

PRELIMINARY

UNEDITED

TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

FOR THE PERIOD:

10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

MONDAY, MAY 16, 1977

The House met at 10:00 A.M..

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, Please!

PRESENTING PETITIONS:

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Port de Grave.

MR. DAWE: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to present a petition on behalf of the residents of Butlerville, at Shearstown, in the district of Port de Grave.

It is signed by 164 residents, which I think is about ninety per cent of those concerned, and the prayer of the petition is as follows; "We, the undersigned, citizens of Butlerville, Shearstown, in the district of Port de Grave, humbly request and respectfully ask our provincial government, through its Department of Transportation and Communications, to give us serious consideration this Summer 1977 with regard to getting three-quarters of a mile paved through our community."

MR. NEARY: Hear! Hear!

MR. DAWE: "Towards that end we humbly and respectfully submit this petition to the hon. House of Assembly and humbly and sincerely ask our provincial government to commit and make funds available to have this stretch of road paved, that is from Big Bridge to the end of Butlerville."

A little background, actually, Mr. Speaker, to this petition, some years ago the government tried chip seal in the Province about ten or twelve years ago -

MR. NEARY: It did not work.

MR. DAWE: - and this is one of the sections that were tried and it did not live up to the expectations and each and every year through Winter action, through frost, through - actually this type of material has not been able to withstand Winter conditions. Each and every year there is considerable patching has to be done. And the road now is in a deplorable condition and the cost involved would be very little, very little

MR. DAWE: upgrading would be required. The minister would have some idea actually to the cost just to lay the black top and if they are going to utilize the asphalt plant at Springfield, which is about six miles from Butlerville, this section could be done at a rather small cost involved.

MR. NEARY: No more than they should do.

MR. DAWE: I do trust that the minister will receive this petition on behalf of the citizens concerned. I do trust that funds will be made available this Summer and I give it my most wholehearted support and ask that it be received and laid on the table of the House and referred to the department to which it relates.

MR. NEARY: It is little enough to do. They should do it.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Harbour Grace.

MR. YOUNG: I would like to support this petition. I know that the area up until 1975 was in the district of Harbour Grace and I saw over the weekend there a letter in the Compass, signed by the residents, or at least this committee, and personally I know all of the members of that committee and it is like the petition requests that this three-quarters of a mile goes through the community of Butlerville and the state of the chip seal was an experiment and no doubt about it the road is in a very, very deplorable condition.

Mr. Young: I do support the petition and I trust that the minister will give every consideration if funds are available to have that three-quarters of a mile paved.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: It is amusing to see the way that government members, Sir, get up and support petitions. What we want is not support, we want action. Members who get up on that side of the House and support petitions should be ready to resign if the prayer of the petition is not carried out, -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. NEARY: - and not be hypocritical.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! I must point out to the hon. gentleman that in speaking to a petition, he may support it and remark on the material allegation, but the previous remarks I would regard as debating.

MR. NEARY: Thank you, Your Honour.

If members have strong feelings, Sir, on the prayer of this petition on either side of the House they must be prepared to back them up. Unfortunately I am not in a position to do anything about it, If I were I would bring pressure to bear on the Minister of Transportation and Communications, and if the minister did not do it and I had strong feelings on it I would resign, leave, I would not support that government any longer.

So, Mr. Speaker, I have no hesitation at all, Sir, in supporting the prayer of the petition .It is only for three-quarters of a mile of road. Apparently it was three-quarters of a mile that was experimented with a few years ago in using the chip seal technique. We had three miles done over on Bell Island at that time. It did not work. It was a waste of the taxpayers money. I do not know who was responsible for it, whose brainchild it was, but it was a terrible waste of money. It kept the dust down for one year and that was it. And I hope there will be no more repeat performances of that kind of extravagance and waste. So I have

MR. NEARY:

no hesitation at all, Sir, in supporting the prayer of the petition.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Transportation and Communications.

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, just a brief comment on the petition signed by 160 people of Butlerville, and to clarify a point as well that I sincerely hope that by the minister responsible for any petition brought to the House of Assembly by him commenting on a petition does not automatically mean that what the prayer of the petition is asking for will be carried out immediately, and the same goes for any backbencher on the government side speaking in support or commenting on any petition.

So in my comment on the petition I will say as I said in many other petitions brought forward to the House of Assembly asking for road work to be carried out is that the petition and the prayer of the petition will be given every consideration by the department concerned.

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

MR. E. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, if I could say just a brief word in support of the petition presented by the gentleman for Port de Grave (Mr. Dawe), I think it is a reasonable request and I think it is little enough to ask for. The Minister of Transportation and Communications has before the Committee of Supply a request, I believe, for \$15 million, I am speaking from memory now, but \$15 millions for road paving and purposes to that end this year. I do not know what it cost to pave three-quarters of a mile of road, what \$25,000, \$30,000 possibly? more than that? Perhaps \$40,000, perhaps \$50,000? I do not know what it cost to -

MR. MORGAN: About \$60,000.

MR. ROBERTS: The minister: say about \$60,000. But whatever the cost it will have to be borne sooner or later, and it will be less this year than it will be next year if we are to judge by the past few years in the escalation in prices. I think these people have a case on the merits, and I think the case is all the stronger because, as the gentleman for Port de Grave said, this was one of the

Mr. Roberts:

areas where the chip seal experiment was used. Well the chip seal experiment was an effort undertaken, gosh I do not know when, I guess early in the sixties or the mid-sixties, in an effort to see if there was any alternative to black top. It turned out not to be a success. There was a stretch down, I believe, by Georges Brook, between Georges Brook and Clarendville, or Georges Brook and Lethbridge, as the gentleman from Trinity North (Mr. Brett), I am sure, is familiar with it, it was tried as an experiment, I believe, it was tried as a suggestion of the official, it does not matter, it did not work -

AN HON. MEMBER: It was suppose to substitute for black top.

MR. ROBERTS: Yes. It did not prove to be a substitute, and indeed we have no found substitute for black top, for asphalt; it may not be perfect and it certainly is dear, and getting dearer all of the time, but it has turned out to be the only acceptable way of paving roads in this Province.

So I think

Mr. Roberts.

the fact that these people a number of years ago sort of became guinea pigs - and the experiment did not work - gives them an even stronger claim. And there are a number of people affected directly by the road. One hundred and sixty people have signed the petition. I think that is a reasonable request, and I would hope the minister, when he comes to carve up the money that has been allocated to him this year, heeds the request of these people in Port de Grave. I would say to the member for Port de Grave (Mr. Dawe), Mr. Speaker, that he will know whether anything is to be done or not, because he will be invited in to discuss this as have all members on the other side but none on this side. And we are seeing this year what amounts to the most partisan, political programme ever seen, the most partisan, political programme ever seen. Gentlemen on the other side, Sir, have been invited to - by the minister or by his officials - to submit, say, if you got X thousand dollars, X hundred thousand dollars, tell us how you want it spent.

MR. PECKFORD: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A point of order has come up.

MR. PECKFORD: It seems to me that the present line that the Leader of the Opposition is taking in his debate, that it has very little to do with the relevancy of the request made by the hon. member for Port de Grave (Mr. Dawe) in his petition. So, therefore, I suggest that the hon. Leader of the Opposition, his last number of phrases are completely out of order.

MR. ROBERTS: To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. ROBERTS: I am speaking in support of a petition that seeks some pavement, and I am suggesting to the gentleman from Port de Grave (Mr. Dawe) who presented the petition, and to the House, the way in which the government allocate their pavement monies, and I think

Mr. Roberts.

that nothing could be more in order, nothing could be more relevant, Sir. I am not debating. If I were debating, I would be denouncing the government for this partisan interference, but I am not. I am merely pointing out that government members have been invited to the minister's office or to those of his officials and said, You have X hundred thousand dollars, and how is it to be spent this year? And members on the other side have told me - and if hon. gentlemen wish, I will name them. But I submit, Sir, since I am speaking to the point of order, that what I am saying is in order. The government's action is not in order. But my raising the matter, Sir, in this way, I believe, is in order.

MR. SPEAKER: On the point of order. It was submitted, I believe, that the hon. gentleman's remarks breached order on the grounds of relevancy. I am not sure whether the matter of debate was referred to. The question of relevancy would not be a factor in ruling it out of order. I think the remarks were relevant. However, relevancy is not all that counts. It is debate, and I would regard the last couple or so sentences of the hon. Leader of the Opposition as a debate, and would ask him to confine his remarks to speaking on the material allegations.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I will have another opportunity to denounce the government's tactics. I do support the petition, Sir, and I do hope that the gentleman from Port de Grave, who may have good reason to expect this kind of treatment, and I hope he does, I hope he will have an invitation to meet with the minister, and with the minister's officials to discuss the request of these people. I write letters to the minister, and do not even get the courtesy of an answer. I hope the hon. gentleman will be asked to meet with the minister, to discuss this, and I hope these people -

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

MR. SPEAKER: Point of order.

MR. MORGAN: If the hon. gentleman is going to be debating, which he seems to be doing now, debating the petition, I sincerely hope that he will quote me and any comments made about me correctly. The hon. gentleman, the Opposition Leader and in fact any of his colleagues who have ever written to my office always got a reply.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, to that point of order. First of all I am not debating. I may be baiting the hon. minister, but that is not debating. Secondly, I can produce letters, a number of letters to the hon. gentleman which have not been answered, including one I wrote him last year - and I will table it if he wants - asking him to table details of the way in which his department gave out snow clearing contracts which has never even been acknowledge let alone answered.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. ROBERTS: And if the hon. gentleman would like others, I will produce them, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

I am not sure if the hon. gentleman to my left got up on a specific point of order or whether he used that opportunity to make an explanation. However, the hon. gentleman's five minutes have expired.

MR. ROBERTS: I have been harassed by hon. gentlemen opposite.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister.

MR. MURPHY: Mr. Speaker, if I may I would like to rise to support this petition, too, because I have my reasons, because when I was in a place other than I am now, I am sure that this petition was among many hundreds that I presented before this House. I do not know if the hon. Speaker - perhaps I should not refresh his memory on certain matters either. But I am sure that this is one particular one that I brought to the attention of government at that time

MR. MURPHY: requesting that some action be taken. So at that time I felt that it was not too great an expenditure of money, and the need was great, so I will bring the same message to the present Minister of Highways if the money is available at all I would certainly like to see it available and help these people out who have been suffering for a great many years. And I think I am referring to nine or ten years ago.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS FOR WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

MR. NEARY: The hon. Minister of Mines and Energy was going to get me the answer to a question I asked him about the bus service provided by Newfoundland Hydro. Does the minister have the information?

MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. gentleman has an answer I will recognize him but I do not see anybody standing so I will go on to routine Order No. 6, Oral Questions.

MR. SMALLWOOD: The hon Minister of Tourism was standing.

MR. SPEAKER: Well perhaps - was the hon. gentleman standing to give an answer?

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Speaker I was attempted to -

MR. SPEAKER: Do we have leave to revert?

MR. HICKEY: A point of privilege, Mr. Speaker, to correct an article in the paper.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, the point of order that is not in order, Sir, A point of privilege must be raised at the earliest possible moment and that was surely when the House met twenty minutes ago, Sr.

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Speaker to that point of order -

MR. SPEAKER: Order please! I take cognizance of what the hon. Leader of the Opposition said, but I cannot actually admit a point of order during a point of privilege. Now one of the two matters the hon. gentleman getting up that he will presumably wish to

MR. SPEAKER: establish - have to establish, if it is a genuine point of privilege would be the prima facie, and the fact that he is raising at the earliest opportunity, but until I have heard him I could not make any decision on that.

MR. HICKEY: Mrs. Speaker, I could have interrupted the hon. Leader of the Opposition but out of courtesy I did not. I arrived in my seat after the time to rise on a point of privilege so this is my first opportunity. It is not a big issue, Mr. Speaker, it is just to correct a headline in the Evening Telegram of the weekend. Not a big issue but I suggest a rather important one and I want to correct the headline. I certainly do not want it to be attributed to me. It simply says "Fluorid found in rabbit - Hickey says test will prove no health hazard in Long Harbour" But, Mr. Speaker, I wish to point out that kind of headline, that headline is in fact just ludicrous. No one in their sane mind would make such a statement because that really covers whatever test may be done for the next five or ten years. My written statement, which I read in the House on Friday, simply said that "To date - that the tests done to date, there was no reason to be concerned from a health point of view or there was no health hazard. I at no time indicated by inference or alluded to any such statement that future tests would prove no health hazard. I am not prepared to make that statement and I would like the paper to correct it."

MR. SPEAKER: I do not think it is required for the Chair to make any decision on the hon. gentleman's remarks under point of privilege. As hon. members are aware it is very well subsidized in May, page 343 "In regard to the explanation of personal matters the House is usually indulgent and will permit a statement of that character to be made without any question being before the House"

MR. NEARY: Oral questions?

MR. SPEAKER: Just about to come to it.

MR. SPEAKER: We have reverted to number five so I should dispose of that in the interim.

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. ROBERTS: A question for the Minister of Transportation and Communications. I am sure he has anticipated this; if he has not he ought to have. He is familiar with the reports that have been on the radio and in the newspapers this morning alleging that the Royal Commission on Transportation in which this government have participated, may - and I stress the word may - may recommend the removal of rail freight service across this Island. Would the minister please assure the House that he will ensure that this is not so? and I say, Sir, this government have participated in this Royal Commission, they were consulted, and they were involved and indeed they participated in the announcement. And could the minister also tell us what steps he has taken to ensure that the Royal Commission does not turn into a execution squad for the railway in this Province?

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. minister.

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker,

MR. MORGAN: this morning's reports which apparently are coming out of some interview with an official of the MOT, number one, and an interview with the head of the Commission of enquiry in this Province into transportation as appointed by the federal government, in the national newspaper the Globe and Mail and picked up by the local papers here, to say the least, it is very annoying and disturbing to me, not only the attitude of the Ministry of Transport official, but also, if quoted correctly the statement made - and I have not made contact with Dr. Sullivan to confirm this so I have to say if he is quoted correctly - in saying that his commission could very well recommend the abandonment of the C.N. Railway in the Province, I would say, to say the least, it is very premature on the part of the head of a Commission of Enquiry that has just been appointed and getting down to work to make that kind of an assumption.

It is the purpose of the commission, it was agreed upon by the federal and provincial administrations, that the commission would be holding public hearings throughout the Province and getting the views and opinions and suggestions and ideas from all concerned citizens of this Province. Until that is done, I cannot see, I cannot see for the life of me how the head of that commission can draw an assumption the way he drew it, if he is quoted correctly in the national newspapers.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary, the original questioner.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, the minister has said, If Dr. Sullivan was quoted correctly, and that is a reasonable thing to say. We have all had experience with being misquoted and we know it can happen. Will the minister get in touch with Dr. Sullivan to ascertain

MR. ROBERTS: exactly what is involved, whether Dr. Sullivan was quoted correctly or not? And whether it is in the contemplation of this commission to recommend—as I say, to become an execution squad—to recommend the removal of rail freight service, being all we have, we do not have any rail passenger service, but rail freight service across this Province?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Transportation and Communications.

MR. MORGAN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I have already talked to the Director of Transportation for the Province this morning upon reading the reports and I have asked him to make contact with the commission to determine whether or not the statements made by Dr. Sullivan, as head of the commission, are correct or not, and to determine why he made that kind of a statement without getting the opinions and views of all Newfoundlanders concerned.

The latter part of the original question, Mr. Speaker, as well was in connection with statements made by the MOT people regarding the subsidies paid to C.N.R. in the Province. We have known for some time the attitude of the Federal Ministry of Transport, in fact the Federal Cabinet, with regards to the subsidies paid for transportation in this Province, particularly the marine Transportation subsidies. As earlier outlined to the House of Assembly, they attempted to, in the month of March, remove the subsidies totally on all the coastal boat ferry services, or coastal ferries around the Province. Now they feel that the Gulf ferries are "sinko" to quote them in the papers, for the federal government subsidies almost totalling \$100 million in this region. My attitude to that is, and I am sure the attitude of this administration, that the Gulf ferry services are an essential link, in fact a part of

MR. MORGAN: the Trans-Canada Highway network, and under our constitution there is no way we will tolerate a reduction in the level of services in that service across our Gulf.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary. The hon. the member for LaPoile followed by the member for Windsor - Buchans.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, could the minister tell the House whether the provincial government will be preparing a long-term transportation plan which will include the operation of the Canadian National Railway in this Province? Will the minister be presenting a brief to the royal commission making recommendations on how they can upgrade and update the rail freight service in this Province so it can, not only compete with road transportation, but will lower the amount of subsidies that are required to keep it operating?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Transportation and Communications.

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, we will be not only putting forward a brief regarding the operations of CNR in the Province, and the CN Railway, but in fact a very detailed comprehensive brief to the Commission of Enquiry involving all aspects and all modes of transport in this Province. At this time I cannot disclose the details of that brief to be made. In fact, I would call upon, and I would like to see all organized groups in this Province, Chambers of Commerce, councils, service Clubs, any organizations throughout this Province, put forward their views as well to this Commission of Enquiry which I sincerely hope has not drawn their conclusions automatically to date.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, would the hon. the

MR. NEARY: minister reassure the House that
under no circumstances will the railway freight

MR. NEARY: service in this Province be sacrificed to get a few paltry dollars to upgrade the Trans Canada Highway ?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Transportation and Communications.

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, I wish as the minister responsible in this Province that I could assure that. The fact is this matter is completely under jurisdiction and control of the federal level of government. But I will say that at no time, at no time in the past discussions and negotiations we have had with Ottawa involving the upgrading necessary on the Trans-Canada Highway have we even discussed the possibility of trading off the CNR Railway or the activity of the CNR's rail freight activity in the Province for the necessary funds, the upgrading of the Trans-Canada Highway.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Twillingate, a supplementary.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Would the minister tell the House whether he has any knowledge, or if he has heard even as much as a rumour to the effect that the Parliament of Canada are to petition the Parliament of the United Kingdom that the constitution be changed in respect of Canada's obligation to Newfoundland in the railway? In view of the fact that the matter is covered in Canada's Constitution, the British North America Act, the part of it including the terms of union, under which Canada entrusts to the CNR the operation of a railway system, the CNR are merely doing as they are told. Is there any suggestion of amending that, repealing it?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Transportation and Communications.

MR. MORGAN: That question, Mr. Speaker, I will take under advisement.

MR. ROBERTS: A further supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: A further supplementary, the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. ROBERTS: Perhaps the minister might also wish to take under advisement the question of whether or not the constitution can be changed unilaterally. My understanding is it cannot when it comes to matters between the provincial and the federal matters. It can

MR. ROBERTS: be changed unilaterally only within the federal government's own competence, for example, the representation in the House of Commons, a current example. But the minister might wish to check into that. I had not heard the report to which the gentleman from Twillingate refers -

MR. SMALLWOOD: A rumour I heard.

MR. ROBERTS: The hon. gentleman from Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) is indulging in a well known move, but I would suggest to the minister he might wish to look into that and find out whether it can be changed unilaterally. I do not think it can.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile, a supplementary.

MR. NEARY: Could the Minister of Transportation and Communications, Sir, indicate to the House a ball park figure of the amount of money that the federal government are talking about in trying to push off the responsibility, shrug off the responsibility for the coastal boat service and the other ferry services in this Province and making the Province responsible for part of the cost? I think that was in the report this morning. What kind of money are we talking about? Does the minister have any idea at all?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Transportation and Communications.

MR. MORGAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, they are talking about approximately \$100 million. Out of that \$ 44 million is for the subsidization of the gulf ferries into Port aux Basques, \$4 million into Argentea, \$23 million in the operations of the coastal boat services, another approximately \$3 million to \$4 million on the ferry services, the small ferries throughout the Province, and \$25 million in the rail freight activity.

MR. NEARY: How much do they ask from the provinces?

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, they have not asked the Province for any participation in the subsidies for transportation.

MR. NEARY: They did in the case of the ferries.

MR. MORGAN: But on the ferries, we call them marine ferries in the remote areas of the Province, they were indicating to us they

MR. MORGAN: wanted to pass the total amount, the total cost of these ferries over to the Newfoundland Government, which was the same thing was done in BC.

MR. NEARY: How much?

MR. MORGAN: Well that amounts to - well there is \$1 million on the Bell Island run, and approximately \$3 million on the total of the six ferries.

MR. NEARY: And they will not reimburse the Province?

MR. MORGAN: They have approached us through the official level. Mr. Lang has never officially communicated with me, or in fact any of my colleagues on this matter saying that what participation we wanted was to be involved. They merely told us that as of the end of March in 1977 when five of the existing contracts operating these ferry services expired that they want us, the Province, to assume responsibility for these subsidies as of that date.

MR. NEARY: But they would pay you.

MR. MORGAN: And of course we refused out right saying that these services were subsidized since Confederation and we saw no reason the Province should at this time take over the responsibility, in particular the financial responsibility, for the operation of these ferries and therefore up until this date we have had no discussion along the lines of the transferring any part of the cost of subsidizing to this Province.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Eagle River, a supplementary.

MR. STRACHAN: On this same question in dealing with a transfer of funds, could the minister assure us that there will be no reduction in the coastal service in order to be able to get airstrip construction on the coast, that the coastal service will not be downgraded in the transfer of funds made in the form of subsidies?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Transportation and Communications.

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, again I cannot assure that. And I indicated earlier I wish I could assure all of these things, but if the attitude that is relayed through the media at the national level, from the senior official, I am of the indication who the official is, without using his name, but if that is the attitude officially of the Ministry of Transportation and his colleagues in Cabinet with regards to this Province, I am afraid we are in for some tough times with regards to transportation in this Province.

MR. SPEAKER: I have indicated I will recognize the hon. member for Windsor-Buchans next.

MR. FLIGHT: Yes, Mr. Speaker, this question is for the Minister of Transportation. Is the minister in his role as Transportation Minister, does he have any input into the scheduling of airlines schedules around this Province, when air schedules are being revised, and I am thinking about the regional carrier here, EPA, in Newfoundland? Does the minister in his capacity as Minister of Transportation in this Province have any input or asked for his views as to what the scheduling should be?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Transportation and Communications.

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, any input that the Department of Transportation has in scheduling of airline services is strictly informal and you could almost use unofficial capacity because the scheduling of airlines is controlled strictly by the Canadian Transportation Commission which is the Federal Government regulatory authority which issues the licence to the carriers concerned, and

Mr. Morgan:

therefore the condition of the licence, the scheduling of the service etc. is strictly co-ordinated and indicated by the licence and also by the regulatory powers of the CTC. So therefore the only input we have is — have often sat down and discussed the services provided by EPA, and I have also discussed with the officials of the Air Canada carrier. But with regards to having control over it we have got no control, it is just merely an informal unofficial input by means of consultation or dicussing the matter with us.

MR. FLIGHT: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary, the original questioner.

MR. FLIGHT: Would the minister indicate if his department has received any complaints from the travelling public of Central Newfoundland, those using Gander, in and out of Gander, with regards to the present scheduling, EPA's present scheduling that took effect, I think, on April 28?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Transportation and Communications.

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, I am not personally aware of any, but I will check the files and with the Director of Transportation he may have some correspondence from that area, and if so, I will enlighten the hon. gentleman.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, my question is, in the absence of the hon. the Premier, I would like to direct a question to the Government House Leader, the Acting Premier, the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. Would the Acting Premier tell the House what plans the government have, what special plans the government have to deal with the serious problem of 18,000 skilled and semi-skilled workers in the construction industry who are currently unemployed? Does the government have any plans to try to cope with this situation; if so, would the minister tell the House what these plans are?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister for Intergovernmental Affairs.

MR. HICKMAN: Ours plans as a Province obviously are those that are indicated in the Estimates and in the Budget that have been tabled in this House; that is the only fiscal control or ability we have to create jobs , to protect so many of these men and women, but primarily men, skilled men who again traditionally are employed in the construction industry, and unfortunately in this Province the construction industry looks to government for a much higher percentage. I gather before I even finish my answer the hon. gentleman is dissatisfied with it. But in any event -

MR. NEARY: It is evasive, vague.

MR. HICKMAN: I have not finished yet.

MR. NEARY: Typical of the kind of an answer you get from the minister.

MR. HICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, as I say the construction industry does in this Province rely upon government expenditures at all levels for a much higher percentage of their work than in other parts of Canada. Secondly, back as far as last October representation was made to the line departments of the Government of Canada indicating to them what the situation would likely be in Newfoundland and it was then, and if they had in the planning stages certain construction works for this Province over and above what they would normally spend in any one fiscal year in trying to accelerate it.

Mr. Hickman.

hopefully this will be done.

MR. NEARY: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary, then the hon. gentleman for Eagle River.

MR. NEARY: In view of the fact that there are now almost 4,000 carpenters unemployed around this Province, over 600 electricians and so on and so forth, would the minister indicate to the House if the government will now take a look at its training programmes to see if it is necessary to continue to run various courses in the vocational schools and in the College of Trades, to train carpenters and electricians and plumbers and pipefitters and welders when we have a surplus that could probably last for the next ten years? Is it necessary to continue the programmes now or would it be cruel to train more people to go out into the world expecting to find jobs as a result of their training? Is the government going to review this situation now, can the minister tell us?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Justice.

MR. HICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, that question really should not be directed at me. It should be to my colleagues -

MR. NEARY: Well, get the ministers in their seats!

MR. HICKMAN: - the Minister of Labour and Manpower or the Minister of Education. But I assume that the vocational training - the officials responsible for vocational training programmes respond to the demand that is emanating from particular sectors of the public in the Province from time to time. And if there is a clear and unmistakable surplus in a particular vocation two things will happen: One is the demand will most dramatically decrease for admission to take that particular course, because it would not make sense for any young Newfoundlander to want to take it; and secondly, that there would be a review from the point of view of the course and programme itself

Mr. Hickman.

as to its validity and how meaningful it is for this Province. That latter part I cannot answer, but I suspect it is being done. I really do not know.

MR. NEAPY: Mr. Speaker, I am completely dissatisfied, Sir, with the minister's answer. It is evasive, general, vague, and I wish to debate it -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. gentleman is not required to give the reasons for his dissatisfaction.

MR. NEAPY: - and objectionable too, Sir, and I wish to debate it during the Late Show on Thursday coming.

May I be permitted a question now, Sir?

MR. SPEAKER: No. I recognize the hon. gentleman for Eagle River.

MR. STPACHAN: Mr. Speaker, a question for the Minister of Mines and Energy. Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro attributed losses of \$2.1 million to the difficulties with the generators at Churchill Falls and they assessed that there would be further trouble again this year as they change and do the modifications on the rims of the generators, the windings. Could the minister tell us whether Newfoundland Hydro is trying to recover any of that money from the manufacturers of these generators, because apparently they feel that only one manufacturer of the generators have created this trouble, and now they are trying to recover any proportion of that fund?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Mines and Energy.

MR. PECKFORD: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Bellevue.

MR. CALLAN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Tourism. As part of its monitoring programme - the EPCO situation at Long Harbour, i.e., the deformed rabbits - as part of its continuing monitoring programme, I am wondering if the minister's department or any other department of government plans to take, say, moose samples?

MR. CALLAN:

I know a number of people in the area are reluctant to apply for a moose licence in that area and, of course, as the minister knows moose, of course, can travel, you know, here and there and everywhere. Does the minister's department plan to test some moose there and see if there might be fluoride in these?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Tourism.

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Speaker, I can inform my hon. friend that a moose has already been taken and samples already sent to the laboratory for analysis.

MR. CALLAN: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary by the original questioner.

MR. CALLAN: The minister said that samples have been taken and sent. Are there any results yet and if not when can we expect the results to be known? Before the season for applications, the 20th. May?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister.

MR. TOURISM: There are not results, Mr. Speaker, because the samples have been sent very recently. I think it was about mid last week. Under normal circumstances, it takes approximately two weeks. So I would hope that roughly within a two week period the results will be back. And as I promised the House on Friday, as soon as the reports are back, and other reports on the additional samples of rabbits, then I will report to the House the findings.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary by the original questioner.

MR. CALLAN: Mr. Speaker, I am wondering if the minister could tell the House what danger is there to human health, you know, in the consumption of these deformed rabbits, say, or moose that would have the fluoride? Is this meat edible or is there danger to the health or what?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Tourism.

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Speaker, I am not competent to give any kind of a firm or detailed answer on that kind of a question. I can only impart to my hon. friend what I am told to date and this is why I rose on the point this morning to correct that headline.

I am assured, and the government is assured by both the Department of Health, who has a monitoring system at Long Harbour and the workers there, are assured by the Department of Health, by tests done by Environment Canada that the tests that were done with regards to vegetation so far, all the tests that have been done by the Department of Health on the workers indicate no health hazards at the present time. I am also advised by my wildlife staff, who are also advised by the expertise that they have been in touch with in various parts, Roschester, New York and Montanna, that the degree of flouride found in the rabbit to date certainly has no basis for alarm, that the flouride is in the bone structure, that it does not effect the meat and therefore there is no reason for us to say at this point in time that there is any health hazard.

But as I pointed out and I wish to emphasize, I do not consider myself competent to give total assurances of that and I do not think anybody is prepared to do so at this point in time.

MR. FLIGHT: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary, the original questioner.

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, would you advise the House as to whether any thought has been given to closing down the -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! I will not interrupt the hon. gentleman now but actually I did recognize a supplementary, the original questioner. But I will allow the hon. gentleman to continue, just to set the record straight.

The hon. member for Windsor - Buchans. I will allow him to continue. I just want to clarify the record

MR. SPEAKER: that I had recognized - there were a few people seeking a supplementary but I recognized the original questioner, who did not wish to ask one.

MR. FLIGHT: Thank you, Sir. Would the minister advise the House if his department is giving any consideration to closing down an appropriate area around the Long Harbour operation for the purpose of hunting, snaring until it is determined as to just what extent of levels of flouride that the wildlife may have absorbed there, closing it down completely, an appropriate area?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Tourism.

MR. HICKEY: No, Mr. Speaker. I think it is very important here and I think my hon. friend should take a leaf out of his leader's book, as he indicated on Friday that while this is a serious situation and one that we are not going to leave unattended, it would be very wrong to react to too great a degree, to react indeed without any firm basis for reacting at this point in time. And everything possible is being done with regards to carrying on further investigations. As I indicated, samples of moose have been taken, I mean this was on our own initiative, not necessarily a request or anything of that nature. Everything possible is being done. I think it would be very wrong to go overboard at this point in time when we have no basis for doing so. And the other thing is that we have no reason at this particular point in time to have any justification to partition off or to close any given area around the plant because this would only give rise to something which we cannot explain, would not be able to explain, and indeed would not be able to justify.

MR. FLIGHT: One more supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The final supplementary, the hon. gentleman from Windsor-Buchans, then I will recognize the hon. member for LaPoile for a supplementary.

MR. FLIGHT: By way of preamble, Sir, I assure the minister I agree that it would be very wrong to cause any alarm. As I understand it we already have rabbits that have been proven to have a high level of fluoride. Now would it not be just as wrong to allow people to hunt in there and take the chance on consuming meat that may indeed be contaminated?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Tourism.

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Speaker, that raises the question of what we would term a restricted area. You know I mean rabbits move and so do moose. Wildlife goes from one part of this Province -

MR. FLIGHT: Seven miles.

MR. HICKEY: - one part of this Island to the other and, you know, just where do you stop? Where do you start?

MR. HICKEY: I suggest that this is not the time and I suggest that the idea of indicating or specifying a given area around the plant as a restricted area, I would suggest to my hon. friend that this could do nothing more than create unnecessary alarm at this point in time when indeed we cannot explain it.

MR. SMALLWOOD: If we found a dozen more rabbits with the same condition?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. HICKEY: I think that would be a different situation, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NEARY: I am not prepared to accept the fact that we are over reacting and that there is no need for alarm, Sir. There is need for alarm and I want to ask the minister this question, because the people in Long Harbour live right underneath that plant, practically right next door, and I know there is a genuine concern about rabbits and moose. But what about the people? Has anybody ever done a study on the people over the last five to ten years' to see if the people are being effective, what kind of things they are being treated for? Is there any danger of the people's lives. Rabbits, that is fine, we can be concerned about too, but the moose and the caribou and the birds and the bees. But what about the people? Is the minister's department keeping an eye on that, or is the Department of Health keeping an eye on the people there to see that they are not affected by the fluorid? If it gets into the bones of rabbits would it not get into the bones of people, human beings?

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Minister of Tourism.

MR. HICKEY: I could not agree with my hon. friend more when he says there is cause for concern. Government have reacted and reacted instantly and immediately, obviously showing cause for concern. Concern and alarm are two different things, two different words, Mr. Speaker, they have very different connotations and that is the reason I said, you know, we should not be creating an alarming situation. It will do no good, it is better for us to carry on and do our work.

MR. HICKEY: And with regards to the points made by my hon. friend, in my statement on Friday a section of that was prepared by the Department of Health which indicates very clearly that there is a continuous monitoring programme done on the workers at Long Harbour plant.

MR. SMALLWOOD: By whom?

MR. HICKEY: Urinalysis-- by his department, and by a medical doctor for the company in coordination with the Department of Health. Urinalysis, blood testing and X-rays and I do not know what else. But in any event, Mr. Speaker, it is clearly stated in that Ministerial Statement. And these are not my words but a section of it written by the people in the Department of Health that all of those tests carried out on the workers are negative, showing no cause and no reason for concern with regard to the health of the workers. There is also a section in that statement which says very clearly that effects from fluoride or amounts of fluoride which would be over and above that which could be tolerated by the human body, the amounts that have been found do not give any cause for concern. And they are doing the tests with the best systems that are available, such as urinalysis, and I am sure that if the Minister of Health were here he could elaborate on that. But as far as we are concerned there is no reason at this point in time to create a situation where those people are going to be alarmed to the extent which is not going to help the situation. The other thing that is contained in the statement, Mr. Speaker, very clearly is that affects on the workers in the plant, people who work in the plant, would be evident much sooner, much quicker than member of the community of Long Harbour.

MR. NEARY: Not necessarily.

MR. HICKEY: Well, you know, this is medical opinion, Mr. Speaker, and I am not going to question that.

May 16, 1977

Tape 2719

AH-3

MR. NEARY: Pollution is pouring out of the plant, outside.

ORDERS OF THE DAY:

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

MR. CHAIRMAN: Head VIII - Social Services, page 45.

The hon. Minister of Social Services.

MR. SPETT: Mr. Speaker -

MR. ROBERTS: May I raise a point of order, Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: A point of order has been raised.

MR. ROBERTS: The point of order is this. It has been my understanding - and I think there are rulings from the Chair to substantiate it - that when a head is called it cannot be interrupted. The Committee must proceed with that until the Committee have disposed of it. There is about thirty minutes left on the head we were previously debating; namely, the Labour portfolio, the estimates of that minister, and certainly we are not - I understand my colleague has some points he wishes to make - so we are not prepared by agreement to let the time lapse and therefore my submission is that that - I do not know what number head it is - but whatever number that particular head is must be called and it must be debated according to the Standing Orders, and then if the government wish to call the Social Services head, well that is, of course, their choice, and we will be quite agreeable to that. But I do not think, Sir, we can interrupt a head once it is under discussion.

MR. HICKMAN: To that point of order .

I am not prepared to concur with the position put by the hon. Leader of the Opposition with respect to the interruption of a head. I think any head can be called at any time. The position is that the hon. Minister of Labour and Manpower is in Gander to open a conference. He will be back this morning. He had hoped to be back by the end of the Question Period, but that probably was not realistic. And what we have planned to do is that when the Social Services estimates are completed, which will be by four o'clock this afternoon, then we would then complete Labour and Manpower. I certainly have no objection to having Labour and Manpower, the last twenty-nine minutes used up now, but I am sure that hon. gentlemen opposite, particularly the critic for that portfolio,

Mr. Hickman.

would find it less than meaningful if the minister is not here to answer the questions that he indicated to the Committee he would like to ask and for which he would like to get replies from the hon. minister. And there is no intention to short-circuit or short-change anyone in this Committee of the twenty-nine minutes. It is simply that the minister is not here at this time. He will be here today, so he told me on Friday. And the minute he arrives, and we have finished then Social Services, we will revert to Labour and Manpower and spend the twenty-nine minutes responding to the questions from hon. gentlemen opposite and in particular the hon. gentleman who indicated he had some questions for the minister.

MP. CHAIRMAN: To that point of order. If the explanation of the House Leader is not agreeable to the Leader of the Opposition, I would have to call a recess and make a ruling.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MP. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, with all respect to the hon. House Leader, I mean there has been no consultation between him and us so accordingly there is no agreement. If we had been approached we might have been willing to agree, but the government's arbitrary action - I do believe there is a valid point of order. Just looking through Beauchesne and no reference leaps quickly out at me so I cannot cite one. But I think we have had rulings in this House that once a head is called, we must proceed. It is not the same as a debate on a bill or an order of the day in that sense. The order of the day is Committee of Supply. The order of the day is not Head I or Head II. The order of the day is simply Order 2 - Committee of Supply. That can be interrupted. The Committee can be raised at any time and so forth. And I would ask Your Honour to make a ruling on the point so we will have it settled one way or another.

Mr. Roberts.

Now if the government have a problem, if a minister has to be away on official business, I mean we are willing to be reasonable, but there are well understood procedures for that, and I would suggest we should leave it to those procedures.

MR. MURPHY: Mr. Chairman, if I may speak to that point of order. I have been in the House for some fifteen years, and I must say from my memory that this has happened dozens of times where a minister through some reason could not attend. We never objected to it then. We are doing the estimates anyhow, whether it is Education. We still have to discuss them. So in my opinion I think it is just another one of the red herrings raised in this House by technical points that have no validity at all. We are doing them. Whether we do a half hour or an hour of Labour or this afternoon, what difference does it make? So all I say is let us get on with the estimates and find out what is happening.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

I will not hear any other explanation, because the time is taken out of the estimates, so I will adjourn for five minutes and give a ruling.

The Committee stands adjourned for five minutes.

Mr. Chairman: I would like to point out that government calls order in Committee as in the House; it is firmly established. Last year the ruling was that we were in interim supply, but now we are more or less midstream of a department and there is a time limit on that department. And I would like to draw your attention to Paragraph 242 , page 203, Subsection (4) "A proposed resolution may be allowed to stand over with general consent until another occasion, but if it has been regularly proposed from the Chair and discussed, no motion for its postponement is regular because there is no period to which it may be postponed."

As we have no general consent, therefore, we must revert back to the subhead we were on when the Committee of Supply adjourned, Labour and Manpower.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman, this rule is not very clear. Unless there is agreement once a head is called it must be carried on until it is disposed of according to the rules, is that the -

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, that is the information I gave.

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Sir.

MR. MURPHY: We have been living in sin for a long while, this House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister of Labour and Manpower -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. CHAIRMAN: Excuse me now, just a moment, Please call the subhead.

MR. HICKMAN: Five.

MR. ROUSSEAU: We have but half an hour.

505-01

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister of Labour and Manpower.

MR. ROUSSEAU: We have about half an hour left? The only reason I stand up is to apologize to the House. I was out this morning to open the -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! The hon. Minister of Labour and Manpower.

MR. ROUSSEAU: I merely stand to apologize to the hon. Leader of the Opposition, to the House, that this morning I was invited out to officially open the twenty-first Annual Convention of the Industrial Accident Prevention Association, in conjunction with the Workmen's Compensation Board. I got back as soon as I could.

I think safety, and health and occupational safety and health is very important in the Province. I thought it was very appropriate and very important that I be there this morning though it be for the few minutes that I was there to open that convention in Gender. So we will have a go at
505-01.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Terra Nova.

MR. LUSH: Mr. Chairman, when I stood in my place to speak to this the last day that we finished, the Chairman had called 501 and I wanted to speak to the heading 505 and we got down to 01 before I got to my feet. So I wondered if I could be allowed to speak to the 505? As I say it got down to it before I got to my feet, the 01 was called.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. member have leave to revert to 505-01.

MR. LUSH: Mr. Chairman, I will not be very long, I can assure you, because the hon. member for LaPoile has raised a lot of the things that I wanted to talk about under this particular heading this morning in the Question Period, and then indicated that he wanted to debate this in the Late Show. However, there are a few points that I would want to emphasize and re-enforce.

MR. LUSH: I think in the Manpower Training Programmes I do believe that there is certainly a necessity for new initiatives and new directions in this particular time of austerity and particularly new initiatives and new directions both in financing and in curriculum development.

In the financing of the Manpower programmes, certainly largely subsidized by the federal government, I do believe that there is a necessity for some changes in this particular aspect of the Manpower Training Programmes. Right now there are a lot of inadequacies in that particular programme. I am not sure as to what direction we should take. I am half inclined to believe that monies that come from the federal government should - that the provincial government should have more authority on how these monies are spent. And I would not at all be hesitant for the provincial government to be given full say on the monies, the Manpower training monies that come to the government because I do believe the people here are more conversant with what should happen, as to how the money should be spent, and there is a particular point of aggravation with me and this is that I think that students are forced into - the way the programme now operates is that many students are forced into programmes that are not their first priority, not their first choice. What happens I think is that the federal government buys so many positions, a certain number of positions in each of the schools, the trade schools, and the Fisheries College or whatever, and I have found that students apply for a position in a certain school and find out that these positions are filled, and then they start going into second choices and third choices. And I think this should be more restrictive. I think students should receive more counselling. And I have known students to go into programmes that were not their choice at all, as a matter of fact. It was just a fact that there was a vacancy

Mr. T. Lush:

and they decided that they would go into these programmes. So I do believe that this aspect needs to be tightened up a little more and there should be more screening of the students going in there, more questions asked them, as to whether or not this indeed is the particular trade that they want to get into. And I certainly believe that something has got to be done here to tighten up this.

And with respect to the curriculum development, and the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) put it very well this morning when he talked about the large number of skilled workers that were not able to find work. And I think that there has got to be a serious consideration given to these various trades for which we are becoming over-trained. And the hon. member listed off carpenters and plumbers and welders, and I do believe we are certainly getting an over-supply of people in these various trades, and auto body is another one.

As a matter of fact, I was talking to a gentleman this week who told me that in the trade school in Gander this year that out of a total class of sixteen, I believe it was, it was with auto body that not one person is employed yet, that is out of last year's class. And I know here in St. John's out of a plumbing class of twenty-seven, maybe it was two, but the numbers were twenty-seven, that as of November not a single person out of these new graduates, these twenty-seven had found a job. So this certainly indicates the over-supply. And I believe we have got to look very carefully at these trades, when people are going into them to ascertain the market, to ascertain the demand, otherwise we are just training people in a futile manner because there are no jobs available to them. Of course, this got to be done with a great degree of care because even though the job market is not available here there could be jobs available in other parts of Canada. So we just cannot say that we have got to cut them out because there is no jobs available here in Newfoundland. But the total demand has to be looked at so that we are training

Mr. Lush:

people properly and efficiently to take care of the demands.

