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VERBATIM REPORT
(Hansard)

Speaker: Honourable Thomas Lush

The House met at 2:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (Lush):
Order, please!

Before proceeding to Orders of the Day, on behalf of all hon. Members, I would like to extend a warm and cordial welcome to a very special visitor in the Speaker's Gallery. The distinguished gentleman was born at Grand Bank. He has had a very illustrious career, both academically and politically. Known to most Canadians as a constitutional expert, he is a former Senator of the House of Commons. It therefore gives me great pleasure to welcome today a Newfoundlander of outstanding repute and a distinguished and famous Canadian, Dr. Eugene Forsey.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:
Mr. Speaker with your Honour's permission and the consent of my learned friends, my Honourable friends opposite, I would like to just add a few words to what you have said.

Dr. Forsey is a distinguished Canadian whose roots happen to be in Newfoundland, and that makes us perhaps all the more proud of his distinction as a Canadian.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

PREMIER WELLS:
But above all else he is a distinguished Canadian. He is more than simply a distinguished Canadian, he is a distinguished Canadian constitutional scholar in the true sense of that word.

He is not trained in the law - he has never been a constitutional lawyer. He is a true constitutional scholar and expert, who knows and understands not only the written word, but the conventions that go together with the written word to make up our full Constitution in this country, and that is as important as being trained in the law and being able to read it, and perhaps more important, because it gives one a better and more sympathetic understanding of the real situation.

I believe he has known personally, and had some degree of work with every Canadian Prime Minister for about the last seventy-five years, or pretty close to that. He has had some connection with them for a very long time, and it is that kind of knowledge, that kind of connection and background and expertise, that makes him the preeminent constitutional scholar that he is in this country. The fact that his roots are in Newfoundland - he was born in Grand Bank on the Burin Peninsula - makes us as Canadians all that more proud of him personally, and all that more proud of one of the great contributions that this Province has given to the Canadian nation.

I should also say, Mr. Speaker, that without seeking to promote a debate on the pros and cons of the Meech Lake Accord, and recognizing that there are, of course, other constitutional scholars who do not share Dr. Forsey's opinions, the Government takes no small measure of comfort from the fact Dr. Forsey's constitutional expertise and competence endorses fully the position that the Government of this Province takes.

Mr. Speaker, it is a source of great pride to me today to be able to stand and endorse the warm welcome that Your Honour has extended on behalf of all of the Members of the House to an individual that I consider to be one of the greatest living Canadians today.

Thank you and welcome, Dr. Forsey.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

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

MR. RIDEOUT:
Thank you, very much, Mr Speaker.

On behalf of my colleagues on this side of the House let me, in large measure, endorse the remarks made by the hon. the Premier. All of us in Newfoundland and Labrador are very proud of the contribution made to Canadian public life by a native Newfoundlander in the person of Dr. Eugene Forsey. We are very pleased and privileged that Dr. Forsey could come to the people's House in Newfoundland and Labrador today and be appropriately recognized by the people's representatives in this Province.

Mr. Speaker, I note the Premier had to make the connection that the constitutional expertise of Dr. Forsey, in many respects mirrors the constitutional position taken by the Premier and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. I said, Mr. Speaker, in most respects, I have read the clear constitutional logic of Dr. Forsey now, on a number of occasions, including his commentary on the Meech Lake Accord, and I must say, I take much

more comfort in the constitutional position as professed by Dr. Forsey and the reasons for it, than I do in the constitutional position taken by the Premier and the reasons he has taken for it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:
There is one world of difference, Mr. Speaker, in saying the distinct society clause might be this if it is interpreted this way, or it might be that if it is interpreted another way, than being a ten headed monster that the Premier tries to make it out to be, anyway it is interpreted. And that, I think, is the great contribution.

Again, Dr. Forsey continues to make contributions to constitutional evolution and constitutional debate in Canada. I note, Mr. Speaker, that Dr. Forsey likes to say to politicians, and I assume to others, that in fact he is a conservative in the tradition of John A. McDonald. I am delighted to see with Dr. Forsey in the Galleries today another great Progressive Conservative, Mrs. Grace Sparks - who I understand is Dr. Forsey's cousin. So Conservatives in the image of John A. McDonald, Conservatives in the image of Progressive Conservatives in 1990 are always welcome to the people's House in Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:
On behalf of hon. Members I want to formalize and extend to the person accompanying Dr. Forsey no less a warm and cordial welcome, a

distinguished Newfoundlander, a distinguished teacher, and a dedicated community worker, Mrs. Grace Sparks.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:
Our welcomes are a little longer than normal today. I also want to extend a warm and cordial welcome to seventy-five grades ten, eleven and twelve students, accompanied by their teachers Patsy Dohey, Melvin Critch, Brian Follett, and Hubert McGrath. They are from Fatima High School, St. Brides.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:
Also, I want to welcome on behalf of hon. Members a council delegation from the town of Salmon Cove represented by their Mayor, his Worship Ray Noseworthy, the Deputy Mayor Jim Parsons, and councillors Jim Reynolds, Bob Rossiter, Margret Kelloway, and the town clerk Jackie Deering.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

Oral Questions

MR. RIDEOUT:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. RIDEOUT:
Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I see the grin appearing on the face of the Minister of Finance. Every day,

as he should, since that fraudulent document called a Budget was brought into this House five or six weeks ago, he is expecting further questions.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance, and the Minister of Education, in particular, have been trying to convince this House, and people involved in education in Newfoundland and Labrador, that Government made great advances towards educational financing in the Budget brought in five or six weeks ago. Mr. Speaker, we have been saying the opposite, and pointing out the opposite, and now school boards themselves, not Dr. Vokey and the school trustees, as the Minister of Finance tries to slough it off on, but school boards themselves are starting to speak out.

Now one school board, the Port au Port Roman Catholic Board, has just written the Minister of Education and the Minister of Finance about educational financing for 1990-1991, and they say, Mr. Speaker, that they are worse off because of the Minister's Budget than they were before he brought it in.

Now, I want to ask the Minister this, Mr. Speaker: Will the Minister confirm that as a result of the 4 per cent increase in per pupil grants, the Port au Port Roman Catholic School Board will only be a net \$5,000 better off as a result of that great Liberal initiative he talked about in his Budget?

He will not rise, eh!

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

DR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to respond to the hon. Member's question. I have received letters from school boards supporting many of the initiatives of this Government, as well, particularly the last year.

Let me go back a year, and talk about what this Government has done in one year in the area of educational finance. Last year, shortly after we came to power, we increased the school tax equalization grant, which is a tremendous advantage for rural boards, from \$4.5 million to \$10 million. It had been increased from about \$2 million in 1986 to \$2.5 million and \$4.5 million; last year this Government went to a full \$10 million, and we kept it this year - we kept it at \$10 million. Also, we increased capital grants for rural boards in this Province last year, from \$20 million - it had been \$20 million for a number of years - to \$27 million, and these benefits will accrue to all boards in this Province.

There are difficult times, Mr. Speaker, and boards are experiencing some difficulties. We understand that. But we have put in place a number of initiatives in one year to really help schools in this Province, particularly schools in rural Newfoundland and Labrador.

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

MR. RIDEOUT:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I still want to direct my supplementary to the Minister of Finance, if he has the ability to get out of his seat, and not have

the Minister of Education trying to cover for him.

Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that this particular school board will only be \$5,000 net better off as a result of the 4 per cent per pupil increase for operational expenses, can the Minister of Finance - can the Minister of Finance - tell this House how that school board will meet an additional \$30,000 payroll cost this year, when they are going to an an operational grant increase of only \$5,000? How are they going to do it, Mr. Speaker?

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

DR. KITCHEN:
Mr. Speaker, that letter arrived on my desk last evening. I took a preliminary look at it, and I found a number of inaccuracies in the calculations. I am exploring this further. Some of the inaccuracies: With respect to the payroll tax, for example, even the calculation of it was inaccurate. So, I am looking more carefully at that. I am sure the Member would not want to condemn the Government on the basis of inaccurate information.

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

MR. RIDEOUT:
Mr. Speaker, the only defence here now is to attack a duly elected school board who are trying to go about putting their budget in place as a result of the further strains put on it by this Government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Minister should be an expert on answering this question without any skating around whatsoever. This school board suggests their calculations show that, as a result of the Minister's payroll tax, they will be \$15,000 worse off in the coming fiscal year, because they will have to pay the payroll tax. Can the Minister confirm that? Is that an accurate figure, or does the Minister not know the answer to that question yet?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. KITCHEN:

Mr. Speaker, that is an inaccurate figure.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, this Government, through its Hydro electricity policy last year, in the Budget, took away the power subsidy for PDDs in Newfoundland and Labrador. This school board contends that that particular issue will raise its light bills by \$20,000 a year. How can this Minister tell this particular school board that a \$5,000 increase in operating funding is going to make them better off in 1990-91 than they were previously, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. KITCHEN:

Mr. Speaker, from my point of view, this is one of the figures I am checking out. I assume that may or may not be correct. To my knowledge, it is not correct. I

am in the process of having officials check into that part of the letter. There were seven or eight items mentioned. I discovered several inaccuracies, and I am asking people to check out the rest. Hopefully, from the point of view of the letter writer, some of the information is correct.

When people write, I really believe they should do their best to present the facts as fair, as honestly and carefully as possible.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

DR. KITCHEN:

When the Leader of the Opposition abuses the time of this House by quoting information which he knows to be inaccurate, such as the effect of the payroll tax on school boards, which we have already announced will be of no effect, no effect at all, when he abuses this House by quoting inaccurate information as if it were fact, then that is a very serious question, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SIMMS:

Ha, ha! What a fool!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

The last defence of a cowardly, incompetent Minister is when he blames other elected officials for coming forward with proper explanations, Mr. Speaker.

The Minister should stand, Mr. Speaker, and be prepared to defend his budgetary actions, not blame them on somebody else, slough them off on somebody else.

This letter, Mr. Speaker, is signed by the Chairman of that school board, no small individual when it comes to a position of public authority in Newfoundland and Labrador. Now let me ask the Minister this, Mr. Speaker: The Chairman of this school board is saying categorically that this school board, in 1990-91, will be \$100,000 worse off financially than they were in the last fiscal year.

How can the Minister say his budget was a great breakthrough for education funding in Newfoundland and Labrador, Mr. Speaker?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Shame! Shame!

MR. R. AYLWARD:
Oh, here we go!

MR. RIDEOUT:
Oh! Get in trouble, you put up your colleague.

AN HON. MEMBER:
It is a general question.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please! Order, please!

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

DR. WARREN:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In the budget this year, the total increase in educational expenditures was from about \$725 million last year to \$775 million this year, about \$50 million, and we add to that \$3.5 million we took from last year's Budget to buy things for this year.

For elementary and secondary Education it went from \$501 million to \$535 million plus three and a half. That is an increase, if my calculations are correct, of about \$37 million on \$500 million, an increase of 7.4 per cent for elementary and secondary Education in this province.

And let me ask the hon. Member to go over and see what happened -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

DR. WARREN:
Let me ask the hon. Member to go and see what happened in Nova Scotia.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

DR. WARREN:
Let him go to Nova Scotia.

DR. KITCHEN:
Right.

DR. WARREN:
Let him look at what is happening across this country, and let him also recognize, Mr. Speaker, that enrollments are declining dramatically in this province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

DR. WARREN:
We have a commitment to Education, Mr. Speaker - we have a commitment to Education. It is one of our priorities, and we will meet that commitment in the Nineties.

MS VERGE:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Member for Humber East.

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance also. I suggest to this Minister that the Chairperson of the Port au Port Roman Catholic School board knows a lot more about his school board's budget-

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. the Member is not to debate the answers.

MR. SIMMS:

There is no preamble?

AN HON. MEMBER:

Pardon me!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member is into a new question - I am assuming she is into a new question.

MR. SIMMS:

Yes, and preamble.

MR. SPEAKER:

I just want to point out for all hon. Members that Question Period is not a period for debate. It is a period for soliciting information.

MR. SIMMS:

Well, why did you not call the Minister to order? He debated the answer and the question.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Humber East.

MS VERGE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MS VERGE:

As I said, my question -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please. Order, please!

MR. SIMMS:

It is tit for tat.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please.

The Chair will not tolerate the kind of statement made by the hon. the Opposition House Leader. The Speaker's rulings in Question Period are not to be debated. For the House to run smoothly, these rules must be adhered to.

The hon. Member for Humber East.

MR. SIMMS:

I just brought it to your attention, Mr. Speaker. We are allowed to do that.

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, again my question is for the Minister of Finance.

MR. SIMMS:

We will continue to, too.

MS VERGE:

The Chairperson of the Port au Port Roman Catholic School Board, who, I suggest, knows a lot more about his School Board's budget than the Minister knows about the Budget for the Provincial Government, this Chairperson is projecting an increase in electricity costs for the Board for this year of \$20,000; an increase in the payroll for Board employees, other than the teachers' payroll of approximately \$30 thousand, and that is allowing for just a 4 per cent inflationary payroll increase; projecting GST costs, beginning January 1st. next year; projecting further electricity costs with the applications before the PUB that are pending; projecting at least

the 4 per cent inflationary rise in other school board operating expenses; in all, projecting between \$50,000 and \$100,000 extra cost this year compared to last year, when the Minister is giving them only an increase of \$5,000 in revenue. What is the Minister of Finance going to do for the Port au Port Roman Catholic School Board and other school boards in the province which will not be able to keep their heads above water this year?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. KITCHEN:

Mr. Speaker, this, I presume, is the same letter. If it is, it was not written by the Chairman of the Board, but by one of the officials. I have already said that some of the matters in that particular letter, because some of the figures she quoted were exactly those quoted in the other letter I received from an official of the Board -

MR. RIDEOUT:

(Inaudible).

DR. KITCHEN:

Of the seven or eight points she made, I have already discovered inaccuracies in several, and we are looking at the rest. So, what we are going to do is size up to find out precisely what are the facts here. If school boards are in as desperate shape as the Member suggests, we have not been hearing that. Some boards wish they had more; everybody wishes they would get more money from the Budget. I have never heard of anyone yet who said, Thank you very much, we have too much. We must realize that we are living in desperate times, where interest rates are rising, where we are

having very great trouble raising money, and we give increases to school boards this year. There have been increases, substantial increases. Perhaps they are not as much as people would like, but we have to be debating on the basis of accurate information, not on the basis of things scratched down on the back of an envelope, and put in the form of a letter, delivered through the Opposition for the House.

MR. RIDEOUT:

That is insulting. That is not true. That letter was from the School Board Chairman.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Humber East.

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, this Minister does not know what he is talking about!

