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(Hansard)

Speaker: Honourable Patrick McNicholas

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[Preliminary Transcript]

The House met at 3:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):
Order, please!

Yesterday the Premier gave notice of a resolution in relation to the member for Mount Scio - Bell Island (Mr. Barry). The member for Mount Scio - Bell Island rose on a point of privilege in relation to the resolution and I would like to make my ruling on the question. The member for Mount Scio - Bell Island has suggested that the resolution would 'frighten and muzzle the Opposition' and 'impair the Leader of the Opposition from performing a public function, a duty,' and that the resolution would 'subvert the parliamentary process' by attempting to intimidate. He also suggested the resolution resulted in a member being put in a position of double jeopardy.

I have looked carefully at both of these claims in light of the resolution and have reviewed several sources on parliamentary privilege, including Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms, Erskine May's On Parliamentary Practice and Maingot's On Parliamentary Privilege in Canada.

As members are aware, when a question of privilege is raised the Speaker rules only on whether or not there is a prime facie case of privilege. A prime facie case of privilege is one where the evidence on its face as outlined by the member is sufficiently strong for the House to be asked to send it to a committee to investigate whether the privileges of the House have been breached or contempt has occurred.

Parliamentary privileges is the necessary immunity that the law

provides for members of the Legislature in order for them to do their legislative work. To constitute privilege, generally there must be some improper obstruction to the member in performing his parliamentary work in either a direct or a constructive way as opposed to a mere expression of public opinion or criticisms of the activities of the members.

It is my opinion in this case that there is no prime facie case of privilege. My conclusion is based on my view that the resolution proposes to condemn the member for inappropriate conduct as a member of the House of Assembly, but the resolution does not obstruct or impede a member of the House in the discharge of his duty. The member's reference to an argument on double jeopardy is not, in my opinion, relevant to the question of privilege.

However, in my view of the resolution, I have concerns with two of the recitals that state, and I quote, "And whereas the foregoing constitutes a clear instance of the hon. Member using his position as a member of this House for personal gain," and the second quote, "And whereas the foregoing reflects a serious abuse by the Member for Mount Scio in the discharge of his duties as a Member of this Assembly." It is my opinion that these two recitals are unparliamentary. Members are familiar with Paragraph 319, Subsection (3) of Beauchesne that states, "A Member will not be permitted by the Speaker to impute to any Member unworthy motives for their actions in a particular case." and Paragraph 316e that says, "A member, while speaking, must not impute bad motives or motives different from those

acknowledged to a Member." Both of these quotations in Beauchesne refer to debate, but I think the prohibition against unparliamentary language would without doubt extend to the contents of a resolution. A member cannot do indirectly something that he or she would not be able to do directly. As a result I have ordered that the resolution should not be printed on the Order Paper of the House of Assembly. It is clearly within the authority of the Speaker to withhold from publication something considered unparliamentary and I would refer members to page 372 of May for a statement of that authority.

MR. TULK:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of order, the hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

Let me say, first of all, that I congratulate Your Honour on having the courage to do what is necessary to do in the House, and that is to take on whoever is wrong in this Legislature. But I wonder if, on a point of order, I could also ask Your Honour to investigate one other question. The Premier yesterday in putting forward this resolution alleged that there was some \$750,000 paid to the law firm of which the member for Mount Scio was a member. The member for Mount Scio consequently contradicted that. I wonder if Your Honour could indeed have an investigation carried out. If indeed the Premier did give wrong information in this House, it was wrong for him to have given it. I want again to thank Your Honour because Your Honour has ruled, in my opinion,

what is correct, because the resolution imputes, in this case, wrong motives and should not go on the Order Paper. I would like to ask Your Honour if he would, perhaps over the next two or three days or weeks, at his own discretion, of course, investigate whether the Premier did give wrong information in this House in stating that figure.

MR. MARSHALL:

To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, the hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

That is clearly not a point of order. It is not for the Speaker of the House to make inquiries of that nature. I would just say, Mr. Speaker, with respect of Your Honour's ruling that, of course, the Premier, when he comes back, may indicate, because this was a matter of privilege that he rose himself, his bringing in an amended resolution with amended recitals, which is always appropriate, if he so desires.

MR. TULK:

Further to this point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, the hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

Obviously the Speaker, would understand if the Premier wants to amend his resolution and take out the kind of accusations that he has put in there, but obviously, Mr. Speaker, they are the very essence of the Premier's resolution - which the Speaker

struck out - and the reasons why the Premier wants to condemn the member for Mount Scio (Mr. Barry). Obviously the Speaker himself would know whether indeed a new resolution put forward by the Premier would be in order, and it is not for the Government House Leader to tell him what his duties are.

Mr. Speaker, just let me say one other thing to you and that is, in my opinion, Sir, this is a great day for democracy in this House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:
To that point of order, there is no point of order.

Statements by Ministers

MR. R. AYLWARD:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. R. AYLWARD:
Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I am pleased today, to inform hon. members of the activities of my department's incentive loan programmes for the first half of the 1985-86 fiscal year.

During the period of April 1, to September 30, 1985, the Rural Development Authority approved 97 loan applications with a total value of \$1.25 million. The loans helped create 89 full-time jobs

and 106 part-time jobs, while maintaining 103 full-time jobs and 490 part-time jobs. The total approvals of \$1.25 million shows an increase of 102 per cent over the same period last year, which saw \$608,000 approved.

The increase in lending activity over the first half of the year made it necessary for us to request a Special Warrant to cover the continuance of the Sawmill Assistance Programme, which is now in its tenth consecutive year. The objective of the Sawmill Assistance Programme is to encourage increased production and employment in the sawmill industry by providing loans and working capital during the Winter months. The loan limit for this years programme has been increased from \$25,000 to \$30,000 maximum.

The dramatic increase in funding over the first half of this fiscal year can be attributed to an increased rate of approval on submitted applications and an increased number of new and former clients who have been approved for maximum loan amounts. The maximum loan for Rural Development Authority loans is \$25,000.

We are now in the process of projecting loan expenditure for the remainder of the fiscal year which will, undoubtedly, require additional funding.

Mr. Speaker, with the provisions of these loans through my Department of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development, I feel confident that small industry will continue to grow and flourish, providing good jobs and security for many Newfoundlanders.

It is very worthy to note that since its creation in 1972, the

Rural Development Authority has expended funds totalling \$22,167,687.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. KELLAND:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the member for Naskaupi.

MR. KELLAND:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to thank the hon. minister for providing me with a copy in advance of the House session this afternoon and say it is a pleasure to be the official critic for a minister who exhibits the qualities of a gentleman that the minister has on this and previous occasions by making a copy available in adequate time for consideration.

There are some interesting things in here. I am very pleased, to start off with Mr. Minister and members of the House, that we are talking about 800 jobs either maintained or created by the programme. I am also interested in the Sawmill Assistance Programme, which I think is vital.

From time to time the question has arisen in our area of Labrador, where we have such a vast area of forest lands. I would like to see, once the primary resource is harvested, the means by which small sawmill operators can avail themselves of that secondary part of the industry. I am glad to see the increase from \$25,000 to the maximum of a \$30,000 loan. I believe that is a step in the right direction.

It is interesting though in the

next statement where the dramatic increase in funding over the first half of the year is attributed to, let us say, a speedier rate of approvals. Now, I do not suppose the minister, in his gentlemanly goodwill, as a minister of the Crown and so on, would have ever considered that 1985 is an election year. I suppose that the fact that there is a dramatic increase of approval of loan and grant applications was due to the fact that in an election year supporters and friends of certain political parties and certain authorities are better able or are in a better position to receive approvals if it would be of some political benefit to the party that they are supporting. I do not suppose the minister would ever consider that might have happened. I am not questioning his integrity in that matter at all, but certainly the House should consider the fact that it was an election year, a whole lot of grants were passed out and, consequently, it may have some relation to the actual political facts.

Notwithstanding that, in a general sense, I believe that these steps, the increase and so on, are taken in the right direction. I would like to mention to the minister that I will take note of the fact that I would expect to see - all things being equal and carrying his argument and statement on to its logical conclusion - next year the same type of increase and growth rate that we saw for 1985.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:
I would like to welcome to the galleries 22 Level 2 students from E.J. Pratt School in Brownsdale

with their teachers Marjorie Badcock and Reg Button.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

Oral Questions

MR. FUREY:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the member for St. Barbe.

MR. FUREY:
I have a question for the Minister of Public Works and Services (Mr. Young). In light of the answers tabled in the House on Monday showing an extravagant expense to renovate the Premier's office in a time of restraint, many people across this Province were shocked by that figure which climbed to nearly half a million dollars. I wonder what those young people out there, those 18,000 young people who have no hope of getting a job from this government, thought when they saw that massive expenditure?

My question to the minister is this: Was there an interior decorator hired as part of the \$429,000 expenditure for the renovations in the Premier's office? If there was an interior decorator hired for this service, how much did it cost the public treasury?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of Public Works and Services.

MR. YOUNG:
Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the interior decorator was hired by the consultant pertaining to the old Confederation Building. If he

wants the cost that the consultant paid the interior decorator, I will gladly get it for him.

MR. FUREY:
Who paid the consultant?

MR. YOUNG:
Government.

MR. FUREY:
Well should you not know?

MR. YOUNG:
But, Mr. Speaker, I just said that. Fixing up the Premier's office, Mr. Speaker, is part of the process of renovating all this building. The main consultant is doing all this building. The consultant's fee pertains to all Confederation Building and the same consultant is doing the new extension.

MR. FUREY:
Mr. Speaker, a supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER:
A supplementary, the hon. the member for St. Barbe.

MR. FUREY:
Yesterday the Premier gave a commitment to the hon. the member for Twillingate (Mr. W. Carter) who asked a very pointed and specific question about interior decoration for that office. He said that he would check. Presumably he would have to check with you, Mr. Minister, because that comes under your auspices and your responsibility.

Now, I ask you again, was there an interior decorator hired to check and redo the decorum of the eighth floor, the Premier's office?

MR. J. CARTER:
The decorum, indeed, was perfect.

MR. FUREY:

To renovate. We see the only living example of mankind taking a backward step since the Neanderthal days in the hon. member for St. John's North.

Mr. Minister, was there an interior decorator hired for renovation purposes in the Premier's office? If so, how much did it cost the public treasury? That is your responsibility.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Public Works and Services.

MR. YOUNG:

Mr. Speaker, I just told the hon. gentleman it was done through general consultant for renovation of the Confederation Building and the Annex, the extension over there. Mr. Speaker, whatever that consultant was paid came out of the fees that we pay the main consultant, the project managers of all the building. I will find out the cost, what they paid the interior decorator, but it was all in the fees for the main consultant for this building.

MR. FUREY:

A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A final supplementary, the hon. the member for St. Barbe.

MR. FUREY:

I have never seen an issue so glossed over and clouded in all my life. Why was that not tabled the other day? Why was that answer not tabled in reply to the question put forward by the hon. member to my right? A final question to the minister: Could the minister -

MR. J. CARTER:

Do you have a problem?

MR. FUREY:

He is at it again. The primordial specimen is at it again. Could the minister tell this hon. House the full cost of transforming the press room on the eleventh floor into your so-called new Cabinet Room?

MR. YOUNG:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Public Works.

MR. YOUNG:

That is a good question, Mr. Speaker, but I do recall that the hon. member for Port de Grave (Mr. Efford) has it on the Order Paper waiting to get the answer. But I can tell the hon. member for St. Barbe that the answer to that same question was tabled before in this House of Assembly. I tabled that before about how much the Conference Room upstairs cost. It has been done. Unfortunately the hon. member was not here at the time, and he probably will not be here when we finish other renovations to the building. So, Mr. Speaker, it has been tabled. I will gladly get anything pertaining to the cost of anything in this building.

MR. GILBERT:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir.

MR. GILBERT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Yesterday I was in the process of asking the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands (Mr. Simms) a

question concerning export wood, that there was a market for 10,000 cords, and he told me what I already knew, that he had just issued a permit for 2,500 cords. What prompted the question was there has been a delay. I was wondering, does he now intend to issue a permit for the other 7,500 cords? Also, was the permit he issued a permanent one or a permit for this year only, that is, for the 2,500 cords? So there are two parts to this first question.

MR. SIMMS:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands.

MR. SIMMS:
Mr. Speaker, this is not a question that would require a simple answer. I am sure the hon. member from his research is well aware of the fact that all the forest management units in this Province, all nineteen of them, are managed, and have been for the last ten or eleven years, under a sustained yield system whereby an annual allowable cut is established based on all of the technical factors that are required to make such an analysis, including the often requested needs for municipalities, wilderness reserves and all the rest of it.

MR. FLIGHT:
Answer the question.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. SIMMS:
Would the hon. member try to settle down now?

MR. POWER:

How many leaders do we have over there today?

MR. PEACH:
None.

MR. SIMMS:
In any event, Mr. Speaker, then, of course, harvesting is allowed depending on the appropriate levels that one could obviously harvest because of the annual allowable cut. What we have done on occasion in the past was increase the annual allowable cut in areas where forests were infested or where there was a lot of budworm damaged wood. We have also increased harvesting, increased the annual allowable cut on some historical occasions where it was necessary to try to keep some employment going. But you have to keep in mind, Mr. Speaker, at all times that it must be done in consultation with all the parties involved. Therefore, I am aware of the situation. We did issue a permit for an additional 2,500 cords to assist those contractors who find themselves in that particular situation, but I do not think we will be in a position to do anymore this year. Next year we will have to consider the matter when it comes to our attention.

MR. GILBERT:
A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
A supplementary, the hon. the member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir.

MR. GILBERT:
I wonder does the minister realize by not granting those export permits that a minimum of at least 300 jobs on the Northeast Coast of Newfoundland will be lost to loggers who are not going to have work this year? I wonder has he

any alternate arrangements for those people?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands.