There is one other point, I think in looking at curriculum development, in addition to looking at the availability of jobs, the job market, I think we have also got to look a little more at putting in courses that train people for self-employment. I do not think there is enough of this done in our trade schools, training people in managerial skills and informing them of the various jobs that are open for self-employment throughout the different areas of Newfoundland. And as I said before teaching them managerial skills, how to go into business for themselves. I think this is another area that we should certainly be looking at right now.

And another point is I think there should be more co-ordination throughout the various trades schools throughout the Province so there is not an awful lot of duplication of similar courses. And again, I think we have got to be cautious about this because there was a study done some years ago which showed that the further away a student was from some particular educational opportunity the less likelihood of a person pursuing courses. So I believe we have got to, you know, it is not all black and white, it is not all cut and dried, that we have to look at the thing very carefully. But I do believe we have to give some consideration to looking at the amount of duplication that is going on throughout the various trades schools, to cut down on the cost, and gearing the courses that are particularly fitting the needs of the people in a particular area. For example, the school at Gander obviously should be offering different courses, let us say, from the school at Bonavista, two different types of environment. And all I am saying is that I think these schools have to be geared more to the particular needs of the particular areas.

And, I think, Mr. Chairman, that is all I want to say under this particular heading of Manpower. And I just want to give these points that I have raised for consideration to the

May 16, 1977

Tape 2723

PK - 3

Mr. Lush:

minister.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shall 501 carry?

The hon. member for Twillingate.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Mr. Chairman,

MR. SMALLWOOD: when the moment came to open the College of Technology just east of this building, I had the honour to do the official opening and I made a speech in so doing. And in the speech I remarked that a lot of people were saying that this College of Technology was really too big and too elaborate because what were the students going to do to get work, to get jobs after they had received their training in the college. My answer was that I did not know, that I did not have the knowledge to enable me to answer the question. I did not know that every graduate of that College of Technology would in fact be able to find a job in Newfoundland.

Now you have, I think it is eighteen vocational trade schools in the Province including the College - or it maybe in addition to the College, I am not sure at the moment - and you have thousands of young men and women who go through them and who get some kind or degree of technical training. To say that there is an over-supply of trained young men and women is really putting it wrong. There is an under supply of jobs for them. But a province or a country is richer not poorer when it has people who are educated and when it has young people who have a variety of technical skills. Mr. Chairman, the presence in Newfoundland of ten thousand or twenty thousand young men and women with trained skills acquired at the Fisheries College or the College of Technology or the eighteen vocational trade schools is a very positive and unmistakable addition to the wealth of this Province. The skills of our people are just as much part of the wealth of the Province as the very dwelling houses that are in the Province, or the longliners or the farms that are in the Province, or the hospitals, or the paved roads, or the fish processing plants, or the schools and a hundred other things. These are without doubt, without dispute, forms of wealth. The Province is better off for having those particular forms of wealth; they do form part of the provincial wealth of this Province. Well, so do the skills, the trained skills of

MR. SMALLWOOD:

thousands of young men and women even though they cannot find jobs, even though they cannot find people who will employ them and pay them to use these skills. The skills are still there. It is greatly to be regretted that across Canada in general, and in particular here in Newfoundland, there is a serious lack of jobs, there are a million Canadians at this moment looking for work who cannot find work, looking for paid work for paid employment who cannot find it. The percentage in this Province is extremely and extraordinarily high, not by any means the highest we have ever had, it is not even the highest we have had since we became a Province of Canada. People tend to forget that in one of the early years of our career as a Province the rate of unemployment went up over thirty per cent in one year. Of course, that does not make eighteen or twenty per cent any more welcome or any more enjoyable or any less grievous. It is terrible to have young men and women with skills, or even without skills, who cannot find a chance to earn a dollar, to earn it, to earn it, not get it in unemployment insurance, not get it in welfare but to earn their

MR. SMALLWOOD: living. It is a shame that there should be even one person willing to earn a living and not have the chance to do it, and more especially if they had received training as a plumber or electrician, or a carpenter, or a welder or anything else. It is a shame that they cannot find work.

But, Sir, that is no argument against having the Fisheries College and the College of Technology and the eighteen trade schools. They are good. They are necessary. They are a great addition to the welfare of this Province. If things were better than they are in the other provinces, the Newfoundlander who gets a trade or a particular skill at one of these institutions can always go and seek a job somewhere else, and some of them do and some of them do get jobs elsewhere, but I am afraid that at the moment, at the moment we have thousands of trained Newfoundlanders who cannot find work.

Their skill is not a dead loss. It is not a burden to them. It is no burden to a man to be an expert welder, or to be an electrician, or to be a carpenter, or to be anything, a plumber, a printer, a shorthand writer. It is no burden to have that skill and who knows, who knows when the opportunity to use the skill, to be able to sell it for a decent income will arise. And so while I am in absolute sympathy with every word just uttered by my friend and colleague here, I have to say what I said at the opening of the College of Technology, that every Newfoundlander born alive, male or female, ought to have the right to a good education, ought to have the right to acquire specialized skills, whether or not he can in fact turn it into cash at some period of his life. If he cannot do it today perhaps he will tomorrow. If he cannot do it this year perhaps he will do it next year or the year after or the year after, and if you are seventeen or eighteen or twenty years of age, and you cannot get a job now as an electrician or a plumber, perhaps in five years you will. And if you can get it at twenty-five or twenty-eight or even thirty years of age that is a good thing. It is a good thing that the Province gave him, with the help of

MR. SMALLWOOD: Ottawa of course, gave him the opportunity to acquire that particular kind of skill.

It is depressing to see men - the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) startled me, and I am sure he must have startled a great many people in Newfoundland the other day when he reeled off a long list of Newfoundlanders, 100 of this and 200 of that and 300 of something else, and 50 of something else and 500 something else, and 1,000 something else, Newfoundlanders with particular skills who were unemployed, and presumably drawing unemployment insurance, and who, when they run out of their entitlement to unemployment insurance, will have to fall back on welfare.

That is tragic. But it is still no burden that they are plumbers, that they are electricians, that they are carpenters, that when the chance comes they will be able to do that work and get very good pay for it. Here endeth the first verse.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, although I have a great deal of sympathy with the presentation, the argument put forward by my hon. friend, the member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood), I do not necessarily agree with the hon. gentleman that these people, their trade, their skill, whatever they are taught, their training will be no burden to them. That is quite true, Sir. But what will happen to these people, Mr. Chairman, is this, that they will be embittered by society, or at society, at the government, our educational system, and they will feel, Sir, that everyone has let them down. The brainwashing that has taken place over the last several years was, first of all, get a

Mr. Neary.

university education, get a piece of paper from the University, you are guaranteed to get a job. Now the young people, the young men and women are beginning to realize that that is not so, that by graduating from the University and dressing up in your cap and gown and getting your certificate, does not guarantee you a job. As a matter of fact, nine chances out of ten, the graduates of the university, a lot of them, have to go to the College of Trades or go to the vocational schools to get further training, to get the kind of training that they need to find employment. And my argument is this - although there is a great deal of merit in what my hon. friend said - my argument is this, Sir, that those in charge of the Manpower training have not used their initiative and their imagination to my liking. There should be a more concerted effort, Sir, to train people in the kind of technology, in the kind of skills, where they can find jobs that are available today.

MR. MUPPHY: Such as?

MR. NEARY: I will give the hon. gentleman a few examples in a few minutes, but I just want to go back over these figures in case they escaped the attention of hon. members of the House. And I can see my hon. friend was listening to what I had to say the other day.

MR. SMALLWOOD: I always listen to the hon. member, always!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I may not always be right, but one thing that I talk about inside and outside of this House are the problems that are affecting the ordinary people of this Province. And here is one for members to chew on while we are in here wasting away our time, wiling away our time mostly on foolish nonsense. Right now we have 3,925 carpenters - this is as of April - 3,925 carpenters on unemployment insurance.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Would the hon. gentleman allow me to ask him a question? When he says carpenters would he define - what is his definition in that classification? Does he mean certificated carpenters or just members of the union?

MR. NEARY: No, they are members of the union. They are certificated carpenters. They are practical men. They are considered to be carpenters in every sense of the word, because they are not semi-skilled. They are carpenters. They are tradesmen - 3,925 carpenters; 604 electricians on unemployment.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Would the hon. member again?

At what date were there 3,900 carpenters unemployed?

MR. NEARY: Receiving unemployment insurance in April.

MR. SMALLWOOD: April. April, May.

MR. NEARY: April, last month. Receiving unemployment insurance last month - 3,925 carpenters, 604 electricians, 566 plumbers and pipefitters, 279 painters and paper hangers, 257 masons and bricklayers, 245 structural metal erectors -

MR. ROUSSEAU: How many masons?

MR. NEARY: 257 .

MR. ROUSSEAU: The union only got nineteen members down here.

MR. NEARY: The union only what?

MR. NEARY: Mason and bricklayers, nineteen members? The hon. gentleman got to be kidding me. The hon. gentleman is just pulling my leg.

MR. ROUSSEAU: That is Pay Ryalls' union, is it?

MR. MAYNARD: Here in St. John's.

MR. ROUSSEAU: Here in St. John's, nineteen members. That is all they have.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Nineteen members what?

MR. NEARY: They got that many over at the Health Sciences Complex right now.

MR. ROUSSEAU: No, they have not. They held up with two or three last year, sure, you know, when they went on strike.

MR. NEARY: Nineteen what is the hon. gentleman talking about?

Nineteen what? Masons and bricklayers.

MR. ROUSSEAU: Yes.

MR. NEARY: Jack Greene got almost a couple of hundred on himself at peak.

- 245 structural metal erectors, 132 sheet metal workers - and these are not my statistics. These are from the Unemployment Insurance Commission. These figures are from a committee that my hon. friend has a representative on.

MR. ROUSSEAU: A joint federal-provincial committee.

MR. NEARY: That is right, Sir.

MR. ROUSSEAU: The only one I am questioning is the bricklayers and the masons. They may go on as bricklayers and masons. Whether they are certified or not is another thing, you know.

MR. NEARY: You cannot say the carpenters are certified either.

MR. ROUSSEAU: No, no. They are not finished carpenters in a lot of cases.

MR. NEARY: Well, a lot of them are finished carpenters, and they are a hell of a lot better than the carpenters who graduate out of the College of Trades or out of the vocational schools. They have got the practical experience. And as far as I am concerned, Sir, the best university in this world is the university of practical experience. And we have got 132 sheet metal workers, 111 concrete finishers, 91 boiler makers, 65 insulating workers, 37 plasterers, 35 roofing and waterproofing men, for a total of 6,347 tradesmen. Now if the hon. gentleman wants to dispute these figures, the hon. gentleman better go and argue with his representatives on this committee that produced these figures.

MR. ROUSSEAU: I am not disputing the figures. All I am saying is that the masons and bricklayers, from the information I have, that seems like a lot more than there are. The rest of them I do not dispute.

MR. NEARY: And added to that, Sir, added to that are 11,442 labour and trades helpers, for a total of 17,789 skilled and semi-skilled workers on unemployment insurance benefits in April.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Has the hon. gentleman

MR. SMALLWOOD: divided these figures, has he totalled them up under two headings - construction and not construction. How many of these, leaving out the last figure of the fifteen thousand-some-odd-hundred labourers and helpers, leaving them out, the others, the 5,000 - 6,000, how many of them are in the construction trade?

MR. NEARY: All of them, Mr. Speaker. All of these are in the construction.

MR. SMALLWOOD: No, not all of them.

MR. NEARY: Yes, Sir, all are in the construction industry, all of them.

MR. SMALLWOOD: May I see it?

MR. NEARY: No, these are my - that is my own release.

MR. SMALLWOOD: I know. I will hand it back.

MR. NEARY: No, but it is my - You mean the - I want to refer to it.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Yes, all right. Go ahead.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) indicated, these are startling figures indeed. But they just seem to go right over the heads of hon. gentlemen. This is the kind of a problem, Sir, that we should be debating in this hon. House. We should be putting forth ideas and suggestions of how we can come to grips with this serious problem.

Mr. Speaker, there are 17,789 skilled and semi-skilled workers on unemployment insurance benefits in the month of April and these were all in the construction industry. My hon. friend does not seem to accept the -

MR. SMALLWOOD: I heard the hon. member name two or three classifications that did not sound like construction.

MR. NEARY: Carpenters, electricians, plumbers and pipe fitters, painters, and paper hangers, masons and brick layers, structural metal erectors, sheet metal workers, concrete finishers, boiler makers, insulation workers, platerers, roofing and water proofing. They are all construction.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Yes.

MR. NEARY: And these figures, by the way, came from the Unemployment Insurance Commission, as my hon. friend knows, via a sub-committee of the Construction Association in this Province.

Now, Mr. Chairman -

MR. PATTERSON: Would the hon. member permit a question?

MR. NEARY: Yes.

MR. PATTERSON: You mentioned there the alarmingly high number of iron workers there, are they certified? Are those welders high pressure welders or are they just fellows who have been working in the trade and are not recognized under the various boiler codes, the welding codes and other regulatory bodies?

MR. NEARY: I presume my hon. friend is talking about the structural metal erectors?

MR. PATTERSON: Yes, but what are they, certified?

MR. NEARY: These are men, Sir, mainly I would say, most of these are up in the Head of the Bay, up in Harbour Main district, in my hon. friend's -

MR. SMALLWOOD: And they are the best in the world.

MR. NEARY: - in my hon. friend's district, that has gone off now. They do not call them vacations on the other side of the House anymore, you go for a rest now, not a vacation. This is a new name. And I would say most of these are in the Head of the Bay. Because I was up there the Sunday before last, I went around the Head of the Bay and the structural steel workers, the iron workers, the painters, and whatever is associated with that trade, most of them are unemployed at the present time.

MR. PATTERSON: That is true, but on those metal workers: Are they certified men, do you know? Does the Canada Manpower list them as being certified metal workers?

MR. NEARY: I do not know, Mr. Chairman.

MR. PATTERSON: Because if they are certified welders, I do not think there is any problem in getting work. You may not get it in Newfoundland but you will certainly - if you are a certified high pressure welder you have no problem in getting a job.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, they may be able to find jobs in New York, I do not know, or in Alberta somewhere, or out around Fort MacMurray on the Tar Sands. My hon. friend may be quite true and there is a big, as my hon. friend knows, a big movement of Newfoundlanders headed west today, "Go West, young man, go West" seems to be truer than in any time in our history. "Go West, young man, Go West," and we will stay behind, those of us who can survive in this Province. But a lot of the electricians are headed out West. I know one family, I think there were five young men in the family that I visited recently and the five of them, if they did not have jobs on the Tar Sands they were going anyway. But two

MR. NEARY: or three of them had jobs and the five young men in that family were going anyway. They were going out to look for employment, out in Alberta. But it is a pretty serious situation that we have, that we are faced with in this Province, Sir, and the people are asking and the construction workers are asking. Before their unemployment insurance run out they are starting to hit the panic button already. There is nothing on the drawing board, they can see nothing ahead but as my hon. friend says, welfare. Now, Mr. Chairman, we have to ask ourselves two questions in this hon. House and in this Province. First of all, and that is why I put the question to the hon. Minister of Justice, the Government House Leader, this morning in the absence of the Premier. What is the government going to do to put all this skilled training that we now have, put them to work if they are going to do anything. And if they are not going to do anything let the government say so, and if they are going to do something then let us have some specific plans, let the government tell us what they are going to do. And secondly, Sir, I ask the minister - and this is a very, very important aspect of this whole problem - what is being done to restrict or eliminate training more people for these occupations until the demand is caught up to the supply?

I said the other day, Sir, that it would seem to me to be cruel and foolish and stupid indeed to keep on training people for jobs that do not exist. We have got enough trained people here, Sir, I would say for the next ten years. The other day jokingly I said we could shut the university down for five years and we would have enough B.A.'s, B.S.C.'s, M.A.'s, and P.H.D.'s to last us for five years, and that is not an exaggeration. Although there is some merit to what my hon. friend says about broadening your education, keep them going to school, they may as well be in there whiling away their time as out in the world unable to find a job, depressed and demoralized. So you might as well

MR. NEARY: keep on training them, and keep on training them. Eventually you will probably end up with the best trained welfare recipients in the whole of Canada.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

Shall Item V, Labour and Manpower, all subheads, carry?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Carried.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Carried.

MR. FLIGHT: The minister never said a word.

MR. MORGAN: You did not give him a chance.

MR. CHAIRMAN: My explanation is that the time is expired on this subhead, on this Heading. Carried? Carried.

MR. HICKMAN: Head VIII, Social Services.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Head VIII, Social Services, Subhead 801-01.

The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

MR. BRETT: Mr. Chairman, I will take a few minutes to introduce the estimates of the department, not very long because I assume that any questions will come up in the various headings. Every government has a moral and legal obligation I suppose to care for its indigent people. We are no different. I do feel that probably this government has been a little bit more cognizant of that responsibility, and I do not mean that because we are so much better, but because times have changed and it has now been shown almost conclusively that social welfare is one of the major problems in our society. The indicators are, Mr. Chairman, that far too many people are willing to accept welfare as a way of life and generations of welfare are creating untold problems that are costing provinces and our federal government many millions of dollars. And that is not necessarily in the support services that we have, like food and clothing and shelter and so on, but because we find more alcoholics, more broken homes, more unmarried mothers and more abused children among chronic

MR. BRETT: welfare recipients that we do among normal, healthy independent people.

I would like to point out that we have taken - or made some changes, many changes but one in particular, our work activity and community development and I was sort of elated when I saw an article in the Telegram a few days ago that the United States is to get a new welfare system. I will not read it but the contents indicate that in the United States they may be taking this same step that we are in that they are going to create employment for chronic welfare recipients and also give tax incentives to the working poor - these are a group of people we do not hear too much about. Of course we would not have to give tax incentives or credits because most of our working poor do not pay income tax anyway. And then the third system that they are bringing in

Mr. Brett:

we already have, which is cash to the indigent.

I would like to point out, because I think it is often misunderstood, that there is a very distinct difference between the chronic welfare recipient and the person who gets welfare for a brief period of time. The person who does get welfare for short periods is the type of person who is unemployed for reasons of unemployment and that is it. We have many hundreds of people in the Province like that; they are working for four or five months of the year, and then while they are waiting for unemployment insurance they probably get welfare for one or two months, and then when they come off welfare they probably have to get for another two or three months, but then they can go on to work again. And these type of cases do not give us any problem. The problems lie with the chronic recipient who is on month after month after month.

A recent survey of our case load here in the Province pointed out a very interesting statistic and that is that out of the approximately 5,000 cases that we have on in the Province, and that does not vary too much, it goes down in the Summer, but from Fall until Spring it is pretty well even, anywhere from forty-five to fifty-five cases. And out of that number 64 per cent are unemployable. And this means then that out of the 5,000 only 1,800 people are able to go to work and the other 3,200 could not take jobs even if they were available. Of course, there are a number of reasons why these people could not; most of the reasons are social; a fair number are one parent families and these make up a large number of our case load right now, like unmarried mothers. And of course there are some on unemployment insurance; they probably could go to work if they could find jobs, but they do not, And a lot of those are supplemented or they used to be before the unemployment insurance rates went up, And there are also people who are working and their income is below

Mr. Brett:

what they would get on social welfare, and therefore they are supplemented.

Then, of course, we have our alcoholics who cannot go to work. And then we have a large number, an exceptionally large number who need specialized training by properly trained social workers because these people at the moment cannot get into the work force, and I am sure that every member of the House knows the type of person that I am talking about. If they are going to look for a job, if you get two people going to look for a job, one is an independent type person, he is sort of spry looking, the other fellow, if he were coming along at the same time, the welfare recipient sort of rejected or dejected looking, and always it is the independent man who gets the job first. So a lot of these people need training by, as I said, specially trained people.

Now these figures should indicate to the House, Mr. Chairman, that social welfare is a very, very serious problem. The average citizen does not understand, I do not think. I did not until I became a welfare officer and then later on what I am now. But to the average person, the welfare recipient that they know is getting too much, and the welfare recipient that they do not know - or the welfare recipient that they know is getting too little rather, and the one that they do not know is getting too much.

All the indicators tell us that we have to put much more emphasis on rehabilitative type of service. Now we provide three distinct types and that is the supportive type, the preventive, and the rehabilitative. And of course the support type of service is in the way of food and shelter, the basic amenities of life, transportation, clothing, medical services and so on. And then our preventive type of service is such as service to child care, correction services, and help to unmarried mothers and so on. But the rehabilitative type of service I would like to dwell on for just a few minutes, because as I said this is the type that governments through their Departments of Welfare, or Social Services

Mr. Brett:

or whatever they are called have to place much more emphasis.

And prior to 1972 very little was done in this Province in the way of rehabilitation of chronic welfare recipient, and that is not a partisan statement, I am not saying that to be critical of the previous administration, because probably the need did not exist at that time. There is a different slant on welfare right now. But it did become very apparent to us that unless we took some steps to rehabilitate the chronic welfare recipient then we were going to end up with a large percentage of our population

Mr. Brett.

dependent, completely dependent on welfare, particularly in certain sections and certain communities around the Province. And the first step that we took was to set up - that was in 1973, I think - set up the Division of Employment Opportunities in the department. I believe that I outlined the work or the purpose of this division last year when I brought in the estimates, so there is no point in my repeating that. But I would like to say - I want it to go on the record - that it is almost impossible to measure the success or the efforts of that particular division.

The Premier made a statement, and I backed it up, that in the last five years we have placed 5,000 people - or we have taken 5,000 people off the welfare rolls and put them into productive employment. Now that has been construed as a political statement, and it is a political statement in that it was made by -

MR. NEARY: That is not true.

MR. BRETT: - in that it was made by a politician. And we did not at any time say that 5,000 people had been removed from the welfare rolls and that they would never go back again. But what we did say - and if the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) - is it? - will listen, I will try to prove that it was not a partisan statement and that it is true. What we did say was that 5,000 welfare recipients had been put to work on LIP projects, other federal government projects, and some of our own, who maybe would not have gone to work had we not had special project officers and other officers in our department trained to go out and find jobs and put these people to work. Because, as I said earlier, these type of people, they just cannot walk up to a contractor and get a job. Nobody will hire them. So somebody has to go on their behalf and more or less fight for them. That is all we said. And maybe some of these 5,000, maybe half of them, have been back to the welfare office again, but a lot of them will not come back, because if you

Mr. Brett.

get them in the labour field for three, four, five or six months, they get a different attitude towards life, and a lot of them want to carry on in the labour force.

I think I should quote an example. This happened on the West Coast not very long ago. It was not right in Corner Brook. It was somewhere - I do not know the coastline that well over there - but one of these projects that we have going over there. It is being supervised by Mr. Jensen and his staff. There are a group of men, and they have to transport them to the job every morning. It could be the Hampden job, I am not sure. But two or three of them took time out to come and see Mr. Jennings and thank him for the special effort that the staff was making on their behalf and they said, "Look, if you had not got this going, went to bat for us, we never would have gotten a job." And they said, "If something else comes up, do not forget us." So, you know, it just goes to prove.

Now apart from our efforts of having special project officers finding jobs through LIP and what have you, I would like to outline the Work Activity Programme which I think is probably one of the better programmes in this department as it deals with rehabilitation. This is something that came up within the last two or three years. I should point out that it is cost-shared, and we are taking advantage of the fifty cent dollar here. In the Work Activity project we do not take people off welfare as such. They continue to get a regular monthly allowance, but in addition to that they are paid an incentive allowance of something like \$160. And the way that we do it is that we would take a group of maybe twenty or twenty-five, depending on how many we can handle, we would take the breadwinner in the family,

MR. BRETTE: and we will put him to work on a project, hopefully something meaningful.

We have specially trained workers who go in and work with the mother and we also have people work with the children. In this way the whole family becomes involved and it is a complete rehabilitative measure and in some cases - well our success ratio has been roughly fifty per cent. That is to say, if we take in a group of twenty-five and we train them, we are reasonably certain that half of these will never go back on the welfare rolls, providing there is employment available for them.

I want to say just a few words about day care and homemaker services. This again is something new, not to the rest of Canada, but relatively new in this Province because we had not gotten into it before, again, in all probability, because we did not see the need. I should say in all truthfulness that there is a desperate need to extend the day care type of service all across the Province, and we recently did a study which indicated that there is a drastic need in the larger centres such as Grand Falls, Corner Brook, Happy Valley, Goose Bay and a few others which I do not have right here now. Of course it is the age old problem of money and right now we are only funding one, and that is the Teach-A-Tot here in St. John's. I do not know exactly what it is costing. It is here somewhere in the headings. But that is the only one that we are funding but there are some thirty, I am not sure if it is thirty-one or thirty-two across the Province, all being operated on a private basis.

We did bring in legislation last year to govern the setting up and the operating of day care. But as I said we have not gone into the financing of them.

There are two kinds. The government has taken some flack in not extending the service. I refer to them as the baby sitting kind of day care, and then the rehabilitative kind, which

MR. BRETT: is the one that we should get into.

But the baby sitting kind of day care is where a couple, probably in the upper middle class bracket, they could be making between them \$10,000 or \$15,000 or \$20,000 a year; the husband could be working making \$15,000 or \$20,000 a year; the wife or the mother wishes to go to work to improve the family lifestyle, and of course if she has children then she has to find a baby sitter or put them into a day care. And we get a lot of requests for this type of service. I feel very strongly that if somebody in the \$20,000 or \$25,000 bracket wishes to go to work to improve their lifestyle then it is up to them to pay for someone to care for the children.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear! Hear!

MR. BRETT: So we have never gotten into that type of service. I do not mind telling you that some of our sister provinces that are fairly close, I think Nova Scotia, has gotten up to their neck in this. It is costing them a fortune and they are trying to find some way out. But as everybody knows, once government starts a programme it is very difficult to give it up.

Now the other type of service is the one that I would like to see extended, and hopefully it will when money becomes available, is the rehabilitative kind or the support or the preventive, you know, it is involved in the type of service that the department is giving, is where children can be taken out of homes where the environment is unhealthy and they can be placed in day care centres where they can mix with normal healthy children, trained in their development. In addition to that the mother is probably finding it difficult to cope and in order to maintain her sanity we pretty well have to take the children out.

And again in the case of unmarried mothers, we can sometimes take their children, put them into day care centres which leaves the unmarried mother free to go to work and become independent. And then of course there are cases where a mother

MR. BRETT: may have to go in a hospital. The breadwinner would normally have to stay home and look after the children, but if we can take them and put them into day centres then the breadwinner can go on to work and remain independent.

So this type of day care service is one, as I have said already twice I think, that I would like to see extended and hopefully it will if the money ever becomes available.

The other type of service that I would like to see extended, and again money comes into it, is our homemaker services, That is pretty much like day care except that we have people who

Mr. Brett:

are properly trained go into the homes and again care for the children maybe while the mother is in hospital, sometimes to care for older people, and rather than place them in costly institutions this again is an excellent type of service and, as I said, one that I hope to see expanded in years to come.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I could - my time is up is it?

MR. CHAIRMAN (MR. YOUNG): One minute.

MR. BRETT: Good. That is fine. I do not want to say any more now; no doubt there will be many questions asked as we go down through the headings.

MR. CHAIRMAN (MR. YOUNG): The hon. member for Baie Verte-White Bay.

MR. T. RIDEOUT: Mr. Chairman, I rise to say a few remarks in this debate for the -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. CHAIRMAN (MR. YOUNG): Order, please!

MR. NEARY: (Inaudible)

MR. CHAIRMAN (MR. YOUNG): Order, please!

MR. RIDEOUT: Mr. Chairman, yes I rise to lead off a few general remarks in the Social Service Estimates for the official Opposition. I am not the official spokesman for this side but unfortunately the gentleman is not here this morning so I will try to make a few general remarks for our side.

Now, Sir, I can appreciate the serious problem that the minister and his department faces, especially with chronic social services in this Province. But looking through flash sheets and so on this morning, I do not see how we can hope to improve that situation very much unless job opportunities are drastically improved in the Province. Those unemployment figures, and of course they will automatically spell chronic unemployment among our people unless there are job opportunities available for them, then there is not too much else we can expect.

I sort of warmed to the work activity programme that the minister has talked about. And I wonder when the minister stands

Mr. Rideout:

to reply to some of the points that we raise on this side if in fact he could tell us whether his department has any plans on the books or about to implement any plans to drastically increase and expand this work activity programme? I think the work activity programme could be something to help solve the chronic social assistance cases that we have in this Province. And if we are going to spend the money on social assistance anyway, and, you know, I am sure we will all admit that we have to, if we have to spend those millions of dollars on social assistance anyway, is there not some possibility or can there be some possibility of channelling more of those funds into work activity projects? If we have to provide millions of dollars each year to keep our people from starving, and of course we have to, then can we not expand that work activity programme in every community throughout the Province?

It may not be politically popular, Sir, to say it, but if a man can work I would rather see him work for his social assistance than just have it handed out to him and lie back and do nothing. That I think is the important principle behind this work activity programme. And I can see that this activity programme could be expanded in every community throughout this Province. God knows there is work to be done in every community, that Community Councils cannot afford to do or other local government groups cannot afford to do, but with a greatly expanded work activity programme then that type of work could be done; the social aspect will still have been taken care of because we are providing the social assistance for those people who cannot, through no fault of their own or for whatever other reason, cannot find work, but at the same time they are doing something beneficial for their community.

Now that is a concept that I would like to see the minister address himself to when he stands again in this debate. What plans does his department have to expand that? I believe there are \$49,300,000 voted or asked for in the Social Services vote this year. Now we have to pay that money out anyway, whether those people do

Mr. Rideout:

anything or whether they do not have to pay that money out to social assistance recipients.

Now I am not talking about disabled people, I am talking about people on able-bodied assistance. Can we not greatly expand this work activity programme so that anybody who can work will do something of benefit for their community to earn those dollars that we are going to give them on social assistance? Personally I do not see anything wrong with that concept. I think it is the direction that we should be moving. But, of course, the overriding problem and the greatest problem is the lack of job opportunities for our people in this Province, and we are always going to have this chronic unemployment situation unless we can turn that around.

I was sort of disappointed in the way the minister sort of skipped over the unemployment situation that exists in this Province today. And I believe that the Minister of Social Services has to take that or the statistics, the unemployment statistics into a greater account when he is looking at his social services vote.

Now it is all right that 5,000 have been taken off the welfare rolls, and probably they have, but I would like for the minister to tell us, he came with the statistic that 5,000 people were taken off, the minister must be able to tell us how many of those 5,000 people are since back on the social service role in this Province. We were able to come up with the figure that 5,000 came off;

MR. RIDEOUT: we certainly must have done some follow-up study to that. How many of them are now back on the Social Service rolls. And going through the unemployment statistics for this Province, Sir, we had to keep into account also, of course, that since December or November month of last year we had LIP programmes and whatnot going on and so the Social Service role has been reduced a little bit. Not that significant, as I will get into in a minute, but it has been reduced a little bit.

The thing that really strikes me, Sir, in looking at the vote in the Social Services Department for social assistance, is that despite the fact that social assistance recipients in this Province today, for the latest statistics that I have here, is greater than last year, despite that fact the Social Service vote has been reduced by more than \$1 million. It is \$49,300,000 the minister is asking for this year, last year \$50,400,000. So despite the fact that the social assistance rolls have increased, the amount of money asked for in the vote has been decreased by more than \$1 million on top of the fact that the minister says they are about to or have increased, as of the 1st. of May, social assistance rates by 6 per cent. Now I want an explanation from the minister of how those two facts correlate. The social assistance roles have been climbing and all indications are they are going to continue to climb, yet the vote has been reduced and the rates have been increased.

I cannot see how those two facts bear themselves out, how they can be reconciled. Now I have indicated that social assistance rolls in the Province have been increasing and from what I can see by looking at figures, that certainly bears itself out. For example, the latest one I have is dated April 19, 1977

MR. RIDEOUT: and the heads of families and/or single persons in receipt of short-term assistance as of that date was 9,283 people. That was an increase over the previous month of last year at this time, when then there were 8,152 people receiving social assistance. That is a real increase in percentage terms from one month in one year to the same month in the next year of 13.9 per cent.

Mr. Chairman, you can go right back through all the flash sheets that we all have access to from the - I suppose it is Planning and Priorities Secretariat - but all those flash sheets going right back through the past twelve months show the same thing. Social Service rolls in the Province have continued to increase. Now I will grant they decreased a little bit when the LIP programmes came into effect in November and December, but the real number of people on social assistance in this Province at any one month in 1976-77, was greater than any month in the past year. I have gone back over statistics right back as far as the late 1960's, and the real numbers involved in any one particular year have gradually increased, they have gotten - oh, the minister shakes his head and says no. Well the real numbers for April, 1977, as I indicated, were 9,283, the total for 1975, for the whole year, was almost four and-a-half thousand.

MR. BRETT: Those are wrong.

MR. RIDEOUT: Pardon?

MR. BRETT: It is all right. Carry on.

MR. RIDEOUT: Okay. Well, I mean, those are the figures I have in front of me; if they are wrong the minister can correct them when he stands to speak.

AN HON. MEMBER: No, no. They are not wrong. You are not wrong.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Just the way they are being

used.

But the point I am trying to make, Sir, is that despite the fact that all indications show that the Social Service roll in this Province is going to continue to grow, despite that fact the Social Service vote is being decreased and the rates increased. Now it will be very interesting to me to find out how this can take place.

If the minister has some plans for a massive job creation programme in the Province, and when I say massive, of course I am not talking about the \$2 million programme as well as it may have affected some people last Fall, but it would have to be more significant than that, if the minister has some plans then we would like for him to get into them and outline them to this House.

Now I have mentioned the work activity programme and before I sit down I want to mention briefly the rate increase. There is no doubt about it, Sir, the 6 per cent rate increase will be welcomed by most recipients of social assistance in this Province. Welcomed maybe, but, Sir, it is not enough to take care of the increase in electricity rates since last year. I do not see the social - and I know that we have problems with funds, we have to share out where the pie goes among the various departments, but the social assistance recipient in this Province today, in my mind, is worse off, he has to be worse off than he was last year. Electricity rates themselves have gone up more than 6 per cent. Telephone rates, fuel bills, food, everything and yet we - last years I believe there was a 10 per cent increase and this year it is down to 6 per cent. So the social service recipient is no better off. In fact, Sir, I would submit to the minister that he is worse off than

MR. RIDEOUT: he was last year because the little increase that they got, while it may have been welcome, one cent would be welcomed by anybody who is on a fixed income, but the little increase that they got is certainly not enough to take care of the cost of living, not even in one situation, that of electricity itself. Those people, Sir, are suffering, there is no doubt about that. The increase, while it may have been all the government could

MR. RIDEOUT: come up with, is certainly not enough to take care of the cost of increase in living over last year. Now, Sir, that is a few of the things I would like the minister to address himself to when he gets up to speak in the debate later on.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, I completely agree with my hon. friend who just took his seat, Sir, that the six per cent increase is not - to people on social assistance, is not enough to even take care of the increase in the last year in electricity rates. The increase, Sir, is not enough and, Mr. Chairman, the hon. gentleman in making his few introductory remarks introducing his estimates made no reference or very little reference to the increase at all. He told us very little about the state of the people who are forced on welfare in this Province today. It was a very weak-kneed, a very poor introduction. There are a number of ministers on the government side of the House, Sir, who think that if they play a low profile that everything will work out all right, that if they do not do anything to rock the boat that they are doing their job. Well, Sir, the performance of this minister has been one of the worst of any minister in the Moore's administration. There are two or three of them over there who say nothing, do nothing, just play a low profile hoping that nobody will pay any attention to them and that their problems will just evaporate, vanish in thin air or go away. Well it is not so, Sir, and this particular portfolio is about one of the third or fourth biggest spenders in government and we hear very little about it, very little indeed. The only time we can get information out of the minister is when we pry it out of the minister in this hon. House.

And the hon. minister in introducing his estimates really told us nothing about the state of the people who are forced on

MR. NEARY: social assistance in this Province at the present time, the widows, the orphans, the cripple, the handicapped, the disabled, the unemployed. We did not get a report, a satisfactory report, from the minister and I am hoping that I may be able to motivate the minister in my few remarks to tell us how the people on social assistance in this Province at the present time are living. Are they impoverished, are they living in sub-standard homes, are they getting enough to eat? Any hon. member of this House, Sir, can stand in his place here today and tell the House that the greater number of complaints that come to members - and I do not care what district they represent, whether it is Labrador West where you have prosperity, my district where you have prosperity, I do not care where it is - the biggest number of complaints that any member of this House get are from people on social assistance, impoverished, the halt and the lame and the blind and the sick and the crippled. The minister gets up and shrugs off -

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible)

MR. NEARY: Yes, and the hon. gentleman gets more about social assistance I would submit. Every member of this House if he were to tell the truth would stand in his place and say, "I get more complaints about social assistance than any other matter in this Province" Oh my hon. friend from Mount Pearl says no. The people down in Mount Pearl, Sir, do not even know the hon. gentleman exists, and I would submit he gets complaints about nothing. He is just a non-member, does not exist. The only controversy the hon. gentleman became involved in since he sat in this House was the -

AN HON. MEMBER: The stadium.

MR. NEARY: the stadium; he got into a snarl with the council.

MR. NEARY: So, Mr. Chairman, we would have expected more from the hon. gentleman to tell us how these people are living. I suppose the hon. gentleman does not have to tell some of us because we are aware of it, we know. We should be ashamed of the way we treat people on social assistance, we should be damn well ashamed of it, Sir.

You know, Mr. Chairman, in this day and age, with the Canada Assistance Plan, the Government of Canada paying fifty per cent of the cost of welfare, and with all the social welfare programmes that we have, unemployment insurance and the like nobody starves to death anymore. But that does not mean, Mr. Chairman, that they are not undernourished, and underfed and underclad - is that the proper English, underclad?

AN HON. MEMBER: Yes, that is alright.

MR. NEARY: And living in dark, cold, uncomfortable homes.

Mr. Neary.

That is not an exaggeration, Sir. If the hon. minister wants to come with me, I will take him any time, not outside the urban centres either, right in the heart of this city and show the hon. minister a few hell holes. And so, Sir, in introducing his estimates, we would expect the Minister of Social Services to enlighten us to the fact that a lot of these people are going to be uplifted, that they are not going to be forced in the future, in the midst of prosperity, in the midst of the highest standard of living that we have ever known in any industrial country in the world, in Canada and here in Newfoundland, and we are not going to force almost 10,000 heads of households into the depths of poverty. And the hon. minister can get up and do all the fancy figure skating on thin ice the hon. minister wants, but these people, Sir, are suffering, because they are forced on social assistance. And when the minister had an opportunity in Ottawa - or the minister's predecessor - to join with the other provinces of Canada in encouraging the Government of Canada to implement the guaranteed annual income, Newfoundland turned thumbs down on it, said, "No, we cannot afford it."

I submit, Sir, that we cannot ignore it any longer. And the guaranteed annual income is going to come in Canada whether Newfoundland participates or not. And our people here will lose out unless this government is prepared to work along with the Government of Canada to implement the guaranteed annual income at an early date as possible.

Mr. Chairman, there was a time back a few years ago when social welfare reforms were the issue of the day. They were the big thing. Everybody talked about social welfare reforms, and I remember great orators and great politicians and great statesmen come out and say that the Liberal Government was the government of reform. Every social welfare - every piece of social welfare legislation in Canada came from a Liberal Government, we were told. Unemployment

Mr. Neary.

Insurance Act, the Canada Assistance Plan, the old age pensions, veterans' allowances, family allowances, all great Liberal reforms. And then all of sudden a couple of years ago, two or three years ago, the Chambers of Commerce and the Boards of Trade and the well-to-do and the high mucky-mucks came out and said, "Ah, they are all too lazy to go to work. You are spoiling our people. You are encouraging them to loaf, to get on unemployment insurance, to get on welfare." And then this became popular. You would not be in style unless you said, "Oh, yes, that is right. I cannot get anybody to paint my house. I cannot get anybody to cut the grass. They are too lazy. All they want is unemployment insurance, and all they want is welfare." And I say that is a myth, and it is not true, and it is phony. And the people - nine chances out of ten the people who are saying it are the people who are monkeys on the backs of the taxpayers themselves. Who are these people that are saying this? They are people that are earning their livelihood either directly - a lot of them - either directly or indirectly from the public treasury. They are people who do not produce one new dollar themselves, but the first there to condemn people on social assistance when in actual fact

Mr. Neary:

what they are receiving themselves is a form of welfare, form of social assistance; they do not produce one new dollar. And so everybody started to back away, said, Oh yes the Board of Trade, the Chamber of Commerce and all these people who were condemning this social welfare system, taking a negative attitude towards it, are all right. They are all right. This is true because I know a case, I know a case myself, I tried to get a man to come down and paint my house. nine chances out of ten they did not want a man, they wanted a slave to go down and paint their house probably offered them a hundred or a couple of hundred dollars to paint a two and a half or a three storey house.

My argument is, Sir, they are not too lazy to go to work, and it is not the social welfare programmes that are spoiling people, that are discouraging people from going to work despite arguments to the contrary. My hon. friend told us in his introductory remarks that it was no trouble to get welfare recipients, probably second generation, third generation in some cases to go to work when the job opportunities were there.

Before I get to that, Sir, the job opportunities, I just want to finish off on this guaranteed annual income. Mr. Chairman, everybody is scared to death of the guaranteed annual income, and it is going to come sooner or later, because I do not know if hon. members can see it yet, can see the vacuum that is created in the midst of all this prosperity that we have. Mr. Chairman, I do not know if it has sunk into hon. members heads yet, not only in this House but in the House of Commons in Ottawa, that in spite of high prosperity that you can have high unemployment, where you have high prosperity. Look at Labrador West, one of the most prosperous parts of this Province, you have over 1,200 people registered with Canada Manpower who cannot find jobs, and it is going to get worse. And out in my own district on the Southwest Corner, where it is one of the best places in Newfoundland to live, Sir, you have 1,208 people looking for jobs, registered with Canada Manpower, mostly

Mr. Neary:

women looking for jobs in the retailing business, young men and women who cannot find employment, being forced to go on welfare.

So you see, Sir, the point that I am making is that despite the fact that you have high prosperity, the highest standard of living you ever had, you can have poverty in the midst of it, and that is the weakness in the kind of society we are living in today.

And then you have, of course, the people who are widows, cripple people, sick people, orphans, the handicapped, the disabled, the blind, the halt and the lame, and all these people are forced to live in the depths of poverty because we do not have a better system than we have at the present time, which is only a hit and miss system at the best. I say, Sir, the only answer to that sort of thing is the guaranteed annual income. And the guaranteed annual income can be phased in over a period of ten or fifteen years. You start off, I think we have a guaranteed annual income right now for the aged, our senior citizens, for the old age pensioners, they have a form of guaranteed annual income. But, Sir, the problem with that is that it is grossly below the average income that is needed to maintain a decent standard of living for these people. And the same thing with vererans. They are not up to what is considered to be enough income to give these people a decent standard of living. And the people of social assistance, of course, are ten times worse off. They are below the national - what is considered to be the national average. I think it is probably about \$6,500 for a family of four. That is what we are told by the people, the experts in the field the statisficians that a family of four would need a minimum of \$6,500 to keep body and soud together, and they are getting much less than this in this Province, if they are getting half of that here they are lucky.

