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Speaker: Honourable Patrick McNicholas

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The House met at 10:00 a.m.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):
Order, please!

Before calling for Statements by Ministers, I would like to welcome to the gallery ten members of the Third St. John's Clerk Branch of the Federated Women's Institute of Canada.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:
I note one of the members is Mrs. Frances Clarke, wife of a former Speaker of this House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:
I would also like to welcome Mayor Horatio Cluett and councillor Walter Cluett, from the town of Garnish.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:
I would also like to welcome twenty-eight students from the Harbinger School of Business and their instructor, Judy Rotchford.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

Oral Questions

MR. K. AYLWARD:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Mr. Speaker, I have questions for the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth (Mr. Matthews). The questions are related to the same, similar types of questions that I asked yesterday about the report, the **Provincial Master Plan** for recreational facilities in the Province. Could the minister tell us if that report contains statements that might reflect badly on his department, statements such as there has been very little planning done by the department, and that there might have been political favouritism in the allocation of grants? Could he tell us if those statements are contained in the report?

MR. MATTHEWS:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth.

MR. MATTHEWS:
Mr. Speaker, the question is a continuation of questioning by the hon. the member yesterday. And I think I explained to him very clearly that there are a number of thrusts to the **Facility Advisory Committee Report**, and one of the main thrusts of the report is planning. And as I told the hon. member yesterday, long before we received the report we had made movements in the area of planning and a number of other areas pertaining to recreation and, in particular, recreational facilities within the Province. And just last year in our budget we funded some eight or ten studies that will lead to proper planning for proper recreational facilities in eight or ten communities and regions of the Province.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the member for Stephenville.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Mr. Speaker, I will ask the question in a different manner so that the minister can give us a response, so he can understand what we are saying. Is the reason why you will not bring the report to this House of Assembly, for all the people around this Province - over seventy submissions were presented to your department - because there are statements in it that talk about political favouritism and about the allocation of grants? Is that not also the reason that you will not give a list of the grants that we have been asking for of where the monies have been allocated all around the Province?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker, the answer to all of the hon. gentleman's questions really is no. It was a very good report by the Committee. There was input from all areas of the Province, from some seventy-plus communities or groups. As I said to the hon. gentleman yesterday, a number of the recommendations in the report were of a financial nature and, based upon the present financial position of the Province and the present approved budget for this fiscal year, the

department was not able to entertain implementing recommendations of a financial nature.

The other thing, Mr. Speaker, is those recommendations in the report of a non-monetary nature, some of them had already been started to be implemented in the policies and programmes of the department and others will be over the next year or two. So there is nothing in the report, Mr. Speaker, that is of any embarrassment or in any way reflects badly on this government or this department. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, I would say that with the recreational sport fraternity of this Province this government has an excellent rapport and I have great relationships with all the various recreational sports groups and people throughout the Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. K. AYLWARD:

You have great relationships is right, Mr. Minister. I am going to read to you a quote and I want you to answer this question. The minister has stated that there is nothing embarrassing in that report. Now, I want the minister to get up and answer the question, again knowing full well what is in the report, because I am now going to table this copy of the report that I have here.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. K. AYLWARD:

One quote is: 'There really has been no planning on the part of the Department of Culture, Recreation and Youth, rather development has been based on a "political understanding" of the needs of the province.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Now, first off, the minister does not have to take the responsibility of tabling the report, because I bring it to the House of Assembly and give this to the people of Newfoundland, who rightfully deserve to see what this government has been doing.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker, what the hon. gentleman has just stated, of course, is an opinion of the Committee. It does not necessarily reflect the opinion of all those who submitted reports or submissions to the Committee. The other point, as I said to the hon. gentleman yesterday, is when he talks about lack of planning, Mr. Speaker, just in the last fiscal year we funded between eight and ten feasibility/viability studies in this Province, of which the hon. member's district received one -

MR. SIMMS:

Take it back.

MR. MATTHEWS:

- yet he gets up in this House and talks about lack of planning or

that it is political. Now the hon. member knows what party he represents in this House, he is not on the government side, but as a minister, in the last fiscal year my department, approved by me, funded a study in Stephenville, and a number of other communities in districts not on the government side, so it has nothing to do with politics. As I said yesterday, Mr. Speaker, in the current fiscal year, in the budget on our recreational capital grants programme, I can tell each hon. member opposite, from the NDP to the Liberals, that there will be recreation money spent in all those districts this year. I do not consider that to be patronage, Mr. Speaker. I think that is fairness.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, the minister has a way of shouting a little extra loudly when he has been bested, as he just was bested by the gentleman from Stephenville. Now the minister made much, a couple of years ago, about the fact that it was an independent committee of people with great expertise in the area concerned; he raised considerable expectations about what the committee would do; he has said in this Chamber in the last twenty-four hours that it is, 'A good report.' Now, Mr. Speaker, he wants to undermine what is certainly a key statement in that report. Mr. Speaker, will the minister indicate what he has

done, in view of the fact that he has indicated to the House that this is not a key statement and he does not agree with it, and so on and so forth so what has he done in the fourteen months he has had report? What has he done to show the writers of the report the error of their ways when they allege that the whole basis of operation of this department is one predicated on political considerations as opposed to the needs of the Province, and as opposed to a proper planning process? What has he done to educate those people? What has he done, what steps has he taken to respond to that particular charge in the report which, dismiss it as he might, is a very serious indictment of the manner in which he has conducted his affairs as minister of the department?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker, I apologize to the hon. member opposite if he is somehow offended by my loud tone of voice, and I have been known to shout in the past, Mr. Speaker, and I guess the time that I shouted most was September 4, 1984, when I helped put the hon. member out of the House of Commons.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:

So I have had occasion, Mr. Speaker, in the past to shout and celebrate, and I guess that is the one that stands out most in my mind. And I would suggest to him that before too much longer I may

have reason to shout again in Fortune-Hermitage when we replace him with a PC member.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker, I did say yesterday in this House that indeed the report was a good one and it is. The members on the committee were well reknowned recreation and sports people from throughout the Province, with a lot of expertise and educational background. As I said, Mr. Speaker, in pointing out to the hon. members in answers yesterday, since I have become minister of the department I have tried to spread the recreation capital grants money, the feasibility study monies around the Province as best I can. In the district of Menihek, Mr. Speaker, we put money into our retrofit programme, from recreation capital grants. As I said, for every member opposite this year there will be recreation money of some form spent in their districts.

