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**VERBATIM REPORT**  
*(Hansard)*

*Speaker: Honourable Thomas Lush*

Wednesday

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The House met at 2:00 p.m.

Mr. Speaker (Lush): Order, please!

On behalf of hon. Members I would like to extend a warm welcome to fifty Level 11 and 111 students from Christ the King School, Rushoon. They are accompanied by four teachers, the Principal George Finlay, Kathleen Brenton, Perry Ryan and Colin Butt.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member for Humber East.

Ms Verge: I rise on a point of privilege. Yesterday I presented to this hon. House a petition of many residents of the Province calling on the Government to reverse the terribly regressive cut in social assistance payments for single parent families. The Minister of Justice, responding to the petition in the absence of the Minister of Social Services, made statements which after research and checking I have found to be false and misleading. The Minister of Justice said that the social assistance cut was required by the Federal Government, which is now enforcing provisions of the Canada Assistance Plan arrangements with the Provincial Government which had not been previously enforced. Today I checked with officials of National Health and Welfare, that is a Department of the Federal Government, officials who administer the Canada Assistance Plan arrangements with this Province. These are officials both in St. John's and in Ottawa, and they told me there has been absolutely no action on the part of the Federal Government which precipitated this change. They told me that under the strict

provisions of the Canada Assistance Plan Agreement with this Province income other than Federal payments, such as Canada Pension and Veterans Affairs Allowances, may be considered allowable income. In fact it is perfectly permissible under the terms of the Canada Assistance Plan arrangements with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador for maintenance and child support to be considered allowable income, the way it always was before October 1 of this year when the current Government made a change in policy requiring that all maintenance and child support be deducted dollar for dollar.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

I ask the hon. Member to please state precisely, and make the case for the point of privilege. The hon. Member is now debating the issue which would be debated should the Chair say that it is a point of privilege. Hon. Members may not understand, but when making a point of privilege there is a clear method for it and the hon. Member should proceed just to state what point of privilege was breached and how it affects her or him in carrying out their parliamentary duties, but not getting to the substance of the motion, which would be debated once we awarded the point of privilege.

Ms Verge: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I was trying to lay out my case for a ruling by Your Honour that there is a prima facie breach of my privileges as a Member of this House, and to seek a ruling from Your Honour.

Mr. Speaker, my case is that the Minister of Justice, speaking for the Government in this Chamber

yesterday, gave false and misleading information, namely that he claimed very definitively that the Federal Government, the Government of Canada, has required the Provincial Government to make the change in social assistance policy that came into effect on October 1st, requiring that all maintenance and child support received by social assistance recipients be deducted from their social assistance payments. Senior officials of the Government of Canada who administer the Canada Assistance Plan arrangements with this Provincial Government have told me that is not true and that the change was initiated solely by the Provincial Government, solely by the Minister of Social Services and his officials. And the Minister of Social Services is nodding his concurrence confirming my point that the Minister of Justice made a false and misleading statement to this House of Assembly yesterday, evidently in an attempt to play politics with such a sensitive and devastating development for 1,000 single mothers and 1,500 children in this Province. I seek Your Honour's ruling.

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

Mr. Baker: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Very briefly it is obvious to everybody concerned that this is simply not a point of privilege. The hon. Member's privileges as a Legislator are not being interfered with in any way. She has not been interfered with in the carrying out of her duties and so on. There is simply no point of privilege. It is simply an attempt similar to the fifteen to twenty other attempts in the last session made by Members

opposite to get up on points of privilege and simply get into some kind of an argument because, Mr. Speaker, they have difficulty using the rules of the House properly. This kind of thing is more properly dealt with in Question Period.

If the Member feels she has a difference of opinion from one official or some officials that differ from the Minister's then Question Period is the time to get at that. There are all kinds of ways of getting at it. She can go to the press, she can do all kinds of things. She is simply abusing, very seriously abusing the rules of this House to simply make a political point, and it is similar to the actions of an individual who, when something happens the individual does not like, simply takes his ball and goes home and wants to play no more. It is a whimpering, cry baby type attempt, Mr. Speaker, to make a political point in the House.

Mr. Speaker: I just wanted again to remind the hon. the President of Treasury Board that he too is getting on the debate rather than stating the case precisely of why it was not a point of privilege.

The Chair is ready to rule. I notice the Leader of the Opposition is standing. I will permit one submission.

Mr. Rideout: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am surprised the Government House Leader could stand there with a straight face on him, Mr. Speaker, a person who professes to have such regard for the sanctity of Parliament, and try to brush off a legitimate point of privilege raised by my colleague

for Humber East.

The point is simply this; the privileges of every Member of this House are breached if we cannot take for granted the words uttered by a Minister of the Crown.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of the Crown yesterday, namely the Minister of Justice, gave false information to this House; information that had been proven false by my colleague in her research done today.

The Minister of Justice told this House yesterday that the Province was forced to change the Social Assistance Regulations because the Government of Canada, through the Canada Assistance Program, twisted the screws, I believe were the words he used, on the Province, forcing the Province to change the regulations.

Now, Mr. Speaker, highly placed responsible officials in the Canada Assistance Plan deny that, so the point of privilege then, is plainly obvious. If we cannot trust the words of a Minister, and particularly the Minister of Justice, but it applies to everybody, then nobody can operate in this House, so everybody's privileges are breached, that is the point, simply, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: As Speakers have so often quoted in the past, a point of privilege is a very serious matter and ought to be dealt with seriously, and by the same token, since it is a serious matter and relates to the rights of Members, it ought to be raised on very rare occasions.

I quote for hon. Members Maingot, page 190 as follows: A dispute between two members about

questions of facts said in the debate does not constitute a valid question of privilege. Reading down a little further, Maingot further states: An allegation of misleading the House is not out of order or unparliamentary, nor does it amount to a question of privilege. I therefore rule that the member did not establish a prima facie case of privilege.

#### Oral Questions

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

Mr. Rideout: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to very briefly quote from the Liberal Policy Campaign Manual for 1989, for the benefit of the Premier, on health care policy and the following is the quote: "Liberal health policy dictates that as long as the demand exists hospital beds must be kept open, institutions must not be understaffed and compassion must always take precedence over business administration." Quickly cluing up it says: "If we cannot adequately care for the sick, the disabled and the aged among us, we have failed as a society and we can take cold comfort in cutting costs and improving balance sheets."

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Premier how that policy quote from his campaign document of 1989 squares with the devastating news delivered over the weekend, I believe, to the Hospital and Nursing Homes Association by the Minister of Health, that they will have \$60 million less to spend on those services next year than they had this year? Where is the

compassion in that compared to the policies enunciated by the Premier during the election?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Warren: It was all a bluff, that is all.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Premier Wells: Let me just correct some of the misstatements in the comments by the hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Premier Wells: There is a great need to correct such misstatements. I am not responsible for the misstatements, but there is a substantial need to correct them.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Premier Wells: I am not sure what the explanation is. It is one or the other of those things. The Minister of Health did not at any time, so far as I know - now I will check with him, and he is listening to what I am saying, but I am giving my knowledge at the moment, and if what I am saying is incorrect, I have no doubt he will correct me. The Minister of Health did not at any time say to the Hospital Association or the members of the Hospital Association you are going to have \$60 million less this year than you had last year to run the hospitals.

Mr. Decker: No, (inaudible) will have the same budget next year (inaudible).

Premier Wells: Okay.

Mr. Rideout: (Inaudible) \$60

million less.

Premier Wells: Okay. Now what the Minister of Health said to the people concerned was that the Government is trying to live within its means, so for your Budget planning purposes this year, plan on receiving no increase. Not \$60 million less than you had last year, no - no - increase.

An Hon. Member: He said yes.

Premier Wells: Well, the hon. Leader of the Opposition can say yes if he wants to. I am going to tell the House what the facts are. The Minister of Health has said to the people concerned, plan your budget for the coming year within the limits of what you received this year. Now I understand the members of the Hospital Association have said if in the ordinary course there had been no cutbacks or no restrictions, we could expect to have about \$60 million more.

Some Hon. Members: No. No.

An Hon. Member: That is only your way of saying it.

Premier Wells: If it is different, it is different. I can only give the House, Mr. Speaker, my understanding of it. I can only answer a question in the context of my understanding. If the Hospital Association wants to characterize it that way, they can. I believe they can correct it. The Minister of Health is here now, and he can correct me if I am wrong.

The position that he -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Premier Wells: I will start again. He can correct me if I am wrong. The position he has put to the people concerned is that when you plan your budget, plan to do it within the limits of the amount of money that you had this year, not beyond that. Now, in that context, that is the way it is being handled. So the question in that context cannot be answered.

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

Mr. Rideout: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that the sick in this Province have to suffer because of the incompetence of the Premier and this Government. Now, Mr. Speaker, will the Premier, who displayed so much compassion in 1989 when he was campaigning to become Premier, tell this House how those drastic budgetary measures are going to affect the sick, the disabled and the aged? Aren't beds going to have to close, Mr. Speaker? Are senior citizens not going to be properly cared for? Isn't the health care system in this province in a mess?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Premier Wells: No, Mr. Speaker. I will tell the House exactly what occurred. We increased the budget by \$80 million more than the prior year. We dealt with the health care problem, more than the former Government was prepared to do. We provided for an \$80 million increase in order to open the hospital beds and the beds were opened. Now, Mr. Speaker, we have a responsibility, not only to the people who are alive and working and paying taxes today, but we have a responsibility to the people who will occupy this Province next year and the next

year and the next decade. We are sensitive to that responsibility, we take it seriously, and we are not going to say, we will not be around 10 years from now, because we expect we will be here for a lot longer as a Government, we will not be around 10 years from now, so we will just defer the burden until 10 years later. We are dealing with it in a responsible way. We have provided for the increase for opening the beds, that has been done. We are asking everybody in the public service to do their planning on the basis of no increase in the coming year. Now that is essentially the position, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Rideout: Quite different, Mr. Speaker, from the Liberal Campaign Policy Manual of 1989. But let me ask the Premier this, Mr. Speaker. Will the Premier, the White Knight of compassion in 1989, stop pussyfooting around and tell the House today how many hospital beds are going to have to be closed to effect that \$60 million saving? How many people are going to be left out of hospitals? And what about the 1,200 people out in the health care sector who are going to lose their jobs because of those cutbacks?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Premier Wells: Mr. Speaker, when we were dealing with the way the former Government managed government in this Province, we dealt with what they were doing to the health care system. And doing it almost in a kind of surreptitious way, trying to pretend that it was not happening

but they were closing down hospital beds. When we formed the Government, we moved to address the problem; we put the extra money there to open the hospital beds, and the beds were opened.

Now what we are saying to everybody responsible for administering public affairs, whether it is health, education, public services or otherwise, is you have to be responsible to insure that the public money is expended in such a way that we provide the services needed within the limits of our ability, our financial ability, to do it. And that is all we are asking people to do.

I sincerely hope - but I do not know with certainty - that not one single hospital bed will close. I do not know what the situation will be, because, Mr. Speaker, what we have said -

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Premier Wells: Now that the noise has died down, I will start again so that people hear what is said. What we are saying to the people responsible for the administration of public affairs, Mr. Speaker, is here is the amount of money that is available. You decide how to manage. But you provide the services that are required. Now that is -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible) pay for it?

Premier Wells: Because we think the administrators and the people who run the public services are better equipped than the 15 Ministers who sit around the Cabinet table to make those kinds of decisions. And we are quite confident that they are better

equipped to do so, so we entrust them with the responsibility, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Rideout: Mr. Speaker, it is now obvious that what Clyde giveth, Clyde taketh back, as well. Mr. Speaker, will the Premier, in order to control this mess and the whole budgetary mess he has, give further consideration to bringing a revised Budget before this House? I asked him the question yesterday, and I ask him again today, before other ministers go around the Province spreading devastating budgetary news, like the Minister of Health brought over the weekend.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Premier Wells: Mr. Speaker, there is no purpose to a revised Budget. Nothing could be achieved. This is all part of a show, and they think they are making some points with it. But we, in the meantime, are being responsible in managing the financial affairs of the taxpayers of this Province in a very responsible way. Nothing significant could be achieved by a revised Budget. All we could do is say we are going to have to borrow more money. Unless, in the meantime, Mr. Speaker, the estimates come in from the Federal Government that revise things upward and change things, which is possible. It is not likely, but it is possible.

Mr. Speaker, nothing could be achieved to address this problem through the means of a revised Budget. If that could be done, we would most certainly do it. But no purpose is going to be served.

I have already said to the House, Mr. Speaker, that even though we project a \$120 million shortfall to the end of this current fiscal year, next March, I do not expect that we will be able to save very much of that amount by cuts that we will now put in place, because the year is half over. If there are cuts in jobs, notices will have to be given and severance will have to be paid. But what we are dealing with is likely to have an impact on next year's Budget, and if we do not take the steps now, Mr. Speaker, we could have a \$200 million or \$300 million deficit next year. We, on the other hand, are being responsible and are managing the affairs of the taxpayers of this Province in a proper way, to which hon. members opposite are obviously not accustomed.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Humber East.