But you could start off with the guaranteed annual income. it could be associated in some way with the Gross National Product

Mr. Neary:

and with our Gross Provincial Product, and as the Gross National Product goes up, the Gross Provincial goes up, up goes the standard of living for people who are on the guaranteed annual income. It may not be as simple as it sounds, Sir, but it is the technique that is being talked about.

MR. BRETT: (First part inaudible) about that.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, it is being talked about and agreed on. The Government of Canada, the Liberal Government up in Ottawa have accepted it as a part of their philosophy, as a part of their platform and this government refuses to go along with it. They would sooner condemn our people on social assistance to poverty for the rest of their lives, And nobody can tell me, Mr. Chairman, because I see it every day with my own eyes and so does every other hon. member that is doing his job in this House, can see it every day. Children may not be going to school - they may not be starving to death, people may not be starving to death, although that could happen too I suppose, but they are undernourished or underfed and we should be ashamed of ourselves, Sir.

Mr. Chairman, the hon. gentleman tried to brush off this problem of social assistance by playing up the employment opportunities in the hon. gentleman's department, that the hon. gentleman seems to take great pride in. He created 5,000 jobs, so the hon. gentleman tells us, 5,000 jobs my foot! The Government of Canada created 5,000 jobs in LIP projects. The gentleman waves his hands -

MR. MURPHY: The way things have of being done, Do not be talking so stupid, will you, for God's sake.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, this administration tried to claim the credit, Sir. They did.

MR. MURPHY: They do not.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, I was the one who exploded the myth. They tried to claim the credit.

MR. MURPHY: You exploded a lot of things.

MR. NEARY: They walked into this hon. House, Sir, and they said, "We have created 5,000 jobs." The first statement that was made. No, it was not 5,000, the figure

MR. NEARY: was much less than that. They are now playing with a figure of 5,000. I am talking about two or three years back when the Government of Canada changed the unemployment insurance regulations, whereby you only needed eight stamps to qualify for unemployment insurance benefits. That is what took people off welfare. That is why they were motivated, because the unemployment insurance benefits were more generous than the minister's welfare programme and so people were motivated to get from social assistance to unemployment insurance, because their income would be greater. And the minister had as much to do with that as the man in the moon! And so did the Minister of the Environment and Consumer Affairs, who is now checking his statistics there.

MR. MURPHY: No, I am not. I have got some other valuable statistics.

MR. NEARY: The hon. gentleman had absolutely nothing to do with it. It was the Government of Canada that created these jobs and what the hon. gentleman also does not say, Mr. Chairman, is that by taking people off welfare and giving them jobs, that they barred other people from getting these jobs, these people who were on unemployment insurance.

There were only a certain number of jobs and the minister may have been given the preferential treatment by Canada Manpower, but the people who were productive and working all their lives who were on unemployment insurance were punished.

MR. BRETT: Are you suggesting we should not find jobs for them or what?

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, I am suggesting this to the hon. gentleman, and I was minister of that department and I often wondered about it.

MR. BRETT: I wonder if anybody knows it.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, I am suggesting this, that when it comes to jobs on LIP projects, where the hiring is done through Canada Manpower there should be no preferential treatment, no discrimination. None.

MR. MURPHY: No preference should be given -

MR. NEARY: No preference to anybody, Mr. Chairman. What you are doing, Sir, you are penalizing the taxpayers.

MR. MURPHY: - cannot even get unemployment insurance.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, the hon. gentleman is over there now sniping away. I say, Sir, that where Canada Manpower is involved that there should be no preferential treatment. None. Let Canada Manpower do the hiring.

AN HON. MEMBER: They will find more jobs.

MR. NEARY: No, Mr. Chairman, it is up to this Province to put forward a job creating programme to the Government of Canada which they have not done up to this very moment. They have waited for the handouts from Ottawa. And that is true, Sir.

Mr. Chairman, another thing about this job, the employment opportunities programme, that I wonder if it should be under that department at all. The job creation efforts, Sir, the target now producing an additional 1,000 jobs on top of the 1,000 that we already have makes a bit of sense. It is a feeble effort on the part of this administration to compliment the federal government's job creation programme, Sir.

But,

Mr. Neary.

Mr. Chairman, unless there is something I do not know, I think it is absolutely wrong to have that programme under the Department of Social Assistance, a Social Assistance Programme, unless, as I say, the Minister of Social Services can show me, can assure me, that such work would not be fifty per cent cost-shared by the Government of Canada as it is now if it were placed under another department. I believe the Job Creation Programme should be under the Department of Manpower and Industrial Relations. If I were minister of the department I would find out if it is possible to have the programme cost-shared, if my hon. friend was looking after it.

MP. ROUSSEAU: He -

MP. NEARY: Well maybe the other department was forced to take it over. I do not know.

MP. ROUSSEAU: There were four departments.

MR. NEARY: But it looks like another form of social assistance, another handout under that particular department. Mr. Chairman, in my opinion these jobs that are created under special works programmes, whether they are by the Province or by the Government of Canada, should be carefully supervised so that those who are, Sir, recipients of wages under the programme will not get the idea that they are just another bunch of handouts. Instead, Mr. Chairman, these jobs that are created under the programme, that people secure through these programmes, they must consider them to be productive jobs, and subject to the normal disciplines that go with employment in the private sector. Now that is very, very important, Mr. Chairman.

Is my time up, Sir?

MR. CHAIRMAN: It has expired. I am sorry.

MR. NEARY: I will come back to it again, Sir, the next time around.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shall 801 carry?

MR. NEARY: No, Mr. Chairman. Can I have another go now, Sir?

MR. MURPHY: (Inaudible).

MR. NEARY: Because I am not finished answering some of the minister's remarks yet.

MR. CHAIRMAN: This would be considered continuous arguing.

MR. NEARY: Here we are.

MR. NOLAN: Mr. Chairman, in rising to discuss the estimates presently before us, I am hoping, I would assume, that the minister is making notes of the questions. I agree with our friend from St. John's Centre that perhaps we should get into the various headings and get into the questions and get into the guts of this thing. We are not doing it often times I am afraid.

Now one of the things that I have to raise is this, that in looking at this department - I am afraid one of the great dangers for any minister in any department is that he become isolated from the people that he is designed, the position is designed to serve. For example, you will notice the Minister of Fisheries going about the Province having meetings and so on with fishermen, and rightly so. You will find the Minister of Highways flitting about from time to time inspecting roads, rightly so. And you will find that other ministers have done the same thing. But the danger with the minister we are now concerned with is to what extent has he been isolated from the real problem that many people are suffering from in this Province with the savage increases in the cost of living? When was the last time, for example, the minister of this department - and if he has not, he should. It might be a bit dangerous to suggest there should be a public meeting of those on welfare, because they may not want to attend such a meeting or be identified, but fine. But surely to God there is no reason why the minister of this department could not go with the member for the various districts where you can walk in to the homes concerned, sit down and talk to the people and see what they are going through. I mean, is the minister aware that in this Province today you have seventy-five and eighty year old ladies up on the roof trying to patch the darn things? Is he aware of that? Well, it is happening. Is the minister aware that older people, for example, are often times going without food, because of the high cost of drugs? Is he aware of that? I mean the minister has got to get out of his office and get out into the homes of the people that he is supposed to serve. Now I am not saying or criticizing all the officials

MR. NOLAN:

of his department, far from it. But I am saying is that if the minister is becoming isolated from the problems, I mean if he is afraid to come in personal contact with these people in their homes, in their own communities, well then the Premier has to look at the possibility of having another minister there who is prepared to go out and to see exactly what is happening rather than merely reading memos and the like. That is not good enough. By the way, rather than I be accused of castigating all officials within the department, let me set the record straight. That is not what I intend to do. Let me give you an example. Much of my contact, for example, and I am sure that of others, is with a gentleman he has there by the name of Mr. Max Baldwin. And I would be the first to stand up here and to compliment that gentleman, to compliment the minister for having the good sense to have him there. And he is a man apparently from my own discussions with him, and I am sure others, who is not merely willing to go by the book. He is not one who is so apt as you find within the bureaucracy to say no. My God there are more ways of saying no in the civil service. It is absolutely frightening what has happened. It is all very well to have security. It is nice to be secure, be employed until you are sixty-five. But this can also create arrogance and abuse. And every minister who has ever been in the government knows what I am saying is a fact, every one of them.

Now if the minister is not prepared to get out, to go to the homes, talk to the members - fifty-one districts you have created in this Province now. And there are people who are suffering and suffering very badly. You have the price of oil going up. You have electricity, you have clothing, you have food, all the essentials. And it is just shocking what is happening. Now often times these are people who because of their financial, or perhaps in some instances their educational background, are not in a position to fight for themselves on a public platform, in the media and so on. By the way, it is time the media started to do something in this Province insofar as we

are hearing all kinds of figures bandied around. We have created 5,000 jobs for this, 10,000 jobs for that, 100,000 jobs for the other thing or whatever. Where is the proof? We have got no proof. I demand that we should be shown where are the jobs. We have a right to know. I am not just talking about the minister's department by the way. There are others. We have asked for, for example, rural development jobs to be tabled here. We have been refused time and time again. The press in this Province seem to be very, very silent on it. It is time the press did in this Province a good thorough investigation of where these jobs are, to demand in the public press, if the House of Assembly cannot get it, where these jobs are.

MR. NEARY: Instead of accepting their statements on -

MR. NOLAN: Rather than merely, as I am afraid that has been done so often, merely accepting it. It is easy for someone to get up and say I have created 1,000 jobs, or we have created 5,000 jobs. That is not good enough anymore. We want to know. We are from Missouri. We want to be shown.

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. It seems that the hon. gentleman is inferring and insinuating that a statement made by a minister in this House of Assembly, or outside the House, should not be taken as facts by the media. Mr. Chairman, this is a very serious accusation. And I would like for the hon. gentleman to retract that statement because what he is saying is, what he is saying, Mr. Chairman, is in fact that the media of this Province or in fact the general public should not believe a minister of the Crown when he makes a statement. That is a very serious charge.

MR. NOLAN: To the point of order, Mr. Chairman. I am saying that there may be situations where a minister is concerned where he may believe it but where it may not be a fact. I am saying, and if the hon. member, I suggest, from Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan) was not in

MR. NOLAN:

the Cabinet when he was a spokesman for the ordinary people in this Province, he was the one who use to demand those things himself. But now he has been sort of politically canonized. But, Mr. Speaker, I am saying that it is not too much for a member of the House of Assembly or the press of this Province if I get up or anyone else gets up and says there are 1,000

MR. NOLAN: jobs or two thousand jobs or three thousand jobs to ask for the evidence. Is there anything wrong with that?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN(MR. YOUNG): Order please! It is not a point of order. It is a difference of opinion between two members. And I feel sure that the minister ample opportunity to answer the question when he speaks.

The hon. member for Conception Bay South.

MR. FLIGHT: Shot down again, 'Jim'.

MR. NOLAN: No, it is not my intention to shot down - or shoot down the hon. member at all. I mean I feel that -

MR. SIMMONS: - all himself.

MR. NOLAN: No, I feel that we have a right to know. I mean the situation in this Province today, when you talk about rural development grants, you are not prepared to table the projects, those employed. They might very well have been employed on a certain month six months ago, but are they employed today? We have a right to know these things, that is what I am saying. For example the minister when he referred to the thousand jobs, I am not castigating him for that. Of course not. But what I am saying is how long were the jobs for? Are they employed now? Are they back on welfare? I am asking for a progress report on the condition of those people who are unfortunate enough to be dependent on social assistance of one form or another. I would like to know how these people are surviving. I would like to know what sacrifices they have to go through. I would like to know how the children, the future of this Province, what situation are they in at the moment? To what extent is even their education, the whole outlook being dwarfed by the inexorable circumstances, financial circumstances in which they live. As a member of the House of Assembly I have a right to know. That is what I am saying. I

MR. NOLAN: am saying that if we do not get more information in this House than we have previously no matter who says that they have created a thousand jobs or two thousand jobs that everyone who is concerned with the economic and social position in this Province at the moment, that the press have to get out and start doing some real investigative reporting, they have to demand publicly in blasing headlines if necessary we have to have evidence of these jobs. John Nolan saying so is not good enough, it is as simple as that. We have to know. We have to be shown.

Now I have watched as I am sure my friend the minister has watched the number of people who had to leave this Province. They are going across the Gulf - talking about resettlement - Boy, oh boy! Moncton, Alberta, Halifax, anywhere but here. Men who have settled into their way of life and we are all creatures of habit surely, and we have a situation whereby these people with grown children and so on have to go off to live in other areas, not because they want to. If they want to that is their own business. What I mean, the minister is a part of a group who are going to leave this Province to the new political and economic Jerusalem. Some Jerusalem. Man, oh man! It is just shocking to watch.

Now I am asking the minister here today to get out of his office, to get out into the homes of the people and go and see them, sit down and talk to them in their homes, get out and see how they have to fix the hole in their roof no matter what their age, see to what extent they are being well nourished, see what the children are going through. It is not enough to have fancy, well-worded, beaucratic memoranda funneled to his desk from time to time and feel that you are in possession of all the facts, you are not. It is as simple as that. As good and as well intentioned as many of his officials are, the minister himself can live in wonderful, beautiful isolation

MR. NOLAN: but he has to get out and talk to the people, get into their homes. In every district in Newfoundland if we are prepared to have grand and wonderful meetings for some groups of people, we are in great danger if we are not prepared on a continuous basis to go into the homes of those who are less fortunate in our society then we are going to be surely accused of making chalk of one and cheese of the other. The cheque in itself is not enough. The minister has to know first hand, as a minister he has a right to go and he has the duty to go to many homes in this Province where circumstances are very difficult particularly for those who are not in a position to write a long, literate letter to the editor, to go on television or radio. They are not sometimes people who would march on the Confederation Building but that is all the more reason why we should concern ourselves with the problems that they are faced with today.

God knows

MR. NOLAN: the complaints you hear today from people who are gainfully employed of how they are finding it tough, very tough, with the prices of the real necessities of life. We are not talking about luxuries. I am talking about accommodation. I am talking about whether it is housing, the price of food, the price of clothing the price of heat and light. I am talking about the necessities, not luxuries. If people who are gainfully employed are bitterly complaining, what are the people going through who are unfortunate enough to find themselves in a position where they have to depend on the state for their sustenance. So I am now pleading with the minister to go out, and as every member in this House, if he is doing his job, can take the minister to various homes where he will see exactly what I am talking about. Every single individual in this House knows what I am talking about.

Now I am not foolish enough to stand here and expect my hon. friend to wave the magic wand and cure all the problems. I am not doing that. But I am suggesting to the minister that there are some things that cannot be fully explained because oftentimes it will get to him first, second, third, and fourth hand, cannot be explained with the various memoranda that I am sure is delivered from time to time to his desk. The minister must see this for himself on more than one occasion.

MR. NEARY: Great department for writing memos to one another.

MR. NOLAN: Well, lots of departments are like that, so I am not going to just fault the minister on that one. But I will hope that the minister will consider some of the things that I have said. I will hope that he will make it a point in the coming year to visit all fifty-one districts, talk to the members, visit those who are on social assistance, sit down and talk to them in their homes. This is going to require a bit of time. But the minister will, as I say, get more satisfaction by doing that than he ever will by sitting in his office talking to officials. Get out and get into the homes, please, because there is where the

MR. NOLAN: problem is. And I believe the minister is not a pompous individual, down to earth, regular guy in my opinion. So you can go in and talk to people and he is the kind of guy that I can appreciate in that situation. That is what I want him to do. If he is going in in a lordly way, talking down his nose, looking down his nose at people, then I would not even suggest it; he is not that kind of a guy, in my opinion. So I hope he will do that. Because it needs to be done. The people out there have to: as you know from time to time deal with officials of his department, many of them very fine people. But it would be nice for the minister, the top guy to go in there and sit down and talk to these people and see the situation in which they have to live.

It is not always pleasant. The minister is not always one, too, I believe, who merely goes by the book, I think that when he is confronted with a specific situation that turns his very guts, as he will, I think he will get his back up and say now maybe there is some way we can help in through some other avenue to assist this particular group. I think he will do that. But it is difficult to explain the situation. It is difficult to explain malnutrition. It is difficult to explain a leaking roof. It is difficult to explain in a memorandum the situation in a home, for example, that I have seen where you have the wallpaper falling off because it is soaked, where you have a young infant in the crib and so on, it is difficult to convey that in a memorandum. The minister must see this himself. I am not saying that the minister in the next year can or should attempt to cover every home of everyone on social services in the province. I am not saying that. But if the minister, being a man of goodwill, is prepared to get together with the various members of this House on all sides, he can go to many homes and go in and sit down, talk to the people and I suggest he will be a better minister. I suggest that department will be a better department because of his spearheading this kind of thing. I hope that he will take

MR. NOLAN: the suggestion that I make and I also hope that we can look forward to hearing from him on his intentions in this regard. So I do not want to delay the House unduly on this matter Mr. Chairman, but I have seen some hard things. I am sure the minister has. Sometimes people who are dealing with his officials feel that the official do not understand. Often times I have explained to people myself that the official concerned can only do what the Act and the regulations provide. I am not attempting in any way to degrade the many fine officials who serve the minister and the people in the department. I am not doing that. I mentioned one that we have regular contact, Mr. Baldwin, who in my opinion, Mr. Chairman, has done a quite remarkable job. Quite sympathetic, quite understanding. He is not a guy you phone and get an answer from a week or a month later. He has some sense of urgency, in my opinion. This is good to see, very good to see.

So, we hope that in the coming year we can join the minister in visiting many homes in the province in our various districts and I think he will find that enlightening, and I believe that he should go and I believe he should sit down with those people, talk to them first hand, he can do it too, no question about it. I think that he is going to be a very very much improved minister as a result of it. But I know one thing, he has to get out of that office supposing we have to blast him out.

MR. NEARY: Or bring the recipients in, one thing or the other.

MR. NOLAN: My friend from Mount Pearl may think it is all very funny, but he has people in his district who are also on social services

MR. NEARY: Barbed wire down on the eighth floor - he and the member for Nascopie and a few others they are the barbed wire.

MR. NOLAN: Yes, my friend from Nascopie is planning a boat trip, I understand.

CHAIRMAN. Order please! It now being one o'clock I leave the Chair
1 three of the clock.

PRELIMINARY

UNEDITED

TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

FOR THE PERIOD:

3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

MONDAY, MAY 16, 1977

The Committee resumed at 3:00 p.m.

Mr. Chairman in the Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

I would like to welcome on behalf of the Committee, to the galleries, twenty-one pupils from the Sacred Heart Elementary School in Placentia accompanied by their teachers, Mrs. McGrath, Mrs. Wakeham and Miss Murphy. Also from Mushwau Innu School, eight pupils from Grade III, from Davis Inlet accompanied by their teachers Miss Bridgette Murphy and Miss Brigitta Piwas.

I may add that Miss Katherine Murphy is the former stenotypist and Editor of Debates.

The hon. the member for Bay of Islands.

MR. WOODROW: Mr. Speaker, we are at this time discussing the Department of Social Services and I would like to say that in the very difficult and complex age that we are living in today, it is not easy to debate or to administer any department in any government, not only in our own Province, but I am sure it is just as complex in the ten provinces throughout the great dominion of Canada, and this applies to the federal administration as well.

Now perhaps the Department of Social Services could be classified as not only one of the most difficult ones, but perhaps the most difficult. It is very easy for us to get up and tell the minister, any minister, how to run his department. Really, it is only the person, Mr. Chairman, who is in the driver's seat who realizes just what must be done and how it can be done.

MR. NEARY: The hon. gentleman will never be in the driver's seat again.

MR. WOODROW: Mr. Chairman, what I am aiming at

Mr. Woodrow.

is to serve the people of the Bay of Islands. And whether I can get it, in fact, in a back seat or a front seat or in a middle seat, if I can do that to the best of my ability, the seat where you administer from, that is not the important thing.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WOODROW. Mr. Chairman, I wanted at the outset to congratulate the minister. I am sure that he is doing his best.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WOODROW: I have had occasion to talk with him, to sit down privately and to talk with him in other places about the complexities of the Department of Social Services and not only that, Mr. Chairman, I have also had dealings with people for the past thirty years, and in fact in many places throughout the Province of Newfoundland. And in fact in most cases I dealt with poor people. It is not, in fact, I guarantee you, it is not an easy job. It is okay, as the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) to get up, as it were, and rant and roar and say what could be done. But what people want, Mr. Chairman, is action. What would the hon. member do? What did he do when he was the minister.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

MR. NEARY: Watch your immortal soul.

MR. WOODROW: I think in fact, you know, we have in fact to mend our own fences before trying to tear down the fences of others. I am not trying to say anything detrimental to the hon. member, but sometimes it is nice to remind him that once you are in the driver's seat it is not so easy.

MR. NEARY: Does the hon. gentleman want to be reminded of a few things?

MR. WOODROW: Well, I say it, some other time, of course. I know the hon. gentleman, I know that is what he wants to do, because he is evil enough to do it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. WOODROW: It is too bad he was not here when the hon. member for St. John's North (Mr. J. Carter) spoke last week.

MR. NOLAN: Mr. Chairman, to a point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

A point of order has been raised.

MR. NOLAN: I mean is it permissible now in this House to accuse an hon. member of being evil?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

No, it is not permissible, and I would ask the hon. gentleman -

MR. NOLAN: And ask him to withdraw immediately.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I ask the hon. member for Bay of Islands to withdraw.

MR. WOODROW: I withdraw it absolutely, Mr. Chairman. And certainly I did not mean it in the strict sense of the word. Just maybe in a general sense.

Mr. Chairman, there is an old saying which says, "The poor you shall have always with you." And we are going to have the poor with us in fact as long as we are around.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Who is the we?

MR. NEARY: The Tories. Tory times are hard times.

MR. WOODROW: Yes, because we had to pick up from where you fellows left off.

Mr. Chairman, there is none so blind as those who will not see.

DR. FARRELL: I do not like that kind of talk lately.

MR. WOODROW: I see.

However, Mr. Chairman, it is nice to know that there is such an air, you know, of joviality in the House, in fact, you know, even on blue Monday, everybody tired after the weekend. In fact it is really nice to know that people, in fact, can make a joke even though we are talking about a very serious topic. Now in the meantime there are two types -

MR. NEARY: Here comes Scatter Day Marshall.

MR. WOODROW. There are two types of people who receive social assistance. First of all we have the long-term recipient. These are people who really and truly, perhaps through no fault of their own, through some illness or accident or some other way, they unfortunately have to turn to assistance, to the Province for help. And these are the people, Mr. Chairman, these are the real needy ones. These are the ones, to my mind, that we have to be very considerate with.

MR. WOODROW: And, of course, then you have the short term recipient as well. These are people of course who, from time to time during the year, they are unemployed and they have to turn also to Social Assistance for help and sometimes, in fact, they have families, children going to school and the like, and it is not very easy when you have to turn to the Social Assistance for help. Now, I must say that I agreed with my hon. friend - he is still here - from Conception Bay South. He is not listening now, but I must say that I have to agree with my hon. friend from Conception Bay South, even though he likes to take a little dig at me sometimes and I do not know what I am doing wrong in his eyes, and so on like that. However, I do agree with him when he says that the Minister should be out in the field, but I am going to qualify it. I really think that there is nothing better than communication, and I recall when I succeeded my hon. friend here from Humber East in Council - I succeeded him in Council in Corner Brook - I always did my best. I do not know whether I did good or bad, but in any case I always, after receiving a call from a - You did not call them constituents in those days, what did you call them?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Parishioners.

MR. WOODROW: Well, not exactly parishioners, no. But, after receiving a call - you could call him a client, maybe, I do not know - I always liked to go out and go to the spot, in other words go to the scene of the crime.

MR. NEARY: Congregation.

MR. WOODROW: Well, congregation of all the faithful. Go out to the scene. It could be something simple like a ditch around the home, but it was always appropriate and good to go out and see what was going on, and I always tried to do it. I think, of course, it would be nice for the hon. Minister to go out and visit every home where people unfortunately have to receive Social Assistance, but this is impossible. It is physically impossible for him to do it. But, perhaps, he could have someone in his Department go out and do this for him. Now, of course, again this brings up another problem.

MR. WOODROW: If you employ more people in the Department of Social Services to do this, it means more money. So no matter what way you look at it, it is indeed very difficult. I do not think, in fact, it is really physically impossible even for him to set up a group of people in his Department to visit the 51 districts in the Province, that is to say the homes of people who are receiving Social Assistance. Again, of course, you know, sometimes I know I get upset myself when I have to call the people working with the Department. Sometimes I wonder why they cannot help out this one or that one at my request, but then I realize, of course, that we have guidelines to go by. If, for example, we want to give more, well it means we have to have more money budgeted for it. In other words, it all comes down to a matter of dollars and cents. Now, I would like to speak about the employees in the Department of Social Services, and I must say that again - why am I always agreeing with the hon. Member from Conception Bay South, I have to stop doing it. He is going to get ideas one of these days. But, I agree with him when he spoke about -

MR. NEARY: The hon. member is not actually fond of you.

MR. WOODROW: - the excellent work of Max Baldwin down in the Department of Social Services. There are really many like him. I must say I have had dealings with the Department of Social Services in the City of Corner Brook, and I have to give great praise to a gentleman by the name of John Jennings, whom I find to be very

MR. WOODROW: fair and trying to do a good job, but I think it is terribly important, Mr. Chairman, that a person, he or she occupying a job in the Department of Social Services - to my way of thinking - and probably as you will understand my way of thinking from my former profession, I think that they should have consideration, they should have compassion, above all else, for people.

MR. NEARY: Feed my lambs and feed my sheep.

MR. WOODROW: Absolutely, absolutely. Let it go on the record - 'Feed my lambs and feed my sheep' - and understanding - I guarantee you, Mr. Chairman, it takes a lot of years. You just cannot be an excellent, or shall we say, a fully-fledged Welfare Officer or Social Service Officer, whatever word you want to use, just by being into it one year or two years. In fact, it is a very trying job, and then, you have people coming in to the Welfare Officer - they get upset and the officer gets upset, and everybody gets upset and you have two fires. They always say, 'You should never light a fire to put a fire out'. In fact, if you have, in other words, one person angry, another person angry, in fact, it would end up God knows where. So, therefore, that is the reason why I feel that the officer has to be well trained. He cannot afford, in fact, if his client is angry, he should try to douse that fire with a bit of kindness. And I must say, I cannot emphasize enough the importance of consideration, compassion, understanding and kindness. And again, of course, there may be people, sometimes, if we try to show a little bit of kindness, maybe they take advantage of us. Perhaps another thing which is important - in fact I have had it happen, at least, I have had complaints about it during the year, sometimes people find it very difficult to go to the office. I am thinking of people now, say, from as far away as, maybe Lark Harbour in my district of Bay of Islands, or some other place like Meadows or McIver's on the north shore of the Bay of Islands. In fact, they find it very difficult to go in and get their cheque. I know one case, in fact, the poor man passed away since. He was a cancer patient, and his wife found it very difficult to go in to the Department of Social Services, Corner Brook and pick up her cheque. Maybe it cost her at least five dollars. Well, that is the point I am trying to make. That is the point, in fact, you know - that is the point I am trying to say, I think that in a thing like this, this is a thing that really should be looked after.

MR. ROBERTS: Would the hon. member permit me?

MR. WOODROW: Yes, go ahead.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman, we have all been following, spellbound, and my question is this - these are, presumably, long-term recipients, I mean, the wife of a man who is dying of a malignancy is obviously not, you know, about to go back into the labour force. Why are not the cheques mailed? I understood that, in the case of what used to be called long-term, there may be a different name on it now, that the cheques were mailed instead of - I agree with the hon. gentleman - forcing a

MR. ROBERTS:

lady to go thirty miles up into Corner Brook. It is just cruel and inhumane.

MR. WOODROW: Well, Mr. Speaker, perhaps it could be some kind of a misunderstanding.

MR. ROBERTS: Short term for the man who is dying, long term for the healthy.

MR. WOODROW: I think in cases like these in fact, these are cases where to my mind, a lot of compassion should be shown. And it is not always easy to be running back and forth to the minister with these cases.

MR. ROBERTS: Well there are some for which the member should run, and that is one of them.

MR. WOODROW: Yes. But however, in fact, it is something I think worth bringing up, I think, in this hon. House of Assembly.

MR. ROBERTS: Hear, hear!

MR. WOODROW: Now we have, of course, today the word inflation. In fact it is still hovering around. I do not know how long it is going to remain with us. But it certainly has literally brought us, price wise, it has really increased everything. And I was going to say also, I believe in fact inflation could be traced back to the cause of broken homes and divorces and maybe marijuana and the like. I think in fact maybe because children suffer, they have to have some outlet. But you have high cost of clothing, food, electricity and fuel and the like. And this, of course, it is not only just happening here in the Province of Newfoundland. It would be foolish for us to think that. I doubt very much if any other administration, if they could do any better than this one is doing at the present time, I doubt very much. So it is not really an easy task. I can say it is not easy to find a solution. However the hon. member, my old friend from LaPoile (Mr. Neary), good old friend, in fact he is on the Western end.

MR. NEARY: Southwest corner.

MR. WOODROW: Yes, well I mean he is over there and I am over on the other one. I am over on the other end, this side of Stephenville,

MR. WOODROW:

Bay of Islands. But in any case, see, he brought up the matter of guaranteed income. Now I have discussed this matter with the hon. member, the M.P. from Humber-St. Georges-St. Barbe, on many occasions. I know it has been talked about a lot in the House of Commons in Ottawa. And I know in fact there are some problems in that also. But perhaps the minister, when he gets up, I would like to ask the hon. minister perhaps to make a few comments on the guaranteed income. Is it guaranteed?

MR. NEARY: Only for fellows who cannot afford it.

MR. WOODROW: Well, as they say, I am sure if he tells us that I am sure he will be - say the right thing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! Order, please! The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, I want to thank Your Honour, first of all, for recognizing me.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

MR. NEARY: I beg your pardon?

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

MR. NEARY: Oh no, not at all, not when the hon. gentleman is in the Chair. We are old sparring partners from Eddie's Snack Bar over on Bell Island.

Mr. Chairman, when I wound up my few introductory remarks this morning on this heading, (7), Social Services, I was talking about the employment opportunities, and I think I had dealt adequately with that matter. I would like to repeat what I said before winding up my few remarks, is that I think that this programme should be placed under another department and not under the Department of Social Services because it looks too much like a handout and people will treat it as such. They will have no respect for the jobs that they get and they will not provide a decent day's work for a fair day's pay. And unless the minister can convince me that the minister is forced because of the Canada Assistance Plan, because of the fifty/fifty cost-shared programme with the government of

MR. NEARY: Canada that it has to be placed under his department, then I would say the sooner it is taken out of that department and put in the Department of Labour and Manpower, the better.

Now, Sir, I was very strong in my condemnation this morning of the minister and of the policy of the administration in dealing with the poor people of this Province, the halt and the lame and the blind and the crippled. I contend, Mr. Chairman, that incompetence in this department can do an awful lot of damage, can cause an awful lot of hardship and suffering to the ordinary people of this Province. And if the minister thinks for one moment that he can go and hide away, and lock himself up in the office, and not surface from one end of the year to the other, and not see any welfare recipients, and not get out into the field and get around and find out what the problems are, if the minister thinks that is doing his job, well then, Sir, I am afraid that he is in for a very rude awakening.

As I say, Sir, the least little bit of incompetence in that department can cause an awful lot of suffering to an awful lot of people. And the minister does not realize, neither does the administration realize, the cruel decision that they took in this Province when they decided that they would not pay social assistance to single able-bodied people.

Mr. Chairman, what are single able-bodied people supposed to be? How are they supposed to survive? How are they supposed to exist? The minister cut them off. The administration cut off people, single able-bodied people, from social assistance and here they are living home, seventeen, eighteen, nineteen, twenty. Twenty years of age, twenty-one, twenty-two, single able-bodied men and women living off their parents,

MR. NEARY: cannot get any assistance from the Department of Social Services, a policy, a cruel policy laid down by this administration. What are they supposed to do? Are they all supposed to go down, jump out in the harbour and drown? What are they supposed to live on? They cannot get jobs. They are home, some living with their parents who are surviving and existing on a very slender income. In a lot of cases, living on the widow's allowance or social assistance, the father getting a D.V.A. pension, the father getting the Old Age pension, father working in some cases for a very low income, but no exceptions to the rule, no assistance for single able-bodied people.

AN HON. MEMBER: That is wrong.

MR. NEARY: That is true, Mr. Chairman, and that is contrary to the Canada Assistance Plan, to the spirit of the Canada Assistance Plan whereby the Government of Canada agreed with the ten provinces that they would pay 50 per cent of the cost of welfare in each Province of Canada, including single able-bodied people. They made no exceptions, no discrimination. The unfortunate part of it is that the responsibility for social assistance regulations comes under the provincial governments and they decide whether or not social assistance is going to be paid to people who are single able-bodied.

AN HON. MEMBER: That is not true.

MR. NEARY: It is true, Mr. Chairman. The hon. gentleman can get the smirk on his face all he wants over there, it is true, Sir.

MR. BRETT: It is not.

MR. NEARY: It is true. Mr. Chairman, I would like - I challenge the hon. gentleman now to get up and make a categorical statement in this House denying

MR. NEARY: the charges that I am laying against the administration. I am charging the administration with discrimination and cruelty to our young, single, able-bodied people in this Province. They are being discriminated against and they are not getting social assistance. There may be a few cases of extreme circumstances, extenuating circumstances. There may be, but I have my doubts. But it is cruel, Sir, what this administration are doing.

The poor fellow or girl are home, their parents are on their backs, they call me up continuously, and I call the minister's department continuously and I am told by the minister's officials - and I will name them if I have to - that the policy of the department is not to assist single able-bodied people.

MR. NEARY: Let the minister get up, if he wants to be cowardly and deny it. The minister cannot deny it because it is true. Every member of this House knows it is true. Maybe the minister has lost touch with his staff. Maybe the minister's staff has not told him yet that they have implemented that regulation. But it is an absolute fact, Sir, and it is cruel and it should be changed, it should be changed as quickly as possible. What are these single able-bodied people supposed to survive on? Thank you.

AN HON. MEMBER: They are starving the other members of the family.

MR. NEARY: That is right, Sir. They are starving out the other members of the family. They are taking away from the old lady's old age pension. Or they are taking away from the social assistance or the benefits that the other members of the family are getting. It has to be spread out more thinly over the other members of the family. And I think the minister should be ashamed of himself and the administration should get a kick in the rear end, in the pants, for implementing such a policy. There is no excuse for it, Sir. Fifty per cent of that allowance is paid for by the Government of Canada. How many times in the last several months have I had calls from widows saying, My son or my daughter cannot find a job. And they go down to the welfare office and they say, No or, Sorry we cannot assist you because of the minister's penny wise and pound foolish policy. They can send the Norma and Gladys in the North Atlantic and spend another \$300,000 this year on a foolish, extravagant jaunt around the Province but they cannot assist single able-bodied people and give them a bit of food, and give them some assistance, give them enough money to pay their board. It is a cruel policy, Sir, and it should be changed.

MR. NEARY: Either that should be changed or the minister should be changed. And there is no good of the minister getting up and saying, No it is not true. It is true. It is true, Mr. Chairman.

I am challenging the minister here and now to get up and make a categorical statement in this House.

MR. BRETT: Do you want me to get up right now or -

MR. NEARY: Yes, make it now.

MR. BRETT: Right now?

MR. NEARY: I want the minister to tell this House that single able bodied people are assisted with no strings attached.

MR. BRETT: All right. Sit down. Yield the floor then.

MR. NEARY: I will yield the floor, Mr. Chairman, because I can always come back at it again.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister of Social Services.

MR. BRETT: Mr. Chairman, the hon. member obviously does not know what he is talking about.

AN HON MEMBER: That is understandable.

MR. BRETT: He is doing the same thing as he did this morning. We are quite used to his method of playing cheap politics. It is not, and I repeat, it is not the policy of this government to refuse all single able-bodied people.

MR. NEARY: No, only 99.9 per cent.

MR. BRETT: No, and that is not true.

MR. NEARY: That is true.

MR. BRETT: But where in the opinion of our social worker a single able-bodied man can get assistance elsewhere or can find employment then he is not assisted.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear! Hear! Hear! Hear!

MR. BRETT: In February of this year there were 727 single able-bodied cases assisted. In March there were 715, in February there were 962, and in March there were 959. So how can the hon. member say that it is

MR. BRETT: not the policy of this department to assist single able-bodied persons?

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Apologize.

MR. BRETT: Some of these young, single, able-bodied people who come to our welfare offices should have their posteriors kicked. The amount of assistance we pay a single able-bodied person is \$46 a month. I know it is too little, but if some of them or half of them had any guts or any gumption they would not be coming to the welfare office.

MR. MURPHY: Hear! Hear!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. BRETT: Just a second now. I had a call from single able-bodied people in Hampton who could not get on the works projects. They could take a chain saw and go in the woods and if they were worth half their salt they would make \$46 in a day. So they were refused and rightly so. It is not the policy of this government. If that is the policy of the hon. member's government, fine! When you get into power in twenty-five or thirty years time you can carry it out.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, now -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Here, here!

MR. NEARY: Now we have finally pried a little bit of information out of the minister, Sir. 715 the month before last, 959 last month. They are applying by the thousands, literally by the thousands. So it is the policy of the department to turn these people down. Mr. Chairman, the welfare officers have been instructed that only under extreme circumstances, only under extenuating circumstances can they assist single able-bodied people.

MR. NOLAN: What are you supposed to give, a blood test or something?

MR. NEARY: No, Mr. Chairman, they are applying by the thousands and the hon. gentleman has now really put his foot in it. Go on - "They should get their posterior^s kicked!" For what? Where are they going to find jobs? What has this administration done to provide jobs for the young people of this Province? What have I been talking about here in this House for the last several weeks? We have 65,000 people unemployed in this Province and fifty per cent of them are between the ages of seventeen and twenty-five. That is over 30,000 young men and women unemployed and the minister has the gall to tell us they helped 715 out of almost 35,000. What a record, Mr. Chairman. The minister should hang his head in shame. The minister knows what I am talking about is true. The pressure is on every member of this House who is doing his job from every household, young men and young women going to the minister's department and getting turned down because the minister says they should get a kick in the rear and go out and get a job. Well I would like to know where they are going to get the jobs. That is what we should be debating in this House, employed, unemployment, job creation, which we are not doing.

MR. NEARY: Over 30,000 young men and women unemployed and the minister gets up and boasts about helping 715. What a record! What a scandal! The minister has put the boots to his welfare officers. That is what he has done and told them they are not to be assisted. Just the same as the emphasis of that department since that minister took over is on investigations. The minister has fallen into the trap of thinking that every welfare recipient is a crook and the minister has his own little squad of Dick Traceys down there going around almost peeping in through the keyholes at people to see if they are chiselling on welfare. They spend more time at that than they do at trying to help the people of this Province. "Perry Mason," the minister should be called. Now that is what the minister spends half his time at, trying to put welfare recipients in jail, and what good is that going to do? We have not seen the fish merchants yet brought before court that chiselled over \$4 million or \$5 million out of this Province. They have not been hauled up and put in jail. Only the welfare recipients dragged by the scruff of the neck and hauled into court by the minister's little Dick Traceys, pocket-sized Dick Traceys going around this Province, hauled into court and put in jail. What is the good of putting them in jail? That is going to do a fat lot of good.

That is what the emphasis is on in that department since that minister took over. There has not been one new innovation since the present minister took over that department. And I am not giving the minister a roasting just for the sake of tearing the hide of the minister. I am doing it, Sir, I am trying to shake some sense into the minister because the people who are forced to come to the government for assistance in this Province are finding it very, very difficult indeed. They are living under extreme hardship and there is a tremendous amount of suffering and they have no spokesman in this House worthwhile.

MR. NEARY: Hon. gentlemen represent vested interests in the majority of cases and very few will stand in their places in this House and champion the cause of the poor people. The member for Bay of Islands gets up and said thanks to everybody. thanks to the receptionist, thanks to the doorman, thanks to the janitor and thanks to this one, good will on earth and peace towards men. That is going to do a fat lot of good for people to get out of bed tomorrow morning with very little to put on the table for their children going to school.

And as I said, Mr. Chairman, -

MR. WOODROW: I am just as conscientious as you are, even more because I speak from the heart, I guarantee you that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. ROWE: You certainly do not speak from the brain.

MR. WOODROW: What do you mean?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, all they have to do is stick a collar on me, and I will outdo the hon. gentleman anytime when it comes to speaking from the brain or from the heart, or from the feet or from the rear, it does not make any difference. Mr. Chairman, the Government should be ashamed of its Social Assistance program, and we were told there a couple of years ago in the Throne Speech that they were going to base the Social Assistance on the cost of living. They have not done that. That have not, sir! This year they are going to grant a six per cent increase which will not even take care of the increase in the fuel allowance. So, the rich are getting richer in this Province, and the poor are getting poorer. The gap is getting wider all the time, and the little fellow from St. John's Centre that used to champion the cause of the poor people - the king of the poor man's champagne - is no longer the champion of the poor people. The working class can kiss his something or other now because he is a Minister now.

MR. MURPHY: The one in this corner is the one and only.

MR. NEARY: Because he is a Minister now and he has his swimming pool.

MR. MURPHY: By 1979 you would be left if you had to leave here.

MR. NEARY: The Minister has his swimming pool.

MR. MURPHY: Look, here it is.

MR. NEARY: The Minister has the road paved up to -

MR. MURPHY: I am an honest politician.

MR. NEARY: The Minister has the road paved up - yes, tell us about the insurance the Government got. The Minister has to tell us. The Minister has the road paved up to his summer home, beautiful swimming pool.

MR. MURPHY: Like the member for St. John's South.

MR. NEARY: The member will soon hibernate up to Topsail Pond and then push the ordinary people, the poor people of this Province, out of his mind, and relax and soak up whatever little bit of sun we will get in this Province this summer.

MR. MURPHY: Thank God I am honest.

MR. NEARY: That is the kind of a crowd they are, sir.

MR. MURPHY: I will read a few extracts now -

MR. NEARY: The hon. Minister can read what he likes if he can read.