MR. SIMMS:

Well, Mr. Speaker, we will do what we always do every year and try to co-operate with those independent contractors and loggers to assist them in supplementing their incomes to the best of our ability. But I say to the hon. member that if we do not proceed on a proper management basis, then ten years from now we will not only lose 300 jobs, we will probably lose several thousands of jobs.

MR. GILBERT:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir.

MR. GILBERT:

I wonder, from the sources that have been providing me with the information, does the minister know that the wood in question is either mature, over mature or insect infested? If it is not harvested, it is going to be wind-blown or blown down within the next couple of years. As I understand it, Price-Abitibi, which has the timber rights on this land, are not going to cut any more. Even they themselves admit that some of it would be mature wood but they are not going to cut any more. We have heard that. So does not the minister think he should issue the permit for the 7,500 cords in this area?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Minister of Forest Resources and Lands.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, I am advised by professional people in the field and it is on the basis of their information that we determine where this harvesting will be allowed. It is precisely in those areas that he describes that we allow cutting for export purposes and whatever to occur. If the hon. member has some specific information he would like to pass on to me, I would be happy to receive it and have a look at it, rather than just his standing up in the Legislature saying 'his sources.' I mean, who are his sources?

MR. GILBERT:

A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member is recognized for a final supplementary.

MR. GILBERT:

Is not the prospect of 300 meaningful jobs enough to have the minister question removing the timber in question from his over-generous commitment to Price-Abitibi?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, I have not given Abitibi an over-generous commitment personally as the Minister of Forestry. There is an agreement which was passed, I guess several years ago, in order to encourage Abitibi-Price to take over the Stephenville mill to create employment where there is no resource and, in exchange for that, they are allowed to obtain wood from units eight and nine. So I do not know quite what the hon. member is driving at or where

he is getting his information from unless he is getting from a budworm.

MR. BAKER:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the member for Gander.

MR. BAKER:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A number of years ago the government recognized the need for a large, adequate Press Room to be put into this particular building. Now with the lavish renovations on the eighth floor, the press has been displaced and have been pushed off in a cubbyhole in totally inadequate facilities. This is the only Province in Canada, Mr. Speaker, that does not now have adequate facilities for the press. My question to the Minister of Public Works and Services is: How long is he going to allow this to go on? When are proper facilities for the press going to be put into place?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of Public Works and Services.

MR. YOUNG:
Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that when a decision is made on where the Cabinet Room will be relocated - I presume the Cabinet Room will be on this floor - the press will be accommodated much better in the new House of Assembly and I feel sure that they will be quite satisfied. There is going to be a lot of swing space used in this building and some people will be inconvenienced. I apologize to the press for the inconvenience that they are now having, and I trust in time they will be put in more suitable accommodations.

MR. BAKER:
A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
A supplementary, the hon. the member for Gander.

MR. BAKER:
Mr. Speaker, do I understand this to mean that the press is going to have to put up with this little cubbyhole, that they can only use sometimes, for the next couple of years at least? Is this an attempt to muzzle the press for the next couple of years so that only the government's position gets out through Newfoundland Information Services?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of Public Works and Services.

MR. YOUNG:
Mr. Speaker, I am not trying to muzzle the press, I appreciate the press. Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, I read an answer in The Evening Telegram to a question that was on the Order Paper when the House of Assembly opened. So I think the press is doing well and I appreciate what the press is doing.

MR. BAKER:
A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
A final supplementary, the hon. the member for Gander.

MR. BAKER:
Mr. Speaker, yesterday the press had a real problem. When the CBC is using their remote, the rest of the press has to go somewhere else but there is nowhere else to go. Are you setting out on a campaign to punish the press the same way you are trying to punish the official Opposition in this House?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear! Hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Public Works and Services.

MR. YOUNG:

No, Mr. Speaker, in no way am I trying to punish the press. I must say I get along with the press really well, because they do not ask me any questions and I do not give them any answers, Mr. Speaker.

MR. FLIGHT:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Consumer Affairs and Communications (Mr. Russell) with regards to the rate structure that has just been approved for Newfoundland Hydro. I wonder does the minister understand or appreciate the complexities in that rate structure as it applies to consumers? The fuel adjustment charge was based on Hydro's cost of oil, it was also based on the amount of oil consumed in periods of low water levels. Now would the minister agree that with the price of oil dropping, any given year we have high water levels or normal water levels, Newfoundland Hydro stands to make a windfall profit?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Consumer Affairs and Communications.

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, I am sure that every hon. member in this House is very much concerned with and aware of

the high cost of electrical rates in this Province. Well-attended hearings were recently held, and the NewLab group attended and following the hearings had some discussions with the consumer rep on the Public Utilities Board. This minister is not aware, and it is kind of hypothetical, whether or not Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro will in the future reap windfall profit. I am not in a position to predict what the water levels will be and I do not think the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Butt) is in a position to predict what the water levels will be. With regard to electrical rates, which is really the question that the hon. member for Windsor-Buchans (Mr. Flight) is getting at, he certainly must be aware that this government is already subsidizing electrical rates in this Province to the tune of something over \$40 million a year. I do not think that Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro can predict what the water levels will be and thus what, if any, windfall profits they will make.

MR. FLIGHT:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the member for Windsor-Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT:

Mr. Speaker, the minister must be aware that the fuel escalation charge was based on Hydro's consumption of oil in low water periods. I mean that is what it was, the cost of oil. If the minister is going to protect the interests of consumers in this Province he should know what implications that rate structure has for consumers. The new rate scheme is so complicated that even Newfoundland Light and Power do

not understand it and had to get a month's leave to make their case, trying to understand the new rate scheme that was awarded to Newfoundland Hydro by the Public Utilities Board.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. FLIGHT:
The question to the minister is can the minister guarantee that any windfall profits made by Newfoundland Hydro, in the cases and under the circumstances I just outlined, will be returned to the Newfoundland consumer by way of reduced rates? Now can the minister guarantee that to consumers in this Province?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of Consumer Affairs.

MR. RUSSELL:
No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. FLIGHT:
A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
A final supplementary, the hon. the member for Windsor-Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT:
The minister cannot guarantee that consumers will be protected. The Minister of Consumer Affairs is the minister people look to to protect them in this situation. What is the minister going to do to protect the consuming public from being further gouged under this new and complicated scheme which leaves the consumer wide open to the whims of Newfoundland Hydro and Newfoundland Light and Power? Apparently now neither

Newfoundland Light nor the minister understands it.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of Consumer Affairs.

MR. RUSSELL:
Mr. Speaker, it is obviously a matter of opinion as to what the hon. member for Windsor-Buchans is stating as to whether or not the consumer is wide open to the whims of Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro and Newfoundland Light and Power Company. It is a matter of the hon. member's opinion, which is not always right.

MR. LUSH:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:
Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the same minister. I wonder, Sir, if the minister is aware that the frequent and regular increases in electricity rates are causing the cost of electricity, the cost of heating our homes and providing light, to quickly become the largest budgetary item that homeowners in this Province have to face, but, more particularly, those experiencing the greatest financial frustration and the greatest devastation are those on fixed incomes, particularly our senior citizens? I wonder is the minister is aware of this? Is he aware that there are senior citizens and others on fixed incomes still paying last year's electrical bills, and if they pay their bills they have to go hungry? Is the minister aware of this and, if he is aware of it, what is he going to do about it? This criminal act of increasing

these electricity rates continuously, it is felonious.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Consumer Affairs.

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, I just indicated in an answer to a previous question that this government is already subsidizing electrical rates in this Province at the rate of some forty-plus million dollars per year.

I am very cognizant of the increase in rates and what it means to the consumers of this Province. One of the results of the present hearing was that instead of having them pay the fuel adjustment rates over the three of four months of the Winter period, they at least now have the opportunity to spread them out over a twelve month period.

Having said all that, it certainly is one of the greatest problems facing consumers, and facing people on fixed incomes in this Province, and I am sure that this government is spending all the money it can on subsidizing the rates without increasing taxes or getting money in other ways for consumers.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, I had a question for the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Rideout), but, obviously, like all the ministers over there, he is at the First Ministers' Conference, so in his absence I will put it to the House Leader (Mr. Marshall).

The question relates to a hunger strike which is being carried out by a group of fishermen in Branch to protest the lack of action by the federal government concerning the works programme for fishermen and plant workers, and the fact that that programme has been so long delayed, and the fact that our fishermen and plant workers have suffered tremendously this year.

The Minister of Manpower (Mr. Power) came in last week and announced that it was going to be on in a couple of days. Now he seems to be very ineffective, so I will ask the Government House Leader, who is supposed to be the second most powerful P.C. politician in this Province today, if he could give us any indication as to when these programmes will be approved so that our people do not have to carry on the same kinds of things which are now going on in Branch in order to survive in this Province?

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. the Minister of Career Development and Advanced Studies (Mr. Power) can quite adequately answer that question.

MR. POWER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Career Development and Advanced Studies.

MR. POWER:

Mr. Speaker, as we announced, this

government, which showed compassion and understanding in sharing with the federal government a job creation programme for fishermen of \$9.5 million, that programme is now very much in place in many parts of Newfoundland. On November 21 I approved an application on behalf of this Province for \$176,000 or \$177,000 to create 50 jobs in the community of Branch, where they had a very difficult season. That \$177,000 for 50 jobs was signed on November 21, was sent to Ottawa the same day by courier, Miss MacDonald has signed that application, Mr. Crosbie, the very efficient member of Parliament for St. John's West approved, and the member for St. Mary's-The Capes (Mr. Hearn) has already notified the people in Branch that the project has been approved and the project will be starting on Monday.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

I tell the Minister of Manpower that I am glad the Minister of Education (Mr. Hearn) got involved because we probably would not have had them sign yet, but I heard that he was going to have an answer today. Let me ask the Deputy Premier again - I am not particularly interested in asking the Minister of whatever he is, as I understand it of Manpower, Education and everything else in the Province - if indeed he will undertake to get some commitment from the employment person - she calls us the fisher folk, so let me call her the employment folk,

Flora MacDonald - if he will attempt to set up some type of structure so that our people in this Province do not have to go on hunger strikes or, in the case of the Department of Social Services, do not have to use CBC to get things approved for them in this Province as has been happening in the last two or three days, Would he attempt with the Conservative Government in Ottawa -

MR. PEACH:

They did not go to the Opposition.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, keep the Milton from Carbonear down.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. TULK:

Would the Deputy Premier attempt to get some indication from Flora and the boys in Ottawa that indeed this type of thing will not be ongoing, that we will see most of those applications approved in the next couple of days and that there will be a structure put in place so that she will take care of the needs of the Newfoundland fishermen and Newfoundland plant workers in this Province rather than waiting to see how hungry they are going to get?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker, his first remarks were with respect to the Minister of Education (Mr. Hearn) and the Minister of Education's involvement in Branch. Of course, the Minister of Education is also the member for St. Mary's-The Capes, one of the more effective members in this House, and obviously he is

going to look after his constituents, and with the hon. Minister of Career Development (Mr. Power) and with the hon. Flora MacDonald, he has done that quite adequately.

Mr. Speaker, as the hon Minister of Career Development has indicated, \$9 million have been pumped into the economy here. The type of imaginative proposals put forth by the federal government in Ottawa are not the type of proposal such as these insipid make-work, Liberal projects. These are imaginative work programmes that are going to be of much longer lasting benefit to the people of this Province. Miss MacDonald has shown herself to be extremely sensitive to the needs of this Province and will continue to do so. With our good and trusty Minister of Career Development, both of them together, they make some team and they are certainly very, very much attending to the needs of the people in this Province. The hon. gentleman should not hold his breath too long before he will see these jobs develop into permanent jobs in the fishery, in the offshore and in other areas as well.

MR. TULK:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. TULK:
Mr. Speaker, my question, I will repeat it because it is obvious that the Deputy Premier of this Province, the Government House Leader (Mr. Marshall), does not understand exactly what is going on. Let me ask him this question. It is a very important question because it is the very question

upon which his mandate, by the people of this Province, was founded.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Question! Question!

MR. TULK:
I am asking it.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. TULK:
Will the Deputy Premier now tell us that he will put a structure in place so that we do not have the same kind of problems that we had with FFT, that we do not have people in Toronto who are depending on some other provincial Department of Welfare, so that we do not have people carrying on hunger strikes in Branch? Will he now tell us that he will put in place a consultative process with his federal counterparts in Ottawa so that the Premier and his government can inflict the type of prosperity upon this Province that was promised if we elected a P.C. Government in Newfoundland and a P.C. Government in Ottawa? Will he now do that?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:
Mr. Speaker, I want the record to show that the hon. gentleman is waving a threatening finger at me. He is trying to intimidate me to respond.

MR. TULK:
Not at all. We ignored you the last few days.

MR. BAIRD:
You might think you would like to.

MR. MARSHALL:

Yes, the hon. gentleman would like to.

But, Mr. Speaker, as far as establishing a consultative process, there has been quite an adequate consultative process put in place, for the first time in the history of our sojourn in Confederation, since September of 1984. That has resulted in many benefits both to Fishery Products International in the fishery, the offshore and everywhere. So there is no need to put in a consultative process, Mr. Speaker. The federal minister and the provincial minister, as all federal and provincial ministers, get on fine. They are both working for the benefit of Newfoundlanders.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A final supplementary, the hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

If the hon. gentleman is so sure that the consultative process that he talks about is now in place with Ottawa, will he ensure us that we will never have the kind of decisions that we have just had with FFTs? Will he ensure us that we will not have people on hunger strikes in this Province? Will he agree, also, that we will not have people stranded in Toronto who are looking for the medical help and assistance that they need? Will he guarantee us that, since he is so happy and if everything is so great in Ottawa? Will he guarantee us that? Come on, boy!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker, what a silly question. It is a wonder Your Honour can sit in the Chair and listen to the questions emoted by the hon. member. What reference is that to the public affairs of this Province, the way the hon. gentleman is asking questions? It is a silly question. I am not going to respond to that.