Ms Verge: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is also for the Premier. I would like to ask the Premier if he is considering having the Government bring in a new tax on individuals for health care? Specifically, is he thinking about charging, either directly or indirectly, individual citizens with a health tax or with health insurance premiums?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Premier Wells: Mr. Speaker, there is no specific intention to deal with that, but I have no doubt the officials in the Department of Finance who are responsible to guide the Government in sources of revenue to run the affairs of the Province, as the hon. member would know from her past experience,

pose all sorts of propositions. The Government has no immediate intention of imposing any such tax.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Humber East.

Ms Verge: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I note the qualifier 'immediate'. My second question is to the Premier also. Is the Premier considering charging user fees for health services now covered by MCP or hospital insurance?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Premier Wells: Let me deal with the comment 'immediate'. There is a difference between having no immediate intention to bring in such a tax and no intention to bring in a tax immediately. There is no intention at this time. I have no idea what the intention of Government may be thirty days, six months, three years from now, at some time in the future, so I am setting the record straight so the hon. member will not come maybe ten years from now, if such a tax is imposed, and say, Look, you said you had no intention of doing it. There is no immediate intention, and nothing more was intended by the use of that word than simply that.

The second thing is the question the hon. member raised about a user fee. Again there is no immediate intention to institute user fees. But let me say to the hon. member that at the last Premiers' Conference, one of the things that concerned Premiers most was the incredible financial burden of the growing cost of medical services; the costs are going up very rapidly, increasing, and no means of controlling them. And the Provincial Governments are



in a circumstance with the Federal Government having changed its approach, having put in the requirement for medicare in the first place, then comes along and says, We are going to cap our responsibility, all future growth, provinces, is yours. And in that circumstance, anybody who wants to, at any time can walk in and say I want this, I want that, medically, and it is paid for automatically.

So the governments in all the provinces of the Nation are concerned about the inordinate growth in health care costs by comparison with other costs. Now, it is not just lack of control. There is another factor that is causing it, too. Our population is aging and so requiring more health care. But the minister is responsible, and all of the governments in the country are concerned about how to keep us in a solvent position so that we can provide for the people who will always need health care, the kind they need. And we have to do it, plan to manage in such a way. What may happen in the future I do not know. But I say to the hon. member, there is no immediate intention to implement a user fee.

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

Mr. Hearn: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last Friday the Minister of Health told Hospital and Nursing Home Boards they would have to take major cuts next year, and in their estimation it will be in the area of \$60 million. Effectively, they will have that much less money to work with. The Minister of Education met with school boards in Gander on Friday and Saturday. Did the Minister of Education convey such

a message to school boards?

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

Dr. Warren: Mr. Speaker, I did have a meeting with, I think, about 100 people from all over the Province and I did a number of things. I tried to outline the problems with which government is faced in these difficult times, and we had a discussion of that. We discussed some of the current problems in funding education in the Province, and I must say I found a great deal of sensitivity on the part of these very responsible leaders in this Province to the problems that we face.

As a preface to answering the question, I did not at that point in time indicate a specific figure that might be required if we freeze the education budget next year, any dollar figure. I think it was obvious, though, that if the same principles were applied, there will be a substantial amount of money that we will have to find next year within the current Budget. If in the context of the Premier's comments we were granted the same dollar figure, \$775 million, next year that we have at the present time, that there would be some reductions, or some areas where efficiencies may have to be found, or some new revenues, or some combination of these three. I laid that out quite clearly and, I want to tell the hon. member -

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

I want to again remind hon. members of the rules laid down for Question Period. I rose a couple times yesterday with respect to questions and I want to remind hon. members that just as the

rules for questions apply, so do the rules for the answers; the answers ought to be brief. The Minister now seems to be in a speech-making situation, so I would ask the hon. Minister to please clue up very quickly.

Dr. Warren: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I have so much information I would like to provide to the people of this Province. I want to make one final comment, Mr. Speaker -

Mr. Warren: Answer the question.

Dr. Warren: Thank you for your suggestion - and that is I intend to consult widely.

I have tried to be fair with the school boards and the superintendents; I have had discussions with them over the past few months, and I want to continue to meet with them to discuss the problems with which we are faced.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Hearn: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister says he has so much information. It is too bad he does not share it with the field. He has said he did a number of things in Gander. From what I understand, he did what he is doing now and what he has been doing, a good song and dance routine and avoiding the questions.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hearn: The Minister has been instructed to trim \$30 million off his Budget next year. Will the Minister tell us how he plans to apply those cuts?

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

Dr. Warren: I know the hon. member, Mr. Speaker, has a great deal of information. He has all kinds of persons who pass on information to him, I know that, but I have not been directed by anybody to trim \$30 million from my Budget for next year.

There have been a set of guidelines provided and we are in the process of assessing the impact of these guidelines. It may indeed be in excess of \$30 million. It may indeed, depending on the settlement with teachers and other factors which we cannot identify at the present time.

I can assure the hon. member, and I will try to be brief on this, Mr. Speaker, that we are going to look at three options. 1) Reductions in services and programs as an option; secondly, efficiencies, and I want to spell out some time some of the efficiencies in the system which we would like to pursue; and thirdly, revenues, additional revenues we might collect.

These are the major thrusts over the next period of time, these are the initiatives we will pursue, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Hearn: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me correct the hon. Minister in one of the statements he made about my obtaining information. I spent four years in the Department. I do not have to get information from anybody there, and I do not. We know what is going on simply because we listen to the field, which the

Minister is not doing.

Will the Minister confirm that in his Budget reduction plans for next year there will be a call for a freeze on operational grants to school boards and institutions, teacher lay-offs, and instruction to school boards to raise more revenue from School Tax Authorities?

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

Dr. Warren: The answer to that, Mr. Speaker, is, quite frankly, yes, there will be some of each of these undoubtedly in the next year. But we are in the process of discussing which and how much, and I will continue to consult before we arrive at a final answer to these questions.

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

Mr. R. Aylward: I have a question for the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation, Mr. Speaker. The Minister will be well aware of his mishandling of the contract for the Ossokmanuan Bridge on the Trans-Labrador Highway over the past summer. This contract comes under a Federal/Provincial cost-shared agreement. I will ask the Minister, what is the percentage of the Federal Government's share of this agreement and what is the percentage of the Provincial Government's share of this agreement?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation.

Mr. Gilbert: As I understand it, it is sixty-seven and thirty-three, roughly. That is

the percentage breakdown of that. It is the agreement the previous Government signed under the Labrador Agreement.

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

Mr. R. Aylward: That is very good, Mr. Speaker. I am glad he knew that. He was almost right - it is sixty-two and a half and thirty-seven and a half -

Mr. Matthews: That is better than usual.

Mr. R. Aylward: - but that was close enough. Will the Minister tell this House, Mr. Speaker, is it true that the Federal Government refuses to pay their share of the cost of the blunder this Provincial Minister made of \$1.3 million when they gave a gift to a contracting company by calling a second contract? Is it true that the Federal Government will not pay their share of this blunder and the Provincial Government will have to pay 100 per cent of it? And will he tell the public of this Province the estimated cost of the work that was excluded from the second contract, which was included in the lower contract in the first case?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation.

Mr. Gilbert: I will take that question under advisement and give the member an answer tomorrow.

Some Hon. Members: Oh. oh!

An Hon. Member: I wonder why?

Mr. Warren: He has to talk to the Premier first.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Kilbride.

Mr. R. Aylward: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, he does not have to take it under advisement, because I will tell him. The Federal Government will not pay for the blunder that Minister made. And the difference in the cost of the work, the reinforcement of two other bridges, is somewhere in the vicinity of \$250,000.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Although the hon. member might like to do so, the hon. member's job is to ask questions. I would ask the hon. member to please proceed with the question. We recognized him for a question.

Mr. R. Aylward: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I apologize. I am used to answering questions from that side, Mr. Speaker, and I find the incompetence of the Minister, not knowing the answers, frustrating.

Mr. Speaker, the work that was dropped from the second contract is worth somewhere around \$250,000. I will now ask the Minister, does he agree with the information the Premier gave me in a reply to my letter where I requested that the Auditor General investigate this matter and the Premier refused? Mr. Speaker, I will quote from his letter, if you are not familiar with that. His reply was that the Department of Works, Services and Transportation felt that by recalling the tender it could get a lower bid than the second lowest bid on the first round, and, indeed, that is what happened. The lowest bid for that tender recall was lower than the second bid on the first round by

some \$200,000.

Now, Mr. Speaker, does the Minister agree with this statement in light of the fact that we are paying 100 per cent of the \$1.3 million, in light of the fact that we are getting \$250,000 less work for the second contract? These are the facts. Does the Minister agree with this statement, and did he supply this information to the Premier?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Works, Services, and Transportation.

Mr. Gilbert: Mr. Speaker, first of all I think we will correct the hon. Member. It was not a mistake by this Minister, it was as has been explained, an administrative error by an employee in the department.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Gilbert: It was an administrative error by an employee. Disciplinary action has been taken, and we hope nothing like that will happen again. But when you are dealing with people, you see, errors and mistakes are made.

Now, as to the allegation the member is making, that the Federal Government has denied paying the difference in the contract, that is not quite so. The first initial response when we requested it was that they were not going to pay it. Now, we have gone back and challenged that and we intend to carry on with it. We have not given up on it. I think that somehow or another the member seems to have it in his mind that there is a problem outside the administration, an error by a civil servant. So, what I am

going to do for the benefit of the Member, I am going to table right now the briefing that was given to me by officials in the department when I asked what happened in that case. And I say to the member now that if he has information that I am not privy to and he feels that we should go further with an investigation, he should turn it over to the police and ask for an investigation. We have no problem with anyone investigating it. But we feel we have satisfied ourselves that there was no impropriety, and we are quite prepared to have the Auditor General or anyone else investigate this. I will now table for the member the briefing notes I was given on this. And if he has further information, I suggest that he go to the police.

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

Mr. R. Aylward: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will inform the hon. Minister now, obviously he is not aware of it, that I went through the procedure we have in this House, Mr. Speaker. I went to the Premier to ask him to get the Auditor General to look at it, a third party. What the Minister provides me, Mr. Speaker, is suspect anyway because of his mishandling of this whole thing. If the Auditor General tabled that when I asked him, Mr. Speaker, I would agree with it. I could not get anywhere that way, and the Liberals on the Public Accounts Committee would not allow me to do it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear hear!

Mr. R. Aylward: Mr. Speaker, I expect that information and other information along with that will be tabled in this House by the

Ombudsman fairly soon. So I went that far.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

I want to remind the hon. Member again that I have recognized him for a question. Not for any comment on the answer by the Minister, but for a question.

Mr. R. Aylward: I apologize again, Mr. Speaker. I am sorry about that.

Does the Minister agree with the Premier's statement, as quoted in the August 18, 1990 edition of The Evening Telegram? Mr. Wells said, 'while the extra cost to the taxpayer was due to the mismanagement of Government officials, if the bid was a bad mistake on the part of the company and there would be a major loss on the operation that is hardly fair, so perhaps some level of justice might have been achieved.'

Mr. Speaker, do you agree with that statement? And how do you justify such a statement when this Government can give a contractor an extra \$1.3 million and take away \$100 a month in maintenance payments to single parents in this Province?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Gilbert: Mr. Speaker, the investigation -

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

The member has been recognized and we have heard the question. I now call upon hon. members to please give the Minister the courtesy to give the answer.

The hon. the Minister for Works, Services and Transportation.

Mr. Gilbert: Mr. Speaker, first of all, to correct the member, when he talks about the asking for the investigation, we have no problem. We have made our investigation. We admit that there was an error, we admit that it is a costly one, we admit that people make mistakes, and we hope that it will not happen again. But we have no problem with anybody investigating it. If the Auditor General feels that there is an impropriety, he should -

Mr. R. Aylward: Why did you write the Ombudsman and tell him how to investigate it?

Mr. Gilbert: According to that, my understanding is as I said to the Ombudsman when he called me, I felt that he was operating outside his jurisdiction.

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

The hon. Minister is now engaged in repetition. I think he has made his point. I would ask the hon. member to please address the question in the short time I am about to give him.

The hon. the Minister.

Mr. Gilbert: As I say, the question as to the Premier's comments in the paper is supposition as far as I am concerned. It is a statement that was in the paper. I do not know what the Premier said.

Mr. Speaker: Question period has expired.

The hon. the Government House Leader.

Mr. Baker: Just a very brief point of order about something

that has come up in Question Period. I would like to comment on it outside the give and take of Question Period. The impression seems to be given that the Auditor General works only when he is directed by Government and cannot do anything, unless he is directed by Government to do it. I understand what the hon. Members are saying but I would just like to point out that the Auditor General is free to investigate what he wants to in Government, and that this Government is proposing a new Auditor General's Bill that gives him a lot more latitude and so on, and a lot more independence. I just regret that the inference was made that this Government controls the Auditor General or in fact controls the Ombudsman. We do neither.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

The Chair is ready to rule on this. There is no point of order. The hon. Member is making a point of clarification, and many times when a Member stands up on that the Chair has to listen a little while to see what is going on, but there is obviously no point of order.