So I do not in one way, Mr. Speaker, apologize for the way that I have conducted myself in that department or in the way that I have spread monies around this Province. There is one thing that I have stood up for and that is fairness and if the case is justified, Mr. Speaker, regardless of where the request comes from, I have done my utmost to fund it. So the hon. gentleman, Mr. Speaker, is just taking one statement out of the total report which has many, many recommendations.

MR. BAIRD:

Typical Liberal attitude.

MR. MATTHEWS:

And again, Mr. Speaker, we are seeing, of course, the Opposition again dwell on negative aspects and they have really lost the thrust of the report, Mr. Speaker, which is a mater plan for the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador in the field of recreation facilities. I think they have lost the thrust, they do not understand the report, and that is why, Mr. Speaker, we are getting the line of questioning we had the last two days.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SIMMONS:

The thrust of the report is there has been no planning. Mr. Speaker, I want to put a question to the Acting Premier, in the absence of the Premier -

MR. TOBIN:

Come on!

MR. SIMMONS:

- if the gentleman from Burin-Placentia West (Mr. Tobin) would stay quiet long enough, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TOBIN:

Why do you not go back to Ottawa!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS:

Given the indictment in the report, about which we have just been talking to the minister, the indictment of the political underpinning of everything that is going on that department, and the clear evidence this week alone from my friend for Windsor - Buchans (Mr. Flight), and other members in this Chamber who can

give you myriad examples of where there has been genuine political pork barreling in the appointment of people - the Minister of Recreation last night on TV acknowledged that the people at Catamaran Park got their jobs on the basis of lobbying from the gentleman for Grand Falls (Mr. Simms) - where you have, Mr. Speaker, a whole range of glaring examples of where political pork barreling is the order of the day, and, Mr. Speaker, given that we recall the eloquence that the Premier used in the days before he became Premier, about his abhorrence over matters relating to political pork barreling, and he now aids and abets the very process, can the minister, will the minister, tell us why it is the normal process which his government recommends to employers generally in the private sector, why is it that normal process is being so botched, so ignored, so overridden in the interst of political pork barreling, why is it that the young people of this Province are being sacrificed in the interst of political expediency? Why can they not have a fair crack, on the basis of their merit, on the basis of their competence to do the job, at the few jobs there are?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Mr. Speaker, I would deny absolutely the premise on which the question is based. I do not see the report as in any way an indictment of the minister or of the government. I do not acknowledge in any way political

pork barreling. The Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth is among the most competent and fair-minded ministers in this administration.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. LUSH:
Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth. I want to say that I listened to the minister very attentively, very carefully yesterday when he articulated the criteria by which people were hired for this government Job Creation Programme. I want to ask the minister, in view of that, because there appears to be a missing link to me, can the minister indicate whether or not this criterion was followed in the hiring of eight positions for the government Job Creation Programme in the Square Pond Provincial Park, in the district of Bonavista North, located on the Trans-Canada Highway three miles West of Gambo? I wonder if, in the creation of these eight jobs and the hiring of these people to fill these jobs, whether the criteria he mentioned yesterday were applied, because there appears to be a missing link to me?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth.

MR. MATTHEWS:
Mr. Speaker, once again, for the information of the hon. member,

the criteria of the Job Creation Programme: Number one, the programme was designed for unemployed Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. Yes, Mr. Speaker, those working in the park the hon. member referred to met the criteria of the Province's Job Creation Programme, which was for unemployed Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, a provincial programme in our provincial parks. The other stipulation of the programme, Mr. Speaker, was that 40 per cent of those employed must be twenty-five years of age and under. Yes, that programme did meet the criteria.

MR. LUSH:
A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
A supplementary, the hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:
I wonder if the minister can explain then why, in view of the fact that the Square Pond Provincial Park is in the district of Bonavista North, and in view of the fact that traditionally people had been hired for the park from the Gambo area, and in view of the outrageously high levels of unemployment in the Gambo area, both among the adult population and the youth population, why was it that out of these eight jobs that not one, single person was hired from Gambo or from the district of Bonavista North. Why not one?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth.

MR. MATTHEWS:
Mr. Speaker, as I said yesterday, we had in excess of 1100 applications for the Job Creation

Programme in provincial parks. There were 225 hired under the programme, of which 40 per cent were youth, twenty-five years or age or under, which amounted to ninety. Mr. Speaker, there are approximately 900 disappointed people who applied for jobs in Newfoundland and Labrador and did not get hired, and any time that happens, I guess, there are different reasons and people look for reasons as to why they did not get a job or why someone else got it.

I would just like to say to the hon. gentleman that once again he is pointing the figure at patronage and all this kind of thing, Mr. Speaker, and perhaps if the hon. gentleman were as occupied with representing the people of his district as he is with some members of his family, trying to get them jobs with government, perhaps his district would be better off.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH:
A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. LUSH:
Now, Mr. Speaker, I ask the minister to correct that statement. I ask him to table the letters that I have written to him on behalf of constituents of my district. I ask him to do it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH:
Now, Mr. Speaker, let me ask the minister: In view of what has

happened in the Square Pond Provincial Park, in view of what has happened in the Catamaran Provincial Park, will the minister not admit that this is pure, unadulterated, unmitigated political patronage, and that is it an indication of a government that has betrayed the confidence and the trust that the people of this Province put in them?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth.

MR. MATTHEWS:
Mr. Speaker, if I did one thing in my original answer, I think I struck a nerve with the hon. gentleman. I think that is obvious to everyone in the House and in the gallery. I guess, Mr. Speaker, there must be some truth to what I said.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. MATTHEWS:
And you see, Mr. Speaker, having the personality that I have, when someone throws me a jab I throw two back. I can give examples to a number of other gentlemen on the other side if they want it brought up. I mean, this is not hearsay.