MR. SIMMS:

Right on!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MS VERGE:

This letter is over the signature of Barry Wilton, Chairman, Port au Port Roman Catholic School Board.

MR. SIMMS:

Chairman of the Board.

DR. KITCHEN:

Yes.

MR. SIMMS:

You just said it was not.

MR. REID:

It was not well done, tell him.

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, the Chairperson says, 'Our Board feels that these facts indicate that education has seriously slipped on the priority list and deserves...' -

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The Chair has reminded hon. Members time and time again that hon. Members, in Question Period, are not to read or quote from letters or newspapers. If hon. Members persist in breaking the rules, then the House is just going to fall into a state of chaos. I do not want to remind hon. Members again about reading directly from letters. The hon. Member, obviously, can refer to it but not read from it.

The hon. the Member for Humber East.

MS VERGE:
Mr. Speaker, I would like the Minister of Finance to confirm that he, in fact, received a letter from the Chairperson of the Port au Port Roman Catholic School Board, and, furthermore, that the letter states that according to the School Board's financial projection, that Board will be between \$50,000 and \$100,000 worse off this year than last year, and that, in their opinion, education financing has been eroded.

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

DR. KITCHEN:
Mr. Speaker, I do not accept what the Member has said. I might point out, my colleague has told me that that particular Board has just received granting for about a \$3 million school, so that is interesting.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Member for Humber East.

MS VERGE:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My question is for the Minister of Education. The question is, Why did not the Government provide school construction capital funding projected for three years, as was done in the past? And will the Minister confirm that, in the opinion of the Chairperson of the Port au Port Roman Catholic School Board, the Government's short-sightedness in not making a pledge for 1992-93 may result in that Board's request for a new school, for 500 primary children in Stephenville, being delayed for another year?

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

DR. WARREN:
Mr. Speaker, I want to pay tribute to the people in Stephenville for the high quality of education they provided for their students in the past, and I am sure they will continue to do that through Government grants and from school taxes they collect - quite a bit from school taxes.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, last year, we did indicate to school boards that we would guarantee \$27 million, not \$20 million. I hope the hon. Member is listening. Last year, we increased the capital grants for school construction from \$20 million, which had been in place for four or five years, to \$27 million.

AN HON. MEMBER:
(Inaudible).

DR. WARREN:

Oh, you were going to do it to \$100 million! I am sure you were going to put \$100 million.

We increased it last year from \$20 million - let me make it perfectly clear - from \$20 million to \$27 million for three years, and we are going to increase that amount over the years, not decrease it. I think the boards know that. We may be increasing it again in the not-too-distant future.

MR. HEWLETT:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Member for Green Bay.

MR. HEWLETT:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In his report on our Estimates Committee Meetings, our Committee Chairman, the Member for Lewisporte, said that this year's Budget was truly a Liberal Budget. To me, the word 'liberal' always meant a progressive view, certainly in the areas of social policy. The Minister of Finance has said there was a special emphasis on education in his Budget, yet the Superintendent of the Green Bay Integrated School Board said, in the local paper, that the Budget was devastating to school programs. How does the Minister of Finance square that with his view of the Budget?

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

DR. WARREN:
Mr. Speaker, these are difficult times throughout this country. We have fewer dollars as a result of federal transfer payments this year than we would have received. These are very difficult times.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please! Order, please!

DR. WARREN:
Let me repeat something I said earlier. Even with these difficult times, Mr. Speaker, we increased educational funding by nearly 7.5 per cent, the same amount for elementary and secondary as for post-secondary, even in these difficult times.

Let me say one other thing, Mr. Speaker. Let me admit that it is going to be increasingly difficult for us to get all the money that is needed to provide the equality of educational opportunity that must be provided in this Province. We have had years of inequality - years of inequality - and who was in Government in this period of time? Who is responsible for the gross inequalities that exist? This Government is committed to closing the gap, Mr. Speaker. I assure the hon. Member that we will close that gap and provide greater equality of educational opportunity for every student in this Province.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Member for Green Bay.

MR. HEWLETT:
Mr. Speaker, the Green Bay Superintendent also said that the 4 per cent increase in the per student operating grants will be offset by the declining enrollments the Minister mentioned earlier. The Minister of Finance, and, I guess, the Minister of Education, are PHDs in Education and should be well aware of that, so how can they say there have been increases, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Education.

DR. WARREN:

I will not list all the increases, Mr. Speaker, this year in educational funding. I will not list them all, adding up to a 7.4 per cent increase in elementary and secondary education. But, yes, we do have a declining enrollment. Let me give the House some data. I am pleased to present these data with a lot of students here, because we know these are excellent students and we have provided a good program for many students in this Province. Let me indicate, though, that enrollments are decreasing dramatically. In 1971-72, we had 162,000 students.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Answer the question.

Mr. Speaker, this is directly related to the question. In 1971, we had 162,000 students in this Province. This year, we have 130,000, and in 1999, the projection is that we will have about 100,000 students. The grant system the other persons put in place, the other Government, is based on a per student basis. We have been giving out grants on a per student basis, so when the students go down, the amount of money goes down. But we are going to change that, Mr. Speaker. The grant system we inherited from the seventeen years, is grossly flawed. Let me tell the hon. Member, if he is listening, that we are going to change that system so that in the future, grants will not be paid on the basis of enrollment, but on program.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

I want to point out again, to hon. Members on both sides of the House, that the Question Period is a period for information, and that Members, in the framing of their questions, should attempt to frame questions which do not get into policy, and Ministers, when they are answering, should also remember that their answers ought to be brief and that they, too, ought not to abuse that rule, and ought not to get into debate.

MR. HEARN:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. HEARN:

Thank you, very much, Mr. Speaker.

My question is to the Minister of Education. I wonder if the Minister would like to correct some of the misinformation he earlier gave, when he said they increased the capital budget from \$20 million to \$27 million. It was \$22 million, with \$2 million for retrofit. The \$27 million, the \$5 million extra, does not benefit all boards, as the Minister said, it is to alleviate the debt load of some boards out there, which leaves most of them with just the \$20 million this year. Will the Minister correct that? And will he also tell us that the Transportation budget, which is also going to effect boards such as Port au Port and the others, is going to hurt boards? And will he also tell us that he is deliberately misleading the people of the Province -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. HEARN:

I withdraw, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. HEARN:

I did not say the House, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Well, I am sure the hon. gentleman would.

MR. HEARN:

I withdraw. I withdraw. And that he is misleading the people of the Province and the school boards when he says there is an increase in the primary, elementary and secondary budgets to help boards, because the increase, the \$39 million approximately, is identical to the increase in teachers' salaries. There is not a one cent increase for board operations in this Province. Will the Minister correct the misinformation he has given this House?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Education.

DR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker, the \$27 million, we do break it up. We have worked with the Denominational Education Councils, and I might say they requested that we break the \$27 million up so that they would have some money for debt retirement. And one very important thing, Mr. Speaker, we do put some money into accessibility of schools. We want to make current schools and future schools more accessible to the disabled, and I think there is \$1 million there for that. That is done. We are proud of that initiative, Mr. Speaker.

I will admit, Mr. Speaker, that the transportation grant is the same this year as last year. I will admit that. And we have fewer students. I guess what I am saying to school boards, and I will speak with them next week in Gander, if I can arrange to be there, but what we are saying is that the time has come to rationalize the school busing system. We cannot continue with some of the reported duplication and triplication of buses. We cannot do it, Mr. Speaker! We have to encourage school boards in all parts of the Province.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

DR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker, they asked for an answer. Do they want the answer?

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible) if you cannot do it.

DR. WARREN:

Do they want the facts?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

DR. WARREN:

I have never misled this House, and I will give you the facts.

AN HON. MEMBER:

You always do.

DR. WARREN:

Never, to my knowledge. And I have the facts. I have the facts, Mr. Speaker, if they want to listen.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Well, answer the question now.

DR. WARREN:

I am answering the question.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! Order, please!

I remind hon. Members again that when a question is asked, it makes it very difficult for the Chair to listen to the answer when there are interruptions on either side. Particularly in Question Period, there need not be these interruptions. I know hon. Members are excited with questions, but there is a place to ask the questions. I would ask the Minister to please clue up his answer as quickly as possible.

The hon. the Minister of Education.

DR. WARREN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I will do that. I would suggest to the House that over the next year we are going to be looking at ways to rationalize, encourage more sharing; fewer buses, maybe, in some areas and more sharing, so that we can keep the cost of transportation down and get the most value for the money we spend.

One little bit of information, Mr. Speaker. I mentioned it earlier, and someone asked for a clarification. I have just been passed a note from the hon. the Member for Stephenville. A new school, St. Stephen's Primary School, mentioned by the hon. the Member for Humber East, has been approved for 500 students, and construction will begin this year. We are delighted with that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. PARSONS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for St. John's

East Extern.

MR. PARSONS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My question, Mr. Speaker, is to the Minister of Environment and Lands. I believe we are all aware in this hon. House that the railway tracks have been removed. Does the Minister have any plans for development on the Crown lands in the vicinity of the railway beds?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Environment and Lands.

MR. KELLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Just to tell the hon. Member briefly, Mr. Speaker, the arrangement with respect to the lands formerly owned by the railway, questions in that regard should more properly be directed to my colleague immediately to the right. But when the matter is resolved and the land reacquired, it will be turned back to the Province and become Crown lands, and then subject to whatever rules and regulations Crown lands are subject to.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. PARSONS:

Mr. Speaker, I am sure the responsibility lies with the Department of Environment and Lands. I am talking about the adjacency aspect of this, the adjacent lands to the railway beds. We know the transportation aspect of it would be the road to. What I am asking the Minister is, are there any permits? Will the Minister be issuing permits for

the lands in the vicinity of or adjacent to where the old railway tracks ran?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Environment and Lands.

MR. KELLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am not totally sure the hon. Member knows what he is talking about, Mr. Speaker. We can only issue title to land that is Crown land. The land which had been owned by the railway, in conjunction with my colleague both Departments are working on it. When the land is reacquired, it will be turned back to the Crown and handled as any other Crown land. Any applications which come in will be treated in the normal manner for Crown land. There are no specific plans prior to the acquisition of the land.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. PARSONS:

Mr. Speaker, I understand there are a number of cabins and portable trailers already situated in these areas. Would the Minister confirm that his Department has issued permits for construction or occupancy? How many have been issued? And what criteria has he been using?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Environment and Lands.

MR. KELLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I will have to check the details. If the Member would be more specific as to which areas, as to

which cabins, which owners he is talking about, I can research that for him. Beyond that, there is no answer that can possibly be given unless he is more specific.

MR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Torngat Mountains.

MR. WARREN:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

My question is to the Premier, who is responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I asked the Premier a couple of questions. I want to ask him one more today. Is the Premier aware that more and more residents of Labrador are upset and concerned about military activity in Labrador, particularly as it relates to low-level flying?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

No, Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of it, and I do not believe it to be so. The simple fact is, a number of residents of Labrador have, for sometime, been opposed to low-level flying. Particularly, and, for the most part, almost exclusively, the native people of Labrador have objected to low-level flying. I have seen nothing whatsoever to indicate that it is more and more. I believe it is approximately the same as it was in the past, and, as I have noted before, representations like that, by that hon. Member, have always been found by me usually to be unfounded.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. Member for Torngat Mountains.

MR. WARREN:
Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Is the Premier aware that the military are flying low over traditional hunting grounds in the Hopedale area?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:
I remember seeing maps showing the corridors where low-level flying was done. Whether it involved anything in the Hopedale area or not, I do not know. But if the hon. Member does not know, I will be glad to make inquiries and find out if anything is being done in the Hopedale area.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. Member for Torngat Mountains.

MR. WARREN:
Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Yesterday, in a question, I asked the Premier if he would meet with concerned groups who were concerned about low-level flying in Labrador. I would like to ask the Premier if he would meet with the concerned citizens of Hopedale?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:
I will meet with concerned citizens of any community in this Province who have established some

basis for concern.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

PREMIER WELLS:
No less the citizens of the community of Hopedale. If, as, and when the Council in Hopedale, or a group of concerned citizens of Hopedale ask me to meet with them, I will most certainly meet with them. But, as I have said before, Mr. Speaker, based on the kinds of representations we have heard from that hon. Member in the past, I have no confidence that there are indeed concerned citizens in Hopedale, although there may be.

MR. SPEAKER:
Question Period has expired.

MR. RIDEOUT:
Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:
A point of order, the hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I listened with a great deal of interest to the responses given by the Premier to questions asked by my friend from Torngat Mountains today. I did so, Mr. Speaker, for a particular reason. Yesterday we noticed, and it was not something new, we had noticed it in this House before. The Premier has an ability, despite his great orations about decorum in the House, and respect for individuals, and respect for the constituents of people who send people to this House of Assembly, Mr. Speaker, we have noticed consistently when this particular Member from Torngat Mountains asks a question, the

Premier is so condescending in his response, he is normally insulting in his response, he normally tries to belittle, giving the strong impression, Mr. Speaker, by his actions and by his distain, that he has no time for the intellectual capacity or otherwise of the Member for Torngat Mountains.

Some of the words he used today, Mr. Speaker, just look at Hansard from yesterday, 'a lacking in good sense'. Look at yesterday's Hansard further on, 'I cannot make much sense of that.' 'I know, from his performance in the House in the past, that I cannot rely on very much of what he says,' Mr. Speaker, 'credible suggestions'. He would listen to somebody else, Mr. Speaker. The last part of the Premier's comments from yesterday, but based on anything that the hon. Member says, 'I would not walk to the end of that door in reliance of anything the hon. Member said, based on his performance in the past.'

We heard the same kind of language from the Premier again today, Mr. Speaker. Giving the -

AN HON. MEMBER:

Why do you not quote what the hon. Member said.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Look -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. RIDEOUT:

Look, Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman should keep quiet. If you want to raise in this House, raise on a point of privilege.

Mr. Speaker, the only thing that can interrupt me under this

procedure today is a point of privilege. If the hon. gentleman has one, raise it and I will sit down Mr. Speaker. Other than that -

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! Order, please!

I ask the hon. gentleman please to refrain from interrupting. Again, the hon. gentleman is on a point of order and all hon. Members have the right to be heard in silence.

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, what I am saying to that hon. gentleman, and every hon. lady and gentleman on that side, is that I have no intention, as Leader of the Opposition over here, to see anybody - I do not want it done from here and I do not want to see anybody from over there - poking fun at, belittling, and trying to somehow undermine the credibility of a Member of this House. I saw it yesterday, I saw it again today and my memory tells me, Mr. Speaker, that I saw it in this House last fall, by the Premier. The person who talks so much about decorum, who wants to raise the level of debate in this House, who wants Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to think he is God's gift to democracy in this Province, Mr. Speaker.