The hon. the Member for Kilbride.

Mr. R. Aylward: Mr. Speaker, I would just like to make a point of order. I believe the hon. Government House Leader is certainly not misleading the House, but he is providing information that is not quite true. I have a letter here from the Auditor General who says when he can investigate a matter - and he states the section under which it comes. But what I say, Mr. Speaker, is that, yes, I agree with you, the Auditor General will investigate this, he will

investigate it next year when he is doing the books. The money is spent, is lost, the \$1.3 million is thrown away and there is nothing we can do about it. The Minister has already said here today that he hopes it will not happen again, but you still do not have procedures in place to see that it does not happen again. That should have been done the day this error was found, that a procedure be put in place so that this would never happen again. The Minister said today that he hopes it will never happen again. That is ridiculous, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

The Chair has to expedite the business of the House, and the Chair will say again that what we are now debating is not a point of order. It might be a point of something else, and if it is a point of something else it has to be addressed in the appropriate area, but it is not a point of order, and the Chair will not entertain any points of order on that same point.

Answers to Questions  
for which Notice has been Given

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Premier Wells: Mr. Speaker, I do not have all of the information that I want to table in the House, but I do have some dates in relation to questions that were asked yesterday, and I want to give them now. The letter that came from the Federal Government setting out concerns or setting out their estimates as to adjustments that would likely flow over the next number of months in equalization payments was dated

March 30. So it was obviously written some two weeks after the Budget was delivered in the House. The letter was actually received here on April 5. The letter was received in the Department on April 5, but there was a telephone conversation on March 30 that indicated the general direction without any of the detail of the letter, the detail was received on March 5. That is as the Government had indicated in the past, Mr. Speaker, there is nothing new in that.

The other question for which I undertook to get dates, Mr. Speaker, were dates when there were discussions with the bond rating agencies. That question was raised.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Premier Wells: Well if it was not then I will sit down.

Petitions

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Humber East.

Ms Verge: Mr. Speaker, I wish to present a petition of residents of St. John's, Marystown, Corner Brook, Stephenville, Marys Harbour, Happy Valley - Goose Bay, and North West River. The prayer of the petition is: Therefore your petitioners urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to reverse its change of policy and continue to permit social assistant recipients to retain a substantial portion of maintenance and child support payments as well as regular social assistance.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms Verge: Now, Mr. Speaker, I presented the same petition of other citizens of the Province yesterday, and in doing so pointed out the harmful effects of this terribly regressive change brought in by this Government on October 1, of this year, brought in without any warning whatsoever to the people affected.

Now the effect on those people, Mr. Speaker, is an instant reduction of up to \$115 per month in their income level. A reduction that amounts to between 20 per cent and 25 per cent for many of the families hurt. The number involved is approximately 1,000 single mothers and approximately 1,500 children. Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Social Services, reacting to the news of this change which I initiated, did not announce it to the public. I brought it to the attention of the public at a news conference on October 1, and the Minister reacting, said that he did it for the sake of fairness. He admitted that he did it and he explained that it was for the sake of fairness. Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Social Services told the people of the Province, through the news media, that because some single parents on social assistance are not getting any maintenance or child support, no social assistance recipient should benefit from receiving maintenance or child support. He said that is his concept of fairness. I call that notion of fairness, Mr. Speaker, perverted.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms Verge: That is a twisted, distorted upside down notion of fairness. Mr. Speaker, surely fairness involves bringing up and improving the lot of the poorest

of the poor, and not dragging down some of the social assistance recipients who are getting a few extra dollars a month to uplift their standard of living, and to give them some chance of getting out of the welfare trap. How, I ask the Minister of Social Services, is it fair to take away up to 20 or 25 per cent of the income of a thousand single parent families in this Province? How is it fair to do that without even telling them in advance? How is it fair to sneak it in and let them know through a form letter with their first cheque for October, which is for a lower amount, lower than they expected? How is it fair with that one deadly stroke of the Minister's pen to negate the benefit of a support enforcement program for one thousand single parents in this Province, people who needed that program the most? Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister yesterday the Minister of Justice gave a new rationale for the change. The Minister of Justice blamed it on the Feds, the tried and true tactic of this real change Administration, blame it on the Feds or blame it on the previous Administration. Now the lie has been put to the Minister of Justice's claim, because senior officials of National Health and Welfare have said that they were in no way, shape, or form, involved in precipitating that change. It was a Provincial change initiated entirely by the Provincial Government.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

The hon. Member's time is up.

Ms Verge: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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



Mr. Efford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

First of all I want to make a couple of corrections. The hon. Member for Humber East has tried to imply in the House today that the Minister of Justice misled the House of Assembly yesterday. He did not. The Minister of Justice said quite clearly that this was caused by the Federal Government. It was caused by the Federal Government. A shortfall of \$65 million last year in transfer payments forces this Government to take a look at the amount of money they have in each Department. Mr. Speaker, there is not a bottomless pit. We do not have a bottomless pit from which we can scoop up all the money we need. We need those dollars from Ottawa in order to give the people of this Province the money they need, and if we have a shortfall of \$65 million, each Minister, and especially of Social Services, has to balance out their money equally and fairly so that they can give a decent income to all people dependent on social assistance. Secondly, Mr. Speaker, she was quite correct in saying that her former Administration caused the problem. They did cause the problem. They forced 20,000 people in this Province to be dependent on social assistance by providing no alternative except to go to the Government for hand-outs, to be totally dependent, lose all their dignity, lose all their pride, and be totally dependent on a few measly dollars that could be handed out by a Government department. No Government department can provide a guaranteed income, no Provincial Government can do that. The tax dollars are not there.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

I ask the hon. Member to please be seated. There is far too much disorder in the House right now and the Chair is having great difficulty hearing the hon. Minister speak.

The hon. the Minister.

Mr. Efford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Let me tell the then Minister of Justice in 1988, when she was the Minister of Justice she brought in the Maintenance Enforcement Program. The reason why, and let me quote, Mr. Speaker, and I will table it in the House, 'Finally, Mr. Speaker, as I have mentioned, as a result of default there are additional demands placed on the public purse, since beneficiaries of court orders not getting their maintenance income often have to turn to Social Services. We may ask why should the taxpayers and citizens of the Province generally assume the financial obligation of the divorcing spouses and parents to provide adequately for their families.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Efford: The very reason why she brought this in. What a turnabout!

In 1989, in the Estimates Committee - Support Enforcement Agency for Collection is just easing the burden on social assistance. The purpose of collecting the enforcement maintenance income from the spouses is to ease the burden on social assistance. The Member for Humber East quoted that that year in the Estimate Committee.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Efford: The Minister of Justice and the Opposition cannot make up their minds.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Efford: Now today it suits her to stand in her place and take a turnabout and face people. No wonder the former Administration did not know what it was doing, they cannot make up their mind on a daily basis.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Efford: Mr. Speaker, it is very simple. We are offering better alternatives to the single parents of this Province. We are offering them something to get their dignity and pride back. The Minister of Education brought in an increase in student aid for single parents this year. The Department of Social Services implemented new training programs, support to get into the vocational institutions, support for upgrading their education, and we have offered a new direction on community development programs where we do not employ people making quilts or painting fences or picking up garbage, we offer them a chance -

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Efford: - to get out there and to be effective in the work force, to learn jobs that they can effectively do in their community so they will get off social assistance and be independent.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Mr. Efford: Let me tell the Member for Humber East when they go to work, Mr. Speaker-

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

The hon. Member's time is up.

Some Hon. Members: By leave!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Mr. Tobin: Could I speak to that petition, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker: Yes, the Speaker is just making sure that he has the district right.

The hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West.

Mr. Tobin: Now, Mr. Speaker, let me first of all say that the Minister did not speak in favour of the petition.

He spoke on the petition, but did not speak in favour of the petition. And what he said about the former Minister of Justice when she brought in the enforcement policy - what she said is right. What you did not say she said was that she did not make it all non-allowable income as you are doing today.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tobin: It fitted in the category, Mr. Speaker, under the former Minister of Justice, as allowable income. And this Minister, Mr. Speaker, and this Premier and this Government has made it a non-allowable income.

An Hon. Member: That is right.

Mr. Tobin: They have socked it, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Education is over there socking it to the sick children in the

hospitals, the mentally handicapped children in the schools, with the elimination of teachers' assistance - they had to go on strike. Now we have this Minister here, Mr. Speaker, again attacking the vulnerable people of our Province. That is what is happening. And the Minister of Justice, Mr. Speaker, got up in this House yesterday and what he said was lies.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An Hon. Member: Withdraw it!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Mr. Tobin: I got carried away, Mr. Speaker, and I want to withdraw that.

An Hon. Member: Watch your blood pressure!

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Speaker, I want to withdraw that - the Minister of Development should laugh. What is happening, Mr. Speaker, is that they have attacked the single mothers, and the single parents in this Province. That action is an action by this Minister and that Premier. And, Mr. Speaker, furthermore they were instructions that were given to this Minister in Cabinet to bring back to his officials that caused this action to take place.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tobin: So it is not just the Minister of Social Services and his staff that are responsible, it is the Premier and the President of Treasury Board.

An Hon. Member: And the Minister of Development.

Mr. Tobin: No, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Development is not in the Province long enough to attend Cabinet meetings, so you should not point at him.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tobin: That is what is happening, and that should not be allowed. The Minister of Social Services said what we have done has made it better for the people on Social Assistance. And in the paper this weekend he said, go grow your vegetables. Get out there and go grow your vegetables, he said, like they did when our Premier was a member of the Smallwood Administration, that is what he was talking about. Well, Mr. Speaker, 30 years ago they did not do then what they do now. And you should be ashamed of yourself the way you are attacking these people.

Some Hon. Members: Hear hear!

Mr. Gullage: (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Speaker, maybe the amalgamator should say it more distinctly.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Speaker, the Premier of this Province says that it is justice to give a construction company an extra \$1.5 million, yet he will instruct his Minister to rob \$1.5 million-

An Hon. Member: How much?

Mr. Tobin: One point three million dollars from the backs -

Some Hon. Members: How much?

Mr. Tobin: Now, Mr. Speaker, how much? Let the Minister tell us

how much. What is happening in this Province is they are attacking, Mr. Speaker, day and night. The poor of this Province, Mr. Speaker, have been attacked by this Government like it has never happened before in the history of this country. And the Minister of Justice got up and said it is the Federal Government's fault because of the Canada Assistance Plan, and the Minister of Social Services had to correct him today. Why should the Minister of Justice not be honest with the people in this House, Mr. Speaker? Why should he not be honest with the people of this Province? That is the question that has to be answered.

Yes, and we have more to say about the Minister of Social Services' budget in the next few days. Yes, we will ask questions on lots of them, your turn is coming.

Mr. Speaker: Order please!

The hon. Member's time is up.

Some Hon. Members: Too bad, too bad!

Mr. Tobin: Support the petition, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order please!

The debate has ended on the Petition and the Chair is about to call another order - when we can get the attention of hon. Members.

#### Private Member's Day

Mr. Speaker: Being Wednesday, Private Member's Day, I believe the Member for Port au Port is to introduce and debate his resolution. The hon. the Member for Port au Port.

Mr. Hodder: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I thought this issue should come up early in this session. As a matter of fact it has been my feeling that this Government has not made its feelings adequately known on this particular issue. Now Mr. Speaker, I think most Members are aware of the problems that the increased weeks for Unemployment Insurance has caused in the Province. Certainly I have heard Members on the other side express this about their districts, and I have tried in this Bill to be as non-partisan as possible. Because, Mr. Speaker, the Members on that side - I see the Minister of Finance laughing - may have a problem with the UI Bill and we may have a problem with the UI Bill.

But Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that the unelected Senate has frustrated the wishes of the elected Parliament of Canada. And whether we agree with the Omnibus Bill or not, and whether there are changes that this side would like to see in that Bill or changes that side would like to see in that Bill, certainly what is happening in the Federal Government in Canada now just cannot be tolerated. And what makes it worse, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that the UI Bill is not even being considered.

The horrendous new GST tax, which this side does not agree with, by the way, is the only thing that the Senators are thinking about, and the UI Bill which has involved in it training money, and has involved in it monies to help people who want to leave the Province, and there are a lot of them, Mr. Speaker, for sure, with the present economic situation. The fishermen's response programs,

which this Province has been use to, the fishermen and fish plant workers have been use to, where the fishery has been bad in this particular economic climate, all that is tied up in the Senate.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding as well, that the Senate has sent back the variable entrance requirement Bill as of the ten weeks, has passed that and sent it back to the House of Commons, so this resolution goes both ways. Yes, I admit, it goes both way, but I do not care, Mr. Speaker, which way it goes.

Someone said when I entered the House today, that we cannot have it both ways, but the fishermen and the fish plant workers and the people of this Province who have three and four and five weeks do not care which way it goes, whether the Senate bends or the House of Commons bends.

