



Province of Newfoundland

FORTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF
NEWFOUNDLAND

Volume XLI

Second Session

Number 66

VERBATIM REPORT
(Hansard)

Speaker: Honourable Thomas Lush

Monday

[Preliminary Transcript]

29 October 1990

The House met at 2:00 p.m.

Mr. Speaker (Lush): Order, please!

Before proceeding to routine business, on behalf of hon. Members I would like to welcome to the House the Newfoundland students who were involved in designing three Christmas cards for the Canadian Red Cross Society. The overall concept of the card design was to bring focus to the Christmas spirit and the importance of the Red Cross in helping, caring and sharing with people throughout the world and in our community. These students are Khrista Shave of the Donald C. Jamieson Academy, Stephen Paul Lilly of the Donald C. Jamieson Academy, and Leanne Faulkner of the Matthew Elementary School in Bonavista. I should point out that Khrista is eleven years old, Leanne is eleven, and Stephen Paul Lilly is twelve years old.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Also, I have been informed, present in the galleries today is a former Member, Mr. Ray Guy. I would like to extend a welcome to that former member, who represented Grand Falls.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Oral Questions

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

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

Mr. Speaker, the March 15 Budget the Minister of Finance brought into the House of Assembly estimated that \$966,900,000 would

come to this Province this year from the Government of Canada in the form of equalization payments. Last month the Premier announced that the \$10.2 million surplus the Budget predicted for this year was gone and that it would be replaced by a \$120 million deficit, due in large measure to this unexpected shortfall in equalization from the Government of Canada. Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Premier could tell the House what the latest estimate is, how much Newfoundland and Labrador will receive this current fiscal year from the Government of Canada on equalization.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Premier Wells: Mr. Speaker, let me just restate so that at least it is accurate, because the underlying presentation of the hon. gentleman is not completely accurate. The position we stated earlier is that of the total that we now projected of approximately \$120 million, some \$63.7 million was due to the fact, not that there was a decrease in equalization, but that we would get \$63.7 million less than had been originally anticipated and estimated by the Federal Government at the time we did the Budget. The balance, I indicated at the time, was due to expected shortfalls in our own revenues plus some unexpected expenditures, and that totalled to make the difference. In large measure \$63 million I guess is half or a little better than half, so I guess you could say that is due in large measure.

Now, then, the equalization that was suggested would be reduced to approximately \$906 million, so that is a reduction of some \$63

million. I believe about two weeks or so ago there was an other estimate made. I do not have the details of that in front of me at the moment, but that other estimate indicated that the decrease might not be that much, it might only be about \$40 million.

An Hon. Member: Forty-three.

Premier Wells: Forty-two million, somewhere in that vicinity. Anyway, I think now the re-estimate is instead of being reduced by \$60 million, it is going to be reduced by \$40 million. We are not prepared to jump at that and change our plans now, because we think in December, when the estimate comes out again, it may be changed again. It is the reason why we did not jump right away when the first estimate came. And hon. members opposite know, they formed the Government of this Province not so long ago, you do not jump immediately when these things out because there may well be changes. And we think now there may well be changes, and we probably jumped too fast the last time in concluding that we might have a \$120 million deficit.

But in the circumstances, where Canada was heading into a recession, we think we took the right course.

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

Mr. Rideout: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier was very definitive and very definite a month ago when he said that equalization payments would be down by \$63.7 million, and he reconfirmed that figure here again today and that, therefore, that

accounted for a large part of the projected deficit by the Province.

Now, I want to ask the Premier this, Mr. Speaker. Will the Premier confirm that the equalization entitlement from Ottawa as of October 1, 1990 is projected to be \$960,469,000, nearly \$19 million more than the Province received last year and only \$6 million less than the Minister of Finance projected in his budget on March 15, 1990? Are these the new estimates, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Premier Wells: No, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Rideout: Mr. Speaker, will the Premier confirm then that the so-called reduction in equalization payments, which he referred to in his October statement, was, in fact, a payback of \$34 million in overpayments from the previous year, an amount which the Government, if it had wished to do so, could have repaid out of last year's surplus but the Government for accounting reasons and so on agreed to bring over into this year's Budget so that the \$34 million payback is the most significant number in the amount of the reduction that the Premier talked about in October?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Premier Wells: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure if the Member was in the House at that particular time. This issue has already been discussed and I think I have made it clear that the Province had a choice. If I did not, I believe the Minister of Finance did. The

Province had a choice last March. It could have said, okay, we will take that into last year, and that would have decreased the surplus we had last year by some \$34 million. Well, that was the choice we made.

Now, we made the choice for this reason, Mr. Speaker. We made the choice because if we had taken \$34 million of Newfoundland taxpayers' cash now and given it back to Ottawa, then that was \$34 million we would have had to borrow and pay the interest on. By taking this choice and paying it over a twelve month period, with twenty-four equal installments, we save about \$2 million for the taxpayers of this Province and we thought that was pretty good financial management.

So a good portion of it is, in fact, done or resulting from financial management. Now, hon. Members opposite know that. The same financial advisors, Mr. Gill and others in the Department of Finance, made the same kinds of decisions at the same time when hon. Members opposite formed the Government and acted in the best interest of the taxpayers of this Province, and we did likewise.

I met, as a matter of fact, I guess last week, with the senior officials in the Department of Finance and they told me then that the re-estimate was that instead of being \$63 million short due to this payback and so on, instead of being that, it would be about \$40 million or so. So it would be \$20 million less than we had originally anticipated the shortfall would be. But they cautioned me. 'Don't rush at that, Mr. Premier,' they said. 'In December, when the estimates come out again, it may be \$20

million or \$25 million the other way, so don't rush at it.'

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

Mr. Rideout: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It may very well be different in December, but the point is that as of October 1 there is only a \$6 million difference in the Minister's projections and what the estimates are from Ottawa.

Let me ask the Premier this, Mr. Speaker. Since the October 1 estimate, and the Premier can have that checked, he does not have to take my word for it, on equalization is only \$6 million less than the Minister of Finance projected in his Budget on March 15, will the Premier now admit that the \$120 million deficit, or the \$200 million deficit, or \$300 million, whatever the deficit is estimated to be today, is at that figure primarily because of gross over estimates by the Minister of Finance in Provincial revenue, not a significant shortfall in Federal revenue?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Premier Wells: No, Mr. Speaker, I will not admit that because as nearly as I know, it is not so. Now, unless those two senior officials from the Department of Finance were deliberately lying to me four days ago -

An Hon. Member: Senior officials (inaudible).

Premier Wells: Yes. I say unless they were. And I do not believe they were. So unless they were deliberately lying to me -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Premier Wells: If the Member will wait a few minutes I will tell him. Unless they were deliberately lying to me last week when they sat in my office and said to me, 'Premier, the figure, as a result of the October estimate we got just last week, looks as though instead of it being a shortfall of \$63.7 million, that shortfall, according to their estimate now, will be some \$20 million less. That is what they said to me last week. I have no reason to doubt those officials, but I will go on the basis of what the hon. member says and I will have a check made with those officials immediately and I will provide the information to the House.

So, Mr. Speaker, I will not make the admission that the Leader of the Opposition invites, but I will repeat what has been indicated earlier so that the hon. member will know the full story, that a significant part of the shortfall is due to a lowering in the provincial revenues from retail sales tax and gasoline tax and other taxes, as we indicated at the time, due, Mr. Speaker, to the impact on the Province of a number of significant economic events: What has happened in the fishery, Daniel's Harbour, Long Harbour, the closure of the paper machine at Grand Falls and, Mr. Speaker, the national economic recession induced by the present Government in Ottawa. All of that impacts on the Province and contributes, along with the others, to the revenue shortfall, and that's the explanation.

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

Mr. Rideout: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. All the things the

Premier is saying now the Government must have had available to them last year when they were drawing up their estimates for the Budget. (Inaudible) is different. I want to ask the Premier, Mr. Speaker, one final question.

When the Premier is talking about now a new figure, or a new revised figure, or a new estimate of \$40 million on equalization, is not the Premier including the \$34 million from last year's overpayment, plus the projected \$6 million the Federal figures are now suggesting, to come up with his \$40 million so that, in fact, the numbers we are saying here today are in fact the latest estimates?

Ms Verge: Smoke and mirrors.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

The hon. the Premier.

Premier Wells: Thank you. No, Mr. Speaker, the smoke and mirrors are coming from the other side. We are going to receive in this coming year that \$34 million plus some more less than we receive, than had been estimated.

One of the reasons why we are going to receive that \$34 million less is because we did not take cash out of our Treasury and pay it back in respect to prior years. What we said was, no, we will take it in the future because that way we save \$2 million. The simple truth is, we are going to get that much less.

Mr. Rideout: Right. Plus six more. (Inaudible).

Premier Wells: That is right. That is where the 40 comes from.

Mr. Simms: (Inaudible) in your Budget.

Premier Wells: The Minister of Finance explained all that in the House, so I do not know. Maybe -

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Premier Wells: Maybe the Leader of the Opposition has just read Hansard, Mr. Speaker, and discovered what the Minister of Finance said in it. That is too bad.

Mr. Rideout: (Inaudible) cover it up.

Premier Wells: Now, Mr. Speaker, I will tell hon Members, the latest estimate that we have as to the shortfall in revenue from that which was originally estimated. Here is what the latest figures are, and this is the latest formal figures we have from the Department of Finance.

The provincial tax sources will be approximately \$16.3 million less than we estimated, all provincial taxes. Some are showing an increase over and above what we estimated, some are showing a decrease. The net differential is that in total we will be down \$16.3 million less than we had estimated. The shortfall from the Government of Canada totalled some \$68.8 million, total. Now, I do not -

Mr. Baker: That is EPF and -

Mr. Rideout: That is EPF.

Premier Wells: That is everything. Everything is included in that, less than had been originally estimated. It

will be down \$68.8 million. So, clearly, the more substantial impact has been on the reduction in the Federal payments. I do not say it is an absolute reduction from the prior year, but it is a reduction in the increase that would normally have taken place as well. So the totality of it is a loss from the Federal transfer payments of \$68.8 and an estimated loss of provincial revenue of \$16.3.

Now, so far as I know, that is the latest figure -

Mr. Baker: Last night's.

Premier Wells: Last night's figures out of Treasury Board, so it is hot off the press.

Mr. Rideout: None of which you knew when you brought in the Budget (inaudible).

Premier Wells: None of which I knew.

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

Mr. Parsons: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the hon. the Minister of Environment and Lands. The City Council has given approval for the establishment of a facility for the storage of liquid waste. This facility will be located at the corner of Logy Bay Road and Sugar Loaf Road. Many residents of Sugar Loaf Road, Outer Cove, Middle Cove, King William Estates and residents of the East End in general, have expressed great concern about this proposed facility.

I want to ask the Minister is he aware of all the waste that is to be stored in that facility, such

as chlorine, sodium sulfate, herbicides and others, all very, very hazardous? If there was an explosion, fire, leak or other accident so near the populated areas, there could be great risk to human health. particularly as the nearest hydrant is one quarter of a mile away.

As well, does the Minister understand that the water table in that area is very high and there is a potential danger to city waterways, such as Virginia Waters, which is very close to this proposed site? In view of these facts, will the Minister ensure that this facility not become a reality in this area, so close to heavily populated areas and to environmentally sensitive water courses?

Mr. Warren: Good question.

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

Mr. Kelland: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess the fact that is the first time the hon. Member has been up on environmental questions since last spring, he has decided to make use of this opportunity to jam as many questions as possible into his short time frame.

However, to answer what I read as the gist of what he is trying to get at, just recently the project the hon. Member is talking about was registered with our Department under the Environmental Assessment Act. As the hon. Member knows, there is a forty-five day period in which the public and any interested party can have input, and to prejudge the project prior to that public input and proper assessment by a committee would be inappropriate. All the points he raised, and all the points and

concerns anyone may have, will be given full review when the input period of forty-five days is completed, and I will be able to provide him some additional information then.

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

Mr. Parsons: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Will the Minister commit to the conducting of a full EIS, Environmental Impact Study, including public hearings, before such a facility is established?

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

Mr. Kelland: Somewhat redundant, Mr. Speaker. Nevertheless, there is a process in place, and the critic for environment matters is fully aware of the process. We are currently in that process. Registration was announced a couple of weeks ago. There is a period of public input. And to prejudge any part of that project prior to public input would be inappropriate and improper to do.

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

Mr. Parsons: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I wonder does the Minister know that Sanicare has been sold to an American-based company - I think it is common knowledge - called BFI, which has its headquarters in Texas? This company is heavily engaged in hazardous waste disposal. Can the Minister confirm whether or not this is true? And is he concerned that the Americans may, through the acquisition of this local company, be attempting to get a foot in the door as a way to make Newfoundland the dumping ground for North

America?

Some Hon. Members: Hear hear!

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

Mr. Kelland: Mr. Speaker, it sounds a little hypothetical. I could probably confirm the location of the headquarters but beyond that, you are posing hypothetical situations and I have no particular comment on that.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

Mr. Doyle: I have a question for the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations. I guess the Minister has to be aware by now that the state of labour relations in Newfoundland and Labrador is rapidly going downhill.

Currently there is a strike at the Marine Institute; you have the Student Assistants who are still out on the picket line; you had nurses demonstrating en masse at Confederation Building last week; you have firemen disgruntled; you have the teachers up in arms, and now, today, the Federation of Labour was out in front of Confederation Building demonstrating, as well.

Now the Minister has made the comment that labour relations are the best they have been in years. Does she still stand by that statement, in view of the current problems we have in the labour movement today?

The hon. the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations.

Ms Cowan: I certainly have not made that statement, Mr. Speaker. Let me clarify what I did say. I

said that in the private sector labour relations are very stable. I gave the example, I think, the time he is quoting me, that out of seventy-three sets of negotiations, we had only had five job actions. Since then that has changed, and we now have six job actions and seventy-five negotiations in the private sector. I would suggest that anybody who is quoting me will be quoting me correctly if they address the private sector.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

Mr. Doyle: I could say to the Minister, Mr. Speaker, that the reason the private sector are solving their disputes is because the Minister of Labour and Treasury Board have not been involved in that process.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Doyle: It has been the unions, the private sector, and the collective bargaining process taking its course, and that is why there have not been any problems in that area. Now, I ask the Minister again, how does she explain the comments by both the Federation of Labour and NAPE, that labour relations in the Province have never been worse and they are getting worse on a daily basis? Can the Minister explain what is prompting the Federation of Labour and the Labour Movement generally to say what they are saying, and is there any plan to avert the collision course that Government is on with the labour movement in Newfoundland?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations.

Ms Cowan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

First of all let me say that many of the private sector negotiations have been so successfully solved because of the diligent and conscientious work of the conciliators in the Department of Labour.

Now, let me have a go at the question on the public sector. First of all, I think if you were listening properly to Mr. Parsons the other night, when he spoke about his meeting with the Provincial Cabinet, he started off his comments by saying that it was the best meeting he had ever had with a Cabinet in the Province. However, he was caught a bit short because he had written his press release before he went to the meeting. I would like to say that the Federation of Labour has as one of its members the Public Service Unions, and there is no doubt that there are problems at this stage in negotiating agreements between the public service and the Government. As Minister of Labour I am watching these with a great deal of interest and when these are all over, if there is any adjustment needed to the whole process, then you can rest assured that that adjustment will be made. Let me also say, Mr. Speaker, if I may before I sit down, that we are reaping what hon. members on the other side sowed.

Ms Verge: The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

Mr. Doyle: Let me ask the Minister a very straightforward question. I do not expect to get an answer, because I never get an answer from the Minister. Let us ask her a very simple question. The labour movement has publicly

stated that two of the main reasons associated with the climate we have in Newfoundland and Labrador with respect to labour relations is, number one, there is never any consultation with the labour movement on matters which affect them directly and, number two, there is gross incompetency at the ministerial level within the Department of Labour. Now, is there anything the Minister is able to do to show labour that she is competent in that portfolio? Does she have a plan? As I asked her a couple of moments ago, does she have a plan, and can we expect labour relations within the Province to improve over the next couple of months, instead of getting worse as they have been?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations.

Ms Cowan: Again let me clarify that we talking about labour relations in the public sector. I think it is extremely irresponsible for the hon. gentleman to keep saying that labour relations in this Province are bad because that is discouraging to groups who might want to come and invest in this Province, and I think it is most inappropriate.

As to his questions about, are things going to straighten up in two months? I would say that it is going to take a good deal longer to straighten up, again, what we were left with. The unhappy attitude that the public service had towards Government has carried over into our particular Government, and it is very, very difficult to come to grips with. No, it will not change within two months I am quite sure, but we are

working on ways in which we can address the problem and see a happier future for those particular rounds of negotiations in the future.

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

Mr. Hearn: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A few days ago, the Minister of Finance verified the fact that the cut in substitute teachers had nothing to do with this year's Budget, or the problems presently being experienced in relation to the Budget, because it was contained in the original budget. Will the Minister of Education tell the House the real reason for slashing 10,000 substitute teaching days?

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

Dr. Warren: Mr. Speaker, I have not had a chance to read the transcript, the response to the hon. Member's question, but I doubt if the Minister of Finance said what he is quoted as saying. So I will read the transcript.

I am delighted to have the question on substitute teachers. I think the time has come to put some real facts on the table on substitute teachers, Mr. Speaker, and if the Member will forgive me, I will take a little time to do that.

Some Hon. Members: No no.

Dr. Warren: I intend to do that, Mr. Speaker, with your permission.

An Hon. Member: In Question Period?

Dr. Warren: Mr. Speaker, the funding for substitute teachers

this past year was reduced from \$14 million to \$12.8 million. Substitute teacher costs in this province a year ago, \$14 million. And I have read the records of the hon. Member in the last few weeks, and I have found that the Government has been trying to cut substitute teacher costs for the last three or four negotiations. I would like for him to come clean with the House and with the people of this province, Mr. Speaker.

We cut substitute teacher costs from \$14 million to \$12.8 million. Substitute teachers last year took up 90,000 teacher days. We asked school boards this year to help us reduce that number of days from 90,000 to 82,000. Substitute teachers in this Province used on the average eleven or twelve days a year. We said this year, Mr. Speaker, we would like for the boards to reduce that by one day for each teacher in a board. In other words, if a board has 200 teachers, reduce it by 200 substitute days. One day for each teacher. Down from twelve to eleven, or eleven to ten.

Mr. Speaker, we did it because we do not have all the money we need for education. We found money this year to put \$1.7 million into computers. We put money into instruction materials. We put money into a lot of other things, Mr. Speaker, so that is why the money was used.

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

Mr. Hearn: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me correct the Minister. The former government did make some provisions to cut the teacher bill, but they did it by reducing salaries over the

first few days. They did not cut days. And I ask the Minister if he agrees with educators when they say that the reduction in substitute teaching days will virtually eliminate all leaves for professional development activities?

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

Mr. Doyle: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the hon. Member would tell me how they are going to reduce pay? My understanding is they were proposing for the last two or three sets of negotiations to reduce the pay to a certain per diem for substitute teachers.

Mr. Speaker, the question on the impact on in-service. It has had an impact, it does have an impact. But to cut one teacher day per teacher for each board could come from in-service, it could come from all other kinds of leaves. Teachers on the average use twelve days per year. Mr. Speaker, I am a little bit disappointed that people are saying that this will eliminate the in-service program. One day per year, Mr. Speaker. Teachers, I think, will be willing to spend perhaps a Saturday doing in-service, perhaps an evening doing in-service. They have done that in the past. I have talked to teachers in the last few days who would be prepared to make up that day to help the Government in these difficult fiscal times; after school, on the weekends, perhaps a day in the evenings, Mr. Speaker, and I hope they will do that, because in-service education is important.

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

Mr. Hearn: Mr. Speaker, let me ask the Minister then, since boards do not have any control over 80 per cent of the leaves taken by teachers under the collective agreement, when the Minister suggests, as he did on radio a while ago and as he has just verified here again, that boards can reduce the effect on professional development by trimming leave days from all categories, and that is just what he said that time, is he telling school boards to break the collective agreement?

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

Dr. Warren: No, Mr. Speaker. We are asking school boards in these very difficult times to perhaps help the Government by reducing the in-service and all the other leaves by about 8 per cent. That is all we are asking, and this year we think most of the boards will meet that objective. Fifty-seven per cent of all the leaves go for sick leave. That is reasonable. We do not think that is unreasonable. Sick leave is there. But there are other leaves, such as special leaves, that we ask school boards to attempt to reduce this year, and most school boards, even though they are going to have a difficult time meeting that goal, are working hard - and I want to pay tribute to them - are working hard to help meet this goal. In fact, some school boards have said that they will use other means, creative means, of providing in-service, so that the students in the system will not suffer.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Winsor: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Winsor: My question is to the Minister responsible for Work, Services and Transportation. The Minister's department has recently reduced the level of service on the Fogo Island/Change Islands run from five trips to four, and now more recently, to three. How can the Minister explain this decision to reduce by that amount, when this Government committed itself to improving the service, not downgrading it?

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

Mr. Gilbert: What we did, Mr. Speaker, was revert to the winter schedule that we do every year.

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

Mr. Winsor: Mr. Speaker, that is not correct; 1989 had a poor trip.

In light of the fact that high traffic volumes for the past month has necessitated an extra trip, or maybe two a day, will the Minister not review this decision and re-instate the four trips that were in place earlier this fall and for all of 1989 during the fall season?

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

Mr. Gilbert: Mr. Speaker, I do not know the statistics the gentleman is talking about, but the last ones I had indicated that the service there now was providing adequate service with

the winter schedule in place, but I will certainly check the records and give the member an answer.

Mr. Speaker: Question Period has expired.

Notices of Motion

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

Mr. Baker: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I give notice that I will on tomorrow move, pursuant to Standing Order 50, that the debate or further consideration on Motion No. 1, an Act to Authorize the Raising of Money by Way of Loan by the Province -

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

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

The hon. the President of Treasury Board.

Mr. Baker: - standing in the name of the hon. the Minister of Finance and any amendments to that motion shall not be further adjourned and that further consideration of any resolutions, amendments, clauses, sections, preambles, schedules, titles relating to Motion 1 shall not be further postponed.

Mr. Speaker: Further Notices of Motion.

The hon. Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Rideout: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce

the following resolution.

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

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

WHEREAS the present Government has announced it will hold provincial expenditures on health in 1991-92 to 1990-91 levels which because of the continually increasing cost of providing health care will in effect mean a cutback in expenditures on health care next year, and

WHEREAS a freeze in provincial expenditures on health will mean a reduction in the health services available to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this hon. House urge the present Government to fulfill its commitment to provide high quality health care for all residents of Newfoundland and Labrador. The provision of which shall preclude health care staff shortages, hospital and nursing home bed closures, and unreasonable delays for hospital and nursing home admissions and for other medical services.

An Hon. Member: As promised.

Mr. Rideout: As promised.

Answers to Questions
for which Notice has been Given

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the

Minister of Health.

Mr. Decker: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The hon. the Member for Torngat last week in Question Period referred to laypersons in the northern communities dispensing drugs. I have checked with the Executive Director of GRHS and have been advised that in the two communities referred to GRHS does not have registered nurses in these communities on a full time basis. In these communities they have lay dispensers, these are persons who have had on the job training by professional staff. Lay dispensers distribute only specific drugs based on specific instructions from health professionals.

Mr. Warren: Shame! Shame!

Mr. Decker: Mr. Speaker, this is a long established practice and may also be put in place when large groups of families or settlers go to summer settlements for fishing.

Mr. Warren: (Inaudible).

Mr. Decker: The system is being very well managed with specific policies in place that are being strictly monitored and adhered to. Mr. Speaker, I should point out that this system was started approximately one hundred years ago when Sir Wilfred Grenfell came to Northern Newfoundland and Labrador.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Carter: Mr. Speaker, you recall on Friday the Leader of the

Opposition asked certain questions of me regarding the recently released Dunne Report on the Fisheries, at which time I indicated to him and to the House that I would not mind tabling copies of our representation to the chairman of that committee. Mr. Speaker, I have here a copy of our representation, the recommendation to the Harris panel. My subsequent recommendation to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans as well as a covering letter to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans dated April 25. I should add there were no written representations made to the Dunne Committee on behalf of my department. No written. My senior officials appeared before the committee, and basically you said the same as we said previously to the Harris panel, a copy of which I am now prepared to table.

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

Mr. Speaker: On a point of order, the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Simms: Yes, the hon. Minister of Health just replied to a question. He had the answer written out presumably. I wondered if the Minister might be prepared to table that. I know it is in Hansard but we would have to wait until tomorrow. We would like to have a quick look at it. Is there any chance of getting a copy of his answer?

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

Mr. Decker: To that point of order, Mr. Speaker, I have briefing notes which were prepared for me by my Department. I did not read it verbatim, I referred

to the gist of it.

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

Mr. Rideout: Now, Mr. Speaker, this is the second time in a week that we have had an experience with Ministers in this House with paper in front of them responding to a question which can only lead a person to believe that they are reading a prepared answer or a briefing note as the Minister of Health referred to it or something. But, Mr. Speaker, it is pretty clear, the rules of this House in Beauchesne, that if a Minister quotes from a document the Minister must table it. That has been the time honoured sacred practice in this House over the years.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have to get to the bottom of this one way or another. If Ministers are going to get up and take the House on their back, cover up and hide, we do not know, Mr. Speaker, if what the Minister said into the record was, in fact, what was in front of him. So, the Minister must table whatever it was he was quoting from. He read it almost verbatim.

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

Mr. Baker: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I feel I must respond to the childish outburst from the Leader of the Opposition. There are many time honoured traditions in this House and one of these time honoured traditions is that when a Member states something as being true that you have to take the Member's word for it. The Minister has said -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Baker: No, just wait now. The Minister has said that he was not reading verbatim from a report or anything else. He was simply not reading verbatim from the piece of paper he had in front of him and we have to accept his word for that. But, Mr. Speaker, I am certain that the Minister would not mind at all tabling what he has there in his hands if only to prove that the Leader of the Opposition is dead wrong. There is no point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Mr. Simms: To that point of order

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

I am trying to establish order for the hon. Member before I recognize him.

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Simms: Thank you. I appreciate it very much. Just to that point of order: then why did the Government House Leader allow this discussion, debate and argument to go on, because we asked the Minister of Health initially if he would table it and he said no, and now you just got up and said he would. What is the argument? Table it and get on with business.

Mr. Speaker: To the point of order, the Chair would like to clarify this. Every time an hon. Member stands with something in one's hands that one is under no requirement to table it. One does not know that it is a document even though the time honoured precedent in this House is that one cites from a document. The Chair has no idea that is a

document. A piece of paper is not a document. One could have precisely anything. Someone has to be guided by what the Minister says. If the Minister indicates that it is a document then the Chair, obviously, has something to go by, but the Chair has no indication that the Minister was doing anything other than quoting from notes. If the Minister wants to table it, of course, then he is quite at liberty to do so.

Mr. Simms: Agreed to table?

Mr. Decker: Mr. Speaker, I do not see what all the fuss is about, there were a few copious notes I have there, but I will certainly table it. I can tell hon. Members

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Mr. Decker: I can tell hon. Members it is not signed by a concerned citizen like the piece of paper which was tabled last week.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

There is no point of order.

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

Mr. Decker: I do not see why he is all puffed up over there about it. I have no interest in this.

Mr. Simms: (Inaudible).

An Hon. Member: Don't be so childish.

Petitions

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member

for Humber East.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms Verge: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to present a petition of several students of Memorial University who come from different parts of Newfoundland and Labrador. These Memorial University students are protesting the Government's October 1st cut in social assistance to single parent families in the Province. The prayer of the petition is as follows: Therefore your petitioners urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to reverse its change in policy and continue to permit social assistance recipients to retain a substantial portion of maintenance and child support payments as well as regular social assistance.

Mr. Speaker, on October 18, the Premier addressed a similar petition and in doing so promised the House of Assembly and the people of the Province that he would get all the details about the change and evaluate the situation. He committed to the House and to the people of the Province that the Government will see everybody is treated in a fair and balanced way. He acknowledged it was possible, that the Government had made a mistake.