The performance of the Premier yesterday, and the performance of the Premier today is despicable, Mr. Speaker. The Premier should at least apologize to that Member and to this House for his actions, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

Mr. Speaker, there is nobody in this House more concerned about the decorum and propriety of comment in this House than I am. Now at the same time I state that, I reaffirm every comment read out by the Leader of the Opposition in respect to the hon. gentleman.

I will explain to the House why I did it. I will just ask my assistant to dig out every question that the hon. gentleman has asked in the past and I will make it public so that everybody will know the basis for it. Some of the comments, representations and misleading presentations that he has made to this House in the past has justified my taking the position -

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

PREMIER WELLS:

I will finish first. -that if there is any cause or any validity to what the hon. Member says, I will act on it immediately. But based on his past performance in this House I have reason never to move immediately on anything he says. I saw that hon. gentleman take and put together documents and present them in this House as though the document was a map attached to an agreement made between the Quebec Government, the Montagnais Indians and the Federal Government. It had nothing to do with it, it was not part of it at all, for the sake of mischievously trying to create ill-feelings and disruption amongst the native people of this Province and the

Government. I have seen him in the past do other things, and present other misleading positions. Mr. Speaker, I will speak frankly, if and when anything the hon. Member says has validity, or I am satisfied that it has validity, I will act on it immediately. As far as all other hon. Members are concerned, when they raise a question and present facts, I operate on the presumption that what they say to me is correct, and I will take steps to check it out immediately. But when that hon. Member, based on his past performance, presents this position, did I know this or that, when I have no cause whatsoever to believe there is any validity in it, I say again, if I have any cause to believe it I will act on it.

I have heard from nobody in Hopedale, nobody in Goose Bay, nobody from anywhere else, and if and when I do, I will be most happy to meet with them on the basis of any genuine concern, but on the basis of representations that that hon. Member makes, and on the basis of his past performance, I have no intention whatsoever of initiating any action.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, what the Premier is doing now, of course, is a continuation of what he was alleged to have done by the Leader of the Opposition in the point of order. He continues to do it, Mr. Speaker, but the point he is missing is that he is doing it in an unparliamentary way. Considering the fact that he has,

in the past, uttered frequently his want to uphold parliamentary traditions and practices, parliamentary language, and things of that nature, it is now becoming obvious that those are simply words and nothing else.

Mr. Speaker, I just refer, for Your Honour's consideration when he considers this matter, to Beauchesne, 6th Edition, Page 142, Paragraph 484 (3), referring to Members, Members in debate. Section (3) says in part, "In the House of Commons a Member will not be permitted by the Speaker to indulge in any reflections on the House itself as a political institution; or to impute to any Member or Members unworthy motives." Now, Mr. Speaker, clearly what the Premier has said yesterday, today, and now in speaking to the point of order, is obviously imputing unworthy motives, and nobody can deny that, nobody other than the Premier himself, who would of course deny it. But, I suggest to Your Honour that it is clear.

There are references in that same sub-paragraph, Mr. Speaker, about the use of indecent language. Paragraph 486 on Page 143 talks about injurious reflections uttered in debate against particular Members, all unparliamentary, Mr. Speaker. Paragraph 487 says, "Words may not be used hypothetically or conditionally, if they are plainly intended to convey a direct imputation." All of these things, Mr. Speaker, the Premier has done, and it is clear for anybody to hear, clear for anybody to say. Why does he not have the courage to stand up and apologize to the Member and to the House and that will settle the matter? He does not have the political backbone to

do so. That is what is wrong with him.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

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

MR. TOBIN:
The sleaziest Government, ever.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

I overheard a comment from the Member for Burin - Placentia which the Chair considers to be most unparliamentary and I ask the Member to withdraw it.

MR. TOBIN:
I withdraw it, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. WARREN:
It is true though.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The Chair again overhears the interruptions by the Member for Torngat Mountains and asks the Member for Torngat Mountains to please restrain himself, particularly on the heels of the Speaker making a ruling.

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

What we are seeing here today, in the last couple of moments, is an indication of a basic problem we have, and I would like to deal

with that in just one moment. A point of order, as Mr. Speaker knows, and as everybody knows, deals with calling the attention of the Speaker, Your Honour, to any departure from the Standing Orders and so on. It is correctly called a point of order. Now, Mr. Speaker, in the particular instance cited by the Leader of the Opposition, the Premier was simply stating a fact, and that fact has to do with what happens in this House.

MR. SIMMS:

It is unparliamentary. It is unworthy. That is the point.

MR. BAKER:

One assumes, Mr. Speaker, that Question Period's function is the asking of questions and the soliciting of information. And the whole assumption is done around the rules of procedure and are based on that assumption - that the function of Question Period is simply to ask questions and to receive answers. Now, Mr. Speaker, as you know and Members opposite know, down through the years we have perhaps evolved something slightly different, where Question Period is used by Oppositions, I am not limiting it to this one, but used by Oppositions to - how shall I put it, Mr. Speaker? - to play games and perform little tricks.

MR. SIMMS:

That is your favourite argument.

MR. BAKER:

Well it happens to be true, I say to the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

(Inaudible).

MR. BAKER:

The asking of questions has

evolved into games and trickery. That is exactly what has happened over the last number of years. And as a consequence, Mr. Speaker, the Premier is simply recognizing that fact. If there is an hon. Member or hon. Members in this House asking questions, generally their question is in the form of a trick kind of thing, have you stopped beating your wife? - and that kind of thing. Or devious kinds of questions, or putting things together that do not really belong together then, Mr. Speaker, the Premier is pointing out that this is his experience with this hon. Member.

It is simply a statement of fact. There is no matter of order here. It is simply the way that Question Period has evolved. Now I would be the first to admit that it would be perhaps more elucidating to Members of the public if questions were asked to get answers and answers were given to give answers. That is not what happens in this House. That is not the way things have evolved.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is not a matter of order. There were no motives imputed. None whatsoever. And the Premier was simply pointing out the kinds of questions that are coming across the House, in some cases, and by some hon. Members, tend to be that kind of questions that are designed for purposes other than perhaps eliciting information. And that is exactly the situation in this case, Mr. Speaker.

So I would suggest to you that this is not really a point of order. I know the Opposition House Leader has a tendency, and again this is something that I have mentioned before, in debating points of order and privilege to

quote sections that have really nothing to do with the point in question. He has a tendency to do that and he gets quite emotional and assumes that by becoming emotional, then that is going to lend weight to the argument. Well, Mr. Speaker, there is no argument to what he says.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

To the point of order. There are a couple of observations that the Chair would like to make. Very often the Chair has indicated that Question Period, in particular, has a different set of rules applied to it than other proceedings in the House. And Question Period, in particular, is why the Chair raises so often to remind hon. Members on both sides that the Question Period is a period for soliciting information and not for debate. Now very often in a question, we try to discourage preamble, because very often it is in the preamble that a Member will put in the kind of word that promotes debate. And if the Chair had to arise on every occasion, then we would never get through the Question Period, but the Chair, of course, calls on hon. Members to co-operate.

Very often we will get hon. Members referring to the incompetence of a Minister or the inability of a Minister, and these are debatable terms, and one might say, unparliamentary - hardly unparliamentary - but they are debatable terms. I think the same applied when the Premier was referring to the hon. Member for Torngat Mountains. He was making the same kind of suggestion that

hon. Members make when asking a question - of a lack of competence in a Minister or on a Minister's ability. He was saying that he lacked confidence in the question. I hardly see that it is imputing motives. The Chair would caution hon. Members on both sides of the House, particularly in Question Period, to refrain from, avoid as much as possible, using words that certainly encourage debate, because that is not what Question Period is about. And I want to advise hon. Members that a different set of rules apply in other areas, because Question Period is not for debate, that is to take place in other areas; and phrases and words that might not be permitted in Question Period, might very well be permitted in the debate part of the House.

So, I say to hon. Members on both sides of the House, remember the distinct differences between Question Period and other procedures in the House, and I ask all hon. Members to refrain, as much as possible, from using debatable terms, and also to respect each other; because if we do not respect each other, we cannot expect anyone else to respect us.

I will say, in this particular case, it is not a point of order, but merely a difference of opinion between two hon. gentlemen as to the context and the tone of what was said. But again, I want to caution hon. Members to pay attention to the few brief remarks I have made in this regard.

The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

MR. WARREN:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I want to give notice that once I have read Hansard, I will be making a point of privilege.

Presenting Reports by
Standing and Special Committees

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Stephenville.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Government Services Committee have considered the matters to them referred, and have directed me to report having passed, without amendment, the Estimates of Expenditure for the Departments of Finance, Works, Services and Transportation, Employment and Labour Relations, Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Petitions

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

MR. WARREN:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I have a a petition, but maybe I should ask the Premier first, am I allowed to present it or not.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. gentleman should not be making these kinds of remarks, this is not the appropriate place. The hon. gentleman may present his petition. It is the House that allows that.

MR. TOBIN:

Say nothing about the Premier, 'Garf', you could be named.

MR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker, I have a petition to present. Apparently the Premier does not like the questions I ask and, as I said, maybe he does not like the petitions I present. However I will say this, I will continue to ask questions and I will continue to present petitions in this House, whether the Premier likes it or not, Mr. Speaker. And I say to you, Sir, and to the Premier, that if the Premier would listen to these petitions, then he would not be doing to the Labrador people what this Government has been doing for the last fifteen months. Mr. Speaker, I think it is ridiculous that the Premier would allow the Labrador people to suffer because of a cut to the Air Subsidy Program.

I have many petitions here from all over Labrador, some from Hopedale, some from Goose Bay, some from Eagle River. I will go with the District of Eagle River.

Mr. Speaker, I have to say one other thing. I believe it is an obligation of each Member in this House who receives a petition, to make sure it is presented to this House. These Members have a responsibility to the people, and I know, because I have copies of petitions that have been sent to Members opposite, that they have not presented to this House. Now why does not the Premier get after his own colleagues and make sure the petitions are presented to this House?

This petition, Mr. Speaker: "We are concerned that the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has reduced the Labrador Air Subsidy

and has, therefore, unacceptably increased the burden of transportation costs to the people of Labrador." It is signed by about fifty people in the community of Red Bay - and I have to sign it also, naturally - in the District of Eagle River.

They are concerned about the action and they are concerned about the action of this Government. They are also concerned that -

AN HON. MEMBER:

Did the Dumaresques live there?

MR. WARREN:

No, Mr. Speaker. There are the Yetmans, the Belbins, the Moores, the Stones, and the Winsors, Mr. Speaker. These are people who are concerned about their air subsidy program being cut. These are people, Mr. Speaker, who are concerned about the Labrador Summer Games, because two people from Red Bay were not allowed to enter into the Labrador Summer Games Table Tennis Championships because of this Government's decision. I will say more about that later on, Mr. Speaker. And I am sure my hon. colleague would agree that they were short-changed by this Government in the Winter Games which were recently held.

Mr. Speaker, I want to support this petition, as I did all the other petitions, and I will continue to present these petitions in this House as long as I am a Member.

The way things went today, I have a feeling I will be in this House longer than the Premier, because the action of the Premier today was nothing but right down in the gutter. Mr. Speaker, I want to support this petition. Hopefully,

it will be referred to the Department to which it relates, which is Cultural Affairs, and also the Department of Works, Services and Transportation. I would hope, Mr. Speaker, that I will get some support from my colleague, the Minister of Education, because this ties in -

AN HON. MEMBER:

Is that Red Bay?

MR. WARREN:

Yes, it is Red Bay, in the District of Eagle River.

Mr. Speaker, yes, it is a great tourist attraction, one of the best tourist attractions in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. I would urge everybody who is planning to go up to Red Bay this year to go Red Bay and, at the same time, take in the Bakeapple Festival, which is an annual event in the Straits area. Mr. Speaker, we support this. We support any kind of event like this which takes place anywhere along the coast of Labrador. But apparently the Premier does not care about Labrador; he never did, and he never will, because he was part of the Government which gave away the upper Churchill. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Menihek.

MR. A. SNOW:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak to the petition presented so capably on behalf of the residents of Red Bay, in the District of Eagle River, on the issue of subsidizing

transportation to and from Labrador.

The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains has presented numerous petitions. He is very capable, very knowledgeable about Labrador, and he does it with a certain amount of vigor, which many of us cannot seem to give here in this hon. House. Of course, we all realize the importance of transportation to and from Labrador, and the reasons why these two particular programs were instituted by previous Administrations and administered by two particular Departments, the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs and the Department of Works, Services and Transportation. They were put there twenty-five years ago, I believe, by the former Liberal Administration, initially, and they were put there for several reasons. Probably the most important reason was the fact that there was a feeling here on the Island portion of the Province that there was a deep feeling of alienation developing within Labrador, and that there had to be some sort of bridge.

That bridge, while it could not be a concrete type of bridge, or a structure in the sense of having vehicles or traffic going over it, that type, it had to be something to do with transportation, and they felt an air transportation subsidy could be that bridge. Indeed, it did work as a bridge for the last twenty-five years. It was a bridge that gapped a feeling between the Island portion of the Province and the Labrador portion of this Province.

It is interesting to note that the reasons given by this particular Administration as to why they cut

these programs were budgetary and the lack of use, although 6,000 people used it; 20 per cent of the population used just one program. About 8,000 people are affected by the second program, which is another significant portion of the population of Labrador. High administration costs was given as the reason for discontinuing this program. These, of course, are not really the reasons.

The hon. the Minister of Finance gave the real reason for cutting the Travel Subsidy Programs to and from Labrador. That was in his Budget Speech. He suggested the reason for cutting it was the fact that the residents of Labrador received a northern tax benefit package, and they felt — he is over there shaking his head now. He is confirming what I am saying, that he cut those two programs because of the Federal Government's tax concession given to the residents of Labrador. We can assume from that, then, because the Minister of Finance confirms that is why it was cut, that, indeed, if any tax concession is given to any residents of this Province by the Federal Government, the immediate response of the Provincial Government is to grab that extra, so-called tax benefit to individuals. We can assume, because the only thing we know that is going to occur in the future is if we judge the past, that that was the reason given by the Minister of Finance as to why those programs were cut.

DR. KITCHEN:

No. That is what used to happen in the past.

MR. A. SNOW:

It happened in this Budget that was presented. I am sure that the

hon. -

MR. PARSONS:

(Inaudible) for the last thirteen months.