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Public Works and Services (Mr. Young), who is responsible for the Public Service Commission. I am bringing a question from one of my constituents who is one of the 117 individuals being laid off a week before Christmas. This individual is a welder and he has applied for a public service job in the Grand Falls area. He has now received a letter back saying that he is not eligible for the job because he does not live in the Grand Falls area. My question to the minister: Is Public Service Commission now telling people in various parts of the Province that they are not eligible to compete for jobs in the Public Service?

MR. YOUNG:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Public Works.

MR. YOUNG:

Mr. Speaker, I do not know the answer to the specific question that the hon. gentleman asked, but I will get the information. I

will take it under advisement.

MR. FENWICK:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker, I have a letter back here from the Minister of the Department of Transportation (Mr. Dawe), who unfortunately is not in the House today, but the essence of the letter - I can give a copy of it to the Minister of Public Works - is that this individual did apply for the job and he was informed indeed that it was only open to people in the Grand Falls area because there were plenty of unemployed people with that kind of trade, welding, available.

Now I have checked today with the Public Service Commission and they informed me that there is a policy that they will not allow people from other parts of the Province to compete for Public Service competition jobs if there is a large number of people in that area with required skills for it.

Mr. Speaker, that is plainly discriminatory against people from my area. My question is-

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

Please pose your question.

MR. FENWICK:

I was about to get to it. My question is will the minister responsible for Public Works and for the Public Service Commission, who has the responsibility to endorse the act which says that the merit principle alone will be involved, look into the situation

and change the procedures so that in future people from Labrador will have a chance to compete for jobs on the Island?

MR. YOUNG:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Public Works.

MR. YOUNG:

I assure the hon. gentleman that I will look into it.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Twillingate.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister of Career Development and Advanced Studies (Mr. Power) is a supplementary to the question asked by my colleague from Fogo district (Mr. Tulk). The minister, Mr. Speaker, stated that on Monday he approved \$176,000 worth of jobs for Branch. Now I am very happy for the people of Branch but, believe me, the situation on the Northeast Coast is equally as serious. Can the minister now outline what projects he has approved for the Northeast Coast, or do the people on that coast have to undertake a hunger strike to get the kind of action the Branch people got?

MR. POWER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Career Development and Advanced Studies.

MR. POWER:

Well, I must say, Mr. Speaker,

that is a better question than some of the ones we get from the member for Fogo (Mr. Tulk). At least it relates to what is really happening in Newfoundland.

MR. TULK:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! A point of order, the hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

I would like the member to understand that that is basically the same question I asked. We are trying to get an answer. We cannot get an answer out of you, boy.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, there is no point of order.

The hon. the Minister of Career Development and Advanced Studies.

MR. POWER:

His points of order of order are not very substantial either, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, just let me point out that the hunger strike in Branch had nothing to do with the application being approved. The hunger strike started yesterday, November 25, the application was approved by this Province on November 21 and signed by Miss MacDonald after that. Obviously there is a time lapse between getting an application signed in Ottawa and back to the Province, and that was when the hunger strike ensued.

On November 21, one of the applications I signed for \$177,000 was for Branch. There was 129 other applications that we approved that day, which are back today and should be announced approvals tomorrow. I guess on

November 23 or 24 I signed another sixty or so applications for several millions of dollars worth of applications. Today I spent an hour or so signing what must be \$8 million or \$10 million worth of applications that hopefully in the next five or six days will get approval.

MR. TULK:

You have not got them all done yet!

MR. POWER:

Hardly!

MR. TULK:

What are you waiting for?

MR. POWER:

The applications are still coming in.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The time for Oral Questions has now elapsed.

Presenting Reports by
Standing and Special Committees

MR. YOUNG:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Public Works and Services.

MR. YOUNG:

I take great pleasure, Mr. Speaker, in presenting the annual report of the Department of Public Works and Services. I trust those hon. member opposite will read this report. I may add, Mr. Speaker, that all the tenders that were awarded, other than the lowest tender, has been tabled on the House of Assembly.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. YOUNG:

Mr. Speaker, I draw all the attention of the Opposition and this outstanding, distinguished looking gentleman to the second page. One picture is worth a thousand words. It gives me great pleasure to table it, Mr. Speaker.

Answers to Questions
for which Notice has been Given

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands.

MR. SIMMS:

I reply to a question number 19, Mr. Speaker, on the Order Paper of November 13, 1985, from the member for Menihek (Mr. Fenwick). The question was, "Last spring the minister indicated there was a temporary programme to replant a bunch of seedlings that had been damaged in the spring. I would like to ask the minister to give us a complete list of those individuals who were hired." The answer is the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands did not indicate at anytime last spring that there was a temporary programme to replant damaged seedlings.

MR. YOUNG:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Public Works and Services.

MR. YOUNG:

I would like to give answer to a question asked by the hon. member of Menihek (Mr. Fenwick) on November 13, 1985. Also, Mr. Speaker, a very, very important question for the member for St. Barbe (Mr. Furey) and I would like to answer the questions pertaining to the renovations to the office of the Minister of Justice (Ms. Verge). I would like to answer question number three, for the records, "Will the hon. the Minister of Justice be moving to new offices in the near future?" No, the minister will not be moving to a new office in the near future. "If so, when?" Mr. Speaker, whenever the Premier decides to change the hon. minister.

MR. TULK:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

On a point of order, the hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, if the hon. minister was not such a clown, I suppose we would object stronger. But if he going to read an answer and stop acting like a clown, which he is. Mr. Speaker, I should withdraw that because it is probably unparliamentary to call him that. But he is in the same type of image, he is a funny boy for the other side and I say to him that God knows they need it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

To that point of order, there is no point of order.

Order, please! Today is Private Members' Day. There is a motion in the name of the hon. the member

for Carbonear.

The hon. the member for Carbonear.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. PEACH:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I take a great deal of pleasure today in proposing this resolution to the hon. House. I am sure that it is one that is not controversial. I am quite certain that it will get unanimous agreement from both sides of the House next Wednesday when the motion is put.

I will read the motion into the record, Mr. Speaker:

"WHEREAS there is a demonstrated need for daycare spaces for the many preschool children in this Province; and

WHEREAS Government has received representation from the Newfoundland and Labrador Day Care Advocates' Association; and

WHEREAS Government hopes to set an example for the private sector by establishing a Child Care Centre for the children of public servants working at Confederation Complex; and

WHEREAS this Province is a member of a Federal/Provincial/Territorial Working Group on Child Care reviewing critical financing issues for child care;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that, insofar as is fiscally possible, Government continue to increase its child care services in a prudent fashion to the benefit of all residents of the Province."

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am sure that as members of this hon. House and, in some cases, I am sure, as probably parents in families with both people working, that many of us realize the need for adequate day care in many parts of our Province. I guess the need becomes even greater in areas such as St. John's, Corner Brook and some of the areas where there are greater opportunities for both members of a family to be working and, of course, where greater numbers of our population are concentrated.

I am sure, Mr. Speaker, there is no question that the need is there. But I would like to take a few minutes to look at the resolution in a little more detail, dealing with first of all, the last 'Whereas' part of that resolution, which says, 'WHEREAS this Province is a member of a Federal/Provincial/Territorial Working Group on Child Care reviewing critical financing issues for child care.'

Mr. Speaker, I will provide some background on the involvement that this Province has had with the federal/provincial/territorial group. There was a meeting of that group in May, 1984 when the ministers responsible for the Status of Women met in Ontario. At that time, a proposal was made for a group of officials from those three groups, federal, provincial and territorial, to be appointed to review the entire child care policy in Canada. The terms of reference for that particular group were to examine what there is presently in existence and also, of course, what the future needs will be and what initiatives need to be taken with regard to the day care facilities that we have under the

CAP or Canada Assistance Plan. They also will look at it in relation to our taxation system. That working group was to report back to the ministers at their conference, which was scheduled for June of this year. I understand that that report did come back and the ministers did meet. I do not think the report has been made public at this point in time but I understand a lot of detail was involved and it is a rather comprehensive report. I look forward to the not too distant future when that report is available to the general public.

At that particular time, Mr. Speaker, the then Minister of Education, and now Minister of Justice and Attorney General (Ms. Verge) for our Province, was representing the Province at that working group conference in May of that year and there was, I understand, an inter-departmental committee under the direction of our Premier's Office established, to be part of the group to put that report together. I understand as well that that group has met three times since then with all of the provinces and that in the early Spring of this year the report was, as I said, finally completed. I am sure that the Minister of Justice, when she probably gets up during the discussion on this resolution, will be able to enlighten us in much more detail on the outcome and the various things that were discussed with regard to child care on a federal, provincial and territorial level.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, this is a matter that was raised during our election last Spring by the Day Care Advocates Association of Newfoundland and Labrador. I did not make reference in the

resolution, Mr. Speaker, in the second "WHEREAS" that the government has received representation from that particular group in our Province.

In doing a little research to find out what that group had actually presented to government over the number of times that they have had an opportunity to make presentations, I did come across a bulletin that they published this year in June. It was interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that they did refer to the political process as it relates to child care in the Province. I just want to note briefly, for the record, that from their bulletin that they put out in June it said that "politically we have had an active period with a federal and provincial election within the last year." Obviously it was a great concern of that group during both of our elections.

"During these campaigns, association members were busy meeting with various candidates for election, raising the day-care issue during the public forums and increasing media interest in day care." They did go on to note a little further, Mr. Speaker, that "outside of the flurry of election activity, meetings with the government members and officials have continued to take place and that issues discussed included increased government funding for day care, particularly with respect to incentives to explore various models of care."

I am sure that during the course of debate on this resolution that the additional funding that has been put in place by this government, particularly in respect to some additional funding that has been put in during this year by the Department of Social

Services, will indeed indicate that the government did take the initiative and did follow along, basically, with some of the requests. It also looked at subsidies for families who need day care and the necessity for a training programme for day-care workers. It is all very well, Mr. Speaker, for us to comment on the need for day-care centers in the Province. I think we have to be very cautious and very much aware that we also need a training programme for day-care workers.

I found it interesting to note, in their particular article, Mr. Speaker, that they did note that the NDP Party had circulated a sample petition on the need for child care that was sent to MHAs for presentation. It did note - and I just quote from their bulletin - that "we agree with Mr. Fenwick who believes that presenting petitions in the House of Assembly is one way to help move the issues of day care up in priority in our Province." Well, Mr. Speaker, I am not sure if the hon. member for Menihek has presented a petition in this hon. House on day care. He indicates that he has not. I am sure, from his comment, he feels that is a very effective way of making an issue.

Well, I say to the member for Menihek today, Mr. Speaker, that I am pleased to have, not gotten ahead of him, but am very pleased to have taken the initiative and played a very major role in bringing that issue to the forefront, to this hon. House and I look forward to when the member for Menihek, which I am sure he will, rises to put forth his views and the views of his party on day-care centers in this Province. I look forward to his

support when he speaks and also when we put the resolution before the House.

It is also worthy of note, Mr. Speaker - and I am sure that probably some hon. members are not aware - that the day-care advocate group did also make two comments in their bulletin; one which said "it is encouraging that in the recent provincial budget - which was in the budget of this past Spring - an additional \$100,000 was allocated for day-care services." I think, Mr. Speaker, that indicates a very clear indication of the commitment of this government to provide a very necessary and vital service to the working mothers and fathers in this Province. I say that, Mr. Speaker, with regard to the workers in both parts, the male and female, because we realize that both play a very integral part in the raising of a family.

It is also worthy of note, Mr. Speaker, that reference was made to the Department of Social Services and the fact that they did make available a small grant for a training committee to do some training for those who wanted to become day-care workers. I am sure we all probably realize that the amount of funding was not sufficient but we all look forward to next year's budget when additional funding could be made available. From my brief involvement with day-care centers, I realize that more funding is a necessity, particularly with regard to the training of the workers.

Mr. Speaker, I have a comment with regard to the work force that we have today and the need for day-care centers pretty well throughout our entire Province. I

would have to say that the need is greater in certain concentrated areas. The number of women that are working and in our work force today is steadily on the increase. The vast majority of women in the Canadian work force are between the ages of twenty and forty-four. Those women work outside their homes. Most of them, I am sure, work within their communities however, and it is projected that by 1990 over 75 per cent of the women between age 24 and 54 will be in the official labour force.

Mr. Speaker, that says two things really; it says, we have looked upon for some time the fact that women had difficulty getting into the work force, but that is not necessary so as more are getting in the work force. I am sure we all agree really that the barriers of discrimination really between male and female in very many of the sectors of the work force are and have been gradually broken down. I am sure that is a very good and positive thing.

It also says, Mr. Speaker, that there will be a more and ever increasing demand and need for day-care centers. With the ages of twenty-four to fifty-four, and we take the earlier part of that age group, we will find that in the years ahead, in the next five or six years, more mothers of young children will be out in the work force working for wages or will have to, probably, stay at home because of the lack of facilities that should really be provided and made available to them either by government or through the private sector so that they can go out and contribute to their family income.

In early 1983 statistics indicate

that there were 49 per cent of mothers with children under three in the work force and 56 per cent of the mothers had pre-schoolers, which is the age from three to five. Now, this percentage gets even higher for mothers with children between six and twelve. I guess that is a sort of somewhat rather motherly concept in that. I think we tend to find, particularly in Newfoundland, that it probably is not until the children get to pretty well close to school age that mothers get out into the work force.

I know there are exceptions. I can probably cite my own example. In my case my wife did stay in the work force and we engaged the services of some baby sitters at several points in time to look after our two children. I guess it is not always easy to find reliable and dependable people who can come into ones home to care for children. I know at one particular point in time in the Carbonear area, back some fourteen or fifteen years ago, we did have a private operating day-care school. I do have to say that it was a very great asset to probably a small population of working mothers at that time. We took advantage of that and found it to be a very great working place really to be able to take children knowing that they were well cared for.