AN HON. MEMBER:
(Inaudible) a member.

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

MR. MATTHEWS:
This is not hearsay, Mr. Speaker. I have been in the presence of

another minister on this side when they received a call from the hon. gentleman's family, and so on, looking for employment with government. So, you know, it is a two-way street. If the hon. gentleman wants to engage in that kind of debate in the House, well so be it. But I would just like to say to him that we have 516 Newfoundlanders and Labradorians working in our parks this morning, 225 are as a direct result of our Job Creation Programme, Mr. Speaker, and I am not going to apologize to anyone for employing 225 Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who, before the June 8 were unemployed, Mr. Speaker. We are proud of the programme.

As minister, I would like to have more money to hire more people and do more work in the parks. We are pursuing that, Mr. Speaker, the Parks Division of the Department of Culture, Recreation and Youth, but no final decisions have been made as to whether or not more monies will be guaranteed for the programme. I am working on it and, hopefully, Mr. Speaker, we will have hundreds of more people employed, not only under the parks programme, but through Fisheries, Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development, and Forestry and so on, Mr. Speaker.

It is a funny thing about the Opposition: When we do not create jobs they stand in this House and they condemn us; when we create jobs they stand in the House and still condemn us. I suppose it is the nature of Opposition, Mr. Speaker, but I think the hon. gentlemen are going the wrong way. I think occasionally they should give credit where credit is due.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH:

On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. LUSH:

The point of privilege I want to make, Mr. Speaker, is that my privileges have been breached as a member of this House by the slur that the minister just made. I want to assure members of this House that there is no member of my family working in the employ of this government. Last year my son applied for a job, Mr. Speaker, was given it, but when he heard the kind of political hay that this hon. crowd was trying to make, he did not take the job, Mr. Speaker. I have nobody working in the employ of this government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:

To that point of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of privilege, the hon. the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman is correct now. But what he did not say was that a member of his family, a son, has never worked with a department of government, because I understand now that the reason he is not working is because he is no longer a student, Mr. Speaker. It has nothing to do with -

MR. LUSH:

That is incorrect. He is attending The Fisheries College.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. MATTHEWS:
So, Mr. Speaker, to that point of privilege, I think the hon. gentleman better quit on this one.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

There is no prime facie case and breach of privilege. There is a difference of opinion between two hon. gentlemen.

MR. EFFORD:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. EFFORD:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My question is to the Minister of Social Services (Mr. Brett), and I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the minister back after his long and strenuous absence from the House of Assembly.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. EFFORD:
But now that the minister has had the opportunity to attend a Social Services Conference in Nova Scotia, and obviously has had the opportunity to listen to the views of other Social Services Ministers around Atlantic Canada, I would like to ask the minister, in listening to those views, and the

fact that he has on three occasions refused to apologize to the workers parents of this Province, has he now changed his mind about the statements that he made last week, and will he now apologize to the working parents of this Province so that he can restore some confidence back in the people of this Province?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

MR. BRETT:
Mr. Speaker, we had a very productive two days in Halifax with all the Ministers of Social Services from the ten provinces and the Territories. We certainly agreed that there is a need for more child care in the country at large and in each of our provinces. There was also general agreement that there must be some flexibility, and that was stressed particularly for Atlantic Canada. There has to be a great amount of flexibility in whatever programme Mr. Epp comes up with in June or July, whenever he announces that.

We stressed the need to do something outside of the tax system. We are afraid that he will go strictly with the tax system, and that will not benefit Newfoundland, and probably not benefit the other Atlantic provinces too much. As I indicated, for us in particular, in order to be of any great benefit there has to be a grant, something not only to enable us to do more in the immediate term, right now, but something that the federal government is prepared to extend down the road. Because if it is through the tax system or through a cap, then we will have great difficulty in coming up with our share of the dollars.

So, Mr. Speaker, it was a very productive meeting and we are looking forward with great anticipation to what Mr. Epp will be announcing, hopefully in June. If not, then we hope that it will be done as quickly as possible.

MR. EFFORD:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the member for Port de Grave.

MR. EFFORD:

Mr. Speaker, obviously the minister does not see it necessary to apologize to the people of this Province. I would like to ask the minister: In view of the fact that three of his Cabinet colleagues have disagreed with his statements, and the Premier himself has disagreed with his statements, will the minister tell this House and the people of this Province how he can carry on as Minister of Social Services, knowing that he cannot work with the members of his Cabinet and knowing that every group in this Province totally disagree with the minister's statements? Does he not see it necessary for him, because of all those factors, to immediately resign his position as Minister of Social Services, immediately today?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, I have spent probably the best years of my life working in the field of social services.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. BRETT:

I was ten years, Mr. Speaker, well we were called welfare officers then but today we call them social workers. I spent ten years in the field and subsequent to that I was the minister of the department for I think it was three years, and a little over two years ago I came back as minister of the department again.

I have touched thousands of people in those thirteen, fourteen, fifteen years, people who, for various reasons, are less fortunate than most of us here in this House. And I would suggest to the hon. member, as a matter of fact I would suggest to everybody in this House, that if it were possible for you to contact or talk to the thousands of people I have touched over the years you would find that most of them would tell you that I was always considerate, and always worked in their best interest.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to the hon. member that one of the reasons that I am in this seat today is because I was for a long period of time a social worker. I met many, many people, as I have already indicated, people who were grateful that I was kind and considerate.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

I think the hon. minister is straying from the answer.

MR. EFFORD:

Mr. Speaker,

MR. SPEAKER:

A final supplementary, the hon. the member for Port de Grave.

MR. EFFORD:

I would like to tell the minister that there is nobody on this side of the House questioning the minister's number of years of service, but we are questioning his ability after the statements he made last week, and the fact that three of his colleagues stated very clearly they do not agree with his views, and his ability to work in Cabinet and to function as a Cabinet Minister. Will the minister explain how he can work in Cabinet with three colleagues who express views opposite to those that he himself has expressed over the last week?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

MR. BRETT:

Mr. Speaker, I have always been an advocate of child care and quality care, and I have worked to that end always as a minister. Over the last few years we have made rapid strides, I can quote figures, I have them here if that is necessary. And I intend to continue to work towards that end. Again I would like to tell the hon. member that my staff will advise him, and anybody who knows me that I have always been a strong advocate of child care and quality child care.