MR. A. SNOW:

The last fourteen months, and in the Budget just announced by the Minister of Finance. Of course, it is interesting to note, too, Mr. Speaker, that if we were to consider that Labrador was an Island, and a subsidy was in place falling in line with the policy of this particular Administration and other Administrations which governed this Province, there would be a subsidy to travel to and from Labrador, brought down to the level of road transportation. Because it is the policy of this Administration, and other Administrations, that ferry transportation, water transportation, would be subsidized to bring it down to the cost of road transportation within the Province.

Now, we probably may get an interesting conjecture from the hon. the Member for Gander, why he does not want to see the people of Labrador - and he likes to belittle. It does not mean much to him. He lives in Gander. And with his District being a single community, neither he nor his constituents have to travel as far as the people in Labrador; it does not cost \$725 for a person to travel from Gander to St. John's, or Gander to Grand Falls, to participate in a high school volley ball tournament. But let me tell the hon. the Member for Gander that it does cost over \$700 to travel from Menihek to St. John's, or to Gander, to participate in a basketball tournament.

It would be interesting to note that if, indeed, the ruling had been a little changed in 1927, we may have had a piece of property called the Anticosti Island. It would have been governed as part of this Province, of course, and we would be able to travel in a subsidized manner to the Anticosti Island, but we would not be able to get a subsidy going even further, to the Mainland of Labrador.

It is unfortunate the people in Cabinet did not recognize the historical values of having the people of Labrador travel, and the merits of why they should be subsidizing. I was very disappointed the Minister of Education, who is so eloquent when he is up speaking and talking about the education his Government is bringing to the people of this Province, does not recognize the value in education when students of this Province have the opportunity of travelling and competing in sports and athletic events. He shakes his head that he is against subsidizing.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. gentleman's time has elapsed.

MR. A. SNOW:

If I may have just one minute to clue up, Mr. Speaker.

I would urge that the special Cabinet committee, when they get through their deliberations, look at subsidizing the Air Subsidy Program to Labrador to bring it in line with what it would cost if you were to have it as a road; to use the same criteria they used when they considered subsidizing water transportation for the rest

of this Province. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Orders of the Day

MR. BAKER:
Order 3, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SIMMS:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. SIMMS:
Mr. Speaker, I want to participate briefly in this Concurrence Debate on the Resource Departments' Estimates, which began on Tuesday. Yes, it was Tuesday, after we finished the Social Services one.

I heard briefly the report of the new Chairman of the Liberal caucus, who also reported.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMS:
I am not surprised to have seen already in only one short year of Liberal rule, the Chairman of the Liberal caucus resigning his position. It does not surprise me one bit. It is pretty obvious he cannot stand the policies of the Government over there, and obviously does not want to have to stand up front, and out in the public eye, and explain to the public all the callous and ridiculous decisions this Government has made. So what they did was, they neatly got rid of him. Because few of his colleagues, down in that corner in particular, have very little support for the Member for Mount

Scio - Bell Island; his knifer friends down in that corner there have been after him for a year, anyway, to try to get him out of office, and now they have successfully done it.

Now what they have done is they have put the new Member -

AN HON. MEMBER:
(Inaudible) leadership over there.

MR. SIMMS:
I beg your pardon? I did not hear the hon. Member.

AN HON. MEMBER:
(Inaudible) you in the leadership over there.

MR. SIMMS:
Yes. Oh, Mr. Speaker, I was quite happy with the support I had in the Leadership, and I got a good deal of support from my caucus. But, Mr. Speaker, I did not resign, as the hon. the Member for Bell Island did.

Now, Mr. Speaker, they have turned around and they put their faith in a rookie, the new Member from the District of Lewisporte, who is very new, brand new, still feeling his way around. A nice gentleman. I do not know if he is a good Member, I have no idea.

MR. FLIGHT:
Why do you not?

MR. SIMMS:
Because I only listen to what is happening in Windsor - Buchans, boy, and Exploits. The Member for Lewisporte has been given the onerous task of being Chairman of the Liberal caucus, following the resignation of the previous Chairman of the Liberal caucus, a man who could not take the pressure, and who was not prepared

to go and stand in the public and defend the Government's policies and decisions. I have admiration for the Member for Mount Scio - Bell Island for having the fortitude to be able to do that.

Now, the Member for Lewisporte, as I said, I am not so sure if he is going to be able to carry the ball, Mr. Speaker. Your Honour smiles, and well he should, because he knows of which I speak. The Member for Lewisporte may not have the same kind of forcefulness the Member for Mount Scio - Bell Island had when he, on occasion, tried to publicly defend Government decisions. He had to give the impression that he was very forceful and strong and supportive, because, Mr. Speaker, there was always the question, like the question the press put to him when he announced his resignation. They asked, 'Well, are you resigning as Chairman of the caucus because there might be a Cabinet post for you?' The Member for Mount Scio - Bell Island said, 'Oh, I do not know about that, you know. I do not know about that. If I am asked, I will have to consider it.' I do not know why he not just did say no, there is no Cabinet post for him. Because that is the reality.

Now the Member for Lewisporte will have to carry the ball, but first he will have to find it. That is what I say to the Member for Lewisporte. First, he will have to find the ball. He is still looking. A nice fellow. He has been there for a year. But he is still looking for that ball. Now, to try to carry that onerous task it is going to be an added responsibility. Nevertheless, I congratulate him for his short tenure, because he will only be there a year. I presume the

caucus agrees with the recommendation of the Chairman, that there should be a new chairman every year. That is what the Member for Mount Scio - Bell Island said. I look forward to seeing the Minister of Forestry as Chairman of the Liberal caucus one of these days. I look forward very much to that.

Mr. Speaker, this Chairman of the Liberal caucus now, from Lewisporte, happens to also be the Chairman of the Resource Estimates Committee. It was his task and responsibility, of course, to chair the meetings from time to time. I only sat in on one meeting briefly, and he did a good job. Of course, he did. I have no problem with that.

AN HON. MEMBER:
(Inaudible).

MR. SIMMS:
Everybody heard about it, I guess, eh! He called me to task several times, called me to order, which is nothing unusual. This Member has no problem with being called to order, as the Speaker full well knows, and I listen to the Chair when it calls me to order. I have great respect for the authority of the Chair, unlike Members opposite, who challenged their own Speaker's ruling in order to get their own way; the only way they could do it; the first time in our history that I know of. Mr. Speaker, I have a great deal of respect for the Chair, and I had a great deal of respect for the Member for Lewisporte when he called me to task on several occasions, I suspect trying to defend or cover up for the Minister of Forestry, whom I was trying to get at, and trying to question. Every time I got a good series of questions going, the

Chairman, the Member for Lewisporte interrupted me, saying, You cannot ask questions that way. That is too aggressive. You cannot be aggressive in Committee. It is not meant to be aggressive. Well, he did not use those words, but that is what he was doing. I hope I can bait him and encourage him to get up and speak again in debate, so he can attack me again for ten minutes and tell me I was wrong. I expect him to do that.

Let me get to some of the Departments' Estimates, Mr. Speaker. We will have lots of time in the next couple of hours to debate the Resource Estimates. We get ten minutes each, so I will take ten minutes now and we will see what else happens from time to time.

These Departments include the Department of Fishery, the Department of Forestry and Agriculture, Development and Tourism, Mines and Energy, and Environment and Lands. I believe those are the five Departments.

AN HON. MEMBER:
They are coming to take you away.

MR. SIMMS:
As long as they do not have white jackets, I am okay.

Mr. Speaker, these five Departments, of course, are probably the most important Departments from a resource development perspective of any Departments of Government, or Government operation, no question! They are the only ones, I suppose. Assuming the Minister of Finance can provide these Resource Development Departments with the necessary financing and funding, then they may be able to

do a reasonable job. In the case of the Department of Development, I would like to know exactly what the Department of Development has done since this Government has been in power, now well into its second year.

MR. EFFORD:
It has been developing.

MR. SIMMS:
It is interesting that the Minister of Social Services says it has been developing, because I have some information here which sort of indicates otherwise. When you talk about business development in Newfoundland, here is an interesting statistic from Stats Canada. 'Personal and business bankruptcies in Newfoundland and the rest of Atlantic Canada were up about 60 per cent in the past year.' Since this Government came into office in Newfoundland, there has been a 60 per cent increase in bankruptcies in Atlantic Canada.

MR. TOBIN:
Is there a connection?

MR. SIMMS:
Well, let us see if there is a connection, Mr. Speaker. That is the statistic for Atlantic Canada, 60 per cent. In Newfoundland, comparing the first three months of 1989, when we were in office, to the first three months of this year, when you were in office, for the past year, do you know how many first quarter bankruptcies there have been in Newfoundland? In the first quarter of last year, 1989, when we were in power, there were forty-four in Newfoundland. Do you know how many there have been in Newfoundland this quarter, this year? There have been 105 bankruptcies.

DR. KITCHEN:

The Federal Government. The Federal Government.

MR. SIMMS:

Oh, of course! The Minister of Finance says, 'The Federal Government. The Federal Government.' That, Mr. Speaker, represents an increase in bankruptcies in Newfoundland this year over last year of 150 per cent. The Minister of Finance sits back in his seat over there and he laughs, he jokes, he cackles, he caws, and he says, blame it on the Feds, blame it on the last Tory Administration, which were there for seventeen years. The Government seems to be content to shine the light on all of those problems they think they can fool the people with by saying, we will blame this one on that one, and we will blame this one on that Government, we will blame this one on this Government. We do not have to take any responsibility ourselves.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that is a very impressive statistic, a very impressive statistic for the Department of Development in its first year in office. From the first quarter of last year to the first quarter of this year, a 150 per cent increase in bankruptcies in Newfoundland. That is a very impressive statistic. Mr. Speaker, on all those other Departments, of course, there are oodles of questions. The Minister of Mines and Energy, I am sure, will participate in this Concurrence Debate and he will tell us again, and perhaps be a bit more forthcoming, what is happening with discussions with the Province of Quebec. I really want to get at that one, with respect to hydro development. In answer to a question from me in

the House one day he said, Things are going on very nicely, and all this, at the officials level, mind you. I think that is what he was saying. There is a great, friendly atmosphere. I can just see it now at the officials' table, the friendly atmosphere that exists between the Province of Quebec and the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. I would be interested in hearing the Minister, who I am sure we are now able to encourage to stand up and participate in this Debate. He will probably take the bait and get up for ten minutes and tell us a bit about that. I would like to hear it, but I want to know at his level, at the Ministerial level, when was the last meeting you had with the Quebec Minister? I think he said in the House it was six months ago. That is what he told me one day, yes. So, six months have gone by. Why have six months gone by since he has talked to his friend in Quebec, the Minister of Energy in Quebec?

MR. HOGAN:

There is no need to.

MR. SIMMS:

You can say that again, there is no need to. The Member for Placentia has hit the nail right on the head, there is no need to, and the Minister will tell him why after this debate closes. The Minister will tell him why.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. gentleman's time has elapsed.

MR. SIMMS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I will get back to it a little late on.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

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

MR. K. AYLWARD:
(Inaudible) ten minutes, Mr. Speaker, of I am not sure what. To tell you the truth, I am really not sure. We are talking about Resource Estimates. I want to say the hon. House Leader who wanted to be Leader but is not Leader, who is partially Leader, had some words to say about our efforts when it comes to the economy; he had some words to say about our efforts when it comes to hydro development; he had some words to say about our efforts when it comes to Hibernia. I have a few words to say about their performance when it comes to Hibernia, and hydro and the economy. I do not know if these words bring back any memories, but have not will be no more rings in my mind, Mr. Speaker, as words that were said and stated, as well as, the sun will shine again.

MR. HOGAN:
Yes, on April 20, 1989.

MR. K. AYLWARD:
Yes, on April 20, 1989. Yes, that is right. The same Government which did not even bring in a Budget or open the House last year before they called the election. They were afraid to pay the Opposition Members who were there, because they might have a break or something, and be able to go and run in the election. Anyway, they decided they could not come in with a budget before they called the election, and this is the same Government which is now talking about how we are doing and so on and so forth - the same

Opposition, I mean.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the former Government ran three elections on Hibernia and related issues. When we got in there we looked at it and found little progress had been made. I mean, we have the Atlantic Accord, and the deal to get Hibernia was supposed to be in the works and everything was going to come. I remember the fateful day the Premier designate, at the time, announced it would be put off, and so on, the former Premier, the Leader of the Opposition.

Their efforts, obviously, were very small, although they tried. I will give them credit for trying, but they were not able to accomplish anything, and that was the problem. Therefore, when the electorate had a chance to look and review they said, Well, how many chances were we supposed to provide? How many opportunities were we supposed to provide? They decided well, it is time for a change. And they did the proper thing. Because this Government is now undertaking to get Hibernia underway, and it is working very hard to do that; and it is doing it by providing information to the general public as to how things are going. Realistically, they are telling people; they are giving them the facts, they are giving them the information. They are saying whether or not it is on the go, or if it is going to be on the go; here is why we have a problem, here is why we do not have a problem. Those types of things are being said, not the huff and the puff that used to happen when the hon. former Minister of Hydro there used to come in, in the last Government, and we in in Opposition used to wonder every day whether or not

they were going to have it. For three years this was going on, that we thought they were going to have Hibernia arrangements. Sitting over there, we were on the edges of our seats wondering every day if they were going to call the election, but they never got around to doing it because they never struck that deal. But this Government is undertaking to do that. I think the Minister of Energy has things well in hand, and I believe we are going to accomplish it.

I believe in his Estimates he indicated things are going very well, and that we are dealing with the problems which have existed in trying to put a deal together. And it is a very complicated deal. So, while I give credit to the former Government for attempting to get a deal - I know my colleagues do not want me to do that, but I will do it, I will give them credit for trying to get a deal, but they did not get it.

So, before they start accusing us of not being able to accomplish anything, I will tell them to hold on to their seats because we are going to accomplish a number of things in the next little while, and that is one of the major things I believe this Minister of Energy, who is very competent and has done a superb job thus far, is going to be able to accomplish, and he working very diligently to do so. He will be informing the House as to the progress being made.

It is the same with the hydro talks, Mr. Speaker. I mean, the Minister got up the other day and he indicated there were a number of discussions which have been held or are ongoing, and this is real information, not the stuff we

used to be fed before - huff and puff and wondering whether or not it was going to go. The former, former Premier used to come in every second and third day and say, We are almost there. We have almost got it; and watch out, because we are getting ready to roll again!' How many times did I hear that, I wonder?

So, I must say, when I listen to the Opposition House Leader talking the way he is talking, I would ask him to put a little bit of credibility in the criticism here, let us be fair when it comes to the criticism side of things. We are going to try. We cannot guarantee anything. We never can guarantee anything. But you tried your best, nevertheless, you put the effort into it, and we give credit for the effort that was put. The problem was with the progress that was made and the final result. Now we are working on the final result, and we are going to get there.