MR. MURPHY: I can read.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, in this Province, in the Department that we are talking about, when things get tight coming on towards the end of the year, what they do, sir, they come in and they say, "Oh, there is so much left in the vote for repairing homes. Well, let us take that out of there and let us switch it over to some other account." So that means that no more homes will be repaired during the remainder of that fiscal year. That is the way it works. The hon. gentleman can shake his head. I was Minister of that Department, I should know. The officials will come in when you are coming down to the last quarter, and say, "Well, look, so-and-so account is empty and we have a few dollars left here that we had set aside for home repairs, so we will transfer that over to this account." That means then, for the next three months, no home repairs. Mr. Chairman, it is a shameful record, a shameful record indeed, sir, and as a result we have an awful lot of hardship and an awful lot of suffering in this Province at the present time. I would like for the Minister now, when the Minister stands, to answer some of the questions, some of the enquiries, that we have put forward. I hope the Minister will be able to tell us what plans the Administration have to try and improve the status of the people who are forced to live on Social Assistance in this Province through no fault of their own, what the

future holds in store for them. Is there any future or are they all doomed to malnutrition, undernourishment, struggle along the best way you can, that type of attitude? No eyeglasses, no dentures, no special diets for people who are sick, no braces, crutches and wheelchairs for kids that are crippled.

MR. WOODROW: Tell us what happened on Bell Island in your day.

MR. NEARY: Yes, sir, I can tell the hon. gentleman what happened on Bell Island in my day. The people were well looked after on Bell Island in my day. I did my job, I guarantee you that. I did not shirk my responsibility, and the hon. gentleman can slap up all he likes. What happened over at Blackhead Road in my day? The highest, the biggest amount of money every spent per capita on repairing homes in this Province was spent on the Blackhead Road and Shea Heights, and next in line was Mundy Pond. The hon. gentleman want a few more examples?

MR. WOODROW: Keep on talking.

Mr. Neary.

Mr. Chairman, I can go to confession any day of the week, Sir, and I can get absolution any day in the week. I have very grave doubts if I would ever go to the hon. gentleman though.

MR. WOODROW: I have not lost the power yet.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. gentleman's time has expired.

MR. NEARY: What was that, Sir? My time is up?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. minister.

MR. BRETT: Mr. Chairman, I would like to deal with some of the points that have been brought up. I certainly will not be able to deal with all of them in twenty minutes, but hopefully I will get the time to deal with the remainder before six o'clock or ten to six I think the time has expired.

First of all the hon. member for Baie Verte - White Bay (Mr. Rideout) - is it? - had some very good comments, exceptionally good, compared with some of the others. I have to agree with a statement that he made in that the work activity or the work projects are probably a little bit late, and this is true, because the whole purpose of these projects that we are carrying out now should do more than provide jobs. That is one part of it, sure. But the main reason is to rehabilitate people. And I am afraid with the high rate of unemployment that is in the Province today, we are going to rehabilitate people and find them back on the welfare rolls, because there are no jobs for them. So the hon. member is very correct in what he said. And, of course, as some members on this side have said, this is true all across Canada. There are something like 300,000 unemployed in the Province of Ontario. So we are not unique in our rate of unemployment.

MR. NEARY: It is higher.

MR. BRETT: It is higher per capita. It always has been, and I would say probably that it always will.

New jobs and plans for next year - well there are no new plans other than for the \$2.2 million which is allocated in the budget. Now previous to the budget there was \$700,000 and all of that

Mr. Brett.

is being spent in different projects which I have mentioned before and maybe later on this afternoon, if somebody wants to know exactly what is going on, I can read them out. But as I said there are no new plans other than for the \$2.2 million. We are moving very slowly on this. We do not want to be accused of being partisan. And, of course, it is very important that these funds be spent in districts where there are a large number of chronic welfare recipients, wherever that might be. We intend to work very closely with three or four other departments of government like Tourism in particular and Municipal Affairs and Housing, Forestry and Agriculture. These three, I would say, would be the main departments. Maybe somewhat with Fisheries, but not as much with the other three. Because we have found already that the projects that are being carried out now in conjunction with these three departments are the ones that are working best, because they are the most meaningful projects. And we believe that it is very important that the projects be meaningful. It is fine to say, "Put them to work." But there is no point in having them picking stones off one side of the road and putting them on the other. It has to be a job that is meaningful.

So other than the \$2.2 million there are no plans, and I think I should say that it is not my responsibility as Minister of Welfare to provide jobs for the many thousands of Newfoundlanders that are unemployed. My responsibility in this particular case is for the chronic welfare recipient.

MR. MURPHY: What is the philosophy of the federal government on work for pay?

MR. BRETT: As a matter of fact, I do not think there is either project actually off the ground yet. There have been some suggestions come in from the project officers and the social workers, but neither project has actually come in as yet. I intend to meet with the five directors in Gander next week. Well we had one meeting here last week, and the next one will be in Gander next week and from there I would say we will be starting some projects.

Mr. Brett.

The hon. member also questioned why the vote was reduced, the amount of money allocated for social assistance even though, he says, the number of people on social assistance

MR. BRETT: have increased. This is wrong. Even though we are going a 6 per cent increase. and even though there is \$2.2 million for job creation. Well actually the reason for that is that, and or other nobody seems to believe this, the hon. member keeps saying that this is not true, that I am being partisan, but it is and I will produce the figures in a minute.

The trend has been downward. I honestly cannot give this House an intelligent answer as to why, except to say that there are many more LIP projects and Canada Works and what have you. I suppose housing projects and so on. This is the only thing I can say, this is the only reason that I can say it is coming down but it is. The trend has been downward. I think probably at this point I should produce some figures, just to prove what I am saying.

Now these figures that I am giving are people who are wholly and solely dependant on government for everything, food, clothing, shelter, medical, whatever. Let us take the year 1972. In January of 1972 we had 8,930 families on short term assistance. In January of 1977 we had 5,443. In March of 1972 we had 5,872 and in March of 1977 we had 4,133. So there has been a continuous downward trend. We expected that it would level off this year but it has not, so we are still budgeting with the hope that that trend will continue down.

MR. RIDEOUT: Those figures are heads of families, is it?

MR. BRETT: Yes, either single able-bodied, units, eh? Anyway, a unit could be man and wife and 5 children, or it could be one single able-bodied, that is a unit. But anyway that, and of course there has as per the government's plan of cutting back, there has been a decrease in staff, decrease in the amount of money that has been allocated for travelling and so on and so forth. So therefore the sum total of the expenditure of the department is down from what it was last year.

MR. MURPHY: The actual grants of the people are up.

MR. BRETT: Oh, yes, I think the House understands that there is an increase of 6 per cent to social assistance recipients. Hopefully that

MR. BRETT: will also apply to foster home rates and other allowances that go out from the department. Somebody, I think it was the hon. member for LaPoile, insinuated that we are not doing anything for the crippled, widows, orphans; we do not care, we are callous, we are hard-hearted, we have not done a thing. Well I would like to quote the increases that this government has been responsible for in the last five years since we came into office.

The first increase that we gave was 40 per cent, and with the new rates that were brought in when the new programme was brought in, short-term able-bodied assistance went up in some cases by as much as 100 per cent. The next increase, the next year was 12½ per cent, and last year it was 10 per cent, this year it is 6 per cent. So that is forty, fifty, sixty that is 68 per cent in the last four or five years. The previous administration increased the rates by 7 per cent in the last seven years that they were in office. So that is quite a record compared with ours.

MR. MURPHY: A very human government I would say.

MR. NEARY: (inaudible)

MR. BRETT: I am not suggesting, and I do not think anybody in this House knows any better than I do because I spent 10 years in the field and there is no one on either side of the House can tell me anything about social service or welfare recipients. After 10 years I have seen a lot of suffering, a lot of sorrow, and I certainly do not need the hon. member for LaPoile, he may have been in the field as a minister but he certainly was never there as a welfare officer. I was a welfare officer for 10 years, Sir.

When the hon. member from LaPoile spoke he suggested that, well in short I guess that I was no good, I should get out, that I had a very poor introduction. Last year I was accused of making a civil service speech.

MR. BRETT:

But that is the way that I do things. I do play a very low profile. I do not rant and roar. I do not run to the Open Lines every day. I do not interfere with my social workers. Of course, we all know how the hon. member did that. We all know about the Mifflin Report which my colleague has here in front of him. If I have not accomplished anything else since I took over this portfolio, I have succeeded in getting welfare off the Open Lines and out of the press, because any politician who tries to score points at the expense of the widows and the orphans and the indigent people of this Province is not worth his salt. I am doing it. I do not intend to do it. And if anybody feels that because I play a low profile that I am no good, well then fine. You can keep on thinking it. But I challenge anybody to say that the Department of Social Services is not operating as well as any other department in this government. The morale of the Department of Social Services was never, never higher.

MR. RIDEOUT: I do not know about that. I do not know about that.

I have to question that, probably argue that.

MR. BRETT: The hon. member from LaPoile (Mr. Neary) spoke about the guaranteed annual income. And I got a feeling that he knows as much about the guaranteed annual income as I know about trying to fly a jet plane about the same. He knows what he read in the paper. That is about all. Certainly the hon. member knows that we already have in Canada a form of guaranteed income. We have unemployment insurance. We have workmen's compensation. We have the Canada Pension Plan. There is a whole host of them. As my deputy minister once said to me, "It is like you are up there and you fall. There are so many nets to catch you before you get to the bottom." Last but not least is our own social welfare programme. I do not think the hon. member realizes, or I do not think he intends to be ignorant - I think he is ignorant of the real facts of guaranteed income. The Federal Government discussed and wanted

MR. BRETT:

to bring in guaranteed income in two parts, the income supplementation and income support which all provinces have today because income support is welfare. You support the people who are unable to support themselves. And that income support is presently costing the Federal Government in excess of \$12 billion a year. And that is a lot of cash in anybody's language, \$12 billion, over. I think it is in excess of \$12 billion that Canada is spending today in social welfare services.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Is that "m" or "b"?

MR. BRETT: Billion.

MR. SMALLWOOD: \$12,000 million?

MR. BRETT: Right. Billion, that is what the Federal Government is spending in social services today. And I ask the hon. member from LaPoile (Mr. Neary) just how far do we take it. Is he suggesting and would the taxpayers agree that we pay people to sit home and do nothing? I wonder is that what he wants? If we did not agree with guaranteed income - we never did disagree with it, we agreed totally with the principle of guaranteed income - but we said we cannot afford it. And anybody who knows anything knows we cannot afford it because if we have to supplement the earnings of the working poor in this Province we are looking at another \$25 million. Now would somebody in this House stand up and tell me where we are going to get another \$25 million? The budget that we brought in this year and last year, the year before, I think almost 90 per cent of it was spent before we came to this House, which means we had ten per cent to develop the Province, 10 per cent of in excess of \$1 billion. And now the hon. member is suggesting that we spend another \$25 million in welfare. I suggest that he go out to the public, to the mere handful that is keeping this Province going, to the fellow that paid \$5,000 or \$6,000 or \$7,000 income tax last year, go out and suggest to him that we spend another \$25 million on welfare next year and we will see how popular he is. I know he is the champion of the poor. I know all about that. But he will not be a champion very long though if he goes talking that kind of stuff. Obviously he does not know what he is talking about.

MR. BRETT: He suggested, the hon. member from LaPoile (Mr. Neary) suggested that the Division, the Employment Opportunities, should be placed with another department. Again, this indicates that the hon. gentleman does not understand the functions of the Division, Employment Opportunities. That Division was not set up purely to find jobs for people who are unemployed. Can I get that through everybody's head? That is not the idea. The idea of that Division is to go to people who have social problems and cannot get into the regular work force, and that requires special training, special care, by specially trained people. You almost have to take them and lead them. They cannot get a job. As I said this morning, you can see them coming, the cap is down over the eyes, the pants are hanging off, they are not shaven, and nobody will hire them. So this Division was set up to work what that type of people and to get them back into the labour market, to give them some pride again - some hope - that is right. Now, that does not belong in the Department of Labour. The Department of Labour does not hire social workers. That is our job, to rehabilitate people, that is where it belongs. And, of course, the remark about single, able-bodied people being refused Welfare, the hon. member is not entirely wrong, not entirely. The part of my job and the job of my staff is to be stewards of the public purse, and we are not going to hand it out indiscriminately to everybody that comes along. You can say I am good if you like, you can say I am confident, you can say I'm forcing them to live off their widows mite, and perhaps they are. but I repeat what I said earlier, they need a good kick in the posterior, some of them. Instead of living off the taxpayer's dollar, where will you find them in the middle of the day? Keeping up the bars. It is about time that somebody had the guts to stand up and say that this is going on. The hon. member knows that it is wrong and I know it is wrong. When I was a social worker, eight - ten years ago, I had the bread lines. They were lined up forty, fifty, sixty or seventy of them when I got there in the morning. I had no time to do social work. They came in and I dished it out as fast as I could to get rid of them, frightened to death of half of them. Well, that day is gone. We have more staff, we have a different attitude towards Welfare, and so we should, and we investigate as many cases as we possibly can - and where we have single able-bodied men who may be able to get a living elsewhere, we do not give it to them, and by doing that, we are being good stewards of the public purse. Now, if that is the only

MR. BRETT: wrong that I do as Minister, then I do not have very much to worry about. I read out the figures, the people that we had assisted. There are times when we had to assist, but we are being selective and we will continue to be selective.

 The hon. member mentions the poor Welfare recipient being dragged into Court. Do not make me laugh! Is the hon. member and anybody in this House suggesting that somebody who is intentionally abusing the Welfare system should be given a pat on the back and sent home, and told "Now, be a good boy and do not do it anymore"? If a person is abusing the Unemployment Insurance Program, he gets poked in jail and his name is in the paper. What is the difference?

AN HON. MEMBER: It is equally as bad.

MR. BRETT: Exactly. I could not agree more. But I know what the hon. member is harping on. He is harping on a few words I said on V.O.C.M. a few days ago. I said the magistrates were hiding behind the Summary Jurisdiction Act and they are not doing their jobs, and I hope I am quoted on it, because Welfare recipients

MR. BRETT: who are abusing the system are being brought to court and, as I said, they are given a pat on the back and told to go home. And this should not be. Because that is the taxpayers' dollars and if they are abusing the system they should be punished.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Carbonear.

MR. R. MOORES: Mr. Chairman, first of all let me say that nothing that I say from here, any criticism that I lay would be laid against the hon. member for Trinity North in his capacity as an MHA but certainly the criticism will be well placed against his department as a minister and the philosophy of that department as it relates to social welfare in this Province.

I would like to say first, Mr. Chairman, that welfare is not a government handout but it is the application of the state's responsibility to those unfortunate persons who in reality are a result, a product, a dysfunction of our competitive, economic system in which we live. As long as there are millionaires there must be, by economic equalization, welfare recipients and given this almost irreversible premise government is responsible, government must undertake a very sincere, long-term programme that will not only maintain the basic standard of living for these people but must also introduce a solid policy for rehabilitation.

From the comments given by the minister with regard to single and married able-bodied recipients, it is obvious that his understanding of the predicament of these recipients, and why that predicament exists as it relates to economic and social welfare philosophy, that understanding is shallow. And because it is shallow I fear for the future of the economic dysfunctions in our society today. I need not say, however, that I fear for the future of the millionaires in our society.

MR. R. MOORES: As long as the industrial base of Newfoundland is underdeveloped and non-productive in terms of jobs, then the welfare roles of this Province will continue to increase. It may be debatable as to what form of welfare is most digestible. By that I mean whether it is federal welfare in terms of unemployment insurance or whether it is provincial handouts, which is exactly what they are today, is another question. But the fact remains that unless dealt with compassionately and in its full economic perception I predict that comments similar to the minister's, which reflect the politics of the department, will predominate much to the chargin of the poor and the glee of the wealthy.

As an opening statement, Mr. Chairman, as a trained social worker in this Province, with a degree from Memorial University, as a member of the House of Assembly who has dealt with 173 separate cases in my district in eighteen months, I can only say that the minister, as a minister, has a well organized department that is responding reasonably well to its recipients in terms of my association with it. But where the department falls down is its attitude and its philosophy on the higher echelons in the bureaucracy.

Any department that feels that any person who solicits able-bodied relief, welfare, social assistance, call it what you will, should be given a kick in the posterior, something is lacking, some basic understanding in terms of how it relates to our economy. In a Province where in my district, for instance, in certain areas there is ninety-five per cent unemployment and you tell that man to go look for a job, and for every job there are ten applicants, then arithmetic logic says that nine people have to be unemployed, nine people have no income, nine families

May 16, 1977

Tape No. 2755

NM - 3

MR. R. MOORES: will suffer hardship of some sort
and it is the state, the government's responsibility
and nobody else's

MR. R. MOORES: to provide those families with what minimal requirements are necessary. Where does the money come from for guaranteed annual incomes? From the rich. From the twenty per cent of this population, the population of our country that controls eighty-five to ninety per cent of the wealth, who have houses with twenty bedrooms, paved driving lots, seven cars and so on. And there are people on the other extremity of our economic system starving to death almost, and the minister ten years in the field, a minister of the Crown has the gall, the audacity to say "where does the money come from, where will we get \$25 million?" Without mentioning any names, Mr. Chairman, there are about five men that I can readily name in this Province who have \$25 million in cash to throw wherever they want to, gambling casinos, resorts in Arizona, Florida, Jamaica, you name it, and where does the money come from for guaranteed annual incomes? It comes from the taxpayers, where every bloody thing else in this Province, in this nation, in this Western world comes from. Somebody has to have the guts and in this case the minister, in this case this government to get up and say that for once we are going to incorporate, to introduce some socialism, small 's' socialism, and say that we are going to distribute more equitably the wealth in this country, in this Province. But they will not say it because they do not have the guts to say it, because this Province and this nation is capitalistically oriented. All they are concerned with is making money and when money is made it is made at the expense of the poverty stricken who will always be poverty stricken as long as the principal attitude of government is to keep economic competition alive.

MR. NEARY: Hear, hear!

MR. R. MOORES: For instance, Mr. Chairman, let me give you an example of the inconsistency of departmental philosophy. Some

MR. R. MOORES: of the most substandard and most dismal housing in this Province today is inhabited by social assistance recipients. I have been in them. I have drank tea in them. I have talked in them and I have had to get out of them before I was contaminated with some kind of disease. I have written letters to district supervisors. I have written letters to the minister himself with regard to some of them, substandard housing that the department is acquiescing in; that is to say, they accept it because it is economically expedient to do so. They will put them in stables if nobody complains and social assistance recipients fear of complaining for fear that they will get no place to live in. That is philosophy, and that basic philosophy says we will give them a six per cent increase but on the other hand we will try to persuade the people, the taxpayers of this Province, that that is why gasoline and tobacco taxes are going up and that retail sales taxes have been increased because we gave six per cent to the social assistance recipients and that six per cent was consumed six months ago and will be doubley consumed by inflation in another six months.

That is the type of philosophy that I am talking about, and make no mistake about it that I am not entering into a monologue, a treatise on capitalism versus socialism. I am talking about basic social welfare philosophy as it relates to human beings in this Province. And that is the reason why I was appointed to the shadow cabinet, if you like, of this Opposition because it is my personal interest. I love to work with these people because they have been trampled on, kicked about, they have been used as political guinea pigs since the beginning of Confederation, and I make no apologies to anybody in this House for that statement. Since

MR. R. MOORES: the beginning of Confederation they have been used, misused, abused and for no reason other than political expediency.

For instance, a widow in Carbonear called me; her husband before he died was making a substantial sum of money, for the sake of the argument we will say \$500 a month, and they were living reasonably comfortably. When her husband died, \$180 a month was all she got. And then she asked the Department of Tourism if she could set up one of these tourist homes, and if she could take in a few boarders to supplement that income. However, that is not the way the lower extremities of our economy and the philosophy of our department works. You do not supplement anything. You do not get out and try to work and bring your standard of living up to where it was before your husband died, because any money you make is equally on a balance of payments type of thing taken away from you.

AN HON. MEMBER: 100 per cent income tax.

MR. R. MOORES: That is right. And if that is ultra-modern philosophy in this technologically advanced society that is turning slowly but steadily, this society, into a welfare state - and the Minister of Mines and Energy can laugh, but if he is around here in the year 2000 he will probably realize it is no laughing matter.

MR. PECKFORD: I was not laughing at what you were saying. I am sorry. I was thinking about something else which was very humorous.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Would the hon. member please tell us.

MR. PECKFORD: No. No. I must refrain from informing hon. members of the House. It was unparliamentary.

MR. R. MOORES: On a more positive note, and Mr. Chairman, I am pleased with the efforts of this government and the minister in terms of their job creation programme. The essential, and I do not want to overuse this word, but the essential, the basic philosophy of it is good, that is what is termed as rehabilitation in social welfare language. Of course if we have an able-bodied person who desires not to be on social assistance, then it is equally the state's responsibility to see that that person is provided with an opportunity to work. And I think that this government, and the minister's department, have done a reasonably good job of at least implementing the basic programme for rehabilitation. Where the programme falls down though is that it is only short-term. And here we have to get back to philosophy again, and I think my hon. colleague from Baie Verte - White Bay (Mr. Rideout) stated this this morning when he was killing time for me to get into the House.

MR. RIDEOUT: Last favour I will do for you.

MR. R. MOORES: If you employ a person for six weeks or ten or twelve, enough to get unemployment insurance benefits, and you do not upgrade that person, you do not rehabilitate that person in terms of providing him with some skill, some education, some type of training, then invariably, inevitably, that person has to end up back on the welfare rolls. Now that is all right in terms of economics and in terms of politics. You have saved the Government of Newfoundland whatever money you saved while he was on unemployment insurance. And you injected into him, at least partially, some need to get to work, some sense of personal fulfillment and achievement. But you do not fool anybody. In the long term you fool only yourself because we are taxpayers of

May 16, 1977

Tape No. 2757

NM - 3

MR. R. MOORES: Canada, in fact we have a global responsibility in terms of social welfare, not just a national one but a global one in providing people with standards of living, decency, and sense of fulfillment. And if you place that person off the welfare rolls for twelve months, what you do is

Mr. E. MOOPES.

you increase his expectations. You increase his need. It is the same principle as if you paid wages of \$10 an hour for ten years, like the Come By Chance development and the Churchill Falls development, and suddenly the bust is over, or pardon me, the boom is over and she busts, and you got guys coming back to Carbonear, to St. John's, making incomes of \$5 an hour. The same thing applies to taking a person off social assistance for a year. The unemployment insurance benefits are glamorous. My God, they are putting the man in relative terms to the position of a millionaire. Where he could only afford one cigarette a week or one package of cigarettes a week, now he can smoke two or three a day. And then back on the welfare rolls again, and the traumatic effect, the mental anguish alone is devastating. It may not appear in the first year of the programme, but if this department and this government does not get down to brass tacks with this situation, and introduce a programme of long-term rehabilitation, then you are fooling nobody but yourselves, and you are doing more harm in fact to overall social welfare philosophy as it relates to national programmes such as guaranteed annual income and a host of others that have been bandied around since I have been in first year university.

But the basic programme, the basic start that this government has taken, I agree with, and I give you full marks. The rest of my comments were merely warnings based upon my professional training, my research and hopefully upon the minister's comments that he has made in the House on previous occasions. That is, Mr. Chairman, essentially what I have to say and I thank most of the members who have listened quite closely. Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

DR. TWOMEY: Members of the House, I rise to speak with pleasure about one facet of the Department of Social Assistance that is not too well known to many of us in this Province. It is known as a works activity project of which there are three in this Province. The first and pilot project started in the district of Exploits, and because of its success has been followed by two others.

DR. TWOMEY:

In essence its main purpose is to train and educate the chronic unemployable, people who by misfortune have a legacy in this unenviable field too often preceded by their forebears and unfortunately sometimes succeeded by their progeny in this field of poverty and low education. When I speak of poverty, some of it is utter abject poverty. I have met many of these people. I have known some of them for two generations. I am aware of their misfortunes and their triumphs. Unfortunately, misfortune seems to be the major part of their lives. I have seen them where they could not make a phone call, when they could not sign their name to a cheque, when they could not approach you and tell you their story of illness or accident, where they could not communicate their more simple needs. This work activities project started in Northern Arm in December of 1975 in a reconverted school house that has now many pieces of equipment to help and train these people as well as a competent and fully trained staff. Twenty-five people are selected every six months, and they are trained in the various components, work. As Exploits has a big logging industry, many of them have been unable in the past to harvest wood. They are now taken into the woods, taught how to harvest wood, taught how to plane it, taught how to make things, like doors, window boxes and even how to repair a home

DR. TWOMEY:

or even build a home. Their wives are taught homemaking, the simple elements of cooking. I found this unbelievable. Many of them are not able to cook. Many of them are not even able to paint the inside of their homes or to decorate a shelf around cupboards. One day I attended the school and they were like little children, amazed, exhilarated because they were taught how to put a piece of wallpaper on a wall. They are being taught how to budget, how to look after their children, how to communicate with their physicians and with their welfare officers. As well as that, there are two classes a week at which children are taught how to play. Again this is utterly unbelievable, but the teachers have told me they did not know how to get fun out of their dolls, their guns or any other toy that is available. So far fifty people have graduated. And of these, twenty-five per cent have found permanent employment or they are undergoing retraining in a vocational school. This is a very small project and I hope it is the beginning of many more to come. Thank you for listening to me, gentlemen.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Baie Verte-White Bay.

MR. T. RIDEOUT: Mr. Chairman, this time I rise to say a few remarks, not to waste time for my colleague, but a few remarks I want to say myself. Let me say first of all though that I did enjoy very much the speech made by my colleague from Carbonear (Mr. R. Moores). I think it was one of the best philosophical explanations of the social services role, or what should be the social service role in this Province that I have ever heard. Now, Sir, I want to make a few comments further on some points I raised this morning. I want to ask the minister when he rises to speak again in this debate exactly what is happening to the programme supposed to be administered by his department of providing adequate housing for people on social assistance, long-term social

MR. RIDEOUT:

assistance in this Province. I do not know what has happened to the programme. I do know from experience that it seems to have dried up. To get a roof fixed for a widow or a family in which the head of the House is disabled in this Province today, Sir, is like trying to get \$1 million out of a turnip. You got to go through all kinds of red tape. You got to get the social worker to make a recommendation to the regional supervisor. Then you got all kinds of waiting to go through before anything comes back. And in many cases, even though the need is there - and I would challenge anybody to say it is not there - the request is turned down. Those people, Sir, who are in those categories - I am not talking about able-bodied assistance, I am talking about long-term people who are disabled. That is basically the people I am talking about - those people are suffering in silence, Sir, while somebody is dragging their feet with regard to processing their application or the request, or either that the money is not there. It is one or the other. It has to be. The result is that there are more people living in substandard housing in rural parts of this Province - that is all I can talk about, I cannot talk about the urban centres - but there are more people living in substandard housing in the rural parts of this Province today than ever before. There are people living in homes, Sir, with the roof as leaky as a basket. And they cannot get a few shingles or a bit of felt from the Department of Social Services to fix the roof. There are people living in homes that are very, very old in which the foundation has either rotted away and fallen down, they cannot get the doors open and tables are sliding across the floor. I was in one of them on Saturday as a matter of fact. And they made a request to social services two or three months ago to get something done with it and there is no answer yet. I would like for the minister to tell us exactly what is happening in his department. Do they still have a programme there of providing assistance to people who are living in substandard houses. We do not expect the welfare

MR. RIDEOUT:

department, the Social Services Department to build mansions, Sir, for those people, even though they are disabled through no fault of their own, even though it is the responsibility of the state to at least provide them with the basic amenities of life. We do not expect to provide them with a mansion. But for goodness sake there must be some more equitable way of dealing with those cases than having those people there sitting for months and then finally end up then rejected. Is it because there is no money there, not enough money there or what? These are questions I would like the minister to answer when he stands in this debate again.

Now I want to say a word about the collection of overpayments, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Rideout.

It makes my blood boil to go into a house in my district and see a seventy-five year old man having his old age pension being garnisheed by the government of this Province because he had a social assistance welfare overpayment in 1951. Now if we have not got a better system than that, then for Heaven sake throw it down the drain. I do not want to see able-bodied people back on the job ripping off the taxes of this Province either.

MR. SMALLWOOD: In 1951?

MR. RIDEOUT: In 1951, yes, sir. And now his old age pension has been garnisheed \$5 or \$10 a month.

MR. NEARY: No statute of limitation.

MR. MUPPHY: The law was always there, you know, that if you received an overpayment -

MR. RIDEOUT: Mr. Chairman, if I could go on. Certainly if there is an able-bodied person who draws social assistance and then two or three weeks later, a couple of months later he gets his unemployment insurance, certainly we are not going to tolerate a person receiving two sources of income, and I do believe that that person has to sign to pay the money back. If he does not, go after him with all the force of the law and get it. But for Heaven's sake, are we going to go after a seventy-five year old pensioner? How far back are we going to go? Have we gone back to 1949 and took every social assistance file of every individual in this Province and had one of those pocket size Dick Tracy's that the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) talks about go through them? Is that what we have done? I have seen cases, twenty, twenty-two, twenty-three years previous that those people got them, and I will tell you this, Mr. Chairman -

MR. SPETT: I hope the Auditor General hears what you are saying.

MR. RIDEOUT: Well I was going to tell the Auditor General -

MR. ROBERTS: (First part inaudible) - the rules this House makes.

MR. RIDEOUT: . I was going to tell the Auditor General where to go that time. There is the Auditor General, and then there is common sense, too.

MR. ROBERTS: The Auditor General only does what we say. Let the government change the rules.

MR. SMALLWOOD: The minister (Inaudible) written off.

MR. ROBERTS: They can be written off by Treasury Board.

MR. NEARY: They can be written off by the minister's department.

MR. RIDEOUT: Mr. Chairman, I think I will qualify the situation by explaining that, you know, these cases happened years and years ago. Now those people are in the twilight days of their lives, and we got the government of this Province - with inflation, with all the expense it cost those people to maintain themselves and their homes - we got the government of this Province going around and clicking off another \$10 or \$15 or \$20 a month off them by going after the federal government and attaching - you cannot call it their wages, but their cheque. Now I know that that has happened.

Mr. Chairman, it is not good enough but when you write to the Department of Social Services about it - I do not know where ^{their} the conscience is - but all they worry about is the letter of the law. Well, I say it is a bit late for the letter of the law to be placed on those people, twenty years too late. If it were done when they were working, I would be all for it. And I will say this to the minister and to the House, that many of those overpayments occurred, Sir, because of incompetence on the part of the social worker.

MR. ROBERTS: Yes, that is the particularly galling part.

MR. RIDEOUT: That is the part that hits you right in the craw. I know some of those people, and I believe their story, but there is no way to collaborate it. They would go to the social worker, and the social worker - they would say they were getting unemployment insurance . And back - I do not know - fifteen years ago unemployment insurance was not that much and neither was social welfare, of course. But

Mr. Pideout.

if they had eight or ten children the unemployment insurance may not come up to what they would have been allowed to receive from social assistance, and the social worker would, therefore, issue them the supplementary amount which brought it up to the level they were allowed. And now these people have been told they have overpayments. And they have been - I cannot say they have prosecuted, but they certainly have been penalized.

MR. ROBERTS: Persecuted.

MR. PIDEOUT: They are being persecuted. Their old age security pension has been docked and garnisheed and it is allowed to continue. If the Auditor General objects to it let the government deal with that. Let this House deal with it. Certainly human compassion would dictate that we deal with it.

MR. NEAPY: The Auditor General would only object if it is left on the records. But the minister should have the authority to write it off.

MR. PIDEOUT: Yes, but they are not being written off.

MR. NEAPY: That is right.

MR. PIDEOUT: And those people are going to their - you know, if they had a couple of hundred dollars overpayment, and they started to take it back from their old age pension last year, some of them will go to their grave believing that they still owe the Queen in right of this Province \$200 or \$300.

MR. NEAPY: That is right.

MR. PIDEOUT: Now, Sir, I want to make a couple of comments also on the - I do not know the word to put on it - but the shocking way that this Province, this Department of Social Services, treats people or treat people who receive old age pensions, old age security pensions and also social assistance for the family. The old age security pension raises, I understand, approximately three times a year or four times a year, I am not sure.

MR. RIDEOUT: three or four months it is indexed and it raises probably three or four or five dollars. And every time that pension goes up one copper, the government of this Province turns around and takes it from the children and the mother. Now, Sir, that is exactly what happens.

MR. NEARY: No gain.

MR. RIDEOUT: No gain whatsoever. Every time the federal government, through the mechanism they use raise the Old Age Security pension, and if the head of that household happened to be a seventy-seven year old man who married in the latter years of his life with a young wife and five or six children home, every time that Old Age Security pension is increased this Province turns around and takes it away from them. Now, Sir, I think that is grossly unfair. Certainly there must be something that this government can do about that.

Now the minister is shaking his head, I do not know what for, but it happens.

MR. BRETT: It happens, but it is not unfair though.

MR. RIDEOUT: Of course it is unfair.

MR. BRETT: Of course not.

MR. RIDEOUT: Ottawa will give it out with one hand and St. John's will take it away with another.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: That is right.

MR. RIDEOUT: What is fair about that?

MR. MURPHY: Federal government salaries, we should not take that out of there.

MR. RIDEOUT: The federal government what?

MR. MURPHY: The guy is getting paid by the federal government, money he is paid by working or anything else, that is not income?

MR. RIDEOUT: I am talking about the man

MR. RIDEOUT: who is on Old Age Security. He is getting two hundred and seventy - whatever it is - dollars a month from Ottawa, Old Age Security.

MR. MURPHY: It is income.

MR. RIDEOUT: Sure it is income, it is the Old Age Security from the Government of Canada. All along his wife and his five or six children, whatever he has home, in school or up to a certain age, will receive X number of dollars from the Province. Four times a year Ottawa will increase theirs, and this government will turn around and take that increase off social assistance. I say it is not fair. What is the point in Ottawa increasing the poor old fellow's Old Age pension.

MR. BRETT: It is fair. It is the only fair way to do it.

MR. RIDEOUT: I do not agree. I do not think it is fair, In fact, he is worse off. Ottawa will give him eight or ten dollars more two or three times a year to take care of the cost of inflation -

AN HON. MEMBER: That is the purpose of indexing it.

MR. RIDEOUT: That is the whole purpose of indexing it, and then this administration, this Province will turn around and take it away and the minister will say it is fair.

MR. BRETT: They do it in every other Province.

MR. RIDEOUT: I do not care. Well, let us be the leaders for once in our lives. Let us be the leaders for once in our lives and take the bull by the horns and admit that it is wrong.

AN HON. MEMBER: Increasing the rate will not count when -

MR. RIDEOUT: That is right. There is no

MR. RIDEOUT: point in having Ottawa indexing the pension to inflation when they give the raise and this government takes it away. I do not care if the other provinces do it, it is still wrong. It is socially wrong, it is morally wrong and it is financially criminal to those people.

Now I have mentioned the overpayment. The minister talked for a few minutes today about employment for able-bodied single people. And the minister has said that his department has assisted some of those people and more power to him. I compliment him and congratulate him on that, but, Sir, I know from my experience, and I get as many requests or enquiries about social services, I suppose, as any other member in the House, that many of those people at are home, you can say it anyway you like, but what it boils down to is they are home living with their parents, taking the bread out of the other children's mouths. Now if they are too lazy to get off their rears and go out and get a job, let that be established and give them nothing, but for Heaven's sake, let us use some of the investigative powers that we have to determine that. If there is neither bit of employment in Ming's Bight, why should five or six other children in that family suffer because a twenty-two year old cannot find a job? And that is what it boils down to, Sir.

Many of those people, Sir, that I have seen are just not employable. I saw a young man in Westport last year who had been refused a half dozen times by the Social Services Office in Baie Verte. I went to them and I went to Mr. Baldwin and they made the enquiries, the usual run of the mill thing and nothing happened, that man is just not employable. No company would hire him. He does not have the - you could not call him retarded, I do not suppose, he has sense enough

MR. RIDEOUT: to dress himself and walk around and so on like that. He is not the type to be institutionalized but nobody would hire him. He cannot do anything. He is living in a house or a shack that he built in Westport for himself. He ran up a debt at the store so that the merchant cannot look at him any more, and he practically starves to death because he is single and cannot get any help.

MR. ROBERTS: Not to mention the tensions that creates within a family.

MR. RIDEOUT: Well he left. Another part of this sad story, Sir, is the family kicked him out. They could not afford to keep him.

MR. ROBERTS: He was actually hurting them by being there.

MR. RIDEOUT: Of course he was. He was taking the bread, as I said, out of the mouths of the younger children. That is what it boils down to. I have to agree with the minister that if there is some lazy galloot home too lazy to go out and look for a job, then by all means refuse him and starve him out and let him go out if he has not got the initiative to do it himself. But let us,

MR. RIDEOUT: as well as being selective, let us make sure that the proper investigations are carried out before we make that type of arbitrary decision, that that not only affects the individual involved but affects very much the families of many of those individuals in a lot of cases.

Now, Sir, I cannot help before I sit down by coming back to the minister's figures, about the number of people on social services in this province.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman, to a point of order. I hate to interrupt my friend, he is making a most valuable speech, but there seems to be more than the unusual amount of noise from the side galleries outside of this - it is very difficult to follow - I do not think any one person is the offender but I wonder if the page or the Sergeant-at-arms or somebody could, -closing the doors is not the answer, I do not see why we should be barred in or barred out - it is simply a matter of self-discipline Mr. Chairman, on the part of whoever it is outside, be they members or be they others. It really is too much at times to bear and this is one of those times.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please! I would ask the constable if he would insure that the noise emanating from the corridors does not interfere with the business of the House. He would ask the people outside to be quiet in their conversations. The hon. member.

MR. RIDEOUT: Mr. Chairman, I thank my colleague for coming to the rescue of my soft voice. Mr. Chairman, the minister quoted some figures this afternoon in the few remarks he made about the number of people receiving social services in the province. He told us that in January 1972, I believe I copied it down correctly, there were 8,930 families, that would be heads of families or single individuals or whatever, on short term assistance in this province. Then he went on to say that for the same month in 1977 there were 3,443. Now, Mr. Chairman, I do not know, you know, something is wrong somewhere. Either we are not using the same definition of a person on social service, but to me a person on social services is a person that is

MR. RIDEOUT: receiving help from the department of social services. The economic flash sheet for March 21, 1977 gave the latest figure for January 1977 which was the latest one they had and they said the heads of families and or single persons in receipt of short-term basic social assistance 10,584. Mr. Chairman, that is double the figure the minister is using, 10,584.

AN. HON. MEMBER: There are the government's own figures.

MR. RIDEOUT: No, He says not single persons, heads of families, and/or single individuals. That is the same thing the minister used. Now the minister may have a different way of saying that is that they have not, there is only 5,443 who has been chronically on that list for the last number of years. I do not know which way he looks at it. But to me there is 10,000, or there were as of the first of January, 10,584 people in receipt of short-term social assistance in this province. You can look at that any way you like and you will see that that was an increase of 13 per cent over January 1976. Everyone of those flash sheets tells the same story. They dropped down a bit in January after the LIP programme started to get on the ball and so on, but they have not for the whole year gone below 9,000 people. I have looked through them a couple of times since the minister made those remarks.

So, you know, the minister says in March 1972 there were 5, 872 short-term heads of families on social assistance. The latest figure I have is for February 1977. The minister gave us the figure for March. He said it was 4,133. I do not have that one, the last one I have is for February, but in February there were 9,283 according to those sheets. That again was a 13.9 per cent increase over last year. So I do not see the social assistance rolls in this province decreasing, Mr. Chairman. There may be some way of tantalizing figures and twisting around figures to say that it is not as bad as it actually shows up on this. That may be so. But to me there are more people in receipt of social assistance in this province today than any before that I have here in those statistics. It is going to be that way despite the fact that the vote is decreased. It is going to be that way until job opportunities pick up in this province and I do not see much indication of that. Thank you.

MR. GOUDIE:

Mr. Chairman, in commenting on this particular department I would like to preface my remarks by suggesting that I am not quite sure if what I have to say would come under this particular department or which department. But what I am suggesting is that it could come under this department. So qualifying it that way, I would like to make a suggestion to the hon. minister and to hon. members of the House. And as a matter of fact I would like to hear any remarks which any hon. member may wish to put forth on what I am about to suggest. I am basing my suggestions on a couple of years experience having worked in community development with the Company of Young Canadians and also on this project proposal which I propose to table at the end of my remarks which was submitted by a former Company of Young Canadian workers and reference groups in various parts of Labrador. But I would suggest that this proposal is valid for any part of the Province because the Company of Young Canadians not only was involved in work in Labrador as well but on the South Coast and on parts of the West Coast of the Island part of the Province. I know there were projects going in the Corner Brook area. Gaultois, I believe, is on the South Coast of the Province, of the Island. Harbour Breton, I believe, is on the South Coast. Not being familiar with all community locations, I am not quite sure. But in terms of community development, I think the Company of Young Canadians particularly in Labrador played quite a major role in bringing about community leadership on the part of some individuals and on some groups such as the Labrador Resources Advisory Council. For four years we were involved in a number of communities in Labrador, Hopedale, Cartwright Makkovik, Rigolet, North West River, Red Bay, Happy Valley, the Inuit population of that community, West St. Modest and in other communities from Red Bay to L'ance-au-Clair in the Straits of Belle Isle area of Labrador. And we were about, when the austerity measures were

MR. GOUDIE:

introduced - in 1975, did the announcement come, or in 1976? - either late 1975 or early 1976 at least we were about to get into the section of Labrador from Black Tickle to Mary's Harbour.

But the organization which was proposed, put forward was to be called the Labrador Community Development Project which would be controlled by a board of directors who would be representative of the areas and groups within Labrador. And I might mention again that this particular project was designed especially for Labrador but could very well be adapted to other parts of the Province.

In terms of the makeup of the group itself to include a Provincial Government official from the Department of Rural Development we were proposing, possibly from the Department of Social Services as well, one from the Division of Adult Education and eight persons from various areas of Labrador; I am thinking of the Development Associations. There is one existing already in the Straits of Belle Isle, and in what is referred to as Southern Labrador, and there was one in Northern Labrador, I assume that still exists.

But this particular proposal we had here could operate as a separate group, that is not included within the present structure of a government department or it could very well be adapted to operate within a government department, perhaps very well the Department of Social Services. But the idea or the rationale for such a group is simply that there are still many areas of this Province, I believe, which could very well make use of expertise in various fields, As an example, we now have a pretty viable handicrafts industry in Labrador; there is the Handicrafts Association which started out with the formation of a small group in the community of Makkovik which was led by members of the community, The community worker was hired from the community to begin with, and it made use of a \$1,500 revolving fund, I am not sure whether it was a loan or a grant from the Department of Rural Development, but

Mr. Goudie:

whichever, \$1,500 was used to purchase materials for the production of handicraft. The group, the community group allocated material, for instance, if a lady in the community wanted to make what is commonly referred to as a Grenfell parka, she would be issued the materials free of charge from the Handicraft Centre, work on the item until it was completed, take it back in and be paid for her labour. So there is no initial expense in obtaining the material. That money, after a 20 per cent markup and sold to the public, that money would be

MR. GOUDIE: reinserted in the revolving fund and out of a \$1500 sum of money came what is now the Labrador Crafts Producers Association. There are a number of communities, namely Hopedale, Makkovik and Cartwright and others I think now, more recently, who have channeled their products into the handicraft retail centre, which is located in Happy Valley. And they are doing in the vicinity of \$22,000 to \$25,000 a month business, which is not bad having started from a \$1500 revolving fund.