All that I am asking in this particular resolution is that somebody bends, and that this House put some pressure on the Government of Canada, whether Senate or the House of Commons to change this intolerable situation.

Each year, as Members are aware, and I think most Members are aware of this, the Federal Government introduces variable entrance requirement legislation to reduce the qualifying requirements for unemployment insurance in areas of high unemployment in the country, and in this Province, for most of it, almost all of it at the present time as I understand, that the ten weeks are the required time. I think on the Avalon sometimes it goes to eleven or twelve.

Mr. Speaker, this year the

legislation is part of a UI major reform legislation which was announced some year and a half ago, Bill C-21. This has been passed by the House of Commons, but is presently stalled in the Senate.

I think most Canadians and most Newfoundlanders have watched the humourous, I suppose, machinations of the Senators. Mr. Speaker, I believe the Premier himself is not in favour of an unelected Senate, he has certainly asked for Senate reform, and I think that it is abhorrent that a Senate should be able to frustrate the duly elected representatives of the country.

It is also abhorrent to me that there is so little attention and care being paid to this Province and to the problems which we have in this Province, by both the Conservative Party in the House of Commons and the Liberal Party in the House of Commons and, as far as I know, the NDP Party in the House of Commons, because the only thing in which they are interested in is the new tax Bill and they have forgotten the fact that Newfoundlanders are facing a very harsh winter indeed and that many Newfoundlanders are in very harsh circumstances.

Mr. Speaker, I think that all Members of this House should be concerned and should urge that the Federal Government proceed with this variable entrance requirement legislation, while the legislation is stalled in the Senate.

It is not fair to Newfoundlanders and Labradorians that this impasse on the Federal level should threaten their livelihoods, most especially at a time when our main industry, the fishing industry, is already suffering in many areas of

the Province. Thank God that in some of the areas of the Province we did have a good fishery this year, but in many areas of the Province the fishery is suffering, and, Mr. Speaker, it is a very bizarre incident, I think, in Federal/Provincial relations what we see now taking place in the Senate of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, as I said in my opening remarks, I do not think we have taken advantage as a Province of all the opportunities in which to impress the Federal Government on the seriousness which faces our Province. Up until the middle of June, while the Premier was on the mainland and the Meech Lake debate was going on here, perhaps both sides might be charged with forgetting one of the major things, because this has been going on for some time. Mr. Speaker, this is having a devastating effect on a large portion of our people, the fishermen of the Province, the plant workers of the Province, the workers of the Province.

Mr. Speaker, I do not have to tell members that the fishery has collapsed in many parts of the Province, nor do I have to tell members that fish plants are closed in many parts of the Province, nor do I have to tell members that no help has been forthcoming in most of those cases.

Mr. Speaker, this is the first time I have ever seen a Government which has thrown up its hands totally and said there is nothing we can do about it, it is the Federal Government's fault. But, Mr. Speaker, since I have been in this House, in the last fifteen years, whenever a crisis of this magnitude faced the Province there was help forthcoming from the

Provincial Government. Mr. Speaker, there have been no efforts made to assist fish plants which are closed, no Government help. One or two cases, in the Minister of Fisheries' district, the Government moved, rolled up its sleeves and put a program in place, but for many of the fish plants in this Province there has been no help. The program which was in place when this Government came to power, which was put in place by the last Government, the Private Sector Program, has been fixed so that it cannot help the rural areas of this Province.

I represent a district myself which used to take advantage of it. Yesterday, the Minister of Labour came over to see me, and I must say the Minister did try. She actually had someone phone my office and say there were not many applications in from Port au Port. Mr. Speaker, ever since this program was started I personally have a list of all businesses in the area - I developed it when the first private sector program came in - and I send out to these businesses the application forms, with a letter urging them to take advantage of the Government program. Of course, this year, Mr. Speaker, the program is designed such that the small businesses, the little businesses - before we had, for instance, a take-out which started a mini-golf course because of this program, which is still there. Mr. Speaker, now because of the requirements of sharing for twenty weeks, then totally on the back of the business for another twenty weeks, then sharing it for the last twenty weeks, business is not of the magnitude or size where anybody in the district could take advantage of it. So, Mr. Speaker,

nobody did. But that is the situation in which we find ourselves.

Statistics show that there were 6,000 more people not working in this Province this year than there were last year. Mr. Speaker, everyone is aware of the problems at Baie Verte, at Daniel's Harbour, at Long Harbour. We are all aware of those, and the strikes and the slowdowns and the bankruptcies which have taken place in this Province. So, Mr. Speaker, this, coupled with the fact that we have a Government which does not know which end is up, has left us in a very sad situation indeed.

Mr. Speaker, normally the Government has a safety net, or the people have a safety net. And if you look at the figures between July 1989 and July 1990, which I understand are the latest figures available, there were 2,200 people less on unemployment insurance than there were in previous years. Now, that would lead one to believe that we were better off than we were before. But these are 2,200 people who did not qualify for UI. And that is not because they are all out working, because we know the figures show there are 6,000 people less working than there were before.

The Minister of Social Services, a few days ago, or sometime in the last month, said there were 3,000 more people on social assistance than there were last year. So if you look at the official figures, you can see that it adds up, it makes sense. There are 6,000 people not working and there are 2,200 more people who are not on unemployment insurance, there are 3,000 on social assistance, so if you take people coming off UI and

people who are not, it adds up to close to 6,000 people, with 3,000 on welfare, or more.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have never been a defender of UI. I think there should be a better program. Unfortunately, unemployment insurance has become a safety net in this Province, which has a seasonal economy. Governments have looked at guaranteed incomes and various things of that nature, but basically, Mr. Speaker, unemployment insurance, in the present circumstances, is something we cannot do without, and without it we tear up the social fabric of this Province.

Mr. Speaker, last week the President of the Union, Richard Cashin - I think it was last week or the week before - went to Ottawa, and I commend him for his action, to try to raise the consciousness of the Federal Government and the Senate as to unemployment insurance. What is happening is that in a month's time the fishermen are going to be looking for projects. The Department of Social Services, at the present time, will not let a person who is a fisherman or a fish plant worker on a community development project.

Mr. Efford: That is wrong.

Mr. Hodder: No, that is not wrong. If you are a fisherman or a plant worker, the answer from the Department of Social Services is that we do not allow you on community development projects because there will be a program from the Federal Government.

Mr. Efford: That is wrong.

Mr. Hodder: Mr. Speaker, the Minister says that is wrong.

Personally, in the last week, in three different cases, I have had calls from constituents who have been refused getting on community development projects. They have not been refused social assistance, but they have been refused getting on community development projects because, as the office says, you will be employed when the fishermen's projects come down.

Mr. Hewlett: (Inaudible) fourteen stamps only to get on the program.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Hodder: Take our word for it, my son. Check with your regional managers. People who are fish plant workers and fishermen who may get on a federal project, which may or not be here, and this is the point I was trying to make before I got off track, because if this UI Bill does not go through in one shape or the other, these projects, many of which are filled now, the social services projects which the fishermen and fish plant workers tried to get on and have not been able to get on, then these people are going to be facing a Winter on social assistance, all the way through. So, Mr. Speaker, that is one of the reasons why it is very, very important that this bill be passed, either in the Senate or through the Senate, or through the House of Commons within days. The fishermen and the fish plant workers are just one minority, but certainly they cannot look forward to anything.

Mr. Speaker, in my district this summer, just to take my district as one, the fish plant was not opened, there was no buyer. There was nobody to buy, so the fish plant was not open. Some of the

fishermen who never, ever got less than twelve, or fifteen and sometimes twenty stamps, the good fishermen out there, none of them got more than two or three unemployment insurance stamps this summer, and all of them are on social assistance at the present time or waiting for the Federal project which, again, is tied up with this UI Bill.

Mr. Speaker, I have had numerous petitions on this particular issue from my district. Two or three or so I have presented to the House; I have referred them to the Minister of Labour and Manpower and ask that she send them to Ottawa. Several of them I have already sent to Ottawa myself. But, Mr. Speaker, I do not for a minute take sides in this debate, but I do think that we as legislators in this Province have to ask the House of Commons and the Senate to come to their senses and to, for once, think about this part of Canada. Because, Mr. Speaker, we are behind economically and we see, sometimes, when an issue like this comes up, just how much we are heard, and we wonder if the Government in Ottawa knows just how desperate the situation is in this Province. Some of these are people who have never been on social assistance, who have never had to face the poverty which is being faced by many at the present time, people with no prospects, many people for the first time on social assistance.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

The hon. member's time is up.

Mr. Hodder: Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the President of Treasury Board.



Mr. Baker: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member for Port au Port puts the resolution as a totally impartial resolution politically, and indicates that he has great concern for the people affected by the variable entrance requirement, the possibility of getting the fourteen weeks reduced to ten and so on, and this is a very great concern of his. And the members opposite, they are concerned about the fishermen who did not make the fourteen stamps and so on, and as a result, they want us to condemn the Senate and ask the House of Commons to do something. In essence, that is the nature of the resolution before us now.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there is a great deal wrong with that, because either it is put there simply as a little political thing to take a swipe at the Senate, or members opposite do not know what they are talking about, one of the two.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, if we deal with the Senate and the position of the Senate with regards to the fishermen who cannot make their fourteen weeks UI and would benefit greatly from the ten weeks, it is a fact, Mr. Speaker, that the fishermen are, perhaps, the one group of workers in the country that really do not have to wait for any change in legislation. The fishermen are in the UI process not through law, not through an act, not through the UI Act, they receive what they receive through regulation. Regulations are made by Cabinet through Orders-in-Council, and the fishermen can very simply, very easily be taken care of by a simple Order in Council. It does not require anything from the House of Commons, it does not require anything from the Senate.

All it requires is a decision by Cabinet. So the fishermen can be taken care of quite easily. An Order in Council can go through Cabinet saying that the requirement for the fishermen in Newfoundland or in areas of unemployment above 10 per cent, or whatever they want to put on through regulation, is 10 weeks, or is eight weeks, or is six weeks. It is all done for the fishermen by regulation, not through law. So it is very simple to take care of matters for the fishermen. All the Cabinet has to do is pass an Order in Council.

Now Mr. Speaker there is more to this than fishermen, obviously. But our great concern, of course, is, at this point in time, the fishermen who did not get their 14 weeks.

Some Hon. Members: And the fish plant workers!

Mr. Baker: And fish plant workers, yes. I was going to say, there is a lot more to this than fishermen.

Mr. Tobin: Construction workers.

Mr. Baker: Construction workers, workers in the service industry all over this province who are having difficulty with their 14 weeks. I agree that the whole problem cannot be solved by an Order in Council, I just want to point out that the problem for fishermen can be easily solved by the Federal Cabinet.

Now, then, let us consider the rest of the workers, and let us see how they fit into this particular resolution.

Mr. Warren: How many people in your district?

Mr. Baker: In actual fact, Mr. Speaker, the Senate has dealt with this particular problem. If we are to take the hon. member seriously, he is concerned about the entrance requirement and so on. The Senate has already dealt with that problem.

Mr. Tobin: We are not debating that Senate up in Ottawa, we are (inaudible).

Mr. Baker: The Senate has already dealt with this problem. I would say to Members opposite that if they want a debate about the legitimacy of the Senate, they should have put a resolution in about the legitimacy of the Senate and not tried to mask it on the backs of the fishermen of this Province. They are doing the same thing that their colleagues in Ottawa are doing, they are holding the fishermen and the plant workers and the construction workers up for ransom. That is what they are doing.

Mr. Tobin: The Senate should be abolished!

Mr. Baker: If that is your intention, to have a debate about the Senate, have the guts to introduce a resolution about the Senate and not masquerade as something else.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An Hon. Member: You should be ashamed of yourself.

Mr. Speaker: Order please! Order please!

I believe when the hon. the Member from Port au Port made his presentation he did it without interruption. I ask hon. Members to extend the same courtesy to the

President of Treasury Board.

Mr. Parsons: The Member for Port au Port didn't (inaudible).

Mr. Baker: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If the intent of Members opposite, if it really is, and they are simply making the point I made in the first place, if the attempt is to deal with the variable interest requirements, that is what I am trying to deal with. If their real issue is the Senate, then I wish they would have said so in the first place. I suspected it was simply a political ploy to knock the Senate, and now they are verifying that.

Okay, I will deal with the variable entry requirements. I have already dealt with the fishermen. It is simple. An Order in Council can do it. There is no need for C-21 to do it for the fishermen.

Now, then, let's deal with the rest of the workers, if I may, without getting tangled up in this extraneous matter that Members opposite insist on bringing up. Let's deal with the variable interest requirement. The Senate, I say to Members opposite, has already dealt with the issue.

On June 14, the Senate passed Bill S-17. Now, Mr. Speaker, I have a copy of it here. This dealt with the variable entrance requirement. And it is a Senate Bill that stands on its own. It was sent back to the Commons, and the House of Commons dealt with it on June 18. And I have the excerpt.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Baker: The hon. Member says

it is wrong, but I have the excerpt from the House of Commons debates here to prove it.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Baker: It was dealt with in the House on June 18. Now make no mistake about it, Mr. Speaker, this Senate Bill S-17 would satisfy the conditions mentioned in the member's resolution. Now, then, it was voted on on June 18. Now, Mr. Speaker, I have a list of the votes here. Under the 'ayes', let us see who voted for this, for the workers in Newfoundland. Let us see who voted for it: I see Baker, Mifflin, Simmons, and there were two Liberal members absent.