That, Mr. Speaker, cannot be denied by anybody who has worked with me. It cannot be denied. I will continue to work to that end, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

My question is also for the Minister of Social Services. It has to do with a programme his department is sponsoring at the Avalon Community College for twenty-four social service recipients who have been in training in a BTSD course, or what we call upgrading, since September of last year. My question for the minister is as follows: Since the twenty-four individuals concerned have no idea whatsoever whether the course will continue in September to its conclusion around Christmas of this year, would the minister stand in his place and let these students know whether or not there is a commitment by his department to continue their training?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

MR. BRETT:

Yes, Mr. Speaker. I just learned of that when I got back to the Province. I do not think there is any intention to cancel the funds that are being made available. I think there was a delay, you can call it a bureaucratic delay or whatever, but it was not a political decision, it was not a decision by me or Cabinet. So to the best of my knowledge - and I have not had time to fully discuss the matter with the staff - is my understanding - I was talking very, very briefly to one of the ADMs yesterday - that it is quite possible that the think will be continued. It is just a matter of bureaucracy, trying to get the decision made. It is my understanding that it will not be cancelled.

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

My supplementary is that, of course, the training of these twenty-four students will wind up in a week or for the Summer, and they, obviously, have to make their own plans as to where they are going. I ask the minister: Is it possible for him to have this discussion with his regional office and with his own officials and let us know by the end of the day whether or not they intend to continue on the course so that these twenty-four individuals will finally be given an opportunity to upgrade themselves so that they can enter the work force and become productive members of society again, so they are in a position to start making plans for this Fall?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

MR. BRETT:

Mr. Speaker, the decision will be made as quickly as possible.

MR. FUREY:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for St. Barbe.

MR. FUREY:

Mr. Speaker, my question was to the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth, but in his absence to the Acting Premier. Could the Acting Premier tell us why none of these 250 jobs for students in the parks were referred to the Canada Student Employment Centers around the Province to avoid these allegations of patronage?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Mr. Speaker, I would defer that to the hon. Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth, who is, of course, as the hon. gentleman I am sure would agree, extremely competent, fair-minded and an excellent minister.

MR. FUREY:

I will repeat that question, Mr. Speaker, for the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth.

Can the minister tell us why none of these 250 jobs for students in the parks were referred to the Canada Student Employment Centers to circumvent these charges of patronage? Why did you not do the proper thing, put them before the student centers and take it completely out of the political realm?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker, first of all, the programme that we have been discussing for the last two days, which has been made public now for about six weeks, is not a total student programme. Now, students are eligible to be employed under the programme. It is a Job Creation Programme for all unemployed Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, of whom 40 per cent of those hired must be twenty-five years or age and under. Now, students do qualify for the programme, but it is not strictly a student programme. Some students in the Province, Mr. Speaker, could not be employed because we started the projects on

June 8. Some of those who applied for the jobs were in high school. Some were at some of the vocational schools, post-secondary, and were not finished. It is a provincial programme, Mr. Speaker, and the decision of government and the department was that for anyone, to be considered for the programme, had to submit applications to the Parks Division of the Department of Culture, Recreation and Youth.

Mr. Speaker, as one minister of government, in the lead department, I did not see the need of going to a federal Manpower office.

MR. FUREY:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. FUREY:

Mr. Speaker, the minister has just confirmed, in his answer, what his own independent committee has said about his department's planning. Now, the minister says 40 per cent of the jobs were for youth. Obviously, 60 per cent were for adults. Why did he not refer the 40 per cent to the Student Employment Center and the 60 per cent to the Canada Manpower Center to keep it free of politics?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker, I just answered the question. It is a provincial government programme and we, as a government, are very, very proud of the Job Creation Programme that we are initiating and funding this year, some \$13 million to \$14

million, Mr. Speaker. We are going to employ hundreds and hundreds of Newfoundlanders, both in the public job creation programme and in the private sector Job Creation Programme.

I would just like to say to the hon. gentleman that this is a new programme and there may be, over the next month or so as we go through it, some things that will come to light so that we really can fine tune the programme to make it better for all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. If such is the case, Mr. Speaker, as the minister of the department I will be more than glad for the next year to fine tune and make the whole thing better and more equitable, if that is the case.

I would like to say to him, if we had made the decision to go through the Student Placement Offices or Manpower, it does not clear itself of politics, Mr. Speaker, or at least I do not think so. Because just say to him that when the Acting Opposition Leader (Mr. Simmons) was an MP in Ottawa and he was dealing with the Southwest Coast Development Association, he told them in no uncertain terms that if they did not hire whom ever he wanted, they would not get another cent while he was in Ottawa. So these are the kind of things we are dealing with. So, because you take it out of the provincial realm and put it into a federal Manpower office does not mean that undue and unfair criticism will not still be there about patronage and politics. That has been there since the beginning of time, and I am sure it is going to be there for a long time after. I just want to go on record once again, Mr. Speaker, as saying there were 1100 application for 225 jobs, and

we did the best we could, as fair as we could, under the circumstances.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The time for Oral Questions has elapsed.

I would like at this stage to welcome to the visitors gallery three students and their teacher, Wayne Gillingham, from Port Albert Elementary School.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees

MS VERGE:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MS VERGE:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the Annual Report of the Newfoundland Crimes Compensation Board for the fiscal year 1986.

This report is by the Chairperson of the Board, Francis O'Dea, Q.C. The Board, Mr. Speaker, administers the Criminal Injuries Compensation Act, 1970, and the Criminal Injuries Compensation Programme created by that statute. Mr. Speaker, the Board awards compensation to people who are hurt personally, either physically or psychologically, as a result of crime, and the Board awards compensation for victims expenses resulting from their injuries or expenses resulting from death. The Board awards compensation for loss of wages,

and for pain and suffering. Victims themselves, people caring for victims and relatives of a deceased victim, are able to apply for compensation. Mr. Speaker, the board travels throughout the Province to hold hearings in response to applications.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Justice, is giving added emphasis to this programme. Recently we conducted a major province-wide publicity campaign centred around Law Day, and, Mr. Speaker, we have had discussions with our federal counterparts about the need to increase funding for victim services and supports. This Criminal Injuries Compensation Programme is now funded 90 per cent by the Federal Justice Department and 10 per cent by the provincial department.