Now that is just one example of the type of community development we get into and if I can use a specific figure, the proposal which I am referring to here and which I will table, calls for an annual budget of \$121,080. Now that is made up as a separate operating group, or a group separate from but responsible to a particular department of government.

The spin off effects of that, or that kind of a concept I think are varied, some of them that I am not aware of, but some things that do happen - one of the spin-off effects is that community people come forth to become leaders in their communities in terms of, well, their resource development but their social development as well. It could be used as a forum into which people could tap into various existing programmes, perhaps under the Department of Rural Development, perhaps under the Department of Fisheries and many others. But the idea behind the whole project will be to bring an awareness to people in more isolated areas of the Province, an awareness of how governments work, both federal and provincial, how various other organizations work and in many ways I use the handicraft as an example, I cannot estimate how many people are engaged now in

MR. GOUDIE: the production of handicrafts in our part of the Province, but I would estimate they are in the hundreds and the type of handicrafts being produced now are quite varied. They are not sticking just to the moccasins and the seal skin boots and parkas and that sort of thing. They are getting into the production of Labradorite jewellery, caribou antlers, I am told. I believe in the hon. member for Eagle River's district (Mr. Strachan) at least for a while the handicraft centre in Nain I think was offering to purchase for so many cents a pound, I believe, caribou antlers and things to be used in handicraft production.

MR. MURPHY: - was this all a part of it or what?

MR. GOUDIE: There was no direct contact with the social workers. The handicrafts that I was referring to came as - I was going to say a direct result of the work of the Company of Young Canadians, but perhaps indirectly.

MR. MURPHY: I was just wondering.

MR. GOUDIE: Because obviously the people in the various communities have been producing well what is now called handicrafts for years when they were being used a little more than they are today. They were being produced out of necessity.

But I just wanted to put that before the minister and to any other hon. member of the House for their comments. I do not think there is any point in getting into the proposed constitution and by-laws and that sort of thing. But for the interest of anyone in this hon. House I would like to table this particular document that gives a summary of the projects, the different types of projects which we have been involved in for four years in various parts of Labrador, the projects which were going ahead on the Island part of the Province

MR. GOUDIE: are not outlined here because we were in this particular proposal concerned with just one section of the Province.

But it also gives a background on the work of not only the Company of Young Canadians but other groups as well in Labrador, a proposed structure, a proposed budget, proposed constitution, by laws and a summary of projects. I am sure the minister and perhaps some other hon. members of the House might be interested in that but I just thought I would put that before this hon. House for comments by the minister if he feels so inclined to do.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister of Social Services.

MR. BRETT: Mr. Chairman, I will comment now on some more of the points that were made and I will go back to the points that were made by my hon. friend from Conception Bay South (Mr. Nolan). I am sure he was sincere, he was rather humourous too. I would like to have the name of the eighty year old who was patching a roof... I am sure she was very versatile and very agile.

MR. BRETT: If I had her address I would like to visit her to get the secret of her longevity or whatever it is. I am afraid when I get eighty I will not be patching any roofs. The hon. member suggested that I get out of my office and travel across the Province and meet the people on welfare. That is very honourable, I am sure, but by rough calculation, I figure it would take me approximately twenty-five years and assuming that I am in power that long I would like to tell the hon. member I will do my best and if I cannot do it in the twenty-five years then my predecessor will probably pick up where I leave off.

MR. MURPHY: Your successor.

MR. BRETT: My successor.

MR. NOLAN: Surely my hon. friend knows I did not suggest he visit every one who is in need of welfare assistance. What I suggested was he could do so many in each district. There is nothing to prevent him from doing twenty in each district a year, is there? Is that too arduous a task?

MR. BRETT: Mr. Chairman, really I was trying to be as amusing as he was.

MR. ROBERTS: The hon. gentleman was not succeeding as well as the member for Conception Bay South.

MR. BRETT: I should mention here though that I did travel to Grand Falls a couple of months ago to meet with the staff to discuss some of the problems in the district, particularly the projects that were coming on stream at the time. And while I was there I made myself available to the public through the electronic media, an Open Line show. I thought it was a good opportunity for people in a fairly large area to talk with me and of course I got back to St. John's only to be very severely criticized by the hon. member from Lewisporte, not only in the House but on the television, in the papers and everywhere else.

MR. BRETT: So it seems that out of one side of their mouth they are saying get out and see the people but on the other side they are suggesting that you should walk.

MR. ROBERTS: How many people were in the helicopter?

MR. MURPHY: How many people were in the helicopter?

MR. ROBERTS: Were there any recipients in the helicopter?

MR. BRETT: That is not very funny, Mr. Chairman.

MR. ROBERTS: No, I agree it is not very funny at all.

MR. BRETT: The hon. member from Conception Bay South again questioned the number of jobs that had been created and he asked for some proof. He said it is all right for somebody to stand up in the House and say that 5,000 people were taken off the welfare rolls, but where is the proof. Now I am not sure that I can get 5,000 names and addresses. That probably is a little bit much but I most certainly can bring names and addresses into the House. Now I have had a table prepared by the officials of the department indicating the number of people that - well it goes back to 1972 - the number of people that have been placed in permanent employment, temporary employment or upgrading and/or vocational training. I am afraid I cannot say how many have come back on the welfare rolls. I have no doubt that a lot of them have but we have no way of determining it. But I do have a sheet here. It would take too long to read but it indicates for example the number in each region for each year and then it is totalled up to 5,130 and then there is another table which indicates the number that were placed into LIP programmes, just LIP alone. So this is available and well maybe I should get a copy of it and table it.

The member for Corner Brook area somewhere -

MR. WOODROW: Bay of Islands.

MR. BRETT: - Bay of Islands mentioned an isolated case of somebody having to go to a welfare office to pick up their cheque, and this happens. I do not think anybody is infallible and out of

MR. BRETT: 324 social workers in the field there are some better than others, and as I said no one is infallible and obviously they make mistakes and this happens in all the district. It happened in my district. I know of a man who was dying with cancer and the last time that he was out of bed he had to drive three miles and then walk two flights of stairs to get an order and I was very upset about it. But this happens and there are isolated cases. I do not think they should be brought up in the House of Assembly. I think they should be brought to the attention of the officials of the department and I am sure that the whole thing would be straightened out.

The member for Carbonear certainly gave a very philosophical speech, probably one of the better ones we have heard since we started this this morning. He sounded like Robin Hood, take it from the rich and give it to the poor. Well that is one way to do it, I suppose. I am not sure that it can work. There was

Mr. Brett.

one point he brought up which was interesting and very true. I will not repeat all that he said. I do not remember all that he said, but basically it was this, that if we have projects, and we put people to work to try to rehabilitate them, and if we are successful, and then there is no job for them afterwards, then really we have not proved anything, and this is true. Because you do have the boom where if they are on social assistance the amount of money they receive is much less than they would get on a work project. Because now they are being paid \$4.20 an hour, which is much more than they would get on welfare. So we are in fact creating a boom sort of atmosphere for a short while, and if there are no jobs available at the end of the project then it is true that we have not accomplished what we set out to do. It is most unfortunate.

I believe the same hon. member made some reference to people earning while they are on welfare and the fact that we take most of what they earn away from them. But this administration made some changes in that, and I am not sure of the exact figure, but I believe that a single able-bodied person can keep fifty per cent of what he earns up to \$80 and a family man can keep fifty per cent of what he earns up to \$200 or fifty per cent of the first \$200. I think that is the way it goes. But anyway there is an incentive there, and it is better than it used to be.

MR. NEARY: It is worse.

MR. BRETT: No, it is not worse. There is more incentive.

The hon. member for Baie Verte - White Bay

(Mr. Rideout) again made some excellent points, as he did this morning. And the first thing he talked about was the programme to provide housing for indigent people. First of all, let me assure the hon. gentleman that the programme still exists in my department, and I have no knowledge of it being slowed down or there being any shortage of funds. They still have to go through the bureaucratic process which is from the social worker to the regional director and depending on the amount, probably to headquarters.

MR. ROBERTS: What is the amount? It used to be \$2,400 that the minister approved and \$1,400 was a different level of approval. What are the categories now?

MR. BRETT: I do not have them with me now, Mr. Chairman. I can get them for the hon. member.

MR. ROBERTS: Has there been any increase in the amounts?

MR. BRETT: There have been some changes.

MR. ROBERTS: Because I mean, you know, \$5,000 a few years ago would have built a house in many rural communities.

MR. BRETT: Right, exactly.

MR. ROBERTS: Today \$15,000 or \$20,000 will not touch it.

MR. BRETT: The amounts have increased. The regional directors - okay, quite a larger sum than they could previous, but I am not sure of the figures.

MR. ROBERTS: Will the minister find out how much and let us know?

MR. BRETT: We will get the figures now, and I will give them to the hon. member.

But, as I said, there was a continuous programme, and to the best of my knowledge, there has been no cut in it. There was no lack of money in the Social Assistance vote up to the time the budget was brought in. I know of no slow down. I know that there are bad cases in the rural areas, but I do not mind telling the hon. member that they are ten times as bad in the urban areas.

MR. MURPHY: Up to \$3,600 in the field now.

MR. BRETT: In the field up to \$3,600. Beyond that it has to come into headquarters.

MR. ROBERTS: What level can be approved in headquarters? Is there still a category reserved for the Cabinet?

MR. MURPHY: Unlimited through Treasury Board.

MR. BRETT: Over that, I think it has to go to Treasury Board.

MR. ROBERTS: So the minister has no independent discretion.

MR. BRETT: I am giving the hon. member information which may not be correct. Could you get some more figures just to see?

MR. MURPHY: I can get that for you.

MR. ROBERTS: So it is either a regional administrator or Treasury Board?

MR. BRETT: Yes, I will check now for the hon. member.

MR. ROBERTS: Why do we have a minister?

MR. BRETT: If he does - I do know, but I will get the figures for the hon. member.

MR. ROBERTS: The minister does have discretion.

He does not know it.

MR. BRETT: Anyway getting back to housing, substandard housing, while there is a lot of it in rural areas, I contend that it is worse in the urban areas, and the reason for it is this. You know, it has been stated that the department condones this sort of thing. We condone it, because we have no choice, because what happens particularly in the larger areas - I would say that any hon. member in this House, if you had a home on Canada Drive, and you had a basement apartment, and if two people came to rent that, one to the family on social assistance and the other was an independent family, I would bet you dollars to doughnuts that the independent family would get the first choice. And what is happening is that landlords do not want to rent to people who are in receipt of welfare.

MR. BRETT: you know, it is the last resort and they end up in sub-standard housing and there is just not enough houses to go around.

MR. RIDEOUT: I was talking in cases where people own their own homes, you know.

MR. BRETT: Well in that case -

MR. NOLAN: Would the minister permit a question? I am wondering if the minister has run into another problem like that that would not be his responsibility but where landlords are also reluctant to rent to those on unemployment insurance? I have run into that quite frequently.

MR. BRETT: To answer the question from the hon. Leader of the Opposition, anything beyond \$3,600 does have to go to Treasury Board.

MR. ROBERTS: So the minister has no independent discretion.

MR. BRETT: Not beyond the \$3,600.

MR. ROBERTS: Well why do we need a minister?

MR. MURPHY: He is giving it to the field supervisor.

MR. ROBERTS: It is either the regional supervisor or the Treasury Board, so why do we need a minister then?

MR. BRETT: Now then, the hon. member for Baie Verte brought up something else that has caused me a lot of concern, it has been an ongoing thing ever since I have been minister of the department, and that is overpayment. And I have to agree with a lot that he said. When this administration took office the rate of recovery was \$5 per person. We thought that it was too high. So we reduced it to ten per cent of the requirement of that family, not what a person was getting because a man and a wife with five children, his requirements under our legislation would be \$316 a month. He may be getting \$200 from Canada Pension and \$116 from us, we were taking ten per cent of \$316.

I thought that this was too high. I was getting a lot of complaints. I felt that people were enduring hardship because of it, particularly in the Winter months. You take a widow with

MR. BRETT: three or four children to lose \$30 or \$40 a month off her cheque, it was ridiculous.

I took the thing to Ottawa at a ministers' meetings and I presented a paper and I could not get one single solitary province to even discuss it. They were not concerned with it. So I came back and we have come up with a new policy.

Now it has not been announced publicly other than that I did say that the rate of recovery would be five per cent rather than ten per cent. But I have not made any announcement as to what would be written off and what would not. So if you can bear with me I will read very briefly the new policy of the government with respect to overpayments, because I do think they were much too harsh in some cases,

MR. NOLAN: Are you going to table that?

MR. BRETT: especially in the case of the widow.

MR. NOLAN: Are you going to table it?

MR. BRETT: I am going to table this if necessary, yes.

First of all, all cases of overpayment that were set up prior to 1966 and in which no recovery or collection action has been taken may be written off. And number two, all similar cases -

MR. RIDEOUT: 1966 was it, 1966.

MR. BRETT: Prior to 1966.

MR. RIDEOUT: Prior to 1966.

MR. NOLAN: Eleven years.

MR. BRETT: And all similar cases from 1966 to 1971 may be inactivated but not written off. This means that they will not be included in the regular payroll and the people concerned will not be bothered. But we have to put it on the record but we will not take any action against these people, from 1966 to 1971. Then number three, all cases of overpayment since 1971 will be dealt with in accordance with a Minute-in-Council which has been passed and this means that each case will be examined on its own merit and appropriate action determined. The types of action may include write off, reduced

MR. BRETT: recovery, action deferred, referral to the Department of Justice for legal action, or any other action deemed appropriate.

So there has been some drastic changes and I do not think -

MR. RIDEOUT: That is a step in the right direction.

MR. BRETT: Oh yes, there is no question about it. And I have worked very hard for this and I am glad that the government saw fit to make these changes because, as I said in the beginning, I have to agree with the hon. member, I think it was much too stringent, much too rough and I do believe that hardship was being endured because of it.

Now there are cases, and I do not think the government should relax in a case where somebody has abused the welfare system knowingly, then I think that person should be brought to court and penalized.

MR. RIDEOUT: The minister does not mind my asking a question. What about now the cases that are set up something like the ones I mentioned where you have a seventy-five or eighty year old pensioner who is presently having his pension deducted \$5 or \$10 a month; when this new policy comes into force and since this overpayment occurred back in the fifties, will that mean that whatever is left of that will be written off or whatever? Has the minister thought about anything along those lines?

MR. BRETT: Well if it is prior to 1966 it will be written off anyway.

MR. RIDEOUT: I see.

MR. BRETT: And from 1966 to 1971 in all probability we will take no action. We can advise the federal government. The federal government by the way have been much

MR. BRETT: more lenient in the last six or seven months with respect to this, prior to that they were not, but they have broadened the area where we can write off over-payments. It is much broader than it was previous to this.

And the next item brought up by that same hon. member was people in receipt -

MR. NEARY: You can always write them off but we will have to pay 100 per cent of the cost of the write off.

MR. BRETT: That is right, you will have to pay it back. People in receipt of old age security and social assistance at the same time - I wish I had more time because I really want to explain this. It has been decided in government's wisdom or otherwise another new social programme that we brought in - we will take a family in all probability in the case of a person who is in receipt of old age security, not very likely to have any more than one child, so we say two adults and one child. They would qualify for \$283 per month.

MR. ROBERTS: They could have six at home.

MR. BRETT: Well all right they could have six, we will take that as a case. Two adults and one child under our social assistance regulations, that family would qualify for \$283 per month and whether it -

MR. NEARY: (Inaudible) does that include the family allowance.

MR. BRETT: No.

MR. NEARY: The family allowance is tacked upon that.

MR. BRETT: No that does not - you know, the family allowance goes on that. That does not include family allowance. Now whether a person be forty-five or sixty-five - you know there is no age limit on this. Now if we are going to permit a man who is in receipt of old age security to get his full old age security and this then we are discriminating against the person, say, who is sixty and cannot get his old age security. We are then saying that because you are sixty you must live on whatever the figure that was recorded

MR. MURPHY: \$283.00

MR. BRETT: \$283.00 but if you are sixty-five we give you \$283.00 plus your \$200.00 per month old age security. I mean you have got to have uniformity there is no other way to do it. So if the old age security comes up, the social assistance must come down. You cannot have one set of regulations for a man of sixty and another set for a man of sixty-five -

MR. MURPHY: : Or sixty-four, you -

MR. BRETT: or sixty-four, so in order to have uniformity you must bring it down once the old age security goes up. Otherwise you are saying to this gentleman, "you live on \$233," and to this one, "you live one \$438."

MR. RIDEOUT: I understand the argument but there is an argument against that.

MR. BRETT: I am not suggesting that there is not.

MR. MURPHY: There is an argument against everything, is there not?

MR. BRETT: And in the case of the single able-bodied again, you mentioned that isolated case - and I do not think isolated cases should be brought up when discussing estimates. Certainly I agree that the particular person that you are talking about should be in receipt of not able-bodied assistance, not short-term assistance, that type of person should be getting a cheque straight from the headquarters here in St. John's.

MR. RIDEOUT: See that is where the social worker should take the ball -

MR. BRETT: Well again, it is an isolated case and maybe if the thing were looked into it can be straightened out, you know, but - probably if the hon. member would bring that to my attention I can - you know, there is another side to the coin which I am not aware of, and if it were brought to my attention something may be done, and maybe it would not. The other point, and I am not going to set

MR. BRETT. through all of them that the hon. member wanted explained, was the number of people on assistance. Now Statistics Canada are not wrong. The figures that I quoted here today are the number of unemployed employable people that are getting social assistance. It does not include, it does not include people who are getting assistance for other reasons, like unmarried mothers, separated, deserted, short-term illness, alcoholics, homeless transients and so on and so on. What I am talking about are the people, the unemployed employable, and this figure that I quoted in January of 1972 of 8,930, that is also - that is picked up in the computer - that is also the number of able-bodied employables who are on assistance at that time and not the total number who are getting assistance from the government. But the total number of unemployed employable and the same thing over here. But it does not include -

MR. ROBERTS: It is going up rapidly, that is the point.

MR. NEARY: But what is the total of those receiving assistance?

MR. BRETT: I do not know what the sum total is.

MR. ROBERTS: It is gone up by ten per cent in the last year or so.

MR. BRETT: He has it on the stat sheet. And again if I had time - I am not trying to be partisan, I have said a dozen times that this is a direct result of the many projects that have been brought in by the federal government and to some extent the projects that we have started in the last year or so.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

MR. BRETT: Oh, no!

MR. MURPHY: You just transpired. Anybody else going to speak over there on a question?

MR. CHAIRMAN: 801-01.

MR. BRETT: Can I get up again?

MR. MURPHY: Yes.

MR. RIDEOUT: I am for letting the minister finish if he only wants two or three or five minutes or so.

MR. NEARY: The minister was going to give us the figures, I believe, on the total number of people receiving social assistance from the department. Can the minister give us that figure?

MR. RIDEOUT: Carry on by leave for -

MR. NEARY: No, not by leave.

Mr. Neary: Now he can carry on because I spoke.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. CHAIRMAN (MR. YOUNG): Order, please!

MR. RIDEOUT: You got another twenty minutes now, 'Charlie'.

MR. NEARY: You can carry on now for another twenty minutes.

MR. BRETT: Well here is a table here will probably explain it much better, you know, and I repeat, I am not trying to be partisan, I am just trying to point out how the trend has changed because of various projects which have been brought in.

But I have two sets of figures here, one for 1971 and one for 1976, I will give you the 1976 figures first. Now regular assistance for reasons related to unemployment and underemployment, seasonally unemployed in December 1976 was 4,416, and seasonally unemployed in 1971 was 7,902; long-term unemployed, again 1976 first, 363 as compared to 711. Now that makes a total for 1976 of 4,778 as compared with 8,613 in 1971.

Now supplement to full-time employment; that is people who are working full-time but not making as much as they would get if they were on welfare, 255 in 1976, and 260 in 1971; and then supplement to part-time employment, people who are working part-time and then the rest being made up in welfare, 163 in 1976, and 333 in 1971, and that is for a total in 1976 of 5,196, and in 1971 of 9,206.

And in special needs; that is the ones I read out just now, transportation, that is, transportation able-bodied cases not receiving regular assistance, for example. Somebody can be getting nothing else, absolutely nothing else from the Department of Welfare other than transportation to hospital, can be getting drugs only - do you understand what I mean? Well in this case, the number of cases in 1976 was 320 and in 1971 was 422, now then the total - I have got another subtotal of 5,516 in 1976, and 9,628 in 1971.

Now regular assistance for reasons not related to unemployment, that is, short-term illness, unmarried mothers, unemployable adults like alcoholics, for example, assistance pending

Mr. Brett:

long-term, people get an order while they are waiting for long-term assistance, that figure was 5,448 in 1976, a way higher than it was in 1971, in 1971 it was only 3,219. And then special needs to cases other than able-bodied, not receiving regular assistance 1,309 in 1976, and 1,103 in 1971.

Now then the whole total, and I can table this if you want me to, the whole total, the total short-term assistance, the total number in 1976 was 12,273, and the total in 1971 was 14,540, which means that in 1976 there were 2,247 less in that category. And then total long-term in 1976 was 10,173, and in 1971 was 15,975 and the total is 5,800 less. And the grant total less is 8,047. In other words as of December 31, 1976 there were 8,047 less cases on welfare than there was in 1971.

MR. ROBERTS: But that is gobbledygook, absolute gobbledygook.

MR. BRETT: No, it is not gobbledygook! No it is not, it is - figures. It is statistics.

MR. ROBERTS: These figures - there are lies, damn lies and statistics!

MR. BRETT: Is the hon. member suggesting that the minister is telling damn lies?

MR. ROBERTS: No, Mr. Chairman, I am not suggesting that the hon. gentleman is lying, I am simply saying there are lies, damned lies, and they are statistics. These figures are meaningless and gobbledygook. My friend from Baie Verte-White Bay (Mr. Rideout) has produced the official figures circulated by the Central Planning and Priorities Secretariat, or whatever its official name is, which show that there are thousands of people more receiving social assistance than there were - and I do not quarrel with the hon. gentleman's figures, nor do I think he is trying to mislead the House, and he is certainly not lying. All I am saying that it is a pile of gobbledygook, g-o-b-b-l-e-d-y-g-o-o-k, that is all I am saying, and he can repeat them as he wants, and he will not change anybody's mind - pass me

Mr. Roberts:

one of those flash sheets. These are the flash sheets, Mr. Chairman,

MR. BRETT: Would the hon. member yield -

MR. CHAIRMAN (MR. YOUNG): Order, please!

MR. ROBERTS: No, I am not going to yield.

MR. ROBERTS: He can have the floor back in a minute if he wants it. The hon. gentleman can produce all the figures he wants. I am looking at the latest flash sheet, to use the official name, produced by the Central Statistical Services, Planning and Priorities Secretariat, dated April 19th. It is the most recent one that has been made public, the most recent one that has been circulated. And it shows that February 1977 there were 9,283 heads of families and/or single person in receipt of short-term basic social assistance and that is 13.9 per cent greater than the same figure last year. And I go back to the one for March 1977, there were 10,584, that was 13 per cent greater than the figure for the same month last year. And they go back to February and it was 5.6 per cent greater than the same month the year before and I go back to January and it was 14.7 per cent greater and I could go on and on and on.

So the hon. gentleman, Sir, the minister can produce what statistics he wants and can do his sums as he wants, he cannot take away from the fact that the number of people receiving social assistance, month by month, has gone up over the comparable period the year before. And I am comparing apples and apples. Now I do not understand his arithmetic. No doubt the numbers add and subtract according to the usual rules of addition and subtraction that are taught in grade one and grade two. But it does not make any sense, and so I say it is gobbledygook but it does not make any sense. And so I say it is gobbledygook and the minister might as well admit it. I am not trying to blame him for it. I am not saying he is responsible. I may want to quarrel with some of the policies which the minister administers but it has nothing to do with this. And we can go further and say if it were not for the LIP projects, what - there are 7,000 men and women.

MR. BRETT: I already said that.

MR. ROBERTS: I know. 7,000 men and women who work at LIP projects which are essentially a form of welfare.

MR. NEARY: Eight weeks unemployment insurance.

MR. ROBERTS: A little more acceptable welfare. There are another 1,000 - are there? - on the job creation programmes done by the provincial government.

MR. NEARY: Plus all those on unemployment insurance.

MR. ROBERTS: And then my friend from LaPoile (Mr. Neary) has made the other point, the unemployment insurance regulations since 1971 have been opened up, Bryce Mackasey's great reforms back in 1972. So I mean it is nonsensical of the minister to try to claim, Oh there are fewer people getting social assistance now than there were in those days. The figures just do not support him. And it will only delay the Committee's work. The minister has made a good defence or a good answer to the questions brought up, why must he go on on this? The fact remains that there are more people looking directly to the government in terms of social assistance for their living than ever before. I do not blame the minister for it. He is not responsible except in a Cabinet-wide sense for the appalling economic policies of this administration. I am not saying he is. The minister is doing the best he can down in the department, and while I may certainly quarrel with some of his administrative policies and so forth, you know that is not the point that I am making now.

But if you take the number of people who are looking directly to the government, non-productive economically, it is what - four times, five times as great as it was five years ago. I do not say that with any pride or any job. I wish to Heavens that the only people on short-term basic assistance were the sort of people with - you know, alcoholics or people who just cannot go in the work force although hopefully their being out of the work force is not permanent. Hopefully they will at some point become - to use that terrible phrase, employable but unemployed.

MR. ROBERTS: But the minister keeps bringing up these sums and all it will do, Mr. Chairman, is delay the Committee. You know the flash sheets are there and my friend from Baie Verte - White Bay (Mr. Rideout) produced the figures from report after report of the department and of the statistical services. There just are not any fewer people. There are people who have come off social assistance. Sure there are. Some of them have come off forever. Some of them have come off for a week. Some of them have come off for a month. And that way there may be, "8,000 fewer than there were five years ago." But not in any real meaningful sense. And I take the month by month figures. And I just read the last four months. I will go back if I have them here, back to -

MR. RIDEOUT: All of 1976.

MR. ROBERTS: Back to 1976. I will go through month by month and I would wager that out of those twenty months, or whatever there are, there are not more than two or three where the number of people on social assistance has been less than in the same month the year previous. And I mean those are facts, you know. I am not proud of it. I am not happy with it. I am not blaming the minister. But, I mean, let us accept the facts and you know if the minister insists I will go through them. But every single month from December 1976 on, I am sorry, from February 1976 up to December, from January 1976 on up, every single month the number of people receiving short-term basic assistance, either heads of families or single persons has been greater than in the same month the year before.

Mr. Roberts.

That can only mean whether we take a mean or a median, whichever precise type of arithmetical calculation the minister wants, there are more people receiving social assistance. Now that is all I am saying, and if the minister would but agree with that one fact, you know, it would not go any further. But for him to get up with his gobbledygook figures is nonsense. I am not calling the minister a liar. I do not think he is, and even if he was or I thought he was, I could not say so. But I do feel, Sir - and if the minister feels I am I apologize to him. I have no desire or thought of making that sort of charge or statement, or anything else - but I do feel that it serves no purpose for the minister to bring up these figures and try to use them the way he has. I think that the point cannot be argued. The point is irrefutable.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. minister.

MR. BRETT: Mr. Chairman, to refute it would be a useless argument, because I am using one set of figures, and the hon. Leader of the Opposition is using another set.

MR. ROBERTS: The difference is mine are correct.

MR. BRETT: I am convinced that there are less people on .

MR. ROBERTS: But how can there be less people on?

MR. BRETT: Because, for example, we are spending less money this year than we did last year even though there is an increase, and there was an increase last year.

MR. ROBERTS: Less money this year, 1977-1978?

MR. BRETT: In social assistance .

MR. ROBERTS: Less budgeted . The money and the year is not over yet.

MR. BRETT: But there was less spent last year.

MR. ROBERTS: Oh, we will just have a look at the minister's figures.

MR. BRETT: Anyway the member for Naskaupi (Mr. Goudie) spoke very briefly. I did not hear all his comments, but I believe he was talking

Mr. Brett.

about community development and what the loss of the AY - is it? -
has meant to his district. In addition to work activity -

MR. MURPHY: CYC.

MR. BRETT: CYC, right.

MR. MURPHY: Company of Young Canadians.

MR. BRETT: Company of Young Canadians.

In addition to the work activity programme in the Department of Social Services, we also have another programme of community development, but this is not cost-shared by the federal government. It is strictly a 100 per cent provincial programme. We have carried out community development programmes in several areas of the Province. They have been very successful, not as successful in rehabilitating people as our work activity projects, but nevertheless successful. I could quote examples of what it has done to people, but it may not be of any interest to the House at this time. If the hon. member for Naskaupi (Mr. Goudie) has some ideas with respect to Labrador and his district in particular I would be only too happy to listen and to discuss the matter further.

Now I think, Mr. Chairman, that covers most of the points that were brought up. There is still a few minutes. Probably somebody else would like to -

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

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman, I do not want to make allowances, but the minister just said, if I heard him correctly, that, "We spent less money last year than we did the year before, and we intend to spend less money this year than we did last year." I think I heard the minister correctly. Well, let me give the minister the figures, Sir, because his statement is just not correct. I quote from the estimates. In the original figure for the year just ended, 1976-1977, was \$49,500,000. But, Sir, the government were a little out on their estimates. The revised figure as of the time these estimates were prepared which would have been about January month, I guess, there were \$50,400,000, an increase of nearly \$1 million over the estimated figure. The revised figure for the year before was \$46,246,200. Therefore, there was an increase in

Mr. Roberts.

1976-1977, over 1975-1976, of \$4 million which is about one-twelfth, which is about eight or nine per cent. And then if you take - these are gross figures, I am not counting the Canada Assistance Plan recoveries but in each case I am comparing apples and apples. This year the budget is \$49.3 million, but we all know that that is only an estimate. It may or may not be the best estimate that the officials could come up with. Treasury Board have been known before this to jiggle around with figures, and this may be a jiggered figure. But whether it is or is not is beside the point. The fact remains that we will spend this year, before we are over, more money under this subhead of 806-03-01 than will have been spent the year before. The minister's statement is just flatly incorrect. And again I do not want to get into a statistical argument with him, but I do wish that he would not make statements which are demonstrably and flatly incorrect on which are matters of fact. They are not matters of opinion. There was more money spent last year than the year before. And if

MR. ROBERTS: the minister says we are budgeting less money this year than last year, I will agree with that but I will go on to say that on the record of the last two or three years the estimates have inevitably been under by \$1 million or \$2 million or more and so I will predict this year we will spend more money on social assistance than we spent last year.

MR. NEARY: It is just for the budget.

MR. ROBERTS: My friend from LaPoile makes the point, and he is right, this figure may well be jiggered. It is easy when you are trying to balance the budget to whop a million or two out of here knowing that it is only an estimate, knowing that - well, as Dr. Len Miller used to say to me, the patients at the General Hospital will still get their meals no matter how much is in the budget or not, or how much is in the estimates. I mean the rates are not changed. It is the rates which determine in the long run the total amount of expenditure, the rates times the number of people who receive them. The minister's statement is just incorrect. He is not serving his own purpose, not servicing the administration's purpose, not serving the House's purpose when he brings out statements that are just, flatly speaking, incorrect.

On motion, 801-01, carried.

On motion, 801-02 through to 804-02-03, carried.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shall 805-01, carry?

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. the member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, on this Child Welfare and Corrections, I wonder if the minister could give us an updating on what is going on now in the Boy's Training Home at Whitbourne, the Boy's Training Home down here at Waterford Bridge, and the Girl's Training

MR. NEARY: Home at Pleasantville?

AN HON. MEMBER: That is not under this Heading.

MR. NEARY: Not under this Heading?

MR. LUNDRIGAN: What is the Heading?

MR. NEARY: Child Welfare and Corrections. Supervision, referral services, foster care, institutional care and adoption services. Are the homes now under the Rehabilitation and Recreation?

MR. BRETT: Yes.

MR. NEARY: Well perhaps the minister could tell us then how many children are available for adoption in this Province at the present time?

MR. BRETT: Substantially reduced.

MR. NEARY: Substantially reduced thanks to a programme that I started back in 1969. When I came into the department there were 650 children available for adoption. Could the minister tell us now how many children say from zero up to however old the oldest child now is under the care of the department? And would the minister tell us how many children are in foster homes at the present time? How many foster homes we have and how many children are under the care of the department living in foster homes?

MR. BRETT: Mr. Chairman, I am afraid I do not have the exact figures for the number of children that are available for adoption, although the information was passed to me just a couple of days ago. I do not know if my officials are listening to me, but if they could get it for me within the next couple of minutes. I do know that the number of children available is way, way down. As a matter of fact, they are down to such an extent, we may have to consider not accepting any more applications for a short while.

There are a number of children, of course, who have slight mental and/or physical defects

MR. BRETT: who are available, but most people do not want to adopt a child like this. Most people come in looking for the blonde haired, blue eyed child, and will not go for children who have defects.

We still have some of these, not a lot, and it is very difficult. And then there are other cases where we have probably a sister and a brother, or a family in a foster home and they may be permanent wards and available for adoption but again we would not split up the family. Unless somebody came along and said, We will take two or three or four, whatever there is, then we would not accept it. But I do not know the exact number. If my officials can get it I will give it to you. But I can say the number is down considerable, and I repeat, to such an extent that we may have to consider not accepting any more applications for a while until we have more children available.

Certainly, as far as applications from out of the Province is concerned, we do get applications and we have not been able to comply with any requests from out of the Province. As I said we do not have enough children to take care of our own needs in the Province.

A note just passed to here indicates that approximately sixty are available for adoption right now, that is in total.

Mr. Brett: In foster homes, we have 850 children in approximately 500 homes and we have 850 children between the ages of two and seventeen, and of course these are under the care of the Director of Child Welfare.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, would the minister tell the House and tell me if there are any circumstances under which these children that are taken from homes, put in foster homes, brought under the care of the department because of social reasons in the home, the father might be an alcoholic, you know, broken homes and the children are removed for some reason or other because of brutality or any reason and put in foster homes. Under what circumstances would these children be made available for adoption, if they are, in fact, if any of them are made available for adoption, without the consent of the parents?

MR. BRETT: Mr. Chairman, if a child were removed from its home or taken away from its parents because of physical or mental abuse then there would have to be a court hearing, and whether or not the child was made a temporary or a permanent ward would depend on the court. But I would say that it would only be in a very, very, extreme case will the judge declare the child a permanent ward, and if the child does not become a permanent ward then it is not available for adoption. But if it were it would not require the consent of the parents. And if the child were, I think it is thirteen now, then the child itself would have to give consent.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Baie Verte-White Bay.

MR. RIDEOUT: I wonder would the Chairman tell me what head we are on now?

MR. CHAIRMAN: 805-01.

MR. RIDEOUT: 805-01. Well I could ask the minister this question - would that be the head that deals with this Boys Home out at Whitbourne?

MR. BRETT: No.

MR. RIDEOUT: No. That is under Rehabilitation now, is it?

MR. BRETT: Right.

MR. RIDEOUT: Well let me ask this question to the minister and if it is under Rehabilitation just forget it then, and that is the end of it. If boys run away from that home and turn up 300 or 400 miles in some other part of the Province, is it your department, the minister's responsibility, the responsibility of his department to get those boys back?

MR. BRETT: Now I would say yes, Mr. Chairman, and any child, if the child is a ward of the director, even though this home may be the responsibility of the Minister of Rehabilitation or Recreation, if the child is a ward permanent or temporary of the Director of Child Welfare then of course we would be responsible for getting the child back, and certainly if there was no other means of paying his way back then we would accept the responsibility.

MR. RIDEOUT: Yes. Well I appreciate the minister's answer. But the reason I bring it up, Mr. Chairman, is that I would want to ask the minister then in that particular case how do they go about getting those boys sixteen or seventeen years old back to this particular home? Does the minister's department use the cheapest means possible to get them back, which in this case, I suppose, would be the use of the public transportation system in this Province which would be the CN bus or something like that or - I do not like using isolated cases, but it sort of hit me in the stomach one day when I know of a couple of boys who ran away from that home down to Baie Verte, who were delivered by taxi from Baie Verte to Deer Lake and provided with EPA tickets to fly to St. John's. Now as far as I am concerned that is flying in style, Sir, and those boys are there for probably rehabilitative reasons or correctional reasons or whatever, and I agree with getting them back, but certainly goodness we can do it in a much cheaper fashion than that, and I just bring it to the minister's attention for what it is worth.

MR. BRETT: Do you want me to reply to it?

MR. RIDEOUT: I would appreciate it if you would.

MR. NEARY: I wonder if the hon. member would permit a question.

MR. BRETT: Sure.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: The minister quoted a figure there of 850 children under the care of the department in foster homes, I find that figure, you know, hard to believe. I believe it is much higher than that.

MR. BRETT: No.

MR. NEARY: It is probably well over 2,000.

MR. BRETT: No, no. I can explain it if you want me to.

MR. NEARY: Well perhaps the minister can explain it, but -

MR. BRETT: Okay.

MR. NEARY: - it seems pretty low to me.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister of Social Services.

MR. NEARY: To answer the comment by the hon. member for Baie Verte-White Bay (Mr. Rideout) I would assume, Mr. Chairman, that a child, if a child were not responsible, would or should be travelling with an escort and, you know, again this is an isolated case, and certainly I cannot give the hon. member an answer as to exactly what happened -

MR. MURPHY: In some cases it may be the -

MR. BRETT: But, you know,

Mr. Brett.

it is an isolated case, and I do not know if the hon. member would like to bring it to my attention at the office. You know, I do not like to see things like that happening. But where you are handling thousands of cases then obviously you are going to run into something like this. But normally a child would be travelling with an escort.

MR. RIDEOUT: It would be cheaper to be bused.

MR. BRETT: No, not necessarily.

MR. RIDEOUT: No?

MR. BRETT: No, not necessarily .

MR. MURPHY: I have seen them fly in from Deer Lake -

MR. RIDEOUT: It is \$108 to fly two in from Deer Lake. Two can come on the bus cheaper than that.

MR. BRETT: Yes. But, no, not necessarily. But anyway to answer the question of the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) , that is, children in regular foster homes. Now, as the hon. member knows, being minister of this department at one time, there are several different types of homes, eh? So we have 850 children in approximately 500 regular foster homes. Now then in receiving homes where we take infants who hopefully are going for adoption, we have another sixty children. And then - that is receiving homes - and then in group foster homes we have another thirty and in group homes another fifty and in special foster homes another sixty. So if you want to add all that up, you will come up with 850, plus sixty, is 910, and 910 and thirty is 940, 990, 1,050 children.

MR. NEARY: One thousand and fifty under the care of the Department at the present time.

MR. BRETT: Yes, right.

On motion 805-01 through to 805-02-01 carried.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shall 805-02-02 carry?

The hon. member for Conception Bay South.

MR. NOLAN: Mr. Chairman, if it is permissible, I would just like to get back to the children again in the foster homes and so on, if I may.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is permission given to revert to 805-01?

AN HON. MEMBER: By leave.

MR. CHAIRMAN: By leave.

MR. NOLAN: I know the minister is aware that there are quite a number of these children who are in my district, for example, and I know that some of them find it pretty tough going. I think the minister is well aware of the fact that many of these people, although they collect certain funds from the department for their upkeep, from the information that I have available, many of these people, it actually costs them money. I mean there are things that these children need or want since they play naturally and associate in school or other places with children of parents who are gainfully employed and so on - Christmastime and so on. I had a meeting in my own district with a group of them prior to last Christmas and some can find it pretty tough. I am wondering if the minister would not consider, one, having a meeting with some of these parents who have adopted these children, because they have some real complaints that they would like to make and observations that might be helpful to the minister? And look, they have been dealing with the officials. I mean, I believe it is time that the minister appeared before some of these people in a group. I can arrange a group for him very, very easily in my own district. And I think he would find it most informative to hear some of the problems that they raised.

Now I am not saying for one minute that the minister can answer all of them. Obviously, he cannot, and I know that from the very beginning. But I mean I have a great feeling of sympathy for some of these people, as I am sure the minister has by the way. It is a real problem, and I would like to see the minister go out into the communities and meet with some of these people. By the way, while I am on my feet maybe the minister might be - one, if he would agree to do that some time I can arrange it? When I say a meeting now, I am not talking about a big public meeting. I am talking where thirty mothers would appear in a certain place, and the minister hopefully would come in and sit down and talk to them,

Mr. Nolan.

which is what they want. And secondly, maybe the minister might be kind enough to give us the amounts that are now provided, if he would, for the children in these foster homes?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. minister.

MR. BRETT: Mr. Chairman, again I have to say that I do not have the foster home rates with me, and I do not know if my officials can get them. They are listening to me, but I do not know if they can get them before ten to six or not. I should have had them, But I do agree with the hon. member's suggestion. I might say that for three years I was a child welfare worker. I specialized in the field of child welfare and correction. And I supervised something like forty or fifty foster homes. And it would bring back some fond memories, I guess, if I were to go out now and meet some of the foster mothers. I think it is an excellent idea and I would be only too happy to follow it up once the House closes. But I will try to get these figures for the hon. member if I can before ten to six.

MR. NOLAN: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We had reverted back to 805-01. Is that carried?
Carried.

On motion 805-01 through to 805-03-07, carried.

On motion subheads 806-01 through 807-02-02, carried.

MR. RIDEOUT: 807-03-01 we are on now, is that right?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, that is right.

MR. RIDEOUT: I notice there is Community Development - \$3,135,000, It was \$440,000 last year, Is this the job creation programme, is this the funds for the job creation programme? If the minister will look at this budget it is 807-03-01. For Community Development there is \$3,135,000 budgeted, That is the job creation programme, is it?

MR. BRETT: Right.

MR. RIDEOUT: That is all I wanted to know.

On motion 807-03-01 through 801-02-04, carried.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Baie Verte - White Bay.

MR. RIDEOUT: Mr. Chairman, this 809 deals with day care and homemaker services, and the day care service vote I see is increased this year to \$265,400 from last year, it was \$156,000 and there is a similar increase in homemaker services to \$182,500 this year from \$120,000 last year. Now the minister made some reference to the day care and homemaker services in his introductory remarks this morning, I wonder if the minister could tell us what this increase means? Does it mean an expanded programme in any way or is this just an ordinary run of the mill increases to take care of the inflationary process or what? Has the day care and homemaker service been expanded and if so what is happening in that regard?

MR. BRETT: Mr. Chairman, if I have permission of the House I would like to revert back to - I do not know what the subhead number was - somebody asked me the rates for foster homes, I want permission to give that now.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The minister has leave.