When it comes to tourism, for example, I have to say the hon. the Minister for Tourism we have here is doing a superb job. For eight years, out in our District, Bay St. George, we wanted a tourist chalet in the region and the former Government never, never considered it, put it aside and said, Go away, we do not want to talk to you. In one year, this Government is going to be putting a new tourist chalet out in the Bay St. George region, a \$250,000 capital expenditure, approved by the Minister - in one year, twelve months, and they cannot believe it out there. They have been looking for four or five things to help promote tourism; we went out there a couple of weeks ago and there were four or five things laid right out. We said to the Chamber

of Commerce, Here are the four or five things you were looking for: Highway sign policy is going to be changed; theme signage is going to be done for different areas of the Province to help promote tourism, an excellent idea this Government is bringing in. I do not know why the former Government did not do it. It is a good idea, and I give credit to the new Minister, who is doing a superb job.

The new tourism booklet being put out is for the entire Province, and in it is a beautiful picture of the Minister. It is a superb effort. I have to say if the former Government had brought it in, I would be giving them credit today for this effort. It is superb! We are ranking with the other provinces when it comes to this. Our Minister of Tourism is doing a superb job. The people of Bay St. George and the Chamber of Commerce have high praise him. They do not know what to do. They put a legitimate request forward, and they are being listened to. I believe that is very good. I had the personal experience of attempting to get a new tourism chalet for our region, for tourism, but the former Ministers responsible for Tourism just ignored those requests. I know that for a fact. So I am very pleased this Government has been able to do that, and so are the people of our region, which is made up of three seats. I believe the hon. the Member for St. George's will concur. It is in the District of the Member for St. George's, and he has done a good job in having it put there. It was a positive effort, and I believe it is going to mean progress for our region when it comes to tourism.

Mr. Speaker, there is a lot more

to talk about. In Forestry, we have a youth training program now with the Federal Government, a silviculture program; getting young people involved in training for silviculture, a superb program, number one, with young people getting involved. It is an excellent program. Young people have to get involved and become aware of the silviculture programs in this Province. They have to get involved and be trained properly. This Government has undertaken to do that. Again, it is an excellent initiative. The Minister of Forestry is to be commended for doing a good job. I anticipate we will be able to sign a new Forestry Agreement with the Federal Government, if the Federal Government co-operates.

When I hear the Opposition House Leader talking about bankruptcies and how they have gone up, trying to pin the blame on this Provincial Government, I cannot believe it. I cannot believe it! It is beyond me, Mr. Speaker. As a matter of fact, what he should do is call up Mr. Wilson, in Ottawa, and tell him to get his act together and get those interest rates down so this economy here can get going, like the rest of Canada wants to get going, Mr. Speaker. It is time for Mr. Wilson, the Finance Minister in Ottawa, to wake up. If he does not, the whole economy is going to be ruined, and I think everybody concurs with that.

So, if the hon. the Opposition House Leader is going to get on with that type of criticism, he should call his buddies in Ottawa and say, Hey, people, let us get it together. You are losing it up there. You are losing it! The credibility of the criticism comes into question when you see that

type of stuff happening.

I would say to the hon. the Opposition House Leader that it is time to get the credibility down pat here, and let us be real with criticism.

I watched Canada A.M. this morning. They had their political panel on, and the PC representative, who comes on with Mr. Kirby and the other gentleman from the NDP, admitted this morning they showed up at 15 per cent in the polls, and he admitted that, for the first time in the history of Canada, the interest rate is higher than the popularity of the present Government. For the first time in the history of Canada, the interest rate is higher than the popularity of the present government. That has never happened before.

He also admitted this morning that Mr. Wilson, the Minister of Finance for Canada, should change his policy, he should now wake up, and he said it in his own words. He said he should lower the interest rates and start letting the economy revive. He has not done it, Mr. Speaker, and I think it is really time.

MR. DUMARESQUE:
Come on Chrétien!

MR. K. AYLWARD:
Yes, come on Chrétien.

I think it is time the Federal Government woke up. And when it comes to developing our resources and talking about the Resource Estimates, if we are going to develop these resources we have to have the ability to go ahead and do so, and not have to be damaged by the impact of such a disastrous Federal policy, which is really

starting to kill. I believe the Federal Government should wake up on that policy. Even their own people are now saying it. I think it is time for them to do so.

Mr. Speaker, I can keep going. It is the same with the Fisheries crisis which presently exists in this Province, and in Atlantic Canada. This government is undertaking to do what it can, and is tackling the issue as best it can. But it needs, and it will need, the co-operation of the Federal Government. I heard this morning that on Monday the Federal Government is going to announce a fisheries aid package in this province.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The hon. Member's time is up.

MR. K. AYLWARD:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It has been a pleasure.

MR. DUMARESQUE:
Great job! Another great job.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MS DUFF:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MS DUFF:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS DUFF:
We are coming to the end of the Concurrence Debates on the Resource Estimates Committee, and I am very pleased to have an opportunity to have a few words on the budgets of these very

important Departments.

A couple of days ago, I listened to the hon. Member for Lewisporte, who very proudly brought in the report on these Resource Estimates, talking about what a wonderfully real and true Liberal budget this was. I hear this constantly, that everything this Government does is very liberal, and very fair, and very equitable, and very balanced. I would say he must have had his tongue very firmly placed in his cheek, if he could call the Budget Estimates for the Resource Departments liberal, unless his view of liberal is very different from my view of liberal. Because, in fact, these five Departments together have been slashed by \$22 million. Certainly that is not Webster's Dictionary view of liberal.

Now, some parts of the budget, I would have to say, and I did say before, are somewhat more liberal, and particularly in the Health area, I think the Government did a fairly good job.

It would appear every day that the Education budget was less and less liberal than it first appeared, but by no stretch of the imagination could anybody call those Departments' budgets liberal, unless Liberal only means it has a red cover on them.

I would like to comment on something else, in terms of the process of the Departmental Budget Estimates Committees. One of the Members, and I cannot remember which one, remarked, in terms of the role played by the hon. the Member for Mount Scio - Bell Island during the Estimates Committee hearings, that he was constantly leaping up and down

with Points of Order whenever Members from the Opposition were getting a little close in on questioning the Minister. The funny thing is, we had the very same thing happen on the Social Policy Estimates, and I think the hon. the Member for LaPoile served that particular function on our Committee.

Every time the hon. the Member for Humber East, in her insightful, persistent, and very knowledgeable questioning of the Ministers of Health, Social Services and Education, every time she got close to home, close to the bone, the Minister was rescued by the immediate interjection of a Point of Order by the hon. the Member for LaPoile. Now, I do not know what happened on the Government Services Estimates Committee, but I imagine there was someone of that sort there, too. So I would have to say it must have been Liberal Government strategy to place an intimidator on every one of the Estimates Committees in case the Opposition Members got too close to home on the Estimates.

Now the cuts in this particular section certainly did not fall even-handedly on the various Departments. A couple of the Departments did get minor increases, barely enough to keep up with inflation. But there are a number of cuts which I feel are very serious and which I would like to comment on. One is in the Department of Environment and Lands, in the area of Environmental Control and Management.

That section alone lost \$1.5 million at a time when the whole world is expressing concern about the environment. We are, in fact, in the decade of the environment,

and there are certainly a lot of environmental problems in this Province. So, I really find it difficult to understand why the Government would have made \$1.5 million cut in that area.

The Department of Mines and Energy, I suppose, got the biggest whack. They went from \$38 million to \$25 million and that is a very fine Minister. I must say I am very impressed with his honesty and sincerity in his performance in the House. But his budget estimates seem to have gotten a very large slash, at least according to the budget document.

The other Department that got badly hit is Development and Tourism. Even with the \$2,100,000 which was given to the Economic Recovery Team, which is included in the budget estimates, there is a significant cut in that entire Department. And that is at a time when I think everybody has acknowledged and spoke in glowing terms about the importance of the development potential of the tourism industry for Newfoundland. An industry where we are lagging very seriously behind other provinces in Atlantic Canada where, I think, it is acknowledged we need to do a lot in terms of facilities development and marketing if we are going to even maintain our market share. And I have wondered if, in fact, the departure of the hon. Member for Mount Scio - Bell Island as caucus chairman had anything to do with the niggardly and mean-minded way in which the Department of Development and Tourism budget was handled because I know that that hon. gentleman has worked a lifetime in the hospitality industry, he is very knowledgeable about the industry, and he must have been profoundly disappointed

with the results of this budget as it relates to the tourism industry.

I know the hon. Member for Mount Scio - Bell Island would be well aware of some of the problems we have. I know annually the Province of Nova Scotia, a neighboring province, has managed to attract 1800 bus tour operators. Only 200 of them come across to Newfoundland. And I do not think it is because we are any less attractive, that we have any less history, or any less beauty to offer. It is simply because we have not made the appropriate marketing effort. And so it is very disappointing to find that so little has been done in this area.

Now, I think the hon. the Member for Lewisporte was waxing eloquent about the fact that his area has received a tourist chalet, and almost as if nothing had been done in previous years on the West Coast, and he was so happy that finally this Government was doing something. Well, the truth of the matter is, and I think again the hon. the Member for Mount Scio - Bell Island, with whom I have worked on tourism committees, knows full well that the major emphasis in tourism marketing, development, the dollars, the travel generator money for the last four or five years have gone to the great northern peninsula and the West Coast, to the total neglect of Eastern Newfoundland. And I will say that in this House because I have said it to the former Minister of Tourism, who happened to be a Conservative, but it does not matter to me what side he is on.

There was not enough emphasis placed on the development of tourism on the East Coast because so much was being placed on the

West Coast. And we were always told that this area was more depressed and that they had to do job creation there, but that our time would come on the East Coast. It was supposed to come last year. It has certainly not come this year, because I do not think there is one new initiative for this area in this Tourism budget.

The entire budget as far as I can see for new initiatives for tourism generators is going to Marble Mountain. And I have no problem with Marble Mountain, it is a wonderful place. And for Newfoundlanders particularly, it gives them something to do in the winter. If we can develop it into a year round resort, great. But I do think that there are attractions and potential on the East Coast, if you want to look just at where you are going to be able to maximize the dollar return on investment because of your population densities, because of the undeniable richness of history, because of existing cultural facilities on the East Coast, there is a tremendous potential there that has never been realized.

I would hope that next year, at least, the hon. Minister of Tourism and Development will be a little bit more liberal on the East Coast, keeping in mind that most of the voters from St. John's, who got fed up with the Tories and kicked them out because they were not doing anything for this region, can just as quickly get fed up with the Liberals, and you will be gone very quickly.

It is very disturbing, for instance, to hear that at least half of the Liberal Members for St. John's are not supporting the

funding for the Outer Ring Road and the Roads for Rail Agreement, Members who were elected for our Districts.

I would be very interested to know why the Minister of Finance, for instance, is opposed to giving to this region, the funding that has already been committed in the Roads for Rail Agreement, funding that is very important to the economic development of this region.

AN HON. MEMBER:
(Inaudible).

MS DUFF:
Oh, we know it is true, but he may not confirm it.

In the Fisheries Department: if ever there was a year when one would have expected to see more liberal funding in a Budget for a Department like Fisheries, when we have just spent months, ever since last September, talking about how serious the Fisheries crisis is and that it is only a resource crisis, and there is a need for bridge financing, you find there is a cut in the Fisheries budget and, in fact, that the Government has neither a program or resources to place on the table; it is constantly waiting for Ottawa to come up with a magic solution.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The hon. Member's time is up.

MS DUFF:
How it flies when you are having fun!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Mines and Energy.

DR. GIBBONS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is my pleasure, this afternoon, to rise and speak for a few minutes on the Resource Estimates.

I want to start by thanking the Resource Estimates Committee, the Chairman, the Member for Lewisporte, the Vice-Chairman from Mount Pearl, and the other Members of the Committee who were present, as well as my two critics who were present, the Member for Labrador West and the Member for Green Bay, all of whom contributed greatly towards the debate.

AN HON. MEMBER:

You have two critics, do you?

DR. GIBBONS:

Yes, of course, two critics, Mines and Energy.

We had two hours of great debate. We were the first committee, I believe, to start the Estimates this year, and we had excellent questions from all 'round. I want to talk a little bit about some of these questions and some parts of my Department.

It is the Department of Mines and Energy, and I like to start by always concentrating on the Mines part. Most people seem to forget about the Mines part, and I always make a point of saying that the mining industry is the only one that is presently a billion dollar industry in this Province, and we have to appreciate the fact that we do have an industry that is a billion dollar industry.

Mining, of course, is only a billion dollar industry because of

the Labrador West iron ore contribution, as the Member of the Committee and my critic for Mines, is well aware. I appreciated the questions he had about the mining sector in that Estimates meeting that evening.

Last year, the value was \$973 million, and we expect, presently projecting, over a billion dollars for 1990, so it should be a good year.

There are other sectors of the mining industry that are doing well. There are some sectors that are not doing well. A couple of our mines were closed down briefly this winter, but both St. Lawrence Fluorspar and Baie Verte Asbestos are now back in operation, and I wish them well for the rest of this year and beyond, because both of them have considerable reserves left in the ground.

Also, some new industries are about to start in mining. Over in western Newfoundland, in the Bay St. George area, on the Port au Port Peninsula, we are about to get our first shipment from the aggregate operation at Lower Cove. In the next few months, I am sure that the Member for Stephenville, and Bay St. George, will be with me when we send that first boat off to the Atlantic Seaboard with a load of aggregate.

I would like to say a few words about mineral exploration and what is happening in mineral exploration right now. We are down a bit from the peak year of 1988, when it reached over \$40 million but, in 1989, it was about \$32 million. This year, I am anticipating about \$30 million. The reason for the reduction primarily is related to taxation changes at the federal level, Mr.

Speaker. In the last Budget, Mr. Wilson cancelled a program called the Canadian Exploration Incentive Program. It is not going to have a big negative effect this year, and that is because a number of projects were grandfathered through for the 1990 field season.

But, for 1991, right now, I have great, great concerns about what is going to happen to mineral exploration in the Province. We have to all address that. I hope we can do something to keep it at a high level. In the Department we are doing somethings to keep it at a high level. One of these things is in our Geological Survey Branch. For this year, as we discussed in the Budget Estimates Committee, we are budgeting eighteen field surveys under the Department. Eighteen different field surveys scattered throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. We are also continuing to negotiate with Energy, Mines and Resources Ottawa to try to put a new Mineral Development Agreement in place. I hope that will also help us to do further surveys and keep the industry and the exploration sector healthy and active.

