowledge on reports that came from Federal Forestry, mostly, the scientists in Federal Forestry. These were the people who recommended highly to me every year, and recommended to the Member for Grand Falls at the time, that we not spray any more than 25 per cent Bt. And I would say they recommend it, although the Minister will not table the report the scientists have given him.

Mr. Matthews: Get a copy of it. No problem to get a copy.

Mr. R. Aylward: The Minister will not table the report the scientists from Agriculture Canada have given him, which is part of Forestry, and the reason he will not table it, Mr. Speaker, I suggest, and I am fairly certain, is because they recommended more chemical this year than is being sprayed.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. R. Aylward: Well, there is none being sprayed and they did recommend it.

Mr. Flight: That is not so.

Mr. R. Aylward: Table the report and then I will agree with you. All you need do is table the report in this House of Assembly and then I can agree. I might have a copy of the report coming to me anyway, Mr. Speaker. But until it is tabled in this House of Assembly and I can see that the scientists at Agriculture Canada recommended that it be 100 percent Bt sprayed this year, I will not believe it.

Mr. Flight: (inaudible)

Mr. R. Aylward: I lobbied for chemical spray for a reason that goes over the head of the Minister of Forestry now, unfortunately, because we, and I can say this a thousand times and he will still ask me the question again, have a crisis situation in our resource. Simple, period! And I did not want to play Russian roulette with that crisis, I wanted to do what the scientists recommended so that I could protect as much of that resource as possible.

Mr. Flight: There is not just a crisis today, there was a crisis in 1982 while you were there.

Mr. R. Aylward: Yes, and there should have been more spray then. So don't tell me, I was not in Cabinet in '82. If they had asked me, I would have said spray.

Mr. Flight: Spray?

Mr. R. Aylward: I was sprayed! I was sprayed!

Mr. Speaker, I only have a couple

of minutes left. I was going to save this for tomorrow, but I just want to make a comment. When I start tomorrow, Mr. Speaker, for the last few minutes, I want to ask hon. Members of this House of Assembly who represent St. John's districts once again, if they will answer me and I do not think they will - I gave them several days last week and I was sure they would stand up for their constituents, but individually, tomorrow, I would like to ask all St. John's Members of this House of Assembly, Mr. Speaker, if they consider their constituents to be parasites. I don't consider my constituents to be parasites.

Mr. Matthews: Good question. Hear, hear!

Mr. R. Aylward: The Member for St. John's South will answer the question, and he should answer it publicly, and he should tell his Premier that he does not consider his constituents to be parasites. And the Member for St. John's center does consider his constituents to be parasites, because he agrees with everything the Premier says, except on Meech Lake. Mr. Speaker, I adjourn the debate until tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Government House Leader.

Mr. Baker: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to inform hon. Members that tomorrow we will continue on with this rather enlightening Budget debate. I am very anxious to hear the last few minutes of the Member's speech, and when that is finished, we hope to, as well tomorrow, deal with Bills 27, 7, 30, 26, and 31. These are the Bills I would like to deal with tomorrow, in addition to the rather enlightening Budget

debate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Baker: One more thing

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Government House Leader.

Mr. Baker: A final point, Mr. Speaker. On Wednesday, we will be debating the Private Member's motion presented by the Member for Mount Scio - Bell Island, which has to do with the tourism industry.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Simms: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just to follow up on what the hon. the President of Council has said, I think I can give him a clear indication that I don't think we will get through the Budget tomorrow, or get past that stage tomorrow. I don't think so. I think a lot of our Members are anxious to speak to the amendment now which condemns the Government. That is something oppositions love to speak to. We are a bit disappointed Members opposite don't seem to be responding, or defending the Government's action, but so be it.

The resolution from the Member for Mount Scio is most welcome, because I think this is about the third or fourth time you have called it now. Hopefully nothing will happen and we will be able to get on with it.

Finally, I want to ask him, as I asked him the other day, for planning purposes Members opposite and Members on this side would like to know if they can proceed with planning meetings with their

constituents for tomorrow evening, or groups or whatever, or does the Government intend to defeat the motion tomorrow to adjourn? And I would like him to answer a little more briefly than he did the other day.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Government House Leader.

Mr. Simms: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I have indicated my intentions to call certain orders tomorrow. Quite obviously, when we deal with the Budget debate and deal with Bills 27, 7, 30, 26 and 31 there will be no need to sit tomorrow evening.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Baker: I will interpret again for my colleagues on this side. What he is saying is that we will be sitting tomorrow night. That is clearly what he is saying.

Mr. Speaker: This House now stands adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, at two of the clock in the afternoon.