Ms Verge: What about Brian Tobin?

Mr. Baker: I will get to that in a minute. There were two Liberal members absent. Now let us go to the 'nay' side. Let us see who are on the 'nay' side. Let us see who voted against getting the ten weeks in for the workers in this Province.

Under the 'nays': Crosbie, St. John's West. Now, Mr. Speaker, that was in June - in June. At that same time, this Government was making representations to the Senate as well as to the House of Commons. We were making representations.

The Premier of the Province spoke to some of the key Senators on the Liberal side at the time, and he also spoke to Members of the House of Commons to express our concern about the ten weeks. This has been done. This has all been done.

Mr. Speaker, as if that were not enough, in early December the Senate, just in case there was

some misunderstanding and just in case the Government, back in June, did not understand the feeling of the country, in early December the Senate passed another Bill, not one but two, another Bill, a second Bill, and they called this one Bill S-12. Do not ask me to explain why the number is lower than the one which was passed in June. Probably one of the vagaries of the Senate.

Bill S-12, another Senate Bill, and it was essentially the same thing as S-17 except they could not put the same Bill up, so they put a Bill and they changed the dates and made it more retro-active.

Mr. Parsons: They don't have the right to (inaudible). They weren't elected (inaudible).

Mr. Baker: Well, thank you for your expertise in this matter. The Senate does have the right and has in Canada, on three or four different occasions, originated Bills that went through the House of Commons. So it is interesting that they did not have the right to do it.

So, Bill S-12, did exactly the same thing, it would allow for the ten weeks entrance requirement for UI - the ten weeks. I would like to see them go to eight weeks, maybe, but the ten weeks. Now, then, Bill S-12 got on the floor of the House of Commons on December 20th. And I also have a copy of Bill S-12 here. I just happen to have it here, Bill S-12. It was voted on in the House of Commons on December 20.

Now, then, I believe I have my numbers reversed, I am talking about S-12 and it should be S-17, and S-17 should be S-12. I have

my numbers reversed on the Bills.

Anyway, if we look at the vote on that Bill, I would really like to do this. Bill S-12 came to a vote December 20th, and the motion was that this Bill be passed that would allow the ten weeks entrance to UI - ten weeks.

Voting 'yea': Let us go down through it. It is hard to read the small print. Baker is there, voted for; Mifflin is there, voted for; Simmons is there, voted for, and down towards the end Tobin is there, voted for. Somebody asked where Tobin was. That is where he was.

Now, if you look down through the 'nays', and I searched through the 'nays' to find St. John's East and find Mr. Crosbie - Rompkey was absent, and I think Crosbie was absent that day - lo and behold I found the name Reid, voted against - voted against!

Now, Mr. Speaker, to summarize, the fishermen of the Province do not need a change in legislation, they need a Cabinet decision. For everybody else, already there have been two Bills put before the House of Commons to accomplish what Members are asking here, and one side of the House of Commons has voted against it. And I am sure Members know that there was also a Private Member's Bill introduced into the House of Commons that was supposed to do the same thing, and again the Government said no. So let there be no doubt about this. With regard to the variable entrance requirements, there are only two bodies that could do anything about it. One is Cabinet, for the fishermen, and the other is the majority of the House of Commons, which voted against it on three

separate occasions. They have to change their minds. That is the only way to handle the problem.

Mr. Hodder: The Senate can do it.

Mr. Baker: That has nothing to do with the Senate. The Bills have been dealt with in the Senate. The Senate has twice presented a Bill to the House of Commons to handle the variable entrance requirements - twice.

Now, then, we get to the real purpose. The real purpose was not to satisfy these poor people who are not going to qualify for UI, obviously. I have dealt with that. That is not the real purpose. I can see by what is being shouted across the floor. The real purpose of this is to somehow take a kick at the Senate. I say to Members Opposite, you should have been honest enough in the first place to say that. You should have been honest enough in the first place to put in the resolution kicking the Senate and commenting on the Senate, if that is your purpose. Please do not go masquerading this intention on the backs of the unemployed people of this Province. I think that is shameful.

Mr. Speaker, I could spend a minute or two on the other issue, the one they really want to debate, the one they are really concerned about and they really want to get something on the record about, but I am not going to spend very much time on it. All I can say is that the problem between the Senate and the House of Commons has to be worked out by the Senate and the House of Commons, and by the parties in the Senate and in the House of Commons. That problem has to be

worked out. We have all heard many ideas in terms of the Senate and what it should do. We all have our own opinions. But that really has no bearing on what we are doing here. What we have is the Government Members of the House of Commons insisting on another much larger Bill. Now they are even using our fishermen, who do not even belong there. They are in the Act by regulation and not by legislation. They are even using the fishermen of this Province to try to help to put pressure on the Senate. Now, the fishermen do not need to be there. They are there by regulation and regulations can be changed by a stroke of a pen by Cabinet. They are using the fishermen and the plant workers and all the other workers of this Province. They are holding them hostage in their fight with the Senate. Their major concern is the Senate and what they want to do with the Senate, and they are quite willing to sacrifice all these people in their fight with the Senate. Members opposite, with this resolution, have done exactly the same thing - exactly the same thing.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Baker: Mr. Speaker, I think the resolution on the surface looks harmless, but in reality, judging by what has happened during the fifteen or twenty minutes I have been speaking, it is not harmless. On the surface it seems as if members opposite want to get some support for the unemployed people in the Province, but now we find out their real concern is a fight with the Senate. That is what I have discovered in the last fifteen to twenty minutes, their real concern is a fight with the Senate.

Mr. Speaker, we are concerned about the people who cannot make the fourteen weeks. We have made our views known. The Opposition in the House of Commons has put forward a Private Member's resolution on that. The Senate, on two separate occasions, has sent Bills down to the House of Commons dealing with it, and in all instances the Government has rejected it. I say to members opposite that the real problem is the fact that there is this fight going on with the Senate and we are being held hostage because of this Senate fight. I think it is regrettable, and I think it is regrettable that members opposite would introduce such a resolution into the House that plays the same game as the people in Ottawa are playing. We are concerned about the situation, and we will do everything we can to ensure that somehow the variable entrance requirements are dealt with properly and not too late - dealt with soon. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Parsons: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it was a pleasure to rise in my place yesterday and address some of the economic woes of that Government, but it is much more of a pleasure today to rise in my place and support the resolution, a resolution that not alone involves some of the people in my district, but overall in all of Newfoundland and Labrador.

I was surprised and, I suppose, bewildered by the speech by the House Leader. He said the only reason why we brought this resolution to the floor of the House was because we had something against the Senate, we had

something against what the Senate was doing. Mr. Speaker, I want to make it quite clear that I am one person in this House who did not sacrifice anyone's well-being for any motive of my own, and I speak, too, for every member on this side. When this resolution was brought to the floor - I am sorry the House Leader is not here - it was concurred with by each and every member of this side of the House, because each and every one of us had people within our constituency whose needs were grave. We considered this to be of the gravest importance, to bring this resolution to the House. The Senate? Yes, I blame the Senate, because they did not allow Bill C-21 to come through in its entirety.

An Hon. Member: Do you support it?

Mr. Parsons: Let me say this to you. I support changes in the UI regulations. I certainly do.

An Hon. Member: Do you support Bill C-21?

Mr. Parsons: I support that Bill coming through right now. Yes, I do. I support the \$75 million that Newfoundlanders will receive in training programs from that Bill C-21 which the House Leader, by intent, never spoke of. There is more in Bill C-21 than ten and fourteen weeks, much more. Here we are with Hibernia coming on stream. Here we are with that great Labrador with its power potential down there. We now need people trained to do the jobs that will be out there for them to get. Up until now I could not see the retraining structure. I said it was nonsense. There were so many people out there now unemployed, what were we training them for? But right now we have

the potential. When I see the hon. House Leader get up and try to skirt around, try to infer that members on this side of the House did it because they wanted to sacrifice the workers, let me say this to you, Mr. Speaker, that I am one, and I am sure I speak for each member on this side of the House, who has personal friends who did not get the required number of stamps. Let me tell you why.

The House Leader speaks about this resolution or this variable entrance Bill. I think this went on for a number of years, four or five years. Each year it came in and it was just passed back to the House and was passed. But nine months ago Bill C-21 went to the Senate and because of politics and Senator McEachen, who believes he still runs the country - he still wants to be the leader and make all rules and regulations - he decided that it would not come out, it would not be passed. And he is the ruler, the same as our Premier is the ruler here in the House of Assembly, on that side.

An Hon. Member: What about Lowell Murray?

Mr. Parsons: You know, it annoys me, it gets me so mad, when they talk about the fishermen. As I suppose we all know in this House, the fishermen out there have a different situation. This year was a unique year. The capelin came first and the men who participated in the capelin fishery, they did well. But the thing that happened in previous years was that one overlapped the other; the cod fishery overlapped the capelin fishery, but this year it did not. So that left the cod fishermen, the trap fishermen, on our whole northeast coast, in

Trinity Bay and White Bay and all those areas, open for the cod fishery.

In many areas it was good, there was an excellent fishery. In my district alone, Mr. Speaker, it was better than I could ever remember. But it only started in our district on, I think, June 14 or 15, when there was any amount of fish, but it ended August 1. So, Mr. Speaker, if you calculate it, there were two weeks in June, four weeks in July, and a couple of weeks, or perhaps three, to go the limit, in August. So you are talking a maximum of nine weeks.

Now, because of the abundance of fish in those areas and being able to average out their amounts, there was no problem with the fishermen in areas where there was a lot of fish. But you have to remember, too, that that fish came in certain plants only that number of weeks, so that the plant workers were left with nine weeks. Now that is not counting the areas that did not get fish, down on the Great Northern Peninsula, parts of Labrador, the southwest coast, and parts of White Bay. I spoke to a man this morning who just came back from White Bay, and in the La Scie area it was a great summer, a great season, but in other areas of White Bay it was a complete failure.

So you are not talking about a straight-cut thing. You are not saying, oh, here is the line and this is the way it is. It is not. It varies in different areas. In my own district alone we had people who worked in the fishery but not fishermen. We had people who hoist the fish, who dipped the fish from the boats to the trucks, we had labourers who

handled other areas of fishing. All those men and women ended up with less stamps than they needed. It was almost possible to get 10 stamps, but 14 was the big thing they could not get. The big question was, Where are we going to get those extra weeks?

And, Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of them out there who did not get those 14 weeks. And I repeat myself, that there are many out there who are my friends who come and tell me, look, I do not know what we are going to do. We just can not come up with that four extra weeks.

This was the only intent of this Opposition in presenting that resolution. It wasn't to sacrifice anyone. And I say to the hon. House Leader that I was surprised and really disappointed that he believed that someone was so callous as to do something like he suggested.

Mr. Speaker, when you find a House Leader, who I had a lot of respect for, but today he stands in the House and defends the policy of that Senate - he defended it when he said they presented two Bills to the House of Commons and they were voted against, and he read out, Mr. Baker, Mr. Rompkey, and on and on, with all the Liberals voting for it. Glory be to goodness, Mr. Speaker, we are not a bunch of children. We know why they voted against it. Bill C-21 went to the Senate. Has the Senate the authority to scrap the Bill, to split the Bill in five pieces and say we are only going to let pass what we think is right?

An Hon. Member: What about the fishermen?

Mr. Parsons: What about the

fishermen? As I said, in some areas the fishermen do not have a problem. There are more out there than the fishermen. I am speaking for the fishermen, but I am also speaking for the plant workers and for the construction people who, because of weather conditions last spring, had a bad start. Again, some of the blame has to be laid on that Government. Because they had an insecure economic position, they offered nothing to the people and, thereby, when the people could not see it, when they were reluctant in their spending, housing starts went down, construction just was not there.

Only because of the rejuvenation of the fishery in many areas did construction start, and again at a rather late date. As we know, in Newfoundland moreso than anywhere else in Canada, our climate dictates that when November 1 comes up, construction is over. I mean, it is just not feasible. I suppose you could argue the point that well, in some areas now, out in Great Mosquito Cove, where they are going to build a road, they will continue during the winter. But I am talking about the construction jobs that employ four, five or ten people. These are the construction jobs I speak of, and these construction jobs just did not materialize this year. So that left a vacuum of weeks out there, Mr. Speaker.

There are times I think about UI and I say it was meant to be an insurance and it turned out to be a means of a livelihood. And, granted, I do not think that there is any argument there, that it started off as an insurance. But now it is a means of life, of survival, of having something or nothing, and neither we nor anyone else can play with that. The

Senate cannot play with it by sending back a bill, a part of a bill - so many are going to be alright and so many are not.