MR. BRETT: Receiving homes are \$94.00 a month, regular foster homes the rates vary, 0 to six years it is \$77 a month, six to twelve years it is \$89 a month, twelve to sixteen years it is

MR. BRETT: \$99 a month and over sixteen years it is \$109 a month. Now the rates are much higher for special foster homes and special group foster homes. The special foster home is \$220, and I do not have the time to explain these homes but all of them are different types of children and it would take probably half an hour to explain them all.

Special group homes operated - one by the United Church - \$335 a day.

AN HON. MEMBER: A day?

MR. BRETT: No, per month, I am sorry.

AN HON. MEMBER: You are going to go into the business, are you?

MR. BRETT: And then child welfare allowances, which is given to a person for caring for an illegitimate child, or a mother looking after her illegitimate child, up to six years \$50 a month, six to twelve years - \$62 a month, and over twelve years \$74 a month.

And now to answer the other hon. gentleman's question.

MR. NOLAN: Would the hon. member permit for a moment? It was the custom in years past, and I suppose it still is, for ministers if they wanted to to have an official or a deputy minister come in to sit with him to provide some of this information. Maybe the other ministers coming up might want to utilize these people so we can get into the estimates on these things, although I thank the hon. member for the information he has provided.

MR. BRETT: Now to answer the other hon. gentleman's questions. The increase in day care does not mean that we are expanding the service. That is the increase in the cost of operating Teach-A-Tot here in St. John's, which is the only day care centre that we are funding and the cost of homemaker services does indicate that we are going to expand the service somewhat. I do not know exactly how many but there will be some more added.

AN HON. MEMBER:

MR. BRETT: Yes. That is right.

MR. NEARY: Nice little programme.

On motion subheads 809-01
through 809-02-04, carried.

On motion Head VIII, carried.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Head VI - Education.

MR. HICKMAN: I think maybe, Mr. Chairman, we would like to
call it six of the clock.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It now being six o'clock the Committee will rise
until eight o'clock.

PRELIMINARY
UNEDITED
TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
FOR THE PERIOD:
8:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m.
MONDAY, MAY 16, 1977

The Committee resumed at 8:00 P.M.

Mr. Chairman in the Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! The Committee will come to order.

HEADING VI - EDUCATION

MR. CHAIRMAN: 601-01.

The hon. Minister of Education.

MR. W. HOUSE: Mr. Chairman, I am asking approval for net expenditure of \$274 million, just about, for education in this year's budget, a total of \$291 million, and that is just \$24 million in excess of last year's revised estimates. And the increase is not basically in new programmes, but the increase is basically inflation and, of course, most of it taken up in teachers salaries; grants to school boards, some of these grants will go from \$117 to \$129; grants to the University; grants to the trades schools and the Fisheries College and the Trades College. All of these, of course, imply also teachers salaries and the rest of it, most of it would reflect inflationary trends.

As we heard, of course, in the media and through the public shortly after the Budget was brought down everybody was dubbing the education budget as tough and restrictive. However one just has to look at the cost, the phenomenal cost of education to realize that no matter how much we spend in the programmes that we would like to spend it in, it would cost untold more millions of dollars.

We are, in essence, educating 158,000 primary and elementary pupils, and about 17,000 in post-secondary education. In other words, we are educating 176,000 people which is more than one-third of the population. And that is something that is unheard of in the rest of Canada; as a matter of fact, the average in Canada is 30.9 per cent of the total population. So here we are with educating the largest percentage of our population, and, I suppose, we are one of the poorer provinces.

Mr. House:

Now we did talk about cutbacks, and people may say, Well do you have any new directions? Obviously, of course, we have been adding yearly to our programmes, and the additions that we are making I do not think are enough, I think government recognizes it is not enough. We know that we should be doing perhaps more in pre-vocational education. We have 25 per cent of our people involved in that now in our high schools. We should perhaps even be thinking about an expansion of the high school programmes to take in another year. I think we are aware of that, and we are concerned about that, but we just do not have the financial wherewithal to meet it.

Another concern we have, of course, is special education. And there is a lot implied in that particular facet of education. But we are gradually improving on that yearly.

I am just going to mention a few of the cutbacks that were reflected in the Budget. One of the things we looked at was the scholarship programme, and we did delete the Grade X scholarship and half of the Grade XI. Now, of course, one must realize that when these scholarships were initiated they were based on public examinations. And since that time we have been having school exams for Grade X, there is no such thing as public examinations for Grade X, and that necessitated a special examination and that was hardly worth the effort because of the fact that the scholarship was only valued at \$100 and did not have much impact anyway.

MR. HOUSE: But we did retain, and we are retaining, one scholarship per electoral district and that has changed a little bit from last year; last year there were two. And the other change in that respect is the fact that there will be one for each electoral district regardless of whether there is a high school in the district or not. Last year of course there were some districts that did not have high schools, but pupils from the particular districts go to other high schools so they will be eligible, each district, for a scholarship.

One of the other things we have got to bear in mind is that the scholarship programme came about prior to student aid, and now the student aid programmes of course presume that any student who wants to get a college education can do it through the auspices of the Student Aid Programme.

Some other cutbacks - and I heard this talked about - another cutback was in special education. That did not reflect a cutback at all that \$300,000. That is a result of the school attendance officers being phased out and the fact that some of the TMR students - or teachers, their salaries now are reflected in the general teachers salaries vote because most of them are coming under school boards.

With respect to the school attendance officers, we had started off a number of years ago calling them Truant Officers and we were down to fourteen this year, when we phased them out completely. And I think just about everybody, educators particularly, recognize that these positions did not have a very large impact on education. As a matter of fact, the districts that did not have any access to attendance officers did not seem to have any less pupils attending school regularly than those that had the school attendance officers in the district. I believe the officers themselves in later years recognized that they did not have a very profound impact on education.

MR. HOUSE: One other - Pardon!

MR. RIDEOUT: What happens to those kids now that you are phasing out the attendance officers? Are you retaining them elsewhere?

MR. HOUSE: We are retaining them - we are replacing some in some positions that we have here in St. John's, and we are working with the Public Service Commission to try and get them relocated in other jobs in other departments.

MR. RIDEOUT: So there will be none of them unemployed?

MR. HOUSE: All of them have been offered jobs at the present time. Some of them have turned them down, but they have all been offered jobs.

MR. RIDEOUT: Thank you.

MR. HOUSE: The other cutback you will see there, of course, is the substitute teachers. In its present form I think everybody recognized that there is a certain amount of abuse, but I do not think that - I think that is the exception rather than the rule. But there are phenomenal costs involved, and I think when you see a teacher can come in nine-thirty in the morning and leave at three in the afternoon and perhaps take away up to one hundred dollars, we figure that cost is too high. So we hope to cut that back by bringing about a programme to limit the number of substitute teachers, or limit the salaries. We have not got that worked out yet but we are discussing that with the school boards and one of two things will happen there: There will be a base rate for substitute teachers separate from the regular teachers salary, or that we will have the first day a teacher is ill that we will have no teacher to replace them.

There will be two new sub-heads this year, one the Bay St. George Community College, I think we discussed that pretty well when we were putting the bill through, and the other one is the Polytechnical Institute, something that we are trying to get off the ground this

MR. HOUSE: year. Mr. Chairman, there has been much progress in the last five or six years, or the last ten years, I guess, since intergration of school districts came about. And we have seen this year we have - I am going back six years, when we had 166,000 pupils, we had 66,00 teachers and now we have about 8,000 pupils less than we had six years ago and one thousand teachers more.

Mr. House:

And of course, these teachers, the extra teachers have been basically used in special education, that is for the mentally retarded pupils and for special programmes such as music, physical education and the like. Also it has reduced the pupil-teacher ratio which has, I think, resulted in better education quality.

The other thing I want to mention, six years ago the education bill for teachers was \$46 million, for this year it is \$139 million. So that shows a phenomenal increase there. But that has resulted in a larger number of teachers, of course, as I mentioned, it has also been the result of the fact that teachers are better upgraded, we have very few teachers now with less than a degree or less than a fourth grade.

Now as I mentioned at the beginning there was a number of - we have not gone into any big building programmes - I think, in the 1950s and the 1960s we saw too much of that - but in the past year when we have been assessing our efforts in the field, in the schools, and a number of things have happened, and I think we will be continuing that assessment during the next couple of years.

One thing we did last year was the basic testing programme for all pupils in Grade VIII and Grade IV, and, of course, this year we began a testing programme in Grade VI. What we are trying to do there is to look at where we stand in relation to the rest of Canada. People have said and suggested that perhaps if we were one year behind in Grade VIII, I will take that and I will buy that, certainly according to the Grade VIII norm across Canada, but we do not know how far we have come because we have had nothing to measure it by, and I know from my own experience that we have made profound growth in skills, basic skills because only about ten years ago I did a survey in an area that is one of the better areas in the Province, I would say, for educational standards, and

Mr. House:

we were showing then two grades behind in that particular spot. And if you take right here in St. John's, this past testing programme that we did, that the schools were right on the Canadian norm this year. It seems as if we are moving along very well.

I interpreted that programme when we did it as showing Newfoundland up very well, particularly since we took the whole Province as a whole, and we know that some of the more remote areas have not had well qualified and well trained teachers except for the last four or five years. So what we did that programme for in the last couple of years was to try and see where we stood and then in future we can see how we have progressed using that as a yardstick.

We have been working on curriculum development, and a lot of work has been done from the department, curriculum development in all facets including special education and the various subject areas, such as mathematics. For instance, we have to revamp completely our mathematics programme because of the evolution of the metric system. We have to completely revitalize our social studies programme to keep abreast with changing trends, and that is going on continuously.

A second emphasis this year has been the vocational education programme, and I want to say here that despite whatever opportunities there are in Newfoundland for work, one of the things and one of the basic aims of our education system is to try to give everybody who is able to do it a marketable skill. Now I do not buy the idea that because there is a certain lacking in Newfoundland of opportunity that we cannot and should not try to educate our people. We are living in Canada as well as Newfoundland, and we want our people to be able to go into any market and obtain a job, and we want to be able to give them that.

One of the changes this year coming about, it is a new change, we are trying to bring about individualized progressed instruction in the vocational school starting with business education

May 16, 1977

Tape no. 2779

Page 1 - ms

MR. HOUSE.

That means, of course, that we will be able to take people in at various times during the year. Right now we have drop-outs, for instance, occurring after Christmas, and we have a lot of empty spaces. So with this individualized programme starting off a business education, we will be able to keep full classrooms all the time. Another important thing that happened in the past year was the gradual transfer of administration of trainable mentally retarded pupils. And just about all boards across Newfoundland have accepted that responsibility - and these are the original Vera Perlin schools that were operated separately - school boards have taken these over for the most part except here in St. John's where they are still administered from here, the department.

The registry of handicapped children is still taking place, and we are hoping to get that completed shortly. And we have set up an Advisory Committee on Special Education to determine what is the best way to go about completing our education programmes for these pupils. And we are working there with this committee and it is made up of people from three departments here, and parents and teachers across the Province. We have continued with emphasis on adult education, and that is another thing I want to emphasize, that that particular programme has grown tremendously, and we have had last year and this year now, we have 18,500 people enrolled in the adult education programmes throughout the Province. These are working, of course, in upgrading their basic skills as well as doing interest courses and skill development courses.

School construction: I just want to mention that. In the last six years there has been over \$110 million worth of new schools built in the Province.

MR. ROWE: How much of that is federal?

MR. HOUSE: Included in that there is not - there are some of the DREE schools included in that, but not all of them. There are a lot of them that were done before, six years ago - or the money was committed. We committed \$135 million, for instance, three years ago and that has pretty well been used up for school construction, because they borrowed on that. So the

Mr. House.

budget this year shows a \$1 million increase in the grant. Of course, that was projected. The school boards knew that and, of course, by 1984 it will have reached \$15 million. The budget did state that we were looking at the possibility of extending that and, of course, we are working now with the Denominational Educational Committees to try and see what impact the extension of the guarantee could mean if we extended it a number of years beyond 1984. So we are working with the Denominational Educational Committees now trying to determine what their basic needs are and hopefully we can come up with something to alleviate some of these problems. I think, Mr. Chairman, my twenty minutes is nearly up. I will take my seat now and let somebody else have a whack at it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Trinity - Bay de Verde.

MR. ROWE: Mr. Chairman, the highlight in the Budget Speech pertaining to education says the following: "The educational expenditures which now represent almost thirty per cent of the total budget are the ones most directly affected by explicit expenditure programme reductions. Training allowances have been reduced and various scholarships and fellowships have been eliminated. There will be reduced expenditures on substitute teachers and government is continuing its strict policy towards operational grants to school boards and Memorial University."

Now, Sir, that one highlight which is a quote from the budget, written by the Minister of Finance, negates and contradicts practically every indication that the minister gave in his opening remarks. Now, Sir, certain hon. members in this House or in this

MR. ROWE: Committee may say, In this time of restraint how can any member stand in his place and call for more expenditures in education or any other public service? How could he have the gall to criticize a Minister of the Crown or the government for not expending more money in this case in the field of education, Mr. Chairman.

Well, Mr. Chairman, I do have the gall to take the government to task for not expending more money in the field of education. And the reason why I have the gall, Mr. Chairman, is because of the fact that the government since taking office has raised the educational expectations of our people to a great extent, particularly in the first Throne Speech they delivered for their election purposes back in 1972.

Now when you combine, Sir, that factor, the administration raising the expectations of our people in the field of education and then you witness over the past five and a half years the bungling and the blundering of this administration when it comes to fiscal matters to the point where the provincial debt has been tripled, you have no other choice but to take this administration to task for not doing more in the field of education.

Sir, the minister is not to be totally to blame. The minister is a new Minister of Education. There have been other Ministers of Education before him so he has inherited some of the problems created by former ministers of education and the administration itself. The minister is more to be pitied, Sir, than criticized in this particular instance. Although, Sir, I must say that I am a little disappointed and many of the minister's former colleagues before he entered the political field are tremendously disappointed in the minister that he did not push just a little harder to get a greater expenditure in various areas of education, whether it be at the post-secondary level or at the primary and elementary level.

MR. ROWE: Sir, if this administration continues on with the type of expenditure in the field of education that it has carried on with, and I am speaking - we can talk in absolute terms, Mr. Chairman, and everything looks great in the field of education, thirty per cent of the total budget, an increase of \$24 million over last year. That sounds good in absolute terms, but what we have got to do and looking at it more realistically, what we have to do is look at what it means in relative terms. And with escalating labour costs and operating costs and inflation and what have you, the fact of the matter is that the relative increase in expenditures in education via the Department of Education, the relative increase is not keeping up with the relative increase in capital and operating costs. And this is why this administration, Sir, is guilty of crippling our educational system -

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear! Hear!

MR. ROWE: - at the present time.

Now, Mr. Chairman, you are a doctor and the Assistant Chairman of Committees is an undertaker, by some strange coincidence and, Sir, I would suggest, Mr. Chairman, that this government should probably be quarantined -

MR. WHITE: Hear! Hear!

MR. ROWE: - because it seems that everything it touches either withers and dies. We talk about the Lower Churchill, we talk about the Linerboard mill and we talk about Come By Chance. Everything it touches tends to wither and die.

MR. MURPHY: The inventors.

MR. ROWE: The inventor - if the hon. minister would like to get back in his seat, number one, and contribute something to the debate later on I will be only too happy to hear from him.

MR. ROWE: But, Sir, I say that this government should be put in political isolation, it should be quarantined. Because not only has it killed three great industries in this Province, but I am afraid that it is on the verge of putting our educational system into a situation where it is going to be an invalided - if I can use that expression - and invalided educational system.

As I said before, Sir, I cannot go too hard on the Minister of Education himself; he is more to be pitied than criticized. It is the administration of this Province, through its financial bungling and blundering and tripling of the provincial debt that has put the Minister of Education in a situation where he cannot meet the realistic needs of education in this Province. Now that is just a general opening statement, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to get on to a couple of specifics which I feel, and my colleagues feel very, very strongly, about and I doubt very much with the time available in the next seventeen or so minutes, or fifteen minutes or so, that I will get near into it. I would like to touch upon the subject of School Tax Authorities.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Very good.

MR. ROWE: Now, Sir, the first thing I would like to point out is that we are full of admiration and we commend the people who are serving on School Tax Authorities.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROWE: They are to be commended because they are trying to gain educational dollars for the various school boards throughout this Province, educational dollars that the provincial government and the Department of

MR. ROWE: Education should be raising, should be raising themselves. We have a few dedicated people in this Province who are honestly and sincerely trying to gain dollars for their school boards, the School Tax Authorities.

But, Sir, there are several problems with School Tax Authorities. I get very upset when I hear hon. members opposite in this House, in this Committee or publicly leave the impression that I am attacking, or my colleagues are attacking the personnel of School Tax Authorities; we are attacking the concept of School Tax Authorities. And what are we attacking, Sir? Well, Sir, everybody knows that throughout this Province that the default rate in the collection of, for instance, school assessments and what have you, ranges anywhere from about 5 per cent from certain School Tax Authorities to 73 per cent, the default rate.

Now can one imagine the cost of trying to recover school taxes or assessments when the default rates are that high? Obviously, many of our people are unwilling to pay these school assessments thereby causing additional administrative costs to school boards, and numerous notices and demand notices and court orders going to poor widows.

MR. NEARY: That is right.

MR. ROWE: That is right, and old age pensioners, people on social assistance get this demand notice from some collection -

AN HON. MEMBER: Oh, no.

MR. ROWE: Oh yes - from some collection agency, 'Pay up or you will be whipped into court immediately'. On these demand notices it is not even mentioned what time they should appear in court or what

MR. ROWE: court they are supposed to appear in. It scares the living daylights out of these poor old age pensioners, people on social services and people who cannot afford it.

MR. HOUSE: We have the statistics.

MR. ROWE: The minister may have the statistics over there but I have phone calls and letters, as do some of my colleagues, and I would suggest hon. members opposite got hundreds of letters of this nature. It is quite unnecessary and an additional expense to the Province.

Sir, the rates of school taxes - I do not know exactly what the rates are at this moment, but up to fairly recently school taxation varied from a minimum poll tax of twenty dollars to a maximum of seventy-five dollars or from a minimum property tax of 2.8 mils to a maximum of 5.5 mils. Now I do not know what the exact figures are now, that was the latest bit of research that I did which is a year or so old, I admit that. But it goes to show, Sir, that there are great inequalities or inequities or what have you, there are differences in the rates from one school tax jurisdiction to another. I do not think that sort of thing should exist unless certain factors are taken into consideration, like the ability

Mr. Rowe:

of a certain school tax authority to a jurisdiction to pay, which in some cases is not the case.

But the biggest crime of all, Sir, with respect to school tax authorities is that the taxes or the assessments are not based on a person's ability to pay or an individual's ability to pay. It is the most regressive taxation system, Sir, you can think up, and this is very eloquently expressed by one of the heads of the Denominational Educational Committees - what is the term used? -

AN HON. MEMBER: DEC

MR. ROWE: No. The head of the denominational - each of the heads of the -

MR. HOUSE: Executive Secretaries.

MR. ROWE: Executive Secretaries - one of the Executive Secretaries of the Denominational Educational Committee very eloquently expressed in a brief that he presented to government the regressive nature of school taxes. And, Sir, it cuts into municipal revenues as well.

Now, Sir, here is the basic situation; look, this is part and parcel of this administration's trend to excuse themselves from certain fiscal responsibilities in this Province. The latest one that we heard was from the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing where we hear that the municipalities are expected to take a greater part to play in their responsibilities with respect to raising funds for their incorporated communities through a real property tax. But, Sir, this has been going on with respect to school tax authorities, and all I am saying is this, Sir, it is so simple I cannot understand why government insists on carrying on with this school tax authority policy. Where is the money coming from anyway? It is coming from the people of this Province. It is coming from the people of this Province, but it is coming through another agency, namely, the various school tax authorities, and

Mr. Rowe:

therefore there must be -I mean this is as plain as the nose on your face- there must be administrative costs. There must be duplication of administrative services. Therefore you are getting less for the dollar collected but when it is finally expended in the field of education than if it was collected directly by the government.

Now Mr. Crosbie used to rant and roar and say, What are you going to do raise the personal income tax, raise the retail sales tax?

MR. LUNDRIGAN: The difference is all right.

MR. ROWE: Well it is the same difference, Sir. The only difference is is that if the administration of this Province, the Department of Finance, took the responsibility for collecting all of the money for educational purposes, even if it meant an increase in sales tax or personal income tax, you will get more money for the dollar collected towards expenditure in education than through school tax authorities. Even now, Sir, we are beginning to see the cracks in Cabinet, the cracks in caucus, The hon. Minister of Industrial and Rural Development, the member for Grand Falls (Mr. Lundrigan) has indicated that the school tax authorities as it applies to Gander are unfair - Grand Falls are unfair. But unlike many hon. members of this House, Mr. Chairman, he is in the Cabinet, and through Cabinet he can make special representation and get the thing straightened out, But poor hon. backbenchers on the government side and hon. members on this side of the House cannot go to Cabinet meetings and straighten up the unfairness of school tax authorities as it relates to their districts, but the hon. member can.

The hon. member for the Bay of Islands (Mr. Woodrow) suggested that school tax authorities are not equitable or not fair. And I admire the hon. member for representing the views of his constituents, Mr. Chairman, in saying so. And I would suggest,

Mr. Rowe:

Sir, that more hon. members opposite should speak out on behalf of their constituents when it comes to school tax authorities and not speak the government line, and tell it the way their constituents feel and not the way that government wants it told from that side of the House. Sir, it is the most unfair way, the most inequitable way of raising money for educational purposes that one can possibly imagine in this Province. And, Sir, an hon. Cabinet minister opposite said, "If we ever get in power" - and he is not wrong there - when we get in power he would

MR. ROWE: ram school tax authorities down my throat.

I will not mention the hon. minister's name, Sir, because it was a private conversation. But I will remind that hon. minister, Sir, that he will not get a chance to ram these school tax authorities down my throat, because when we take power there will be no school tax authorities to ram down the throat of any Minister of Education, or myself, or the administration when they take over the next time around.

Now, Sir, that is one of about fifteen topics that I want to talk about and I have about five minutes left. Sir, I want to relate very briefly to Memorial University. Sir, there are certain things that I have said about the university that have prompted hon. members opposite to call me the member for the university, as if I am standing here defending the university. Well I have no links with the university, Sir, I would like to get that record straight right off the bat.

The President of the University, Sir, is a good administrator. He is a fine gentleman. But there are certain things that we totally disagree with, and there are certain things of course that we agree with, that has been said and stated by the President of the University. I find it very insulting, Sir, for the President of the University to say that he would show the detailed budget of the university to the press rather than he would to politicians. I find that very offensive. And I state once again the stand that this side of the House has taken, that the detailed estimate of the University should be tabled before this Committee and should be examined by the Committee because I strongly believe, Sir, that the university is being severely downgraded by this administration, severely downgraded.

It all started with the reduction in student enrollment because of the cut backs in student aid. We had severe - the operating costs were cut back quite severely. The capital grants to the university are inadequate, and we have this latest blow to the

MR. ROWE: university, once again a deferment of the building of a new library and we see the sad spectacle on television, on Here and Now one night, of Memorial University stacking away in storage the books of that library to make more study space for the students.

Mr. Chairman, one of the main organs, the very backbone of a great university is the calibre of its library. And here again, Sir, on top of all the other restraints that the university have had to accept since 1968, back to the Liberal days, Sir, we got a situation now where once again we got a deferment on the building of the library at the university, and cut backs in scholarships at the university which means, Sir, that we are going to lose our students from Newfoundland to other Mainland universities. This great university that was envisaged by the Smallwood Administration, built by the Smallwood Administration, and the Liberal Government and party takes great pride in establishing that university, It was meant to be one of the greatest universities in Canada, Since it is only the university in Newfoundland and Labrador it was meant to be a great university, but the way things are going now with restraints and operating grants, capital grants to the university, cut backs in the library, cut backs in scholarships, fellowships and what have you, I am afraid that this university is being downgraded, Sir, to the point that we are not going to be very proud when it comes to talking about our university.

Now, Sir, since my time is up I would like to just close by saying that I hope that I will have the opportunity to speak on things other than school tax authorities and the Memorial University. I would certainly like to get into the Polytechnical Institute, the vocational aspects of our education, capital grants to the school boards, student-teacher ratio, whether or not we have got an over or under supply of teachers, the substitute teacher formula, and a need for redirection in our curriculum, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon member for Baie Verte- White Bay.

MR. RIDEOUT: Mr. Chairman, I just want to take five minutes or so to make a few general remarks before the minister gets around to replying to some of the very valid topics raised by my colleague from Trinity-Bay de Verde. When the minister rises in his place to speak, Sir, I would hope that he would spend a little bit more time talking about the substitute teachers and the abuse of the substitute teachers that he mentioned in his opening remarks. I understand that the allotment of money by his department for substitute teaching has been, or is to be, greatly reduced this year. And the minister mentions, Mr. Chairman, abuses. Now if the minister is going to stand in his place, Sir, and talk about abuses then lay it on the table, get it out, tell us what the abuses are. If there are teachers staying home and faking sick, tell us; tell us how many instances that happen or tell us whether the teachers have medical certificates, or tell us something. Do not just say there are abuses when we are paying - what is it? - the estimates says almost \$140 million for teachers in this Province. If we are paying for them, \$140 million, then they should be able to do their job. So what is the minister talking about when he is talking about abuses of the substitute teacher system in the Province?

Now then the minister talks about replacing that with a base rate. What is the minister looking for now, Mr. Chairman, to go into the classroom, baby-sitters? Is he going to pay them \$15 or \$20 a day as a base rate to go in and baby-sit twenty-five or thirty students?

AN HON. MEMBER: He laughs when he says it, but be serious now.

MR. RIDEOUT: I was laughing at the smile on the minister's face that time because I do not know if he had any experience hiring substitute teachers or not, but the minister has and I have and you got to do some weeding out before you get what you are looking

MR. PIDEOUT: for. But if you are going to pay them \$15 or \$20 or \$25 a day then you are not going to get the substitute teacher who would hang around a place like Baie Verte because there is four schools there, knowing that over the year they would be able to make a half decent salary substituting teaching. So the base rate, Sir, what is that going to do to the substitute teaching programme? I would submit that it will replace them with probation licence people, emergency supply people, people who will go into the classroom and sit down and let the kids probably climb up the wall while they are reading a book. Now if that is what it is going to be replaced with it is time for us to - it is time for the minister to have a better look at the substitute teaching payments than that.

And then the minister says they are not going to hire anybody the first day. Now what is going to happen to the students the first day, Mr. Chairman? Are we going to automatically send them home? In the larger central high schools, where you get the extra teacher for every number of teachers that you have hired, you might have a teacher with a few free periods, a few periods off where they can go into the classroom and substitute on behalf of those people, we may have that. You may have a case where the principal does not teach at all or the vice-principal only teaches a half day and you may be able to jiggle it around such that you got somebody to go into that classroom. But, Sir, that is not the case for most schools in this Province, I would submit, especially most schools in the smaller centers, places smaller than a thousand or fifteen hundred people where every teacher with the exception of probably one or two periods a week teaches a full day and teaches probably a couple of grades. What is going to happen to the kids there, Sir, when the teacher is sick? Are we going to send them home? Is that what we are going to do with them?

AN HON. MEMBER: Are you talking about substitute teachers?

MR. RIDEOUT: Yes. So there are a number of questions, Mr. Chairman, related to substitute teaching that I would hope that the minister would address himself to now when he rises in a few minutes to speak. Now, Mr. Chairman, if I had my way and there were no such thing as an infamous seventy-five hour rule on estimates in this House, the education budget would not pass this House supposing we were here till Christmas until Memorial University is made table their estimates on the table of this House of Assembly.

My colleague has already referred to it, but what a sham, what a mockery are we making, Mr. Chairman, of legislation in this Province when we in this present session - all of us, I believe as far as I recall by unanimous agreement, voted the Polytechnical bill through the House of Assembly saying that the Polytechnical Institute must table its estimates before this House. The amendment, I believe, was proposed by my colleague - my friend from St. John's East.

And then we passed that one and then we passed the Community College Act, or whatever it is called, and we had

May 16, 1977

Tape no. 2785

Page 1 - ms

Mr. Rideout.

the same stipulation attached to it. And the minister has the gall to bring his estimates before this House again, having passed through those pieces of legislation this year, and not putting the same stipulation, the same type of restraint on Memorial University. Now, Mr. Chairman, is that not making a farce of legislation? Is that not making a farce of this House of Assembly?

MR. HICKEY: Their act does not change.

MR. RIDEOUT: Well, let us change their bloody act. What are we waiting for?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT: So, what are we waiting for? Their act has not been changed! The Polytechnical Act was not changed until a couple of months ago. We could do that. The minister could bring that in and get it changed. We all agreed with it. I do not know of one dissenting voice or one dissenting vote in the House.

MR. MURPHY: Would not the denominational boards -

MR. RIDEOUT: I do not know what the DEC's do, Sir, but I am talking -

MR. MURPHY: No, I am just wondering. No, it is just a matter of opinion actually.

MR. RIDEOUT: I do not know. Do the DEC's - well, make them too. Make the vocational schools - I suppose they will have to under the Polytechnical Act.

It is a farce, Mr. Chairman, of legislation to have us in this session sit down and waste - I do not know if it is a waste - but to spend four or five hours considering legislation for a polytechnical institute and for a community college in Bay St. George having in that legislation a clause saying that they must bring their estimates before this House, which is a good thing, and we all support it. But it makes a farce of that legislation for the minister to allow Memorial University to continue to do what they are doing, and then for the hon. gentleman - I suppose I should call him an hon. gentleman - who is now the President of Memorial University to say that he would rather show his estimates

Mr. Rideout.

to the press than to a politician, the minister should go over and take him by the scruff of the neck and haul him over in the office and say, Look here buddy, in one week we are going to have a bill through the House, and you can either show us your estimates or if you do not like it, you can lump it, and get out and get somebody else. To be dictated to by that type of action in 1977 in this Province is ridiculous, and I am disappointed in the minister that he allows that type of thing to go on. And like I said, Mr. Chairman, if I had my way and there was no limit on this debate, the education budget would not get through the House, and suppose I was the only one here, until the minister agreed to go get those estimates and put them on the table, even if we had to do away with the Committee for a while and pass a piece of amending legislation to enable the minister to do it. And he had all kinds of time to do it, Mr. Chairman. We were sitting here day in and day out this year with very little on the Order Paper. So if it was a priority with the administration, if it was a priority with the minister, there is no reason why it could not be done.

MR. HOUSE: We would have to change a Liberal policy. That was their policy.

MR. RIDEOUT: I could not care less what the Liberal policy was.

MR. NOLAN: You can change it if you want to.

MR. RIDEOUT: I could not give two hoots, Mr. Chairman, that the Liberal policy was. I am talking about the policy of this government, this administration, this minister. That is what I am talking about. If the Liberal Government did not have the wisdom to do it, well let them live with that. That is too bad. I am not going to answer for every sin or dance to every tune or sing every song of the previous administration. I got no intention of doing it. My task, my role as a member in this House, is to question this administration, never mind to answer or atone for the sins of the past. The minister will leave us his legacy. Let us see if he will be the great reformer to haul in on the table of the House the MUN budget.

MR. RIDEOUT.

Now, Mr. Chairman, my colleague from Trinity - Bay de Verde (Mr. Rowe) referred to school taxes. That is the other albatross around the minister's neck and the neck of this administration. School tax, Mr. Chairman -

MR. MURPHY: It never happened in St. John's.

MR. RIDEOUT: - Mr. Chairman, the minister from St. John's is at it over there again.

MR. MURPHY: Sure. I am speaking for my district.

MR. RIDEOUT: Yes, well the minister can speak for his own district, Mr. Chairman, but I wish he would do it according to the rules. When I sit down, the minister can get up. I mean, that is the way to speak for your own district.

MR. MURPHY: Well, let everybody now practice what they are preaching.

MR. RIDEOUT: Mr. Chairman, on school taxes. My colleague has had some words to say about it, but certainly there is nobody, there is no hon. member can get up and argue in this House, but that school tax is one of the most regressive taxation methods that we have in this Province today. It is the most regressive. It matters not whether Tom Rideout is making \$50,000 a year and Joe Blow is making \$5,000, they still pay the same amount of school tax. Now, Mr. Chairman, what is fair about that? What is equitable about it? I cannot see one hon. member supporting that type of taxation. And as my colleague from Trinity - Bay de Verde (Mr. Rowe) pointed out, it is coming out of the taxpayers anyway. And on top of that we set up another bureaucracy to go around and collect it, when Mr. Doody's boys, the hon. Minister of Finance's boys down in Finance are there anyway, and what extra burden would it be on them to collect it. We set up another bureaucracy, and

MR. RIDEOUT: we pay another - I do not know how many people, but certainly a hundred or a couple of hundred people, we pay rent for more offices, we pay salary to more secretaries, we pay rent on more photo copiers, we pay all the postage, just to collect that most regressive tax that this Province has ever seen. I am delighted the member for Bay of Islands (Mr. Woodrow) had the guts to get up and speak out about it publicly, and also the minister from Grand Falls had the gumption to speak out against it publicly. The only thing about the minister from Grand Falls is that he is in the Cabinet, in the inner circle, and he could do something about it more so than just me or my friend over there from Bay of Islands. All we can do about it is rant and roar about it here in the House or on the airways. But the minister can do something about it.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: I will have it given up.

MR. RIDEOUT: Good! Good for you! We will have something further to say to the minister later on.

But, Mr. Speaker, you know, is the minister going to leave this regressive taxation method in place? Is he going to do anything about it? His own caucus is starting to crack over there. Is the minister going to do anything about it or is he going to let it tumble down around his ears? When can we see some leadership from the minister?

MR. LUNDRIGAN: What is the alternative?

MR. RIDEOUT: The alternative is we are all paying for it anyway so let us pay. If it means raising the sales tax or raising the income tax let us do it. It is done fairly then.

MR. MORGAN: Raise the sales tax?

MR. RIDEOUT: I do not care what you raise.

AN HON. MEMBER: Base it on personal income.

MR. MURPHY: We cannot raise the gas tax.

MR. RIDEOUT: No! No!

MR. NOLAN: We have that information now.

MR. RIDEOUT: General Taxation.

MR. HODDER: Personal Income Tax

It is fair taxes.

MR. RIDEOUT: Yes, it is the only fair tax - that is right.

MR. MURPHY: Why? What is the difference?

MR. RIDEOUT: Because then the guy who makes fifty thousand dollars pays more than the poor beggar who makes five thousand. That is the difference, and that is the way taxation should be.

MR. MURPHY: 23 per cent sales tax?

MR. RIDEOUT: That is the way it should be. Surely, Mr. Chairman, the minister is not arguing that the man who makes more pays the same as the guy who makes less.

MR. MURPHY: That was valid two years ago before the election and we won every seat in St. John's because we brought in this -

MR. RIDEOUT: Well, that is some surprise, Mr. Chairman, that the Tories won every seat in St. John's. That is a penetrating insight into the obvious, Sir.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I want to say another word, and I do not care if it is politically popular or not, but I am going to say it anyway.

MR. MORGAN: You have your chance now, with the Convention coming up.

MR. RIDEOUT: Mr. Chairman, any way to use Beauchesne over there to silence the minister for a few minutes?

MR. RIDEOUT: Mr. Chairman, I want to mention school supplies. I do not care what previous administrations did, and I will mention this before they get a chance to shoot it across, but in Sub-Head 604 for School Supplies, there is \$4,850,000, which, the major bulk of it, I would assume, Sir, is for free textbooks, up to what - grade nine, is it?

AN HON. MEMBER: Grade eight.

MR. RIDEOUT: Grade eight. I believe it is grade nine. Mr. Minister, free textbooks up to grade nine?

MR. HOUSE: No. Up to grade eight, including grade eight.

MR. RIDEOUT: Including grade eight.

Mr. Chairman, this administration ranted and roared about

MR. RIDEOUT: Mothers' Allowance, and what did they replace it with?

Free textbooks! Why do we need a programme right across the board for free textbooks in this Province? Can anybody answer that question for me? Why do I need free textbooks, or the Minister of Education, or any other minister in this House, or member? Now, there are some, obviously, who need it, so by all means let us give it to them. But, Mr. Chairman, this business of everything you do has to be universal - now, I do not care if that is politically popular or not, but the minister could save a couple of million bucks there, and probably, instead of slashing his Scholarship Programme, provide a bit more incentive, instead of slashing that, probably by increasing it a bit - or to cut it - what about Mothers' Allowance - I just said what about Mothers' Allowance. You did away with Mothers' Allowance and replaced it with free textbooks because it looked just a little bit better, that is all.

MR. MURPHY: Everybody was getting Mothers' Allowance.

MR. RIDEOUT: Everybody is getting this.

MR. MURPHY: No, not everybody. Just the ones going to school.

MR. RIDEOUT: Up to grade eight. No, no, everybody.

MR. RIDEOUT: No. Well, if you did not have any kids, you did not get any Mothers' Allowance, either.

MR. MURPHY: I had three kids and they are finished school but I (inaudible).

MR. RIDEOUT: Did you get any Mothers' Allowance?

MR. MURPHY: I did not. My wife did.

MR. RIDEOUT: No, your wife did not, either, if the kids were not in school.

MR. MURPHY: I am not going to argue.

MR. RIDEOUT: Well, I mean, the minister is wrong, that is the only argument. You did not get it if you were out of school. I remember when we were teaching they used to come to us to sign those forms certifying that the kids were in school; and if they were in school, you got it, and if they were finished school, you did not get it. So, this business, Mr. Chairman, of universal free textbooks for every child going to school in this Province, I think it is something the minister should have a look at. I do not think there is any need of it, personally. Now, as I said, I do not care whether it is politically popular to say that, or not. I believe it.

MR. RIDEOUT: I do not believe there is any need for free textbooks for everybody. If I can pay for mine, then why should I not pay for them? And if the minister can pay for his, why should he not pay for them?

MR. NOLAN: For the same reason you get the Old Age Pension if you are a millionaire; it costs too much to turn them down.

MR. RIDEOUT: Yes, that is something else. If we were in the House of Commons I could have something to say about, but not here.

But you know, this business of universality of the whole programme, I think, kills the programme. It makes it too expensive, and certainly it is open to abuse. How much of those books does the minister's department have to replace, does he have any idea? If I buy a set of books for my kids and pay five or six dollars for them, I would submit to the minister that they will be less subject to abuse than if I go up to the school and get them for nothing. I have seen that happen, I am sure the minister has too.

MR. HOUSE: I will agree with that.

MR. RIDEOUT: They are not fit to give to another youngster the next year in many cases, pages missing, marked up, dirty, abused, and yet the government insists on carrying on with this foolish programme. They had it up to Grade III or IV, I believe, and then just before an election they increased it up to Grade VIII. For Heaven's sake, do away with it and give it to those who need it, by all means. If we gave more to those who need it and less to those who did not need it, I would submit to the minister that this society would be a lot better off than it is today.

Now, Mr. Chairman, that is the few comments I wanted to make generally on the estimates. I

MR. RIDEOUT: will have some more details as we go through the subheads.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. the member for Conception Bay South.

MR. NOLAN: Mr. Chairman, on the Education estimates that we now have before us, there has been some discussion about the School Tax Authority and it is something we cannot ignore. In spite of the opinion of our friend from St. John's Centre (Mr. Murphy), the School Tax Authority is inequitable, it is unfair, it is unjust. My friend from St. John's Centre grew up and went to school in a time when it was pretty rough sledding, as many of us did.

MR. MURPHY: No Baby Bonus or anything in those days.

MR. NOLAN: No Baby Bonus, no, no Baby Bonus indeed. But because of the fact that he did see many injustices in his time, I am surprised that he cannot seem to fathom that it is most unjust to have a family, or a father with an income of \$30, \$40, \$50, \$60 or \$100 thousand a year paying the same school tax as one who is earning \$5,000 or \$6,000 a year. I mean, how he can justify that in his own mind escapes me.

MR. MURPHY: Sure they pay the same sales tax.

MR. NOLAN: Never mind the sales tax. We are talking about school tax.

MR. MURPHY: Because it suits the member to do so. According to him we should - if you earn \$10,000 you pay 14 per cent sales tax, if you earn \$20,000 it should be 16 per cent. Would that not be fair?

MR. ROWE: If you have more money you buy more things therefore you pay more tax.

MR. MURPHY: Ah, come on! Let us be -

MR. NOLAN: Mr. Chairman, I do not mind arguing with the member for St. John's Centre as long as he is prepared to argue about the school tax. If he is going to talk about the other taxes, I suggest he do so in his own speech.

The School Tax Authority is based on monies being paid by everyone, everyone. The sales tax has nothing to do with it whatsoever. The school tax is - what is it now, by the way, \$75 for a working person? Is that it, \$150 a year?

MR. ROWE: That is in St. John's.

MR. NOLAN: Seventy-five dollars a year.

MR. ROWE: Yes, in St. John's.

MR. NOLAN: Per person.

MR. ROWE: It changes in different jurisdictions.

MR. NOLAN: Right. Well now, the Memorial University, and I believe within a class up there under, perhaps, Dr. Warren, four or five years ago did a study on the amount of monies collected in the various School Tax Authorities. I am sorry I do not have the facts and figures here but they are available, they are available. I had them at one time. It was this study done by his class or classes or something, and the figures that were there would shock you to death by the amounts of money that were not collected in the various School Tax Authorities.

For example, I can remember one with \$75,000 or \$90,000 outstanding. In fact, in certain instances the amount owing and not collected was greater than the amount that was collected. And there is case after case after case of this in this Province, case after case of it. Thousands and thousands of dollars - and the Minister of Transportaion looks at me questioningly, if I can get hold of these figures and give them to him,

MR. NOLAN: I will lay them right before him because it was available and I think I can probably still get hold of it. But it was staggering, the amount of money that was not collected under the School Tax Authority, staggering beyond belief.

Now if it were based on income as it should be -no tax is fair, but if there is a fair tax surely it can only be based on income, that is,

MR. NOLAN: the more you make the more you pay. It is as simple as that. Therefore rather than have a new bureaucracy, as my hon. friend mentioned, collecting the school taxes and so on, you have the apparatus set up now through the income tax department and all you do is tag on the point or two or whatever is necessary to equal the amount that you are collecting now. And by the way, on the strength of what you are collecting now you would not have to raise it very much if you still have as many outstanding debts as you had according to the figures that I had four or five years ago. They were public because they were done at Memorial University. Scandalous the amount outstanding, just fantastic! As a matter of fact you wonder why people were not marching in the streets and saying, 'Why should we pay if half the rest of them are not paying, making chalk of one and cheese of the other.

At least under the income tax system you will get every cent that is owing to you. It would be collected. You would not have a new bureaucracy set up to do it and that is what you are doing everywhere now. A scandalous waste of money, scandalous waste of money! The only fair way you are going to have it is to have it based on income and no other reason will justify. Now, so much for the school tax authority.