Mr. Speaker, when I asked the Premier about his promise a week later, he said he had asked the Minister of Social Services if people were being treated in a fair and balanced way, and when the Minister replied yes, the Premier was satisfied. Now I say to the Premier how can the Premier conclude that it is fair to penalize children of social assistance recipients who are separated or divorced or who were

never married? How is that fair? I say to the Premier how is it consistent to allow children of social assistance recipients who are able to find a job and earn some income, to keep up to \$115 a month of that income in addition to regular social assistance and not allow single parent families to benefit from receipt of child support. In one case the father is present in the household, in the second case the father is absent. How is that fair?

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Premier for him to explain to the House of Assembly and to the people of the Province how it is fair to reduce the income of a single mother and three children from \$650 a month to \$550 a month. How is that fair and balance? How does that accord with the Premier's promise of leading a compassionate Government? How does that accord with capital 'L' Liberal philosophy?

Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed that the Premier is not listening to me. He seems to be extremely uncomfortable with this subject and I can certainly understand why, because there is no defence for the cruel and callous reduction in social assistance for single parent families that this Government inflicted on the Province on October 1.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms Verge: So I call on the Premier to fulfill the promise he made on October 18, of getting all the details of this change, getting all the details and admitting the mistake that was made.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Further petitions?

Orders of the Day

Mr. Furey: Motion 4, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Dumaresque: Mr. Speaker, I just want to take a few minutes to make this House aware of the work of the Committee on Elections and Privileges when it dealt with the issue of broadcasting the House of Assembly proceedings. I just want to outline the recommendations that we made and some of the rationale for making these recommendations.

First of all, last fall we were mandated to address the issue of whether we would bring audio, radio coverage of this House of Assembly into being, and on March 13 of this year we submitted a report recommending that radio access be given to all media, and this has taken place and gone on since that time.

However, a second part of our initial mandate was to decide on and recommend whether there should be TV coverage of the next session of the House and therefore the new House of Assembly. And in addressing that issue, Mr. Speaker, we had public hearings and we also went to three other jurisdictions in Canada and we heard some twenty-three witnesses.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, we reached a number of recommendations respecting the financing, distribution and administration of a system to govern the televising of the new House of Assembly.

I might point out that in all of our journeys and in all of our consultations, be it with the public or other experts in this field, the question of financing always came up and I would have to say that it was the biggest concern that was raised when our committee had to deal with this recommendation.

Many people of course wondered, do the people really want to have the House of Assembly broadcasted, and on that point we had to, I guess, take a leap of faith and assume that, apart from the fact that there has been direct representations made to the committee, that there should be access to the House by T.V., we had to assess whether the fact that we never had any quantitative data, I suppose, in terms of a poll or anything like that, which would judge whether the people wanted it, we did conclude, Mr. Speaker, that we felt it was a necessary thing and therefore we unanimously recommended that television come in to this House of Assembly.

Principally, the rationale for it was, it is a matter of I guess, of coming to grips with the age in which we live, it is now an age of television and practically all other jurisdictions in the country have some access, if not full access to the legislative proceedings by television, and indeed many of the countries of the western world, and I might also add, that many of the countries in the eastern bloc have access of the legislative proceedings by television.

On the aspect of distribution, we had to deal with a recommendation whether we should have the signal distributed throughout the

Province, and the committee again recommended that there should be distribution to as wide an audience as possible in Newfoundland and Labrador.

I might point out that the CBC provincial management came to the committee and recommended or certainly made aware to the committee, that they would be prepared to have the signal go throughout the Province the following morning for at least an hour, so we certainly thought that was a good gesture, albeit not what we would like but again the cost was a very big factor in our recommendations, because in order to have gavel to gavel proceedings of the House broadcast to every part of the Province, it would mean having a separate satellite channel and that would run us into well over \$1 million, so certainly that was not entertained.

As far as the administration of the system is concerned, Mr. Speaker, our journeys and consultations led us to conclude that the best system would be a five camera computerized system similar to the one in operation now in Saskatchewan, in which two of the cameras would have a manual override and could be used to take pictures of significant occasions.

So, Mr. Speaker, when we concluded our report and it was submitted to this hon. House a week ago last Tuesday, we made the recommendation that there should be access to the House, and I guess if there is one noteworthy point I still would like to reiterate is, that the financing was a top concern of the committee and I would imagine in light of the economic situation in which we find ourselves today, that it will be a top concern of all hon.

Members.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I would just like again to thank the members of the committee who served with me, particularly the vice-chairman, Mr. Hodder, the Member for Port au Port, the Member for Bonavista South, the Member for Pleasantville and the Member for Ferryland.

In reaching our decision today, Mr. Speaker, I hope hon. Members will take into consideration what I have noted about the consultation and indeed what is in the report.

Thank you.

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

Mr. Hodder: Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say a few words, a very few words, on this particular Committee. As the Member for Eagle River has pointed out, the Committee was asked two basic questions and that was the broadcasting of the House and the second one was the televising of the House. Of course we are now broadcasting the House and, I think, Members have seen some changes because of that. Mr. Speaker, I am concerned that the report of the Committee, which was unanimous; I am concerned that it might not be put into practice. I think it is right that the House be televised, and I think in this day and age that politicians have to be accountable, and that the best electorate is an informed electorate. Now, Mr. Speaker, why else would the Government have struck the Committee and allowed it to deliberate for this period of time unless they intended to do something about it? Now, I would be the first to say to the House,

and particularly in these particular times, that we cannot open up the Treasury in order to bring a very expensive system in, but there are a number of other alternatives. The only televised proceedings we see in this Province is the House of Commons, and if one were to look at the Ontario Legislature they would find that the quality is much better than the House of Commons, but the cameras in the House of Commons are ancient. You can buy one of the cameras that they have in the House of Commons for very, a very small amount of money, perhaps \$300 or \$400 each. Now, what I am saying, Mr. Speaker, is that we do not have to have the first class technology to have a good picture and to have adequate coverage, I should say, of the House. We are, we know, moving into a new House of Assembly and, I think it is incumbent upon Members, incumbent upon Government, upon the Cabinet, to come up with an adequate system which is not going to be expensive for the taxpayers of this Province. I do not suggest, Mr. Speaker, as the member for Eagle River has said, that we should take care of the distribution. If we are going to do it ourselves I think you would have to do it fairly and honestly. You would have to make sure that the Labrador portion of the Province had the same coverage as the Avalon Peninsula portion.

But I think, Mr. Speaker, that if for this period in time, we were to make the signal available outside of the Chamber for those who wanted to use it - and there are proposals, such as the one from CBC which would give us Question Period for an hour a day, five days a week - I think that if we do not try to be everything,

that we can do an adequate job in an inexpensive way.

Mr. Speaker, I think it would be a backward step to ignore the report of the Committee. I think that this is a reform, such as the Public Tendering Act is a reform. Such as, I should say, that the ombudsman, when we brought him into the Province, it was a reform which was happening all across Canada, we just happened to be the first Province to drop it.

But Mr. Speaker, it is a reform. The world is becoming quite small. We can see now what the troops - as someone mentioned - in the present Gulf crisis, that if it had been Hitler and Roosevelt in this particular time, you would see the Second World War being portrayed on television as you are seeing now. With the world becoming smaller and smaller we will be one of the last legislatures to broadcast or to televise in some way. I understand that nine out of thirteen I believe of the Legislatures in this country at the present time, broadcast.

Mr. Speaker I think it will help this Chamber immeasurably. I think it will help the decorum of Members. And I should say on that point that a lot of the people we spoke to when we talked to other legislators in the country, did not like television. Particularly where it was new. Because what will happen is that it will change the House of Assembly as we know it. I think if you talk to MPs though, that television has become in the House of Commons, something which is almost part of the institution now, because it has been there long enough.

But I do not think that comments

of other Members - I think we ourselves probably will resent the fact - I read an article in Maclean's magazine about the effect of television in the British House of Commons, the Mother of Parliament. I understand that one of Mrs. Thatcher's big assets was that she could shout loud and that her shrill voice could reach above the hubbub in the House of Commons. But now she is so quiet that the Speaker has trouble hearing her. But television has done that and will do that to us.

But Mr. Speaker, I do not think we should be afraid of change for the sake of change. And I think that we should follow along, Mr. Speaker; I do not think that we can turn back. I think that in the British House of Commons it was tried on seven or eight different occasions to get television, but eventually the Mother of Parliaments was televised. Most Legislatures in the United States are televised; most Legislatures across Canada are televised. I think that the people deserve openness. Some people say that we should maintain the mystique of this House. I do not think that is a valid argument. I think, Mr. Speaker, we underestimate the people - not everybody wants to see us. A lot of people say they do not want to see us. I am sure there are a lot that do not. But there are an awful lot of people who would cover the debates.

And the other thing, Mr. Speaker, I do not always think that what happens in this House gets adequately portrayed outside the House of Assembly, and I think this would be a way in which the people of this Province would directly see what we are doing.

Mr. Speaker, I do stress that we must be careful with costs, but I do believe we should go ahead with it. I would like to thank the Committee, Mr. Dumaresque and the other members of the Committee. The Committee worked hard at the job and we are unanimous in our recommendations. I do believe Government should act on that, particularly at this particular time when we are moving into a new House. Again, to sum up, I do not think we have to go for any cadillac system, I think we can have an adequate system without having to pay a lot of money for it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Before I recognize the hon. President of Treasury Board the Chair wants to make a ruling on a point of order that was raised on Friday, re the tabling of a letter by the hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains. I notice the member is not here. I do not know if members wanted me to wait until he is here, but the Chair did not want to delay on that.

First of all, I want to point out to hon. members that in this matter we are talking about two things. One, we have had a lot of debate in this House about the tabling of documents. It is a precedent in this House that when a member quotes from a document it ought to be tabled. We have had much debate about that, about documents and objects, as well. We have had objects ruled not to be tabled, but with respect to documents being quoted by members on either side, in most of the rulings I find that they have been tabled. Now, the question here, though, was not quoting from a document, the question was whether the document met the requirements for tabling. Again, many

decisions by Speakers, which I have read over the weekend, make a distinction between documents and letters. There are much questions about documents as well as to what constitutes a document, but clearly there is distinction between documents and letters.

I quote for hon. members Page 155 of Beauchesne, Paragraph 495. For the benefit of hon. members, this is a whole section on the tabling of documents and hon. members ought to be familiar with it. I am just going to read the ones I consider to be apropos - 495, Section 2 "It has been admitted that a document which has been cited ought to be laid upon the Table of the House, if it can be done without injury to the public interest. The same rule, however, cannot be held to apply to private letters or memoranda."

The other one I would like to read is Section (5). Although I have more or less discarded that, for the benefit of hon. members, "To be cited, a document must be quoted or specifically used to influence the debate. The admission that a document exists or the reading of the salutation or address of a letter does not constitute citing." Then, Section (6) "A private Member has neither the right nor the obligation to table an official, or any other, document."

That ruling was sustained by the Deputy Speaker at the time, I believe, Deputy Speaker Aylward. He is the only one I can find who used that particular one in recent years. The more apropos rulings are on Page 152 of Beauchesne, Paragraph 498, Section (1). "An unsigned letter should not be read in the House." Of course it goes on without saying that since it

should not be read it, it ought not be tabled. Section (3). "When quoting a letter in the House, a Member must be willing either to give the name of the author or to take full responsibility for the contents." And 499 says, "Telegrams should not be quoted in the House as there is no way of ensuring the authenticity of the signature." Of course that is the reason why with the letter we said the Member should be willing to give the name of the author, because with all things being documented in the House, it is necessary to be able to trace their authenticity. Somebody said 'a phone number', but I do not think we could get into that position, where we accept phone numbers. So for these reasons I would suggest that the hon. member was out of order in presenting the document and ought not to have presented it, so I ask the table to pass it back to him.

The hon. the President of Treasury Board.

Mr. Baker: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to take a few moments to comment on the Committee, the work the Committee has done and the Committee's report. First of all, Mr. Speaker, we are very pleased that the Committee looked at and spent so much time examining the idea of a televised House of Assembly. I believe their conclusions are well-founded, the fact that it would be nice and appropriate to have the House of Assembly televised. I think the Committee examined a number of alternatives and decided eventually that perhaps they did not want a make-shift system in place, that perhaps if we are going to televise the House, then we should have a proper system installed,

with the proper types of cameras and the proper regulation of the cameras and so on, Mr. Speaker. So they opted for that particular choice.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have to say to you and to members of the hon. House that I agree that televising the House is something that should be done. However, Mr. Speaker, I hesitate and cannot recommend at this point in time, with the financial situation we are in, and with what we are asking school boards and hospital boards and Government departments to do and so on, I think it would be unwise at this point in time to get into an expenditure of \$500,000 or \$750,000 or whatever amount to install the proper system. I would suggest to hon. members that I would be quite amenable to, and I think Government would be amenable to, at some point in time going with a built-in system. And it is kind of unfortunate that we are in the situation we are now where that kind of an expenditure would to the people of the Province seem to be a complete waste when we are hearing all kinds of dire consequences from the fact that our revenues have been cut.

Mr. Speaker, regrettably we cannot support the immediate installation of television into the new House of Assembly along the lines recommended by the Committee. However, the reason I am saying this is because of the financial situation. The Committee examined or, I believe, started to examine a lot of alternatives with regard to television in the House and there were alternatives, perhaps, that were examined fully or partially that would be more acceptable in terms of a financial cost to Government.

So what I am going to suggest, Mr. Speaker, is that whereas Government cannot put out that kind of money now to put TV in the House of Assembly, that perhaps if the Committee, the same Committee were to go back and have another look at some of the options that exist - you have to realize that when the Committee was put in place they were not told about this, and did not know about this, and that the circumstances have changed. I think it would be a useful exercise if the Committee got together again and came up with further suggestions as to what can be done now that would not incur this big cost on the taxpayers of the Province.

Mr. Speaker, in summary, Government's position is that whereas it would be proper to do it at some point in time, at this point in time we cannot allocate the funds to put the proper television network into that House of Assembly, and that we recommend that the Committee go back and have another look at a more cost-effective way of doing it.

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

Mr. Rideout: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Like previous Members who spoke on this question today, I will not take a lot of time. But I do want to take a few minutes to speak on behalf of my colleagues I lead on this side of the House. Our Vice-Chairperson on the Committee has spoken, and spoken very eloquently, on how he and most of our caucus feel on this particular issue.

Mr. Speaker, before doing that I do want to take the opportunity, as well, to congratulate Members from both sides of the House who

served on that Committee and who, in my view, did a very admirable job, a very excellent job, really, in addressing the question that we as Members of this House submitted to them for study, for a report and for recommendations.

It is very difficult, Mr. Speaker, at a time when we are in difficult financial circumstances, to argue with the position as laid forth on behalf of the Government by the Government House Leader, how we could justify spending relatively large sums of money to install television in the new House when hospital beds have to close or teachers are being laid off and Social Services have been cut back. I think there would be, perhaps, some backlash if we were to proceed -

Mr. Efford: There are no Social Service cuts.

An hon. Member: What are you talking about?

Mr. Efford: Mr. God, (inaudible) just as stunned as (inaudible).

Mr. Rideout: Mr. Speaker, collectively in this House, if everybody's stunnedness was added together, it would not exceed the stunnedness of the hon. Minister.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let me come back to debating the report submitted by the Member for Eagle River. I believe there would be some degree of apprehension by the people of this Province if we were to proceed to spend large sums of money on installing television equipment in this House or in the new House right away. I believe that would be the case. However, Mr. Speaker, I believe that it is possible to achieve the goal of having a fully televised House

without spending the sums of money or the kind of money the Committee is talking about.

I have been told, for example, that in other jurisdictions the kind of equipment - I mean, we have to make a decision here. Can we afford a deluxe system, or is there some middle ground where we can afford to begin the televising of this House at some reasonable cost? I think the Government House Leader's suggestion that the Committee continue to exist and continue to examine some other options and identify the cost of those options and come back to us with some recommendation is a good one. Now I do not want that to be interpreted, Mr. Speaker, as being a licence for the Government and/or the Committee to procrastinate forever. I do not think that would be necessary.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Rideout: I understood you moved it, so I will second it, okay?

Mr. Speaker, there are a couple of other things I would like to say. Personally, I am all for having a fully televised House as quickly as possible. That is my own personal position. Now, Mr. Speaker, having said that as Leader of this Party, I can tell you that there are Members in our caucus who are not for that. Now whether they might change their minds at some point down the road, as they look at evidence from other jurisdictions, I do not know. But if unanimity were required in this House today in order to do it, there would be - I do not know about the Government caucus, I do not know if it is unanimous or not, but there are still people on this side of the

House who are very apprehensive about fully televised coverage, and I have to respect their opinion.

But I can say that the vast consensus of people on this side of the House is that we should do it, we should go with it, we should bring this Parliament into the 1990s and on into the next century, by doing what has been done by almost every other Legislature now in Canada. I mean, the House of Commons is televised, Ontario is televised -

Mr. Simms: Russia.

Mr. Rideout: - Manitoba, Saskatchewan. I am not quite certain about British Columbia. Alberta is, Quebec is, New Brunswick is, Nova Scotia is about to make the move, I understand. Over the last several months the Mother of Parliaments has made the move. For God's sake, the Parliament of the Soviet Union is being televised and displayed, not only in their own countries, but all over the world those days. So it is a natural evolution from Hansard to the Radio feed to which we agreed last year, to television.

But I do understand the Government House Leader's concern about a deluxe system, but I believe that the committee, if it were to go back and do some more work, can find a system or can make some recommendations on a system which is a lot less costly, and therefore it could be done at significantly less cost to the taxpayer.

I would be prepared to support that with one caution. In view of the fact that the new House supposedly will be ready for the spring session, I would like the

committee to do its work, get on with reviewing those other options, whatever they might be, and perhaps report to us before this session is over as to whether or not you were able to identify an option that would, perhaps, be within the fiscal limits of the Government, and would, perhaps, be within the time limits of being able to have the new Legislature ready when we meet there, whatever time it will be in 1991.

I would like to see it happen but as I said -

Mr. Simms: No more trips, though.

Mr. Rideout: No. There is no need for the committee to go out of the Province anymore, Mr. Speaker. In this time of restraint, the few dollars they would save by not going away could, hopefully, reduce the cost of the system.

Seriously, I must say once more that there are still some members who feel very, very uncomfortable about the whole television question in this House, but I think the vast majority might feel that the time has come to open up this Legislature in every way, to become a modern legislature, a modern Parliament so that the people of this Province can see what their members are doing in the real situation, not in a scrum. The voice on the radio is not bad, coming across the TV screen or whatever, but do as they are doing in practically every other jurisdiction now in the western world, and that is to allow the television cameras in here and open up this place and make democracy what it should be, let the people know what is going on in here.

An Hon. Member: Like City Hall.

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

Mr. Baker: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I believe, according to the comments made by myself and the Leader of the Opposition, the motion perhaps should be that the report be sent back to the committee for a further report before the end of the year. I believe that is what we agreed on.

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

Mr. Simms: Mr. Speaker, the motion before us is to concur in this report as presented, and I do not think there is any problem voting with that, but the added suggestions by both sides, that the committee reconvene and have a look at some other ways and so on and bring back another report, we can do that by agreement and by direction.

I think the motion on the floor now is to concur in this report. I do not think there is any need to defeat that; it is better to pass that and then we make an agreement or whatever, or a further quick motion to ask the committee to go back and look at another way, or a cheaper way, something along those lines.

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

Mr. Baker: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I do not want to be caught in a bind, but as long as it is understood that by voting for the concurrence motion we are not then committing to running off and spending a half million or three-quarters of a million dollars on the system.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Baker: Okay, Mr. Speaker. That is satisfactory.

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

Mr. Simms: Mr. Speaker, but -

Mr. Speaker: I am sorry. The Opposition House Leader. Sorry! I was right the first time.

Mr. Simms: What did you call me?

Mr. Speaker: I was right the first time. I thought I wasn't correct, but I was.

Mr. Simms: I thought maybe if the Government House Leader could commit to the suggestions that were made and say that we will as a House by agreement ask the committee to go back to the table again and rework along the lines which have been suggested, then we can do that by agreement after we vote on this particular motion. I think probably that is the simple way. Question - the report be concurred in.

Mr. Speaker: The motion is that the report be concurred in. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

On motion, the report of the Committee on Privileges and Elections was concurred in.

Mr. Speaker: Are we looking at a further amendment?

Mr. Simms: Well, I would suggest by agreement. The Government House Leader can say we will direct, and we will agree to do it.

Mr. Baker: Yes, Mr. Speaker. If we have agreement of the House, we

can simply direct the committee to go back. The fact of the matter is, we have indicated that a large expenditure at this point in time is not appropriate, and we will try to find quickly some other way of providing that service which will not incur that expense.

Mr. Simms: Right. And then they have -

Mr. Baker: So if we could by agreement agree that the Committee goes back now and looks at that aspect of the report.

Mr. Simms: Or word that as a motion and we will agree or second it.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. members have all heard the motion.

Motion, that the Committee return to consider other options re televising the House, carried.

Mr. Speaker: The Government House Leader.

Mr. Baker: Motion 1.

Mr. Speaker: To move that the House resolve itself into Committee of the Whole to consider certain resolutions related to the raising of loans by the Province, and that I do now leave the Chair.

On motion, that the House resolve itself into Committee of the Whole to consider certain resolutions, Mr. Speaker left the Chair.

Committee of the Whole

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Rideout: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I want to take a bit of time again today to have some further remarks on Bill 39 - I think it is Bill 39 - which is The Government Loan Bill. The authority the Government is requesting from this House to go out and to borrow \$325 million additional dollars, that is really the pith and substance of what we are talking about in this debate, Mr. Chairman. That is what the Government is asking authority to do.

Now before I get into the meat of what I want to say today, Mr. Chairman, I want to make this observation. It was only one week ago Tuesday past that this House reconvened, having been adjourned since June of last year. By the way, Mr. Chairman, the Government could have had their Loan Authority Bill any time they wished last spring if they had not gotten so wrapped up in other matters and then decided to let the House go home for the summer. They could have had their Loan Bill last spring, and I suspect they now regret they did not, which is the normal thing to do, by the way. The normal thing to do is to do your borrowing requirements in the spring, before the House adjourns for the summer.

But be that as it may, Mr. Chairman, here is the situation we find ourselves in as legislators in this House today. We find ourselves coming back last Tuesday and the Government's first order of business, a \$325 million borrowing requirement. That was the first order of business the Government brought before this House. So we debated that bill last Tuesday, or Tuesday a week before, the next day, Wednesday, was Private Members' Day, the next

day was Thursday, on which day we did a partial debate on the Loan Bill. Because by agreement we did the Hibernia legislation and put the Hibernia legislation through all three stages, and finished off the afternoon with further debate on The Loan Bill. The House did not sit the following day because of our Party's Convention. So therefore, the first week we were sitting we had a day and a bit debating this \$325 million Loan Bill. Last week we had Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Thursday night and Friday, and we are started again today. The sum and essence, Mr. Chairman, is that on \$325 million Loan Bill we have had as of this moment approximately five days debate.

Now under normal circumstances, Mr. Chairman, it might be fair for Government supporters to say that that is adequate. It might be. Three hundred and twenty-five million dollars additional borrowing is not to be sneezed at when you look at the debt this Province presently owes. It is a big sum of money, but under normal circumstances the Government might be able to make the case that, look, the Opposition is doing nothing but filibustering here; they do not want to be co-operative here, and we are going to make moves to get our legislative program moving forward. Under normal circumstances. But, Mr. Chairman, I submit to this House that we are not facing normal circumstances today in this Province. We had a Minister of Finance who on March 15 brought in a Budget that projected a \$10.2 million surplus on current account, Mr. Chairman. I know how you divide up between current and capital account. I know how you do that, Mr. Chairman. There was an overall

deficit when you add in our capital requirements, but on current account, the money you use to pay the light bill, pay salaries, pay heat, and the other daily expenses of running the Government, the Minister projected to this House that he would balance the books and he would have a surplus of \$10.2 million on that side of his ledger. That is what he told this House. This is why we are not facing an ordinary situation today, six months after the Minister brought in that Budget, if you can really make the case that it was a Budget, it was just a slapping together of numbers, but six months after the Minister did that, Mr. Chairman, he and the Premier had to go before the people of this Province and say, oh, no, it is not a \$10.2 million current account surplus, it is now a \$120 million current account deficit. That is why, Mr. Chairman, that all things are not equal in this House today. If the Minister had to have the intestinal fortitude to bring in a new Budget, or to bring in a revised Budget, or to be honest last Spring and amend the Budget. The Minister and the Premier have told us in this House that they were advised of the shortfall verbally on March 30 last year, that it was made in writing to them on April 4, before the Budget debate had even begun. Yet, Mr. Chairman, they let us go right through the charade of asking questions and then giving answers on numbers that were no longer operative. Now that lays the stage for this Opposition having to do what we have been doing over the last five or six days, and that is questioning in detail the health care cuts that the Government says is coming in this Province, the education cuts they say are coming, and the social

services reductions they say are coming. We have no choice, Mr. Chairman. We would be totally irresponsible, we would not be fit to represent anybody here if we did not take the only avenue that was open to us as an Opposition, which was a money Bill, the borrowing Bill, to try to get answers from this Government. Mr. Chairman, having only spent five days doing that what has the Government now done? They have used the closure rule to get this Loan Bill approved. The Government House Leader gave notice today so it will be on the Order Paper. If he wants to call it tomorrow then by one o'clock tomorrow night the Bill must pass. If he waits until Thursday and wants to call it on Thursday, by one o'clock Friday morning the Bill must pass. The point, Mr. Chairman, is that as of this day, as of tomorrow when this House reconvenes at two o'clock tomorrow afternoon, the closure motion will be on the Order Paper. The Government can call it then any day they wish, and one o'clock the following morning debate must cease. After five days debate, after six days debate, after seven days debate, after eight days debate, we do not know when they are going to call it, but we do now know their intention, Mr. Chairman. And if we were to continue for another ten days, another two weeks, or another three weeks, Mr. Chairman, probably some would say we are not doing our duty. It is so severe we should stay at this much longer. It is so severe that perhaps we should be at it a month, or six weeks, to grill the Government to get the answers. That is why we are not in the same position this day as you would normally be on a Government borrowing Bill, because the fiscal

position of the Province is quite different than we have seen it for quite some time. If the Government comes to this Opposition and says they have a window of opportunity to raise money, which the Government has not done yet, but if they come to us and say, look, unless this Bill passes we are not going to be able to float a \$100 million bond issue next Thursday, then if that is the situation come and talk to us, Mr. Chairman. If it is not do not sit over there and fearmonger and try, by innuendo, to say that is the situation. If the Minister wants to come to us, or the President of Treasury Board, and say, we have an issue ready to go and if we do not go within this time frame it is going to cost us extra money, then, Mr. Chairman, this Opposition is a responsible Opposition and we are not going to impair or jeopardize any more than it already is, the fiscal position of this Province. We have already said that to the Government House Leader. Our House Leader has said, if there is something in the works and you need this Bill to float an issue or to do a loan or whatever, let us know. We asked you to let us know and we will consider that and we will get back to you and see where we are going to go on it.

The other thing, Mr. Speaker, on this particular loan bill that galls me from an Opposition perspective is that we cannot get any answers. I do not know if the Minister of Finance has spoken on this bill yet.

Dr. Kitchen: I have not had a question.

Mr. Rideout: Well, now Mr. Speaker, he has not had a question. On Thursday of last

week I riddled off, and I read them off here, one, two, three, four, five, six, and they were - let me read one of them to the Minister again. In the March 15 budget that he brought down, the Minister estimated total revenues of \$1,393,946,000 from the Government of Canada. Last Thursday I read that figure into the record of this House. Two weeks later the Minister was informed that there was going to be a reduction. I told him how much that was, although he did not tell this House. I asked the Minister then, taking into account the figures that he gave us, the \$63.7 million less in equalization that he and the Premier said that we were going to get - I will get on that in another way now in a few minutes time - but at the time we did not know anything else. These were the figures we were working with. I asked the Minister if, because of the \$63.7 million reduction in equalization, if the revised estimates of revenues from Federal sources was now, as of last Thursday, \$1,330,246,000. And I went on to ask him another question about his revised revenues and about his revised expenditures. And I went on to ask him another question about his combination of Federal revenues and Provincial revenues.

I asked him six detailed financial questions during the hour that I was speaking. Went through them, Mr. Speaker, item by item, and they appear in Hansard. Now I know the Minister was not in his seat all during the while I was speaking. But Mr. Speaker, Thursday went by. Thursday night went by. Three hours, the debate in this House Thursday night. Another couple of hours Friday morning, Mr. Speaker. And not one squeak. Not one peep from the

Minister, to answer detailed questions put to him by a Member on this side of the House. Other Members over here, Mr. Speaker, have asked detailed questions.