Let me talk to the House Leader for a minute. Again, he was not here when I said previously that he was reluctant, that he certainly did not make any mention of the \$75 million that were in that Bill, that Newfoundlanders because of our unemployment average could certainly partake of a great amount of that \$75 million for training purposes, to give your people in your constituency and mine in my constituency a chance to avail of the jobs that would be forthcoming with Hibernia or with, as I said, our great resource in Labrador.

Now I can see some sense to it. And so do the Feds have that type of sense. The House Leader certainly did not mention that, did he? He did not mention that there were \$75 million there to be spent on training programs which could increase the potential and the possibilities for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. He certainly never said it. Indeed he did not. All he said was that we were conspirators on this, that we conspired on the backs of the poor people. Can you imagine? I take exception to that. I really do! I think the House Leader became overly enthusiastic.

Mr. Hodder: You are not supposed to be eating food in the House, boy.

An Hon. Member: It is a nicorette.

Mr. Hodder: A nicorette? Oh.

Mr. Parsons: Mr. Speaker, all the whereases have no political



overtures. There aren't any: All we are sending is a very simple message.

An Hon. Member: That is right.

Mr. Parsons: All we are saying is, look, there are Newfoundlanders and Labradorians out there who cannot hope to reach the fourteen week plateau and all we are saying is that whoever is responsible for it should fix it. That is all, fix it.

When I was asked if I agreed with C-21 - up until this present era I had a lot of misgivings about it - but now there is the 75 million which is there for training, and I see that Newfoundlanders and Labradorians can now become trained for the jobs which will be out there. Let us face it, there are going to be lots of jobs offered that our people cannot take in Hibernia, and in the power situation.

I can hear 'Oh mys' from up in the corner. The 'oh mys' from up in the corner do not restrict me or do not do anything for me, but it shows me that either the Member has no one looking for the fourteen stamps in his district or he is aloof from all the people who are because of his status. I wish that he would get on his feet and say to this hon. House: I do not agree with those people wanting the fourteen stamps or reducing the fourteen week requirement to ten.

I will wait for him, after I am finished, to get on his feet and say to the hon. House: look, I do not believe this is a fact of life. Because that is all we are saying, each and every one of us is repeating over and over the need for these fourteen work weeks

to be reduced to ten.

Mr. Speaker, let us talk about the monies, let us talk about UIC and the financial benefits from UIC. To collect UIC, a person has to get ten weeks work; if he were to get ten weeks at a top stamp, he would have to be making about \$640.00-

An Hon. Member: Time is up.

Mr. Parsons: My time is not up, I could go on forever on this because I know what I am talking about. An employed person has to make around \$640 a week to get a top stamp, \$640 a week, that is a lot of money. He has to make \$640 to receive that top stamp.

If he did work for ten weeks at \$640 a week, it is only \$6,400, that is no great amount of money.

Mr. Decker: (Inaudible).

Mr. Parsons: You are trying to distract me but you are not going to do it -

Mr. Warren: You are too stupid anyhow.

Mr. Parsons: -because there are too many distractions in the Department of Health right now, so do not let us get into that. I will wait for another day, it is your colleague in the centre I would like to get at.

It is your colleague in the centre who refused, who shut out his mind, who deliberately said to the House that we were doing it on the backs of the poor people. This is the hon. gentleman whom I heard say this, this is the hon. Gentleman who did not say to the House: there is \$ 75 million of which a lot of Newfoundlanders

could avail. This is the man. This is the man who agrees with me and I know he does, that there should be changes in the UIC program. There should be changes, do you agree? There has to be changes in the UIC program.

Mr. Speaker, let us go back. We had \$6,400, this is what that person would make, and I am telling you he is pretty lucky for a person in rural Newfoundland, even within the urban areas, to make \$640 a week. That is insurable earnings, \$6,400. Now, if that person has four in the family, a wife and three children, remember he has a four to five week waiting period. Now granted, he only loses two weeks pay, but Mr. Speaker, at \$640 a week with four dependents you do not have much left after the week, you do not have anything left, so you have two weeks then that you have nothing. You do not get paid for it.

You may have to wait five weeks but they usually bring it up to that two weeks period, but there is a two week waiting period for which you really do not get paid, so no one wants to go on UIC, no one even wants to be in the predicament where a man goes out and works for ten weeks, no one wants to be in that predicament to jeopardize his children and his family for even that two weeks. They don't want to do it, Mr. Speaker, but when I heard today the House Leader of this Government stand in his place and say that this resolution was nothing more than this side of the House trying to piggyback on the backs of the poor, then I am amazed at his reasoning. I really cannot understand it, Mr. Speaker.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Parsons: Oh, yes, I can see the Minister of Social Services, he is over there now wondering how long more I have to go.

He added to the dilemma, all we are saying is there are a lot of poor people in Newfoundland and Labrador. He certainly did not create anything. He was not in a very creative mood when he cut \$100 a month from the poor single parents. He did not add to it.

Mr. Efford: I gave them all a job.

Mr. Parsons: You gave them all a job at what? You had to be on welfare, of course, before you could apply for the job. You had to apply for them.

An Hon. Member: The jobs were only designed to get them on UI.

Mr. Parsons: That is all. Who do you think you are telling?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Parsons: They are down there cutting off trees. They are everywhere cutting off trees. It was said here today that those trees would never be cut off only for he had an accident with a moose. I do not know about that. That may or may not be true. But it is certainly rampant here in the House that this work of cutting of the trees along the roadway would never be done only the Minister of Social Services hit a moose and now he is cutting all the trees back. Mr. Speaker, I agree with him.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Parsons: Mr. Speaker, I agree with him that there is a necessity, a great need to cut off the brush on the sides of the

road, especially on the Trans-Canada because I have had a couple of near misses myself, I am like the Minister of Social Services when something comes to your door it hits home. So I think it is a good idea. But as far as the UIC is concerned I hope that Bill C-21 can be passed through the Senate. I hope that the Premier, even forgetting what the House Leader said, I implore the House Leader and the Premier and Members of Cabinet to do their best to persuade those people in the Senate, those unelected people in the Senate, to be morally responsible to the public, to the people of not alone Newfoundland and Labrador, but to Canada, and let that C-21 pass.

Mr. Speaker (Snow): Order, please!

The hon. Member's time has elapsed.

Mr. Warren: Hear, hear! A good show!

Mr. Speaker: By leave!

Mr. Parsons: Mr. Speaker, in my final sentence, I want to say this again to the House Leader, the days of going away to Southern Ontario and Toronto and getting your stamps - that bubble has busted. It is gone. It is not as great up there now. The potential is not up there. So you and your Government are going to have to do something to fill the gap. I am saying you can start by using your best offices to bring it back from fourteen to ten, but in the interim you should be spending money now, start a formula to start jobs so those people can get their fourteen weeks.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Eagle River.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

I rise today to speak to this resolution because as many of the Members know, over the last several months I have been speaking out loud and clear on what this legislation is doing to the people of Labrador and indeed to the Province as a whole. In the next little while I want to talk about the process involved, I want to talk about the exact content of this particular debate, and I want to talk about the future process that should be involved to get things changed. First of all I want to talk about the parliamentary system. The parliamentary system that we operate under in Canada operates under a majority government concept whereby if the members of the governing party have the most numbers in the House of Commons they can make the laws of the land. That is straightforward first year political science. That is something that everybody in this country believes in and has supported, and today readily realizes that this is the reality.

The other concept of parliamentary democracy that we live in and as a result of our BNA Act is the Senate, the role of the Senate. I know it is hurting. It hurts a lot. It hurts a lot to be finally exposed as the Tory that you are.

An Hon. Member: Now, boy!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Dumaresque: It hurts to be exposed in the partisan games that

they are up to. It hurts. But I can tell you that it is going to hurt more. The role of the Senate that we have in the country today is to be the second sober thought in the parliamentary system. The role is to judge the merits of Bills that are passed by the House of Commons, in this particular case they have said no to C-21, because it is bad legislation. That is the power of the Senate. That is the full authority of the Senate at its best. That is the effective authority of the Senate that we have built in our Constitution.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Dumaresque: Mr. Speaker, I think it is also incumbent upon this House to know what the Opposition is saying today, what they are willing to support under Bill C-21 - what they are asking the House of Assembly here today to support. They are asking us to support a reduction in benefits, a full reduction in benefits from forty-two back to thirty-seven weeks, and back to twenty-four weeks. They are going to gut the present system of getting insurable earnings from UIC as it presently stands. Because for the Members' information, Mr. Speaker, the existing system right now under the variable entrance requirement is this, any place in the country that has an unemployment rate of over 9 per cent, the people can qualify with ten insurable weeks and be able to draw benefits for up to forty-two weeks. That is the existing system that is in place. Let us see what the proposed system is under C-21, the system that this Opposition is supporting and is wanting to have approved, is driving like crazy to see that it is put in place and has effect

upon the people, let us see what that says. That UIC amendment says that only in areas of over 15 per cent unemployment, only in those areas will people be able to qualify with ten weeks of insurable earnings. And in those areas that they do qualify they will only be able to draw thirty-seven weeks of unemployment insurance, only thirty-seven. Thirty-seven weeks of unemployment insurance.

An Hon. Member: What is it now?

Mr. Dumaresque: It is forty-two now. It is five less. And you know the difference -

An Hon. Member: They fish on the Labrador.

Mr. Dumaresque: It is 15 per cent unemployment that you need now to qualify as opposed to nine, six more percent they are saying. So you are going to cut out all kinds of places, all kinds of communities in this Province you are going to cut out by supporting this. Now if you had to go back to 9 per cent unemployment, as it is existing there, under this proposed amendment seventeen weeks is what you will need to qualify at the unemployment level of 9 per cent. And how much will you get then, Mr. Speaker? You will then get twenty-four weeks of unemployment insurance.

An Hon. Member: You would get half a year, Danny. Half a year.

Mr. Dumaresque: You will then get eighteen weeks less than what is already existing. Now that is sensitivity. I submit it is sensitivity. It is Tory sensitivity - with these kinds of policies they are ruining this country.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Dumaresque: That is what the record will show, Mr. Speaker. At the end of this day the record will clearly show this is what they are supporting. This is the kind of thing that they are supporting.

Now what should be done and certainly what way are we going to be able to move towards getting a change in this particular unemployment insurance issue? Of course, Mr. Speaker, as one of the members pointed out, we have very significant parts of this Province supporting changes to unemployment insurance. I know one of the members opposite mentioned Richard Cashin and what Mr. Cashin has been saying about the proposed amendments and the authority of the Government. On October 11, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Cashin is quoted as saying, 'This has to change. The Government in Ottawa has to face up to its responsibility so that these people are not the innocent victims of a power play between the House of Commons and the Senate in Ottawa.' That is what Mr. Cashin is saying. He is saying as one student of politics, just be elementary, just acknowledge the system instead of playing pure partisan games, as you are here today.

I must say I would not feel good if I were to sit down without giving some advice on the process they should go through now to get things changed, I would not feel good if I sat down without saying what not to do, because there are some things that people opposite have done that they should not have done. I think one of the main things they should not have done was, last Spring everybody heard here in this House that

there was going to be a dramatic escape from this House of Assembly, there was a member going to Ottawa. There was going to be a dramatic exit from this House of Assembly. Mr. Warren, from Torngat Mountains, was going up and having dinner with Barbara McDougal and five other Cabinet Ministers. As he went out the door, all the members here were in suspense, I guess, because they knew this was the Member for Torngat Mountains, this was the Tory envoy that was going to go up to Ottawa and sit down with Barbara McDougal, John Crosbie, and Valcourt and he was going to change the world. He has not told us yet what he and Barbara McDougal had for dinner, but I can tell him what the Tories have given for supper to the people of Torngat Mountains. They have given them nothing, other than to say to the people of this country, we don't care about you. We don't care what you have to go through down on the Coast of Labrador. If this is one of the things the Tory Opposition is going to do, send up this great envoy, I would have to say we just cannot afford that kind of frequent flyer around this House of Assembly. We have to cut back on those things, and the next time an envoy goes up from the Tories, I hope he is on the PC Party expense account.

Mr. Speaker, the other thing not to do, which I have seen done by the members opposite, is to pop up here in the House of Assembly and say one thing but do something completely different. They are saying we do not want this passed in the Senate. We want it passed, and we want to see the people in Labrador and in other places in the Province get back to ten weeks.

Now, where is the correspondence?

Will the Leader of the Opposition table here today the correspondence between himself and the Federal Cabinet Minister for Newfoundland, John Crosbie, the correspondence which asked Mr. Crosbie to support the variable entrance rate requirement legislation? Will the Member for Port au Port table the correspondence to the Minister of Fisheries and the Prime Minister to that effect?

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

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Port au Port.

Mr. Hodder: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite, who cannot seem to modulate himself from one level to the other, who seems to be like he is on the back of a ship in a storm when he makes a speech -

Some Hon. Members: That is not a point of order.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

The Chair is unable to ascertain whether it is a point of order if hon. members on my left keep making a noise. I will hear the hon. Member for Port au Port and decide if there is a point of order.

The hon. the Member for Port au Port.