As a matter of fact, I think statistics will show that in properly controlled day-care centers and day-care institutions with the properly trained people that the children who come out of those centers are very much more equipped when they go into nursery school and into the kindergarten part of our day-school system. They adapt themselves more easily

socially and you find that their concepts and their intellect really has been developed by their training and by their association with other peers.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The hon. member's time is up.

MR. PEACH:
Mr. Speaker, since I do have an opportunity to speak again in closing debate on this resolution, I will take my seat.

Thank you.

MR. FUREY:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the member for St. Barbe.

MR. FUREY:
Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to speak to this resolution as it has been presented by my good friend for Carbonear (Mr. Peach), who, I believe, has his heart is in the right place on this.

I step outside the resolution for a minute to question why it even appears in this chamber, this resolution by a government member. Your party has governed for the last fourteen or fifteen years and will govern till the next election, perhaps. It would have been eighteen years then, and I just wonder what kind of clout the parliamentary secretary has with his caucus and with his -

MR. HODDER:
This is a Private Members' Resolution. (Inaudible).

MR. FUREY:
Does the parliamentary secretary

for Port au Port want to rise in his place and say something?

MR. HODDER:
I just said that that is why it is called a Private Members' Resolution.

MR. TULK:
Rise in your place.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The hon. the member for St. Barbe.

MR. FUREY:
Mr. Speaker, I am just wowed by the member for Port au Port (Mr. Hodder) who sits there and shouts and says, 'You have no right to speak in this chamber. You were not elected, do not speak, do not say anything.' This is the typical kind of Tory nonsense that has permeated the Province for far to long.

The point I was trying to make, Mr. Speaker, if we can get some order over there from the Minister of Trees. Can we get some order?

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

I ask all hon. members to have silence while the hon. member for St. Barbe (Mr. Furey) is debating.

The hon. member for St. Barbe.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. FUREY:
I was only getting to my preamble, Mr. Speaker, and already they are excited.

I said in my preamble that I believe that the hon. member for Carbonear (Mr. Peach) has his

heart in the right place on this issue. I noticed who stayed for his speech and with the exception of the Port au Port puppet and the Neanderthal man for St. John's North I would suggest that other members in their seats who listened attentively have their hearts in the right place on that side as well.

It is just amazing though when you read the series of preambles here which lead to the conclusion by the member, you have to ask the question, does he or does anybody over there who believes any of this have any power at the Cabinet table or otherwise within the caucus of the party? It seems to be what you are playing here is a paper game. There does not seem to be any political will.

Listen to the preambles as I announce them, Mr. Speaker. "WHEREAS there is a demonstrated need for daycare spaces for the many preschool children in this Province." Well, what have we learned that is new there? "WHEREAS there is a need," and the former Minister of Education (Ms. Verge) who, prior to getting involved in politics and being a very strong advocate and supporter of the Advisory Council on the Status of Women - and did a tremendous job by the way - he heaps credit on her as the former Minister of Education, saying that she was responsible for doing all kinds of wonderful things in day care. I think he said that. Did he not say that?

MR. SIMMS:

Tell us what you have done.

MR. FUREY:

Give us the government and watch us.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. FUREY:

Now, let me continue, Mr. Speaker. I know they are getting excited. I know the minister of trees wants to get up and have a go at this and so does the Parliamentary puppet from Port au Port and a few others, but let us continue analyzing, for the record's sake if nothing else, these preambles.

"Whereas there is a demonstrated need for daycare spaces for the many preschool children in this Province;" we have known that for years. You have been governing for fourteen years. Are you just realizing that now? Do you know that I checked prior to this debate with the Minister of Social Services (Mr. Brett) and he was good enough to tell me that the expenditure on day care for this Province, although it increased this year by \$100,000, is \$586,000. Now put that in perspective. We have spent more in this Province renovating His Worship's, His Honour's, the King's office and renovating the new Cabinet room than we have spent on our children. Put that in perspective.

MR. SIMMS:

What about the future?

MR. FUREY:

The future? We heard about your future. We heard about it in 1979. We heard about it in 1982. We will hear about it again, I am sure, the next time around too -

all kinds of futures. That is the problem. You deal in fairy tales and futures and not in facts.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. FUREY:

Mr. Speaker, may I continue?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

Once again I will ask for silence on both sides of this hon. House while the hon. member is speaking.

The hon. the member for St. Barbe.

MR. FUREY:

Mr. Speaker, the preamble continues: "And Whereas government has received representation from the Newfoundland and Labrador Day Care Advocates' Association;" yes, you have received representation, nine months ago. What have you done with that representation?

"AND WHEREAS government hopes to set an example for the private sector by establishing a Child Care Centre for the children of public servants working at Confederation Complex;" great, but what is new in that? Great, you want to set an example. Well, why did you not set the example fifteen years ago so we could be fifteen years ahead now?

"AND WHEREAS this Province is a member of the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Working Group on Child Care," the key word here is 'reviewing', "reviewing critical financing issues for child care;" well, when is the review going to be over? Will we monitor and review and size everything up and study it to death forever?

Finally, look at the resolution to all of this preamble. "BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that insofar as is fiscally possible, government continue to increase its child care services in a prudent fashion to benefit all of the residents of the Province." Mr. Speaker, I just tried to put it in perspective. Let me reiterate, \$586,000 is spent on child care in this Province. That is \$586,000, right?

MR. BRETT:

Right, \$586,000 more than you fellows spent when you were in.

MR. FUREY:

Let me remind the hon. minister, if my research is correct, we have the worse record in the country.

MR. FLIGHT:

He may be the worse minister.

MR. FUREY:

No, I would not say he is the worse minister. I am not going to do that. I am not going to get involved in that silly game. It is the worse record. Now whether you, as minister, are responsible for it or not, that is another question, but it is the worse record. The facts are clear.

I want to refer to the report delivered by the Advisory Council on the Status of Women to the Royal Commission on Employment and Unemployment. Let me state some of the facts as they outline them.

They tell us that in our Province there are approximately 15,000 children under the age of five who need child care while their parents work. They tell us that we have less than 900 licensed full-time day-care spaces throughout this Province. Now,

let us put that in percentage terms. That means that 6 per cent of our pre-school children are in licensed facilities. That leaves 94 per cent in other places. Ninety-four per cent of our preschool children are somewhere else; they are not in licensed facilities.

Working parents of children under that age of two have no choice but to make private arrangements, according to our law. This age group is excluded from any group day care. There are very few licensed spaces available for young school-aged children who need care during lunch time and after school. That is another issue in day care. Our Province, unlike most of the other Provinces in this country, does not have a system of supervised - and I emphasize that word, and you will see why later - supervised licensed family day-care homes. This was a recommendation that was put forward by the Advisory Council to the Royal Commission on Unemployment, a very good recommendation: that this form of care be developed, as has been made to government, by the Advisory Council and we agree with it. We support the general thrust of the member for Carbonear's resolution. This Party always has because we are a Party of compromise, compassion and moderation.

MR. TULK:

Did you hear that?

MR. SIMMS:

I heard it but I do not believe it.

MR. FUREY:

Funding supervised day-care services would offer another option, Mr. Speaker, to working parents as well. It has the

potential to provide supervised care for infants, which is currently unavailable, and has the flexibility to accommodate different forms of care. For example, care for children whose parents have to work shift work and those kinds of things, parents who have to work on weekends.

Studies in the Province in 1982 tell us that over 80 per cent of working parents express a desire for educational programmes, Mr. Speaker, for their children, rather than just babysitting. It is not good enough to drop your child off somewhere and have somebody put your child in front to a television to be cartooned to death. That is not good enough any more. Supervised, licensed care would provide a system in this Province which can be monitored more easily, Mr. Speaker, than informal care and it will ensure a quality standard. What is the sense of having day care and having supervised day care in our Province unless it is built on two fundamental principles; accessibility and quality.

Licensed, supervised day care, delivered through a variety of different models, must be made assessible and affordable to the working parents of this Province, Mr. Speaker. Aside from the obvious benefits to the children and their parents, employers would benefit as well, we are told. There would be less absenteeism due to complications brought on by child care arrangements and less turnover in staff. Productivity of workers would be improved if child care concerns were alleviated.

They made a recommendation, Mr. Speaker, to the Royal Commission

on Employment and Unemployment and it is a recommendation that we on this side fully endorse and would associate ourselves with. It reads simply that they recommend, and we support it, "that more public funds be made available for day care services in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador."

Aside from the obvious advantages, Mr. Speaker, of day care and increasing the funding to care day, let us talk about another problem - if we may digress for a second - that it could place a focus on. I am talking about employment and I am talking about unemployment as well, particularly youth unemployment. I do not know if any members across the way had occasion to witness the television programmes called On Camera last Wednesday night. I am sure you will all witness it tonight. I do not know if any of you had the occasion to witness the programme On Camera last Wednesday night.

It had a forum of young people. I believe there were about 100 young people and some adults on stage and they opened the forum up to talk about youth unemployment in this Province. You are all painfully aware of the statistics in this Province, I think it is well over 30 per cent, hugging close to 35 per cent. I think that translates into roughly 17,000 or 18,000 young Newfoundlanders and Labradorians between the ages of sixteen and twenty-four who cannot find work.

What a golden opportunity to train young people, to train them in a quality way, to provide quality day care services in homes around our Province. But during that programme, they asked the young people to give their comments, Mr. Speaker, on what their dreams are

for the future of this Province.

One young fellow very sadly stood in his place and perhaps crystalized the dream of young Newfoundlanders and Labradorians around this Province. He said, "My dream is to have enough money when I graduate from Grade XII so that I can get out of here because this has become a dreamless land with no dreams." The Minister of Rural, Agriculture and Northern Development (Mr. R. Aylward) does not want to hear that because it is true. He crystalized what young people are feeling in their guts and in their hearts about the place that they choose and want to live in but cannot. We are saying on this side what a golden opportunity it is.

MR. MITCHELL:
Garbage.

MR. FUREY:
The hon. the member for LaPoile (Mr. Mitchell) says that that is garbage, that young people are not saying that, that young people are not stuck in no man's land.

MR. MITCHELL:
Ask that young fellow to go paint houses in the Summer.

MR. FUREY:
The hon. the member for LaPoile is saying all those young people are lazy. Is that the Tory policy? Is that the Tory belief?

MR. TULK:
That is what it is.

MR. MITCHELL:
Who said that?

MR. FUREY:
You said that.

MR. MITCHELL:

I did not say it.

MR. FUREY:

You said, "Ask them to go paint your house and see if he will go paint your house." Is that not what you just said?

MR. MITCHELL:

They are not motivated.

MR. FUREY:

Oh, they are not motivated?

MR. MITCHELL:

No.

MR. FUREY:

So the official Tory policy as enunciated by the member for LaPoile (Mr. Mitchell) is that all those young fellows and girls between the ages of sixteen and twenty-four, all 18,000 of them, the reason why they cannot get work, "Do not blame us. Do not blame the Tory Government, They are lazy."

MR. MITCHELL:

Who said that?

MR. FUREY:

You implied that. You just implied that. And the hon. the Minister for Career Development and Advanced Studies (Mr. Power) - what is your portfolio, Education Level II is it? - tried to come in here the other day and tell us about all the jobs they created, 5,400 jobs.

The Speech From The Throne in April said "We hope to create 7,000 jobs." You could not play with the figures enough to create 7,000 could you? You only gave 5,400 young people \$1,200 each for a miserable seven weeks to try to go back to college. How ridiculous, toying with the figures and you know it, a mug's

game! You know it, I know it and every young person - you look into their eyes - know it too. That is why they are on to you. I am glad that you put forward the truth on how you feel over there about young people scratching and scraping and trying to get work in his Province. You hit it on the head. "Ask them to paint my house, see if they will paint my house. They are lazy." That is what you said.

Mr. Speaker, let me say that I move, seconded by the member for Gander (Mr. Baker) - and, Mr. Speaker, we believe in the general thrust of day care on this side, we really do. We have no problem with that. We just wonder why they have to bring it to this Chamber and have to admit, because it is an admission, that they have not done anything - seconded by the hon. the member for Gander, that we strike out all of the words after 'Be It Therefore Resolved', and add that government immediately establish a system of properly supervised' - and I put emphasis, Mr. Speaker, on the word 'supervised' - 'and adequately financed' - and we use that adverb for a very good reason, Mr. Speaker, because we believe that it describes how it should be instead of how it is - 'family day care homes in our Province, instead of only paying lip service to the recommendations already made to government time and time again by the Advisory Council and other groups, and that such a day care system be beneficial to every single resident in this Province.' I put forward that amendment for your consideration.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. FUREY:

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion we recognize in this Province that we have-

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. FUREY:
Are the two former speakers making a ruling? Shall we wait?

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, let me say, as the trained seals over there squirm and try to squirt their venom around the House, that we on this side believe, unlike, as I said, the Neanderthal specimen from St. John's North (Mr. J. Carter) who probably will not even support the initial wishy-washiness of this resolution, in the thrust of providing good sound supervised day care, with quality and accessibility as their fundamental precepts.

We say that we should provide as much money as is necessary to get more people working. Let me say finally, Mr. Speaker - I know you are going to tell me my time is up - that the fact that our Province, Newfoundland and Labrador, has the poorest record in day care right across this sweeping land, is truly a reflection upon the Progressive Conservative Government that we have had for the last fifteen years.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Greening):
Order, please!

The hon. member's time is up.

MR. HICKEY:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. TULK:
Has the amendment been ruled on, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please! The amendment is in order.

MR. TULK:
Thank you.

MR. HICKEY:
Mr. Speaker, I want to have a few words on this. I take it, Mr. Speaker, we are still speaking to the main motion?