Mr. Speaker, doesn't this House have a right to expect from the Minister of Finance an answer to a question like this? Doesn't this House, don't the people's representatives have a right to expect an answer? It is not a question that is embellished with political rhetoric. It is not a question that has any political overtones to it. It is a direct question. Are your estimates this figure now?

I mean, you are the one who told us, Mr. Speaker, that you are \$120 million in deficit, \$130 million if you include the \$10 million surplus. You are the ones who told us that. You are the Government. And now I am asking you, because you gave us this figure, is this now your best revenue estimate from Ottawa? Do I not have the right to expect a reasonable answer to that, Mr. Speaker?

An Hon. Member: Sure you do!

Mr. Rideout: Doesn't any Member of the Opposition who asks a similar question have a right to expect an answer? Don't the people of Newfoundland and Labrador have the right to expect such a question to be answered?

But no, Mr. Speaker. This Government, under the leadership of this Minister of Finance, who is content to sit in his seat, to grow on to his seat, Mr. Speaker, to grin when it suits his fancy to grin, and to hide behind a closure rule to get this piece of legislation through. Not prepared

to answer any questions.

An Hon. Member: Shame.

Mr. Rideout: I will send the Minister over a copy of the questions if he wants them. Because they are technical questions on technical financial matters and I had them written out, but they are read into the record. I wish the Minister would go before this House rises tonight, and call in one of his officials and say, look now, what the Leader of the Opposition was asking here is very simple, let's get the information. And if we get some information from the Government, Mr. Speaker, we are prepared to let the loan bill go. But I mean, I cannot, in conscience, let this loan bill go when the Minister is not making an effort even. Even if he got to his feet and gave some kind of a tired old political speech, at least he would be doing something to earn his Ministerial salary, Mr. Speaker.

An Hon. Member: Minister of arrogance.

Mr. Rideout: I am not talking about the responses that we get from the Minister of Social Services or the Minister of Health. I am talking about the Minister of Finance, who brought in the budget, and when there are technical questions, legitimate in my view, asked to him about his revenue and his expenditure and his revised numbers, I would think that the Minister would feel duty-bound to run out of this House, call up his officials, make note of the questions, and come back and stand up after one of us sits down, for fifteen or twenty minutes, half an hour, whatever it takes, and answer the questions.

Now if that was the attitude of this Government, Mr. Speaker, this loan bill would probably be approved by now - if that was the attitude. But no, the attitude, Mr. Speaker, is to stonewall, to cover up, to sit down and say nothing and do nothing, and by and by we will whip in the closure rule and we will get her approved anyway.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this is the Government that talked about openness, democracy, being open with the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. And that Minister sits over there stone-faced day after day -

An Hon. Member: No, that is not true, (Inaudible).

Mr. Rideout: - and will not get to his feet. He has not. He has admitted in this House already today that he has not answered the questions that I put to him on Thursday. And then, Mr. Speaker, to add insult to injury, we saw the performance put on in this House today by the Premier. Aided and abetted, Mr. Speaker, back in the middle of October, by the Minister of Finance. The Minister of Finance and the Premier told the people of this province in October that we were running a \$120 million deficit. And they made it abundantly clear, they made it clear in this House since the session began Tuesday before last, that the single most important reason for that \$120 million deficit was a reduction in the amount they expected on equalization, by \$63.7 million.

That is the reason they quoted when they had their press statement. That is the reason they have given this House day after day when it has been raised

in Question Period. Now Mr. Speaker, if you go to the Government's own financial documents of March 15 1990, you will see that the Minister of Finance at that time estimated that this Province would receive \$966,900,000 in equalization from the Government of Canada for the fiscal year 1990/1991. That is the figure that the Minister put before this House, that this House accepted, and that went out before the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

They then, in October, came before the people of this Province - the House was not in session, they did it through a press conference - and said, no, that is now going to be \$63.7 million less. That is what they told us, and for that reason, in fact the major reason, we are going to be running at least a \$120 million deficit. The Minister keeps nodding his head, so I am right spot on the mark so far.

What they did not tell us at that time Mr. Speaker, was that the most revised estimate, the October 1, 1990 revised estimate for equalization from Ottawa for the whole of this year - and we know it might change again in December, who knows, it might change up, it might change down - was \$960,469,000. Nineteen million dollars more than we got last year. Mr. Speaker, in equalization, and only \$6 million short, as of August 1, of what the Minister projected in his budget March 15.

Now, Mr. Speaker, where, all of a sudden, did this grand emergency fiscal situation come from that the Premier and the Minister talked about in October? They did not tell us, for example, in

October - they told us later when the House opened after the questions were asked. They did not tell us, for example, in October, that part of the equalization shortfall was because this Government decided in its wisdom or lack thereof, well that is something they have to answer for, but it was this Government that decided that they would re-pay a \$34 million overpayment from last year in equalization, the Government was overpayed \$34 million. It was this Government who decided they would re-pay that in this fiscal year.

Did they tell us that, Mr. Speaker? Did they tell us so that we could subtract that \$34 million from the \$63.7 million and say, 'yes, in that case then the equalization shortfall is somewhere in the area of \$30 million.' No, Mr. Speaker, no such thing as honesty and straightforward, come forward and tell the facts and tell the truth. No, that was covered up. That was hid away until we got into this House and people started asking questions.

Did they tell us, Mr. Speaker, that the Ottawa estimate as of October 1st for equalization was only \$6 million short of what the Minister projected in his March budget? No, Mr. Speaker. They told us that it was \$63.7 million short. That is what they told us. More dishonesty. More deceit. More cover up. The statements that have been made by the Premier and the Minister of Finance since they started talking publicly about the fiscal situations facing the Province is just as fraudulent and just as deceitful as was the budget itself, Mr. Speaker, and they are continuing to do it.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if the October estimate out of Ottawa is only \$6 million short of what the Minister's own figures were -

Dr. Kitchen: Ottawa's figures.

Mr. Rideout: No, I am talking about if it is only \$6 million short of what your budgetary figures were.

Dr. Kitchen: (Inaudible) buddies in Ottawa.

Mr. Rideout: It is not my buddies in Ottawa, Mr. Speaker. You call up people in Intergovernmental Affairs and the Department of Finance officials and ask them - that is not buddies in Ottawa, Mr. Speaker, that is people who work for the Government of Canada - and say what is your latest revised estimates of equalization payments for Newfoundland? No trouble to get the information, Mr. Speaker. None whatsoever.

Dr. Kitchen: (Inaudible) and hid it away in March.

Mr. Rideout: Hid it away in March. Why didn't you pay it in March?

Mr. Speaker, what we are talking about here is honesty. If -

Dr. Kitchen: (Inaudible).

Mr. Rideout: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance will have an opportunity when I sit down, if he so wishes, to get up and answer all six questions that I asked him on Thursday which he has not got to his feet on at all yet. He will get a chance to get up and respond to what I am suggesting here today if he so wishes, but he has no right to sit over there in his chair and babble on like

somebody who obviously does not know what they are talking about.

Now, let me continue with the Minister and I hope he will get up. If the latest Ottawa estimates, that is the point I was trying to make, are only \$6 million short of what the Minister estimated himself in his budget in March, if that is the case then the operative question, Mr. Speaker, is do we still have a \$120 million or a \$130 million problem on our deficit? What is the deficit if those figures are correct? We know that \$34 million of the \$63.7 million was the payback of an over payment. But if the Ottawa figures are correct what is the current account position of this Province today?

And when one asks that question, Mr. Speaker, if we accept the word of the Premier and the Minister of Finance because they knew those things that I am talking about here today and we did not. They knew those things back in October when they made their statement. The operative question then becomes: if our deficit is still \$120 million or if it is \$130 million or if it is \$200 million or \$300 million, whatever the figure might be, whatever it is, and the Ottawa projections are correct and we are only going to be \$6 million short of what the Minister himself projected, then where is the real problem? Where is the real problem if those numbers are, in fact, correct, Mr. Speaker?

There is only one other problem then, one other source of the problem and that is a gross over estimate of provincial revenues, Mr. Speaker, or over expenditure. If you take out the first one, the transfers from Ottawa, there are

only two more areas left and the two areas left are directly under the control of this Minister and this Government, estimated provincial revenue and controlling expenditures.

So, if we are way out of whack on those figures, then, Mr. Speaker, we want to know. We want to know the truth. If we take the Ottawa figure of \$6 million and discount the \$34 million re-payment, if the Minister's \$114 million out on his revenues and his expenditures, tell us, isn't it a proper and appropriate question for a responsible opposition to ask? Tell us - if the deficit is now \$200 million and the Ottawa problem is twenty-five or thirty of that, then is the Minister out \$175 million or so on provincial revenues and expenditures?

We do not know, Mr. Speaker, and we will not know as long as the Minister of Finance continues to hug on to his seat for dear life. We will not know unless the Minister is prepared to get up and share honestly and openly the information that will answer those legitimate questions put forward by the Opposition representing the people of Newfoundland and Labrador in a global capacity as the Government represents them in a global capacity.

If there is going to continue to be stonewalling, and if there is going to continue to be nothing but only silence from the Minister, then, Mr. Speaker, would any opposition in its right mind allow this Bill to pass. How could any opposition worth its salt at all allow this Bill to pass, giving the Government authority to go out and borrow another \$325 million, when the most basic, elementary financial

facts have not been put to this House.

Why would any opposition, Mr. Speaker, that even remotely considered itself responsible, agree to pass this Bill when question after question after detailed question has been asked, yet the Minister has not once risen in his place and attempted to answer them.

Mr. Simms: He has not even spoken, I don't think on the Bill.

Mr. Rideout: I do not believe he has spoken at all. He introduced it, very briefly, but he has not spoken since, as far as I know, and there have been detailed questions asked about the fiscal position of this Province. How can the Minister, how can the Government, I say to the Government House Leader, how can the Government expect the Opposition to acquiesce by passing this Bill, when those most basic, elementary financial questions; there has not been one attempt to answer them.

We will deserve to be tarred and feathered and flung out of here, if we let that Bill go through without those questions, without attempting at least to get those answers. We would not be fit to stare ourselves in the mirror if we let this Bill go through, and the Government knows that and what is their answer?

Mr. Speaker, is their answer, co-operation and answering the questions, is that their answer? Well, the Minister of Finance has not yet stood and I read off six detailed questions on last Thursday and more today, is that the approach of the Government to be co-operative and provide the

answers?

No, Mr. Speaker, so far, the approach has been to stonewall, to continue to cover up, to say nothing. The Minister has not risen at all since he introduced the Bill to provide an answer, not that I am aware of, he certainly has not risen to give answers to my questions.

The Government's answer, Mr. Speaker, is the hobnail boot answer, as Mr. Neary, when he was here, would say. The Government's answer is the hobnailed boot, to drive everybody into the ground, to stifle democracy and bring in closure, that is the Government's answer, not to provide the House with the information and the facts.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I tell you this: we are not going to be intimidated or bowled over by that approach. The Minister of Finance and the Government can have this Bill within hours, if they start giving answers, but if they are going to continue to procrastinate, if they are going to continue to cover up, if they are going to continue to depend on closure, if they are going to continue to say nothing, then, Mr. Speaker, its closure it will be, because this Bill will not go through between now and Christmas eve, unless we get answers, unless the Government uses the ultimate parliamentary weapon, the ultimate antidemocratic weapon and decides to cut off debate.

If that is what the Government wishes to do, there is nothing I can do about it, but I think, that on behalf of the people of this Province, I have a right to expect answers to those questions which I have asked. We have a right to expect answers to questions which

other Members have asked and until the Government, particularly the Minister of Finance, gets on his feet and we can glean by listening to his reply, that he is attempting to provide honest, truthful answers, then the Government will have this Bill, if, and only if, Mr. Speaker, they use the closure rule that is brought down today, but they can have it within hours if they decide to be co-operative and give appropriate answers, detailed answers to the detailed questions that we have been asking over the last several days.

An Hon. Member: He is still not up. Well, I guess it is closure it will be.

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

Mr. Winsor: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too want to have a few words to say on this loan Bill, especially since it is a wide open debate that can cover any area of fiscal management, or mismanagement I should say. I want to read to the Minister of Finance, some words that he himself had to say: However, we have been able to produce a Budget that addresses in a very significant way, this Government's three basic priorities of economic development, health care and education. A Budget that does not come down hard on the people. This is a prudent Budget that will enable us to go a long way towards delivering to all regions of the Province, the fairest, the most equitable level of service, we have been able to provide and still be fiscally responsible to the present and to the future - with the Minister of Finance's signature.

And the Minister had the nerve to proclaim that this was a great Liberal Budget. I heard the Minister of Social Services the other day, in trying to defend the indefensible, blame the problem on the previous seventeen years.

Mr. Efford: If you want another constituent looked after (inaudible).

Mr. Winsor: Threats again. I heard the Minister of Social Services indicate that the problems were caused by the Administration of the past seventeen years.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear! (Inaudible) good words.

Mr. Winsor: He said that when this Administration took over, there was something like I think he said about 800,000, I cannot remember, 800 million I mean and now it is up to the range of 5.4 billion, he said. I would like to let the Minister know that last year this Administration borrowed \$397 million, this year it is going to borrow \$494 million, almost \$1 billion in two years, so in seventeen years I suspect the deficit will be much larger.

An Hon. Member: But that is not new money though, is it?

Mr. Winsor: Borrowing. Then the Minister of Finance said I suppose the Opposition has to say something about this best Budget that has been introduced in this House in about seventeen years. I wonder does he still say the same thing now -

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An Hon. Member: Tell us about the stadium out in Fogo.

Mr. Winsor: Yes, I can tell you about the stadium. The Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs stood in his place in the House and said the program that we have in place is even better. We will not build two stadiums or three stadiums, we will build even more. The question is, when? Is it going to be in 1990-1991? 1991-1992? If the Member for Carbonear wants to speak -

Mr. Reid: (Inaudible).

Mr. Winsor: Mr. Chairman, could you ask the man for silence?

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

Mr. Winsor: The Member for Carbonear who keeps wondering about the stadiums. They were stadiums that this administration committed. Not only that since then I think there has been, in fact, perhaps the process got delayed a little.

An Hon. Member: What Administration?

Mr. Winsor: The Minister on March 29 committed two major recreation complexes in this fiscal year.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Winsor: Two.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Winsor: What is that?

An Hon. Member: When was election day?

Mr. Winsor: March 29 this year your Minister committed two major recreational complexes to the tune of \$1.5 million, not to exceed \$3 million.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Winsor: No, it was a statement the Minister was going to announce by July.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Winsor: By July this Minister was going to announce the sites. But then in July there was a new kid on the block who got a feasibility done that was not suppose to be included in the phase two applicants.

An Hon. Member: Where is that? Was it in a Liberal district?

Mr. Winsor: Oh, I could not tell because the Minister of Development is not in his seat, so I could not dare mention where the new feasibility was completed. Yes, it was suppose to be I think eight, and the number got up to nine to accommodate a certain district in the Province. The Minister of Development is not in his seat, so I would not dare mention where it is.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Winsor: The Minister wants me to tell about the party he had in Noggin Cove, where he had a few words to say and he forgot the grooms name.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Winsor: His name was Ches and he called him Charlie.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Winsor: I want to take a few minutes, they sidetracked me on recreation because - you cannot really say a whole lot on recreation because this Government has no policy for recreation.

This is the second year in a row that we see recreation getting shortchanged. Last year not five cents for new capital projects in Newfoundland, not five cents. All they did was carry on the commitments that fortunately the previous administration had made so they carry on -

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Winsor: Does the Minister want to know about the feasibility study that was carried out, I think, for the Port au Choix area that somehow he was able to sneak into the system -

Mr. Simms: Was it not included initially?

Mr. Winsor: No, no, it was not included initially. And I am not saying these children -

Mr. Simms: They were not playing politics?

Mr. Winsor: No politics in that, because I think the Minister's statement had said that no new applicants would be considered this year, they would be stage one applicants, all others who had previously completed feasibility studies would be stage two applicants.

We want the stadium that you had committed, not the stadium, we need the sites. We are not so concerned because you made a commitment to the people of the Province that you would announce two sites. What we are waiting for is the announcement. This is very much, by the way, talking about an announcement of things, this is somehow similar to the announcement of the Central Newfoundland Campus that was promised and the Minister of

Education stood in his place time after time in this House - An Hon. Member: The Minister for Gander.

Mr. Winsor: Oh, the Minister from Gander. I cannot tell what the Minister of Gander said about the -

An Hon. Member: (inaudible) Government is going to do.

Mr. Winsor: No, the Minister never said that. I think the Minister was always opposed to the announcement of a campus for Central Newfoundland, and I do not think he was very supportive of Gander's bid. I was there waiting eagerly, thinking that the President of Treasury Board had lots of influence in Cabinet. I was supporting the Gander bid I have to confess to my colleague from Grand Falls. I was supporting the Gander bid because of it being, of course, close to my district. In fact some of my district is only fifteen or twenty miles away, and perhaps instead of being on the Gander Bay road towards Gander they could even move it out a little further towards Gander Bay area and that would be my district. I had a vested interest in it and I never once criticized the Minister because I was thinking he was going to be able to pull some punches and get that campus but it did not materialize.

On the matter of education, of course, I spent quite some time in the classroom and I have watched the Minister of Education duck and skate over the issues for the past few days. We watched him, I think it was last Thursday, when he indicated that the strike for student assistants was all but over, there were just a few simple matters to resolve. But, lo and behold this morning the first

thing I saw when I drove in were people on the picket line. I said, who are these people, I wonder, are they janitors or maintenance people? I thought there was a new strike in the school system because I was so assured by the Minister last Thursday that it was all going to be settled. I picked up the paper today and you know what I read, that the student assistants could not even get anyone from Treasury Board to talk to them this weekend. They waited and waited for meetings and lo and behold no one showed up for the meetings. The commitments that had been given were not lived up to.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Simms: It might be foolishness to you but it is not foolishness for those students who are out on the street.

Mr. Murphy: (inaudible)

Mr. Winsor: The Member for St. John's South is against everything so he can bat his gums as much as he wants to and nobody is going to pay any attention. I want to spend a little bit of time addressing the matter of in-service for teachers, because I think the Minister of Education has missed out badly on this one. In his attempt to save some money on Education I think he has missed out badly on the call to eliminate the number of days that substitutes can be called into the school system. If the Member knew what it was like in the classroom he would not make such ludicrous statements. The Member for Mount Scio - Bell Island should know that already -

Mr. Walsh: If I only knew what it was like to have Christmas off,

Easter off and all Summer off I might be willing to give up one day.

Mr. Winsor: I thank the Member for his comment.

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

Mr. Winsor: Did I hear the Member for Mount Scio properly when he said that he would not complain if he had Easter off, Christmas off, and all Summer off? Is that what I heard the member say?

Mr. Walsh: I would never complain if I had that off.

Mr. Winsor: You would never complain.

Mr. Walsh: Would you complain if you had that off?

Mr. Winsor: The Member obviously does not know what it is like to be in the classroom. I ask the Chairman to ask the Member for Mount Scio - Bell Island to be quite.

The Minister can have lots of time to respond.

Mr. Simms: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: The hon. Opposition House Leader on a point of order.

Mr. Simms: The hon. Member for Fogo has been struggling now for fifteen minutes to try to get some words out. He is elected to this House and he is entitled to express his opinions and points of view, but, Mr. Chairman, it is very difficult for him to do it, as you are well aware, when members there, members there, and members there, continuously interrupt the hon. Member for

Fogo, and I do not think that is right. The hon. member should get protection.

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

Does the hon. Member for Fogo wish to be heard in silence?

Mr. Winsor: Yes.

Mr. Chairman: Okay.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Chairman: The hon. Member did request silence and there have been interruptions from both sides of the House, and it is unparliamentary for anybody to be interrupted. The Opposition House Leader now has a point of order, that the hon. Member has been continuously interrupted and the hon. Member now has requested silence.

So I recognize the hon. Member for Fogo.

Mr. Winsor: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I think the Minister missed the boat badly when he effectively cut out - the Minister will say that I have not done it, but I am giving boards, they still have substitutes. The fact of the matter is the boards are afraid to use them because you cannot anticipate an illness will come. I am told that the magic figure out there is twenty days. If you have a teacher and he is out for nineteen days sick leave for any number of reasons then that counts against your substitute days. Get twenty, and it is okay. That these twenty days are not going to be included. So a teacher on long-term disability for two or three months could be out for

forty school days, these forty days will not come from your number. If it is less than twenty they are going to come from your number. And school boards are afraid, very much afraid that somebody could have tonsils removed, for example, take three weeks out of school, or thereabouts which is going to come from their pool of days for substitutes. As a result we have seen already in this House the Special Interest Council, the Arts Councils of Newfoundland could not take place this weekend. We saw last week ads in papers saying that the Phys Ed Special Interest Council would not take place. And one after the other we hear that the Primary Interest Council have cancelled their annual meeting for next year because they are afraid of the cutbacks. All this at a time when their focus is suppose to be on education.

Right now in the school system new programs are constantly being introduced. The Minister, I think last year put something like \$1.5 million into computers for the Province. Teachers cannot get adequate in-service for these.

An Hon. Member: Why would they cancel the weekend conventions?

Mr. Winsor: Why? Well it was going to extend into a weekend Thursday, Friday and Saturday or whatever it is they go into. So on Saturday, the final day was suppose to wrap up and the President of -

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

The hon. Member has asked for silence.

Mr. Winsor: So, Mr. Chairman, the Minister inadvertently, I do not think the Minister was aware of the impact of these cutbacks, especially when they were announced retroactively, that this included April, May, and June of last year when there was not one school board in the Province knew anything about it. The cutbacks were not announced, were not revealed to school boards until September this year. They had already used a large number of the days that were set aside. And what I cannot imagine is how the parliamentary assistant to the Premier and the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations, both former educators, both former Presidents of the NTA, who spent countless hours and days with professional days, from NTA, that they did the in-servicing themselves. I wonder how the Minister and the parliamentary assistant can stand by and watch that occur.

The other area that has to be addressed in this is in health cutbacks. The cutbacks, or freeze, if we want to use the word that is being inflicted on the hospital and health care system in this Province can only work to the detriment of these particular boards. The fact of the matter is that some 75 per cent of the Budget that is used in Health is for salaries.

I think the Minister of Health, if I can remember him the other day, he said, it was something in the range of \$800 million for health care. That would mean that \$600 million has to be used for salaries; 75 per cent of that would be about \$60 million which is probably the figure that is going to be cut from health care in this Province. And the

Minister continually says that there will be no cutbacks. Added to that we find the situation that the young nursing staff who have just been recruited to serve in the hospitals in this Province, they have already been given notice that because of the cutbacks, the threat and the fear of layoffs, they have no choice but to seek employment elsewhere. So the situation in health care is becoming critical. This Administration has done nothing to allay the fear out in the hospital and morale in the health care sector is at an all-time low. People are terrified. They do not know what their jobs are going to be. They do not know who is going to pay the mortgage next month or the car installments. Because these cuts are coming. The Minister and the Premier can say they are going to wait for the impact statements, but they have been told to hold the budget in line with next year. Unless there are no cutbacks coming, the fiscal situation of the Province is not nearly as bad as they are making us believe it is, and this is an old attempt to get the two major bargaining groups, general service workers and teachers, to think there is nothing there for them and to force them into less than adequate wage settlements.

The Minister of Health is smiling. I do not suppose that is part of an insidious plan he has to try to force the other ones into signing, and they are really not in such fiscal problems or such restraints as they say they are.

An Hon. Member: Mr. Chairman.
(Inaudible).

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

The hon. Member has requested silence.

Mr. A. Snow: That is Graham and his munchkins.

Mr. Winsor: That would be Graham. That would be the Minister of Forestry.

Today in response to the questioning by the Leader of the Opposition, the Minister of Finance and the Premier, I thought, looked rather sheepish, and rightly so. Because I think of the \$960 million that was forecast to come to the Province, they knew in advance that some \$34 million was an overpayment on last year. They knew that \$34 million was not going to be in the system, yet they did a budget that said it was going to be there. Now what were they hoping for, that Ottawa, the one - a cover up - who never gives them anything, was suddenly going to say we are going to have to balance your budget and give you that \$34 million. The \$34 million and the \$6 million the October 1st figures indicated, indicate that some \$40 million, which they talked of, and that is where he got his two figures, the \$36 million they were overpaid last year which they knew about and the \$6 million that was deficit. The question is, what is the real deficit? I do not know what the deficit is going to be now. We heard an announcement of \$120 million. If it is only \$6 million less and the Province has only been under some \$16.8 million, it should be something in the range of \$22 million. That should be the actual deficit, yet we are hearing figures of \$120 million, \$200 million. Just what is it? I am much afraid it is only an attempt to force the bargaining units who are left to

negotiate to come to less than adequate settlements, an attempt to intimidate, to scare them. It is an attempt to scare the rest of the people into settling for less than adequate wage settlements.

An Hon. Member: It is shocking.

Mr. Winsor: Terrible. The Minister of Labour stood in her place in this House on numerous occasions and talked about the wonderful job creation projects her department had, the Employment Generation Program. If we had Hansard we could look back. The Minister, I think, said, we will not have projects that will last for ten weeks duration and then be finished and have people back on the social services program and so on, and she went to great length to describe those new programs of Government. I find it passing strange that in some of the programs she announced just recently, one of the requirements is for someone to be on social services.

The Minister of Forestry in his projects he recently announced in Silviculture has basically the same lines. Has this Government all but given up on the economic policy this Budget was going to address? They were going to concentrate on three things: the economy, education and health. We are going to have reductions in education services, reductions in health, I think the focus went down from 16 per cent of the Budget to 16.1, and in that it was commissioned out to the Economic Recovery Team.

In the Hansards shortly after the Budget there are some interesting statements. I think the Minister of Social Services has one here himself. Let me see if I can find

what he had to say. He said, 'I mean, it gave us a clear pat on the back, and the Minister of Finance is telling us very, very clearly that the Budget of last week was the best budget to come down in the last seventeen years, since you were on this side, a budget in which the priorities were in the right place.

I wonder if the Minister still stands by that, the priorities are in the right place? Because what we see in this budget is a serious attack on health and education. I would like for the Minister of Education now that he is back in his seat, to tell us, in a few minutes, how education, his triple E, Efficiency, Equality - I forget what the other one was - is being addressed by the severe cutbacks, the restraints that are being imposed on the education system in this Province today.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Winsor: The Minister can not wait to get to his feet. Do you know what the Minister is going to do? The Minister has gone through an old file that he perhaps had in his 1966 -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Winsor: The Royal Commission Report of 1966, I do not know if he is going to dust that off or if he is going through some notes he found up in the Education Department by which he is going to try to illustrate to teachers -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Winsor: I had to suffer through it. I did not read it, I suffered through it. Back in University in my earlier days, I had to suffer through that Royal

Commission Report. But the Minister is waiting to get on his feet. I will just bet the Minister can't wait to get on his feet and he is going to say that the previous Minister of Education, he too tried to effect savings in substitute teachers. I am sure the Minister can't wait to get to his feet.

Well, let me tell the Minister that did happen, but it happened in a way that there was a negotiation process with the Newfoundland Teachers' Association.

An Hon. Member: Come clean.

Mr. Winsor: The Newfoundland Teachers Association, Treasury Board, the two parties sat down and they agreed on a method. And they did not set a number of days, they said that the pay for substitutes - I can't remember the formula - would be set, I think, at per diem. The one they negotiated - let's not talk about the proposals, because in collective bargaining there are all kinds of things. The deal that was eventually settled on would be, I think, a teacher would get x amount of days, something arranged, or 140 or 150. But after three consecutive days for the same teacher, that substitute teacher would get the same pay as the regular teacher.

The problem the Minister of Education has now inflicted on the education system is that there will not be three days pay. There will be no pay, because there will not be any substitutes. The Minister is well aware that already in this province -

Dr. Warren: (Inaudible).