Mr. Hodder: My point of order, Mr. Speaker, merely is that the -

An Hon. Member: The pitch in his voice.

Mr. Hodder: No, I mentioned the pitch in his voice; you cannot

turn down the volume at all. I think modulation is the -

Mr. Speaker: Would the hon. Member for Port au Port get to the point?

Mr. Hodder: The point of order was that the member opposite said he would like to see my correspondence. I think it is on record in this House of Assembly that I delivered a number, at least three, petitions in this House of Assembly from the district of Port au Port which were relayed to the Minister to be relayed to her counterpart in the House of Commons. Other than that, I have sent a number of petitions from the district directly to the Senate and to the House of Commons.

Some Hon. Members: Table them.

Mr. Hodder: They were tabled!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

There is no point of order, there is a point of clarification. The hon. the Member for Port au Port will have an opportunity to speak at 4:40.

The hon. the Member for Eagle River.

Mr. Dumaresque: Mr. Speaker, it is terrible to see the ugly head of the dinosaur rise again here in this House of Assembly. It is terrible to see again the insensitivity the Tory party has always promulgated in this Province and propping up now in Ottawa. It is terrible to see that once the heat comes on them they have to resort to these spurious points of order.

Mr. Speaker, the fact of the

matter is that there is no correspondence between the Leader of the Opposition and the Prime Minister, or the Minister of International Trades, John Crosbie. There is no correspondence asking them to pass the variable entrance rate requirement. There has been no concerted effort by this Opposition to say anything to their friends in Ottawa, the same kind of movement that was made by the Member for Torngat Mountains when he went up there and had dinner with them. It is totally lip service that has been paid to these people in Ottawa, and you just cannot get away with playing that crass political game anymore. There will be a time when you will have to account to the people of this Province for your actions and the petty political games you are perpetrating in this House.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Dumaresque: Mr. Speaker, what this House has to do is acknowledge and certainly continue to support the parliamentary system we have in this country. We should continue to let the Senate do its job - do its job of being effective, do its job of saying to bad legislation, 'no, we will not pass that legislation.' And in this particular case the Opposition over there should be letting the Senate do what they have to do, what the people support them in doing, and that is killing C-21. Get bad legislation out of this country. We do not need the kind of Tory insensitivity that is going to be put onto the people by virtue of C-21. That is the kind of thing we do not need, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, these are a number of

things that have to be done, these are a number of procedures that have to be followed. And I hope that after today they will be able to get their pens to paper and say to the Minister of International Trade, who has the authority as the Minister for Newfoundland, to bring it up in the Cabinet, to say to his Cabinet colleagues, let's pass this Order in Council. We do not have to go out there and debate it for twenty-four hours on the House of Commons floor. Let's say to the Members of Cabinet, pass this Order in Council so that fishermen in Newfoundland and Labrador can qualify for ten weeks instead of fourteen. There is nothing difficult about that. There is nothing unreal about that. All it will do, Mr. Speaker, is send out a signal to this Province that we have a sensitive and caring Government in Ottawa, a compassionate Government that is willing to make the necessary changes rather than go out and roll the dice, rather than go out there and say, we again have them where we want them, and we are going to make them suffer until it is my way or no way.

That is not the kind of Government the people of Canada want. That is not the kind of Government the people of Canada elected. And I guess that is why in the latest polls they are now down below the reform party of Canada; that is why they are down to 11 per cent; that is why they are down below the interest rate, Mr. Speaker. That is why they are down there, and that is why they will continue to be down there.

And I can tell you their cousins in Newfoundland are not going to be any different. Their Tory cousins in Newfoundland are also going to have to account for the

crassness they have gotten on with. And I can tell you they will not be above the interest rate either when the next election rolls around. They will be on the roll call when the next election day is over.

An Hon. Member: They will have a new leader, too.

Mr. Dumaresque: Yes, they will be under different leadership after this weekend.

So, Mr. Speaker, over the last few minutes I think I have been able to outline exactly what the process is, what the authority of the vested House of Commons is, what they can do, what the majority of the House of Commons, what the Tories can do in Ottawa for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. That process is clear. They can do it, and they can do it now. What they also have to do, Mr. Speaker, is prepare to make changes to C-21 to make it a sensitive, compassionate and caring Bill that will address the so many inaccuracies of the present UIC Act, but, at the same time, be able to give us good, honest legislation.

I have also outlined, of course, not to get into the envoy spirit too much in the next couple of weeks, because we can't afford to be saved by the Member for Torngat Mountains. And, Mr. Speaker, what they can do is make their views known very publicly by making the Leader of the Opposition send to his colleagues in Ottawa, particularly the Minister of Trade and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries, who voted against this - I cannot believe they could stand up there and vote against this amendment, against this particular Bill at

the time it was proposed.

Mr. Murphy: Look at what the Opposition Leader said, Danny.

Mr. Dumaresque: I have just been handed, Mr. Speaker, one of the more recent things the Leader of the Opposition said. 'Mr. Rideout, who spoke on behalf of the Conservative caucus, warned that seasonal workers in rural communities will be driven onto social assistance and be penalized for factors beyond their control. In addition', he said, 'an estimated 40,000 Newfoundlanders will be affected by changes in the duration of benefits.' That is what he has said, that is what he has acknowledged, and today that is what he is willing to accept from the Tory Party in Ottawa. It is unbelievable that they would go through such lengths to prop up their blue cousins and to be able to score a political point. I cannot believe it!

Mr. Murphy: Winston said to you get your resolution in now.

Mr. Dumaresque: Mr. Speaker, at this point I would like to move an amendment to this resolution.

Mr. Tobin: His time is up, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Dumaresque: To move an amendment to eliminate the third -

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

I am sorry to interpret. I will not cut into the member's time. The hon. member started at 4:04, and the hon. member has twenty minutes. So the Chair will not take directions from hon. members.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!



Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Eagle River.

Mr. Dumaresque: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this time I would like to move an amendment to this resolution to eliminate the third AND WHEREAS and after the following BE IT RESOLVED that... to eliminate the remainder and institute the words 'AND BE IT RESOLVED that this House condemn the Government of Canada for not passing the variable entrance rate requirement and thereby reducing the qualifying period for unemployment insurance benefits to ten weeks in Newfoundland and Labrador.' And to also institute 'AND BE IT RESOLVED that this House condemn the Federal Cabinet for not passing the Order in Council that would give fishermen the necessary authority to qualify with ten weeks.' And, Mr. Speaker, to keep the final WHEREAS as it is. I think with this particular amendment this will be a good signal to send to Ottawa. Mr. Prime Minister, Mr. Crosbie, the Tory Party, you have the authority to do it. Put your money where your mouth is and pass this legislation for the people of Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Before I recognize the hon. Member for Torngat Mountains I would like to have a copy of the motion so that the Chair can rule.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Tobin: (Inaudible) in your caucus this morning.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Burin -

Placentia West, did I hear you say this was discussed? Did you make some statement? Are you casting aspersions on the Chair?

Mr. Tobin: No, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Okay.

The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

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

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

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Speaker, I am at a loss to know why you would single me out.

Mr. Hodder: Why are we being picked on down here?

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Is the hon. Member for Burin - Placentia West on a point of order?

Mr. Tobin: I made a comment, Mr. Speaker, to the Member for Eagle River who read his resolution. When he said what he had to say, and I made some sort of comment about it being discussed in caucus. While I was not recognized by the Chair to speak, I am not sure - Mr. Speaker, it is probably something new, but it is the first time I have seen anyone in this House being asked by the Speaker a question as what I said to a colleague. Now maybe I could be ruled out of order, Mr. Speaker, and I will accept that for saying something when I was not recognized. But to explain to the Chair what I said to my colleague -

Mr. Hodder: You have the right to speak in this House, the same as he has.

Mr. Tobin: I am not sure under what rules you would make that assertion and assumption?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the President of Treasury Board.

Mr. Baker: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Perhaps I can clear this up. The Member for Burin - Placentia West knows exactly what went on. He is obviously not on a point of order. When Your Honour indicated that Your Honour wanted to see the amendment, there was comment made, seemingly from the Member for Burin - Placentia West, along the lines of, well, you discussed that with Cabinet. Now the Member for Burin - Placentia West said - or you discussed that in caucus this morning'.

Obviously, the Member for Burin - Placentia West has explained that by saying he was talking to a member across the way. However, the way it came out, and I was listening very carefully, I can see where His Honour could possibly get the impression that the Member for Burin - Placentia West was talking about His Honour. I can see where he could get that impression, so it was simply that. The way it came out was the Member for Burin - Placentia West was questioning His Honour. His Honour wanted to straighten that out, and it was straightened out. And I think that was, Your Honour, a perfectly proper thing for you to do. Because if, in fact, members are questioning your impartiality and the way you deal with things and so on, then you quite properly should stop and find out the truth

of the matter. So, Your Honour, it is not a point of order, but I hope that -

Mr. Tobin: Under what rule does the Speaker question a Member (inaudible)?

Mr. Baker: The Speaker, at any point in time, can comment and interrupt when he feels aspersions are being cast on the Speaker. And I can see where that impression could have easily been obtained. The Member for Burin - Placentia West straightened it out by saying he was talking to the Member for Eagle River. And if that is so, then we have to accept that and that is fine.

There is no attempt by Your Honour to pick on anybody, but I can understand how you got that impression, Your Honour.

Mr. Speaker: If the hon. member was referring to the Member for Eagle River, there is no point of order.

The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

Mr. Warren: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. While you are checking on the amendment to the resolution, if you allow me, Sir, I will continue with my few minutes I have remaining on the resolution.

For the last fifteen or twenty minutes I have listened to the hon. Member for Eagle River. At the same time, I went back to an editorial in the Evening Telegram which says, 'Mr. Dumaresque is inclined to make extreme statements and then expect others to go along with him.' That will tell you in a nutshell what most people think about Mr. Dumaresque.

Let me say to my hon. colleague, he was talking about my trip to Ottawa at the taxpayers' expense. I think each member in this Legislature is allowed two trips per year to Ottawa, but I went to Ottawa, let me say to my hon. colleague for Eagle River who, in this House - by the way, Mr. Speaker, I would ask for silence from all Members.

Mr. Speaker: I am having difficulty in hearing the hon. Member for Torngat Mountains, and the hon. Member for Torngat Mountains has requested silence. There is a lot of noise on this side of the House, so I would ask people to refrain. I recognize the hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

Mr. Warren: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Just prior to the election in 1989 the hon. Member for Eagle River published in a newspaper ad the names of a number of people in his district who supported him, so he said, for nomination.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains requested silence and the Chair has to enforce the rule. If the hon. Member wishes silence, he has the right in this House to have it.

The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

Mr. Warren: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And one of the same individual's, whose name this hon. gentleman published in the Northern Pen, a man by the name of Mr. George Hudson, from Black Tickle, has been quoted in the past week, in the Sunday Express, as saying that he is particularly

mad at the Provincial Government. Now Mr. Speaker this same hon. gentleman has for the past number of months said that the people in Eagle River have elected me and I will do everything to help them. All we have to do is look at the problems in Black Tickle this past summer, and everybody can see how much this hon. gentleman helped the people in Black Tickle.

Now Mr. Speaker, let me refer back to my hon. colleague, the House Leader, and I guess he knows this from brother George up in Ottawa. Now Mr. Speaker, can the hon. gentleman remember and also my colleague from Eagle River - and this is probably ten or eleven years ago - that there was a Bill brought forward into the House of Commons by the Liberal Government, by Mr. Trudeau, and who happened to be in Mr. Trudeau's Cabinet at the time? Mr. Chretien, Mr. MacEachen - Mr. MacEachen, that is an interesting name - Mr. Rompkey - another very interesting individual - now, who else was in the Liberal Party in Ottawa at the time? Mr. Dave Rooney. Mr. George Baker. Mr. Brian Tobin.

And there was a vote carried forward in the House of Commons. Now, Mr. Speaker, was that vote asking to reduce the number of requirements in UIC? No, Mr. Speaker. That vote was to go from 10 weeks up to 16 weeks. That was that Government, the Liberal Government, with Mr. Chretien, Mr. MacEachen, Mr. Trudeau, Mr. Rompkey, Mr. Baker, Mr. Tobin and Mr. Rooney who wanted to go from 10 weeks up to 16 weeks.

An Hon. Member: Did you check to see who voted on that?

Mr. Warren: Now Mr. Speaker, this is the Government -

An Hon. Member: Name it. Name the people who voted.

Mr. Speaker: Order please! Order please!

The hon. Member deserves some silence, there are still comments going back and forth across the House. The rules apply to both sides.

The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

Mr. Warren: Thank you very much Mr. Speaker. Today I took some statistics in my district in Torngat Mountains, from Rigolet to Nain, and I have very disturbing figures. In Nain there are 57 fishermen. As of today, one fisherman out of 57 will qualify for UIC benefits. Mr. Speaker, from Hopedale to Rigolet there are 128 fishermen, fourteen will qualify for UIC benefits.

Now Mr. Speaker besides that there are 67 fish plant workers in Nain alone who have been on and off, and only seven will qualify for UIC benefits. Now Mr. Speaker let me go back -

Mr. Baker: (Inaudible).