MR. YOUNG:
No, the amendment, 'Tom'.

MR. HICKEY:
Not the amended motion?

MR. SPEAKER
We are speaking to the amendment now.

MR. HICKEY:
Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to my hon. friend from across the way. I, first of all, want to congratulate my colleague for Carbonear (Mr. Peach) for bringing the issue to the floor of the House, because, as he said, Mr. Speaker, there is no question about the fact that this matter should be debated. I doubt if this resolution will answer all of the questions and produce all of the suggestions which are necessary to put together a clearly-defined and appropriate policy for day care in this Province.

Let me say, Sir, first of all, that sometimes it is very easy for us, especially those in government, to take the easy way

out, as I would put it, or, to use the old phrase, "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread." The easy answer, Mr. Speaker, is not always the correct one. Whilst we have groups demanding - I believe my hon. friend's amendment grew out of this kind of recommendation and representation - and the Day Care Advocate Group is certainly one, that the provincial government move into the private sector and make it mandatory that if a child is being looked after in a home, even one child, that that home be supervised, licensed and so on, whilst that has some merit, I would urge my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, that we take a pretty hard look at that before we enter into such an arrangement.

Again, to use an old saying, "We might kill the goose that lays the golden egg." Notwithstanding the need for expanded day-care services in the Province, and no one, Mr. Speaker, would doubt or deny that the need is great, nevertheless, we will not, in this term of office, in my view, see enough money available to the government in this Province to bring about the necessary improvements and the necessary increases in day-care space in the Province to adequately serve all the people who need the service. In other words, what I am saying, is that it will take a horrendous amount of money if we are to meet the needs of all the people who need day-care services.

Mr. Speaker, I hope my words are not misinterpreted as defending or attempting to defend the record of the government over the years because, in my view, in this area, although the need is still great, we have just scratched the surface. It needs no defense. If one is knowledgeable at all of all

the needs of the people of this Province, of the difficult times we have come through, of the high unemployment, the low revenue and the tremendous demands on the dollars that are available to the Treasury, one will clearly understand that it is no wonder we were the lowest, if we are not the lowest now - I doubt if we have changed, despite the improvements we have made this very year - in the country in terms of the number of dollars.

Mr. Speaker, we have a lot of catching up to do. We had a lot of catching up to do. I recall that back in 1972 catching began in a real way. Prior to ten years ago or twelve years ago, Mr. Speaker, there was nothing, zero, done with regards to day care. Hon. members have to keep this in mind. I am not over-sensitive to constructive criticism. I think I can agree with my friends opposite if they are going to say that we have not spent enough money on day care. Of course we have not. The questions arise, Mr. Speaker, could we have found more money to spend? Where could we have found it? What other programmes should have gone by the board? For example, do you cut back on social assistance? Do you cut back on roads?

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Renovating the eighth floor?

MR. HICKEY:

Now, Mr. Speaker, renovating the eighth floor, that is a fallacy. The renovations to the eighth floor would not be a drop in the bucket to help solve the problem with day care in this Province. You know, someone said that the Premier will not take the eighth floor with him whenever he decides to move out of office or whenever

the government changes, whatever time that will be, that the eighth floor will be there for whomever else. Mr. Speaker, if the Premier was housed in offices which were far less than what they are, there would be people who would say they were not befitting a Premier of a Province, which is just starting to develop, to meet and sit down and have dialogue with people from all corners of the world, that at the very least the Premier should have some kind of decent office accommodation. There is only one Premier, and there is only one Premier's office in the Province, Mr. Speaker.

But let me not stray from the debate, because the issue we are debating is the important one and that is what we should stick with. Let me simply say that it is an oversimplification to pinpoint one single issue, such as the cost of some renovations, in attempting to address the issue of day care. Did the government, this year, do nothing with day care? The answer to that, Mr. Speaker, is no. What did the government do? In my view, the government did the best it could, under the circumstances. As a matter of fact, it did more than I, for one, expected; it doubled the start-up funds from \$500 to \$1000. Now, that does not sound like very much, Mr. Speaker, but that is a pretty good help to somebody who is just starting to develop a small day-care center or a few day-care places. We have an enriched means test to cover people who are not receiving assistance from the government through the Social Assistance Programme. That means test, Mr. Speaker, needs to be changed as funds become available. Mr. Speaker, with all the demands for funding, with all the programmes

that need to be expanded at this point in time, it is ludicrous for anyone to say that we can solve the day care problem with another \$500,000. The government increased the amount of money, I think, by roughly \$100,000.

Mr. Speaker, the whole day-care issue has been addressed by government—and, I suggest to you, not in a total sense, because government is still working on the issue per say. Government clearly showed its policy with regards to day-care centers in the private sector by setting the example with the extension to the Confederation Building, and so it should have. I recall, very clearly, the discussions and debate on that issue. Mr. Speaker, the day-care issue is not one that will be solved overnight and it is not one that will go away. Government is acutely aware of that, and that is why my hon. friend for Carbonear (Mr. Peach) went to some trouble to deal with a number of things which are ongoing, and some of the dialogue which has gone on in the past, and continues. What has to be realized, Mr. Speaker, is that we live in a Province which is unique. We have to be careful, whatever the clear, definitive policy regarding the development of day care in this Province, that it has some regard for the uniqueness and the quality of life in this Province. At the present time, children of families who are receiving social assistance, who have special needs, who might be classified as slow learners, or who need some assistance in preparing for school, can take advantage of that programme, and there are a fair number of spaces available. Again I suggest it is not the total answer, and I am not sure that it meets all the requirements in that particular

target group. Certainly, each and every year that programme is enriched in some way or other, where the children of families less fortunate than ourselves are able to take advantage of the programme of early childhood development and day care, combined, in a manner which helps to prepare those children for entry into the normal kind of school to commence their education.

People who are on social assistance, or who are being supplemented by Social Assistance - in other words, they are working but they are not making enough money - can qualify under our means test, as can single parents, Mr. Speaker, who are assisted month after month after month to enable them to stay in the work place with the hope of finding a better job and through that process become totally independent. And then, as I said earlier, there are those who have no contact whatsoever with the social assistance programme per se but who are earning the kind of salaries which, when they take into account the requirements and the cost of day care, will permit them to qualify under the enriched means test.

So, as I said, it is not as though government has not addressed this issue. The question which arises is how fast we will be able to turn out the funds and produce the funds to cover our whole population. Again, Mr. Speaker, you are not talking about places, other areas of the country, which are very different from this Province.

Whilst the amendment to this resolution is well-meant and, I know, motivated for the right reasons, Mr. Speaker, and I do not

question or quarrel with that, I suggest that we should be extremely careful that we do not go in the wrong direction by saying that every single time someone takes their child to a home to be looked after while the parent goes to work, that that home should be licenced and supervised. I believe that we would soon see a great decrease in the number of homes available to look after children and, consequently, it would have a counter-productive effect as opposed a productive and positive effect, as I am sure my hon. friend is motivated in attempting to produce.

Mr. Speaker, I have said that one of the clear answers to the day-care issue is money, and so the obvious question arises, where does the money come from? Two sources, Mr. Speaker, just two: Either it comes out of the provincial treasury, or it comes out of the federal and provincial treasuries. There are those who will tell you there should be free day care for all. That sounds great, Mr. Speaker! Who is going to foot the bill? Who is going to pick up the tab? It is all right for those people to advocate free day care, no cost to any citizen, but I wonder what would happen, Mr. Speaker, if there was such a programme adopted across this nation? They think they have a problem with the deficit now, and everyone is jumping up and down because some government attempts to look at some social programmes, I wonder what would happen if we had a programme like that and that cost was added to the already bulging cost of social programmes across this country? We should look before we leap, Mr. Speaker, I suggest. This is why I said earlier, 'fools rush in where

angels fear to tread.' The quick solution, the fast one is not necessarily the right one. I would argue you against anyone who would suggest, Mr. Speaker, and never let it be said that I feel less compassion for people than any member of this House, but I would argue with anyone who would suggest that day care be free to all. Because, Mr. Speaker, it is as if to say everything is for free. Sooner or later one would ask the question, what is it we should really pay for? If people can afford to pay, I believe they should pay. I certainly agree that the enriched means test that we have, although quite a bit above social assistance standards, should be enriched further, must be, and, I suggest, Mr. Speaker, will be enriched further to take in more people, more segments of the population.

But to say that the taxpayers through their provincial and/or federal treasury should underwrite the total cost is, to say the least, pie in the sky. I do not think that will ever come, at least not in the foreseeable future. There are some who suggest that the private operations, the private day-care centres should be discontinued, and there are those who suggest that the day-care centres in the Province should be government operated and/or co-operative, non-profit centres. I would argue against that, Mr. Speaker. Again I believe that is an issue which obviously will be addressed as we go down the road and get closer to the ultimate, where there are day-care centres sufficient in the Province to cover all those people who need to take advantage of them. Maybe then, maybe as we get close to that point, we might be able to afford the luxury of being

able to say, let us go the co-operative route as opposed to the private sector.

Those who suggest banning the private operator sometimes suggest that it is safer for the children and there is a better chance of more educational type programmes if we go the co-operative route. I do not agree with that, Mr. Speaker. All the discussions I have been involved in in recent years with the civil servants who are responsible would indicate to me that we are headed in this direction: The best of both worlds, the non-profit and, in some instances, maybe, the co-operative, but not necessarily casting aside or throwing out or banning the private entrepreneur.

Let me suggest to my colleagues on both sides of the House, Mr. Speaker, that if the private sector is able to be charged with the responsibility of looking after the aged in licenced boarding homes, and time has shown they can and they can do it effectively, with compassion and far cheaper than government can, and can do it as good and cheaper than the non-profit organizations can -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! The hon. member's time is up.

MR. HICKEY:

Mr. Speaker, let me conclude.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

By leave.

MR. HICKEY:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I will just wind up by saying I want to make the point that the precedent is already set for people who are in the business of

looking after the elderly and the chronically ill, and they have done it and they are doing it in an excellent fashion. That shoots down the argument of those who suggest that the private entrepreneur in the day-care industry, so to speak, should go by the way. I believe that is a wrong approach. I think, Mr. Speaker, the day that the government entertains that notion, anymore than the day that the government entertains the notion to go out and supervise and inspect every single home, is the day we get in trouble.

Let me conclude by saying that I agree that there should be an educational initiative, some form of educational direction for even the private homes by way of literature, by way of educational means of one kind or another, to, as my hon. friend opposite said, make sure the child does something more than sit in front of the tube all day and look at cartoons. I agree with him on that, but I do not think the answer is to supervise and license those homes.

MR. KELLAND:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the member for Naskaupi.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. KELLAND:
Thank you.

I would like to make the comment, in speaking in support of the ideas that were put forward certainly, originally, by the member for Carbonear (Mr. Peach), the former Minister of Social Services and my young colleague on this side. It is no wonder that

the member for St. Barbe (Mr. Furey) became emotional at different times and expressed his opinion and some of his comments were addressed in an emotional manner simply because I just could not believe what I heard emanating from the other side of the House just a few minutes ago. I am not referring to my good friend, the member for St. John's East Extern (Mr. Hickey), nor my good friend the member for Carbonear, but rather the despicable performance and the cowardly approach to his responsibility as a member of the House of Assembly to sit in his place, without the guts to stand up and say what he said while he was sitting down, and I specifically refer to the fact that when my hon. young colleague here was talking about a young person who expressed concern on a television programme that that member for LaPoile district (Mr. Mitchell) made a remark, "Yes but you try to get that same young man to come and paint your house next Summer," and inferring and implying and everything else that that young person who was concerned was too lazy. Now, good heavens, has the man got the guts to stand up in his place and say what he said when he was sitting down?

MR. MITCHELL:
A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
A point of order, the hon. the member for LaPoile.

MR. MITCHELL:
I think, for the record, it should be noted that this hon. member did not say that young people in this Province were lazy. I would never say that and I would never advocate that.

MR. FUREY:
You implied it.

MR. MITCHELL:
One of the things that I did take exception to was the fact that a young person would say, publicly, 'The only ambition I have as a Newfoundlander and as a young person living in Newfoundland is when I graduate from high school to get enough money to get out of this Province.' What I am saying is that this Province holds more opportunity for young people than anywhere else in Canada. If we have young people who have the initiative and the ambition to get ahead in this Province, they can get ahead. The opportunities are there.

MR. TULK:
Is that why they are all going to Alberta?

MR. MITCHELL:
We have a golden opportunity to get ahead.

This resolution that we are talking about today will show private initiative for young people to get involved. So what I am saying is that through all of the government initiatives by this government and by the federal government in Ottawa to assist young people to become entrepreneurs in this Province is greater than anywhere else in Canada, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
To that point of order, there is no point of order.

MR. FUREY:
To that point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:
There is no point of order.

MR. FUREY:
I have a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:
A point of order, the hon. the member for St. Barbe.

MR. FUREY:
Mr. Speaker, it was very clearly implied by the member for LaPoile -

MR. TULK:
He said it.

MR. FUREY:
Perhaps he did but I am giving him the benefit of the doubt. But the implication was very clear and the implication was that you cannot get young people to work, you cannot get young people to paint a house. Let me take that argument a step further from that television show the other night, witness what happened when he finished his statement. When he finished his statement, those other 150 in unison, en masse, put there hands together and nearly knocked the cameras over clapping. Perhaps you could tell me if the 15 young people from Bird Cove in the great district of St. Barbe that I represent, were lazy when they caught the ferry two weeks ago to go to the Mainland because they cannot find work and they need some stamps and they want to be with their family for Christmas. Were they lazy?

I do not believe young people are lazy in this Province and I believe they care, probably more deeply than anybody in this House of Assembly about their Province. So do not squirt your spume and venom over them in a blanket statement and say that they are lazy and then duck out of it.