I only have a word or two to say about Memorial University, and it is simply this: That the Minister of Education always struck me as a man who is willing to stand up to be a spokesman for the educational bureaucracy or the group if you like, a man who has been down the road, a man who has worked hard as a boy in many many fields of endeavour and then went on to become a very prominent and a very fine educator. No question about it and I will be the first one to point it out. However, never in the history of this province, never in the history of this province has the Minister of Education stood by and let someone who is paid out of the public payroll stand up, who is in charge of spending millions of dollars,

MR. NOLAN: and say flatly, publicly, "Not likely! I will give it to the press before I will give it to the House of Assembly." That is the President of Memorial University. And a statement that the Minister of Education to this day has not had sufficient gumption to call him on and make him appear on the floor of this House. Surely that is wrong. The Minister of Education permits this type of thing to happen. He is lowering the position of education in this province. Now he cannot avoid it. He is the man that should say so strongly and boldly and clearly and enunciate that here tonight. If he does not then he is a failure as the Minister of Education. He knows better because I am sure he has the best education and so on of the people of this province at heart.

Now that brings me to another point. It is this. Time after time we are hearing now from parents, from educators, from columnists, commentaries and so on that we are spending a lot of money on education. By the way, this is not peculiar to Newfoundland. I hear in many provinces of Canada and many states of the United States that in spite of the millions upon millions upon millions of dollars that are being spent that we do not seem to be getting any kind of a just return on our money.

Now the Minister of Education has to answer this for this province at least; he cannot answer for all the other provinces of Canada. But what is gone wrong in education? Has something gone wrong? By the way, lest this be interpreted as an attack on the educational fraternity and so on, I do not mean it that way, far from it. In fact I know teachers today in this province, and I salute them, who have gone away beyond what they are normally required to do under the Act, under the regulations, under anything you will find within the school boards and so on in their rules, laws and regulations. My God! I know teachers who are bringing in some food to give to some children. I know that. Certainly beyond the requirements. Nothing says they have to do that. But there are teachers out there who have the humanity, the compassion the concern that goes way beyond what they are required

May 16, 1977

Tape 2788

LB-3.

MR.NOLAN: to do by law. I think that they should be recognized. There are teachers in this province who in spite of inadequate facilities, inadequate facilities in many ways and terrible obstacles and handicaps are doing a job that they should be recognized for. It galls me a little sometimes when we criticize those in education,

May 16, 1977

Tape 2789

PK - 1

Mr. Nolan:

when we lump them all into the same heap because by doing that we are so wrong, so wrong. Sure there are teachers who cannot wait for the school bell to ring before they will go charging over the bodies of the students if necessary to get out of the classroom. But surely to God, I hope, I hope that that is the exception rather than the rule. Surely what disturbs me a little bit is the stricture within some of the contracts and so on is that it is so darn difficult to get rid of a lousy teacher, an inadequate teacher, a hopeless teacher.

Now there are good educators; for example, I think, my friend from Bonavista South (Mr. Cross) was in education, as was our friend from Grand Falls (Mr. Lundrigan) and my hon. friend opposite as well as my friend here from Burgeo (Mr. Simmons) and Trinity (Mr. Rowe) and, of course, from Baie Verte (Mr. Rideout) and there are others of course, and of course our friend down here for Port au Port (Mr. Hodder). So they know what I am talking about. Teachers are the ones who will tell you privately what is going on within the education fraternity. I am sure there is more than one goes to our hon. friend, and has over the years, and got his ear privately and said, You know what is going on in such and such a place. Well maybe he was not in any position to do anything about it then. There are those now who look to him as though he has some power to do something.

The problem is, what is the power of the Minister of Education? And I suggest to you in some instances it may be very, very inadequate, it might be lacking somewhat which even he may be very well forced to admit here in this House. The Minister of Education is not the all-powerful educational dictator that someone may attempt to picture him as, because his power has been substantially diminished over the years, and

Mr. Nolan:

we know it.

So to those teachers who are toiling out there, who are doing such a great job in so many places - God, when I think of some of the teachers that I have known over the years and some that I know now who have to try and compensate in class for the great deficiencies, inadequacies, and unconcern in the home, I have seen them do it trying to make up, they are trying not only to be teacher but parent, they are trying to make up, to try and grab hold to something, to try to do something with the boy or the girl which they cannot do in - in some instances they can, but they cannot take it all of the way. I mean, they have got twenty, thirty, forty kids on their hands in a classroom, and they know there are certain children because of lack of parental responsibility, and discipline maybe the parents just do not give a darn, they feel the teachers should look after everything. There are people in this land who look upon the teachers as glorified, well-paid babysitters. Not so. There are teachers who are called upon to accept a burden that is not fair to them, not fair to us as taxpayers, and not fair sometimes to the other kids in the class.

But there are teachers in this Province who we can be proud of, very, very proud of them indeed. Now whether we are giving them as legislators sufficient backup and so on is a matter that we have to ask ourselves. And maybe no matter what the Legislature may approve it may very well be that because of the decentralized authority through the DECs and all the rest by the time it gets down to the teacher level it might be watered down some. That is another thing we have to consider.

But I am always nervous about the build up of bureaucracy, whether it is in a department, whether it is in the University or whether it is in the educational set up.

Mr. Nolan:

Another thing we have to remember too in education is the amount that is done in various communities. For example, I am naturally thinking in terms of in various parishes that I knew of over the years. My main information, of course, came from, well, the Christian Brothers that we have known over the years, and the various people within a community who would attempt to raise money, and this is true of every denomination that I could think of, they were involved; many people today in communities where I am most familiar throughout Conception Bay South, various service clubs and so on are doing a lot for students one way or another, and I would hope that the part that they have attempted to play is recognized.

But when we hear that - I do not know what we are spending on education this year, \$144 million? Is that unfair?

MR. SIMMONS: It is more than that.

MR. NOLAN: How much?

MR. RIDEOUT: \$273 million.

MR. NOLAN: How much is it, \$273 million? \$291 million on education. Thirty per cent of the budget. So of all that amount of money what kind of return are we getting? Are we getting students now who were better than they were say twenty years ago, fifteen years ago, ten years ago? Are they that much better? Are they that much brighter? Do we continue to have gymnasium and so on we are not allowed in to use it during the summer? We are not allowed to use it on weekends. Do we have situations like this? Well what kind of educational monuments are they? Gymnasiums and the like were built to be used.

One of the greatest lacks in our whole system right now, and it is not only education but it spins over into health, is based on the fact - and I have had by the way a physical fitness director within the urban region tell me that kids today are in worse shape than ever before. Why? Well the reason is my friend from St. John's Centre was in reasonably good shape when he was a kid and I believe I was but the reason is there was no family car. You got out of school and you walked to school or your home, you walked a mile or two and you walked back and that was it. There was no such thing as a school bus. In fact many of us were lucky to have shoes, I suppose. But I mean that is what it is. Now we have fortunes being spent on various recreational facilities and I am told, and I was in the last five years, by a very prominent and knowledgeable physical fitness director for a very large area that kids are in real trouble, they are in lousy shape. So what are we spending all the money for? What has gone wrong? How often do we hear now that young people are coming out of school and they cannot read? They cannot add. But they cannot read - why? What has gone wrong? I mean, has the quality of education suffered?

The minister refers to the many degrees the various teachers have, more qualified now than ever before and so on. Well that is fine. But I mean a piece of paper on the wall does not prove anything. I mean the product we are interested in is the kids coming out of school. The

MR. NOLAN: Minister of Education can be the most highly qualified teacher in the land. What I would be interested in to judge him is what kind of students he is turning out, and that is the only thing we can base our assessment on. And that is another thing - Supposing you have a lousy (and I use the word advisedly) teacher, who for various hangups of one way or another is a total misfit, how long does it take within our system now with the various contracts and so on to remove that man or woman from within the school before he or she causes too much harm on the children concerned? How long does it take? I suggest to the minister it takes a fair while.

MR. NEARY: Especially if he has his permanent licence.

MR. NOLAN: Especially if he has his permanent licence.

MR. HOUSE: His tenure.

MR. NOLAN: His tenure. Well that is what they have up at the university when they go off looking at the giant squid and so on.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. NOLAN: Yes. Well tenure is fine. You know I am not against that, but what I am against is there are misfits and if there are misfits I think that there should be a way - So I mean, what is more important? His or her tenure or the innocent kid that is there in that classroom who could end up a product of this type of thing that should not be there in the first place perhaps? I mean if we are going to guard that type of person within our bureaucratic system we should all be thrown out of the House. It is as simple as that.

So there it is, Mr. Chairman. If we are now getting - and everyone seems to be raising the question - if we are gone wrong, if there needs to be a new assessment of our educational system, and again I repeat by the way I am not just talking about Newfoundland, I am not aiming this at the minister as though he is the educational ogre in this case. I am not because I can show you articles and so on that come from various Provinces of Canada where the same questions are being raised. So therefore it is something we have to ask ourselves as to what has gone

MR. NOLAN: wrong. If we are spending \$291 million, thirty per cent of the budget of this Province, we have a right to some answers. Parents have a right to some answers. And not only that, I suggest to you that the educators, of which there are many who are hard-working, who are dedicated, who are sincere, who have gone far beyond what they are required to do by law

MR. NOLAN: whereas the others will do only, and not that if they can avoid it, only what they have to do by law, then we owe it to them to find out and come up with the answers. As I said, there are teachers who go beyond any possible imaginable limits as to what they are prepared to do for young children that I know of in this Province. I wish I could name some of them but I will not here and I cannot here. Hours mean nothing to some of them. Morning, afternoon and night, weekends they are at it. Truly dedicated people. Some of them very, very qualified, but whether they are qualified or not - you can have sixteen degrees on your wall, it does not mean you are going to be more compassionate and a better teacher. God knows there are people on various islands in this Province, out in the various bays and so on, down the Southwest Coast that I can think that they may not have had too much to offer in the way of massive numbers of degrees and so on. But there is a history that you can see of their pupils where they had the most inadequate, the most inadequate facilities - School houses, my God they had little or nothing. Facilities were few and far between. Circumstances awful. No school buses, no nothing, and yet they seem to have been created by God to be in the classroom. Brilliant, brilliant men and women, many of them not recognized. They are not in any educational hall of fame, I am afraid. Many of them did not get degrees from our university and they are not likely to perhaps, but by golly they were something. They were some men and women.

 And we have I believe people today in the educational fraternity who have copied some of them in some ways and enlarged upon it themselves and are doing a fantastic job, and I would certainly pay all of them tribute. But to the misfits that are in there we do not have the apparatus to remove them. We are handcuffed. Oh, sure you can get rid of them by going through various - I mean I have had teachers tell me this and I am sure the minister knows. Security is a fine thing. Security in the civil service, security in your job, security to teachers, tenure and so on, a fine thing; but to those who

MR. NOLAN: want to abuse it , God help you! God help you ! And I am not worried about them. It is the kids who are the victims of their educational malpractice that I am concerned about. They are a cancer on the scene and they should be removed.

Well now that is it. The school tax authority. The unmitigated gall, unmitigated gall of the president of the university -

MR. CHAIRMAN(YOUNG): Order please! The hon. member's time has expired.

AN HON. MEMBER: By leave.

MR. NOLAN: If I may just wind up very briefly, Mr. Chairman. Am I permitted? Right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: By leave!

MR. NOLAN : Thank you! I certainly thank the hon. member opposite. The school tax authority - I do not think - Will you keep quiet, you fellows? I will get after them. I do not think that the hon. member for Grand Falls is a traitor, political traitor, unfaithful and so on as has been suggested by some. I think he has expressed some concern about the school tax authority and I say more power to him, more power to him. He is not a political Charlie McCarthy. If he wants to speak out on something that concerns the people in his district let him go and let no one over here jeer him about it. I do not think it is right. If he wants to say something like that and to express his feelings more power to him and maybe in that way we will get the changes.

Now as I was cluing up I was about to say about the unmitigated gall about the president of the university. Is there any member in the House of Assembly who can stand by without rising in unison to their feet and not objecting publicly here and now to the Minister of Education who can accept a statement from the president of the university saying, "I will give it to the press before I will give it to the politicians and to the members of the House of Assembly ?"

Mr. Nolan:

Who were the servants of the people now? What money are they spending? Where is it authorized? Right here in this House. And the one man above all who is suppose to champion our cause in that regard is the Minister of Education, and he has not seen fit to do so.

AN HON. MEMBER: Not a squeak.

MR. NOLAN: So let us hear the minister before this night is over ask for a public retraction from the President of Memorial University for making such arrogant statements, such an insult to the people of this Province and every man and woman in this House.

MR. HOUSE: The President has said he did not say that.

MR. NOLAN: Well are you saying the press are lying?

MR. HOUSE: Pardon?

MR. NOLAN: Well who is lying in this instance?

MR. HOUSE: I do not know; he has said that he did not say that.

MR. NOLAN: Well before I sit down may I say if the President did not say that, then of course I retract everything I have said; but all I am saying is that there are certain areas of the press who reported that he did say it, and maybe that area of the press might want to run a story accounting how they got their story. But I mean if the President did not say it, game over, forget it! It is as simple as that. But if he did, nothing but a public apology will suffice.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: We will still bring in the Budget.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Eagle River.

MR. STRACHAN: Mr. Chairman, I would like to move the discussion on education away from the school tax authorities for a little bit, and move North a little bit and talk about some of the

Mr. Strachan:

educational problems that face the people in the North and on the coast.

We have on the Labrador Coast a system of education over the past twenty-odd years which has led the children of the Coast away from their background, away from their homes, in an attempt to try to make them the same as everyone else, attempt to make them the same as people from an urban community. For instance, in native communities and Inuit communities and Indian communities we have children being taught from textbooks exactly the same textbooks as the ones taught in St. John's. For instance, a child will learn very early, at the age of five, six and seven, that daddy comes home from the office driving his car when there are no cars in the communities, and daddy does not work in an office; or you come home in a bus, and there are no buses; or daddy comes in the door wash his hands, or mother stands at a sink and does her work when there are no sinks in the homes, and various other aspects of this. We have the children being taught basic facts of life which are not true to their environment, untrue to their communities, much as we would like to see some of the things that we see in the school books.

So with the result the children are brought up or educated in the schools in an entirely different context from their normal life at home, and there is immediately, when five, six, seven years old are tearing away from the family and the children split off. Additionally, up until a few years ago the children were taught, Indian and Inuit children, were taught French, the two languages were English and French. That is now being changed. I am glad to see that it has been changed. Because, of course, the French language is of very little use to a person who has a native language and should be taught in a native language.

Mr. Strachan:

I think the Minister of Education is aware of these problems, and I believe he was the first Minister of Education who travelled the Labrador Coast, and much as I would like to praise him for his attempt of going down there and visiting the schools and finding out, it is a shame when we have been a number of years in Confederation that this is the first Minister of Education, the first minister to ever travel onto the coast and visit schools, And although I will pat him on the back and say, wonderful, I still think it is a crying shame that we can stand up and say that after twenty odd years of Confederation this is the first time the schools and the teachers and the principals and the pupils saw the Minister of Education. It shows -

CAPT. WINSOR: And one other before him.

MR. STRACHAN: One other was there?

CAPT. WINSOR: Doctor Rowe.

MR. STRACHAN: Doctor Rowe. I will retract that, Doctor Rowe apparently was down there some years ago. He apparently is a good fellow.

But it shows the lack of rapport between the people in isolated communities and the department, and, I think, that - I commend the minister again, and I hope that in another short while he will consider taking another trip down to see some of the problems that they are faced with.

Similarly the children who grow up in this system then end up at Grade IX, X, and XI of having to leave their homes; in order to carry on their education they must leave home and travel 200 miles from September, virtually September, to Christmas and then they

MR. STRACHAN:

get a couple of weeks off at Christmas. And then from Christmas until June they are away from the parents. They are away from their home. They are kept in a dormitory. And well as a dormitory may be run, they have no contact with their parents or their friends or their way of life. And then we start asking why these people return, native people in this Province, return and are very bitter about their lifestyle and very bitter about life, very bitter about education and very bitter about white people. And the reason is obvious. By the time they go to school in dormitory and they have spent three years away from their family at the age of fourteen, fifteen, sixteen, that child, that man or woman or boy or girl cannot work with their parents. They no longer become hunters because at that age they do not learn to go into the woods or into the barren lands. They do not learn how to hunt. They do not learn how to trap. They do not learn even the enjoyment of it. Even if they did not want to keep it as a way of life, they virtually are educated out of the system. And good as that may sound, we have to give them a basic fundamental education and I believe they need it. At the same time, by the time they reach grade eleven - and I believe less than one per cent, less than one per cent of the students coming from the Coast reach grade eleven. And if education was a business they system is totally bankrupt - so with a result that that person does not want to stay away from home any longer, and given grade eleven will not go on to university, will not go on to technical school or trade school. That student wants to return home. And the reason they always give you, and I know well because I entice and try to encourage them to go to Corner Brook, for instance, the reason they give you is they want to spend one year home. They want to get one year back among their family, one year back to see their father, their mother and their brothers and sisters and their friends. What happens then is when they come back they find that they have been educated to a level in which they cannot respond to the parents or to the friends. They have learned to require other things so that they cannot hunt or trap or fish or even know the area. They may know it as a nine year old or a ten year old,

MR. STRACHAN:

but they do not know it at the age when they are developing skills and got the physical strength to develop these skills. So with a result that after a year home you find that that person at the age of seventeen, eighteen, nineteen, twenty, and I know of people at twenty-five years old, are very, very bitter, because they are no longer native, they are no longer Inuit, they are no longer Indian, they are not quite, and do not have the ability and do not want to enter back out to the outside world, and we talk about inside and outside. And therefore they just remain in the community and they are virtually left in the garbage dump. They are virtually thrown out in the rubbish pile. And it has been my job and a number of others' jobs to try and retrieve these people after two or three or four years home and try to drag them back into the education system so they can make something of their lives. But they develop a great frustration, a very deep frustration, a great bitterness about this type of educational system which does not train them for one world and it takes them out of their own world.

So we have this bitterness which develops in quite a number of native people. And it is understandable to someone who can understand the function of what has happened to them. I should mention here that there has been an attempt, and as I say in these previous comments, I am by no means decrying the lack of effort in recent years of the school board in Happy Valley- Goose Bay who have been trying to make an attempt to change this system, albeit slowly, but they are hard trying trying to make an attempt to change this system which can make the educational system more meaningful to these children. At the moment the educational system is in many ways totally useless. If you talk to the teachers many of them are extremely frustrated. The teachers are very unhappy. They know that what they are teaching the young children is meaningless in many aspects of the life. They know that what they are doing is introducing, I do not say another culture, but they are introducing another aspect to their lives which these children are not familiar with

May 16, 1977.

Tape 2793

RH - 3

MR. STRACHAN:

They also know that they are teaching them away and dragging them away from their parents. And so

MR. STRACHAN: with the result that the teachers themselves become frustrated and very unhappy, and I mean very dedicated teachers. In fact, the more dedicated they are the more unhappy they are with the system of education that they have. Now in being negative I want to propose certain things in a positive vein because I feel that there are some things - apart from the Minister of Justice - I believe there are some things that can be done, I believe can be done. We seem to be trying to teach children and specialize them or get them away from the basics. I think in education the pendulum has swung so far one way that very quickly we are trying to specialize students in some things so that they do not have the basic three R's, they do not have the basic education which many of us were brought up with; so with the result that we end up with people specialized in fields or pulled away.

My feeling is that very clearly these students and these native people and others require the basic three R's to be taught very strongly and very firmly and be the basis of their educational programme. But if we are going to make the educational programme meaningful to them, we must introduce very early on some life skill programmes into their educational system. It is ridiculous to me, or at least I feel it is ridiculous, to go to some communities, isolated communities on the coast and see a large school building, which is probably the largest building in the community, one of the few buildings which is often equipped with water and sewerage, for instance, and with taps and so on, with a gymnasium in some of them, and to see that building only occupied from nine o'clock to four o'clock for five days a week for a number of months per year, and then it is closed up totally to the community. And I really believe that we should look at another aspect, that people who do not have educational skills to the standards of teachers, but are contributing something to the community, can be brought in as teachers in a community way so we get into the community school aspect in which they are teaching life skills which are meaningful to the students. I can, for instance, suggest that I would have

MR. STRACEAN: Liked to have seen one of the finest trappers in Nain, a very good trapper, that it would have been more meaningful for him to teach trapping to the students than for a teacher to try and teach some other programme from somewhere, dreamed up somewhere out of a book which is not meaningful at all to the student. But if he could teach them how to trap, and there are a very great deal of intricacies to trapping, it is a very acquired business, then surely that young boy, in being taught how to do that, will be taught something which is meaningful if he wishes to come back or even on his weekends if he wishes to carry on in a form of sport or a hobby or a pastime.

But at least it would relate the school to the student and to the home rather than to accept the fact that we could only have qualified teachers coming in to teach, because many times they need to be qualified for obviously the basic skills that one needs to teach, but many of the other skills that they have can be drawn from the community, and the schools should be opened up. The schools are closed up and kept separate and isolated, and what we should be doing then is to think of opening up the door of the school and making more use of that school through community programmes, making it more available. Do not lock the gymnasium because the children are rough and mark the walls with their football, or with anything else. To apply that kind of a principle that they cannot get into the gymnasium because they make a mess, in an isolated community in which the only facility is the school gymnasium is to be moralistic, paternalistic, and that is what we have had for far too long. And unless we get rid of this moralism out of the educational system in the school, we will continue to have only one per cent go beyond grade eleven and we will continue to have frustrated and very bitter young men. I see young men who are often - and women, but young men particularly I see who I can call

MR. STRACHAN:

nothing else but Country-Western. They are not Inuit, they are not Indian, they are not like us, they are nothing else and they do not know where they are. And they return from school from North West River, and all they can pick up, all they can catch on to is to get back into guitars, they are very musical, and develop a semi-culture of their own and which they revolve around, in which they are far more interested in music, in records and the Country-Western attitude. I say Country-Western because they are not Inuit any more, they are not Indian any more, they are not Settler any more, but they are not fitted to come out into the outside world and take the rough and tumble and some of the things that people elsewhere have been taught and educated into, so

MR. STRACHAN:

with the result that they get into this little world of their own which is often very bitter and very frustrated. And that is the problem that we are inheriting. And that is what you face sometimes when you face native peoples, especially young ones who will give you a rough time or will confront you about your things. They do it because we are educating them into that system and not educating them into a system which is meaningful to them. I feel very strongly about that because I have seen many, many young people, some of them very bright, extremely bright, who have given up. And there is nothing worst than to see the young people on the Coast, who should be the leaders and can be the leaders and who should be standing here instead of me, but will not be, not for some time, and it is a shame to say that they will not be because of our educational system which leads them away and leaves them nowhere. So they do not know who they are, they do not know where they came from, and they do not know where they are going. And I think that this has to be changed. I commend again, I mean this, by no criticism of the board, because the board in recent years and Frank Roberts, for instance, has made a tremendous effort to try and change this - he is aware of these things - has made a tremendous effort to try and change it. And he has inherited a great deal which was recorded over the years. And I commend him for his work. But I think that it should be pushed further and a little faster. We should look at a different system of sending children in grade nine, ten and eleven away from home to be educated. That should be changed. And I do not want to get into how it should be changed, but there should be a different system there. And we should try to get the schools away from the old moralism and paternalistic system which is changing, I agree, but it has done its damage. And I think it needs to be changed now if the young people on the Coast and the young native people and so on will find out who they are, and find out where they are and where they are going.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Trinity-Bay de Verde

MR. F. ROWE: Mr. Chairman, so far we have dealt with under the minister's heading, the school tax authorities, and I think I have spoken to it

MR. ROWE:

and three of my colleagues have spoken to it. I think we have spent quite enough time on it. It has to sink through at some point, I would assume, Mr. Chairman, that the only solution to this whole problem is the abolition of school tax authorities altogether. We have talked about Memorial University. And I would just like to comment on that just once more, Mr. Chairman, because it appears now, and we have to accept the word of the Minister of Education from the President of the University that he was quoted incorrectly when he suggested that he would give the detailed estimates of the university to the press before he would give it to the politicians or the House of Assembly. We have to accept the word of the minister on that. However, Sir, we still have to accept this very realistic fact and that is we still do not have the detailed estimates of the university before this committee for clear, pure, hard examination. Whatever the president of the university is quoted as saying, correctly or incorrectly, that basic fact is still with us. We do not have the budget of the university in detail before this committee. And when we listen to statements from the president's report like this Sir, "During the past academic year, however, austerity reached disturbing proportions that we faced with an anticipated deficit of around \$1 million. This deficit has in fact been avoided by severe economies imposed upon all our administrative operations by freezing vacancies or postponing replacements, by the sale of university property and by other measures." And then the president talks about the possibility of a \$2 million deficit which of course they are not permitted by law to have. The point is, Sir, that this is probably absolutely true. There is no suggestion that the president is hoodwinking the public of this Province by putting it in the president's report. But still the people who are representing - the elected members who are representing the taxpayers of this Province have the right to examine in great detail the estimates of Memorial University.

MR. ROWE:

Now four hon. members on this side have made their points on that. And I do not think there is any need to go into it any further except to say that it should be. And I would hope that the Minister of Education would stand up and relate to that particular question which he is replying to some of our questions when he has an opportunity to get up a little later. And also I hope hon. members opposite would stand up and relate the feelings

MR. ROWE: of their own constituents with respect to the School Tax authorities which we have practically beaten to death here tonight. I would like, just briefly, Mr. Chairman, to relate to some comments made by my colleague from Eagle River in connection with what, in educational jargon, I believe is called a curriculum environmental bias, where you have certain people in certain regions of a Province who are getting certain educational or instructional materials, or books, or films, or what have you, that are not meaningful to them because they are in a completely different environment from the area where this material was originated in the first place. A typical example, of course, was back there in the early years of Confederation and pre-Confederation years when we were getting textbooks where students had to learn arithmetic where they were told to go so many blocks east, so many blocks west, and so forth and so on. What did blocks mean to a student in an outpost in Newfoundland? It was absolutely meaningless, and therefore he could not learn arithmetic or mathematics with that kind of language. My friend from Eagle River has pointed out the curriculum environmental bias that is in the instructional materials that are being presented to some of his constituents in his own District and the social implications that are involved therein. I can only suggest that a very worthwhile thing for the Minister to take on is to instruct the people in his curriculum division to really put an emphasis on trying to translate really some of the curriculum material into jargon, into language, into phrases, etc. that are meaningful to people in the more remote areas of our Province and who have a completely different lifestyle from the urban areas for which most of these instructional materials are originated in the first place.

Now, sir, I would like to get on to a couple of other subjects on the Minister's head, and one is the Polytechnical Institute which I do not think will ever be known as a Polytechnical Institute! It will be known, at least for quite some time, as the Paper Institute,

MR. ROWE: because that is all that this institute is at the present time. Sir, this was a dream of the last Administration; it did not get off the ground, and we can harp back on that if hon. members opposite wish to do so. But one must remember, sir, that when this Administration took over they came on with the same promise of a great, new polytechnical institute in this Province. What saddens me, very deeply, is the fact that the people of this Province probably have, at this very moment, the feeling that this Government has now announced a great, new polytechnical institute for this Province, and what we have is nothing but a paper polytechnical institute.

We have a Bill 14, An Act Respecting The Establishment And Operation Of The Polytechnical Institute Of Newfoundland, and what this Bill essentially has done has taken the College of Trades and Technology and made that one college of the Polytechnical Institute, and taken the Fisheries College and made that another college of the Polytechnical Institute. There is no indication whatsoever, sir, - there is a vote there for the Polytechnical Institute, I believe, in the order of a million dollars. What can one million dollars do this fiscal year towards the building of a Polytechnical Institute? Will we see the beginning of a Business Education and Applied Arts College of the Polytechnical Institute? Will we see a Pharmacy and Paramedical Technology College for the Polytechnical Institute this year? I submit, Sir, we will not see anything, not even at the spec stage or at the drafting stage, and I would like the Minister -

MR. WHITE: What about the residence over there?

MR. ROWE: Well, this is the next point I was going to come to. Sir, a promise was made. We had marches on the Confederation Building here.

MR. ROWE: We had great meetings in the Premier's office and with the Minister of Education and his Hon. the Speaker about the residence for the College of Trades and Technology. Not a single word, Sir, in the Throne Speech or in the Budget Speech on the residences for the College of Trades and Technology! Yet we have the government announcing and bringing in a Bill for a Polytechnical Institute Sir, it is just one great political fraud, if I am permitted to use that particular expression. It is one great political hoax.

MR. J. CARTER: (inaudible)

MR. ROWE: Well, the hon. member for St. John's North Sir has some peculiarities when it comes to what is parliamentary and what is not parliamentary.

MR. J. CARTER: The peculiarity of being Minister of Education, too.

MR. ROWE: Well I must say it was a great training period for - it was a great training year for myself, Mr. Chairman, taking on the hon. member for St. John's North when he was Minister of Education. The result was Sir, that after the estimates were dealt with so was the minister.

MR. RIDEOUT: That was a consolation.

MR. ROWE: But, Sir, well I do not like, Sir, to see any hon. member given the flick by the Premier, but that was one of the few good things that the Hon. Premier of this province has done since he has taken over this province was -

MR. RIDEOUT: (First part inaudible) got the shaft. Gordon Dawe.

MR. ROWE: The shaft, that is right. Gordon Dawe was one, actually, yes. But, Sir, I think that the Minister of Education owes it to people of this province to call a spade a spade, and lay before the committee the true facts with regard to the polytechnical institute. What are we going to see with respect to the building of a polytechnical institute in this province this year, next year, the third year, the fourth year and the fifth year; how long down the road is this polytechnical institute, particularly when you take into consideration that we have a vote of

MR. ROWE: only \$1 million for the polytechnical institute. Is this for architectural plans? Is this for specs, is it for designs, is it for preliminary site work, is it for a start on the business college and applied arts college or is it for a start on the pharmacy and paramedical technology college, or what is it for? But, Sir, if the government has not made a commitment for the residences which surely would cost in excess of \$1 million, what is the \$1 million for voted in the polytechnical institute vote in the estimates of the Department of Education? So I call upon the minister Sir, to lay before the committee what the true facts are with respect to the polytechnical institute.

Now, Sir, looking at the student-teacher ratio in the province. Three years ago or so the then Minister of Education came with great pride talking about a three phase system for the student-teacher ratio. We still have yet to see the third phase. Now, Sir, the minister indicated in the House of Assembly some time ago during the question period that there were - how many hundred, Mr. Chairman, - so many hundred teachers are on the unemployment role, are receiving unemployment insurance benefits. Two or three or four or five or six hundred, 565, between five and six hundred teachers are receiving unemployment insurance.

MR. NEARY: That was last -

MR. ROWE: Okay, well, obviously there is a significant number of teachers receiving unemployment insurance at the present time in this province. Yet the minister tonight, Mr. Chairman, says that we have 186,000 students in this province, far in excess, relatively speaking than any other province of Canada. Now,

MR. HOUSE: One hundred and fifty-seven thousand students (Unaudible)

MR. ROWE: 157,000 students which the minister - the important thing and the operative phrase is that this is far in excess, relatively speaking, number of students per capita than any other province in Canada. Now, Sir, if we got unemployed teachers and we have these

MR. ROWE: tremendous number of students, surely heavens it is time that administration bring in the third phase of the student teacher ratio. When I asked the Minister of Education in the question period a few days ago, Sir, you know, do we have an over-supply, an under-supply why is not the third phase brought in and all this sort of thing, the minister came back and said something to the effect that it really does not make that much difference in reducing the unemployment rate of the teachers if we bring in the third phase of its student-teacher ratio. Who in the hell, Sir, is worried about the number of teachers unemployed? What we should be more worried about is the quality of education in this province. That is what

MR. ROWE: we should be worried about, And the only way of improving the quality of education in this Province is to bring in a reasonable student/teacher ratio. Now, I realize, sir, that there are places in this Province where you have ten students to one teacher, but we also have too many places where we have fifty and sixty students to one teacher, and I submit, Sir, that, the Department of Education -

MR. HOUSE: Impossible!

MR. ROWE: Oh, yes!

MR. HOUSE: Fifty or sixty pupils to one teacher?

MR. ROWE: Yes, in some of our schools. I can name them in the District that I represented at one stage of the game - St. Barbe North. There were classrooms there with fifty and sixty students in the one classroom.

MR. HOUSE: Yes, Does it still apply?

MR. ROWE: I cannot speak for that District today. But there is severe overcrowding of classrooms in some of our schools in this Province. You see, Mr. Chairman, the point that I am trying to make is this: Look, there are certain areas of this Province that are really forgotten for some reason or another, some of the rural and more remote areas of our Province. The Minister realizes this, that there are schools in this Province that do not have what you really could call adequate, or even indoor, washrooms. They might have a toilet with just a -

MR. HOUSE: Now?

MR. ROWE: Now. The Minister knows that. I am not incorrect in making that statement. There are schools in this Province, and I do not want to name them because it is a reflection on the school board and the school system, but some remote areas of this Province have very inadequate sanitary washroom conditions. They have very high numbers of students to one teacher, and the point - I am getting taken a little bit dragged away from the main point that I am making - and the point is this, Sir, Mr. Chairman, that if we have unemployed

MR. ROWE: teachers in this Province, as the Minister has indicated, and we have 157,000 students, which is far in excess on a per capita basis than any other Province in this Nation, it is incumbent upon the Minister to bring in the third phase of the student/teacher ratio - not in order to get some of the teachers off the unemployment rolls, however important that may be, but for the more important reason of improving the quality of education in this Province. Because the Chairman of the Federation of School Boards and numerous other educators have already indicated, publicly and loudly, that because of the inadequacy of the operating grants and because of the inadequacy of the capital grants, and because of certain other factors, that the quality of education in this Province is suffering drastically. Because, although we have an absolute increase in the number of dollars going towards education, we do not have a relative increase to keep up with inflation and increased operating costs, and what have you. Just look at the electricity bills and the labour bills and the increased teachers' salaries, which is a major contributing factor, I would submit. All of these factors mean that the absolute dollar, the absolute money looks great - the increase looks great - but the increase, as far as improving the quality of education in this Province, is just not in that budget, Sir. It has not been in that budget since this Administration took over. We have had, Sir, a retrenchment in education as far as improving the quality of education is concerned since this Administration took over. And, Sir, some people stand before this Committee and say "The Government is on the verge of bankruptcy; how can we get up here and rant and roar and feel justified; how can we have the gall in calling on the Government to spend more money in the field of education when they do not have the money?" Well, sir, I repeat again, I have the gall and a lot of my colleagues have the gall, for the simple reason - the reason that we are in this desperate financial situation that we have today is because of the blundering and bungling of this Administration over the past five and one-half years.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROWE: And that is.

MR. ROWE:

bad enough, but when we have this blundering and bungling along with promises raising the educational expectations of our people, it is a crime. It is a political crime. It is as simple as that. Now, Sir, I would like, in view of the information that I just related to the Minister of Education, for him to explain why we do not have the third phase of the student teacher ratio being brought in this year and when and if we can expect it to be brought in.

The other point that I would like to relate to, Mr. Chairman, is the substitute teachers. Now one or two of my colleagues have already indicated that the minister mentioned that there were certain abuses taking place with respect to substitute teaching, either teachers booking off for unreasonable reasons, not turning up for unreasonable reasons, and substitute teachers coming in and babysitting. Now, Sir, I personally feel that in this day of restraint, and even not in this day of restraint, even if we did not have restraint, that I do not think it is quite right for a teacher to come in to do a babysitting job and get for one day one-hundredth-and-ninetieth of a normal teacher's salary. I think that he is getting too much for a babysitting job. So if it is going to be cut back in that area I wholeheartedly agree with it. But I am a little bit worried when the minister indicated, he used the term 'base rate' I got down here. Now I do not know what the minister meant by 'base rate.' But I am a little bit concerned about it because the fact of the matter is that we have two types of teachers coming in to substitute teach. One type of substitute teacher is a babysitter, a chemistry teacher coming in to teach French, so he babysits the class. But we do have the chemistry teachers coming in to teach chemistry. We do have the French teacher coming in to teach French. And I would submit, Mr. Chairman, that that teacher should get the same pay as the normal teacher in the classroom.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! The hon. member's time is up.

MR. ROWE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. minister.

HON. W. HOUSE: Mr. Chairman, I have been listening and I have been jotting down a few notes. And I thought if I did not get a chance to respond to some of the comments now when I get a twenty minutes later on I would have too much to respond to.

Mr. Chairman, in responding to the hon. member from Trinity-Bay de Verde (Mr. Rowe) regarding the quality of education deteriorating since this administration came into power, I do not know what he is saying to teachers in this Province. As I have said we have got 1,000 more teachers, we have got 8,000 less pupils. These teachers are better qualified. And the educational grants to school boards have more than tripled. And teachers themselves, educators themselves are saying today that - and I tend to agree with them - that the quality of education in this Province is higher now than ever it was before. We get the argument that you get certain standards of grade eleven. You know, you will say, we will get a person who wrote us a letter. He had grade eleven presumably and he could not spell or he could not write. What has happened in Newfoundland now is that there is a large percentage, we are doing mass education, there is a large percentage of our students who are getting through grade eleven, albeit some of them are getting a low standard grade eleven because it all depends on the person. We are getting pupils now in our schools getting grade eleven that were literally kicked out of schools at a grade six ten, twelve years ago. But teaching has been perfected well enough and we have got qualified teachers, qualified well enough to get these pupils through eleven years of school, eleven or twelve years of school, and give them a form of grade eleven, I am sure, that better prepares them for the society we have today than if they were let go at grade six. So you get more grade elevens, and I submit right now that the top thirty per cent of our students today coming out of school are better than any students ever we had come out before. And I think that is the result basically of better qualified teachers.

MR. HOUSE:

You can go back and say we had good teachers back in these days. That is true. I agree with that. I went through it. And I know we had them. But we had a very small number of people. It was the survival of the fittest. It was the cream of the crop really who were getting through school in these days. They did not require

MR. HOUSE: the kind of teaching that is required today. I just wanted to respond to that one because I think if that is a smack at teaching and teachers, if you think the quality is going down, because we have more teachers, less pupils and better qualified teachers, but that in itself must of necessity indicate better teaching, all other things being equal.

AN HON. MEMBER: We have \$290 million worth.

MR. HOUSE: That is right, I think so. Money is relative as well as anything else. I want to just make a few comments about school tax authorities. I think we take, you know, a lot - we use the most extreme examples. When somebody says the collection is seventy-three per cent, this was in a small school tax authority that had a severe problem in incomes of people due to strikes or something and nobody forced the collection rates. The fact is that last year, I believe, there was just about \$7 million collected by school tax authorities.

MR. NEARY: How much, \$7 million?

MR. HOUSE: Just about \$7 million.

MR. NEARY: How much is outstanding Province wide?

MR. HOUSE: I do not know how much is outstanding Province wide. But last year just about \$7 million and about eleven per cent was the cost and the expense of collecting that.

MR. ROBERTS: That would be seven cents on the dollar.

MR. NOLAN: Would the minister permit a question? If the minister is prepared to give us an amount of \$7 million that was collected, surely the minister should have his officials here, as should every minister, to give us the outstanding amounts as well. Part of the formula is not good enough in estimates. We would like to have the amount outstanding as well. Surely the minister will do this for us tomorrow.

MR. ROBERTS: Eleven per cent.

MR. HOUSE: Yes, that is the cost of staffing, executive secretaries,

MR. ROBERTS: **Outrageous, these are make-work programmes.**

 Sure the sales tax takes in \$140 million and takes about one and one half per cent to collect.

MR. HOUSE: Let me go on to explain about this school tax.

You know -

MR. ROBERTS: You cannot explain the inexplicable, Wallace.

MR. ROWE: I am not trying to trip up the minister, but the minister did mention that the administrative costs amounts to eleven per cent. Would that include the cost for example, of running these collection agencies, bringing people to court and all this kind of a thing? Because that certainly is a cost upon the taxpayer?

MR. HOUSE: This is what I gather would include everything, the payment of the secretaries and the collection -

MR. ROWE: **Agencies, the court costs.**

MR. HOUSE: You know you could take this to extremes. You know, people talk about school tax authorities, why have the collection agency out there? The basic reason why I think school taxes should be collected is the fact that it is indicating local contributions, indicating it, and where you got local contributions being made I think it gives some fiscal responsibility to the boards. You know, you take it to the extremes; why not collect all municipal taxes here centrally? You know, why not have one big income tax and then farm the money out? Just see how responsible people would be, how responsible would people be in their demands.

MR. ROBERTS: It has started already. Has the hon. gentleman read the budget speech on a uniform municipal property tax?

MR. HOUSE: It would be collected locally though.

MR. NEARY: The municipalities provide some services, unlike the school tax authority who provide none.

MR. HOUSE: The school tax authorities do provide services, and you go out throughout this Province and you will find that

MR. HOUSE: the better schools in this Province today have been the result of school tax authorities. Remember we collected \$7 million last year; our contribution from government was \$11 million so -

MR. ROBERTS: Why should any school have authority to accept, collect money ? It is the board that provide the schools.

MR. HOUSE: Well the school tax authorities are creatures of the board, they are part of the board, there are board members that make it up. I wish to point out one other thing; in every other Province across Canada there is a form of school taxes, it is part of the municipal structure.

Newfoundland has been losing out on federal money ever since Confederation for the simple reason that in the other provinces where the municipality collects the school tax, they access the federal government properties and they get whatever that property is accessed, of course they get a grant from federal government. Let us assume -

MR. ROBERTS: (First part un-audible) think we were out of municipal tax.

MR. HOUSE: Let us assume that there is \$200 million worth of federal property in Newfoundland. By virtue of the fact that we have not had school tax authorities and business assessments we have been losing \$1 million a year. Now then, the

MR. HOUSE:

school tax authorities are assessing businesses and they are also getting the money from the Federal Government. And that is the only way we will get that money, by virtue of the fact that we assess other business properties. So that would be money that we would not get and some school boards are getting that now.

MR. ROBERTS: How much are they raising now? The minister states one-seventh of the money being raised is coming from the Federal Government.

MR. HOUSE: No, I did not say that.

MR. ROBERTS: You said \$7 millions a year being collected and as much as \$1 million a year coming from the federal.

MR. HOUSE: I am saying if we had the total Province under school tax and all the federal property assessed and doing a business tax all over, we would -

MR. ROBERTS: What parts of the Province are not under the school tax now with any real federal property in them?

MR. HOUSE: Well, I do not know.

MR. ROBERTS: No, I know the minister does not know or he would not have made the statement.

MR. HOUSE: I say I do not know what parts are not under school tax authorities, that just about all the Province will be under school tax authorities this year.

MR. ROBERTS: And how much is raised from Federal Government assessments this year?

MR. HOUSE: I am not totally aware because all the districts do not have business assessments as yet.

MR. ROBERTS: Before the minister makes loose statements like a \$1 million being lost he might check his facts.