Mr. Warren: The hon. House Leader now is trying to interrupt me again. But anyway I am going to answer my hon. gentleman. Mr. Speaker, let me tell the hon. gentleman there would be 11 that would qualify instead of one. Eleven out of 57.

But let me just say one other thing. I listened this day in Question Period, and I listened to the Minister of Social Services saying it is not true, and saying it is not true two or three times. But I want to tell this

honourable House that what was referred to today is true. And I will give two individual's names who will not object to me giving their names. And one person, Mr. Speaker, whose name is Mr. Gustav Flowers in Nain. Gustav Flowers had five or six UIC stamps we will say from fishing. Social Services has a project now identified in the community of Nain. Gustav Flowers went up to see if he could get employed on this project and he was told by the social worker - I say to my hon. colleague because I do not think he believes this - he was told by the social worker in Nain that we have been advised by our senior staff that we cannot hire you on because we are expecting the Federal Government to come forward with a program later on.

An Hon. Member: That is wrong.

Mr. Warren: That is true. Gustav Flowers was told that by a social worker. And, Mr. Speaker, let me tell you one more thing, a fellow by the name of Harry White -

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

The hon. Member asked for silence, and I remind the Minister of Social Services that he is not in his seat.

I recognize the hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

Mr. Warren: Mr. Speaker, let me give him another example of a fellow by the name of Harry White from the district of Bellevue. This man went to the Social Services Department in Whitbourne and he said: I will go and cut brush, but the social worker said, no, we cannot hire you on because

you are a fisherman. We have to wait and see if the Federal Government will give a program.

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

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Minister of Social Services on a point of order.

Mr. Efford: It is not very often I rise to my feet on a point of order in this hon. House of Assembly because most times there is no need, only to just get a point across, but the point I want to make, Mr. Speaker, is that the hon. Member is giving misleading information to the House in regard to the Department of Social Services and what the criteria is centered around community development programs. It is false information that I want to clarify in this hon. House of Assembly. The point is there is absolutely no way people are refused community development programs. All they have to do is first apply for social assistance.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

The hon. Minister is giving a point of clarification. There is no point of order.

The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

Mr. Warren: Mr. Speaker, let me go one step further when we are talking about fishermen. This past Summer there was a fisherman outside of Southport in Trinity Bay, in your district, Sir, who saw the Premier coming across in his yacht, the Premier said to him: how is the fishing going? He answered: it is very bad, Sir, I do not think I am going to get enough stamps. What did the

Premier say? We have to look at that later on. The Premier was there in Trinity Bay in his yacht enjoying himself and those fishermen were trying to get enough stamps. Here is this young person in Trinity Bay who was refused by your Department.

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

Mr. Warren: I am saying he was refused by your Department to work at cutting brush along the Trans-Canada Highway because he had four or five fishing stamps. That is why, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains requested silence and there are still conversations going back and forth across the House.

I recognize the hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

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

I noticed, Mr. Speaker, that when the hon. Member for Eagle River spoke he talked about my being an 'envoy' to Barbara McDougall. Let me just say one thing, Mr. Speaker-

Mr. Tobin: (Inaudible).

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

I am having difficulty hearing the Member for Torngat Mountains, and I am interested in what he has to say.

The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

Mr. Warren: Mr. Speaker, let me

say just one thing. I met with Barbara McDougall and I expressed to her the concerns of fishermen and fish plant workers along the Labrador Coast. My hon. colleague for Eagle River, or my hon. colleague for Naskaupi, have failed to mention this, but the bit of earnings that the people from Hopedale, Rigolet, Makkovik and Postville have received this year, they have received because Barbara McDougall's Department did one thing, and it was uncomplimentary to this Government by the way, this Government did not like it. And what happened was she supported and the Federal Government supported Torngat Fisheries in having five Torngat people working on a shrimp boat that enabled the Labrador people to get an income for five or six weeks. Only for that, Mr. Speaker, there would be no fishery in Makkovik this year, Rigolet, Postville and Hopedale because Torngat Fisheries could not carry on with their -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Warren: In concluding, Mr. Speaker, I just want to say that, referring to the amendment that my hon. colleague brought in from Eagle River, Sir, he was preaching to us how the democratic process works in a Legislature. I would suggest to you, Sir, that there is no seconder for that amendment. So therefore it is out of order.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Leader of the Opposition on a point of order.

Mr. Rideout: Thank you, Mr.

Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make a submission to Your Honour on the amendment proposed by the gentleman for Eagle River. There are two or three things that I would like to point out to Your Honour, because I am assuming Your Honour will want to rule on the admissibility of the amendment before the proposer of the resolution speaks.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, the amendment clearly changes the intent of the resolution.

Mr. Dumaresque: (Inaudible).

Mr. Rideout: Mr. Speaker, I am not seeking any advice now from the parliamentary expert from Eagle River. I am saying what I think. He had a chance to say what he thought. Mr. Speaker, the intent of this resolution is to condemn the Senate, the unelected Senate, and to equally condemn the Government and the Parliament of Canada for not acting. This amendment takes out the condemnation of the Senate so therefore it changes dramatically the intent of the resolution put forward by my colleague from Port au Port.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, the amendment has an inaccuracy in it. It is not an alleged inaccuracy, it is an inaccuracy in fact, and that was the allegation made in the House today by the President of Treasury Board that the Executive Council, the Cabinet, could vary fishermen's UI requirements by Order-in-Council.

An Hon. Member: You are wrong.

Mr. Rideout: Now, Mr. Speaker, we have checked the precedents and

the statute in Ottawa over the last hour or so, and we have been advised that every variance requirement that was ever brought before the Parliament of Canada since the introduction of the fishermen's UI back in the late 1950s was brought, both Liberal and Conservative Governments, in the form of a bill to the House of Commons. Everyone, Mr. Speaker, that is what the statute records show and that is what the researcher has told us.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, as an argument for Your Honour to consider that this amendment is definitely out of order is that there was no seconder. And you cannot propose an amendment to a resolution or a bill in this House without a seconder, and it cannot be seconded, Mr. Speaker, let me remind the gentleman on the other side, it cannot be seconded retroactively. It must be seconded when a Member says I propose the following amendment, seconded by my colleague from wherever. So it cannot be seconded retroactively. This amendment was not seconded and for all of these reasons, Mr. Speaker, it is out of order.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the President of Treasury Board.

Mr. Baker: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Just a few very brief comments. My understanding is that the intent of the resolution - and you go down to the BE IT RESOLVED parts there - the intent of the resolution is involving the qualifying period for unemployment insurance benefits to ten weeks, and that somehow something has to be done to ensure that the

qualifying period of ten weeks comes into force as quickly as possible. Now my understanding from reading this on the surface, as I pointed out in my presentation, is that was the purpose of the Bill. If, in fact, Mr. Speaker, that was the purpose of the Bill then I would suggest to you that the reasons given by the Leader of the Opposition are totally inappropriate. He is now indicating that perhaps there might be another purpose to this Bill other than dealing with the qualifying period for unemployment insurance.

As I have pointed out in my presentation, the Senate has dealt with that particular aspect of the Unemployment Insurance Bill and they have sent back to the Senate on two separate occasions, December and June, Bills dealing with the very topic that the Members now have in their resolution. So the Senate has done that, therefore we see the introduction of the Senate as being another totally different matter. A totally different matter not having to do with the qualifying period for UI at all because the Senate has, I repeat, deal with that.

Now, Your Honour, the Leader of the Opposition says that he checked with people to find out the validity of my comment about the regulations and so on, and I am glad he did that. The truth of the matter, Mr. Speaker, probably will take a while to determine. First when I was doing my investigation on this particular Bill I called the Federal office and the Federal Minister, Ms McDougall. I called that office and indicated that my understanding was that the Senate had sent a Bill back to the House

on the UI and gave her an approximate time, and wondered if I could have a copy of it. And the reply that I got, Mr. Speaker - I am dealing with the point that was raised here- the reply that I got was that no such thing had been done. The reply that I got from that office was that no such thing had been done. I went another route and found that in actual fact, it had been done twice.

So I would suggest to the hon. Member that with regards to the regulations my information is - and this is not something I got off the top of my head - my information is that this can be changed by regulation and your information is it cannot. I suggest that at some point in time we need to straighten this out, but, Mr. Speaker, it has no bearing on the relevancy of this amendment. And I would like to make one final submission, Mr. Speaker. If, in fact, the amendment is ruled out of order for other reasons, and it is not because of relevancy, but if it is ruled out of order for other reasons, then I would suggest to Your Honour that there are two separate issues here that have to be voted on separately and there is adequate precedence in Legislatures in Ottawa and in England that resolutions of this nature that deal with two separate issues should, in fact, be voted on separately. It should be a split vote.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

The Chair would like to recess the House for five minutes.

Recess

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

On the point of order on the things that have transpired, according to Beauchesne, 554, if the motion finds no seconder it is dropped immediately, for the amendment is not in order.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: The hon. The President of the Council.

Mr. Baker: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a good ruling. A point of order, though, related to a request I made in my presentation. According to Beauchesne, paragraph 557, page 172, a motion which contains two or more distinct propositions may be divided so that the sense of the House may be taken on each separately, and the Speaker has discretionary power - discretionary power - to decide whether a motion should be divided. I would suggest to Your Honour that there are two distinct propositions in this motion.

I made the case in my presentation a few moments ago, I made the case in my original presentation before this House. There are two distinct propositions, one dealing with the Senate and one dealing with the variable entry requirement. So I would request, Your Honour, that when the vote is taken on this motion, it be split, be divided.

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

Mr. Rideout: Mr. Speaker, to that point of order there are two or three quick points I would like to make, because the time is getting close to adjournment.



First of all, this motion was made yesterday, ruled in order, and is printed on the Order Paper today. Secondly, the point the Government House Leader used about the Speaker in his discretion splitting a resolution. This is not the Speaker in his discretion - Your Honour has not said a word about this resolution - this is the Government asking the Speaker. No discretion here, Mr. Speaker, the Government House Leader is asking the Speaker. And thirdly, Mr. Speaker, since twenty minutes to five the gentleman for Port au Port should have been speaking, so the Government House Leader cannot make any request to Your Honour; he can try, but it cannot work.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible) a point of order?

Mr. Rideout: That was to your point of order.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Was the hon. member speaking to the point of order?

Mr. Rideout: Yes I was, Your Honour.

Mr. Hodder: Mr. Speaker, I had 20 minutes. I have five left. I thought I was speaking to close off the debate.

Mr. Speaker: There is a point of order before the Chair. The Chair is going to have a recess briefly and if the Chair is not back by five o'clock, if all Members agree, we will call it five o'clock.

Mr. Rideout: Pardon?

Mr. Speaker: If the Speaker is not back by five, is it agreed to

call it five o'clock?.

Mr. Rideout: Mr. Speaker, it is Private Members' Day. We have to have the vote by five o'clock.

Mr. Speaker: What I am asking is that we agree to call it five o'clock.

Mr. Hodder: When we get back?

Mr. Speaker: Yes.

Mr. Hodder: When we get back, yes.

Mr. Speaker: We will recess for a few moments.

Recess

Mr. Speaker: Order please!

In the limited time the table Officers and I have had to check on this, and checked with Ottawa, the House of Commons, to get an interpretation of Beauchesne, page 172, clause 557, which says a motion which contains two or more distinct propositions may be divided so that the sense of the House may be taken on each separately, and the Speaker has a discretionary power to decide whether a motion should be divided.

On the matter of the discretionary power of the Speaker, again we are informed that either - of course, all hon. Members will know that the Speaker is entitled at any time to review resolutions. It is not something we do very frequently, but we check to see that the wording is proper, that there are no offences against the House, and the Speaker may if he senses two things, one, that the language is incorrect, or two, that there are indeed two

propositions, can then do as Beauchesne says on his own initiative, or, of course, being requested or being prompted by Members that in order to get the sense of the House, there may be two propositions.

I point out to hon. Members that obviously it is purely a judgement call. In this case I have read through the resolution. And our resolutions are not always the same as in other Houses, as well. A lot of Houses, for example, do not allow 'whereases', this kind of thing, but we do. As I read it, and in the circumstances, I can sense that there is a necessity or there can be a case made for a necessity to have two distinct votes, one on the first resolve, that the House declare its outrage at the undemocratic actions of the unelected Senate of Canada, and secondly, that there be a vote on the second one, that the House urge the Government of Canada to introduce amendments to the Unemployment Insurance Act. So, under these circumstances the Chair, using its discretionary power, will rule that we will have two votes.

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Rideout: Mr. Speaker, I cannot question Your Honour's ruling and I will not. We have no other alternative but to accept it. But I can say this, that I have never seen done in this House before what was done here this evening. I do not think the record will show it was ever done in the last fifteen years.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, the House is supposed to be adjourned since 5:00 p.m. It is working now by unanimous consent, and we

withdraw our unanimous consent. The House is adjourned automatically.

Mr. Speaker: This House now stands adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, at 2:00 p.m.