MR. MITCHELL:
To that point of order, Mr.

Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, the hon. the member for Lapoile.

MR. MITCHELL:

To that point of order, Mr. Speaker, I have to reconfirm again that I did not say that the young people of this Province were lazy and I never implied that in any way, shape or form. What I am saying is that we do present to the young people of this Province an opportunity to be able to advance themselves and to get involved in private initiatives. If we were to listen to all of the arguments that are put forward by the Liberal Party on the other side of the House, the next resolution that we are going to hear from them is a guaranteed supplement income for young people or a guaranteed annual income.

MR. TULK:

Sure, there is nothing wrong with that. Brian Mulroney wants that!

MR. MITCHELL:

What are we? Are we a democracy? I believe that we have to provide the vehicle of opportunity and once that opportunity is there, then we can see improvements.

MR. FUREY:

Sit down, you have already put your foot in your mouth! I hope the young people of Lapoile heard you!

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Order, please!

To that point of order, it is a definite difference of opinion between two hon. members.

MR. TULK:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of order, the hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman can try to squirm out from under whatever he said in the original statement, but it certainly cannot squirm out from what I just heard him say in this House, that there is all kinds of opportunity for young people in this Province and there is no need of them leaving. Does that not say that the young people who have left this Province have left because they are lazy and no good? What an inditement!

The hon. gentleman should stand up and retract everything that he said about the young people in this Province. He should stand up and apologize to them or otherwise squirm under his seat and out of the House. It is terrible what that gentleman just uttered when basically what he said is that there was no need of those young people to have gone to Alberta and to Toronto and to other places in Canada, if they had ambition. The implication is quite clear, they are no good. They have gone to Alberta or Toronto and they are no good. Why do you not do one thing or the other? Either get up and apologize or get up and dig the hole deeper.

MR. FLIGHT:

What an inditement to the young people of his district!

MR. MITCHELL:

To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, the hon. the member for Lapoile.

MR. MITCHELL:

Mr. Speaker, to that point of order, I cannot apologize.

MR. TULK:

No, you cannot find it in you!

MR. MITCHELL:

I cannot apologize for this government. There is no way that I can apologize for the initiatives of this government has provided for our young people.

MR. TULK:

Where?

MR. MITCHELL:

I was a young person in this Province.

MR. TULK:

You? How long ago, son? The Liberals were in power when you were young.

MR. MITCHELL:

I listen to the hon. gentlemen. There are young people in the gallery and they are trying to make an impression again.

MR. TULK:

I hope we make a better one than you did.

MR. FLIGHT:

I hope they are not from Lapoile because you would loose lots of votes.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

Could we have silence while the hon. member for Lapoile is speaking on a point of order? The hon. the member for Lapoile.

MR. MITCHELL:

I cannot apologize for our educational system in this Province. It gives every young person in this Province the

opportunity to get educated, to get a skill, to get a training, so that they can make their way in society. No, I am not going to apologize for that.

When we saw a resolution come before this House in relationship to U.I.C. which affected fishermen and a lot of those fishermen are young people in our society. I did not apologize. I stood on my feet and I argued for that resolution while members on the other side were callous and never had any concern for the young people in the fishing industry and in our fish plants in this Province.

MR. TULK:

Go on boy, sit down and shut up! You are making a fool of yourself!

MR. MITCHELL:

But you see them today trying to make a impression, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, there is no point of order.

MR. KELLAND:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Naskaupi.

MR. KELLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As for the member for LaPoile (Mr. Mitchell), I do not think I will ever call him an hon. member again, in or out of the House, in good conscience I could not do that. His allegation was that we were trying to impress some young people in the gallery. What he has done is drop another fifteen or twenty points in my estimation as a man, let alone a member of the House of Assembly, when you

tried to use that, now, standing in your place, to excuse your despicable behavior when you did not have the guts to stand up and say what you said earlier in your seat.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MITCHELL:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of order, the hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. MITCHELL:

Mr. Speaker, I do not know why I am being abused by the Opposition.

MR. TULK:

Apologize and withdraw your remarks.

MR. MITCHELL:

We have seen this government sign a \$350 million development agreement with the federal government to develop the offshore and I believe that the opportunities for our young people is going to be greater in this Province than anywhere else in Canada as far as getting a job in this country is concerned.

MR. TULK:

On a point of privilege Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of privilege, the hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, the member for LaPoile (Mr. Mitchell) has made a tremendous mistake for which he has been brought to task and I would suggest to Your Honour that what he is doing is rising on points of order just simply to try

to stop the member for Naskaupi (Mr Kelland) from making a very worthwhile speech. That is a very serious point of privilege because what he is doing is impairing the ability of that member to perform in this Legislature. It is as simple and as basic as that.

I would ask Your Honour that when he gets up and starts making long-winded speeches on spurious points of order in an attempt to try to stop the member for Naskaupi from making his speech that Your Honour tell him to sit in his place or otherwise leave the House and write a public apology.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of privilege, there is no point of privilege.

Would the hon. member for LaPoile state his point of order?

MR. MITCHELL:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to rise on a point of privilege.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of privilege, the hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. TULK:

You are on a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

Was there a point of order?

MR. MITCHELL:

I was on a point of order but now it is a point of privilege.

MR. SPEAKER:

There was no point of order, a point of privilege.

The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. MITCHELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to thank the Speaker for his hon. ruling. One of the sad things that we see from the other side of this House is that it is easy to get up and criticize but very seldom do we ever see them put forward solutions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. MITCHELL:

It is a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

Could we have silence while the hon. member for LaPoile is speaking on a point of privilege? I wish to notify all hon. members to obey the rules of the Chair because I have no hesitation in naming anybody.

The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. MITCHELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My point of privilege is that I have been drastically abused in this House for saying something that I did not say. I want the record to stand that I represent the young people of this Province in this House of Assembly and I want to make sure that we put good sound programmes in place so that the young people of this Province can be proud that they are Newfoundlanders.

MR. SPEAKER:

I would suggest that the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Mitchell) is making a speech rather than a point of privilege so there is no point of privilege.

The hon. member for Naskaupi.

MR. KELLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for the ruling.

Let us talk a little bit about day care. I have been here a few months and that is the first time any member has made me angry, not angry as a person so much as the attitude that he displayed and the gutless manner in which he discharged his duty as a member of the House of Assembly.

But let us talk a little bit about day care and let us talk about the Private Member's Bill that was presented by the hon. member for Carbonear (Mr. Peach). As was indicated by my colleague earlier, we do support the main thrust and the idea behind what the private member's bill is attempting to say. But like my colleague from the district of St. Barbe (Mr. Furey), I also feel it is a bit on the wishy washy side, a little limp-wristed in its approach and a little less than would be desired, I think, by those people who are concerned with day care.

If you look at some of the situations that emanate and that are caused by the lack of adequate day care services in our Province, you have to look at all kinds of things. The employment picture, the reasons why there are two people, husband and wife, working in our Province at such a high rate. For example, the modern way of living now seems to be, because of high cost and so on, that it is absolutely required in many, many cases that both parents in a household have to go out and find employment. In order to give their children almost the basics of life now it requires a second income. If you look at the current costs, and I can use our local example in the Naskaupi

district, if you look at the cost of the present type of day care which is available, and that is in the form of two pre-school nurseries, the full day care under those establishments consist of care from seven-thirty in the morning until five-thirty in the evening, that is full day care, at a rate of \$12 for that day. In other words, we can put it this way, \$60 a week if it is full day care for five days a week. If the second wage earner in the household is on minimum wage, as many of them are, we are talking about approximately \$160 in gross earnings a week, following deductions which might amount of - oh, let us say \$20 to \$30 depending on circumstances, the number of dependents and so on - would drop it back to let us say \$130, drop that back by day care payments of another \$60 and you are talking about \$60 or \$70 left for the second wage earner which sort of makes the whole exercise of going out to try to bring some extra income and extra benefits and amenities to your family almost a wasted effort. We have to look at that part of it as well.

When we were talking about day care and a subsidization at a greater level than it is at the moment, the hon. member for St. John's East Extern (Mr. Hickey) was, I think, a little critical in that he said, "We are not just talking about money, money will not cure the ills of the lack of day care service in our Province." I do not think anybody on this side really said that, that only money would solve the problems. I think what we are saying over here is that money, of course, additional money, extra money to whatever the system will bear, along with a meaningful programme. I think the intent of

the member for St. Barbe was to put a little more backbone and a little more starch into the Private Member's Bill from the member for Carbonear, in moving that amendment, which would say that they want a properly supervised and adequately financed family day-care system to be at work, to supplement whatever there is right now, Mr. Speaker. It is certainly inadequate on a province-wide basis right now.

We have to consider too that when we are talking about the working mother, that is not the only mother, the only type of parent that requires day care. In that statement are a number of other facts. For example, a homemaker, the mother who stays at home while the husband is working, let us say, also requires day care services. The unfortunate circumstance of that is when you have a pre-school nursery which, in effect, is providing day care service, these are generally booked solid. I think the two we have in Naskaupi district in Happy Valley-Goose Bay have about thirty-six children in each of them and there is absolutely no room to satisfy the day care needs of the mother who requires it on an intermittent basis, say a couple of hours a day or whatever, for various purposes, whether it is to go to a hospital or whatever she has to require these services for. So we have to consider the fact that we are also talking about a homemaker as well as the working mother and there are not enough facilities to go anywhere near satisfying that need.

There are some benefits, in my opinion, Mr. Speaker, to the children themselves in being able to participate in day-care services and day-care

establishments in that they do have an opportunity to be exposed to their peer group and their early experiences in social interaction I think is important to them. It is a preparation for their entering the school system eventually, in much the same way I suppose a benefit that is now derived from pre-school nurseries that we see in a number of places in our Province. But subsidized day care is a basic social service but subsidized day care is a basic social service, we have to say that, it is a basic need, and it is a basic social service and it should be readily equitably available to anyone who has need of it whether it is a working mother, a parent who requires the day-care service on a part-time or intermittent basis. That is the sort of thing that we are looking for. If the government really had its heart and soul behind the intent of that Private Member's Bill.

We have to consider in recent times, Mr. Speaker, we were advised that people who are tenants of the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation system are not allowed to provide babysitting or day-care services with another establishment. And the government's reason for that is that they have a fear of the liability against the corporation or the government. Now I would suggest that is probably discriminatory in that a person who pays rent to the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation for the accommodation they are living in cannot carry on an enterprise as a means, as a circle means of earning extra income because the government has the fear of liability to the corporation and the government itself. I can understand that

fear. But surely there must be some method by which controls and plans and a system put in place whereby with subsidization or whatever method you want to use, there must be some method by which that can be overcome.

AN HON. MEMBER:

You have to have heart.

MR. KELLAND:

And simply to say, look, we support day care, we want day care and we have always wanted day care and to turn around and say well, someone who can provide a day-care home because they are tenants of the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation, sorry, you cannot do it because there may be some liability on the corporation or the government itself or perhaps the minister or whatever. So I find that a little bit of a forked-tongue approach to what the government is trying to say, and we do again, as we have said, and my colleagues have said we do support the main thrust of what the member for Carbonear (Mr. Peach) is trying to attempt in his Private Member's Bill.

But I would think that any member of this House and every single member of this House who really does believe that there is a great need for day-care services to an extended and expanded amount in this Province, they have very little choice I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, but to vote for and in favour of the amendment as proposed by my colleague for St. Barbe (Mr. Furey) district.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Justice.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, I am extremely pleased to rise and speak in support of the motion that was so ably put by my colleague, the member for Carbonear (Mr. Peach). The member for Carbonear presented his motion and the supporting rationale for it, I thought, in a most clear and thoughtful way. He indicates that he has quite a deep understanding of what is day care, what is the importance of good care for young children, and why it is necessary for government to carry on increasing child-care services so that all residents of the Province are helped and benefitted.

Mr. Speaker, it was somewhat disappointing to hear, as the second speaker in this debate, the Liberal member for St. Barbe (Mr. Furey) who disappointingly did not contribute constructive remarks, did not indicate an appreciation of why it is important that-

MR. FUREY:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

A point of order, the hon. member for St. Barbe.

MR. FUREY:

Maybe the hon. minister could tell us whether she supports the amendment?

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, there is no point of order.

The hon. the Minister of Justice.

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, in my opening phrase I indicated that I am very pleased to indicate my whole-hearted support for this motion. Mr. Speaker, I would appreciate not being interrupted by irresponsible, partisan, political comments from the people opposite.

Mr. Speaker, clearly what I am supporting is the main motion. I was about to say that consistent with the shallowness of the St. Barbe member's presentation, he proposed an amendment to the main motion which is quite unsatisfactory because it is so narrowly focused. Mr. Speaker, the amendment proposed by the member for St. Barbe calls for much less action on the part of government than does the main motion by the member for Carbonear (Mr. Peach).

The amendment suggested by the MHA for St. Barbe (Mr. Furey) specifies only one type of day care, which is family day-care homes.

MR. SIMMS:

Right on!

MS VERGE:

Now, Mr. Speaker, anyone with a passing understanding of the reality of daycare today understands that what is needed by the people of our Province is a variety of models of daycare.

MR. SIMMS:

Right on! We know it, too.

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, we do need family day care, but we also need other types of day care. We need work-place day care -

MR. SIMMS:

Right on!

MS VERGE:

- and I cite as an excellent example of work-place day care the Memorial University Day-Care Centre -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

Order, please!

MS VERGE:

- which is sponsored by Memorial University for children of its faculty and staff.

Mr. Speaker, the university has provided first-class facilities for the centre and allows a board comprising employees of the university to administer the day care programme. At present, that programme comprises a comprehensive daytime programme for children of an early age, up to kindergarten entry age, and it also provides an after school service for school age children who get out of primary and elementary school earlier in the afternoon than their parent or parents return home to let them into the house.