MS COWAN:
Hear, hear!

DR. GIBBONS:
As my time is running along, I would like to switch now to one of the energy sectors. I will talk first about the hydro energy sector because the latest speaker from St. John's East raised a question about a major, major cut in my budget this year. And I would like to address what she said.

Yes, the Department of Mines and Energy's Budget is down from \$38 million in 1989 - 1990 to \$25

million in 1990 - 1991. There is one big reason for that, and that is, the cancellation of some electrical subsidies to the PDD and to industrial customers, particularly the subsidy that was being paid in Long Harbour in the industrial case.

My net budget in 1990 - 1991, as I calculated, is \$12,979,300 right now. My net budget last year, net of the electrical subsidies was \$10,933,200. So actually, we are showing a \$2 million increase in my budget, and it is just the subsidies for electrical energy that are down. I think we are still going to do well in our Department in terms of the operating funds and the projects that we are carrying out.

Now a little bit on hydro, as the Member for Grand Falls likes to continue to emphasize. I have said all there is really to be said at this time in the previous answers that I have given the Member for Grand Falls. We are continuing to have meetings. Our next meeting will be next week.

AN HON. MEMBER:
(Inaudible).

DR. GIBBONS:
At the negotiating team level. This is where the action is. It is at the negotiating team level. They are having their next meeting in the next week. There will be further meetings from there. We are still making progress and I am pleased with what is happening.

I hope that by this fall I can come to this House and say, we have reached a certain stage - a letter of intent. So let us all keep our fingers crossed, yes, because one never knows until you get there. But we are making

progress and we are pleased with the progress that we are making.

AN HON. MEMBER:
(Inaudible).

DR. GIBBONS:

It is not him actually, it is a her. I have not been talking to her recently but we have had no need to have discussions at this time. When we get an opportunity we will have a discussion. The meetings are going well and as I said the next one is coming in a very few days.

On the hydro side, Labrador is not everything. We do have things happening in the Province. As I announced last Friday morning, hydro has changed its policy on small hydro development, to try to encourage small hydro development in the Province to help us with our short-term and medium-term needs for the next decade.

AN HON. MEMBER:
(Inaudible).

DR. GIBBONS:

We had some discussions on that but it was the hydro board that made the decision. We hope this will stimulate some industrial activity in the Province and also provide some electricity to help our needs over the next five to ten years. I am sure that some companies will come forward with good projects. I know we have had a lot of attention since last Friday. We have had numerous telephone calls. I am hoping that in the next few weeks somebody will come up with some firm proposal that we can get on with over the next year or two.

Switching away from hydro, in the time that I have left I will say a few words about offshore. In the

offshore, maybe the first thing I should say is relative to the offshore drilling. Offshore drilling is on again. It is on again. There is one well being drilled right now. No thanks to the ice pack this year which has delayed the drilling considerably over the last month or so, but it is on again, and I am anticipating and hoping that there will be at least one or two other wells drilled before this year is out.

I have no confirmation now, but I am optimistic right now because of things I do know; that we will have at least one other if not two others drilled in 1990. That will keep that industry active this year. It will keep the service sector related to that industry active, and be well positioned for 1991.

On Hibernia, I have been giving updates regularly in this House as has the Premier been giving updates regularly in this House. We are continuing to make progress. The latest progress you all saw a few days ago when we tabled for first reading the legislation that is necessary to implement the Hibernia Agreement. We tabled three pieces of legislation that will allow us to sign the Hibernia agreement when it is done. We hope that everything is going to be on schedule and as we pass the legislation in this session everything else will be done in Ottawa as well.

The Federal side has their legislation in Committee stage and they are approximately where we are in terms of the legislation necessary to implement the Hibernia agreement. We still have not reached the final position on the benefits package, we are still

discussing that. But I do hope that over the next few days we will reach some agreement on the benefits package.

The Member for Green Bay drew particular attention to the benefits package and talked about the super module. I am not going to get into the details of which one and what is in each. But what is in any super module certainly is equivalent quality and quantity of work, plus some other components to what was in the main support frame that was in the statement of principles.

So Members of this hon. House, ladies and gentlemen, certainly on Hibernia we are making progress and I would hope that we can stay on schedule for a mid-1990 signing. Beyond Hibernia there is other interests in the offshore. In my latest discussions with Petro-Canada they are very interested in Terra Nova, and I hope that during 1990 they will make a decision on the submission of a development plan for the Terra Nova oilfield, which will be No. 2 for us.

As we move towards the year 2000 I can see us making considerable progress on hydro from Labrador. I can see us approaching and competing with Alberta in terms of our oil production from the offshore. Because with Hibernia, with Terra Nova, and with the others, we certainly will be in the 200,000 barrel per day range by the year 2000.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The hon. Member's time is up.

AN HON. MEMBER:
By leave!

MR. A. SNOW:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. A. SNOW:
Thank you very much.

I am sure the hon. Member for St. John's West will be able to have an opportunity to elaborate a bit more on his Department and hopefully answer a few questions that I may pose during this Concurrence Debate on the Resource Departments, in particular his Department of Mines and Energy. It is with quite a bit of interest I noted he expressed the amount of contribution that Western Labrador makes to the general economy of this Province and, in fact, they produce, when I say 'they' the people of Western Labrador in operation of the mines, produce about three-quarters of that particular mining industry, about \$700 million out of what he talks about a \$1 billion industry. So about 70 per cent of the mining wealth of this Province that is generated is produced in the District of Menihek.

Of course, that is not produced by trucks or pieces of equipment, that is produced by people working in Western Labrador, people who generally came from the Island portion of the Province, and who had for years participated in travelling back and forth, needed subsidies in the air travel, and he sat quietly by as the Minister of Mines, recognizing the contribution that employees make -

MR. SIMMS:
Has he ever been up there by the way?

MR. A. SNOW:

- to the production in the mines, he sat idly by and allowed the Conservative Member for St. John's Centre, the hon. Minister of Finance to gut the Labrador Travel Subsidy Programs and, of course, hurt the mining industry per se, because it costs them now more to travel back and forth. I will tell the hon. the Minister of Finance why that hurts the mining industry in Western Labrador. It is because the miners have to take \$800 to send one of their sons or daughters out here to St. John's to participate in an athletic event. That is why it hurts the mining industry. That is why the hon. the Minister of Finance does not understand it. He lives in St. John's and he can walk over to a school gym and watch the kids participate. In Labrador they have to fly and spend \$700 to get out here to participate. It is unfortunate that the hon. the Minister of Finance does not understand the geography of this Province.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

I wonder if the hon. Member could take his seat for a minute.

It is 4:00 o'clock and I want to read the questions for the Late Show this afternoon. The first question is: Mr. Speaker, I am not satisfied with the answers given by the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture, re: the spray program. From the hon. the Member for Humber Valley.

Mr. Speaker, I am dissatisfied with the answer given to me today by the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations in response to my question re: the Employment Generation Program. From the hon. the Member for Fogo.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to advise you that I am not satisfied with the answer given to my question on the status of universal fisheries plants. From the hon. the Member for St. Mary's - The Capes.

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

MR. A. SNOW:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I want to congratulate the Member for Lewisporte on presenting his report and for the way he conducted the Budget Estimates in the Department of Mines and Energy. I am pleased to see, as I suggested earlier, how the Minister recognized the contribution of mines to the general economy of this Province, and in particular the contribution of the people of Western Labrador into the economy of this Province. I am disappointed, in discussions with the Minister, that he does not have more money available for exploration. In my District of Wabush and Labrador City we live next door to the Province of Quebec, and in that particular area about twenty-five miles from Labrador City, there is a new mine being developed, a graphite deposit, being developed in the Province of Quebec. There has been about \$7 million spent there so far over the last two years, and they expect that this year there will be a further \$20 to \$30 million spent. It will probably open up a mine that will employ another 150 to 200 people.

It is unfortunate that this Province does not see fit to put funds into mineral exploration, as the Province of Quebec does, to aid the actual exploration for minerals. We have a particular

mineral deposit, a graphite deposit, about fifteen miles from Labrador City - Wabush, easily accessible by transportation routes that are already in place - a highway. This would provide immediate employment, and hopefully, in future, would provide a new mineral deposit development in Labrador. Of course, this particular Government has seen fit not to put money into exploration, and I am very disappointed in that, and so are the people in Western Labrador.

MR. BAKER:

The previous Administration put their money into cucumber exploration.

MR. A. SNOW:

The previous Administration may indeed have put some funds into cucumber exploration, as the hon. Member for Gander has suggested, but what I am suggesting to him, the hon. President of Treasury Board, is that they, his Administration, put some money into mining exploration. Not what was done last year, or five years ago, but what should be done today, tomorrow, and next year.

The hon. Minister of Mines and Energy also talked about his commitment to the further development of hydro development in this Province. Of course, as any hon. Member of this House knows, hydro development in this Province means future development in Labrador, more specifically the Lower Churchill development. He talked about how well the talks were going between the officials of this Province and the officials of the Province of Quebec in negotiating this particular development.

It is interesting to note, of

course, that there has not been an EIS done on the Lower Churchill development. I would question the Minister - I hope he is listening in the Common Room - he is not here in the House so I know he is out there in the Common Room listening to it. I would wonder how this is going to generate any employment within the next immediate future of three, four, or five years, this Lower Churchill development, if indeed there is no EIS done yet. This environmental impact statement would have to be done. I would suspect a project of the magnitude of the Lower Churchill development would require an EIS that would probably take two, three, or four years to do. Of course if that statement is not done, there will not be any start on the actual physical construction of a Lower Churchill development, and we all recognize that this would mean tremendous employment in Labrador, and thus employ people, not just from the Island portion of the Province, but employ people from Labrador as well.

I hope, when the hon. the Minister of Mines and Energy speaks again he will address that particular question; it is something a lot of people in this Province are wondering, because it gives the illusion, when he talks about how the officials are meeting, and that they may indeed have a Hydro Bill within a couple of months, that people are anticipating that there could be employment there within as short a period as six or eight months, or maybe even a year, when, in truth, there could not be employment if there is no EIS done, because that would take three or four years.

I am not sure, as I suggested, you could have a project of this

particular magnitude done without a thorough EIS. I would also suggest that when they are having discussions on the actual construction of this particular project there has to be an allowance made, when this power is being generated, not just to transmit power to the Island portion of the Province or to sell it to Hydro Quebec for transmission through the Province of Quebec for sale in New Hampshire or New York, but there has to be some consideration for utilization of the power within Labrador. I would hope the Department of Mines and Energy, with their economists, would do a study, an economic analysis of the construction of the transmission line from the Labrador portion of the Province to the Island. I question whether or not the proper analysis has been done in the sense of cost effectiveness of the utilization of the power within Labrador, rather than just transmitting that power for sale down through Quebec and into the United States, or, indeed, down here to the Island portion of the Province. So I question whether or not they should be building a transmission line per se. That is one Department I had a specific interest in, and it concerns a lot of residents in Western Labrador, in the Resource Estimates.

Another one, of course, we have quite a bit of concern about in Western Labrador and Mehihek, and the towns of Labrador City and Wabush, is the Department of Environment and Lands. We have two wildlife enforcement officers in Western Labrador. They patrol an area of about 28,000 square miles.

MR. BAKER:

They must be some good, to patrol

that much.

MR. A. SNOW:

That is exactly what I am about to bring up. The hon. the President of Treasury Board says you have to be some good to patrol that much. Well, they are good. They are good, but they need some good resources to be able to do their job better. I am glad that Member, the person who controls the purse strings, sits idly by in Gander and watches tens of people, probably even hundreds -

MR. SIMMS:

Tens of people?

MR. A. SNOW:

Many. Not just one or two wildlife officers, but tens -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. Member's time is up.

MR. A. SNOW:

I will have to go again. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for LaPoile.

MR. RAMSAY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It gives me pleasure to rise today in the Budget Estimates Concurrence Debates on the resource sector. I had the honour of replacing one of our Members during one of the Budget Estimates Hearings, and it was very enjoyable. I was with the Minister of Mines and Energy, and quite a few things were discussed, some of note, or course, the Hibernia situation and several other things. Some questions were asked. I know I asked one about the possibility of using windmills

for the generation of electricity. Maybe one in here would probably keep the whole Government going anyway, supporting some of the hot air that floats around. Of course, the technology has not been developed yet to allow us to harness windmill power, but it will in the future, as technology develops with advances in super conductors, and all these variety of new advancements in physics and physical science should allow us to improve the transmission of Hydro power.

Under the Department of Development there are a couple of comments I want to make. The Department of Development has been quite reasonable to the District of LaPoile, with improvements that have been announced in the last couple of years for the Tourist Information Centre on the Trans-Canada Highway just outside Port aux Basques. Luckily, with the Tourist Information Centre in the place it is currently situated, it will still be able to be utilized by the Trans-Canada traffic leaving the gulf ferry.

The Department of Development has also assisted us in new efforts in developing new industrial mall space in the community. Through the assistance of some of the officials of the Department, who sit on the Community Diversification Fund Management Committee, they have given us some assistance in approving the effort to have the transfer shed refurbished. Now, the Federal Government have also called on and have come through quite substantially, I might add, with monies for the conversion of this transfer shed, which, of course, is no longer in use because of the closure of the railway. And the

course is currently underway, the way it was decided they would train the individuals who were going to do the renovations in gritting and sandblasting. The gritting and sandblasting, of course, will be very much a required occupation when the Hibernia project, if it does finally come to a conclusion, gets off the ground.

As well, another company, which our area has seen develop quite substantially a certain amount of business in bringing back to Newfoundland money from central Canada, which is not often the case, a company called Atlas Testing, a company which have expanded quite a bit while here in Newfoundland - they have offices throughout the country - they are currently having employees who are trained in the Port aux Basques and LaPoile District area, shipped off to Ontario and a variety of industrial sites throughout Canada, and they are bringing their paycheques home. These are the individuals who will be called on in the future, given further industrial activity, be it activity through oil exploration or oil production, or activity in the hydro sector, for their non-destructive testing capabilities. Currently, the largest number of non-destructive testing personnel available in the country are situated in the Port aux Basques area, I might add partially due to the concurrence of the former Government in allowing the non-destructive testing course to be set up in Port aux Basques, notwithstanding the non-funding of same by the Provincial Government of the day; the funding had to be gotten from a Community Futures Committee, as there was no funding available from the former Government to see

that this course will be implemented.