At the recent meeting of Provincial Attorneys General with the Federal Justice Minister, the hon. Ray Hnatyshyn, there was a consensus about the need to improve services and programmes for victims of crime and we were all very pleased to hear Mr. Hnatyshyn commit the federal government to more funding for these purposes; he said he would be making an announcement by the end of this month about more federal funding for victim services. Mr. Speaker, I told him that our government would welcome funding to allow us to add court workers and councillors to give support and therapy to victims, especially victims of family violence and sexual assault. Thank you.

Petitions

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition on behalf of some 2,000 people of Fogo District, and I would read the petition into the record:

"To the hon. the House of Assembly in the Legislature assembled; the petition of the undersigned, residents of the communities of Lumsden, Deadman's Bay, Fogo, Deep Bay, Tilting, Joe Batt's Arm, Aspen Cove, Ladle Cove, Templeman and Cape Freels, humbly sheweth; that we petition the Government of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador to ensure that its federal counterpart not only maintain, but improve the existing Canada Post Offices in this Province; and that Canada Post Offices have served as a very essential communication link for smaller communities throughout this Province; and that private and business affairs are virtually served by Canada Post Offices in rural Newfoundland and Labrador; and that the closing and downgrading of Canada Post Offices represents a move towards the downgrading and centralization of services in the rural parts of this Province; and that the present federal government is taking a policy trend towards the closing of Canada Post Offices in these smaller communities; and that the closure of Canada Post Offices in this Province would represent the equivalent of the removal of such social programmes as Medicare, the Old Age Security system and other universal safety nets. And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray."

Now, Mr. Speaker, what the 2,000 petitioners from the district of Fogo primarily - Templeman and Cape Freels are included, and they are in the district of Bonavista North - are asking is that the provincial government intervene on their behalf, in what we know is a federal matter, to ensure that the federal government does not close down some of the post offices that we have in the smaller areas of the Province.

Mr. Speaker, in speaking in support of the petition let me say that it seems that what we are seeing here, and this is the primary thing I would like to speak about, is a move once again on behalf of those people, those economists, those people who believe that everything has to pay - primarily bureaucrats, but some politicians - regardless of where it is or what kind of service it offers. There are those people in politics and there are those people in bureaucracies who believe that if it does not pay then it should not exist.

Mr. Speaker, in this Province of ours there is, I believe, an insidious programme of centralization that would make what happened in the 1960s in this Province look like a Sunday school picnic.

We have seen the neglect of the inshore fishery in this Province, we have seen the downgrading of that. My friend from Twillingate (Mr. W. Carter) yesterday raised a question in this Legislature as to whether the inshore fishery was going to function at all in this Province this year. We are witnessing one of the worst years, and, Mr. Speaker, there can be no debate about the fact that that comes from overfishing and the

lack of restructuring in the inshore fishery, and, as a result of that, many of our smaller communities are suffering. While we are not against the restructuring of the deep-sea fishery, that is just an example, Mr. Speaker, of what I am talking about.

The closing down of Canada Post offices in this Province represents the same kind of insidious move to do away with some of the smaller communities of this Province. Mr. Speaker, I only have a couple of more minutes left, I believe, but we are going to have to come to a decision in this Province: Do we sacrifice everything on the block of economics, or do we look at certain things and say, yes, they are vital, and as a society we should pay for them? Do we want the type of society that we have in this Province today, where our smaller communities represent the very fabric of Newfoundland? Are we going to allow that kind of society to continue, or are we going to say if it does not pay axe it, do away with it? Mr. Speaker, let me say to this House that in the first six months of 1986 there were some seventy-two communities in Canada which lost their post offices, some seventy-two smaller communities. There are people in this country today who have to drive forty kilometers to pick up a piece of mail. There were fifty rural routes eliminated in the first six months of 1986. Mr. Speaker, here is a case where we are not even sure that those people, those great economists, those great logical thinkers, supposedly, tell us that it will not survive, that a post office cannot pay. Mr. Speaker, if we provide more services through our local post

offices, the question becomes, very simply, can they survive?

Mr. Speaker, there is every indication that instead of closing down those post offices, which those 2,000 people from Fogo district are begging us to intervene on their behalf with the federal government for, indeed we should be providing more services through them. Mr. Speaker, again I am running out of time, I know, but in spite of the cutbacks in services we have seen, there is also the indication that indeed the amount of government funding that is required to keep Canada Post open is going down year by year.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The hon. member's time has elapsed.

MR. TULK:
Yes. I would just like to conclude, Mr. Speaker, by saying that I would recommend a certain piece of information put out by the CLC, by Shirley Carr, to members in this House and, indeed, to people, to take a look at and approach the federal government on it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SIMMS:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. SIMMS:
Mr. Speaker, I just want to speak briefly to the petition to give the hon. the member the assurance that we do support the concerns contained in the petition. In fact, we have done that publicly.

The Premier, I know, has communicated with the Government of Canada, on a number of occasions, expressing our concerns. I believe he has had communication with Mr. Harvie Andre, who is the minister. In addition to that, the hon. member might recall, I believe his colleague for St. Barbe (Mr. Furey) brought in a resolution condemning any such action, and on this side of the House, of course, we were pleased to support that, because on this particular issue, I think, the opinions of the member are shared by members on this side, as well.

MR. TULK:

You cannot relax.

MR. SIMMS:

No, no. I agree with him, we cannot relax. We must be vigilant and continue our opposition. I know that ministers on this side, on occasion, when they meet with Mr. Crosbie, for example, our federal minister, usually have that on the agenda and have mentioned it to him many, many times. We will continue to oppose any such decision by Canada Post, and continue to articulate the position that the hon. member just articulated in presenting the petition. So, just briefly, we have no opposition. We support the petition.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to rise in support of the petition presented so ably by my friend and colleague for Fogo. He speaks to

an issue concerning the people of rural Newfoundland almost without exception, in every rural community, because they have heard what is happening to rural post offices elsewhere in Canada. He made indirectly a reference to a post office in Saskatchewan, which was closed sometime ago, and people are now driving forty miles to pick up their mail.