So, Mr. Speaker, we need work-place day care. Memorial University has taken a lead role. The provincial government has indicated an intention to establish a work-place day-care centre for the employees stationed at Confederation Building and Confederation Complex, which is a splendid initiative on behalf of the government and reinforces the example of the university that work place day care is very desirable and works well.

A second kind of day care which can operate in other than family homes is one of a co-operative nature, where a small group of parents band together, form a co-operative and operate a day-care centre, which could be located in public facilities or in any one of a number of locations in their communities.

Mr. Speaker, we also need day-care centres operated by community organizations such as church groups, such as YM/YWCAs. We have a number of fine such day-care operations in the Province. Mr. Speaker, we need to get school boards involved in preschool programming, using vacant school facilities, using classroom space being freed up as a result of declining enrolments. Mr. Speaker, we need school boards to build on what they have started already. School boards have begun pre-kindergarten programmes for four-year-olds due to start kindergarten in the following school year and their parents.

Mr. Speaker, we need to foster privately-owned profit-making day-care centres. In short, Mr. Speaker, we need for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador a variety of types and kinds of day care.

MR. SIMMS:

Right.

MS VERGE:

We need to ensure that that day care is of high quality. Now, Mr. Speaker, for all those reasons, the amendment suggested by the member for St. Barbe (Mr. Furey) falls far short of the mark which this government has set for itself, and it indicates a deficiency in his and his party's appreciation of day care.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when the member for St. Barbe spoke in this debate, he used many exaggerated expressions and phrases. He used theatrical stances and poses and shimmied and moved about within a radius of about ten feet. Perhaps that was designed to compensate for his obvious lack of appreciation of this subject.

But, Mr. Speaker, I note that while Opposition members have regular opportunities to speak in this House through Question Period daily and Private Members' Day, this is the first time I have heard a Liberal Opposition member even mention the word 'daycare', even talk about care of young children.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the member for Menihek (Mr. Fenwick), on the other hand, has shown initiative on this subject. I recall specifically the member for Menihek asking good questions about daycare in Question Period, I think it was earlier in this session. But, Mr. Speaker, never before have I heard a member of the official Opposition in Question Period or on a Private Members' Day, talk about child care or daycare or talk about the needs of preschool children.

Mr. Speaker, I think we all have to pause and ask, why is day care important? Why is the care of young, preschool children of crucial importance to our Province? Mr. Speaker, research has shown that the early years are the most important in an individual's development and growth. Research has demonstrated that the effects of preschool education on disadvantaged children are measurable and dramatic. Cost benefit analysis have been done showing that

children who, at birth, are disadvantaged because of the socio-economic situation of their parents, because of a lack of stimulation at home, benefit in a way that can be measured from early childhood education from participation in a quality day-care programme.

Mr. Speaker, what I was looking for - I will just have to find the correct place in my notes here - is the research findings that the early years are the formative years. It has been shown that most of an individual's learning and development occurs within the first five years of life. By the age of five, the brain has reached 90 per cent of its adult weight, and half the final intellectual growth of the child has been achieved by then. So, Mr. Speaker, as a society, as a government, we have to pay close attention to what happens in these early, crucial, formative years of children.

Now, Mr. Speaker, throughout our history, parents have had to rely on help from relatives, neighbors and friends in caring for and bringing up their children. The fact that parents need support in raising children is not new. What is new is the complexion of our economy and our society, and the family unit. I have some statistics that point out the present picture in our Province. There are now 49,000 children under the age of five in the Province, as reflected in the 1981 census. Approximately 15,000 of these preschoolers are living in families which have both parents in the work force, or in single parent families where that parent works outside the home. Mr. Speaker, the size of the family unit in our Province is

shrinking. The 1981 census shows that -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. member has asked for silence while she is speaking. I would ask hon. members on both sides if they would afford her that courtesy.

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, the 1981 census shows that the average family size in this Province is only 3.8 adults and that is a decrease from 4.6 in 1971, and 5 in 1961. The family size is shrinking. The extended family is not as prevalent as it once was. The possibility for parents getting help in raising their young children from grandmothers and grandfathers, aunts and uncles, cousins and sisters and brothers-in-law is not as prevalent today as it once was.

Poverty, as we all know, is a pressing problem in this Province. The rate of adult literacy is relatively low in this Province. Although I do not think it is really out of kilter with comparable areas elsewhere in North America, still an alarmingly high number of adults in this Province, including parents, cannot functionally read and write.

Mr. Speaker, in our Province, 9.4 per cent of families with children are single parent families, according to the most recent census data. Our divorce rate is changing rapidly, it has grown quite significantly. Mr. Speaker, 15 per cent of all live births in our Province are to adolescent

mothers. Many of these teenage mothers are unmarried and many of them are keeping their babies. Now, Mr. Speaker, mothers and fathers in all these kinds of situations have a greater need now than ever for outside support and sharing of the responsibility of bringing up young children. Many groups in our Province have expressed concerns about the adequacy of these kinds of support, and pointed out the need for more quality day care spaces.

Quite recently a group in the Corner Brook area, called the Citizens Action Child Care Committee, with funding from our Department of Social Services, conducted an exhaustive survey of people in the Corner Brook - Bay of Islands area to determine their views on child care and the findings, which I only received recently, indicate that quite a lot of people in that area feel that there should be more support to families, that there should be more day-care centers of various types, and indicated that workers at these child-care programmes should be well trained.

Mr. Speaker, I feel that there is no doubt at all about the crucial importance of the care and upbringing of young children, and about the need for supplements to the nuclear family for this early childhood care. I believe that the children of our Province, families in general, and our whole society need a variety of high-quality child-care arrangements. An arrangement which might be appropriate for an employee of Memorial University, which happens to be met quite well now, may not be the same as the need of a family in Triton where there is a fish plant employing women and men seasonally, on shift

work, requiring both parents of two-parent homes in that area to occasionally have to be absent from the home for more than a twenty-four hour period during the fish plant season. Again, there might be a different need for a family in Mount Moriah near Corner Brook. The needs vary.

Studies have shown that one of the keys, a crucial ingredient to providing quality day care, is involvement of and participation of the parent, but how those parents are involved and how they share the responsibility of bringing up their children depends on individual circumstances, depends on the make-up of the family and the community, and, for that reason, a variety of child-care models have to be encouraged and fostered, not just the one model suggested by the narrowly-focused proposed amendment by the member for St. Barbe (Mr. Furey).

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to deal with initiatives that have been taken by this government over the past few years, during the Peckford administration. Mr. Speaker, in that time, five or six departments have been actively involved. These departments include Social Services, Education, Health, Labour and the Ministry responsible for Women's issues. As I have indicated, the government as a whole, has taken the lead in work-place day care by making plans for a day-care center for Confederation Complex employees, and that should be opened within the next year or so.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Education is one which got involved in developing better day-care services only in the past five or six years. That

department has had added to its staff complement an Early Childhood Development Consultant, a very competent, well-trained person. We have had two highly-trained, qualified individuals holding the post. The current consultant came to the department after working with school boards.

The Department of Education was involved in an interdepartmental study which produced the report which I am holding called, The Report of the Ministerial Advisory Committee on Early Childhood and Family Education, which sets out an excellent analysis of the requirements for child care in our Province, and gives practical recommendations to the government for action.

Mr. Speaker, following the recommendations of that report, and with the work of the Department of Education's Early Childhood Consultant, there has been developed for school boards a preschool parent resource package which school boards today in this Province are using in reaching out to parents of three and four-year olds due to enter their schools, due to enter the regular Kindergarten programme a year or two in the future. This is a programme which has been very well received; it is building on programmes, which I mentioned earlier, for families with children entering Kindergarten.

Mr. Speaker, now in progress is work on programme guidelines for day-care centres. This work has been done co-operatively, involving government personnel as well as workers at day-care centres.

Mr. Speaker, there have been

important initiatives taken by government in recent years. There has been laid a good foundation for the kind of expansion in the number and quality and variety of child-care arrangements that are needed.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I want to again state my support of the resolution and itemize some of the important issues which government has to deal with and is now analyzing and dealing with. First and foremost, I think, is the one mentioned by my colleague, the member for St. John's East Extern (Mr. Hickey), and that is financing. The provinces have consulted with one another and are now discussing with the federal government the need for better federal government involvement with provinces in financing child care. In particular, the provinces are seeking an arrangement whereby the federal government will subsidize child care for all children. Presently, there is subsidization through the Canada Assistance Plan for only disadvantaged children, either children of social assistance recipients or handicapped children. There is a need to broaden the funding arrangement to reflect the importance of support for families raising young children right across the board, not just some types of families, but all families who can benefit from good child care.

Mr. Speaker, another important issue which is being dealt with by my colleague, the Minister of Career Development and Advanced Studies (Mr. Power), is the need for training programmes for workers in child-care centres.

Other issues, Mr. Speaker -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! The hon. member's time has elapsed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

By leave. By leave.

MS. VERGE:

Do I have leave, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER:

By leave, the hon. the Minister of Justice.

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, I will just take a minute.

I have mentioned two crucial issues which are now being worked on, financing and the provision of training for child-care workers. Other issues include the provision of supervised, regulated programmes and services for children under the age of two.

Also, Mr. Speaker, we have to look at labour/management policies which allow more flexibility for working parents to spend the time they want to spend caring for their young children. We need to look at having more school board involvement in preschool programming.

These and others are issues which are being worked on now by the provincial government to see that all residents of the Province are benefited by proper quality child-care services, which is what the MHA for Carbonear's (Mr. Peach) motion calls for and, unfortunately, the amendment posed by the member for St. Barbe (Mr. Furey) falls far short of.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I am quite pleased to speak to this resolution. I am also quite pleased to speak after the Minister of Justice has because -

MR. LUSH:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of order, the hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, I do not know whether it is a point of order or a point of privilege but for some time now I have been concerned as a member in terms of getting recognized to speak. Your Honour, it is not to challenge Your Honour because I think all hon. members will know that this is not one of the things done by this hon. member. But I am concerned, as a Member of this House, that I do not get my just time in speaking. Now the hon. member for Menihek (Mr. Fenwick) I have been following, for example, gets on Question Period just about everyday. I suggest Your Honour that I am not able to get on Question Period everyday and I believe that I have as much right as anybody in this House to get on Question Period. There are sixteen members over here and I have as much right to get on Question Period as any other member. Maybe Your Honour is just unaware. He sees people standing and everybody will be given an opportunity to speak.

It was most important for me to speak today because circumstances will prevent me from not being here next week and Your Honour, I

have stood here a couple of times to indicate that I was speaking, and I just believe that there are members on this side not getting their rights in that respect. Again, the most potent point is with respect to Question Period. The hon. member, who is only one member, gets on everyday and if he has that right I surely have that right, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, to that point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, the hon. the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands.

MR. SIMMS:

Now, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member who has just risen on a point of order or a point of privilege, he did not say what it was.

MR. LUSH:

A point of privilege.

MR. SIMMS:

A point of privilege. Therefore, I cannot be interrupted by a point of privilege in that case. The hon. member who has just spoken now is a gentleman, Mr. Speaker, by all descriptions. I think all of us in this House respect the hon. member for Bonavista North. When he speaks, he usually makes some sense in everything that he says and we would love to hear the hon. member speak in this debate, perhaps, in fact, he might be able to add something - well, not add something because neither of the two previous speakers on that side have said anything yet - however, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the point of privilege, it is clear by all the rules and all the precedents that Your Honour has the absolute authority in terms of

who is recognized in this House and who should speak in any debate.

The hon. member might really have a complaint, but he certainly do not have a point of privilege. Your Honour quite rightly recognized the first individual, I guess, who came to Your Honour's sight and that is the way it has been forever and always will be. I suggest perhaps the hon. member might be able to take his complaint to his caucus and let him get a chance to ask a question in Question Period earlier in the game than having the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Barry) dominate the Question Period. There is no point of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TULK:
To that point of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
To that point of privilege, the hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:
Mr. Speaker, the member for Grand Falls is exactly right when he says that the when the member for Bonavista North stands in this House, he makes a great deal of sense and I suggest to him that that is unlike the member for Grand Falls, the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands - he never makes sense.

The member for Bonavista North was raising a very-

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. TULK:
Now, Mr. Speaker, I always obey

your rulings and would you ask those two leadership contenders, number three and four down there to be quiet.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. TULK:
The real leadership contender for Mount Pearl (Mr. Windsor), you do not hear anything out of him, like you hear from those two down there.

Mr. Speaker, I can stand here until six o'clock.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

If the hon. member provokes some members on this side, he can expect a certain amount of interruption.

MR. TULK:
I am not arguing, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. member for Fogo.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. TULK:
Mr. Speaker, name the hon. gentlemen.

Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, the member for Grand Falls (Mr. Simms) is exactly right when he says that the member for Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan) makes a great deal of sense when he stands in his place. The member for Bonavista North (Mr. Lush) made it quite clear, in his point of privilege, that he was not questioning Your

Honour, but he was pointing out a fact that he feels he is being unjustly treated, not through any intentional part -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, not intentionally, of course, by Your Honour. But he was making a very good point and that is that the member for Menihek (Mr. Fenwick) -

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. TULK:

How many times is that, Mr. Speaker? The member for Humber West (Mr. Baird) is not even in his seat.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

Would hon. members please allow the hon. member for Fogo to make his point?

The hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

They have got me scared to death, Mr. Speaker.

The point that the member for Bonavista North was making is that the -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, are they going to stay like that or do you have to

name them? The member for Bonavista North was making a point that there are sixteen members in this House and the member for Menihek in Opposition. I know that Your Honour will take note of what the member for Bonavista North has said and, indeed, will attempt -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. TULK:

I have to have it quiet, Mr. Speaker, because I am scared to speak when they are speaking. I am sure that Your Honour will take into account what the member for Bonavista North has said and will take it in the light of which it was said. Indeed, of course, if the -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, who are you going to flick out first?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, I am trying to make a point of order. I am being continually interrupted by -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

Carry on.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, the member, as I was saying, for Bonavista North (Mr.