Another thing I would like to mention with regards to development is the commitment of our Government to tourist development for the Placentia area in light of the proposed Argentia ferry. I think this is a very important thing. Notwithstanding the differences the hon. Member for Placentia and myself have on the Argentia issue, it is a fact that the Argentia area has suffered over the last number of years because of the lack of proper service for the summer provided by the Ambrose Shea; the Ambrose Shea would very often break down during the summer season, therefore, making it much more difficult for tourist-related traffic to travel in the summertime. Now, granted in the wintertime the volume of traffic that travels by vessel across the gulf, or otherwise, from the Province to mainland Canada, in my mind, does not justify a year-round Argentia service.

Now, that is the way I feel about it, and, of course, we choose to differ on this, some colleagues opposite and some of my own colleagues. But it is a matter that would see several jobs in the Port aux Basques area move outside, to the Argentia district. They say there will be a certain amount of tourism increase. The circle route, which should be used, from Argentia down through to leave in Port aux Basques, that is certainly the case for the summertime. The volume in wintertime, I am not too certain that would be a big advantage.

With regard to the Department of Environment and Lands I will say I

have had some good results from the Department myself in dealings for constituents, with regard to procedures through Crown Lands, in having applications find their way through the system in a reasonable period of time, not the period of time it took in the past, which normally might have been two months, to have applications proceed through the system. It is a tedious process, a process that needs reworking, and the Minister has committed to have his Department improve the methods which the Department uses to approve the various applications, deeds, things going through the title transfer, registry, etc., in seeing to it that people of the Province are not held up in having the required amount of time that is needed, making sure that does not become too long, which would hurt them financially, as it sometimes had in the past. It is not the kind of thing you can blame Government for, I guess, but it is the kind of thing political initiative will change and improve.

As well, I would like to add that I am very pleased our Department of Fisheries has seen to it that the Federal Government has been identified as the Government primarily responsible for fisheries. There is a certain blurring in the public eye in Newfoundland. We, as provincial politicians, certainly have to look after the people, as is often said by the people's Opposition opposite. We do have our responsibility in the area of fisheries, given us by the Federal Government. But we have a certain commitment, I think, to make sure that all federal initiatives must first be exhausted prior to the Provincial Department of fisheries taking a course which would possibly make us very poor off

financially to handle other social needs which are required. We certainly do have to stand firm in our efforts in making sure that the fisheries jurisdiction is maintained as it currently is.

Now if they change the ground rules as far as fisheries management goes, then, of course, we might be able to see a difference in the way in which the Department of Fisheries is run provincially. But there is a certain amount in the way we are doing things now which gives the Opposition good food for getting upset, saying that the Provincial Government is denying the people their just support for the fishery by commenting on the Budget and saying that we have a lesser commitment to fisheries than they did.

Our principle in operating the way we have with the Federal Government, all the negotiations leading up to now with regard to the fisheries crisis that is currently happening here in the Province, our, I suppose they might call it, somewhat rigid way of dealing with it, I think, will see definite results; possibly not the results required next week, but we will see rigid results in the long-term. Next week we may very well have to supplement, if necessary, the announcement, as the Federal Government has done, in sharing the burden of the federal deficit. I am certain that when they announce their federal initiative next week it will possibly be contingent upon the Province participating, as with the federal farm aid initiatives announced out West. This money is contingent upon X number of dollars of provincial money going into it. I know our Government is committed to

participating in this area. Now, the amount by which they expect us to participate may very well give us reason to believe as to whether the Federal Government is really serious about helping the people of the Province in light of the fisheries crisis.

Mr. Speaker, the one Department which I have not mentioned is the Department of Forestry and Agriculture. I applaud the Minister on holding fast to his conviction of using Bt this year. I am sure that hon. Members opposite might say it is a difficult situation, which I am sure it is, to balance the needs of the industry against the environmental concerns of our public.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member's time has elapsed.

MR. RAMSAY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I might just in conclusion say that the hon. Minister has done quite a job in seeing to it that these needs are balanced out.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, first of all before I launch into the few comments I would like to make on the Resource Estimates, I would like to say how pleased I was to have the opportunity to appear one evening while we were considering the estimates of the Department of Fisheries, before the Resource Committee. I would like to take

this opportunity to compliment the Chairman and the Members of the Committee. I do believe it was the only committee during this session that I had an opportunity to take part in. Certainly, the Committee, I think, functioned very, very well. The Members on both sides, certainly those of us who were not bona fide members of the Committee, but obviously have a right to appear as Members of the House, were given adequate and ample time to ask questions and have second rounds without any fuss whatsoever.

I do not know what happened on another occasion, but I understand that the Chairman was not so forthcoming, from my colleague for Grand Falls, on another occasion.

MR. SIMMS:

They were unhappy with me. They tried to protect the Minister that is all.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, I can only speak as I find. My colleague from Fogo and I were here when they were doing the fisheries estimates, and we were quite pleased to be able to participate and quite pleased with the flow of information, and so on, that went on before the Committee.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I must say I believed that we gleaned more, maybe unwittingly, I think we gleaned more from the comments of the Member for LaPoile this evening in this legislature than we gleaned in the whole three and one half or four hours that we spent before the Committee debating the estimates of the Department of Fisheries. Because the real, I do not know whether the hon. gentleman knew it or not, but in the last four or five

minutes of his presentation I was listening very, very intently, because he was articulating, Mr. Speaker, what I believe has been the agenda of this Government for the past year. That is, simply put, and to quote almost verbatim the words of the hon. Member who just took his seat, it is this, the agenda of this Government is to ensure that the fishery is downsized, to ensure that there are less people participating in the fishery as fishermen or fish plant workers. Therefore, flowing out of that, Mr. Speaker, is to have a massive relocation of human effort from the fishery into some other economic activity either in this Province or somewhere else. The hon. gentleman articulated that, Mr. Speaker, very, very well. We know it to be the case.

When I asked the Minister for example, in Committee when we were doing his estimates, if he wants to promote a professional corp of fishermen in Newfoundland and Labrador, and taking the Federal Government numbers of about 25,000 or 26,000 registered fishermen, full-time and part-time, I asked the Minister directly, how many full-time professional fishermen did he believe that the fishery in this Province could support now under reduced quota circumstances? How many professional fishermen could it support under a growth situation, where the fishery with proper management could rebuilt itself to a total allowable catch of 250,000 or 260,000 tons.

I am sure the Chairman of the Committee and all Members who were there that night, will recall the tremendous skating effort put on by the Minister. The Minister was very quick to say, and very quick to take the position, that only a

core of professional fishermen could be supported in the long-term by the industry itself, but he was not so quick, Mr. Speaker, to answer the direct question: 'Well, Mr. Minister, how many do you think that is?' And that is the key question, Mr. Speaker, that this Government, if they are going to espouse as a Provincial Government, for the first time since Confederation, a Provincial Government espousing, promoting, trying to bring about a decrease in the number of participants in the fishery, fishermen and fish plant workers. If they are going to espouse that policy, Mr. Speaker, then, certainly goodness, it flows from there, just as night flows from day, that they have the responsibility to do their homework and to tell the people of this Province and tell the industry involved, in this Province, just how many people they believe the industry can support under different scenarios, different options.

If the TAC is 125,000 tons next year, what is the optimum level of fishermen and plant workers that should be retained in the industry? If the TAC the following year is 178,000 tons, what is the optimum level of employment that the industry can 'professionally' - to use the Government's word and the Minister's word - sustain?

I do not believe it is too much to demand, on behalf of the people who have attempted to make their livelihood in that industry, the people who have built rural Newfoundland and Labrador, and populated it and strived and, through some very difficult times, survived, I do not believe it is too difficult to demand from our

political masters, that they answer that type of question. You cannot, Mr. Speaker, take the position, in my view, that we can articulate this new policy, but we do not have any responsibility to point out what the result of it is. You can talk in magic buzz phrases about diversification and decentralization and downsizing, but some time or another, Mr. Speaker, during the political responsibility process, people who hold political responsibility have to justify the policy they are enunciating, the policy they are articulating, and that is where we take great difference with this Government and its fisheries policy.

The Minister has not, the Premier has not, no spokesman for the Government has attempted to define for all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, the thousands who are out there in the hundreds of communities that have, up until now, depended on the fishery, nobody has attempted to define for them what this professional core of fishermen and plant workers is, how big it can be, where it will be located, what will be the effect on the northeast coast, what will be the effect on the south coast, what will be the effect on the west coast, what will be the effect on Labrador. We talk about it, we articulate it, we enunciate it as a policy, but nobody from Government, yet, has had the fortitude or the courage to tell people what that policy means, Mr. Speaker.

The other thing I would like to point out - and those numbers are available - the Chairman will recall, I asked the Minister directly 'what were the numbers under certain quota circumstances,' and the Minister

basically, I think, said, 'We will have to get that information, and let it come back through the Committee or to the House.' We have not seen any of that information yet.

So, Mr. Speaker, this is a fundamental question which must be addressed, and which the people involved in the industry have a right to expect to be address.

AN HON. MEMBER:
How?

MR. RIDEOUT:
How? By going to the source of the information, Mr. Speaker, getting it, knowing what it takes financially to bring the level of income up to the professional status that the Government defines, whatever it is defined to be, and then doing a correlation of the numbers. Mr. Speaker, you do not have to be an Einstein, you do not have to be struck with a bolt of lightning, to be able to develop a model whereby you can work in the appropriate numbers to come out with the answer to the professional core of fishermen that the Government is talking about. There must be, within the thousands who work for this bureaucracy, this Government, and the thousands who work for the Government of Canada, enough of mini-genii, or whatever they are called, to be able to come - if they cannot do it, punch it into the computer, and the computer will spit it back to them, Mr. Speaker.

I understand that the adjournment order is now before the House.

Thank you, Sir.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

Debate on the Adjournment
[Late Show]

MR. SPEAKER:

I call on the hon. the Member for Humber Valley.

MR. WOODFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I asked earlier this week, Mr. Speaker, a question of the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture, pertaining to the spray program, and the answers the Minister did give at that time were correct because it was only a couple of days after, I think, that he announced the actual spray program for 1990. One of the questions I did ask at that time was, if he would table the results of last year's spray program, and if there was anything - I think in the statement the other day, I asked him if he would table any results, or any comments, made by the Federal scientists with regards to the spray program last year, and any suggestions, if any, they made in this year's program.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it is obvious that last year's program was not a successful program, and the reasons for that, Mr. Speaker, may be debatable. One of the questions I asked was, was it because there was not enough acreage spray? Was it because of the weather conditions or they did not get on the second application, and so on? Were the reasons for that identified? That is my question. I do not think there is a Member in this House, who would not have loved to see the full 6000 hectares that were delegated to be sprayed last year, a success. Everybody would like to see it a success. There is no politics in that, in trying to

downgrade and trying to nitpick an industry that is vitally important to everybody in this Province. It is debatable on what we should use - whether we should use Bt the biological form of spray or should we use fenitrothion, a chemical, or something else?

Now I know there are hon. Members opposite, in Government today, that when on this side of the House always said that we should use Bt. They were always against any chemical spraying. Rightly so, if it can be identified that this particular chemical spray is harmful to any humans, harmful to any animals, or any other thing. I do not think anybody would argue against that, but some questions still have to be answered - what do we give up first? Do we give up and take a chance of losing our forests that are vital? Can we afford that luxury so to speak? Now, some of the acreages that were mentioned last year, identified in the Minister's statement, were something like 27,502 for the hemlock looper, and in the severe category approximately 10,500, yet we sprayed approximately 5362 hectares. Now one of the questions I asked is, why did we spray, even if we got to the six that was supposed to have been done, why did we spray such a small amount when there was 27,000 identified? What happened to the other 21,000? Out of the 10,524 what portion of the 21,000 would be in the severity stage? That should have been identified at that time. The big question, like I said in the Minister's statement yesterday, why not spray for the whole amount of acreage that is identified regardless of what you spray with? Spray the total sum.

MR. BAKER:

There is no need to.

MR. WOODFORD:

Well, it is obvious. The Member for Gander says there is no need to, but it is obvious that the total acreage as identified last year, they have tripled, so something has happened. Is it because we did not spray enough? Is it because of the combination of the looper and the blackheaded budworm, or what have you?

In having said that, Mr. Speaker, did we ask, did the Department, through the Minister, ask the federal scientists for any recommendations this year? The Minister could probably answer that. I do not know if he is listening to me. Did the Minister and his Department ask the federal scientists for any recommendations this year pertaining to the spray program? That is one of the questions. What did his own officials say with regards to the spray program? Last, but not least, the paper companies, what did they recommend?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. Member's time has elapsed.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture.

MR. FLIGHT:

There is nobody in the House, Mr. Speaker, who is more capable of being the official critic for Agriculture than the hon. Member. I am beginning to doubt though, whether that is so from the forestry side, when I hear some of the questions he is asking.

Let me point out, Mr. Speaker, that had I used fenitrothion this

year - there were 69,000 hectares in the severe to moderate range, and using fenitrothion we are spraying 43,000 hectares. I could not have sprayed 43,000 hectares had I used fenitrothion, when you consider the buffers around all the water bodies, around the rivers, around the towns. And the reason we are spraying only 43,000 hectares is very simple, that is all it is possible to spray. If you have 100 hectares out in the middle of a bog, low volume, do you send a spray plane out to spray the bog or do you spray the 100 hectares? So there are thousands of hectares that are practically impossible to spray.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. FLIGHT:
Now, Mr. Speaker, let the hon. Member tell me this, if he wanted perfect success last year with the 6,000 hectares we sprayed, and we did have success -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. FLIGHT:
- the Bt program last year was just as effective against the looper as the fenitrothion spray program the year before was. Just as successful and did not hurt the environment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. FLIGHT:
I should pose this question to the hon. Member. If he expected 100 per cent success in the Bt program last year on the 6,000 hectares, why is it in the 1970s we had to spray 100,000 hectares one year with fenitrothion? We started in the 1970s, and with matacil we

would go 100,000 hectares one year, 200,000 next year, 300,000 next year. Was that success?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. FLIGHT:
What happened then? What happened to those particular spray programs? So, Mr. Speaker, the Member should get to understand it. Mr. Speaker, if I had any doubt about whether or not he was totally -

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The hon. the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture has the floor.

MR. FLIGHT:
If I had any doubt about the hon. Member totally understanding the spray program this year, then I was sure when I heard the hon. Member on radio this morning, and I will quote a transcript of a statement he made.

MR. SIMMS:
Do not attack him now.

MR. FLIGHT:
I am not attacking the hon. Member. It is for his information so he will be better informed to talk about the spray program.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. FLIGHT:
But he said, if you are going to spray Bt -

MR. SIMMS:
Is that a quote?