Mr. Speaker, I went into a post office in Seal Cove, Fortune Bay, a couple of weeks ago to see the postmistress there, who happens to be an acquaintance of mine. We were chatting, just the two of us, and, while we were doing so, a lady, about sixty-eight or seventy years of age, came into the office with a roll of bills in her hand, she dropped them on the counter, the postmistress took the bills and straightened them out and counted them, she gave the lady so much change, she took a money order, she wrote out the money order, she took an envelope, she addressed the envelope, she took a stamp, put it on the envelope, put in the money order, sealed the envelope and dropped it in the mailbox. The elderly lady left the post office and, during the entire sequence of events, not a single word had passed, not hello, nothing, not a single word. When the lady had left I said to the postmistress, what was all that about? 'Ah, she said, 'Mrs. X was paying her son's car payment.' And she was able to do it without saying a single word because of the relationship she had with that postmistress.

She had a need to do it that way, too. That lady, I submit to you, would have been intimidated in other circumstances and probably would not have availed of the post office. Certainly she would not

have a car to drive the forty miles or the twenty miles to the next post office if that one happened to be closed. That is the kind of thing we are talking about here, Mr. Speaker. We are not talking only about the receipt and dispatch of mail. Because if you want to send a letter out, often in most communities there is somebody going your way and you say, Joe, will you drop this in the mailbox for me? So it is not the passive kind of service that the post office provides. That is important, too. It is not a matter of whether you can get a letter or send a letter. It is much more than that in the rural communities. It is whether or not you will have banking capacity. You do not find the Bank of Montreal or the Bank of Nova Scotia in the Harbour Milles of this world or the Seal Coves of this world, so unless you got a post office where you can buy a money order, it becomes difficult to transmit money through the mail because they insist that you not send cash, and, of course, it is not very smart to do it that way anyway.

So the post office in those communities is a banking centre, providing a number of quasi banking services. It is a shopping centre, where you send for your items to Canadian Tire or to Sears or wherever. Because those people who live in communities of 200 or 300 people do not have the myriad of shopping centres and choices of specialized shops they can walk into, their specialty shops are the pages of the Sears catalogue. But how will they be able to muck those parcels down forty miles of road in a taxi, if they can afford one? That post office also, of course, is the place where they make their

job enquiries. If you live in St. John's, you go to the Canada Manpower Center. But you do not do that in Little Harbour East, or Little Bay East, or Bay L'Argent, because the manpower center is a long way down the road. So, you make your enquiry through the mail. And, of course, that post office is the pay office. It is the payday center for so many people, for pensioners and for others who get their stipend, however meager, through the mail. That will be gone if that widow, Mr. Speaker, in order to get her meager pay cheque, has to, before the fact, cut into what she is going to get by engaging a taxi to go ten, twenty, or thirty miles up the road on a continuing basis.

That is what the post office means to rural Newfoundland, Mr. Speaker, all of the things I have mentioned. But it means one more thing, and on this I would like to finish. Recall the days of ten or twenty years ago when there was a school in every community. That is gone. The bus now takes the youngsters ten miles down the road. So the school is not there as a meeting place where, on parents' nights, you run into your neighbors. The church is gone or closed in many communities, or only open once a month, so the weekly gathering point that the church was is not there in most of those small communities. So what, Mr. Speaker, is the only remaining community institution in most of those small communities? It is the post office. It is the only place you meet anybody anymore. Now, remove that post office and the one last remaining community center, community institution, community meeting place, has been taken away from us.

So, for all of those reasons, the

social reasons, the cultural reasons, and the straight hard-core economic reasons, getting your mail, making your purchases, sending you cheques, making your job enquiries, making your car payment, for all those reasons, Mr. Speaker, we must be vigilant, as we were in passing that unanimous motion. We must be vigilant in our continuing support for this endeavour. We must do everything we can to get the message up to Ottawa before they implement that insidious five-year plan which will rob many thousands of Newfoundlanders. Do you know, Mr. Speaker, how many post offices they are talking about when they are finished? They are talking about only seventeen post offices remaining in Newfoundland. I mean, it boggles the mind that they would come up with something that would propose that only a handful of post offices - I suppose we are talking St. John's, Stephenville, Lab City, maybe Baie Verte, if the minister is lucky, very few communities around this Province. That is terrible and we must continue to oppose it. That is why I have pleasure in supporting the petition.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

Any further petitions.

MR. EFFORD:

Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Port de Grave.

MR. EFFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition on behalf of twenty

residents from the Bay St. George area. I am glad to see that the Minister of Social Services is in his place, because we have had numerous petitions from people all over the Province, especially out around Western Newfoundland, concerning the cut back of thirty-five social workers some time ago in the Department of Social Services. We, on this side of the House, find it necessary to keep presenting those petitions to the House of Assembly because we are not getting the support for the petitions that is necessary, and we are not getting understanding of the petitions from the Minister of Social Services, to reinstate those thirty-five positions so that the Department of Social Services can function in the way in which it was set up to function, which is to serve the people of this Province who are dependent on the Department of Social Services system.

We are not only talking, Mr. Speaker, about people who are not working, younger people who are dependent on social assistance, we are talking about widows, we are talking about senior citizens, we are talking about the children of this Province who need social workers working with them on a daily basis. Mr. Speaker, this has been very clearly pointed out by a number of people in the Department of Social Services, in the district and regional offices. I am surprised that the minister is not listening to those complaints. They are coming to us as an Opposition, and I am sure they must be going to the managers of each of those district offices.

If they go to the managers, then the administration in the Department of Social Services must

be also hearing the complaints that the social workers themselves are putting forth through their managers. The problem they are having, Mr. Speaker, they tell us, is there is no way with the case load they are being presented with today, because of the thirty-five jobs that were recently cutback by the Department of Social Services, that they can properly perform their duties and take care of the people that are depending on them for their daily needs.