Lush) was right and the member for Grand Falls was right as well when he made his point, that the member for Bonavista North does make a great deal of sense. It was far more sensible to point -

AN HON. MEMBER:

A lot more sensible than what you are saying.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, I am going to have to ask you to protect me from that crowd. I know that Your Honour will take it in the light in which the member for Bonavista North said it and it is a very good point.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

There is no point of privilege. I was interested in the comments of the hon. the member for Bonavista North if he cannot be here next week. If the hon. member for Menihek would give leave, I will certainly recognize the hon. member for Bonavista North. Otherwise, I will recognize the hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker, at the beginning I was going to give him leave but after that display taking time from me, I have changed my mind.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to the motion. I am pleased also that it was introduced by the member for Carbonear (Mr. Peach). I thought that the contribution through the Minister of Justice (Ms. Verge) was excellent. As a matter of fact, one of the few people, I think, who has taken a continuing interest in this House in the issue of child care - I have to call it child care because day care, obviously, is a limited term indicating during the day. As the Minister of Justice has pointed out, in places like Triton and places where people have to work on shift work and so on, the concept is really outdated.

That is probably about the end of the good comments I can make about the child care record of this administration. However, I want to start off by a few comparisons.

We have in this last budget, amid a lot of desk thumping on the other side, an indication that the budget for child care was increased by \$100,000. The indication was that this is a magnificent contribution towards the cause and a great improvement. I have gone and looked back through the previous budgets and the budget in 1979-1980, under 809.03 - Day Care Services - we see \$250,000 in the 1980-1981 estimates, that is, a quarter of a million dollars in 1980-1981. In the 1985-1986 estimates, the total for Day Care Services reads, \$236,000. I wonder how they can describe that as being a magnificent advance over this five or six year period of time. It looks like it is gone down. Obviously, the subheads may have been changed and there may have been different arrangements.

But my point that I would like to make is that there is no visible increase in the amount of money going there. As a matter of fact, talking to the Child Care Advocates' Association, which has been mentioned in the resolution and is obviously lobbying for this, they indicate that there has been no increase in the budget since 19 -

MR. HICKEY:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! A point of order, the hon. the member for St. John's East Extern.

MR. HICKEY:

My point of order is, the hon. gentleman for Menihek (Mr. Fenwick) obviously does not understand the changes that were made in the budgetary allocations during those years. There has been an increase. There has been money paid out in day care through the Social Assistance programme under the Canada Assistance Plan, which is not a direct allocation, and as a consequence, it is buried in the Social Assistance programmes. It is not fair for the hon. gentleman to play on the fact that it is only \$250,000 this year, hence, where is the \$100,000? It is there.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, there is no point of order. It is a difference of opinion between two hon. members. The hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I pointed out to the former Minister of Social Services (Mr. Hickey) that I was not holding

this as a direct comparison. I think that is unfair.

I do, however, wish to indicate that the increase in a lot of the allocations this time has been the first increase in nine years in these particular areas. Let us go over some of them because I think it is important to see where this \$100,000 went.

By the way, one of the things that I think we should note is that \$20,000 of the \$100,000 is really not new money. For example, in a press release put out by the Minister of Social Services (Mr. Brett) on September 9, 1985 outlining the increases in it, he indicates and I can quote, "the Community Services Council Early Childhood Training Centre has been awarded \$20,000 to assist with the cost of organizing part-time or evening courses." I assume that is part of the \$100,000.

Well, Mr. Speaker, it goes on three lines later and it says, "these services were provided in the last fiscal year by the Community Service Council with funding assistance from the federal government." So what we are looking at here is actually an \$80,000 increase, if indeed that is what the increase is.

Quite frankly, I had a resolution that I am going to read towards the end of my speech, but I feel that the Minister of Justice (Ms Verge) must have an extremely frustrating time in the Cabinet. Frustrating because, I know, she is deeply committed to the concept of child care on a subsidized basis available to virtually all the people in the Province who need it. I can see her frustration must be incredible when in the budget making process

any increase in it is done almost in token amounts.

Let us look at some of the monies that have been made available under this particular programme. The Start-Up Grant, which the former minister spoke about, went from \$500 up to \$1,000. It is a Start Up Grant for any kind of licenced registered day-care centre that we are talking about. By the way, we do not have a lot of those because we are only talking about 800 seats in this Province. As we remember, the minister already indicated that there are at least 15,000 children who can avail of it, so 800 is not a very large proportion of it. But the Start Up Grants, if you want to start up a new centre, went from \$500 up to \$1,000. That does not matter, by the way, how big your organization is. If it has eight seats, which is the minimum commercial centre, it gets \$1,000. If it has fifty seats, which is a sizeable operation, it also gets \$1,000. And \$1,000, Mr. Speaker, it is about the amount of money required to buy two fire safety doors to stick on your operation which are required by law, and quite rightly so, in those centres.

But the point is, Mr. Speaker, if is hardly anything in terms of money to convert say a premise that already exists into something that would be suitable for it, unless of course it formerly used to be a school, which I, by the way, suggest is a very good way of putting in day-care centers. The schools that we have that are surplus should be looked at more and more. I would suggest that if the ministers have not already looked at that, that is one area of increasing it.

Subsidies to parents: This is an interesting thing. What does day care cost? What is the commercial rate for it out there if you go in? My information is that it costs between \$60 or \$75 per week for each child that you put in there. If you have one child in there it maybe \$60 or \$70, two would be \$120, \$130, or \$140, three, of course, that would be a horrible situation to think of, three children under the age of five. My wife and I actually had that for a couple of years. At the time we felt like we were subsidizing the pamper factory, quite frankly, but that is beside the point. In that instance what you would have is something like \$200 a week required to get the proper kind of day care for these individuals, if you were putting them in centers like this. There is a subsidy, but the subsidy is only a full subsidy if you make less than \$745 per month, that is about \$8,000 a year, and this is a good arrangement. There a catch though. As the minister, I think, pointed out, as members opposite pointed out, the member for Naskaupi (Mr. Kelland) as I recall pointed out very adequately, it is only if the individual goes in an approved day care center that has been licensed. And, of course, with 800 seats the waiting list for some of these institutions is so long that you cannot get them in there.

If we look at the situation of a single parent, which is one of the worst situations that we have, a young woman looking for a job, having a child to look after, that person will be able to get a subsidy, if they are working at the minimum wage or somewhere in that range. The minimum wage would be around \$8,000 a year so they would be approximately in the

range that is required.

The problem is that they might have to wait a year or two before they can get the child into that center and, in the meantime, they have a requirement to earn a living. As everybody knows, if they have to hire a babysitter in order to do it, they have a much higher cost, in most cases, to pay that person because the minimum wage at \$2.75 an hour for people looking after children in a home at say forty hours will work out to somewhere in the range of \$100 or so. So it is even more expensive to do it that way.

By the way, this is the first time it has been changed in a long time. It used to be around \$400 and that was almost laughable. Yet, this time last year you had to make less than \$400 or \$500 a month in order to be qualified for the subsidy. The subsidy slides as your income level goes up and it cuts out completely at the level of \$1,257 a month. Of course, there is a formula for it so I do not want to go into the intricacies because it is not important for the particular points I am trying to make.

The subsidy; this government put in a subsidy to help people improve their day-care centers and, quite frankly, at twenty cents a day, I am not so sure that we should laugh or we should cry about it. Twenty cents a day is the subsidy, a dollar a week per child, and a total, I think, of two hundred and sixty some odd-days a year is all that is allowed, so each child place in a day-care center would be worth 261 day-care days, so what you are talking about is, well, I do not know what it works out to. But the amount of money required to put the kinds of

facilities in place are exceedingly greater than that and I think at twenty cents a day, we are probably joking, especially when we are talking \$15 a day which seems to be just about the average amount of money required in order to put a child in day care. Of course, it is not to the parents, it is to the center in order to get equipment and supplies.

There are a whole bunch of other areas that have not been addressed and in the time available I am not going to get a chance to address it, thanks, I think, to a lot of obstruction on part of some individuals.

Our problem, Mr. Speaker, is this, we have to get a whole-hearted commitment on the part of the government and on the part of all society to look after children who are in situations where they need day care because their parents have to work, because they are single parents or because both parents are working. We have about 15,000 children in this situation. Quite frankly, the nickle and dime approach - I am not going to call it the nickle and dime approach, that is to generous - the penny and nickle approach of this particular government would, again, be laughable if it was not so tragic. What we have is a situation where 800 or 900 spaces are all we have available when we need 15,000, and that is pitiful.

In addition, we now have a decision by the Newfoundland and Housing Corporation, which was referred to earlier by my colleague for Naskaupi, where the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation will not allow for home day care. I am not sure if

the Minister of Justice (Ms Verge) mentioned it, but I should mention it at this point. Home day-care is not operating a center in your back yard or anything like that. It is the idea that, when we only have 800 seats and we need 15,000, we have got to find some other way to look after these children. In a properly constructed home day-care situation, there would be a co-ordinator and this co-ordinator would be involved in matching the parents and the children with the child care givers, so that we would have a situation in which the children that are needed to be looked after are matched with the kind of people that could responsibly look after them. There is a limit. The limit, under law, would be only four children, at the maximum, could be looked after in a place like this.

The 6,000 units that the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation have as subsidized units are now off limits to that kind of very high quality child care when it is offered in the properly supervised context, making sure that the fire regulations are adhered to, such as would be appropriate for a small operation like that, making sure, also, that the persons have the proper personality for that kind of child care, making sure that those individuals also are able to look after the children properly and that there are proper standards, and making sure that they are inspected as well. These systems are not pie in the sky systems. They are inexpensive approaches to putting this kind of child care in place. They exist in countries like Australia and in other countries in Europe. They would go a long way to answering the immediate need that we have

here and to bridging the resources that we have here. The problem, of course, is that we have conflicting decisions by various agencies which make it more difficult.

I wish the Minister of Justice were in her seat now because I would like to ask her if she agreed with the decision made by the Minister responsible for Housing in supporting the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation to make it off limits to any kind of child care which is, indeed, what the ruling does. I wish I could talk to her about that.

The other thing I would like to ask her - she is not here but it will be in Hansard - is, is there a decision by the Department of Justice lawyers about what the actual level of liability is and what are we going to do about insurance of it? Quite frankly, the commercial units need insurance. They have to operate with insurance from eight to fifty people. Obviously, some sort of insurance can be worked out for the home care people.

My motion, which I will now move, seconded at this point by nobody, but if any one of the Liberals wish to second it -

AN HON. MEMBER:

You cannot do that.

MR. FENWICK:

I am moving an amendment to the amendment.

MR. FUREY:

Are you supporting mine?

MR. FENWICK:

Oh, I support your amendment but I would like this one. It would be

that the words "Therefore Be It Resolved", in other words the resolved section be deleted.

AND WHEREAS this Province has the least investment per child in child care of all the provinces in Canada; and

WHEREAS the increase in spending of \$100,000 in the previous budget is just a tiny fraction of what is needed -

MR. SIMMS:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

A point of order, the hon. the member for Grand Falls.

MR. SIMMS:

The hon. member say he is moving an amendment to the amendment. He obviously has to indicate as well who is seconding his amendment to the amendment. He has not indicated that. He should before he reads the amendment.

MR. FENWICK:

To the point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, the hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

A good point of order, Mr. Speaker. As you know I do not have any members of the party here. I now welcome any Liberal. The member for Eagle River.

MR. HISCOCK:

I second it, Mr. Speaker.

MR. FENWICK:

Thank you very much.

MR. SIMMS:

Stop the clock.

MR. SPEAKER:

Is it agreed to stop the clock.

MR. TULK:

On a point of order, that is the cheapest move that I have seen a member of this House make. The hon. gentleman gets up with his theatrics. Anybody who wants to second it. I think you have already been told that somebody on this side would second it and yet did not have the decency to come and say, "Would the member for Eagle River?". But the theatrics. Sure, Mr. Speaker, we have no problem to second it. All he has got to do is ask and, if we think it is worthwhile, we will second it. You do not need the theatrics. The member for Eagle River will second his motion.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say, while I am on my feet -

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker, to the point of order that was raised.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Fogo was speaking.

MR. TULK:

I would like to make one other point and that is that I would like for Your Honour to consider over the next day, if indeed the amendment is in order, and of course, come back with a ruling as to whether it is or not. But there is absolutely and no need for the theatrics that we see by the member for Menihek, to stand up and try to see if he can force us into some corner or not. That is the cheap kind of stuff that I do not need.

MR. FENWICK:

To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, the hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

As of the time I stood up, no member that I had inquired of, of the Liberal Party, was willing to second the motion. I did not ask the member for Eagle River (Mr. Hiscock) because he was not here, but I would welcome his seconding. I just want to read the last three lines and then I will sit down.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

I want a seconder for the motion.

MR. FENWICK:

Yes, the member for Eagle River.

MR. HISCOCK:

Yes, I will second it.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that this House condemn the government for indifferent and callousness towards parents and children who need quality child care services.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

It is now six o'clock and the House stands adjourned until 3:00 p.m. tomorrow, Thursday.

Index

Answers to Questions

tabled

November 27, 1985

Reply to Question #19 dated November 13, 1985, from the M.H.A. for
Menihek.

QUESTION: Last spring the Minister indicated that there was a
temporary program to replant a bunch of seedlings that
had been damaged in the Spring. I would ask the Minister
to give us:

- (1) A complete list of those individuals who
were hired on for that temporary program,
and the duration for which they were hired on,
and the salaries paid.

ANSWER: The Minister of Forest Resources & Lands did not indicate at
any time last spring that there was a temporary program to
replant damaged seedlings.