MR. HOUSE: Well the school tax authorities, Mr. Chairman, the school tax authorities have estimated that there could be up to \$200 million

MR. HOUSE:

worth of federal property.

MR. ROBERTS: Sure. And I can estimate the moon is a million miles away but it is not.

MR. HOUSE: Mr. Chairman, am I allowed to go on without being interrupted.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

MR. HOUSE: I am making the assumption or the statement that came from the school tax authority stating that there are federal properties to be taxed railway lines and so on that could be taxable and that the only way we can get it is through a school tax authority. That is the only way we can get it. As a matter of fact, Mr. Chairman, I am beginning to feel like a lot of my friends around the Province, that that is not the Liberal Party of Newfoundland, that is the Anti-School Tax Society because everybody is real adamant that they are going to get rid -

MR. ROWE: Ha, ha, ha!

MR. HOUSE: - and it is their creature. They are the people who brought in the school tax authorities. We have modified it tremendously by having a fairly -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

MR. HOUSE: You got to make up to \$3,000 or \$3,400 if you are married before you pay any.

MR. NOLAN: Will the minister permit a question?

MR. HOUSE: Yes.

MR. NOLAN: Would the minister give us some reason then as to why rather than the school tax authority route, which as I have stated seems to be most inequitable if there is going to be additional funds raised for education, why he would not go based on income, taken care of through the income tax department, and not collecting eleven per cent as is presently being paid? Will the minister answer that please?

MR. HOUSE: I cannot answer it. The only thing I can say, we would not be able to get taxes on federal properties by doing it that way.

Mr. Speaker, the other statement that was made -

MR. NOLAN: I am talking about income, not federal property.

MR. ROBERTS: He does not know what he is talking about. Leave him - let him, let him -

MR. HOUSE: I know what I am talking about, Mr. Chairman. I am talking about school taxes, I am talking about us being on the same plane as other provinces in Canada, and that is having some kind of school tax locally, so that the people will certainly show more responsibility in their demands, number one. And number two, the fact that we can assess federal property and get some funding that way. The hon. member for Bay de Verde (Mr. Rowe) just mentioned, I think, that old age pensioners were getting dumped for taxes. When a person becomes sixty-five years of age they do not have to pay taxes.

MR. ROBERTS: (First part inaudible.) - gentleman in Twillingate who has been sued for four years tax. I sent it down to the minister today. The Gander school tax authority do not know about the rules. The minister -

MR. HOUSE: He may have owed the tax before he became sixty-five years of age.

MR. ROBERTS: He was sixty-five five years ago, he says.

MR. HOUSE: Oh well, he does not have to pay school tax.

MR. ROBERTS: Well that is what I told him. I will let the minister tell him too when the gentleman is up in Magistrates Court, you know.

MR. HOUSE: Mr. Chairman, I want to just mention the substitute teacher. I mentioned when I was going through that there was allegedly some abuses of the substitute system. I believe I stated I think that was the exception rather than the rule. I believe I mentioned that on the way through. School boards and school superintendents, and I was one of these for a while, and I think all of us recognize that even if there were not abuses, -

Mr. House:

to pay somebody to come and take a class for a day at the same rate as a teacher is paid for a year's work, you know, 1/190 th. of a year's work, you are not getting the work, you know, value for your money. You pay a teacher for a programme, a one year programme that has got short range and long range planning and so on, but to call somebody in -

MR. ROBERTS: Short planning is -

MR. HOUSE: - say at 9:15, they get there about 9:30 or a 9:45 and just go through giving a series of seat work that is already prepared does not warrant top professional pay that the teachers grade may qualify them for. And what I mentioned in a base rate was something in the nature of, you know, a good day's pay but not to the extent of 1/190th. of a salary.

So as I said there are two options we are looking at, and we are discussing this with school boards and we will be discussing it with the NTA, of which way we will go, whether we will have a flat rate for substitute teachers or whether we will go back to the old formula of having perhaps teachers - perhaps if a teacher is sick for a day we will let the pupils either stay out of school, or some other teachers look after them for that particular day. Because a lot of the substitute teachers are in on one day stands. Now obviously if a teacher is going to substitute for another teacher for a week that would be a different story, but on short periods of time we do not think it warrants a full salary.

MR. ROBERTS: Oh I am going to get up and say I welcome them.

MR. HOUSE: Free textbooks - Mr. Chairman, there is something I want to mention here that the free textbooks if you - we have been having three-quarters of our textbooks free ever since I have been teaching, because what used to happen was that the government paid a subsidy of 75 per cent of

Mr. House:

the cost of textbooks and then the other 25 per cent was what the pupil used to pay.

AN HON. MEMBER: At least they paid something.

MR. HOUSE: But that was very costly because pupils were buying new textbooks every year.

MR. ROBERTS: Why do we need new textbooks?

MR. HOUSE: So this new plan we did not think would cost substantially more. And the fact is that -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. HOUSE: - we replaced them at 25 per cent -

MR. ROBERTS: They would be like old age pensioners they will become a millionaire.

MR. HOUSE: - of the total textbooks per year. In other words, every four years we have a new slate of books paid for. This is not much more costly than it was before to the government. It is not much more costly.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. HOUSE: But one thing, Mr. Chairman, a family with seven or eight youngsters going to school, if they had to buy these textbooks at 25 per cent of the cost, as they have now, would certainly have to pay more than they got to pay in school taxes.

AN HON. MEMBER: Oh, oh!

MR. NOLAN: But hopefully a little more effectively.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes.

MR. HOUSE: Mr. Chairman, we talked about the University.

I am a little bit apprehensive to get into that topic.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. ROBERTS: The Holy Grail

MR. NOLAN: The Holy Educational Grail.

MR. HOUSE: No I am -

AN HON. MEMBER: The Holy Grail for many years.

MR. ROBERTS: There goes Your Honour agreeing with him, boy, shocking.

MR. HOUSE: I went over last year to the University one day to meet with the students, It was not a student protest day, but it was a day they wanted to talk about the University and the cutbacks and so on, and I spent some three or four hours there on the stage and it was not a very easy time, And at that time I stated ~~that~~ perhaps we are, you know, penalizing the University financially, I do not know, But how can I know if I do not know what the money is being spent for.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROBERTS: Does the minister not know -

MR. HOUSE: Pardon?

MR. ROBERTS: Does the minister not know what the money is going for there?

MR. HOUSE: Well I know it is going as a grant-in-aid to the University, I know generally speaking -

MR. ROBERTS: Is the minister not satisfied we are getting our moneys worth?

MR. HOUSE: Yes, I think we are.

MR. ROBERTS: Well how can the minister say he might be penalizing the University? He cannot have -

MR. HOUSE: I said we may be penalizing the University but how were you going to get this public credibility if you are not willing to submit your budget to -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HOUSE: Now that was stated -

MR. ROBERTS: The minister can require them to do it.

MR. HOUSE: - and I have no more information about the University budget this year than I had last year.

MR. ROBERTS: The minister can require them to do it.

MR. FLIGHT: Is the minister going to bring in legislation that will require them to -

MR. HOUSE: Mr. Chairman, you

MR. HOUSE : cannot require the university to submit its budget for scrutiny in this House of Assembly.

MR. NEARY : Why not?

MR. ROBERTS : Why not?

MR. HOUSE : Their act does not demand that they do it.

MR. SIMMONS : Could we not change the act and bring in amending legislation?

MR. HOUSE : Yes, the act was brought in by the former administration.

MR. ROBERTS : Of course it was, and so was the university and proud we are of it.

MR. HOUSE : Yes, but we are paying for it now.

MR. ROBERTS : Right.

MR. HOUSE : We are still paying for it now.

MR. ROBERTS : And all we want is the people to have a right to know where the \$43 millions is going.

I am sorry, Mr. Chairman. The minister is riling us.

MR. HOUSE : I am not riling them, Mr. Chairman.

MR. ROBERTS : Oh, yes, Mr. Chairman. He might not mean to but he is.

MR. HOUSE : I want to make some mention about the community use of schools. I think it was a -

MR. NOLAN : Tell us about what you think about the university first now. Come on.

MR. HOUSE : I think the university is doing a marvelous job in -

MR. SIMMONS : But tell us publicly what you really think - Come on. Let us hear it publicly now.

MR. HOUSE : I think Professor Morgan is a good administrator. I think he is doing a first-class job of running the university. As a matter of fact he has run it for a number of years.

MR. NOLAN : Like a commandant.

AN HON. MEMBER : (Inaudible).

MR. NOLAN : Five vice-presidents. The President of the United States does not have that, for God's sake man.

MR. HOUSE: That is right. I want to refer to the community use of schools and people have made references to the lack of use of gymnasiums and library facilities and so on. People have to bear in mind that this Department of Education tries, does encourage the community use of schools and we are doing that largely through adult and continuing education classes, but also we want to get boards, we want boards to open up their school gymnasiums to the community under regulations. Of course we could only encourage this because school boards do own the schools. The schools are not owned by the Department of Education. They are owned by the school boards. And I might say that in a large number of school districts the gymnasia are available to community groups and there are schools in this Province that are open twenty hours a day. Now I know there are some areas - The hon. member for Eagle River mentioned that they were not being used in his area. I do not know that, but I know in the area where I came from school gymnasia are open to the public for public functions.

MR. CHAIRMAN (YOUNG): The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. ROBERTS: There are still two or three hours left in the time that has been allocated so there will be lots of opportunity for the minister to speak again.

I think it is the first time I have ever heard him speak on estimates, Sir, and in all charity I must say that I hope he will make a better fist of it when he speaks in the morning or again tonight, whenever he speaks, because he noted down all the topics that he wished to speak to and he did -

MR. HOUSE : I did not get them all done.

MR. ROBERTS : Well I cannot help it if the minister did not get them all done. He will have another opportunity. He had the same twenty minutes that every other minister has or any other member has, and as my friend from Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir says if the minister had perhaps organized his thoughts it might have been a little better, but it is probably just as well he did not touch them because the ones he

MR. ROBERTS : touched upon he skated around. You know the university - He said well perhaps we are penalizing it. He says, Maybe we are, and then I say to him, Would the minister tell me whether we are getting our money's worth? Oh yes, we are getting our money's worth but perhaps we may be penalizing it.

MR. HOUSE : Yes, right.

MR. ROBERTS : Well, let me put it fairly and squarely to the minister. Does he think that - Is it \$43 millions? - that \$43 millions which is what, about five per cent of the total gross current account expenditure of this Province, five out of every hundred dollars we spend, does he think it is being well spent or not? Then he mealy-mouthed said, Well we do not know if we can make the budget public. Well damn it this House is voting \$43 million, -

MR. HOUSE : You could not before.

MR. ROBERTS : This House controls the legislation. -

MR. HOUSE : It always did.

MR. ROBERTS : If the legislation that was adopted twenty-seven years ago is no longer adequate -

MR. HOUSE : Oh, ho!

MR. ROBERTS : If the minister feels that a lot of things that were done twenty-seven years ago are no longer adequate - Of course they are. And who would think that anything that was done twenty-seven years ago was still adequate today? The government have changed their policy in five years on item after item after item. You know, the minister can do better than that. I had not really planned to get into this debate, Sir, because there are a number of my colleagues who are much more knowledgeable on aspects of education than I will ever be. My friend from Trinity-Bay de Verde,

MR. ROBERTS: my friend from Baie Verte-White Bay, my friend from Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir and others, they can speak with knowledge on fields of education that I cannot speak on with knowledge, so I will not touch on those. But after listening to the minister's defence, if that is the right phrase -

MR. HOUSE: I did not defend.

MR. ROBERTS: I will say the minister - I agree with the minister. He did not defend. He did not defend the school tax authority. He did not even put up a weak apology for it. It was really lacking in logic, lacking in fact, lacking in analysis, lacking in force and lacking in conviction. It was the least prepossessing performance I have ever seen. Even the gentleman from Grand Falls, who has said publicly, I am told, that he does not like the school taxes can put up a better defense than the minister could and the minister is responsible for the system. He is administering it. He is forcing the school tax authority to increase their assessment and he is forcing areas that do not have school tax authorities to bring them in. It is the minister's policy.

He is nodding acquiescence and well he might.

MR. HOUSE: They request.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman, forcing may be like beauty, it may lie in the eye of the beholder.

Now, Sir, the minister - I jotted down a note or two as he was speaking and these are kind and I hope parliamentary phrases - arrant nonsense, the minister's defence, if that is not to put too high a word on it. Complete and utter balderdash. The minister, I assume he believes what he is saying -

MR. HOUSE: Right.

MR. ROBERTS: But if the minister cannot say it with a little more conviction than that. He got up and he said there is \$200 million in Federal property in Newfoundland. There may be. I do not know.

MR. HOUSE: I said I assume there is.

MR. ROBERTS: He assumes it and on the basis of that assumption he makes policy. My name is heaven, what are we coming to? With all the high priced bureaucrats we have, surely we can know to the nearest say \$50 million - Are we making policy? The minister's big reason, his

MR. ROBERTS: secret weapon for nailing our policy on school tax authorities, his big weapon was, Oh, well we can tax Federal property. That sounds impressive but then we say, Now how much is there? Well, he says, \$200 million, and then when pressed a little more he says, well we assume that and then when pressed a little bit more he says, Oh, well it is not my figure. Do not blame me. Do not come after poor little old me, I am only the minister. Do not blame me. It is the school tax authorities or whatever it is called. That is a little like asking Dracula about blood banks. You know, if the minister cannot do better than that, Sir, let him go back to doing something other than being Minister of Education.

He talks about responsibility. Now are we going to have a hospital tax now? We do not have a hospital tax and yet we have a school tax. Are we not responsible in hospitals? Board after board throughout this Province is running hospitals, a policy which I helped to put into effect as the Minister of Health. Indeed the present legislation under which all our hospitals operate, yes, all of them operate, was put on the order books while I was Minister of Health - the Hospitals Act, so-called. Do the minister say hospital boards are not responsible? They do not collect any taxes. They do collect a fee for services in special very narrow circumstances. The so-called differential rate between the ward rate and private or semi-private accommodation. Is the minister now advocating a hospital tax so hospital boards are responsible?

MR. HOUSE+ Perhaps it would be a good thing.

MR. ROBERTS: We do not have elected school tax authorities. Revolutions were fought and wars were fought over taxation without representation. We do not have elected school tax authorities. We are moving to elected school boards. We do not have elected school tax authorities. They answer to nobody, nobody. Then he goes on about responsibility. Are we now going to have a welfare tax? Are we now going to have a roads tax? Are we now going to have a police tax so we can all be responsible for the quality of police? Are we going to have a mines and energy tax?

MR. ROBERTS: There is only one activity, one sector of government activity on which this kind of tax is levied and that is the school tax. It cannot be defended in principle I say to the minister -

MR. HOUSE: What about municipal taxes.

MR. ROBERTS: It can be defended because a greedy government chooses to get its money this way. What was it the minister said?

MR. HOUSE: What about municipal tax?

MR. ROBERTS: Municipal taxes, yes I will come to those. Those are related to services. School tax is not related to services. Taxes, Sir, an elementary lesson, are related either to consumption as in gasoline tax or sales tax or a tax on liquor or a tax on tobacco. These are consumption taxes where the amount of tax one pays is related to the amount of the goods or the services one consumes and presumably one has some degree of control over what services one consumes.

MR. ROBERTS: Secondly, taxes are levied on income. A very basic and to me a very fine principle, the more you have the more you pay, the bigger percentage you pay, progressive income tax. Then in the case of municipalities taxes are levied in part on property. Although every expert in the municipal field will tell the minister if the minister bothers to ask, property tax is ceasing to be the important tax and will quickly cease to be a very significant tax at all in the sense of providing municipalities with the revenue that they need. I do not know what the proportion is in Newfoundland but the minister will have to agree with me the property tax is not the tax of the future in Newfoundland. This government may try to make it the tax of the future but I say to the minister of municipal affairs the property tax is not the tax on which he is going to finance the growth of municipal services in this province.

We do not have the property base to tax in that way. Possibly operate and maintain the ongoing services but you know there is no municipality in Newfoundland that can function under a property tax.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the minister then went on to talk about the federal thing. Let me come back to that. He said we assume there is \$200 million. Then he said we are losing as much as \$1 million a year in taxation. Obviously meant to stagger us in our seats, \$1 million gone. My heavens, losing a million bucks a year for the last twenty years. By heavens, what are we coming too. Then I venture to question, I said, How much are they actually getting? He said: "Oh, we do not know that." I said; "Well, we are getting \$7 million in total, is the minister going to say that one-seventh of the total tax that is collected are grants in lieu of taxes or taxes paid by the government of Canada upon property they own. Nonsense.

AN. HON. MEMBER: It may be.

MR. ROBERTS: It may be. It is arrant nonsense. I have no idea what the

MR. ROBERTS: figure is and I do not pretend to know. I am not going to stand in the House and say I know I do know that there is not one seventh, not one dollar of every seven collected, you know, nothing like it. The minister's defence Sir, was the most astonishing piece of ineptitude and evasiveness that I have ever seen. I do not know how much property the federal government has in Newfoundland, I do not know how you value the property. I am not sure how you value property the government of the province owns. Do you value it at which it cost to put it there. Do you value its replacement cost? We do not insure much of the property we own as a province, except for the mortgages and there the insurances normally have to amount to at least the value of the mortgages. But I do not know. The next step is are we going to tax municipal property? I mean after all why shouldn't we, on the minister's analysis.

Maybe we should start taxing the hospitals and the churches on the minister's analysis. The tax does not bear any relationship to the services. All he is saying is, There is Ottawa we can hook some money, He does not know how much they own, or how much they can raise in taxes, how much they are raising. He just plucks figures out of the air. What we do know, Mr. Chairman, what we do know is that this government are raising \$7 million a year and it is costing them the better part of \$800,000 a year raise it, 11 per cent. Well I have that down in finance. it is not one per cent overall. I bet the income tax people in Canada, who collect our income tax for us, do not average one per cent in collection cost. That means out of every dollar that is beaten out of the backs of people, and the school tax authority beat it out, they beat it out with every weapon the law allows them, every dollar. Like the old man - it was not in Twillingate. I misinformed the hon. minister. He will get the letter - there was an old gentleman somewhere down in Bonavista Bay, I wish I had the letter with me -

MR. ROBERTS: who was 65 three or four years ago. Now he is being sued by the Gander School Tax Authority for his - I am sorry.

MR. J. CARTER: What is his name?

MR. ROBERTS: I do not remember the gentleman's name. I indicate the note today to acknowledge it and to say I would ask the minister for the answer. The minister will get it in due course. The Liberal Government brought in the school tax back in 1956 in Corner Brook. The only difference is we now will end it. Sure we did lots of things. Who brought the hon. gentleman into the Cabinet? That is as relevant as the other question. You cannot name anything that happened in Newfoundland between 1949 and 1972 done by the provincial government that the Liberal government did not do. It is impossible. Not even the hon. gentleman with his ability to search high and low behind rocks and under rocks and elsewhere where his colleagues are, cannot find anything that was done by the government of this province between 1949, on the first day of April and 1972 on the eighteenth day of January, that was not done by the liberal administration, for good or for bad. I say to the hon. gentleman he can exercise all the ingenuity he wants and I challenge him to find anything done between those two dates that was not done by a liberal government.

MR. ROBERTS:

So much for the hon. gentleman from St. John's North (Mr. J. Carter). Now, Sir, to come back to the Minister of Education. He can defend the school tax authority. I realize he is on a sticky wicket. And I am prepared to believe the hon. gentleman believes this is the right way to raise taxes for school. Well I say it is the wrong way, and my party says it is the wrong way. And if the hon. gentleman says in a snide, sneering way, "Oh, me and my friends think that the Liberals are known as the party of the anti-school tax authority," I glory in that.

MR. HOUSE: I did not say that.

MR. ROBERTS: I would like nothing better than to be able to stand in this House and say, Mr. Speaker, here is a bill, an act to abolish school taxes and assessments in this Province, and we will let the government of this Province assume the full cost of education and we will take the cost of it out of general revenue, not lieutenant revenue or major revenue or brigadier revenue but general revenue. Seven million dollars is half of one per cent on the sales tax. The sales tax is now producing \$14 million a point. The school tax authorities pay out \$7 millions, \$6 millions net because you got to take out the \$800,000 and it goes for inflated salaries. And so we are talking of half of one point, half a point on the sales tax, and we will cancel the Norma and Gladys and we could break her even.

MR. SIMMONS: Even you save the squandering on Scrivener. on -

MR. ROBERTS: The illogicality of the minister's approach! You know, is he going to have to get a hospital tax? Why only in schools has everybody got to be "responsible" by paying their taxes? We do not have a hospital tax, a welfare tax, a labour tax, a mines and energy tax, an agriculture tax, a forestry tax. We do not have any other kind of tax other than those related to consumption or to income, except in education. And I will tell you why we have that tax, because the minister and his colleagues lack the courage to do that which they

MR. ROBERTS:

know they ought to do. And that is to say, "We accept the responsibility for education." There are gentlemen on the opposite side who accept that philosophy. I think the gentleman from Grand Falls(Mr. Lundrigan) does. I am told the gentleman from Bay of Islands, a man who is outspoken as well as much spoken, accepts that philosophy.

MR. SIMMONS: Maybe the next Minister of Education.

MR. ROBERTS: He may well be the next Minister of Education. I hope he will be. It will be a significant step forward for the gentleman from Bay of Islands(Mr. Woodrow). But, Mr. Speaker, the defence of the minister, of the school tax question, really - I mean if he wants to get off with snide remarks let him get them off.

MR. HOUSE: It is a good defence.

MR. ROBERTS: But I would glory and my colleagues glory in being known as the Anti-School Tax Party welcome. Yes, it certainly is terrible. We should not have to be up in this House in 1977 hearing this sort of nonsense from a minister. He has not dealt with any - my colleagues have raised ten, fifteen, twenty substantive and substantial issues. Instead we get the minister up saying, "Well we think there might be \$200 millions. It might as easily be \$100 million or \$50 million or \$500 million. But let us assume \$200 millions. It has a nice round figure. Let us assume \$1 million, fourteen per cent, one-seventh of what we take in. Let us assume that. I do not know if any reason for saying it, of course, Mr. Chairman, except I assume it. It has a nice ring to it. We will let people figure outside there, Oh, well, there is \$20 million or \$25 millions we ought to have got." You know, is that the way the minister makes his policies? Is that the way the educational programmes of the minister and his department are run, on assumptions and on guesses and on hopes? I could go on and talk about a number of the issues that the minister has not dealt with, but my colleagues will speak on that, and they will pin back the minister

MR. ROBERTS:

where we think he ought to be pinned back, like his evasion on the university. The minister is asking for \$43 million, I am told, \$43 millions, \$43.7 million, nearly \$48 million. That would be the fourth or fifth largest vote in the entire estimates of the entire administration of this Province. What would be ahead of it? Teachers' salaries, the hospitals, the main hospital vote, the main welfare vote and the consolidated fund services. That is probably the fourth or fifth largest amount. And the minister gets up and he does not know if he is coming or going, or to use the good old Newfoundland phrase, if he punched or bored when it comes to tell you about the university. Either the minister says he is satisfied with the system and he feels he has enough information and that he accepts the responsibility and glad to do it, or he takes the steps that are necessary. And if the university does not like it, the university answer to this House. And this government answers to this House. And I am sure if the minister comes before this House and says,

MR. ROBERTS: "I do not have enough legislative authority to get what I believe we ought to have in the way of information," this House will gladly give it to him. I do not want to interfere in running the University, nothing is further from my competence than running this university, but asking where their money goes and how much they have and what they spend it on has got nothing at all to do with academic freedom, nothing. It is a canard and a red herring.

MR. HOUSE: It never did.

MR. ROBERTS: I agree it never did. The minister and I are on all fours on this one. The difference is, I would like to do something about it and the minister would not.

Now let me leave the minister on the university by raising one more question. We have said to our university, and I happen to be one of those people who is desperately proud of the university, I do not think it is perfect, there is much about it that makes my blood boil, but I am desperately proud of what that university has done, and what it has done for the people of this Province and what it has done with the people of this Province.

I am not a graduate of Memorial, I suppose I am not the only member of the House, but I never had the opportunity to go to Memorial, I went to another smaller, older place somewhere to the West of here which took me in and eventually pushed me out with a few letters after my name, but I am desperately proud of Memorial. If my friend from Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) had no other monuments to his credit after his term as Premier of this Province than the creation of Memorial University, he ought to be satisfied. I am not saying it is perfect, of course not. But we have given the university two conflicting instructions, and I am going

MR. ROBERTS: to ask the minister to tell us man-fashion which it is because it cannot be both. On the one hand we have said to the university, Take everybody who is qualified. Take everybody who is qualified academically. And on the other hand we say, You can only have a limited number of dollars a year to do it. Now those two are in conflict. You cannot build - to take an analogy that I think is accurate - you cannot build a hotel and say to the hotel, Take in everybody who comes by for the night's lodging and at the same time not give that hotel all the money it needs to build additional rooms and buy additional beds.

The university now - President Morgan says this in so many words in his report, my friend from Trinity - Bay de Verde (Mr. Rowe) referred to it - the university now are being caught and something has to give. It may be the quality of education, it may be something else. But I want the minister, if he would please, to state definitively what is the government's policy. Is it still open door? Is it still that any Newfoundlander or any Labradorian who qualifies by the univeristy's standards academically will be granted admission, and a place will be found for him or for her and accommodation, you know, the classroom and Library and laboratory accommodation will be provided as necessary, and faculty; or are the government saying you have so many millions of dollars, educate as many as you can with it and turn the rest away? It cannot be both. The government have tried to get away with that now for what? About four years. And it is not a new problem. We wrestled with it when we were there and we always came down on the side of saying, Keep taking them in, Newfoundland has still got half the number of

MR. ROBERTS: the relative age group in higher education compared to the rest of Canada, the other provinces.

For many of our people the university education or post-secondary education - the Trades College or the other institutions - is the way of the future, it is the only way out. We are not going to have a Province whereby people cannot get the education they need. It has to be a very great priority.

Well it has had no priority the last three or four years. Education, particularly at the university and post-secondary level, has been downgraded every way it can. Yes, money has gone up, of course it has, but in priority the university has become the stepchild, the unwanted and ugly stepchild. And if the minister is going to make that his policy, if that is the result of his policy, now let him come out and say what the policy is. Is it going to be open doors, all who qualify may come, which is what we have done for twenty-seven years in this Province now, or is it going to be only those can come up to however many the dollars can accommodate?

I think that is one of the central issues confronting us in the field of education today. All the other things are important, but I am not competent to talk about substitute teachers and curriculum and those things, I am told about them and I, perhaps, understand some of them. But I do know a little about the university. I know what it means to my constituents, I know what it means to people throughout this Province. I know what it meant, for example, to the minister. I think it is fair to say that if the Liberal Government had not put that university there the minister might not be where he is today, because he got where he is by a combination of two things; his own ability and hard work.

MR. ROBERTS: and the opportunity to go to Memorial.

MR. HOUSE: Not that Memorial.

MR. ROBERTS: Well, where did the minister go?

MR. HOUSE: Not the new Memorial.

AN HON. MEMBER: To the old one.

MR. ROBERTS: He went to Memorial.

MR. HOUSE: The old Memorial, yes.

MR. ROBERTS: What Memorial? There is only one Memorial.

MR. HOUSE: The old one.

MR. ROBERTS: It has grown and prospered in the years.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! The hon. member's time is up.

MR. ROBERTS: So quickly? So quickly?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. the Minister of Rural Development.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Mr. Speaker,

MR. LUNDRIGAN: I am going to just take a few moments, because it is certainly not my intention to take any of the time of the House for the debate on the Education Estimates.

I refrained last year from getting involved, primarily because we had, again, seventy-five hours, and I find, I will be quite frank about it, some kind of an impingement on my natural tendency to be, sort of having to sit by and watch other ministers. I like to have the same kind of free role as hon. members, and it is a difficult thing to do when you are in Government, because you can always be accused of taking the time of the House.

Mr. Chairman, I would, first of all, like to congratulate the Minister and the Member for Baie Verte - White Bay for their presentations to the House this evening, because I do believe both of them had very straightforward and professional kinds of comments. The Member for Baie Verte - White Bay, that I praised him for his Irish attitude a few weeks ago - he claims it is English, while his attitude is very Irish and his spirit is very Irish, and I feel he had some very pointed remarks, and certainly a commendable debater, a person that I feel will one day challenge the leadership of this particular party.

AN HON. MEMBER: Why not? Everybody else does.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: The Leader of the Opposition was very disappointing, Mr. Chairman. I say as a man who has the intellect and the capability, I am very disappointed with his presentation as a person who has - and he has shown it on every occasion in the House - a tremendous intellect, that he did not take the opportunity today to present to the Legislature some suggestions that could have been, maybe, incorporated in the thinking of educators through the Minister and the Department. Because I believe it is a fatal mistake, in the debate, when we have got five hours, to get hung up on the most politically palatable avenue, which is the School Tax issue. And of all the hon. members, especially my colleagues who are educators, my colleague, the member from Burgeo - Baie d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) who is an educator of some renown, a former President of the Newfoundland Teachers' Association, my former colleague and associate in the University, as a fellow professor in the University, who is a commendable person in his field, an outstanding person in Science education, I might indicate to the Legislature, and some dozen members of the Legislature that are educators, it is a shame we have got hung up on the

MR. LUNDRIGAN: political aspects of the particular budget and ignored some of the real issues.

Now, I will just clarify one point, One of the funniest things that happened to me since I got involved in politics eight or ten years ago was some three weeks ago, or more. I listened with intent one weekend to a newscast indicating that I had taken very serious objection to the School Tax Authorities for the fact that they existed, that I was totally opposed to School Tax Authorities, that they should be abolished immediately, and away I went with my comments; to find out on Monday that it was the hon. member from Trinity - Bay de Verde (Mr. Rowe) that had made the comments, and they were attributed to the member for Grand Falls. Perhaps the Leader of the Opposition suspects, as a result of that misclassification, or whatever you might want to call it, that the sentiments of the Member for Trinity - Bay de Verde have felt in substantive fashion by the Member for Grand Falls, which is not so. I have never expressed publicly any position against School Tax Authorities. I have expressed, and I will express publicly again, Mr. Chairman, that the way the School Tax Authority in the Exploits area is imposing its taxes on the Grand Falls residents - poses an unfortunate and a very heavy burden on the people in the area, and I will not be satisfied, as the Member, which I feel that I have every right to express the public opinion, until we can find ways and means to ease the burden of school taxes on the residents of Grand Falls. The School Tax Authority in the Exploits region imposes a property tax, and, as a result of the fact that you have an excessively high property structure - tax structure in Grand Falls - property valuation in Grand Falls, it necessarily follows that the people in that community pay a heavier proportionate share of taxes than they pay, say, in the city of St. John's. We have people in Grand Falls paying as high as \$200- a householder, just because of the fact that they are paying it on the basis of property .

MR. ROBERTS: What are those, school taxes?

MR. LUNDRIGAN: The school taxes. When we have got, say, in the city of St. John's \$75, And the people in Grand Falls, I believe, have been paying school taxes longer than any other community in the Province. They began paying school taxes before Corner Brook, before it was ever legislated, because the school systems in Grand Falls, well it was a school burden on the constituent, on the individual, and they are not delighted to pay any tax, but certainly

MR. LUNDRIGAN: it would have to be said publicly that the people of Grand Falls have been paying an inordinate amount of the tax burden in this Province since day one, because they do earn salaries which are higher than the Provincial average, and they do have a fairly healthy industrial base, but they have been paying assessments for school purposes in Grand Falls almost since the beginning of the mill. And my friend from Windsor-Buchans can attest to the same thing as many of his constituents did the same thing as well. I have taken exception, and I state today, and I have had many discussions with my colleague, the Minister of Education; as a matter of fact, at the present moment there is a request for a meeting with the Town people, the Town managers, the Town officials, the Council in Grand Falls, and when we get the estimates through and the House clued up - if we get the thing through reasonable early - we will sit down with the representatives of Grand Falls and we will, hopefully, sit down with the School Tax people and find a way to impose less of a burden on the residents of Grand Falls. I believe the School Tax Authority people feel themselves that the burden is a bit exorbitant, and I believe that no reasonable person wants to impose that kind of a burden, and we have to find a way around it.

Now, I am just going to make a few comments.

First of all, Mr. Chairman, we are dealing with one of the heaviest expenditures in the Provincial Budget - \$291 million, less the related revenue - \$273 million. I remember, Mr. Speaker, some years ago, when I had the great fortune, along with a number of other people in the Legislature over the past years, of spending some time in the University of Alberta, I did a little analysis at the time about the relationship between education and productivity - education and the ability of a general community to be productive, and it has been established in study after study, research after research, thesis after thesis, document after document, that there is a heavy relationship between the educational capability of a region, of a

MR. LUNDRIGAN: people, of a particular province or a country, and the productivity. The level of output, the level of development, the economic -

MR. ROBERTS: The higher the education will be, the higher the productivity.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Well, that is basically the conclusion. Even in Kuwait, where you have an abnormal and a very high kind of return because of the unusual economic circumstances in that particular country, they can still correlate educational development and the human resource development with productivity and with growth and with development of any kind of an economic sense. That is something which always gives me the great commitment and feeling that we have to be very, very particular in making a tax on educational institutions, because when times get relatively poor and when the dollars are relatively scarce, when the kinds of things are not able to be done in society - the hospital programs and the social welfare programs, and so on, are not able to be met up to the expectations of the public - it is a great tendency for all politicians to attack the educational institution. It becomes the then exposed 'sacred cow'. It might be a bit of a sacred cow, as a matter of fact, but there is an awful tendency in this day and age - right now, 1977 - relatively tough times across our Country and in our Province - to attack education and to expose it as one of the great consumers. I am a little concerned about that because I do believe that it is a very important, if not the most important, use of a Provincial dollar or a budgeted dollar, to put it into the development of your people in your society. The unfortunate part in our Province, of course, is that many of the people and the most competent, capable people we develop and help develop through our institutions of one sort and another, we lose them as a result of the state of our economy which has been going on since day one. I have had, recently, the opportunity - as a result of the prodding from the member for Conception Bay South - to look up the export of

MR. LUNDRIGAN: people statistics , the emigration from our Province, to find out that every since Confederation - and I presume if you go back to the thirties, or even before there has been a tremendous migration of people from our Province. One of the saddest stories of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador is the fact that we have not been able to provide the state of economic development that would enable us to hold our population. And, if you go across this country, you would find that a tremendous bulk of leadership exists among people who are former Newfoundlanders. If you go down to the New England States, if you go to Toronto, I understand there is a population in Toronto almost equivalent to the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, - people who are carrying on the great activities of that particular Province in that City. These are the things that we have to get our teeth into. In doing that, Mr. Chairman, we have to raise questions about the relationship between the education and the economy of our Province, whether we have a classical education, whether we are too oriented towards an academic education, or whether we should be more concerned with relating the educational institutions - the educational output, if you want - to the state of the economy we have in this Province. I believe we have changed the attitude in this Province towards the end result of education. I think we have changed in the last number of years. The fact that the Fisheries College has taken on the level of significance it has in recent years, the fact that we are debating whether or not

MR. LUNDRIGAN:

there will be a polytechnical institute this year, whether the million dollars is adequate, whether it will start or not. It is an indication that we are on the right track, that we are concerned that the output, or that the general return from the educational dollar is relative to the economy that we are living in today. I think it would be a great tragedy if we did not recognize that we cannot afford in this Province to have the kinds of general classical orientation for education that they might be able to afford, say, in the Province of Alberta. I believe that is a realism that we have to face. And if we are going to just conjure up all of our dollars just to develop the human being without any relevancy to the economy, I think that would be heading in the wrong direction.

Now I am going to make one comment on a most important aspect of the education budget. And that is - I do not know if it is specified in any particular vote. I do not think it is. I think it is maybe more specified in the teacher salary vote, \$139 million - and that is the business of curriculum. Now I was an educator for a few years and maybe fortunately or unfortunately got carried away with sort of the calling of politics. But, Mr. Chairman, I remember the pride that I had when I, first of all, I finished my education in St. Peter's School in Upper Island Cove. I was not sent away and educated and trained abroad or I never got any of those kinds of sophisticated education. But I did understand a little about the E.J. Pratt poetry. I knew what he meant when he wrote his poetry. I had some idea about the sea and the surroundings, the countryside, the ordinary folk, the common living, the general community. And someone told me after a while about curriculum. What is curriculum? I thought curriculum was a pile of books on a desk. Someone said curriculum is the sum total of all of the experiences that you acquire and that you were exposed to, that you come in contact with, that you learn and associate with as you grow up and grow through your school and grow

MR. LUNDRIGAN:

up through your community. And I would not change the education that I got and the little school in Upper Island Cove with any institution anywhere in the world. I knew I could not speak all the proper words. I still cannot. I stick "h's" all over the place. But I got some good feeling of what it is about to grow up in a community, first of all, among the kinds of - the environment in which your school existed, especially the marine environment, your exposure to the sea, these kinds of things. That is why the hon. member from Baie Verte-White Bay (Mr. Rideout) can get up with the spirit and the enthusiasm that he speaks with, not because he had a classical education or he was exposed to the higher institutions of learning, the very sophisticated system. And this is what I believe we have got to recognize in our Province today. I have taken great, strong exception to Doctor Phil Warren, who was a great friend of mine, a colleague of mine. I taught with him at the university. He was my boss, in charge of the division of administration. He was for years an associate. I have taken great exception to some of his philosophy which found its way into our system to a considerable extent and which is imposing a very heavy administrative burden on our systems today because I believe we might have gone - I ask my colleague in all frankness if he does not feel sometimes himself if we have not gone a little bit too far towards the centralization, towards the regionalization, towards the making it bigger and putting it all -

That is one of the reasons we are paying almost \$12 million this year for school transportation. This is the kind of a tendency we have ourselves as people. And these are the issues we have to get into, Mr. Chairman, I suggest to the Leader of the Opposition. What is the best size of a school? Somebody told me down in Terra Nova, my hon. colleague who is the member for Terra Nova

MR. LUNDRIGAN:

and I am sure he would like to have some remarks - he is an expert in his field - would like to tell us about that little one room school. I understand they have got a tremendous curriculum, a tremendous educational standard, perhaps not all of the amenities. We have got to be careful that we do not associate quality with largeness, with bigness, with the rest of it. We have got to be careful. I remember the words of my colleague, the member for St. John's South(Dr. Collins) very recently. He captured my attention, he captured the attention of the member from Twillingate(Mr. Smallwood). But he said we have got to be careful we do not associate quality with dollars. Look at the dollars and say, Look, we spent \$291 million, \$273 million net this year. Is that enough? Let us be a bit careful about that because there is a tremendous amount of education, if you can quantify it, which has no relevancy to dollars. Let me just mention the most important thing that I was going to harp on, that is curriculum. What happens in the classroom? I contend that the most important thing we can do for young people today aside from the basic skills, people got to learn to read. That is the number one thing that has to happen, whether it is in the school or elsewhere, and especially number one today when you have got your problems with television where people are basically encouraged to be intellectually lazy as a result of television. They have got to learn to read. You have got to learn to do something with figures.

MR. LUNDRIGAN:

Do not get all carried away with all of your new math, all that stuff. They are all getting back today, you know, and starting to say that a lot of that stuff is a lot of nonsense imposed on us by the American super salesmen. So you get your reading and your writing and your arithmetic, as I say, the three "r's". That is number one. Number two, which is maybe more important even in many ways, is the business of trying to expose our students in Newfoundland today to things that are relevant to Newfoundland. The curriculum - let us get back to trying to expose our students, like the St. Francis High School in the hon. member from Harbour Grace's riding, talking about fishing, fishing technology, 200 mile limit. And I notice the editorial in the Evening Telegram tonight commending these people for trying to bring into the curriculum things that are meaningful and relevant to the environment they are growing up in. Let us get involved like the Icelandic people do, not a system of propaganda. But when you grow up in an Icelandic school, I have been told during the couple of times I have been there, the youngsters are exposed from day one to a curriculum that is pro-Icelandic, Icelandic cultures, all the sagas, all the history, so that when they leave school if they go anywhere in the world they are Icelandic first and foremost. Go to Gimbley in Manitoba today and you will still find the Icelandic people are almost as pro-Icelandic as they were when they left there. That is some seventy or eighty years ago during difficult times. Let us get into the curriculum where you expose them to a lot of the Breakwater Books, Cassey Brown's beautiful latest two books she has put out, the business about the songs and the music and all this kind of culture. I do not know -

AN HON. MEMBER: Hurry it up.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: All right, take it easy hon. colleague. I notice the gentleman the other night went without too much interruption until

MR. LUNDRIGAN:

two minutes after eleven.

I believe I am right in saying that we have the richest culture maybe with some comparability in Quebec - do we? - not in Canada, when it comes to her songs, her music, all of the thousands and tons of things that Dr. Pat O'Flaherty, a good friend of mine as well, though a great supporter of the opposite group across the way, and other people who - and Dr. Neary, Dr. Peter Neary, great scholars - they have put together - Dr. Storey. The Newfoundlandia you might want to call it. These are the kinds of things we have to try - and I believe the hon. minister communicated that. It is coming back in our schools today. Put it back into our curriculum; put it back into our schools, because one of the disadvantages that happened in 1949, with all the advances, is that we became part of this great Canadian system. We lost a lot of our identity. As a result of that we lost a lot of our Newfoundland patriotism. That is costing us today. That is what correlates for the lack of productivity to a large extent. We have not got the pride. You go in schools today, and ask youngster to go out and sing, "The Ode to Newfoundland." When I sing it, I still get the shivers that I had when I was growing up in my little classroom. A lot of our students do not even know the words of it today. We have got to - aside from the basics - we have got to emphasize in our curriculum a lot of very pro Newfoundland stuff so that our people do not lose the old pride, the old nationalism, if you want to, because that is what makes the metal that ends up making a nation. I am not suggesting anything separatist in my remarks.

But let us, Mr. Chairman, if we got four or five hours left, let us get into the guts of this, and let us leave out the bit of petty politics.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HICKMAN: Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee rise, report progress and ask leave to sit again.

MR. CHAIPMAN: I move that the Committee rise -

MR. ROBERTS: Are we going to carry this subhead?

On motion 601-01, carried

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

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply have considered the matters to them referred and have directed me to report having passed items of expenditure under the following headings: V, Labour and Manpower, all items without amendment, VIII, Social Services, all items without amendment, and have made further progress and ask leave to sit again.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chairman of the Committee of Supply reports that the Committee have considered the matters to them referred and passed the items of expenditure under the following headings: V, Labour and Manpower, VIII, Social Services, all without amendment.

On motion report received and adopted.

On motion Committee ordered to sit again on tomorrow.

MR. HICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I move that the remaining Orders of the Day do stand deferred and that this House on its rising do adjourn until tomorrow Tuesday at ten of the clock.

MR. SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that the House do now adjourn. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? Those in favour, "aye." Contrary "nay." Carried.

This House stands adjourned until tomorrow at ten of the clock.