Mr. Winsor: The Minister keeps

interrupting. He has lots of time to get up and have his say in Question Period. He dominates -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Winsor: The Minister dominates Question Period in his answers. He goes on and on and on. Now in debate, he has an opportunity -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Winsor: Oh a fine man, yes. But no clout in Cabinet. That is what I am starting to think. He is losing his clout in Cabinet. The Minister does not believe what he is doing. The Minister does not want to see in-service for teachers cut back. He is a strong supporter. He thinks teachers should be continuously upgrading their skills and their qualifications, and he is very supportive of it. But he can't convince the President of Treasury Board. The President of Treasury Board -

Mr. Simms: And there are a few other right-wingers over there.

Mr. Winsor: I never told you this one. The President of Treasury Board did an in-service for us a number of years ago. I attended a session. The President of Treasury Board and the Vice-Chairman of Newfoundland Enterprise, or Newfoundland and Labrador Enterprise -

An Hon. Member: Fraser (Inaudible).

Mr. Winsor: Yes, I would not say the name - did an in-service, the two of them, on some kind of upgrading or integrating into the school system.

Mr. Simms: Wins Baker and (Inaudible).

Mr. Winsor: Old Bt Baker, that is what we called him then because he was right in the middle of his matalacil spray program. He conducted an in-service session that I had the unfortunate experience of having to sit in on for five hours. That was one of the bad in-services we had.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible) in school.

Mr. Winsor: Two hours, an afternoon session. That is right. But it went on a little bit after school. Like the Premier said today, why don't teachers do their in-service after school? Perhaps the Premier should know that teachers in this Province spend hours and hours after school in extra-curricular activities. I just happened to be in a school gymnasium this weekend where I saw at least ten teachers - because there were ten teams involved - taking sporting teams, travelling some considerable distance. Mr. Speaker is not in the Chair, but a team from his school in Gambo were unfortunate enough to go off the road because of slippery road conditions out in central Newfoundland, as the President of Treasury Board knows, having been there this weekend to try to allay the fears of educators and hospital care workers out in the area.

Mr. Simms: He is going to be bombarded again this week.

Mr. Winsor: He is going to be bombarded again this week. I had a very intriguing telephone -

Mr. Simms: (Inaudible).

Mr. Winsor: Oh, I can't tell any more on it. No. He has to wait until November 2, I believe, for that big convention, when the surprise that is in store will be revealed.

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

The hon. member's time has elapsed.

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

Mr. Parsons: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I was waiting for the Minister of Education to rise in his place, but I suppose he can't very well when the boss is sitting there in the front row and the boss says, no way! He looks around, and he can really stare you down if you will let him do it. He is the whip cracker. It is too bad we are not back in the horse and buggy days, because he would be the real chauffeur driving the horses.

Mr. Simms: Hitler-like tactics.

Mr. Parsons: Oh, I tell you, the tactics of that hon. House Leader are something else. The hon. Minister of Justice is right behind him there and, I suppose, anything he does not come up with, the Minister of Justice -

An Hon. Member: Legal (inaudible) necessary.

Mr. Parsons: Yes, legal advice is necessary to tell hon. gentlemen to keep to their seats, do not say anything. The hon. the Minister of Social Services has been quiet since Friday. We stopped your gallop on Friday and we are proud of it. I also conceded the fact that I was wrong. But that Government over there, these hon. members over there, everything

they do they have another reason for it; they are right, blame it on the Feds.

Ms Verge: Do you know what Peter Fenwick said about the Minister of Social Services?

Mr. Parsons: No. What did he say about him?

Ms Verge: He said he was out to lunch.

Mr. Parsons: The ex-leader of the New Democratic Party, who held a seat here in this hon. House, said the Minister of Social Services was out to lunch. And how right he is. The only thing is he did not elaborate enough in saying the Minister of Social Services might be out to lunch himself, because the cuts within his Department prevent an awful lot of people from having their regular lunch.

Mr. Efford: There are no cuts.

Mr. Simms: What part of the world are you in? Get outside of Confederation Building, boy. Get off the ninth or tenth floor.

Mr. Parsons: It is unbelievable, that a Minister who has cut single parents by \$100 and \$125 a month now says there are no cuts. How can you explain that to a person who is only getting about \$6000 or \$7000 a year when they lose \$1500 of it? Is that not a cut?

Mr. Efford: No.

Mr. Parsons: Well what is it, a reduction in what?

Mr. Simms: That is a freeze.

Mr. Parsons: That is a freeze, is it? I have to take another crack at the Minister of Social

Services. His rationale is confusing.

Mr. A. Snow: That is not Reaganomics, that is Effordomics.

Mr. Parsons: That is Effordomics. He says some people within this category were getting more than some other people, so instead of raising the lower people on the totem pole he says, take it off the top, and the top means a person getting only \$7000 a year. That is all. The Minister of Social Services sits in his seat every day and says there is nothing happening out there, there are no cuts.

My hon. colleague for Humber East has gotten up consistently in the House and explained, asked, almost on her knees, for the Premier to reverse that decision, to re-instate the monies that were taken from those poor people.

Mr. Efford: Why didn't she ask me?

Mr. Parsons: She has asked you, but the boss himself, God almighty, he said you cannot do things on your own, you must come and ask me. And the boss himself said no, we are not doing that. We are not going to take one step backwards.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Parsons: Yes, that is right. God had twelve disciples, but you now have fourteen. God had twelve disciples, now there are fourteen across the way and many others over there who would like to add to that number. In fact, there are a lot of people over there who are now saying that perhaps they would be better in some of the positions some other people have over there at this moment.

Mr. R. Aylward: There would be lots of Judases over there.

Mr. Parsons: There would be lots of Judases over there. There are some people in your ranks who feel that some of the people are not doing too good a job, some of the Ministers. There might be a bit of back-stabbing, but I wonder of all those disciples, of the thirteen or fourteen, how many Judases do we have in the other group, the backbenchers? I do not think the Minister of Social Services is a bad fellow. I really do not think he is. Do you know what? I believe that he really has, not a heart of gold, but he has a heart that is -

Ms Verge: A heart of tin.

Mr. Parsons: Tin? No. No. The Minister's hands are tied. He is not allowed to do it. He is not allowed to dictate to his subordinates within his Department without first getting the authority. When he comes in here -

Mr. Efford: (Inaudible).

Mr. Parsons: You have no control over what you do, and in that sense I feel sorry for you. I really do. I feel sorry for you. I know you are not doing it with even half a heart, not to mention a heart and a half. And I know if you will listen to my colleague from Humber East, and eventually he is going to listen, because he is that type of person. Now, if the hon. the Premier would say to the Minister of Social Services -

Mr. A. Snow: What about the Minister of Justice? Remember how he tried to slough it (inaudible)?

Mr. Parsons: Oh, the Minister of Justice. For a young man, I am

amazed that he has not come to the rescue. But he does not even come to the rescue of the Minister of Social Services. The only thing the Minister of Justice has done that is concrete is to have had a policeman on the door in Corner Brook to stop my hon. colleague from Humber East from getting in, because he had something to hide. He and his buddy, the Mayor, had something to hide from this hon. Member.

In fact, what they were afraid of was that the hon. Member was going to explain, was going to relate some of the rights of the people, what was wrong with what they were doing. The Minister of Education, he told me he did not care, so there was only one left and that was the Minister of Justice. Now, that was his contribution.

When I look across over there now I can only think of one old phrase that went - one of the Premiers of the past said, they sold the shop. This crowd squandered the shop in a couple of years, and they are always talking about what happened over there in seventeen years. Look at what happened in seventeen years. You have done worse in two years. What are you trying to get, some acclaim for what you have done in the last two years? What have you done? Someone get up and explain to me what this Government has done. What have they done? I can hear the hon. Member for Mount Scio - Bell Island, but you stay with the moose.

Mr. Walsh: We are in a row boat, you were (inaudible) battleship.

Mr. Winsor: You are not getting into Cabinet with a moose call. Perhaps if you used some other recourse, such as calling up the

Premier and telling him what a great job he is doing, or delivering a bit of chicken to the caucus if they are at lengthy meetings or whatever, that is the way to get there.

Mr. Tobin: He was cooked on Knickerbockers and burned on chicken wings.

Mr. Winsor: Mr. Chairman, every time that a person addresses this hon. House, one has to think about health care. One has to think about reductions in a service which is so essential to each and every person. But a few nights ago, I think it was last Thursday night, I watched CBC interview an old lady from Stephenville. Now, first of all, I disagree with the tactics that were used by the media because I do not believe that lady should have been interviewed, I really do not.

An Hon. Member: Why not?

Mr. Parsons: Because, I mean the lady came across to me -

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Member, but the hon. Members for Exploits and Fogo, if they want to carry on a conversation they should go outside the Chamber.

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

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Parsons: Mr. Chairman, they do not disrupt me, I could not care less.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Parsons: But, Mr. Chairman, I was speaking specifically of an

item that was broadcast or showed on television by CBC pertaining to an old lady in Stephenville. And if any hon. Member in this House, if that could not make them just sit back and wonder about the whole system that we are involved in, when that old lady eighty years of age looked at that interviewer and said I could be thrown out on the street, you know, there must be a better way, there has to be a better way. I mean you cannot cut the legs from under those poor people. It was shown, I want to remind the hon. Member for St. John's South. It was shown on television where they interviewed the poor lady.

Mr. Murphy: (Inaudible).

Mr. Parsons: Oh, yes, they did. There has to be a different way rather than to cut into our health system. Now granted I have to concede, I suppose, a fact of life, that we perhaps have one of the best health systems across Canada in the world. But if so we pay a lot for that health system. I mean it does not come easy, and it has to be paid for, someone has to produce the dollars to pay for it. But what I am saying is it cannot be done like this Government is doing it. I have heard the Premier there, I have heard the Minister of Health, I have heard them stand on their own two feet -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Parsons: Yes, the money now that is being spent on your Recovery Commission -

Mr. Tobin: What about Doug House?

Mr. Parsons: The money that is being spent on the Recovery Commission, millions of dollars.

See out of the now deficit of \$120 million there is still \$60 million unaccounted for. Where did the \$60 million go?

An Hon. Member: Twenty-one million went to Sprung.

Mr. Tobin: Chartering planes to go to Ottawa.

Mr. Parsons: Chartering planes to go to Ottawa. Yes.

Mr. Tobin: Chauffeur driven cars.

An Hon. Member: Go on, boy, that is the former Premier.

Mr. Winsor: Bridge contracts.

Mr. Parsons: We lost \$1.5 million on a bridge contract that some bureaucrat left on his desk, right?

Mr. Tobin: You were not long making up that \$22 million.

Mr. Parsons: That is \$1.5 million.

What Dr. House's Commission is costing - you know, we just cannot look at specifics and say, these are the dollars that Commission is costing, because they are an umbrella. There are so many different segments underneath their Recovery Commission that God only knows, Mr. Chairman, how much it is actually costing. Now if that were to be dissolved, if that Commission were to be thrown out and the hon. Minister of Development took his rightful place in Cabinet, did what he is supposed to do, develop, send the money in the right areas, I think that he could accomplish something. And I think that a lot of the money that we need now for health care could come from the savings in that area with that Royal Commission, with that

Economy Recovery Commission.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: And that justifies it, does it?

Mr. Parsons: All I can hear over there - now the hon. the Member for Carbonear is starting in. He is getting in his two cents worth.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Parsons: I will not ask him that, because the hon. Member would be honourable enough to get up and answer my question and I do not want to put him in that position.

Mr. Tobin: (Inaudible).

Mr. Parsons: No, I do not think he did. I think he ran a pretty tight shop. But I am sure that if he was one of the Ministers within that thirteen, within the discipline range, that he would not go along with some of the cuts in the health care system, especially in the senior citizens homes where it is going to hurt most.

Mr. Tobin: The unemployment situation.

Mr. Parsons: On the unemployment situation, they are always up here oh, blame the Feds.

Where I come from we had a good fishery this year. We had a good fishery up the coast, right up the Southern Shore, parts of Trinity Bay, parts of White Bay, parts of Placentia Bay. But we had failures in some areas. I think we had a part of Fogo as well that was treated well. But the places that were hard hit, I have never seen the Minister of Fisheries stand in his place and say well,

this is a program to help the people who are suffering from the failure of the fishery. There is not a sound, Mr. Chairman. A Fishery Response Program -

An Hon. Member: Mr. Valcourt -

Mr. Parsons: Mr. Valcourt, that is all you can hear. Mr. Valcourt. The hon. Member for Exploits is over there now again, he is resounding, he is an echo from that side. If someone does not utter blame it on the Feds, every five minutes, someone will say, boy, look, they are all left, you know, you sort of shake yourself and have to say, are they still over there? They are not blaming it on the Feds. They are not blaming it on the Feds.

There are a lot of discrepancies as far as UIC is concerned.

Mr. Tobin: (Inaudible) teachers, listen.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Parsons: We are going to do something for you, because I think you should be exposed as the past President of the NTA for your sentiments that you have expressed in this House, in fact I am going to say to our people write a letter explaining to the teachers what he has espoused in this House as it pertains to teachers salaries, to pensions, substitute teachers, whatever. We are going to explain the truth. Always the truth. That is one thing with this side, Mr. Chairman, everything that came from this side, and even when we were on that side was the truth. And sometimes, not intentionally, but sometimes the people on that side do have a tendency to stretch the truth.

Mr. Chairman, there is a problem where UI is concerned. In Newfoundland more so than any other Province because of the unemployment situation, UI has become a part of their livelihood. I was delighted to see -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Parsons: I was delighted to see Bill C-21 passing through the Senate and there is still some discrepancies even with the Bill being passed.

An Hon. Member: Yes, there is.

Mr. Parsons: There is. I will be the first to admit it.

An Hon. Member: You are not in favor of that Bill.

Mr. Parsons: I am certainly in favor of Bill C-21. It had to come. I am amazed at the hon. the Member for Placentia that he did not know that in Trudeau's years that was 10/16 syndrome. So, actually this Government now with a 10/14 is reduced from that era. So, now there was always -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Parsons: Yes, there was always a bit of legislation brought in to let it revert back to ten weeks, but what I am talking about now is - that is happening and on November 18th it will become a reality. But what we have been saying to the Minister, and I hope that she gets that message across to the hon. Barbara McDougall today, in saying that there is a time element as it pertains to the 18th.

Now, I am not sure really if the 18th is the first day that those

people are allowed to apply because if it is then that is bad because, as the hon. Member for Eagle River knows as well as I do, there is a waiting period and if there is a backlog that could run into three weeks. So, you are talking about coming up to December and people with no money. I mean that is fine for people in glass houses to sit in there and hope that no one throws stones, but those people are out there and they have to live. They have families to raise. They have bread and butter to put on the table and it has to be done somehow. This is why in the interim that I have suggested and many of my colleagues have suggested, and I am sure that the people on the back benches over there, and I am sure that the hon. House Leader has thought about it, that there should be some sort of a response program. Some sort of a program to create - do not talk about the Feds. Do not say that it has to be done by the Feds. Let the Province get involved. Let the Province have the initiative to get in there and do something worthwhile for the people who are mostly affected. Those are some of the people who will be affected, but there is another group of people in there. The fishermen are okay. On the forth of November they can apply for UI. The fishermen, as everyone knows in the House, can average out their weekly income, over - if they make, say, there are week's, if they had a good week, they make \$5,000. Well, you can average that over a five week period. That is fine. But there is a lot of support staff, apart from the fishermen, that are contingent on the fourteen weeks. And there is no way of getting it.

And I know that our concerns, as

it pertains to those people -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Parsons: - no, they are out there too, boy, family people, that have no chance of getting fourteen weeks. The work is just not available. They have twelve or thirteen stamps, and because they live in the metropolitan area of St. John's - and that includes, Mr. Chairman, from Seal Cove, taking in Petty Harbour, all of St. John's, Conception Bay South, Outer Cove, Middle Cove, Logy Bay, Baoline, Portugal Cove, Flatrock, Torbay. I think that is about the whole area. But all those people are in the one block with Metro St. John's. And there are a lot of people in those outlying areas who are in the same boat as the fellow in Trinity Bay. They just cannot get those stamps. The work is not available, there is no way to find work, and so the stamps are not there. And there are fourteen weeks they have got to get. I know a lot of people now - and like I said, our concerns today are being made known to the Minister.

There are people out there who just cannot get the fourteen weeks. And I know too that the hon. House Leader realizes that that is factual because I am sure that there are people in his district as well as mine who cannot hope to get the number of weeks required to get UI benefits.

See, Mr. Chairman, it is so easy for all of us to look and say oh well, this happened last year, or this is going to happen next year. But Mr. Chairman, when there is no food in the house, when there are no provisions money-wise for any food to be placed in the next couple of weeks

while we are waiting for UI, I mean that is drastic. That is unforgivable in this day and age. There should be no one, in a country as affluent as Canada, in a Province as affluent - although a lot of people say otherwise - as Newfoundland, then I do not think that that should ever happen. I do not think there should be anyone out there in need of a few lousy dollars like some of those people. And I think there has to be something done.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Parsons: As far as the Minister of Education is concerned, well, he is a pretty good person. But as far as the Minister of Education is concerned in his role as the Minister, there is a lot to be said about that. I think, like my predecessor said, he is a bit weak around the Cabinet table. And I think there are ways of saving money. I remember here, when the Liberal Government was elected first, talking to the Minister of Education about School Tax. I was on the Board of Education for St. John's when the school tax was brought in, and I must say I was reluctant to accept that concept. And I thought to myself, well you know there must be a better way.

But then I realized that there was a lot of money coming from that source and to cut it in midstream would be detrimental to the educational system. Because I said to the Minister, and I asked him questions on it as it pertained to the School Tax Authority. Because one of the pledges in the Liberal platform was to abolish the school tax authority. The Premier said it on the West Coast - abolish the school tax.

It was lovely to listen to, but impractical. Mr. Chairman, there is approximately \$30 million derived from the School Tax Authority. That goes into the incidentals of the schools livelihood. That is what makes the school work. Without that money the school just cannot operate. But they were going to bring in some new system, but now the Minister of Education is going all over the Province saying he is going to cut back. What he said is, we are holding the line. But holding the line where the teachers' raises come into being, and that is a fact of life, when all those things are taken into consideration in a financial way, the cost of living, the raises for the people within the school system. So what they are saying, what the school people are saying, what the boards are saying, is you have about a \$12 million reduction. A 12 per cent reduction. Which amounts to millions of dollars in the school system. That was the same Minister who was telling us that they were going to cut out the School Tax Authority, which again brought in a revenue of approximately \$30 million. If they had cut out the school tax, that would mean the school boards would be minus another \$30 million. Thank God, Mr. Chairman, for common sense.

Mr. Chairman, I know that I have a lot of things to say and I may get a chance tonight, but I want to say a few words to the Minister of Environment and Lands. I stood in my place today and I asked a few questions which he skirted around, questions which pertain to a facility which was to be placed on Robin Hood Bay Road.

Mr. Kelland: (Inaudible).

Mr. Parsons: I do not know anything about it? Well, let me say this to you. You know less. All you did was get up and say, I never asked questions of you before. No, there were some really pressing questions which needed to be asked before I even got in.

The environment, to me, overrides just about everything, but not when you see people being taken out of their hospital beds, not when you see little children going home from school, who cannot get into school because of cuts in the education system.

Any environment questions, well, they usually come in where I brought them in, about third. But I want to remind the hon. the Minister that I did ask environmental questions as it pertains to the forest, and I asked them of his colleague, the Minister of Forestry.

An Hon. Member: One day.

Mr. Parsons: One day? I have only been here two weeks. But I would like to speak to him for a few moments, and I think I have a few moments left, on that facility.

That facility is going down here in the East End. I do not know if you will recall, but about a year ago they wanted to put a recycling oil facility in there. They already have the dump there. You are talking about people, boy. You are talking about liviers.

An Hon. Member: You don't know what you are talking about.

Mr. Parsons: I do know what I am talking about. You do not, and that is the point. You do not know what you are talking about;

you get up and you skate around. You are better than Gretzky on your skates, boy.

An Hon. Member: Read the Act.

Mr. Parsons: I read the Act. All I asked you today was would you bring about an EIS. That is all we wanted. Then you talked about we are going to do this, we are going to do that. Public hearings go with an EIS. Public hearings go hand in hand with an EIS, and that is what is necessary when there are people involved, public hearings to get the public out to the forefront. They are not going to write you letters. What is the use of writing you letters? You never read them anyway. You never read the letters anyway, you throw them in the wastepaper basket or get some bureaucrat to read them.

What they want is public hearings. And I am telling you, I am warning the Minister now that he had better have them. Because the people are not going to take it.

Mr. Hogan: Do you know the Act?

Mr. Parsons: I know the Act better than the hon. the Member for Placentia. I came back to the Minister -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Parsons: He doesn't know very much about that, either. He knows the riot act. When the Premier tells him you sit down and you go there, he understands that. But he never knew much about the police force. He and I were in the Police force together, but he never knew much about it.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible) Cabinet.

Mr. Parsons: Yes, he is. Oh he is going into the Cabinet, yes. I will bet money on it. Yes, the Member for Placentia is going into the Cabinet..

Mr. Tobin: That is scandalous. Do you know what he just said?

Mr. Parsons: No. What did he say?

Mr. Tobin: (Inaudible) brother-in-law.

Mr. Parsons: I did not say anything about being the Premier's brother-in-law. I did not say it. No, it is not. But he is going in. As I told hon. ministers over there today, there are some of them over there who had better start doing more homework, and I am talking about homework. It would be really nice for the Premier.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Parsons: Oh, he is finished. I am telling you there is lots of potential over there. They will not be good, but they will be as good as what is there now.

Mr. Simms: They will be better than half.

Mr. Parsons: And the hon. the Member for Placentia certainly would be better than some of them.

Mr. Simms: I think he is better than the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Parsons: I do not know. Well let us see the mathematics of the Minister of Finance. He says \$120 million plus \$10 million, minus \$6 million, minus \$34 million equals \$130 million.

Mr. Doyle: He has his little black slate (inaudible).

Mr. Parsons: Yes, he has it all fouled up. Yes, there is potential over there, even for the gentleman who is standing in the doorway, to take the job from the Minister of Finance. And for the betterment of this Province I hope the Premier will wake up and do it, because there are some good men.

An Hon. Member: He is using the Ouija board.

Mr. Parsons: Yes, I think he is. He is using the Ouija board.

Dr. Warren: Is he talking about me?

Mr. Parsons: No, no, no! I was talking to you, but you were not in your seat. I cannot do that, because someone may say something else. I only said a few words about the School Tax Authority you were going to cut out. But you were not interested in that, it was just the Premier who was telling you what you had to do because the Premier is the boss. Now the Minister of Education never wanted to cut out the School Tax Authority because he knew how much money was involved in the School Tax Authority, he knew the schools needed that extra \$30 million.

Mr. Simms: He has to carry a message.

Mr. Parsons: But he has to do what he is told, like the rest of the ministers over there. They are just doing what they are told. They cannot stand on their own two feet. They have no feet to stand on, because the Premier cut them out from underneath them.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Parsons: The Minister of Education was going to cut out the school tax. Can you imagine what a mess our education system would be in -

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

Mr. Parsons: - if they had to get another \$30 million cut?

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

The hon. member's time is up.

Some Hon. Members: By leave!

Mr. Parsons: I can go on for another ten minutes.

Some Hon. Members: By leave! By leave!

Mr. Chairman: By leave?

An Hon. Member: - He is better than the Member for Fogo, I can tell you that.

Mr. Simms: Apologize to the Member for Fogo.

Mr. Parsons: I want to go back to the Minister of Education again for a moment because the Minister of Education, as I say, is a reasonable man. In fact, he did a study which is just collecting dust. He did three. I did not realize that. But the last one I read some parts of, and that minister had a lot to say. But now the minister is in a place where he could use that line of thought, and he is not allowed to do it. He is not allowed to implement it. He is being stifled. He is almost like he is in a handicap race - you know, you cannot go because you are handicapped. He is handicapped by the boss.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible)
Prescott Street.

Mr. Parsons: Yes, boy, I must say. The hon. the Member for Placentia is over there waving his hands. Many were the hours I did on Prescott Street. I would not want to go back to it.

Mr. Simms: At least you are up speaking your opinion.

Mr. Parsons: At least I am doing now what I did best then, I told the truth. I gave it up and gave it all I had. I cannot say that for the hon. the Member for Placentia, because again he is the same as the Minister of Education, he is restricted.

But I have to tell you a little story. The hon. the Member for Placentia and I were in the police force. When you went on New Gower Street and those places in those days, you had to be prepared to take on the world and we used to try it. Sometimes we were not very effective, but we tried, we gave it our best shot.

Mr. Chairman, a few months ago, while we were in a heated argument, this guy was ready to take me on and I was almost ready to say, let us go at it. But then I realized I was not as young as I used to be and I said, Glory be, how am I going to get out of this one? As you remember, I often say about the Premier, God Almighty. Well, God came to my rescue. I was down in the foyer one day with a whole bunch from the district of the hon. the Member for St. John's South, who were in here to try and beg the Premier not to close their plant so that they would not lose their jobs. Do you know what the Premier said? I looked the guy right straight in the eye and I

said to him, I would if I could, but I cannot. He saved the day for me.

Mr. Simms: And before the day was out he changed his mind.

Mr. Parsons: Yes, he changed his mind. He threw in a million but the million was never spent. I am surprised at the hon. Member for Placentia, because he was a man with good standing, with great principles. For him to be hoodwinked, to be tied to his seat by somebody no better than he is -

Mr. Winsor: (Inaudible) the Premier would answer his questions.

Mr. Parsons: Again, I am surprised that he is not on his feet saying, yes, there are discrepancies here. We do not know where the money is being spent. We would like the Minister of Finance to do an accounting of where the money went. Dr. Kitchen never told anyone where it went. The hon. the Minister of Finance could not tell anyone where to go. He does not know. There is an old adage out there now that says, I do not know. That is the Minister of Finance - I do not know. He knows nothing about what is going on, not a thing.

Mr. Chairman, before I sit down I would like to have another little swipe at the Minister of Environment and Lands, because he was a bit arrogant today and arrogance doesn't do a thing for me.

Mr. Winsor: It doesn't become him.

Mr. Parsons: No, it doesn't become him. I have known him for years. Perhaps he got up on the wrong side of the bed this morning, or whatever. I do not

know.

Mr. Simms: He is second only to the Minister of Health in arrogance.

Mr. Parsons: He was even a little bit worse than the Minister of Health today. When I asked him questions as it pertained to Sugar Loaf Road -

Mr. Tobin: (inaudible) watch out for Danny.

Mr. Parsons: Danny got a lot of points, boy. You did well on that fishery resolution. You got a fine lot of coverage. More than the hon. Minister of Environment and Lands is after getting in the last six months. I want to say to him that he is not going to get as much.

Mr. Tobin: The Minister (inaudible) Danny's (inaudible).

Mr. R. Aylward: Move the Committee rise and report progress.

Mr. Parsons: How many minutes? Two minutes? Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee rise, report progress and ask leave to sit again.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

On motion, that the Committee rise, report progress and ask leave to sit again, Mr. Speaker returned to the Chair.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Trinity - Bay de Verde.

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole have considered the matters to them referred and have directed me to report progress and ask leave to sit again.

On motion, report received and adopted, Committee ordered to sit again on tomorrow.

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

Mr. Baker: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think, by agreement, we can now call it 5:00.

Mr. Simms: Agreed. I move that the House adjourn until tomorrow, Tuesday, at 2:00 p.m.

Mr. Speaker: It has been moved and seconded that this House do now adjourn. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the said motion? All those in favor 'aye'.

Some Hon. Members: 'Aye'.

Mr. Speaker: All those against say 'nay'.

Some Hon. Members: 'Nay'.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion defeated. I ask hon. Members to join the Chair at 7:00 p.m.



Province of Newfoundland

FORTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF
NEWFOUNDLAND

Volume XLI

Second Session

Number 66(A) (Night)

PRELIMINARY REPORT
(Hansard)

Speaker: Honourable Thomas Lush

Monday

[Preliminary Transcript]

29 October 1990

The House met at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Speaker (Lush): Order, please!

The hon. the Minister of Mines and Energy.

Dr. Gibbons: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Just a point of information, Mr. Speaker, for those Members of this House who did not get the news this evening.

At 6:10 p.m. while I was at home this evening, I received a call from Senator Al Graham, he had just come out of Senate and he had the news for me that a Hibernia Bill was passed this afternoon.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Green Bay.

Mr. Hewlett: Mr. Speaker, to that point of information, as is known on a well known beverage commercial on the radio stations these days, 'Ditto Skipper, thank you.'