MR. FLIGHT:
Mr. Woodford said if you are going to spray Bt or a mixture of Bt or

something else, 2, 4 D, for instance -

AN HON. MEMBER:
What is 2, 4 D?

MR. FLIGHT:
I have to tell the hon. Member that the program we designed this year was to try and protect and keep trees alive and try to kill the bugs. What he proposes here is a solution that will kill the trees and keep the bugs.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. FLIGHT:
Well 2, 4 D is a herbicide, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. FLIGHT:
And there may be a need in this Province to use herbicides and there is a small herbicides program for suppression and retarding the growth of hardwoods. But it is kind of scary when the official spokesman for the Opposition in talking about a spray program suggested maybe we should use Bt or 2, 4 D or something.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. FLIGHT:
On a 43,000 hectares spray program. So I will just tell the Member that.

Now, Mr. Speaker, with regard to my tabling reports. I remember, Mr. Speaker, every other day, hon. Ministers of the Crown tabling reports that they are required to table under legislation. Number one, I am not aware that I was

required to table under legislation any report on last years spray program. But I will undertake - I do not recall having a Member ask me to make available a report, but I will tell the Minister -

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The hon. Member's time is up.

MR. FLIGHT:
- he knows the phone number to my office. I will undertake to deliver every spray program and the results.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

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

MR. WINSOR:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question and my concerns were with the answers given by the hon. the Minister of Labour, who I see is not in her seat, maybe she is out back or if not, I guess, the President of Treasury Board will respond on her behalf.

AN HON. MEMBER:
She was here all day. Where is she gone?

MR. WINSOR:
Upon taking office one of the first things this Administration did was to cancel the private sector program that had been put in place. I think there was some \$7.5 million in that program for providing employment to business throughout the entire Province. Last summer, I think it was just shortly after this Administration took power, they cancelled this program. Then there was pressure put on the Administration from the

Board of Trade, continued questions from the Member who had brought the program in in the House of Assembly, the business community, and the dramatically rising unemployment rate in the Province. The Minister, when the House closed, attempted to weasel in a program during the summer when no one was around.

AN HON. MEMBER:
(Inaudible).

MR. WINSOR:
No, it started last summer, late in the summer. She weaseled in a program - her twenty twenty twenty program as she called it. I think she found \$1 million or so from some project that did not get off the ground. And then this year in the budget, she gives another \$2.8 million for the program. So we questioned the Minister in the House yesterday as to how many new jobs were going to be created this year under her program, and the Minister said, 'The money in the budget this year for the employment generation program is money that was spent last year.'

AN HON. MEMBER:
Figure that out.

MR. WINSOR:
'Also, we will see the money, again, reflected in the next budget.' Now, it does not take much of genius to figure out it is three budgets, the program can only last sixty weeks, the last announced funding occurred last February.

We could not get any generation programs down there. We tried and we were not very successful. The Minister did not give us enough programs, but what we get from the Minister is that we do not qualify for the program because it is not

a new and expanding business. The business has been in operation for forty-six years, and I go down through the list of programs that have been approved by this Administration and some of the businesses approved were in existence for 100 years.

AN HON. MEMBER:
Hear, hear!

MR. WINSOR:
The Minister has \$9 million of requests for programs and applications still coming in.

AN HON. MEMBER:
\$9 million!

MR. WINSOR:
\$9 million of requests. The last report that the Minister gave us, I think, there was some 700 or 800 jobs created - 700 or 800 jobs.

AN HON. MEMBER:
Not 3000.

MR. WINSOR:
Not 3000 that was created the years before. In addition to that this program has all but eliminated the tourist sector because of the down time during the winter, they do not qualify for the program.

AN HON. MEMBER:
That is right.

MR. WINSOR:
No farmers can avail of the program.

AN HON. MEMBER:
(Inaudible).

MR. WINSOR:
Farmers across the Province, the tourist industry, the service industry that have down-time during the winter, none of these

can avail of the program. And if you look through the programs that were announced you will find that a fair number of them were approved and withdrawn.

AN HON. MEMBER:
That is right.

MR. WINSOR:
The withdrawn ones came about because they realized they could not live up to the criteria. The twenty weeks in the down-time, they could not avail of it, so what the Minister has done here is introduce the program that is essentially no good for large parts of the population of this Province.

AN HON. MEMBER:
How many?

MR. WINSOR:
How many? You check through the list and see how many have withdrawn.

AN HON. MEMBER:
Give us the information.

MR. WINSOR:
Oh, you want the information. We will get it for you tomorrow because the Minister cannot supply it. But we can.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. WINSOR:
Now, the unemployment rate in this Province continues to soar. We have a crisis in the fishery, fish plants closing by the day, the business community is out there now and going to want to avail of these programs to get them through this short period of time. The Minister has acknowledged now that there is no more money left in the program. What are the businesses

going to do now for the remainder of this year if there is no money? The Minister goes on to say -

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The hon. Member's time has elapsed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
By leave. By leave.

MR. WINSOR:
Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the President of Treasury Board.

MR. BAKER:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am very surprised and shocked that the Member for Fogo was dissatisfied with the answer he was given. The answer was given very truthfully. There is \$2.9 million in that program. Truthfully, this was the program that was in existence before the Budget was done this year. Truthfully, that \$2.9 million will be spent this year and as projects, for either one reason or another cannot be completed, then new projects will be put in, so there is a certain amount of slippage, as the Minister mentioned. The answers were given truthfully and honestly. So, Mr. Speaker, it surprises me. It shocks me that the Member is dissatisfied. It surprises me.

Mr. Speaker, there is another reason why it surprises me that this question comes up at this time. I might say that what I am going to say next is perhaps something that is new to, especially the new Members in the House who just recently got

elected and did not sit in Opposition for the last four years, as I did and Members on this side. Mr. Speaker there is a record in place over the last four years of job creation. I sat there for four years and every year I heard the Members, now in Opposition, who were sitting over here, announcing job creation projects.

Shortly before the last election, Mr. Speaker, you would not know this, I decided to go back through the four years and go through the Throne Speeches -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
(Inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

I remind the hon. Member for Grand Bank that he is not in his seat.

MR. BAKER:
Mr. Speaker, I went back through the Throne Speeches and back through the press releases and so on that were issued by the then Government. Mr. Speaker, what I found is that there is no unemployment in this Province. And that is why it surprised me that the Member was dissatisfied with the \$2.9 million being spent. There is no unemployment in this Province, not a single bit of unemployment. As a matter of fact, we are now scraping the backwoods of Ontario to find people to come here to take a job. Mr. Speaker, if you could only think for a minute, how many jobs do you think were created in the last four years, while I was sitting in Opposition? Would 50,000 jobs be a lot? That is a large number of jobs. Mr. Speaker, it was not 50,000 jobs they claimed they created. One

hundred thousand? One hundred thousand? Did they create that many jobs?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
No.

MR. BAKER:
No, no. Mr. Speaker, it was more than that.

AN HON. MEMBER:
What?

MR. BAKER:
It was more than that. It may be even 150,000; 150,000 jobs would really satisfy this Province. Would 150,000 jobs created be enough for this Province to take care of the unemployment?

MR. SIMMS:
You can try as hard as you want, it is not going (inaudible).

MR. BAKER:
Mr. Speaker, that is not enough. In checking the Throne Speeches for the four years, and in checking the Budgets and in checking the announcements that were made about job creation by Members opposite, I discovered that in four years 276,450 were jobs created. Why do we need another one?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please! Order, please!

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

MR. HEARN:
Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

It seems to be an evening of avoiding having to answer questions, because I notice the

Minister of Fisheries is not in his seat, either. Oh, the real Minister of Fisheries is here.

Mr. Speaker, I asked a question of the Minister a couple of days ago about the status of the plants which were formerly owned by Universal Fisheries. The Minister at the time, and Hansard will verify this, said he was not in a position to give an answer, but he would report to the House the following day. He did not say tomorrow, which could have been any day, he said, 'the following day'. It is now at least two or three days later, and the Minister has not reported to the House yet. The Minister has one of his high officials on the Saltfish Corporation Board, and there are other Members from different organizations. Information on the plants is filtering out from all different kinds of sources, and I think it would be only fair and just if the Minister had stood in the House and let the people know exactly what happened in relation to the proposals and bids on five plants.

Let me just say that the plants involved, the three which were put up for proposals, and two others which were leased by the Company, in Belleoram and Riverhead, provided, and my hon. colleagues might be interested in this, the one company, a new company which just came into the Province in 1985, provided 2,400 jobs. These were jobs which were not there before, because the plants were shutdown and there were no markets for the fish. So, if one company in one District can provide 2,400 jobs, that would be a total, of the fifty-two Districts, of 122,800 jobs, and surely we have more than one company. So the figures used by the President of

Treasury Board in relation to jobs created by our Government, when we were in power, may not be out of whack at all, because in at least one District the figures are fairly constant. But the Company did create 2,400 jobs. That is approximately the number on payroll last year.

It was a Company which came into the Province, aggressively went after product, reopened plants which had been dormant, and provided a market to fishermen who could not sell their product. Unfortunately, and the history of the plant is there, the company ran into financial trouble, some of it their own doing, some of it not; some of it was long-term investment which was overlooked. A lot of the debt load the company carried was tied up in plants and boats which would be able to be recovered after some time. If the Government opposite had used the opportunity to put the company back on a financial footing, by assisting financially and perhaps putting people on their Board of Directors, or internally to work on the financial side, as the company was willing, if they had matched money offered by the company to get the plant going again, then we would not have lost the 2,400 jobs which are now in danger of being lost.

The whole operation has been completely fragmented. There is very little interest being expressed, the Government sits by and twiddles its thumbs, and the Minister says, It is really not our doing. The plants are owned by the Saltfish Corporation, and whatever happens rests upon them. It would not be in the hands of the Saltfish Corporation if the Government opposite had taken the initiative when they had the

opportunity to do so, and helped protect the jobs and the markets which were there. Whatever happens now, we are going to have a much lesser operation than was previously there.

I hope when the real Minister of Fisheries, the Minister of Social Services, stands up to respond, he will tell us exactly what is happening, what the proposals are for the plants in St. Mary's, in Fermeuse and in Ferryland, and what this Government is going to do to make sure the fishermen who had a market, and the plant workers who worked at these plants, along with River Head and Belleoram, will be able to go to sleep tonight and rest easy, knowing they will have a market, and knowing they will have a job.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

MR. EFFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, first of all I will apologize for the fact that the hon. the Minister of Fisheries could not be here to answer the question. He was gone before questions for the Late Show were read out; he had a speaking engagement in his District.

Let me ask the hon. the Member for St. Mary's - The Capes, who just said this Government must be twiddling its thumbs or twiddling its fingers, what his Government was doing for the last seventeen years? What were they twiddling? It could not have been their fingers. Because if you had been twiddling your fingers in the

right place and using a pen and the little bit of brain God gave you, the fishery would not be in the mess it is in now, we would not have five or six plants closed down up there. That is the whole problem with the situation. What have we been doing for the last eleven months?

MR. HEARN:

It is back in the mess now because (inaudible).

MR. EFFORD:

Mr. Speaker, he also said we should have put someone on the Board of Directors. What happened? Five years ago, when Universal took over the five plants, why was there not someone put on the Board of Directors to ensure the plant would be operating at some decent level of profit and management? Your Government did not put anybody on the Board of Management. It is only in the last eight or ten months that it got in financial trouble, and now you are saying we should have put someone there, now that it is \$20 million plus in debt. That shows good Tory philosophy. That is good Tory philosophy. Do it after the fact. If you had taken that \$20 million and put it in the bank and used the interest alone, you would have provided more than 2,400 jobs a year. My goodness, where is your financial expertise in making statements like that?

Now, \$20 million at 10 per cent a year is \$2 million a year: How many people could you employ with a payroll of \$2 million a year?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. EFFORD:

My goodness! Mr. Speaker, there

has to be a decision made. Number one, there is a problem with the Universal Fisheries company, but it has to do with the Saltfish Corporation. They called for tenders; tenders have been received by the Saltfish Corporation. They are meeting on it with the federal people, and a decision will be made. There are a couple of plants outside that, one in Belleoram and one in Riverhead. Now the one in Belleoram has nothing to do with the Saltfish Corporation, but the Minister, a good Minister, already has some of the problems answered. One of the main problems with the plant in Belleoram is resource; there is not enough cod to keep the plant going enough weeks so that people can get some decent employment, ten or fifteen weeks to receive UI. What he did, first of all, was identify the scallops that are going to be processed down in that particular area this year. He has also identified hake and pollock that will be processed in that plant. So that will complement and make up for the resource-short cod, and there will be some work in the Belleoram plant this year. But, as the Minister has said so often, if the fish do not swim in, you cannot flick your fingers and make them swim in. You have to find other another answer. What happened? All the years this plant has been down there it has been in trouble. It just did not happen this year.

AN HON. MEMBER:
Universal (inaudible) in.

MR. EFFORD:
That is what I am asking. Why did not your Government, when it was there?

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible) wanted to sell the boats. He had the boats up on auction.

MR. EFFORD:
Wanted to sell the boats? Seventeen years you have been selling boats? How come we have been building boats, and for seventeen years you have been selling them?

AN HON. MEMBER:
(Inaudible) those boats (inaudible).

MR. EFFORD:
How long ago was that? I was still on baby bonus when that was taking place.

AN HON. MEMBER:
There was only one (inaudible) in history who sold two boats for a dollar.

MR. EFFORD:
Mr. Speaker, I know the hon. Member has a right to be concerned about the number of people, but this Government is very concerned. We are not going to sit idly by and let everything go and have nothing happening over the summer months in those communities. But, you cannot work with the impossible. The situation with Universal Fisheries must be cleared up. There is a problem with the Saltfish Corporation, and they must try to recover some of those monies. That is in the process. When that process is finalized, the Minister of Fisheries and officials from the Saltfish Corporation will be making a decision on what is going to happen. You know that already.

The situation at Belleoran and -

AN HON. MEMBER:
We know that.

MR. EFFORD:

There is a prime example of how they have their act together over there. They ask questions, they know the answers, and when you get up and try to give some responses, they look across the floor and say, Well, what are you answering the question for? We already know the answer. It is very clear. There is no point, Mr. Speaker, employing 2,400 people on the Southern Shore, trying to run fish plants if there is no product there.

MR. HEARN:

Product is not the problem.

MR. EFFORD:

The product is not there, not all over the area. There is no access to product for all those plants.

MR. HEARN:

What do you know about it?

MR. EFFORD:

I know as much about the Southern Shore as the hon. Member does.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. gentleman's time is up.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

It is moved and seconded that the House do now adjourn.

On motion, the House at its rising adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, at 9:00 a.m.