It takes time, Mr. Speaker, and I do not know if the Minister of Social Services (Mr. Brett) is aware of this. A social worker just does not go into a house or a home for a visit where there is a problem, whether it be child care or whether it be a senior citizens or widow, if he or she has a problem, and in five or ten minutes walk out. These things take time, if they are able to perform their job properly.

I was just recently talking to some of the social workers. They tell me that on any given day, depending on the type of problem it is, they are lucky to get through two or three case loads. Sometimes it is probably four or five, but the average is three to four per day if they are going to do this and they are going to have more people employed in the Department of Social Services. I think, if the Minister of Social Services would admit it, that is one of the reasons why last year those thirty-five people were hired on in the Department of Social Services because of the case load and the requirements by his department. They saw it necessary to increase the staff at the district and regional office level. I have to say this, as we have said in all of our

presentations of the petitions, the minister very clearly said in the estimates committee that there are as many, or probably even more - he could not tell us the number - more people depending on social services in 1987 than there were in 1986. With those statements by the minister, there is absolutely no reason or no excuse why he could justify cutting back thirty-five jobs.

Now, the minister very clearly stated that it was because they had to cut \$700,000 off the expenditure in the Department of Social Services. Now, that very clearly states that the priorities of this government are certainly in the wrong place because all we have to do is go the eighth floor of this Confederation Building or go down to the first floor and you see major construction going on within the building itself. I think it is somewhere to the tune of \$10 to \$15 million worth of renovations that are being done on the Confederation Building alone.

We see a committee set up by the Premier just recently of four deputy ministers and another official of the government to monitor government spending. That particular committee is going to cost the taxpayers of this Province, for salaries, furniture, and secretaries, to the tune of \$500,000 to \$600,000 a year. Mr. Speaker, this provincial government has twenty-two Cabinet Ministers. They are supposed to be qualified in performing their duties and if they have the qualifications that are necessary to perform their duties, why do they need an outside committee to tell them how to spend money in their departments? Mr. Speaker, if those people were performing their duties as they were elected

to do, that would be \$500,000 that this government could save in that particular area alone.

So what this government is doing is putting the restraints and the cutbacks onto the people of this Province who have no alternative but to go to the Department of Social Services for assistance. Why do they go there? The majority of young people and the majority of people are depending on social assistance not because of their own free will, but because there is no stable job creation by this administration. The majority of people do not want to be dependent on social assistance.

We have to implore the Minister of Social Assistance (Mr. Brett) to reinstate those thirty-five people, Mr. Speaker, to reinstate them immediately because of the strain it is putting on all the people who are depending on his department.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker, I hesitated a moment getting to my feet because I thought the Minister of Social Services would want to speak to this petition. Obviously he does not intend to do that.

I would like to speak to this petition which considers thirty-five positions around the

Province in the minister's Department of Social Services which have been discontinued. Mr. Speaker, first I would like to say that I would like to see the day in this Province when the hon. minister could lay off every single social worker in this Province. Now that is the day I would like to see in this Province.

The reason I would like to see that day, Mr. Speaker, is because there would no longer be any unemployment in this Province. There would no longer be any social problems in this Province, Mr. Speaker. There would no longer be any need for welfare. There would no longer be any need for housing, Mr. Speaker. If that day could only be, if we could only live in such an ideal state, such a utopia, then, Mr. Speaker, it would be reasonable for us to start laying off social workers.

But that hardly describes the Newfoundland in which we live today. Unless there is a drastic change made in the direction in which this Province is heading, that day is going to be a long way off, Mr. Speaker, for we have a Premier who just a few days ago stood in this Chamber and boasted because the budget of the Social Services Department had gone from \$104 million to \$111 million, a man who is boasting about his failure, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. DECKER:

A man who is admitting that his policies are only adding to the budget of social services. As long as we continue to go in that direction, Mr. Speaker, we should not be talking about laying off

social workers, we should be talking about hiring social workers, unless we change the direction we are going in and unless we deal with the Minister of Social Services.

The Minister of Social Services himself, who, I might add, represents the government's policy on social services - now that is what he is meant to do - is so out of touch with the year 1987 that a little over a week ago he stood in this Chamber and he insulted every single working woman in the world. Every single working mother, the minister said, is contributing to child delinquency. This is what the minister said. Now, with a mind frame like that, Mr. Speaker, there is no way that we can be laying off social workers. We should be employing social workers. We should be employing instructors for the minister himself so that he can be taught a few things about the reality of this world in the year 1987.

Since the minister made these devastating attacks on working mothers in this Province, we, on this side of the House, have given the minister every single opportunity that came at our disposal at least to withdraw his remarks and to apologize for his remarks, Mr. Speaker. He has failed continually to apologize or to try to clarify. All he has done is stood up, spoke as a minister, spoke on behalf of the government, and stood by his facts, which are totally erroneous and which cannot be substantiated. He has failed to give us any references to prove that indeed working mothers do cause their children to go out and become delinquents. He has refused and he still stays in that

position, Mr. Speaker.

So this petition, which asks that the social workers be reinstated, is a good petition and it should be followed. I should say, Mr. Speaker, that -

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The hon. member's time has elapsed.

MR. SIMMS:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. SIMMS:
I just want to briefly respond to the petition. It is, of course, the same petition that we have had here presented in the House on a number of occasions over the past couple of weeks. I suppose there have been a dozen or more presented. I do not exactly know the number so members on this side have expressed the views of the government on the issue. It is all in Hansard and clear. I do not need to elaborate. Some of the members opposite in presenting the petition, of course, have made some pretty strange comments.

The member for Port de Grave (Mr. Efford) was sort of lecturing the minister how a social worker works and yet the minister himself already said this morning that he had been a social worker himself for ten years and a minister for five years so I would say that he has considerably more knowledge about how a social workers job is performed than the hon. member for Port de Grave.