Mr. Speaker: Before recognizing the hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West, I recognized the hon. Minister for Mines and Energy, thinking it was on a point of order. It was not a point of order, he appropriately called it what it was, a point of information, therefore there is no need to rule.

Mr. Simms: It was a point of information?

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

Mr. Baker: Motion 1, Mr. Speaker.

On motion, that the House resolve itself into Committee of the Whole, Mr. Speaker left the Chair.

Committee of the Whole

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Chairman, I want to have a few words in the discussion; I want to say as well how delighted I am with the word that the Minister of Energy just gave this House. I had my doubts whether or not the Prime Minister should have appointed eight additional Senators, but I believe tonight, we have as Newfoundlanders, reaped the benefit of that decision, that action by the Prime Minister.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tobin: As I said, I had my doubts about the eight Senators he was appointing, but we all know, Mr. Chairman, we all know that the Liberal Senators were trying to hold up the Hibernia Bill and with the appointment -

An Hon. Member: And so were the blockheads.

Mr. Tobin: We got the NDP who voted against the Hibernia in the House of Commons, and who voted against it and who are now - I wish the spectator was here. But the NDP voted against the Hibernia bill in the House of Commons and now they are saying they are not against the project. They were against the bill but they are not against the project.

And we have the Conservatives, Mr. Chairman, and the Liberals who supported the Hibernia deal in the House of Commons. And finally with the eight additional Senators that the Prime Minister appointed - that I have my doubts about, and I do not mind admitting it - the Conservatives majority was able to force it through the Senate, and it will become law. So I think that is extremely worthy of note, Mr. Chairman.

Now, there are other issues I have to speak to tonight on this bill that the Government is trying to push through the Legislature. And now we have the President of the Council or the Government House Leader today, who came in and attacked democracy like we have only seen it, Mr. Chairman, since this Government, this regime, came to power. Five days, fifteen hours debate on a bill to borrow over \$300 million and they want to bring in closure.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: Now I would say to the Member from St. John's South, instead of yapping across the House he should have watched the news this evening and heard what the President of the Newfoundland Federation of Labour had to say about the Government that he supports.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: Yes. That is what he should have done. And you should have been out in front of the building today when Mr. Coombs from the NTA spoke.

An Hon. Member: There were no paddy wagons (Inaudible)!

Mr. Tobin: Yes, you were out

there. But you were not out there like you were out there the last time they were there.

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: What is the Minister -?

An Hon. Member: There were no paddy wagons (Inaudible)!

Mr. Tobin: No, Mr. Chairman, but the Minister of Social Services should not concern himself about the paddy wagon for the NAPE workers. The Minister of Social Services should concern himself about the paddy wagon for the thirteen year olds in this Province! That were locked up - the Minister of Social Services - were locked up in an adult penitentiary last night or the night before last. And there is the Minister who when he was in Opposition was never going to let that happen. We have got people since he became Minister of Social Services who escaped from the Boy's Home and they were found all over Canada, while you presided over the Child Welfare Act in this Province. That is what we have seen.

And we saw the other night thirteen year olds locked up in a penitentiary here in St. John's. And it is disgusting, Mr. Chairman, for a Minister who portrayed, when he was a Member of the Opposition. There was nothing like that would ever happen. And here he is. Has he ever eaten his words, Mr. Chairman. You, sir, were the Minister of Social Services the other night when there was a thirteen year old put in adult jail. And you should not have let that happen.

You are the Minister. When you were in Opposition you said to me

several times, you are the Minister. Well now you were the Minister the other night and saw a thirteen year old locked up in this Province. Is that what cutbacks are doing, Mr. Chairman? Is that what this Government's cutback programme is for? To bar thirteen year olds up in adult jail?

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: What is that? What did he say? The Minister of Development has something to say?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: You should, because you have a lot to say in this House. You have a lot of explaining to do one of these days when you get around to it.

But this is what is happening. We have got Government cutbacks in this Province like we have never seen before. And the cutbacks now are taking place to the extent that thirteen year olds are being locked up in adult penitentiaries. That is what is happening.

And there is the Minister there, look. Let the record show that he is the Minister who presided over locking up thirteen year olds in adult penitentiaries.

They were locked up in an adult penitentiary last night, or the night before last, and there is the Minister who when he was in Opposition was never going to let that happen. Since he became Minister of Social Services we had people escape from the Boy's Home and they were found all over Canada while you presided over the Child Welfare Act in this Province. That is what we have

seen, and we have seen the other night thirteen year olds locked up in the penitentiary here in St. John's. It is disgusting, Mr. Speaker, for a Minister who portrayed when he was a member of the Opposition that nothing like that would ever happen and has he ever eaten his words, Mr. Chairman. You, Sir, were the Minister of Social services the other night when a thirteen year old was put in an adult jail and you should not have let that happen. When you were in Opposition you said to me several times, you are the Minister. Well, you were the Minister the other night and saw a thirteen locked up in this Province. Is that what cutbacks are doing, Mr. Chairman? Is that what this Government's cutback program is for, to lock thirteen year olds up in adult jail? Does the Minister of Development have something to say?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Tobin: You should because you have a lot to say in this House, you will have a lot of explaining to do one of these days when we get around to it.

This is what is happening. We have Government cutbacks in this Province like we have never seen before and the cutbacks now are taking place to the extent that thirteen year olds are being locked up in adult penitentiaries. That is the Minister there, let the record show, that he is the Minister who presided over locking up thirteen year olds in adult penitentiaries, and I think that is shameless. You should resign. From what he said about that when he was in Opposition, and now to let it happen, if he wants to maintain

any level of credibility he should offer his resignation to the Premier, and there are other issues we have to get involved in. Is the Member for Port aux Basques saying something?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Tobin: Well, I think everybody should listen if he is going to say something.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Tobin: I do not have too much to say about the Member for Harbour Grace because he is a very courteous man and extremely conscious of his role as a member representing a constituency in this Province. You have the Member for Placentia who is not sure yet why he is here, and you have the Member for Carbonear who had to bankrupt the council in order to get in here. That is what is happening, and now they are into the Minister of Municipal Affairs every day looking for money trying to straighten out the mess they find themselves in. He had to bankrupt the council, spend every cent they had, and more besides, and put a burden on the taxpayers of Carbonear like we have never seen before in order to publicize himself enough to get a seat in the Legislature. That was after running three times before, so this is the crowd we now have over there tapping their desks when this Government announced a \$60 million cutback to the health program in this Province, and now we are looking at cutbacks in social services. As a matter of fact today I talked to several people who work for the Department of Social Services and I can tell you that the social workers in this Province are extremely concerned about what is taking

place.

Mr. Efford: (Inaudible)

Mr. Tobin: And knowing you you probably have it sold now.

Mr. Efford: Got what?

Mr. Tobin: That is what is going on. Sold, s-o-l-d. I said knowing you you probably have it sold.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Tobin: That is what is going on in this Province, and we can take it further than that. The Minister of Development decided to come down on this end tonight. Mr. Chairman, part of the problem in this Province today, and the cutbacks in health, education, and social services, is because the Premier has stripped this Minister of any authority in terms of economic job creation, and I sincerely believe that if the Premier had the courage tomorrow to eliminate the Newfoundland Senate of Doug House and his cohorts, and give the authority back to the Minister of Development that we may see something happening in this Province. And I would say to the Member for Pleasantville, the man who has had half the courage when we voted in the Economic Recovery Commission, it is time for him now to re-examine what that Economic Recovery Commission has done and go to the Premier and tell him to fire the lot of them, and save millions of dollars, Mr. Chairman, of the taxpayers money and open up hospital beds and give the single mothers back their \$115 a month and to look after the educational needs in this Province than to (inaudible).

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Tobin: Look after the needs in this Province and then talk about cutbacks. Let the ministers over there turn in their \$8,000 a year for their car allowance, turn it back to the taxpayers of this Province, Mr. Chairman.

An Hon. Member: They do not need (inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: Yes, there are more cars attached to the Premier's Office now than are probably attached to the car pool. That is what is happening.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: I can tell you how many, indeed I can.

An Hon. Member: What about the four wheel drive?

Mr. Tobin: No, there are no four wheel drives attached to the Premier's Office. But I can tell you there is a grey Oldsmobile attached to the Premier's Office, and she is chauffeur driven. You talk about the hypocrisy of this Government when there is a chauffeur pulls up in front of the door and he gets out, Mr. Chairman,

An Hon. Member: - (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: Is that parliamentary, Mr. Chairman?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: He said lies.

An Hon. Member: No, he did not.

Mr. Tobin: Yes, he most certainly did. He is saying it there all night.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: The Member for Placentia said it.

Mr. Chairman: Order, please! Order, please!

The Chair did not hear what any of the members down there said.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Tobin: No, Mr. Chairman, I know if you had heard it, Sir, I have that much respect for you that if you had heard the Member for Placentia saying 'lies' that you would have brought it to order. I agree you would have done that.

But the Premier of this Province, you talk about hypocrisy, the Premier of this Province pulls up in front of the door, this driver with the big cap on, you should see him, and he gets out and he walks around when the Premier comes down and he opens the door and he lets him in, then the Premier's two assistants -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: Oh, yes he does wear a cap. The Premier's two assistants come out and they manage to open the door and they get in the back seat and they drive away. Now we do not know where they are going. Maybe there is another charter taking them anywhere in Canada for a week - you know, where does the Premier take his charters? We know that he has taken the charter and kept them on the tarmac in Ottawa for a week. Now do we take these charters any place else? That is the question we have to have answered in this Assembly. We have a Premier who we now know charters planes, keeps them on the

tarmac for a month, a week, you never know -

Mr. Reid: (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: Yes, and for twenty years he will not spend what you spent in Carbonear in the last year when you backed up the council to get in here. That is what is going on in this Province.

Mr. Murphy: (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Chairman, I would say one thing that you would not need many points to have the majority that the Member for St. John's South had. You do not need many points to match his majority. He would not be here only for the court.

Mr. Murphy: Now (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: You would have to go to the court to find your way in the House of Assembly.

Mr. Murphy: What are you against the courts?

Mr. Tobin: No, I am not against the courts. As a matter of fact, I think they did the right thing to bring you in here because if we could only get television into the House now and see how you conduct yourself for the people of the Province - you will not be long bringing down this Government.

Now what about the health issue in this Province.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Tobin: People have been thrown out on the streets, the sick and the suffering in this Province. My colleague for Grand Bank, Mr. Chairman, is going to be back tomorrow with a thorough

analysis done as to what the health cutbacks mean to the Burin Peninsula.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: Yes, and the teachers are going to throw you in the streets too -

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tobin: - yourself and your colleague the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations.

Mr. Doyle: You and the Member for Conception Bay South.

Mr. Tobin: Like should be done. The other night we watched it on television and we watched it again tonight the substitute teachers in this Province, as a matter of fact today,

An Hon. Member: What about the Member for Mount Scio?

Mr. Tobin: No, when the Minister of Education got up in this Assembly today and said to the teachers of this Province go have your in-service training on Saturdays.

Mr. Walsh: A good idea.

Mr. Tobin: Now there is the Member for Mount Scio - Bell Island attacking the teachers of this Province like he did this evening. He is constantly attacking the teachers of this Province. I would like to know if the Member for Exploits shares your view as to what you have to say about teachers today? I would like to know if the Member for Carbonear shares your view as it relates to what you had to say today? Because I am not sure they do. I am not sure that the Member

for Carbonear is going to say to the teachers of this Province go have your in-service training on Saturdays and after school like the Minister of Education said today. And there were teachers and substitute teachers in the galleries today whom I met with after who could not believe the arrogance and the attitude that the Minister of Education displayed towards that profession.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An Hon. Member: What is so funny?

An Hon. Member: Shame!

Mr. Tobin: The arrogance that he displayed towards the education profession in this Province.

An Hon. Member: The hon. Member for Carbonear who (inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: I do not think for one minute, as a matter of fact, I just looked at some of the messages that came in today on another petition.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Tobin: Do you know what it said?

An Hon. Member: Table it! Table it!

Mr. Tobin: Yes, I will table it. I tabled the last petition, and I will be tabling this one tomorrow. The letters they returned, I will table it. Why don't you table the letters you are getting back from your constituents and do not tell me you are not getting them because I had a call from a constituent of yours who told me.

An Hon. Member: That is not true.

Mr. Tobin: That is true.

An Hon. Member: It is not true.

Mr. Tobin: And the teachers in his district are suspicious that he is throwing them in the garbage can.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Tobin: Yes, they are. That is what the teachers of Placentia, they are extremely suspicious -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: Did you hear him that time, Mr. Chairman?

Did you hear him that time?

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!
Order, please!

Mr. Tobin: Anyway, Mr. Chairman, what is the message for the President of Treasury Board? Do you know what they said when they first got the letters? Most of the teachers put them in the garbage, immediately, when they got the trash. Tell the Minister not to bother with this any more, his arrogance must be growing under his leader's wing; his arrogance must be growing under his leader's wing!

Now I think that, that says everything about the attitude the teachers have towards this Government, it says everything about the arrogance being displayed by the Minister of Education and others.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: I do not know what you are talking about. Are you talking about the bodyguard who was on television during the Meech

Lake debate?

An Hon. Member: No, no. (Inaudible), the night before (inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: Were you talking about the bodyguard who was on television during the Meech Lake debate in this Province?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: Two bodyguards, two bodyguards.

Ms Verge: (Inaudible) guard to guard the guard.

Mr. Tobin: Yes, the guard, the guard, the guard; two. As a matter of fact, there were twice as many guards there as the Member for St. John's South majority. The Premier, when he was up on the Meech Lake Debate, had twice as many guards with him as the majority of the Member for St. John's South in the last election. That is what is happening in this Province.

The waste: how many travelled on that aeroplane, that chartered aeroplane, that is what I would like to know and I think the people of Newfoundland, I believe the people of Newfoundland have a right to know, how many people were on that plane that was on the tarmac? How many people travelled and the names, that is something that I would like to see, and it is something that the people of this Province are going to have a right to see, and it is something we are going to see, Mr. Chairman.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: I hope you checked with the jail when you were out to see if there are any more locked

up. That is what is happening in this Province today. You have the Minister of Finance who has refused to answer one question in this debate, yet they bring in closure. Why is it that the Minister of Finance has refused to deal with the issues which have been raised in this Assembly regarding cutbacks? Why? That is the question that has to be answered as well.

The President of Treasury Board or the Government House Leader, can bring in closure to cut off debate to protect the incompetence of the Minister of Finance, who refuses to answer a question in this debate. That is what is happening in this Legislature. This Government has used closure more often than it has ever been used in this Assembly before, in eighteen months more often than in twenty-five years, that is what is happening.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: How would you know? That is what is happening in this Province; we saw the day you were left in charge of the House, you know a lot about it. Now the Minister of Education is back and it is about time and I hope some of the teachers had a hold of him tonight when he was out, after what he said today: go have your in-service training on Saturdays and on weekends; what arrogance was displayed by that Minister today!

Now, what about the teacher-assistants in this Province? The Minister told us last week it could be over in an half-hour, the strike, and NAPE finally convinced Treasury Board, the Ministers to let their people back to the table tonight. What

about that, where is the concern by the Minister of Social Services? Where is the concern by the Minister of Social Services for these children who are not in school, that he has some responsibility for?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible) this Minister of Social Services (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: I wish the Member of St. John's South would stand up and speak in this debate. He probably said more than anybody else. I hope you get up in your own chair. But what is happening here is an example of arrogance -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Chairman: Order, please! Order, please!

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Chairman, I do not care who speaks in this House or who does not. Or how many meetings my colleagues have or how many of them get together. That is not important to me. I have to say what I have to say because I believe that we have the most arrogant Government ever elected in the history of our Province.

And I can tell you something else. The labour movement in this Province, there have been more protests out here in the last ten days than we have seen in the last ten years. We have seen the Teacher Assistants out there marching against this Government. We have seen, today, one of the largest gatherings of people that we have ever seen. A combination of the President of the Fisherman's Union out lambasting this Government action; you have got today the President of NAPE -

An Hon. Member: He said we could

work the thing (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: Oh, yes, they said you were a wonderful Government. The teachers said you are a wonderful fellow too. Keith Coombs said that too, about how lucky they are to have you in there to straighten everything out.

An Hon. Member: No he did not.

Mr. Tobin: Yes, no mistake. You should hear what the teachers were saying about you. And they are right. Because nobody in the history of this Province has ever turned their back on a group like you and your colleague the Minister of Labour have done. It is the quickest 360 degrees that we have ever seen. How can -

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: Three hundred and sixty degrees. I would suggest to the Member from Windsor - Buchans that he go in and take that call that he made there fifty years ago.

Yes, he said, Mr. 'Chairman,' 'I was in meetings all morning but my Deputy Minister took the call.' The call made fifty years ago. The Deputy Minister took the call.

But what we have -

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: Yes. I think everybody has - oh, you ought to talk about turning 360 degrees. When you went down to the rock concert and when they asked you who was the fellow who was with you you did not know. He was a stranger then. After he got the contract he was a stranger, wasn't he? Right? He didn't know who he was then. But I tell you he bloody well knew who you were

before he got the contract! He knew who you were before he got the contract. Yes, they said, who was that? He said, well I don't know what you call friends. You know. And here is - you could hardly see him with sunglasses. They even had sunglasses alike, Mr. Chairman.

And then we talk about why this Province is in the financial mess it is in. What is going on here. You have got the Minister of Health -

An Hon. Member: Time's up.

Mr. Tobin: Your time is up. Mr. Chairman, I have five minutes left. And I can say to the Member from Exploits I have five minutes to spend now dealing with where he came from.

Why, sir, are you sitting in this Government, in the Premier's office, allowing this Government to do to the teachers of the Province what they are doing? How can you as a former President of the NTA allow this Government to basically tear up the negotiations that have taken place? What is happening to the pension plan with this Government and yet you support them?

An Hon. Member: That is not true.

Mr. Tobin: What is not true? It is true. They are tearing up the pension plans of every civil servant, that is what is happening here, and you are standing by and letting them do it to the teachers of this Province. You, Sir, lack any courage. There is more courage and backbone in a jellyfish than is in you when it relates to standing up for the rights of teachers in this Province, and when you let the

President of Treasury Board beat up on the teachers. The Minister of Education has done absolutely nothing to defend the teachers except attack them. That is what the Minister of Education has done. Let them go and have their in-service on weekends. What an arrogant and complacent attitude for a Minister.

Dr. Warren: I did not say that.

Mr. Tobin: He did say it. He said it today. You most certainly did say it and the record will show that you said it. Here is the integrity of this Government. Let the record show that the Member for Carbonear said you did say it. It is not just me. It is one of his colleagues the Member for Carbonear. Look, he agrees again.

Mr. Reid: A point of order, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Chairman, he does not even know the rules of the House.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Tobin: And the Marystown Shipyard workers were down there today, too, by the way. They were down here today with their banners with the Federation of Labour, I can assure you that, condemning the attitude of this Government towards the Marystown Shipyard. That is what is happening in this Province. You forced the shipyard workers to travel to St John's to protest. The arrogance and contempt this Government has towards the labour movement in this Province.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Chairman I do not

know if they were in a bus or in streetcars. I would say fifty years ago when the Minister used to take the phone calls it used to be streetcars and not buses. That is what we had in this Province. I encourage all members opposite, and on this side, to take Hansard and circulate it to the teachers. The Minister said, go have their in-service on Saturdays, despicable, Mr. Chairman, what arrogance.

An Hon. Member: You are out of gas.

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Chairman, if anyone gets out of gas here it is only a matter of touching up against the Member for Placentia and you will get a recharge pretty easy. There is more gas being wasted over there than the Persian Gulf is going to affect us.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if you could ask the member to answer the phone and let us get on with the important debate in this Legislature. I can tell you one thing, the Minister of Mines and Energy is worth all the rest of the Ministers put together.

An Hon. Member: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tobin: If the Cabinet was made up of people with the sense of responsibility and commitment to this Province that the Minister of Energy has I tell you there would be some Cabinet. But we do not have it. And what does the Premier do? He looks to his backbenches. Well, what have you got?

You got the Member from Mount Scio - Bell Island saying, I am the jewel of the Liberal Party, I am

soon going to be in Cabinet. And, Mr. Chairman, if that is the jewel of the Liberal backbenches and the Premier is soon going to put him in Cabinet, I would say that it is no wonder that the Premier has to put up with the incompetence of the Minister of Social Services and the Minister of Transportation, the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Education. It is no wonder -

Mr. Chairman: Order, please! Order, please!

The hon. Member's time is up.

Mr. Tobin: By leave, Mr. Chairman?

An Hon. Member: By leave?

Some Hon. Members: No leave!

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Dr. Kitchen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was wondering if I was going to get a standing ovation.

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

Mr. Chairman: Order, please! Order, please!

Dr. Kitchen: Mr. Chairman, the Leader of the Opposition this afternoon indicated that he wanted to ask some questions about the loan bill. And he proceeded to ask one. And since that is the first question that has been asked on the loan bill I thought I had better answer it. Because the

Leader of the Opposition is a responsible person and he also indicated that if I answered his questions we would not have to invoke closure. So I am going to hold him to his promise now and I am going to try to answer the question that he asked. And if there are any other questions over there that I can answer I will try to answer them.

The Leader of the Opposition looked at the budget of last year and quoted from it that equalization payments were estimated for the year 1990-1991 to be \$966,900,000. And then he quoted from a document which I believe was the September 30 release from the Federal Department of Finance indicating that our entitlements this year were \$960.5 million.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Dr. Kitchen: Alright, something in that order anyway. And in any event, let me say this: the latest document we have from Federal finance does indicate that the entitlements for this year might be \$960.5 million, and that indicates - and he was wondering - if that were the case, why we would be bothered worrying about the \$60 million when the difference is only \$5 million.

Well, let me explain that the position has not changed one iota since we made that release about the more than \$60 million. And let me explain just what is going on here. Because the actual amount really is not \$960 million but something like \$997 million. But there is a ceiling. You see, the equalization payments, if they rise higher than the GNP for a period of several years then a ceiling is invoked. And the

ceiling is invoked for 1990-1991 to the tune of \$36.7 million. So when we subtract the \$36.7 million from the \$997 million we are back to our figure of \$960.5 million. But that is not the end of it, because after that we have some prior years of adjustments of \$34.2 million which is made up of ceilings for the two prior years of 1988-89, and 1989-90, of I think it is \$28 million. And other entitlement overpayments for the same two prior years and these entitlements result from adjustments to the thirty-seven items that form the equalization. There are thirty-seven tax basis coming from all provinces of Canada, these are put together and certain adjustments are made as a result of the figures that are coming in, and that is \$6.2 million. So when you take the \$6.2 million on adjustments to the \$28 million on ceilings for 1988-89, and 1989-90, you get \$34 million, that must be subtracted from the \$960 million which brings you down to \$924 million or \$926 million actually.

Now when we did our readjustment as a result of the March 30th figures from the Federal Government we said it was \$906, not \$926, but \$906.6. Now what accounts for the approximately \$20 million difference: that is the extra \$20 million that the Federal Government is suggesting that we might be getting. And we are very nervous about that \$20 million, and for a very special reason, and we are not going to really alter our figures as a result of that. The Premier alluded to that today. The reason for it is this that these figures are based on the budgets from the various provinces and, as we know, the revenues that were in these budgets in almost all provinces

are overestimated because Canada as you know is in a recession and the revenues that were predicted in Ontario are down, and the revenues that were predicted in Nova Scotia are down, and all the revenues are down which means that the next time these figures are released by the Federal Government in January we suspect that \$20 million will be wiped out, perhaps more, we are not absolutely certain what is going to happen, but the chances are because these budgets overestimated their revenue, and then the Federal Government is going to have to adjust their points again. So we are not paying much attention to that \$20 million that they thought on their recalculations. All right, we would sooner go with the original ones. And that basically is what it is.

So you take the \$966.9 million in the Budget, you take off the \$60.3 million on equalization which we announced, we were talking of a figure of \$63.7 million, \$60.3 is equalization, and the remainder is EPF changes and two or three other little items and that brings us back to the \$906.6 million. So, Mr. Chairman, our original thought that the Federal entitlements as expressed in cashflow are really down by the \$63.7 million. And despite the things that are occurring you have to look at the statements and analyze them and come up with that. So basically our original figures of \$63.7 million are roughly what it is going to be we think by the end of the year. That is our best estimates at this point in time.

So it would be wrong to say that of that \$125 million, the bulk of it is not Federal equalization and other adjustments because that basically what it is. I just

wanted to clear up that point for the Leader of the Opposition and now I presume he will let us have The Loan Bill.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Rideout: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, if that is what you call clarity, I would hate to get stuck in the fog. You know, Mr. Speaker, this Minister and this Government is showing more and more every time that they get on their feet that they are more and more incompetent than we thought they were!

Some Hon. Members: Right on, right on!

Mr. Rideout: More and more incompetent than the evidence shows that they are. Mr. Speaker, I listened without interrupting the hon. Minister once, not once did I interrupt - I do not believe a soul over here interrupted, because I was so engrossed in making notes as to this clarification he was talking about.

The Member for Exploits should go out and talk to some teachers around the Province who have a bone to pick with him.

First of all, let me say this to the Minister of Finance. I asked the Minister eight questions; I repeated some of them again today, they are in Hansard of Thursday, he has yet to respond to one of them. He took out of the air an opportunity to respond to one series of questions which I raised in the House today, but the eight questions which I asked on

Thursday on revenue from the Government of Canada, total combined revenue federal and provincial, expenditures and were we up or down on those expenditures, estimates on provincial revenue, he has not yet, not once yet has he made one response to those series of eight questions that I asked him in debate in this House on Thursday.

Not once, so if he thinks that picking a little piece of the pie out of the air and responding to, tonight as incompetently as he responded to it, is going to satisfy the legitimate questions which we have raised on this side including myself then the Minister of Finance is going to have to get to his feet on another couple of occasions yet.

I meant what I said to him today; if the Minister of Finance is prepared to be forthcoming and to provide this House with up-to-date, appropriate, accurate, honest information that we think is plausible and believable, then we are prepared to accept that and to get on with giving the Government the authority to borrow another \$325 million.

But if the Minister is going to continue to stifle himself in his seat and only get up on the odd occasion when he thinks that he has an answer, then, Mr. Speaker, the Government House Leader might as well call closure whenever he feels like it, because we are not going to be irresponsible enough to allow this bill to go through unless we get some answers, and the Minister has yet to provide a single answer!

He has yet to respond to the eight questions that I asked him on Thursday; he has yet to tell us

whether or not the estimates sheets in his Budget are- what are the revised sheets from that Budget of March 15, what are the revised figures? Not a single word do we hear, not a word. The silence is deafening, so we are going to stay at it. We are going to stay at it until the Minister comes to his senses and provide some information.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let me get back to the whistling past your grave response that the Minister just gave us a few minutes ago. Mr. Speaker, I was going to say something to the Member for Harbour Grace, but I will not.

The Minister has just confirmed what we said in this House today. The fact of the matter is that in the Minister's Budget of March 15, the Minister estimated, just to round off the figure, that the Province was anticipating \$966 million in equalization payments from the Government of Canada this year. There is some change beyond that, but just to keep it simple, it was estimated to be \$966 million.

The latest estimate from the Government of Canada, the October 1st. estimate from the Government of Canada, is still that this Province will receive \$960 million.

Dr. Kitchen: Not true.

Mr. Rideout: Well it is true!

An Hon. Member: It is not.

Mr. Rideout: Well the Minister just said it was true a few minutes ago.

Dr. Kitchen: I explained why it was not true.

Mr. Rideout: You did not explain why it was not true. And when the Minister was trying to explain it I had more courtesy than to interrupt him, Mr. Chairman, I was listening and making notes as to what he was saying. The fact of the matter is -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible) names.

Mr. Rideout: Mr. Speaker, the Minister is the one who should listen. His budget document estimated \$966 million in equalization. The October 1 estimate from the Government of Canada is still that we will receive -

An Hon. Member: No.

Mr. Rideout: It is.

An Hon. Member: It is not.

Mr. Rideout: It is.

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

Mr. Rideout: Now produce it. Produce a piece of paper from the Government of Canada -

An Hon. Member: Adjustments have to be made.

Mr. Rideout: Produce the piece of paper from the Government of Canada, from a bureaucrat or a politician saying that it is \$63.7 million short. Produce it. If you got the evidence and the information lay it on the table of this House.

Mr. Simms: He can't produce it.

Mr. Rideout: If you can document it.

An Hon. Member: Document it.

Mr. Rideout: We called up to the Finance Department and got the October estimate, that is what we got, Mr. Chairman, and their estimate is still that this Province will receive \$960 million, Mr. Chairman, a difference of \$6 million.

Dr. Kitchen: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Rideout: It is not even a point of foolishness, sit down.

Mr. Chairman: Order, please! Order, please!

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

Dr. Kitchen: Mr. Chairman, the hon. Leader of the Opposition is confusing entitlements with cashflow, and that is his basic problem.

Mr. Rideout: I am talking about estimates.

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

There is no point of order.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Rideout: Mr. Chairman, it is not even a laughable point of foolishness. What I am talking about is the estimates on equalization that the Minister felt confident enough to include in his Budget on March 15, vis-a-vis the estimate that has come out of Ottawa as of October 1. Now if the Minister was confident enough to take the Ottawa estimates and put in his Budget on March 15, what is wrong

with us accepting the latest estimate out of Ottawa dated October 1, I say to the Minister? And that estimate, Mr. Chairman, suggests that this Province can still expect to receive on equalization payments from the Government of Canada \$960 million, \$6 million less than the Minister predicted in his Budget, Mr. Chairman.

An Hon. Member: Not true.

Mr. Simms: Table it. Get up and table it.

Mr. Rideout: Now, if the Minister has evidence that is different from or contrary from that bring it into the House.

Mr. Simms: Without doctoring it now, without doctoring.

Mr. Rideout: Without cooking around with it. Bring it in and put it on the table and if we are wrong then somebody has given us wrong information. That is the challenge to the Minister. If the Minister has the evidence bring it in here.

An Hon. Member: Cooking the books.

Mr. Rideout: If the Minister has the evidence bring it in. We are not too big to say that we were given wrong information.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible.)

Mr. Rideout: It is not a matter of explaining that I say to my Member for Exploits, it is a matter now of bringing in the evidence. And why is it a matter of bringing in the evidence, Mr. Chairman? Why is it a matter of bringing in the evidence now? I tell you why, because there has been one deception after another

through this budgetary process since March 15. One trend of deception after another.

An Hon. Member: Right on!

Mr. Rideout: The Minister of Finance came into this House in March and he told us that his best guess was that we could expect a \$10 million surplus on current account. The Minister of Finance knew before the Budget debate began. The Premier has confirmed for this House that the Government of Canada verbally on March 30 and in writing on April 4, before the Budget debate began, this Government knew that it was possible that there equalization numbers were wrong.

An Hon. Member: That is wrong.

Mr. Rideout: That is a fact.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

Mr. Rideout: That is the first deception.

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

The hon. the Minister of Finance on a point of order.

Dr. Kitchen: Mr. Chairman, the hon. Leader of the Opposition is not speaking what is true. The Budget debate began on March 15 with the Budget Speech and at that point we did not know about these entitlements. We did not know until March 31 in a phone call and sometime in April afterwards.

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

The hon. Minister is using the point of order to give an explanation so it is not really a

point of order.

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Rideout: What the Minister of Finance is doing, Mr. Chairman, is taking the guise of a point of order to confirm once again, as has been confirmed now in this House on many occasions that the deception, the deceit, and the fraudulent document that he brought in here called a Budget. That is what he is doing, Mr. Chairman. The Budget debate begins in this House when the Minister of Finance reads his Budget Speech. That is in fact what happens, but what else happens? The moment the Minister of Finance finishes reading this Budget Speech this House adjourns for a period of time for members to consider the Budget. On this particular occasion this year, Mr. Chairman, before the House got around to considering the Budget, in other words before the House got around to responding to the Minister's Budget Speech the House took its Easter recess and the Budget debate in fact did not begin in this Legislature until sometime in April, and the deception and deceit continued, Mr. Chairman, all during April while members from both sides of this House sat down and grilled Ministers on estimates that were not true. The Government knew they were not true, Mr. Chairman, that is the deception.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Rideout: The Government knew verbally on 30 March before debate began, the Government knew in writing on April 4 before debate began, that their numbers were wrong, yet they continued to mislead and deceive this House for

all of April, and for twenty-nine days in May Mr. Chairman, not a word was said about a Budget deficit. Not a word was said about lower equalization payments, not a word was said about being off provincial revenue projections, not a single squeak, Mr. Chairman, did we hear from one Minister on that side of the House. That is the tread of deception that went through this House for fifty or sixty days, Mr. Chairman. Now, the Minister of Social Services can come in, sit down, and find out what happened. What happened after that, Mr. Chairman? We projected that the figures were wrong. Our finance critic, the Member for Mount Pearl, said they were wrong. Then in June or so we gave some numbers as to how much we thought they were wrong. What happened, Mr. Chairman? The Government did not admit until August -

An Hon. Member: Mind you blood pressure.

Mr. Rideout: Do not let the Minister worry about my blood pressure. I could not think about a better cause to go down for than honesty and integrity in Government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Rideout: In August the Minister of Finance finally admitted that he might have a \$55 million problem. Then there was nothing else said again until, I believe, it was October. I am not quite certain of the date but sometime after October 1, sometime just before this House opened, the Minister of Finance and the Premier went before the cameras and told the people of Newfoundland and Labrador they did

not have a \$55 million problem. We do not have a \$10 million surplus, but we have a \$120 million problem, and it could be more, and \$63.7 million of that problem is because we are going to get \$63.7 million less in equalization. That is what he told the people of this Province. The Premier and the Minister of Finance went before the people of this Province and told them that, even though they knew that the Ottawa estimate on October 1 was that there would only be a \$6 million difference.

An Hon. Member: What did you have for your supper?

Mr. Rideout: I had a bit of chicken, Mr. Chairman. I do not know if I got it from Mr. Walsh or from his colleague or not. But I had a bit of chicken. I was tied up with Barbara McDougall until about 6:30 -

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

Mr. Rideout: - and I rushed home and I put a bit of chicken in me and rushed back again, Mr. Chairman.

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

Mr. Rideout: Now, Mr. Chairman, the point - they can howl and holler all they like, if they are not going to give answers they will have to use closure. They will have to use the guillotine, they will have to use the hobnail boot, if they are not going to give answers, Mr. Chairman. But the point is this. There has been one wave of deception after another on this budget. And it has continued from March 15 through to March 30 through to April 4, through to August, through to October, and it is

continuing in this House today, Mr. Chairman!

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: Bunch of frauds.

Mr. Rideout: No, Mr. Chairman, not because I say it, it is going to make it true, any more than it is going to make it true that the Opposition have had lots of time to debate this loan bill just because the Premier says it, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Simms: Right on.

Mr. Rideout: If this Government was not lead by a person who believes in deception they would have brought a new budget before this House, Mr. Chairman.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Rideout: That is the truth! You would have brought a new budget in. You would not have allowed this House to continue from April until May 29 debating a deceitful, fraudulent document. You would not have allowed it. If this Government was interested in the truth they would have told the people of Newfoundland and Labrador in October, we do not have a \$63.7 million problem with the Federal Government. It might be a \$6 million problem, plus the \$34 million of overpayment from other years. From last year.

Mr. Simms: Forty.

Mr. Rideout: So for a total of \$40 million, which the Premier admitted in this House today.

Mr. Chairman, is it wrong for Members on this side of the House or the public of Newfoundland and Labrador to expect anything less

than the truth on budgetary matters or on any matter? Is it wrong?

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: Well, you had had lots of opportunity. Why didn't you?

Mr. Rideout: The Minister has had opportunity after opportunity.

Mr. Simms: Time and time again you have been asked.

Mr. Rideout: Time and time again in Question Period.

Mr. Simms: You did not know, that is the reason.

Mr. Rideout: I mean, we have feathered out here information, Mr. Chairman, that the Government never came forward with at all.

Mr. Simms: Even their own backbenchers don't know.

Mr. Rideout: Even their own backbenchers, I suppose, do not know it.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Rideout: Mr. Chairman -

Mr. Simms: They will sit there and howl, that is all they will do, but they do not know what is going on.

Mr. Rideout: And then they have the audacity - the Minister of Finance has the audacity - to get up and pick one question out of the air, which he bumbled and fumbled and did not answer, and forget about all the other questions that I personally, and others, have asked over the last several days. And he has the audacity to get up and say: I

suppose now after doing that the Opposition is going to allow this bill to go through.

Well, Mr. Chairman -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Rideout: Mr. Chairman, I am not at all worried about next year. What I am worried about is the truth and honesty of the financial position of this Province this year. We will worry about next year later when it comes. But the Minister of Finance has got to start to give this House answers. And they have got to be correct answers. They have to be answers that can stand scrutiny. You can not just jump up and give some kind of an answer off your head and expect that that is going to satisfy the Opposition.

And what is happening in this Province now, Mr. Chairman, as a result of the announcement made by the Premier and the Minister of Finance a couple of weeks ago? You have hospital administrators, nursing home administrators, you have senior citizens, parents, people all over Newfoundland and Labrador are out there now scratching their head and worried, wondering what is going to be the result of the freeze that the Premier said he had to impose on expenditure in health and education in particular, because we were in such a financial mess.

I asked the Minister of Health the other day about a particular institution and he said, oh, the administrator got caught in the corner with the media and he made some wrong information. Well, I did not get around to it today, Mr. Chairman, but we now have a copy of the letter that the Minister of Health on the 15th of

October sent to every administrator in a health care institution in this Province, and the Minister, Mr. Chairman, did not mince any words. The Minister told him that they will have to spend next year what the net expenditure is in 1991. Signed by the hon. the Minister of Health, Mr. Chairman.

An Hon. Member: No, what?

Mr. Rideout: That is the letter that went out on October 15 to every health care institution administrator in this Province saying I can tell you now that you will have to spend in 1991-1992 what your net revised expenditure was for 1990-91. In other words, the freeze, the new 'f' word, Mr. Chairman, that the Government has been denying. They have been denying it day after day in this House, what they are saying is: we have gone out and consulted with the experts, and we have gone out and asked expert opinion from those administrators who are expert in their field. It may be that Bay St. George may not have a total freeze. It may be that it is not right and proper to do that in Bay St. George, and it will have to be worse somewhere else. Well they all got the same letter, Mr. Speaker. They have been all told to rework their numbers and come back to the Government with how they proposed to live within that Budget and Government will make the final decision and let them know. In fact, they were told, Mr. Chairman, that new computations from the department would go out the following week, in other words the week of the 16th to the 20th, I believe it was. Have they gone out? Or are those health administrators out there involved in a useless exercise that they should not be

involved in?

Is the deficit still \$120 million projected? Is it? We have not had any answer from the Minister of Finance or anybody else. Mr. Chairman, is it worse? Is it better?

An Hon. Member: It may be worse.

Mr. Rideout: It may be worse. Well tell us what your best guess is.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Rideout: Well that is what you said, but now you are saying it may be worse.

Mr. Simms: That is right.

Mr. Rideout: Is your best guess -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible) better.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Simms: Which is it?

Mr. Doyle: You just said it could be worse.

Mr. Rideout: You told us you were going to get \$63.5 million less in equalization this year. But that is not a fact.

An Hon. Member: It is.

Mr. Rideout: It is not a fact.

The Minister did not explain it. He did not even do a good job at muddying it, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Simms: Just confusing it even more.

Mr. Rideout: All the hon. gentlemen, the lady is not there,

on the other side can try to do what they like in terms of a personal attack. You do not have the intellectual ability. You are silly and you are stupid. That does not bother me one bit, Mr. Chairman.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Rideout: I have some understanding of what honesty is. I have some understanding of answering a question truthfully. I have some understanding of the fact that the Government has been, in my view, and I think the evidence supports it, being deceptive from day one in this budgetary process. I have some understanding of that. And if the gentlemen opposite do not like that then I could not care less, Mr. Chairman.

But I happen to believe it. And there are other people in this Province who are wondering over the last couple of weeks whether or not it has all been necessary. There are people who are wondering, Mr. Chairman, what happened to the promise of real change; what happened to fairness and balance; what happened to the Liberal commitment, that we are not worried about balance sheets, as published in their Liberal policy manual, that the health -

Mr. Simms: Compassion.

Mr. Rideout: - care, system of this Province will be based on compassion, not balance sheets.

These were the buzzwords eighteen months ago, Mr. Chairman. Hospital beds will open. That is what people are talking about from one end of this Province to the other now. And that is fine. But it is incumbent on the Government

to provide solid, irrefutable answers.

Mr. Tobin: (Inaudible).

Mr. Rideout: Yes, and I would imagine, Mr. Chairman, that because of the budgetary freeze the net - once you net it all out - and the closures take place that the hospital administrators are talking about as a result of this freeze, that there will be more closed than were opened and in use when this Government took office eighteen months ago.

Premier Wells: We will see.

Mr. Rideout: We will see. That is right. I concur with the Premier, we will see.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: If you are not going to do it let them know.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible) fearmongering (Inaudible).

Mr. Rideout: No, a freeze is not a freeze, says this Premier.

Mr. Simms: Not a cut, he says.

Mr. Rideout: A freeze is not a cut, says this Premier. The Minister of Health says a freeze is not a cut. But, Mr. Chairman, if the Government of Canada freezes a programme or caps a programme then that is so much of a cut as far as this Government is concerned. We heard the reaction last year after the Federal budget. And rightly so! Because a freeze is a cut. We have tried, in debate back and forth, particularly with the President of Treasury Board, to establish what some of those increases are for next year. And we know that most

of the institutions are taking into next year a 7 per cent wage hike. We know that. Where are they going to get that in a frozen state of affairs, Mr. Chairman?

We know that medical supplies go up, that the cost of heat and light and maintenance of the plant goes up.

Mr. Simms: Worker's Comp.

Mr. Rideout: We know that there is, what? Is it a \$54 million or \$34 million problem with Worker's Compensation for the hospitals?

Mr. Simms: Significant increases.

Mr. Rideout: It is millions of dollars anyway.

An Hon. Member: Nine million.

Mr. Rideout: Nine million. That the Worker's Compensation Commission is asking in addition from the hospital and health care institutions in this Province. We know there is going to be some inflation. It is not going to be in a zero situation, Mr. Chairman. The experts that the Premier depends so much on in the system have said categorically that in their view that will add 12 per cent to their costs next year. All of those things that I have been through now on two or three different occasions in this House.

An Hon. Member: That is not a cut, that is not a cut.

Mr. Rideout: But that is not a cut, says the Premier. It is going to add 12 per cent. There are some institutions saying it is going to add slightly in excess of 13 per cent.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Rideout: But the - well, there we go again. The President of Treasury Board says they are wrong.

Mr. Simms: They are all wrong.

Mr. Rideout: They are all wrong!

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

An Hon. Member: Why don't you explain it?

Mr. Rideout: When the nurses were in the gallery in this House last week the Premier said they did not know what they were talking about; NAPE does not know what it is talking about; the Opposition do not know what they are talking about.

Mr. Simms: Administrators.

Mr. Rideout: The administrators of the homes and the institutions do not know what they are talking about. I suppose, as normal, Mr. Chairman, for this Government and this Premier, the only one who knows what he is talking about is the Premier. Everybody else is absolutely, 100 per cent off.

But I am operating, Mr. Chairman, under the assumption that some of those experts out there, whom the Premier referred to in the first few days of this present session of the House, do in fact know what they are talking about.

Mr. Simms: Right on.

Mr. Rideout: I am operating under the assumption that many, many, many of them know what they are talking about.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Rideout: That is right Rick Nurse, Sister Elizabeth Davis from St. Clare's; there have been dozens of them quoted in the media over the last several days, re-iterating and re-affirming that a freeze to them means this: A freeze to St. Clare's means they have \$5 million or \$6 million less to spend next year. A freeze to St. Clare's means that there is going to be X number of people laid off; a freeze to St. Clare's means that there is going to have to be X number of beds closed; a freeze to St. Clare's means that there is going to have to be programmes scrapped.

I am operating under the assumption Mr. Speaker, that those experts that the Premier talked about and in which the Minister put so much faith, know, they know that a freeze on their system, the health care system means about 1,200 less jobs in the health care system next year, because that is what the experts are saying-

Ms Verge: The Minister cannot hold up his head (inaudible).

An Hon. Member: St Clare's have already called in their people and told them they are going to be laid off.

Mr. Rideout: Yes, I am operating under the assumption that the expert managers of the health care system know that a freeze means 400 or 500 hospital bed closures. I am operating under the assumption, Mr. Speaker, that school boards know that a freeze to their budget means several hundred less teachers.

I am operating under the assumption that those experts out there in the system have to use the Premier's own words: have a

better handle, on what it is going to mean than the Government does, because, Mr. Speaker, there has been no evidence to the contrary. Who am I going to believe, am I going to believe the administrator of the Valley Vesta Senior Citizens Home in Springdale, who has sat down with his board-

Mr. Simms: He is still trying to explain it to him.

Mr. Rideout: - am I going to believe that administrator out there who sat down with his board and said, look, ladies and gentlemen of the board, we have been told that we have a freeze on our budget for next year. Now, a freeze for us means so many hundreds of thousands of dollars less in income because of all the other factors.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Rideout: How much.

Mr. Hewlett: Nearly \$700,000.

Mr. Rideout: Nearly \$700,000 the Member for Green Bay tells me, so that expert administrator of the home in Springdale says to his board, as a result of the Government freeze, as a result of inflation and higher salaries and heat and light and all of that, he tells his board that we will have \$700,000 less to spend next year and the Government have asked me and you, the board, to go back to them and tell them how we are going to save, not save, shave, shave \$700,000 off our budget.

So the administrator in his expert wisdom, with the concurrence of his board, goes back and says: you have to lay off twenty employees, close twenty-six beds and a whole bunch of other things, but these

are the major components. That is the only way we can do it.

We come to the House and ask the Government, the appropriate Ministers the question: Oh, no, no, no, that is not the case at all, that is not the case at all. We have asked him to send in those things, then we will have a look at it and then we will see if that is what it is going to be.

And we have, Mr. Speaker, raised institution after institution, who have spoken out publicly, not that they have spoken to us, but they have spoken out publicly. Some are afraid to talk to us, some of them we call, say, we had better not get into giving you that now because they might use that example in the House, then we might get a back-handed slap in the chops from the Minister of Health.

An Hon. Member: Intimidation.

Mr. Rideout: Intimidation.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Ms Verge: There is a lot of that on the go.

Mr. Rideout: I can tell you one thing, Mr. Chairman, there were a lot of people in the civil service when we were the Government, and I am sure the Minister of Social Services could name a few of them if he were so inclined, who were prepared to talk more than there are today. Ask the young man Anstey, the wildlife officer out in Western Newfoundland what happens when you dare, even though you are speaking on behalf of your association - people elected you as President of your association. Ask him.

Ms Verge: A matter of life and safety.

Mr. Rideout: It is a matter of life and safety. Ask him what happens if you dare, if you have the audacity and the gall to be critical of this Government. A letter of reprimand goes in his file. He is hauled in here from the West Coast and told to never dare do that again. Then members on the other side of the House, when we raise those things, will nod their head, that is the right way to go, or some foolish cat call, Mr. Chairman. Despite the fact that the Premier says five or six days, or whatever it might be, by the time this bill comes to a vote, it's plenty of time for the Opposition. Despite that, we have a very unusual set of financial circumstances facing this Province today and we have so many unanswered questions. Like I said, at the risk of being repetitious, I put down eight myself on Thursday, and the Minister of Finance has not bothered to respond to one of them.

Dr. Kitchen: They have all been answered.

Mr. Rideout: They have not been answered. The Minister never got up. The first time he got up since he introduced the bill was tonight so how could they be answered? They were not answered. There was no answer whatsoever. That series of questions were not raised in Question Period. I deliberately did not raise them in Question Period because they were so technical. I was hoping the Minister would take some note of them and go get the revised estimates and bring them back to this House. While all this is happening people in this Province

are being put through a real, real, difficult time. One moment Government will say, the best figure is a \$120 million deficit and another moment they will say it might be higher, and another moment they say it might be lower. What is the best guess we have today? Is it \$120 million? If it is, say so, that is the end of it, and stick to it, or is there some reason to believe it might change again. What is the situation on provincial government revenue? We can carry this on, and we will carry it on, in the hope that the Minister sometime between now and when a final vote comes on this bill, will provide answers. I said to the Minister today we could have it done in hours if the Minister was going to be co-operative and provide answers.

Mr. Chairman: The hon. the Government House Leader on a point of order.

Mr. Baker: (inaudible) a minute onto his time at the end if he wants. He mentioned earlier that there were a number of questions that he asked on Thursday in his speech that were not answered and he has referred to it several times since. I took the trouble in the interim to read his speech on Thursday last and I did find one question: is there any significant decline in provincial revenues? but I am having difficulty finding the other seven questions. I find questions like: is there any reason why I have three minutes left? and, when is this crowd going to get serious? Those are rhetorical questions, but I wonder if the Leader of the Opposition could list the questions he wanted answered that I cannot find in his speech on Thursday?

Mr. Simms: What is that, Mr. Chairman, a point of order or what was it?

Mr. Chairman: Are you speaking to the point of order?

Mr. Simms: Was it a point of order?

Mr. Chairman: Yes, a point of order.

Mr. Simms: Well I just raise the point it is not a point of order.

Mr. Chairman: That is right.

Mr. Simms: It is point raised by the Government House Leader to try to interrupt the Leader of the Opposition who is in full flight giving a tremendous speech, a fantastic speech, and nailing the Government, that is all. He used the opportunity to interrupt the Leader of the Opposition. He will sit back and listen, the Leader of the Opposition has another half an hour left yet. He will throw out lots of questions and make notes of them, and check Hansards and all the rest of it, and they will be repeated, if necessary. You need not worry, I need not try to interrupt the hon. Leader of the Opposition when he is in full flight. Shame on you.

An Hon. Member: Oh, oh!

Mr. Chairman: The hon. Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Baker: It is a matter of order, I just want to point that out. In the sense that the Leader of the Opposition has said several times that he is not going to give up, and he is going to keep going until he gets the answers to his questions, and I am simply trying to get the order of the House

straightened out. If we knew what the questions were, we would attempt an answer.

Mr. Chairman: There is no point of order.

Mr. Simms: There is no point of order. A good ruling, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Rideout: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, any Minister that was piloting a piece of legislation through this House, if the Minister were serious would make notes as a member from this side or the other side was speaking and raising some questions about a particular piece of legislation. You go look at Hansard from the speech that I made on Thursday, Mr. Chairman, do you think that the Government House Leader is going to find, Question 1, here it is; Question 2, here it is, Question 3, here it is. No, what the Government House Leader will find, Mr. Chairman, is my raising not really in question form, but in speech -

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Rideout: Hold on now! - in speech form: what about the revenues? What about the estimates? A whole bunch of them, Mr. Chairman. I have them all written out. I will go down to the office and I will pick them up and come back again because this debate is such that we can go back and forth and do it all over again. I will read them into the record again, if the Government House Leader wishes. But any competent Minister, Mr. Chairman,

piloting a piece of legislation through this House, if he were sincere, if he were co-operative would make notes of what members are asking. If we are asking about revised estimates, he would have made a note: revised estimates. When I get up now I will speak about that. If we are asking about revised expenditures, he would have made a note of that. When I get up I will speak about that. If we were asking, as I did in the very first question, what is the new revised estimate figure for revenues from the Government of Canada? That was the first question I asked him, now will that appear in Hansard, with a question mark after it? I cannot guarantee it, Mr. Chairman. I do not know exactly how I phrased the question. But I remember the question directly, as being the first one, Mr. Chairman.

What is this? Is it not a fact that a number of parts of the health care system have 7 per cent salary increases? was one of the questions I asked, built into their expenses for next year? There has not been any response to that. So if you want to go through Hansard and find out is it all there, with a question mark behind it, if you want to go through and take that incompetent cover up approach, Mr. Chairman, sure you can do that. Or if you had a sincere Minister who would have taken the notes as the questions were asked, then he could have gotten up right after and responded to them or went and got one of his officials and got up after somebody else spoke and responded to them. What did we have, Mr. Chairman? That was Thursday, we had a Minister who sat grafted to his chair until tonight. Grafted onto his chair until tonight, Mr. Chairman, you

would not handspike him out of his chair until tonight. But tonight we thought he had at least some kind of an answer on the equalization questions that I raised today and he got up.

The other questions that were raised last week, no. The Minister can go shake his finger, I am not a bit afraid, Mr. Chairman, of the Minister shaking his finger. I tell you now I am not trembling in my shoes over here about the Minister of Finance shaking his finger. I have seen a lot bigger and hard nippers in this House, Mr. Chairman, over the last 15 years, than the Minister of Finance. I can tell you that.

Mr. Chairman, the Minister of Finance made an announcement in this House on Friday regarding the closedown of the Clarenville taxation office. Let me ask the Minister of Finance some questions about that, that he might want to, before debate ends tonight, go down, call in his officials and get the answers.

Mr. Chairman, the Minister projected that it is going to save the Government I believe in the order of \$200,000 or \$250,000. The remaining - there are going to be three people, I believe it is, lose their jobs - the remaining number of employees out in that particular region will be transferred to either Grand Falls or St. John's, as I understand it.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Rideout: Now, Mr. Chairman - I will get to that in a second - how is that going to impact on the taxation work that those individuals do down around the Burin Peninsula and the Bonavista Peninsula and other parts of that

region? For example, I have been told through a phone call from one of the employees out there, yesterday I believe it was, that there is only one fuel tax inspector in that whole office now. As a matter of fact that individual told me - now, was this announced? I can't recall it being announced - that at the end of June last year there were fourteen individuals in the fuel tax inspection division in various regions of the Province. Ten of them were laid off last June. Was that an announcement? Was that made?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Rideout: Was it? You announced you laid off ten fuel tax inspectors. That was in the Budget? Okay, I will take the Minister's word but I will certainly have it checked. I do not recall it but that does not mean to say it was not there.

So therefore there are now four fuel tax inspectors for all of Newfoundland and Labrador. And probably one of those may be eliminated as a result of the Clarenville move, so I have been told. So it might be four or it might be three. But how in heaven's name can the Minister justify that when he puts it up against the statements made by the Premier over the weekend - I believe it was The Sunday Express - that the Government intends to decentralize out of St. John's to the various regions of the Province, where they can do it.

If you are going to be closing down existing Government services like the Provincial Taxation Office in Clarenville, what are you going to move back out into Clarenville? I have been hearing,

Mr. Chairman, consistently over the last few days, that the Government is also looking at the Motor Registration Division in Clarenville. That that is probably on the block. That that is going to be closed down. Can the Minister tell us whether or not that is under consideration?

We have been hearing all of those things, you know, through calls from all parts of the Province, Mr. Chairman, but yet lo and behold on the weekend you hear statements from the Premier that they are looking at doing the opposite. The evidence that we see so far - and God, please forgive us if we are stupid and lacking in intelligence - is to the contrary. That some of the Government service already out there in rural Newfoundland has been attacked and eroded and closed down.

Certainly that is the case now officially with the Clarenville Taxation Office. Is it soon going to be the case officially with the Clarenville Motor Registration Office? We are hearing it. I do not know how busy the assistant deputy ministers are down in the Department of Finance, but I would assume, Mr. Chairman, as senior bureaucrats in a major department they would be fairly busy. I have been told that one of the secretaries to an assistant deputy Minister has been given notice and let go and that an assistant deputy minister - now there are two I believe. Anyway, in this case it will be a situation of a secretary working a half a day for one ADM and a half a day for another ADM. Now, is that consistent with the work load of assistant deputy ministers in the Department of Finance? If it is, my suggestion is that the

appropriate thing to do would be to get rid of an assistant deputy minister and a secretary if one ADM can do it. But if it is necessary to keep two ADMs and they are so busy that they have to be kept on - how is one secretary going to handle the work load of that kind of situation?

Mr. Chairman, the calls are just coming in day after day about the potential of cutbacks that this Government is talking about. And can anybody fault us by trying to get some of the answers to those questions? My gosh, I would think that is our job, that is our duty. We would be doing less than our duty if we did not pose the questions and ask them. But, Mr. Chairman, it is also incumbent on the Government to answer. No point of - oh sure, we will pose the questions. We will keep posing them. Well, Mr. Chairman, I have to say with honesty to the Premier that there have not been any answers so far. There have not been answers so far. There has been a lot of political rhetoric. There has been a lot of skating. There has been a lot of saying, 'oh, we are going to leave it to the managers.' And then when the managers and the experts start to speak they do not know what they are talking about. There has been a lot of that. The Premier is engaged in that. The Minister of Health is engaged in that. The Minister of Education is engaged in that. There has been a lot of, 'oh, we are going to leave it to the experts', but once the experts and the managers open their mouths they do not know what they are talking about. The unions do not know what they are talking about. The Nursing Home and Hospital Association do not know what they are talking about. Well, Mr. Chairman, the time has

come for the Government to tell us once and for all, do they know what they are talking about? And if they do know what they are talking about, get up and lay out the facts, table documents, table revised estimates. If the numbers are now numbers that you are satisfied with, table documents. If the numbers that the Nursing Home and Hospital Association are talking about are totally inaccurate, get up and give us your numbers. I mean you must have some idea now. You cannot beg ignorance or compassion forever. People out there are now worried because you made the announcement. It was you who imposed a freeze that is in essence and in every respect a cutback for next years operations in the health care and the education sector. So, it is incumbent on you. Did you do any calculation before you came up with a freeze as an option that the Government was going to pursue? Did any Minister over there come back to his Cabinet colleagues and say, 'if you freeze health care at this years level for next year, Mr. Premier, here is what it could mean'? Did the Minister of Education come in and say, 'if there was a freeze on the Education budget, here is what it would mean', or did you just do it blindly? I mean this Government, Mr. Chairman, negotiated at least one collective agreement voluntarily. It put its signature on at least one collective agreement voluntarily and that one is with the nurses. And God help us, they deserve every cent they got and probably more, but now the Government is turning around and saying to the employers of those nurses, whom the Government agreed to this settlement for, that you have to absorb next years part of that out of a frozen budget. Now

did you not calculate the effect that would have on hospitals and nursing homes in this Province? The Government allowed other employee groups to go to binding arbitration and the Government cannot slough that off, Mr. Chairman, on hospital and nursing home administrators who are calling them up, so the Government says, saying that we have a state of emergency on our hands. We passed a piece of legislation, I suppose you would call it, I do not know if it was a resolution. It was what the Government asked for anyway in the midst of the Meech Lake Debate in this House last year on the advice of the Government House Leader that he had to have this piece of legislation because there was a state of emergency and anarchy out there in the health care system. And we debated it for, gosh, less than half a morning, I believe. And we allowed it to go through. That was on the books and unused right through the duration, Mr. Chairman. What did the Government want it for?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Rideout: It was on the books and unused. We passed it in this House.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Rideout: The resolution that the Government House Leader asked for last spring, to satisfy the state of emergency in the nursing homes in the Province. The Government did not use it; the Government did not proclaim it. The Government House Leader is nodding acquiescence. That is a fact. But what did the Government end up doing, Mr. Chairman, after coming to this Legislature and saying: we have an emergency, guys

and gals in the Opposition, please cooperate with us? We did, we got it through. He ended up leaving it unused on the books of this Province and finally, doing what? Allowing the question to go to binding arbitration. Right?

He did the same thing after a several week strike with lab and x-ray people. He allowed that question, the outstanding issues, to go to binding arbitration. And once an arbitrator makes a decision, Mr. Chairman, even though the Government has accepted it as binding by allowing it to go - both sides have accepted it as binding - what is the first reaction of this Government? We cannot afford the arbitrators decision. We cannot afford that. So if we are to meet the decision of the arbitrator there is going to have to be retrenchment, cutbacks, layoffs, because we can not meet it. Well, Mr. Chairman, one thing the Government should know, and it was said to us clearly one time three or four years ago when we agreed to put a particular issue to binding arbitration, that there is no incumbency on the arbitrator to look at the Province's ability to pay. None whatsoever. And we had that said to us in black and white by an arbitrator some years ago when we were the Government.

And this Government has now found that out, Mr. Chairman. But what is the Government's response again? Well, so be it. If we have to pay what the arbitrator proposed or said well then we will have to retrench, lay people off, and make the system tighter and more efficient. But do you not know those things before you take that last discretionary decision to put it to binding arbitration? Do you not know that there is a

possible downside here? Did you not know that by the time you did those binding arbitrations, by the way, that your surplus was a deficit?

I think by answers we have gotten in this House that the answer to that question is yes. Did you tell your employees that your surplus was now a deficit? Were you honest with the people of this Province before you went to binding arbitration on a number of major collective agreements, and said that we do not have a surplus anymore, it is now a deficit?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Rideout: Right? Mr. Chairman, public employees are not unlike, I suggest, employees of private corporations. If they see that - people in the private sector - their company is making a profit the employees want a share of that profit. Right? If they see that their company is reasonably sound they expect some remuneration, some compensation, for their efforts that helped generate that kind of healthy financial situation.

People in the public sector, I say to this Government, are no different. If they had been told as they were by the Minister of Finance, that the Province was showing a surplus for the second year in a row surplus on current account. The Minister is getting dumber and dumber. The people of this Province, the employees, were told that the Government could pay its heat, light, and salaries and still have a little bit left over. Yes, \$10.2 million on surplus account. Mr. Chairman, somebody found the words for me the other day in the Budget Speech, where the Minister bragged

about his second surplus in a row.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Rideout: We will. Don't let the Premier worry about that. The Minister bragged about his second surplus in a row on current account. In other words, he was taking in more than he was spending on heat, light, salaries, and so on like that. On March 15 he said 'it is with considerable satisfaction and pride that I am able to announce that in 1990-91 we will achieve a second consecutive current account surplus, at a level of \$10.2 million. The Minister's words, Mr. Chairman. In other words, the Minister of Finance was saying to every public employee in this Province -

Ms Verge: Page 8.

Mr. Rideout: Page 8. He was saying to every public employee in this Province -

An Hon. Member: He said, no.

Mr. Rideout: He said it, I just quoted him. I did not make it up. Mr. Chairman, the top of the next page I will have a look at a little later on, when I get a chance. However, the Minister cannot take back what he said and what he said was that there was a \$10.2 million surplus on current account. Obviously, that sent a signal to everybody that the Minister was going to collect more in revenue than he was going to pay out for salaries, than he was going to pay out for rent, than he was going to pay out for heat and light, than he was going to pay out for all the current everyday expenses of operating the Government, and those people therefore said to themselves,

well, I guess this is the year that we can expect to get some reasonable catch-up in our wages, Mr. Chairman. That is the game the Government got caught in. It is a game of deception, Mr. Chairman, that has been consistent. I did not write the words that are on Page 8.

An Hon. Member: You did not quote the whole thing.

Mr. Decker: What do I have to do, quote the whole document? My God, it was the Minister of Finance, Mr. Chairman, who, on March 15, was up putting dents in his chest, telling us about this great Liberal Budget that he had just brought in.

An Hon. Member: Two in a row.

Mr. Rideout: Two in a row, he said.

Ms Verge: Three priorities.

Mr. Rideout: Three priorities, health, education, and social services.

Dr. Kitchen: A point of order, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

The hon. the Minister of Finance, on a point of order.

Dr. Kitchen: The hon. the Leader of the Opposition, when he accuses somebody else of being deceitful, should be careful not to be deceitful himself, and by just quoting one sentence and not quoting the remainder of that paragraph he is being deceitful.

Mr. Chairman: There is no point of order.

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Rideout: I do not want to speak to the Point of Order, Mr. Chairman, because there is no point of order.

Mr. Chairman: I just said there was no point of order.

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Rideout: If I only read part of a paragraph, if I only quoted part of a sentence, if I left out selected words in a sentence, or left selected sentences out of a paragraph, this paragraph is entitled, Financial Outlook for 1990-91, and this is one whole paragraph I am quoting to the House. When I was taught the little bit of English I know, I thought that one paragraph had to contain or be about one idea. Now, what is the idea of this paragraph, Mr. Chairman? Listen to it: 'Mr. Speaker', says the Minister of Finance after just about beating the chest off himself, 'it is with considerable satisfaction and pride that I am able to announce that in 1990-91 we will achieve our second consecutive current account surplus at a level of \$10.2 million. End of sentence, a period, and end of paragraph.'

An Hon. Member: Full stop.

Mr. Rideout: End of sentence, a period, and end of paragraph.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Rideout: Now the next paragraph, I assume, being consistent with the principles of English grammar, is about a new idea, and the next paragraph, or

it should not be a paragraph, I say, is about another one, Mr. Chairman. The central theme of this paragraph is to tell everybody from St. John's to Nain that the Government has been good fiscal managers on current account and that they are running a \$10.2 million surplus. That is the whole point of that paragraph - nothing about capital account, nothing about equalization, nothing about anything else except to give the message. What the minister expected at that point in time was that the cameras would zoom right in on him, come right in on him and in every living room in Newfoundland and Labrador that night he would be seen telling all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians that on the current account side, on the side of managing the House, on the side of paying for the light bill and the salaries and the wages, this Government was in good shape. Now you cannot make no more or nothing less than that, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Doyle: Cooking the books.

Mr. Rideout: And on page 10 the minister went on, and this is another full paragraph. Now remember, a paragraph is about one idea.

Ms Verge: Page 10.

Mr. Rideout: 'In developing this budget', on page 10, 'Government took its responsibilities very seriously. The overriding principle is that we must balance our current account position', which he talked about back on page 8 and said he had done, 'and keep our overall budgetary requirement at a manageable level while providing necessary services.'

Making up this, Mr. Chairman? No,

Mr. Chairman, these are the minister's own words coming back to haunt him. These are the minister's own words, Mr. Chairman, because that minister and that Government knew that they could not keep those commitments, Mr. Chairman.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible) a master of deception.

Mr. Rideout: The master of deception is not on this side of the House, Mr. Chairman, the master of deception is on the other side of the House.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Rideout: He is not over here. This is not our document, Mr. Chairman.

Ms Verge: (Inaudible) of halloween.

Mr. Parsons: That is your document.

Mr. Rideout: On the Eve of Halloween, Mr. Chairman, it is a haunted House that is over there. There is deceit and deception rampant, Mr. Chairman. Government has known about deficits without telling the House. Now the Premier can get all upset if he likes, Mr. Chairman, Government knew. The Premier has admitted Government knew. And Government, Mr. Chairman, has known that the equalization matter I raised in the House -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Rideout: What did he say?

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Ms Verge: He said (inaudible).

Mr. Rideout: Stupidity.

There, you see. If the Premier does not agree with what you are saying, you have had lots of time to debate, because the Premier said you had lots of time; you are stupid and silly because the Premier says you are stupid and silly; you are lacking in intellectual ability because the Premier says you are lacking in intellectual ability. Nobody, but nobody in this Province is as gifted, Mr. Chairman, as the Premier. Nobody!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Rideout: Mr. Chairman, I knew the hon. gentleman would agree with that. I believe it has been ruled in this House before that 'trained seals' is parliamentary, and I would expect trained seals to react exactly like trained seals.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Rideout: Mr. Chairman, I have it wrong. The Premier is not the master of deception, Mr. Chairman, I got it wrong. I had it wrong the last time I said it. The Premier is not the master of deception, he is the doctor of deception and the Minister of Finance is his disciple. And that is what we have seen in this Province over the last several months. The Premier can look all he likes, we have not been getting straight answers on this Budget. We have not gotten them on this Budget since the Budget was brought down. We have not gotten straight answers on revenue shortfalls since the Budget was brought down, we have not gotten straight answers -

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

The hon. Member's time is up.

Mr. Rideout: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you. But I will be back again, I can tell you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Baker: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to take part in this debate for a few short moments. I am obviously reminded at this time of an old saying I have always considered to be an axiom, and that is if your argument is weak, shout.

Mr. Rideout: I heard you shout on more than one occasion.

Mr. Baker: Yes, sometimes my arguments have been weak, I will admit to the Leader of the Opposition.

Now, then, I would like to deal with a number of issues. First of all, the comments made by the Leader of the Opposition in terms of the resolution and the emergency situation during the hospital support staff strike. We passed a resolution in this House. When that resolution was passed, if the hon. Leader will check back he will find that the situation was described in great detail at that time. We pointed out that we had been advised by the Hospital and Nursing Homes Association, not by a few frantic phone calls from a couple of institutions as he seems to suggest in his speech. I wish he would get those matters straight and not get carried away in flights of rhetoric and not say things that are inaccurate. The Hospital and Nursing Home Association, a very responsible

group, advised us in writing that a state of emergency existed. When the legislation was introduced into the House I explained quite clearly what the steps were, and I pointed out that we were enacting a piece of legislation that was on the books that automatically led to binding arbitration; that everybody knew at that point in time that it automatically led to binding arbitration. So there was no desire on our part, or there was no decision made on our part at some later date to turn over the finances of the Province to an outside arbitrator. The legislation clearly provides that, and we were using that piece of legislation. It was explained fully at the time, and it was not as the Leader of the Opposition was trying to pretend in his speech. Again, instead of letting his mouth go and whatever comes out comes out, I wish he would pay some attention to exactly what he is saying and the correctness of what he is saying. It is very misleading to the general public.

Also, I would like to comment on his questions. I mean, the great pretender. He pretends that somehow there are a lot of questions he has been asking, a lot of very detailed financial information he wants about this loan bill, and he repeats it time and time again and even knows the exact number of questions he wants answers to. And he even specifies the date on which he asked those specific questions. Now he says that in his speech. He said that in his speech just now. I looked through Hansard for that date and I knew what I was going to find.

Ms Verge: We don't have Hansard for Thursday night.

Mr. Baker: Thursday October 25. That was when he was giving his one hour speech. I read his hour speech. And he finished his speech and somebody else got up. And this is what he is referring to. And I did find some questions. He did ask a couple of detailed questions that were immediately answered through back and forth across the floor, and he admitted in this speech that he did get the answer. He asked at one point about the expected inflation rate and I gave him the answer to the expected inflation rate. So it was given immediately.

He asked if there was any deterioration in Provincial revenues and the answer obviously has since been provided. An exact figure of \$16.3 million is our current estimate. I mean, everything could find in there was answered; I could only find a few questions. He kept repeating the same questions over and over, which were already answered, or he asked a rhetorical question and then answered it himself.

Now there were other questions of the order, 'do you know what I would say?' Now that is nothing the Minister of Finance would want to answer. There are a lot of these rhetorical questions in there. The fact of the matter is, the impression he was trying to create with Members of the House and with the press and in Hansard was that there were eight penetrating detailed questions which he had asked and he had no answers to them and, therefore, by heavens, he was going to keep this thing going for the next two months.

In reality the questions did not exist. Again, that is fine. I like listening to the Leader of

the Opposition sometimes, as a show. He puts on a good show, but the content leaves a lot to be desired. He asked a question about a 12 per cent figure he keeps quoting. What he does is he tends to add things together. If there is a 5 per cent salary increase and if inflation is expected to be 4.5 per cent and if the cost of something else goes up a couple per cent, he adds them all together and assumes that the total then is the total per cent increase in the budget.

Now I tried to explain to him that that is simply just not correct. That is not the way things are. If you have \$20 and there is a 10 per cent increase in one \$10 of it and a 20 per cent increase in the other \$10, 10 per cent increase in \$10 is \$1 - okay? - and the 20 per cent increase in \$10 is \$2. Now that is a total increase of \$3. But it is not an increase of 30 per cent on your \$20. That would be \$6 not \$3. And you cannot say that a 10 per cent increase on one segment of an amount of money and a 10 per cent increase on another segment amounts to a 20 per cent increase on it all. You cannot go around saying that. And that is the kind of logic he is using. And when I attempted to explain the flaw in his logic to him, he did not understand it.

Because what I got up and said, and had leave to say, was look, if you have 25,000 public servants and they each got a 5 per cent increase in salary, would that mean that there is a 125,000 per cent increase in the salary bill? Obviously it would not, and I tried to sort that out. The Leader of the Opposition continued in his speech to start adding partial increases and he talked -

and not only that, but once he said about the cost of this goes up and the cost of that goes up and the salaries are up, and then he said on top of that there is inflation. That is inflation! That is what inflation is, and he adds it on to the top. So, Mr. Chairman, my point is that when the Leader of the Opposition gives these entertaining speeches and shouts, you have to bear in mind that perhaps the content leaves an awful lot to be desired.

I went through the questions and I believe the questions have been answered. I also object very strongly, Mr. Chairman, to the approach taken at the beginning of this speech, that the Leader of the Opposition took at the beginning of this speech. The Minister of Finance got up and explained the numbers the Leader of the Opposition was using, and what he said was that the Leader of the Opposition had a number, an entitlement, but he said from that entitlement had to be taken away certain numbers and, therefore, the cash we were going to get was a much lower amount. Now it seems to me that that is a pretty simple concept. But when the Leader of the Opposition got up, he said the Minister admitted we were getting the original figure. That is not what the Minister said at all. It was just the opposite of what the Minister said. Just because you get up and say something like that, and you shout it out, does not necessarily mean it is true. As a matter of fact, the shouting sometimes indicates that perhaps it is not true, that perhaps there is some kind of a flaw in what is being said.

And that is one of the things I have grown to dislike, the pretense, the total pretense that

tends to masquerade as truth, and if it is repeated often enough and it is carried often enough in the press, it perhaps does become the truth: perception is the reality, and the reality gets lost. And it is a distasteful thing to see that happen.

An Hon. Member: Why are the hospitals using false (inaudible)?

Mr. Baker: I will attempt to answer. I have not seen all the hospitals' estimates, but I did go through one of them on Saturday. I sat down with a group and went through it. I believe they were talking in terms of between 11 and 12 per cent. Essentially, they had things added in there that really should not be added in, so maybe there are some misunderstandings in the process. For instance, the Opposition keeps shouting all the time about the payroll tax. Now there is a fairly hefty payroll tax in the hospitals, but it is an in and out proposition and has no effect.

Mr. Winsor: (Inaudible) as you explained how (inaudible) occur.

Mr. Baker: Okay. But it does. Just take my word for it, and one of these days I will explain that, too.

Mr. Winsor: We have been waiting a long time for it.

Mr. Baker: However, the board members agreed with me when I pointed out that this fairly large number in there was a number they were going to get reimbursed for, on top of what the Opposition referred to as a frozen budget, or a projected budget. That was going to get paid back simply because it is in and out. So there are some things in there

like that. They had, for instance, put in a fairly large figure for pay equity.

An Hon. Member: And you are not going to (inaudible) it?

Mr. Baker: No, that is not what I am saying. If you would just listen, I am trying to explain things sensibly.

There was a fairly large figure put in there for pay equity. Now there are two things. Number one, we do not know what the figure is going to be yet, but number two, the pay equity was not even part of this year's money. We had a universal figure put in for pay equity in the Budget, so it depends on when they finish. It may or may not be spent this year. We may have to increase the amount, or we may have to decrease it. I do not know what is going to happen. But obviously when we are talking about surviving on this year's Budget we are assuming that if pay equity is in by that time, pay equity will be included in this year's Budget and will not be a total increase. So in answer to the question, these two large numbers essentially made up quite a large percentage. I think, without those two numbers in there, it probably would have been 7.5 per cent, or somewhere around there.

So perhaps there are reasons why the numbers are fairly high. I suspect that once the whole thing is dealt with through the process, once the reports come back to us and once we examine them and so on, perhaps a lot of these things will be straightened out. I certainly hope so. And I simply went through with them and pointed out where I thought the figures were off a little bit and they

agreed yes, in fact, if the pay equity would then be counted as part of this year's base, and if the payroll tax is going to be in and out next year as it was this year, because they were wondering about intentions, then that is true, it would not be as serious an effect as it first seemed. So perhaps some of these things are interfering. Now I have not looked at any others, so I do not know. There may be other reasons and other instances.

Mr. Chairman, the real reason I wanted to have a few words to say was not to respond to the Leader of the Opposition. I kind of got carried away, because it disturbs me that these things are going on in the House and they are part of a pretense that happens here sometimes which, on occasion, may be taken to be truth.

What I wanted to talk about was the comments regarding closure. I want to spend a few minutes on that. First of all, closure is a mechanism that Government uses to make sure that legislation gets through in a timely fashion in the House. It is generally used to avoid filibusters and a slowdown in the legislation. In this instance, I would like to put the following scenario before you because it describes what we are going through at the present time. We have on the Order Paper forty-one pieces of legislation. Now all of them are not earthshaking, earth-shattering. We have forty-one pieces of legislation, and some of them are important. We have another ten or twelve ready to go. So we can safely say that there will be fifty pieces of legislation that really should be dealt with. Some of them are minor, but more of them are major: the Auditor

General's Bill is major, the Regional Services Board is major and so on.

In these bills there are going to be some other money bills to be dealt with. So we have a lot of business to do. We have other money bills left, we have lots of what I assume are going to be controversial pieces of legislation to put before this House. And the House presumably will be sitting up close to Christmas.

Now the indication I have been getting from the Opposition House Leader is that there really is no hope of co-operation in terms of The Loan Bill, that members opposite tend to keep going until Christmas, as the Leader pointed out a little earlier tonight. They intend to keep going until Christmas, and they have the perfect right to do that. But in so doing, they would hold up all the other legislation that is there. Now, Mr. Chairman, we cannot allow that to happen, so at some point in time we will have to bring in closure because of the total lack of co-operation from the Opposition. It is as simple as that. We cannot allow an Opposition to hijack the House. It would be alright if we did not have much on the Order Paper. You know, if we did not have much on the Order Paper, then that is fine, they could talk on for a month or whatever and we would not mind. Because they apparently have a lot to get off their chest, although listening to some of the speeches in the last couple of days we wonder why they are wasting the time to say what they are saying: a wonderfully relevant speech from the Member for Burin - Placentia West earlier, if you remember. Very relevant to what

we are doing.

But, Mr. Chairman, we cannot allow the Opposition to hijack this important legislative programme. It cannot be done. As Government, we must govern and we must guarantee that our legislative programme gets through the House in an efficient manner, always bearing in mind that there must be enough time for debate.

With this loan bill there is another problem, and it is one of flexibility. And I will be totally straightforward with Members of the House. Some time within the next couple of months we will need to go on the market to borrow money. There is no panic right now; there is nobody pushing us and saying, Well, we have to have something tomorrow. And there will not be for the next number of weeks. There is no immediate panic, but the problem is if we postpone this bill - I am trying to explain why. I cannot just call another piece of legislation and let this one die. I can't do it. At a certain point in time we are going to need to get that money. It has already been budgeted and passed by the House and so on. We are going to need to get that money to operate the Province, as we have agreed as a Legislature we should do. So at some point in time we are going to have to do it. But if we leave it until the last minute - I am sure the Member from Green Bay, who was in the Premier's office for a while, will understand this - then we are stuck with whatever rate we can get. So we need some flexibility to go to the markets when the conditions are right, on the day, week or month when we can get the right conditions. We need that flexibility, so we want the loan bill. And, surprise! we are

going to get the loan bill. But we are also going to make sure Members of the Opposition have had enough time to properly debate it if they want to, that they have enough time to ask questions. But I wish, instead of pretending they are asking questions, they would actually ask some. We will make sure they have lots of time to ask their questions, and then we will get our loan bill and go on to the next order of business on the Order Paper.

Unfortunately, I have also received some indication from the Opposition that the lack of co-operation is going to continue, and in the Committee stage, where they have the perfect right to, they intend to keep talking and hold things up. I regret that very much. I do not think there should be that much lack of co-operation. I sat in the Opposition for four years and I think on one or two occasions in the four years we dug in for a while on something, but I remember always, when push came to shove, when the crunch came, our House Leader, Mr. Tulk, would come to us and say, boys, I know you want to talk, but that is enough.

An Hon. Member: Always put the Province first.

Mr. Baker: Always put the Province first.

Now I really regret that this does not seem to be happening at this present point in time. I know that for the first week the House was open, before the Opposition House Leader showed up, there was all kinds of co-operation. The Opposition Leader, the Member for Humber East, the Member for Mount Pearl and the Member for Green Bay, they were all very

co-operative. But things have changed in the last week and a half - a week and a few days. I do not know why, but things have changed. There seems to be a complete lack of co-operation. And I understand that in Committee stage they intend to do exactly the same thing with all the other bills. I say again, I regret it. I hope it does not happen. I hope we get some co-operation.

I say to the Opposition House Leader that there are other money bills, and you know in money bills you are free to talk about a variety of things, you are not really kept to the topic. And there are some other money matters that we will be bringing forward soon that will give all kinds of opportunity to vent your frustrations. Now I know you must have many frustrations; to vent your frustrations, you have all kinds of opportunity to do it. I would like to see this loan bill go through without us having to bring closure in. I really would. And I put it to the Opposition House Leader to talk to his colleague again. Closure is not something that you use lightly - you only use it when you have to. I ask him to talk to his colleagues again and listen to their advice. And if he listens to their advice, perhaps we can quite sensibly settle this impasse without having to use closure. But I say to him we will use closure. We will have the loan bill soon and we will go on to the rest of the legislation. And we will deal with all of our legislation in this House because that is, in essence, what we are here for: to deal with the legislation, not to kill time, and not to simply experience the joy of hearing ourselves speak and have the joy of being able to read

Hansard and say, Look at how long I have talked in debate in the House. So I hope things get a little better down the road. Mr. Chairman, I thought I had better explain this closure and the use of it, and why it is necessary and why I suspect it may be necessary in the future.

Mr. Chairman: The hon. the Member for Green Bay.

Mr. Hewlett: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I might address just a couple of issues raised by my hon. friend from Gander. I seem to remember that the innovation of a Fall legislative session was something that came about at the instigation of former Premier Peckford, and that particular fall that he had such a session, the Opposition of the day, and the Opposition of the day was the Liberal party of the day, instead of dealing with the legislative program provided them by the Government House Leader, the President of the Council of the day, the Opposition spent the entire fall session and, I think passed one bill or some such small number of bills, because they spent the entire session on alleged conflicts of interest for the Government House Leader of the day. So obstructionism or filibustering, whatever is the phrase the hon. Government House Leader refers to, I first saw that in a fall legislative session, in the one and only fall legislative session that Premier Peckford brought in, because he found such a session turned out to be totally non-productive as regards passing legislation.

I would make one other comment directly with regard to the hon. Member's remarks, as well, and that has to do with the concept of

inflation. If my memory serves me correctly with regard to documents I had seen passing over my desk over the years, I think there was a rule of thumb within the senior ranks of the bureaucracy that inflation in the health care system was at least double the rate of inflation in society in general. And the latest pronouncements I saw on Canada AM, there a couple of days ago, from some bank or another in Canada, that even with a recession, inflation in Canada was expected to be 6 per cent in 1991.

I realize that when I went to school, and I guess when a lot of us went to school, the concept of inflation during a recession was contradictory. But the economics textbooks appear to have been thrown out the window and we do have times today when we do have recessionary times with inflationary times. And, as I said, the rule of thumb from my memory was that inflation in the health care system generally runs at least twice the rate of inflation in society in general, and, therefore, to assume a rate of inflation in the health care system of 12 per cent is not altogether untoward at all. Mr. Chairman.

Having said that, Saturday morning past I left St. John's by airplane in the pouring rain, landed in Deer Lake in a raging blizzard, and in two and a half hours made my way to the town of Springdale and spent most of the day at the hospital and at the senior citizens' home discussing mainly with staff at those institutions what they have been hearing on the radio and television over the last little while. The administration of the hospital had been told to produce an impact statement as

regards a freeze on their institution. And certainly the calculations they put together - they called the staff of their institution together and told them the results of these calculations - indicated approximately twenty jobs being lost, the closure of twenty-four beds in the seniors' complex, and the closure of two pediatric beds in the hospital.

That is the same hospital that lost fifteen beds last year in the Budget. And it is, I suppose, sadly ironic that the discussion I had with the staff in the hospital itself was held in the pediatrics ward that was about to be closed down if this particular budget impact is carried out as per the calculations of the administration of that particular facility.

One of the things I found most notable in the discussions with the employees was their confusion and uncertainty. Their administration indicated to them that they had to live with a freeze, and a freeze would mean certain layoffs and cutbacks in beds, etc. They turn on the television news in the evening, the hon. the Premier comes on the news and indicates that, no, a freeze does not necessarily mean these many beds or these many layoffs. So the individuals working in the health care system are in a state of confusion and consternation. One individual indicated to me that it appears that anyone with less than ten years' seniority in this particular facility is going to lose their job.

So out there in the field, in the actual health care institutions of the Province, the seemingly sort of contradictory statements coming from this administration have

thrown a real concern into their own work force. People are not sure what their career path holds in store. And it is rather tragic that the Government - I can not say deliberately, because that would be unkind and unfair, but they have basically been playing games with people's minds as to just what kind of a situation they face. And certainly the employees in the health care system out there are very concerned as to what their individual futures are. But the bottom line on a freeze is simply that there will be some bed closures, some layoffs. A freeze, given a roughly 12 per cent inflationary rate, will mean approximately \$700,000 will have to come out of the economy of the town of Springdale, and I guess Green Bay in general.

The District of Green Bay has not seen a new mine open since I was a boy. I remember very well getting a day off from school when Premier Smallwood came to Springdale to open up a new copper mine, and we were all bused out to the site to see this wonderful event in the lives, I suppose, of our parents, many of whom were able to find employment in that particular mine. It also opened up a new era of sociology for us, because we had a large influx of mainlanders come in to our town, who moved into a thing called a sub-division, and they all built houses that looked much alike and they all had square patches of lawn out front that you would graze no animals on, and we thought that was rather strange. But I digress.

As I said, no new mines since I was a boy, our Forestry is in decline, basically we have run out of trees, and I am sure, even with

the best efforts of the Forestry Department, the decline in jobs will continue and it will be another forty or fifty years before there will be a large batch of trees for local loggers.

The fishery in Green Bay has never been a tremendously large industry. It is called Green Bay because of the trees, and the area was settled mainly because of forestry in the 1890s or thereabouts. So the fishery today is still up and down as regards an inshore fishery. We have a very large fish plant that is a holdover from the days that Nickersons did a joint venture with a local fish plant owner who had a fish processing licence. Unfortunately, that fish plant is heavily dependent on northern cod. Last year saw their northern cod quota cut in half, and I fear for the future of that particular plant if there are further cuts.

So we have the mines at a standstill; the mineral exploration industry supporting the mines is in decline; forestry is in decline; the fishery uncertain. The economy, therefore, Mr. Chairman, cannot afford cuts in Government services. One of the largest industries, I suppose, if you want to describe it as such, in the Springdale area in particular, is Government services. And health care is not only in Springdale a public service, it is a \$6 million industry in that particular community that next year stands to lose in the order of \$700,000.

It is unfortunate that the only stable industry, which is Government services, now appears to be in decline, and that spells doom for the district in general. I saw in the paper the weekend

that the hon. the Premier mentioned, with regard to the Hibernia project, that he was concerned about St. John's overheating its economy, a phrase, I suppose, that hon. gentlemen opposite, when they were in Opposition, used to laugh at when we expressed concerns about it. However, the Premier appears to be sufficiently concerned about it and he is thinking about decentralizing Government services outside the city of St. John's, but the communities he listed were such as Grand Falls, Gander, Stephenville, etc. Those communities are somewhat larger than the town of Springdale, which is the largest community in my district. There was no mention of towns like Springdale or Lewisporte or other medium-sized towns, which are also finding themselves in hard times.

So Springdale, which desperately needs an increase in Government workers is going to get a cut, while relatively wealthy larger towns, such as Grand Falls and Gander, can probably expect to see increases if the hon. the Premier goes through with his decentralization programme. Now that is not what I would refer to as fairness and balance.

We have mentioned already in this House cuts in the Social Services Department at a time when, obviously, as the hon. the Minister of Social Services indicated on a number of occasions, the caseload of his Department is growing. The job creation programme of the Department of Social Services this fall was not particularly large, because there were very few draw-downs on the money available. Mainly because the Community Development Programme within that

Department operates on a twelve month of the year basis, most of the able-bodied persons drawing social services were already on a make-work project, or were drawing UI as a result of the make-work project.

So unfortunately, what at the beginning appeared to be a large make-work project through the Department of Social Services turned out to be relatively small, and the only work project for people not on social services was being handled by the Development Association on behalf of the Forestry Department, and again they had sufficient monies only to hire a handful of people. Needless to say the Development Association had a hundred-plus people on their list requiring work, but these people did not qualify for Social Services work programmes and there was insufficient money in the programme being handled by the Development Association to deal with these people.

Mr. Flight: (Inaudible) 300 jobs.

Mr. Hewlett: Not in Green Bay,
Mr. Chairman:

Now we hear of talks in the media, in this Assembly, about cutbacks in the education system, that there are prospects of a loss of several hundred teachers in the next year or so which, in many cases, especially in smaller schools, will lead to an increase in multi-grade classrooms, something which I was familiar with when I was a child in school, something which I thought we had hoped would, for the most part, be long gone. Unfortunately, as one teacher indicated, I think a principal from the town of Gander, this particular administration, if

it goes through with these kinds of cuts, will put education back twenty years.

Less substitute teachers - heaven help us if an epidemic of flu hits a given town. If the teachers come down sick, then the students who are not sick are going to be sent home anyway. I had a member of my constituency, Mr. Weir, who is a teacher on Little Bay Islands - he is President of the Arts Interest Council with the Newfoundland Teachers' Association - call in to CBC Radio the other day, to one of their talk shows, and indicate that the convention for art educators in the Province this year had to be cancelled, because in a pre-registration effort they found out they had less than a dozen or so people with leave from their school boards to attend the convention, because the substitute teacher days had been cut back so severely.

So the In-service education of teachers and the actual sending home of children from school is coming about as a result of less substitute teachers in our educational system. And I find that doubly ironic when you think of the fact that the Well's administration has two Doctorates in Education among its ranks, two former NTA Presidents among its ranks, none of whom, I would say, right now, are very much liked by the leadership or the membership of the Newfoundland Teachers' Association.

And while I am on that, my hon. friend from Gander, my former elementary school teacher, I think he broke the rule of rules when he wrote individual teachers, I believe on two separate occasions, going around their union leaderships and going directly to

the teachers themselves. From all indications I have heard, individual NFA branches and the executive of the NFA Province-wide are not at all pleased with this latest tactic in collective bargaining, and I do understand that many of the letters are being sent back, directly to the hon. Minister. And I do understand, as well, that some of the teachers may be forwarding the letters to their Members of the House of Assembly for presentation in the House of Assembly to the hon. Minister.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Hewlett: Right on.

Another issue I must bring up, and the hon. Minister from Gander, please do not think I am singling him out for special treatment tonight, but he did precede me in the debate and it reminds me of another issue, which is an issue relating to the environment, Mr. Chairman.

Some months ago in this hon. House there was much to-do made by the hon. the Minister of Forestry and much satisfaction expressed by the hon. the Minister from Gander with regard to the fact that for the second year in a row the Wells' administration would be using a biological agent to control insect infestations in our forests. Now the previous Government, under Brian Peckford, used the chemical matacil to control insect infestations and, as a result, I think it is fair to say, there was a considerable political price paid for the use of that particular chemical, at the hands of people who are part of the environmental movement and, more specifically, at the hands of the Liberal Opposition of the day.

It was certainly widely known throughout the Province that their position was that chemical sprays - certainly chemical sprays applied aerially - were not the way to go about practicing good forest management and that when they came to power such practices would stop. And, indeed, as I said, they made a great political fuss again this year about the fact that they were again using a biological agent to control insect infestation. However, not that long ago, in the local newspaper that serves my district, a little advertisement appeared indicating that an aerial spray programme was going to be done, quote unquote, in an area south of King's Point. When we did further checking on the matter we found out that eighty hectares of forest land, new growth, cut overgrowth, was being sprayed aerially with a chemical herbicide - a chemical herbicide.

Now for an administration that was full of smiles, like a bunch of cats that had just had a fine meal of canaries, to go and make such a fuss about using a biological spray on insect infestations and then to go quietly, almost surreptitiously about the Province and apply a chemical spray to control unwanted deciduous growth, that smacks of hypocrisy.

And as I indicated earlier, there is an irony - and I have said this in media statements that I have made. The control of insect infestations is an absolute must in forest practice. It absolutely must be done to save the forest from destruction. The spray used to control insects is a biological agent which is presumably more environmentally-friendly but is more sensitive in the way it has to be applied. Weather conditions

especially matter a great deal as to whether or not that particular spray will do a good job on controlling insect infestations. However, the practice of thinning out hardwoods, deciduous growth, in a new growth pulpwood forest is an optional forest practice. It is not necessary to save the trees from destruction, it is an enhancement technique to improve the rate of growth of pulpwood forest.

So there we have an administration which runs up the banner of being environmentally friendly with regard to a must-do, a non-optional spray programme, a programme where if the weather goes wrong their spray programme is a total waste and the forests are in danger, and in an optional forest programme they go to work and use a chemical spray. That is a tremendous inconsistency, one which the administration has not answered for, at least in regards the inconsistency and hypocrisy of having two separate policies with regard to aerial sprays of our forest lands.

And to be quite honest with you, Mr. Chairman, I am rather surprised and rather disappointed in the various environmental people in our Province, that they have let this matter go on without so much as a significant comment. I remember when I was a young man, I guess in my mid-twenties, and Brian Peckford was a junior Minister in the Moores' administration, having to stand on a school stage in Green Bay and defend at the time what was the indefensible, and that was the use of the chemical matalacil by the Moores' administration to control an outbreak of insects in our forest. I nearly got thrown off the stage and out of the building

because I was trying to explain somehow, on behalf of the Government, that this was necessary to save the forest from imminent destruction. Yet, here we have today a Government which, on the one hand, would seem to agree that I should have been thrown off the stage, and, on the other hand, appears to be only too willing to do such things as chemical sprays if and when the matter suits them.

Insofar as the hon. Minister from Gander to some extent made his political reputation on being against the matalacil chemical spray in our forest protection programmes, I think there is an onus on the hon. Minister from Gander somewhere in this debate, somewhere in some debate over the next little while, to stand in this hon. House and explain how, on the one hand, he could boast about the Bt programme to control insects, but has had very little if anything, that I know of, to say about the chemical programme to control birch trees, alders, aspen, berry bushes, etc. Mr. Chairman, I guess what we are talking about is real change.

The Liberal party in Opposition was environmentally friendly, the Liberal party in Government is environmentally less friendly. The Liberal party in Opposition deeply regretted, attacked, said everything negative possible about the closure temporarily of hospital beds for the summer, the Liberal party in Government sees as a matter of financial management the permanent closure of hospital and nursing home beds without so much as a blink of the eyes. The Liberal party in Opposition, Mr. Chairman, were deadly opposed to the School Tax Authorities, and while their

detailed program as outlined in their brochures during the election said we will look at closing out School Tax Authorities, everybody in the Province, Mr. Chairman, everybody who listens to the Open Lines, the body politic in general knows full well that individual Liberal members in this hon. House of Assembly, when they were on their local radio stations, when they went to doors and spoke to their people, when they went to their town hall meetings, they said in no uncertain terms, 'we are going to abolish the School Tax Authorities.' Now we have the Minister of Education bringing in a tax on payrolls, a new tax on education, and we have indications that the School Tax Authorities might even be required to garner more revenues themselves, even though the Opposition Liberals indicated they would get rid of that particular institution.

So, Mr. Chairman, how can the people of the Province have faith in the Liberal Government in the major policy areas?

Mr. Doyle: They can not.

Mr. Hewlett: We are not talking about matters of style, Mr. Chairman, we are not talking about petty little things, we are talking about major policy areas. This particular administration is greatly at variance with the positions it enunciated when it was in Opposition.

Mr. Chairman, I know they are all human beings over there, but they remind me of chameleons; they have a tendency to change colour: They were Liberal red when in opposition, and, Mr. Chairman, when in government they are Thatcher blue. Thank you very

much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Kelland: I just need a couple of minutes, Mr. Chairman, to, perhaps, give some detail with respect to the issue most recently raised by the hon. member who just spoke before me. Again, I perceive it to be a bit of a mixing of apples and oranges, in that he would have been well aware of the difference between the pesticide spraying and the herbicide spraying which has taken place in the Province over the past few years. Herbicide spraying started to take place in our Province in 1984, I believe was the first year, and there was an experimental area sprayed. Something like 259, 260 or 270 hectares were sprayed on an experimental basis, and the Member for Grand Falls would be pretty well aware of that.

My understanding is since that time, up to and including the most recent applications, the total is something like 9,000 hectares in total in that whole period of time. Now Glyphosate is the active ingredient in what is now called Vision and had been originally called Roundup. That was registered for use in Canada and in this Province in 1984 by the Federal Government, and in order to get registration, quite an extensive environmental assessment was carried out by the Federal Government; you do not get registered unless you can meet whatever standards they set, with particular emphasis on the environment and health matters.

Mr. Simms: So was Fenitrothion.

Mr. Kelland: So it did get registered for use. Perhaps fenitrothion was also registered. I would expect it was or it would not be legally permitted. Now additionally to that, of course, keeping in mind the relatively small area in the herbicide spray, the Province also subjected Glyphosate or Vision to fairly extensive review with respect to the environmental impacts.

The interesting point about the herbicide in use is the review shows where it may have an effect on habitat or small areas of habitat, and very young and small growth. It has very little effect, if any, that could be demonstrated on mammals and fish and birds, and, additionally, the herbicide does not bioconcentrate. So there are some significant differences in that which was used in a pesticide application. In addition to that, following questions placed to my colleague, the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture, I heard him give the commitment publicly that he would, even though those factors I just mentioned are indeed fact, undertake to do a review of the methods being used, the quantities to be used, the areas to be sprayed. And I additionally give the commitment, as we do the permitting on that particular type of an activity to, in consultation with and in conjunction with my colleague, the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture, also review and see if there are not some alternative courses available to us. But that technical information might be of value to the Member for Green Bay, who did not appear to know it. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

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

Ms Verge: Thank you, Chairperson.

My colleague, the Member for Green Bay, stated near the end of his speech that the Liberals while in Opposition were Liberal red. A year and a half after assuming office he sees them as being Thatcher blue. I perceive that they are imperial purple.

Chairperson, the Member for Green Bay talked about the Liberal campaign promise of bringing in real change. Well, they certainly have lived up to that promise. It is not the type of change they indicated however. It is not small 'l' liberal change, it is not progressive change, it is not change that is uplifting the poor and the disadvantaged, it is not change that is narrowing the gap between the poor and the rich, it is just the opposite, Chairperson.

The real change includes the \$130 million current account budget slide. March 15 the Minister of Finance delivered a budget forecasting a \$10 million surplus on current account and, as the Leader of the Opposition reminded him by quoting his own words, words that are now haunting him on the eve of Halloween, he predicted a \$10 million current account surplus. Just a few months later, by August, September, he and the Premier had to face the people of the Province and tell us that they were revising their budget prediction and now calling for a \$120 million shortfall. That is a \$130 million slide. That is real change.

Now, Chairperson, we are here considering a borrowing bill. We, in the Opposition, have asked many questions relating to the bill which have not been answered.

The Government House Leader, the President of Treasury Board, who talked about pretense when he rose earlier this evening, who talked about pretense, is making out that we have not asked questions, so I am going to go through some questions for him now. I am glad he is taking out his note pad and has his pen poised. I will go through some questions with him.

Mr. Simms: You will be sorry you asked.

Ms Verge: Where did that \$130 million slide come from? What caused the \$130 million slide? How much of the \$130 million negative variance stems from a drop in projected federal revenue? The best information of the Leader of the Opposition is that the actual drop in federal revenue, below what was forecast in the Finance Minister's Budget, the middle of March is \$6 million.

Mr. Baker: That is not true.

Ms Verge: The Government House Leader is saying that is not true. He is saying it is, I believe, \$68 million. Now if the Government House Leader is right, if the actual drop in federal revenue below what the Minister of Finance forecast in his Budget in March is \$68 million, there still remains to be accounted for a \$62 million negative variance. According to the Premier and the Government House Leader, the total estimated negative variance from the Budget in March is \$130 million. The Government House Leader is saying that \$68 million of that stems from a drop in federal revenue, so there is still \$62 million they have to account for. If the Leader of the Opposition is correct, if the latest information given by the

Federal Finance officials to the Leader of the Opposition is correct, there is only a \$6 million drop, meaning the Provincial Government has \$124 million to explain through provincial factors.

So the first question is, of the \$130 million negative variance, how much stems from a drop in federal revenue? The next question: How much of that negative variance results from a drop in provincial revenue?

Mr. Baker: \$16.3 million.

Ms Verge: The President Board Treasury is saying \$16.3 million.

My next question is how much of the \$130 million negative variance results from increases in provincial spending? I am pausing, waiting for that answer.

Mr. Baker: The rest of it.

Ms Verge: The rest of it, according to the President of Treasury Board. So that would mean - I will do some quick arithmetic - about \$52 million extra spending beyond what was forecast in the Budget.

Let us do our sums now. I am asking the President of Treasury Board to pause and do sums. We have to come up with a total of \$130 million negative variance. The President of Treasury Board is saying that \$68 million of that comes from a drop in federal revenue, \$16 million comes from a drop in provincial revenue, and he is now saying \$45 million comes from extra provincial spending.

Chairperson, I would like the President of Treasury Board to itemize the changes in provincial

revenue? Where does the \$16 million decline in provincial revenue come from? Next I would like the President of Treasury Board to itemize the additional \$45 million in provincial spending. How much of that extra spending went for public relations directors, media specialists, PR advisors, image makers? How much came from extra spending on the Economic Disaster Commission, for jobs for defeated Liberal candidates, and Liberal campaign managers and Liberal campaign workers?

We would like to have an itemized list of negative variances within the control of the Province: The decline in provincial revenues. What sources. The increase in provincial spending.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible) 1988 first?

Ms Verge: Next, Chairperson, we, in the Opposition, would like to know what the \$325 million borrowing which this bill now under consideration would authorize would be used for. Why does the Government want to borrow \$325 million? What does the Government plan to do with the borrowing? Does the Government have a plan? What does the Government intend to leave out? How much of the borrowing will be devoted to the Government's stated three Budget priorities, namely, economic development, health care and education?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Ms Verge: How much of the borrowing will go for upgrading the fishery? How much of it will be spent on cushioning the impact of the decline in the total allowable catch, while we wait for

the stock to replenish? Chairperson, will any of the borrowing be used to reverse the terrible October 1 social assistance cut to single parent families?

Chairperson, with the borrowing, with the budget revisions, what will be the impact on hospitals and nursing homes? How many hospital beds will have to close? How many nursing home beds will have to close? Remember, Chairperson, nursing homes have many fixed costs. If they are to absorb a budget cut, if they are to cover current operations with less money, they have little choice but to lay off staff and close beds; they have little choice but to wait for residents to die, then fold up their beds and put them in the storage rooms.

Mr. Furey: Shame! Shame!

Ms Verge: The Minister of Development is saying shame. It is a shame.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible) shameful.

Ms Verge: It is a shame, and it is exactly contrary to what the Liberals promised when they were campaigning for election. Perhaps the Minister of Development will rise in his place and explain to the House and the people of the Province, to the administrators of the hospitals and nursing homes, how they can possibly avoid closing beds, with the instructions given by his colleague and buddy, the Member for the Strait of Belle Isle, the Minister of Health.

The Minister of Health wrote the Chairs of all the hospital and nursing homes in the Province a

couple of weeks ago telling them that they would have for operating purposes in the Budget Year 1991-92 only the same as the revised net budgets for this budget year. That is what the Minister of Health told the administrators. The Minister of Health asked each of them to, on an urgent basis, send him their projections of the real changes that would have to be instituted to live within those budget guidelines.

Chairperson, perhaps this was an exercise in public relations. Perhaps the Minister of Health and the Government are not really serious, perhaps the Minister of Health and the Government are floating trial balloons, perhaps the Minister of Health and the Government are trying to shock people and scare them now, making them believe that there will be devastating reductions and cuts and layoffs when really what they have in mind is something less drastic, hoping that when the eventual news gets out that people will breathe sighs of relief and say, they are not such a bad Government after all. Perhaps this is a game, a charade. Perhaps the public relations gurus on the eighth floor, in the Premier's Office, and the Directors of Public Relations in the different ministers' offices have connived to confuse people, to upset people, to manipulate the news. Perhaps that is the real situation, Chairperson.

If so, the President of Treasury Board could get up later on and explain what is really going on. Perhaps he can tell us if the Minister of Health really meant what was in his correspondence to the Chairs of the hospitals and the nursing homes a couple of

weeks ago; perhaps the President of Treasury Board can explain whether the Minister of Health really intended the tide of health care workers, of nurses and doctors and specialists leaving this Province, even as I speak; perhaps the President of Treasury Board can explain if the Government really intended graduate nurses, nurses in their final years of the RN and BN programs, to apply for jobs outside of the Province; perhaps the Minister of Health will return to his seat and address some of these questions.

Now on the subject of Education, the third stated priority of the Government in this year's Budget: in education, the President of Treasury Board might tell us how much of the \$325 million that would be authorized to borrow under this bill will be spent on primary, elementary and high school programs? How much will be spent on programs for disabled and handicapped students? Will any of it be used to keep the Government's promise to the student assistants and their parents and others involved in education? Will any of the borrowed money be used to maintain last year's - just last year's - level of services and supports in the schools for students with special needs?

Remember, Chairperson, this is a growing need. Not so many years ago in this Province, students with multiple handicaps and disabilities were kept home. Others were warehoused in institutions like Exon House and the Children's Home here in St. John's. They were not given any kind of education programs.

When I was Minister of Education

the policy was changed and legislation was enacted making it legally mandatory for school boards to accommodate all students, including students with severe disabilities, in the regular schools. When a couple of colleagues were Minister of Social Services, supports were put in place so that these students could live with their families, could live in communities, could attend classes with their peers. Advocates for the mentally and physically disabled heralded what the former Government did. Our Province's education programs for disabled students have received international recognition and praise. The integration of mentally handicapped students in Labrador City and Wabush has been cited as a national example of progress. It is an example of which we all should be proud.

Now under this administration there is regression from the quality attained previously. Perhaps the President of Treasury Board will stand and explain that some of the money the Government wants to borrow with the authorization of this bill will be used to upgrade the level of supports for disabled students; perhaps he will say that the Government really meant to keep the promise that has been made three times and broken three times, of maintaining last year's level of services and supports for handicapped students in the schools.

The promise was made by the Minister of Education when he addressed the Provincial Association of Community Living Conference here in St. John's, back around the end of May or early June. Then, to the horror of his audience, two weeks before

school started, at the end of August, the Department of Education sent notices to each school board office saying that the budgets for employing student assistants were cut by 30 per cent. Damage control was exercised. The President of Treasury Board, by then negotiating with the bargaining agents for the student assistants, and the Minister of Education besieged by parents of handicapped students said no, no, we really will provide the funding to have enough student assistants in the schools and to provide the same level of education quality as last year. But they betrayed their word again, and that is why the student assistants had to go on strike again.

Mr. Baker: That is not true.

Ms Verge: The President of Treasury Board is saying that it is not true. I hope it is not true. If it is not true, he is going to have to demonstrate that, he is going to have to commit the funding necessary to provide student assistants to all the handicapped students in the schools who require that kind of support; he and his officials are going to have to recommence talks with NAPE and provide the necessary assurance, and I would think that this time NAPE is going to require that all the t's are crossed and the i's dotted.

Chairperson, teachers' salaries, including substitute teacher salaries; there has been a massive cut by this Government and it was done part way through the fiscal year, making people see that this Government is incompetent. This Government has lurched from one extreme to the other, from one decision to another. They do not

seem to have any coherent plan, they do not seem to know where they are going. Would any of the money to be borrowed under this bill be used to increase funding for substitute teachers? Will any of the money be used so that the Government can live up to its contractual obligations with the NTA, or are teachers going to have to remain in the classroom even if they get sick this year?

Chairperson, what about economic development and job creation? What is the Government doing? What jobs are being created? Is Enterprise Newfoundland and Labrador Corporation in place yet? What kind of spending is going on for new employees and offices for that corporation? Are they contributing to the economy, apart from buying equipment and renting office space for themselves? And is any of the money to be borrowed under this bill being used or intended to be used for the purpose of bolstering the Economic Disaster Commission and the Enterprise Newfoundland and Labrador Corporation? Is there any other effort in job creation? We know about the Commission, but what about the line departments? Is the Department of the Minister of Development doing anything in the way of adding to jobs or stimulating the economy of the Province? Is any of the money to be borrowed under this bill to be devoted to that kind of effort on the part of the Department of Development?

When all is said and done, Chairperson, when we get the true figures about federal government transfers to the Province, about provincial revenues from provincial sources, and when we get the actual information about

Provincial Government spending, at the end of the day are people in this Province going to be better off or worse off? Is the gap between the rich and the poor going to be wider or narrower?

Chairperson, so far there is no reason for anyone to have any confidence or hope. People in the Province are badly shaken; people feel betrayed; people are shocked because the Liberal Party, when in Opposition and when campaigning for election, promised so definitely that if they were elected they would increase employment, they would bring the mother's sons back from the mainland, they would open more hospital beds, they would upgrade the quality of health care, they, with their two NTA past Presidents and their two education administration professors from Memorial University, would do wonders for education. After all, one of those education professors, who just happens to be the Minister of Education now, had written a Task Force report on education financing, and in that report that education professor, now Minister of Education, called for massive increases in operating grants to school boards, in Provincial Government funding of student transportation. People cannot believe that it is these very same individuals who are now presiding over such massive cuts: cuts to education, health and avoidance of responsibility for economic management, the very three areas that were central to their campaign platform, the same three issues that were highlighted in the Budget just a few short months ago.

Chairperson, talk about real change. This, indeed, is real change. It is just not the kind

of change that everyone expected. One of the first acts of the Government was to set up - I should not say set up, but was to state its intention of establishing the Economic Recovery Commission. It so happened, at that time, the Province had just come through three or four years of steady and substantial economic growth. The gross domestic product was up, employment was up, the number of jobs and people working was up, the unemployment rate was down. And the new real change Government, trying to minimize the accomplishments of the previous administration, announced the creation of an Economic Recovery Commission.

Chairperson, since the day of the announcement of the creation of that Economic Recovery Commission there has been steady erosion: There has been steady decline in the gross domestic product and in employment, there has been an increase in unemployment; there has been an increase in net out-migration. So, now, after a year and a half there really is something to recover from, but what are they doing about it? Where is their plan? Where is the Premier's agenda for upgrading the economy? Where is the Premier's manifesto for uplifting the conditions of the sick, the disabled, the poor, the single mothers, the children of the Province? How is there any cause for hope anymore? How is there any cause for optimism? How is it that the young people of the Province should plan to stay in Newfoundland and Labrador and make their homes here? What has this Premier and this Government done to inspire the people of the Province? What has this Government done to persuade graduating nurses to plan on

making careers here in Newfoundland and Labrador? Nothing. That is why the majority of nursing students approaching graduation are now looking outside the Province for job opportunities. What is the Government going to do? What is the Minister of Health going to do to stem the tide of out-migration of nurses, of doctors, of specialists, of other health care workers? He sits there twiddling his thumbs. He does not have a clue. The Government lacks any agenda, any plan, any idea of improving the Province. The Government is lurching from one glib promise to another.

Glib promises - the Minister of Education knows all about glib promises. He is probably the best one over there at placating people. It takes a little while for the audience to catch on, but after a while more scholar for the dollar and the three E's of education wear thin. It takes a while, but people are catching on. Most of the teachers have figured him out by now. The school board superintendents caught on quite a while ago.'

Chairperson, I am not going to have time to develop this theme now, but many people in our Province today, while being shaken by the poor performance of the Government and by the Government's abandonment of their campaign promises, are afraid to voice criticism publicly - they are afraid. The Government has succeeded in employing many of the Smallwoodian devices of intimidation and fear. There are many people in this Province, bright, well-informed people, who work directly for the Government or its agencies, or who are in a position to be hurt by the

Government who are holding back - they are holding back. They are afraid of reprisals from the Government, because the Government, within days of assuming office, cold-bloodedly fired some of our leading public servants, our career public servants, and since then - Chairperson, I am running out of time, so I will have to move that the Committee rise and report progress. I hope to return to some of the subjects I was speaking about, and I look forward to getting answers to the questions I asked from the President of Treasury Board.

An Hon. Member: Don't hold your breath.

On motion, that the Committee rise, report progress and ask leave to sit again, Mr. Speaker returned to the Chair.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Trinity - Bay de Verde.

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole have considered the matters referred to them and have directed me to report progress and ask leave to sit again.

On motion, report received and adopted, Committee ordered to sit again on tomorrow.

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