The hon. the member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Decker) talks

about something that is not even in the petition, of course, or relevant, but he tries to raise this comment made in the Legislature some time ago by the minister. He says he embarrassed every working woman in the world - not in Newfoundland or not in St. John's - but in the world. To my way of thinking that is a pretty fair commendation for the minister to know that a comment of any minister in the Legislature, or anybody in the Legislature, would extend all around the world, but it is just typical of the points being made by the members opposite in the presentation of a petition. The member for the Strait of Belle's comments were irrelevant to the petition. The member for Port de Grave's petition is just a repeat of a dozen other petitions that had been presented in the House and the hon. members are aware of the government's position, the minister's position because he has commented on it on several occasions, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CALLAN:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. CALLAN:
Mr. Speaker, I have a similar petition to present. I will read the prayer, Mr. Speaker. It says, 'We, the undersigned, would like this petition presented to the House of Assembly of Newfoundland and Labrador and the prayer of the petition is as follows:

"The Department of Social Services has recently cut back thirty-five positions around the Province within its department. This petition, Mr. Speaker, comes from the Bay St. George Foster Parents

Association" - I will repeat that - "the Bay St. George Foster Parents Association."

In their prayer, Mr. Speaker, they say, "We are very concerned about these layoffs as it will critically affect the services that are needed for our children and all those whose lives are enriched by the services of social workers. Children who usually come to live in our homes" - the foster parent's homes - "are children who have either been abused mentally" - Mr. Speaker - "physically or sexually." So says the prayer of this petition.

"The social worker is the link between the child and the system. Their services to the children are vital to the well-being of the child. As a Province, we must have increases of services" - this is from Bay St. George, this is not me, this is not my opinion, this is the opinion of the Bay St. George Foster Parents Association. "Their services to the children are vital to the well-being of the child. As a Province we must have increases of services by approximately 150 new workers." So say the Bay St. George Foster Parents Association.

"As citizens, we feel that we cannot permit this reduction of services." Of course they then ask that the petition be presented which I am begging leave to do today, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in supporting this petition I must note the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) was interrupting there as I was reading the prayer, or trying to. The Minister of Finance asked the question, 'How many social workers do we have around the Province?'

By adding 150 new workers, as the Bay St. George Foster Parents Association suggests, he wants to know how many more that will be or what will the total be then.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance should know the answers to these questions and as my colleague from the district of Port de Grave said earlier, and as my colleague from the Strait of Belle Isle also said in his remarks supporting the former petition, we should, Mr. Speaker, be at a point in our history, in 1987, where there should be a reduction of social workers and we all long for that day, a reduction. When this Province has full employment, and therefore the people who day in and day out have to visit the offices of social workers around this Province will be diminished, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the need for social workers in the field, which is described in this petition, will probably never decrease. The day will never come when the need will not exist because we are talking about foster parents who, willingly and lovingly, adopt children, as the prayer says, some of them who have been mentally, physically or sexually abused. They take them into their homes, Mr. Speaker, and they look after them or they take them into institutions -

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The hon. the member's time has elapsed.

MR. CALLAN:
So, Mr. Speaker, I support this petition and I hope that the minister, wherever he is, will pay heed to these petitions and will

reverse the decision that he took several weeks ago.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. FUREY:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. FUREY:
Mr. Speaker, I would like to rise in my place to support the prayer of this petition today, so ably presented by the member for Bellevue (Mr. Callan). This is a very important petition, Mr. Speaker, because it cuts into perhaps the most sensitive department of all departments in government, the Department of Social Services.

Mr. Speaker, I agree with my colleague from the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Decker). I wish to God there was no need for any budget for the Department of Social Services, Mr. Speaker. I wish, like all of us, that there was some kind of utopia that we could reach whereby there were not social problems, but the sad fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, that there are people in our world today who, through no fault of their own, have to come and knock on government's door for help, Mr. Speaker. I think the Premier in his place the other day quoted that since he has been Premier they have spent nearly \$1 billion on social services.

Mr. Speaker, that is almost self incriminating because what it really says is that since the eight years that we have been in power, the budget has had to progressively rise because the problem has gotten progressively worse. Mr. Speaker, if that was

not bad enough, what we have to deal with and what these foster parents are asking, through us as members in this Legislature, to deal with is just how is government spending its money. Is it spending its money wisely? Are they spending money where it needs to be spent? Are they targeting money to those who are less fortunate, Mr. Speaker, than most of us in this world today? What we have to do, and our responsibility is to highlight just where it is that some of this money is being spent.

Because, Mr. Speaker, these 35 jobs targeted to the most needy in our society in this Province, what we are seeing is a reduction of \$700,000. Well, Mr. Speaker, let us look at government's priorities for a minute.

Did the Premier really have to spend \$800,000 to redo and repaint and recarpet and refurnish his office? I do not know. Some would argue he had to. Did the Cabinet have to spend \$3 million last year, Mr. Speaker, travelling around the world to all these exotic parts of the planet? And, Mr. Speaker, did they bring home any jobs? Some would argue maybe, I would argue no. Mr. Speaker, did they have to spend \$250,000 on entertainment last year? Some would argue yes, I would argue no. Mr. Speaker, do 8 of the 22 Cabinet Ministers really require personal press secretaries at a cost of \$250,000 when we have the Newfoundland Information Services which is a global press secretary? Some would argue yes, I would argue no.

Mr. Speaker, if you stack up just those expenditures that I talked about, \$800,000 to make the Premier's Office prettier,

\$250,000 on entertainment expenses for ministers, \$3 million to fly 22 Cabinet Ministers around the world, and \$250,000 for 8 personal press secretaries, Mr. Speaker, if you add all of that up, you truly have to ask yourself, and everybody on both sides of the House has to ask themselves, truly, in their own hearts, were those expenditures necessary? Now, Mr. Speaker, that is the real question, because this expenditure of \$700,000 for thirty-five social workers targeted at the most needy in our society is necessary. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, that is necessary.

The Foster Parents Association in Bay St. George, through a petition which has been presented by a number of people on this side of the House from both the official Opposition and the New Democratic Party, Mr. Speaker, have been asking for, on their behalf, in conclusion, that government take another look at just how they are spending their money, whether it is being spent wisely, and whether they cannot find in their hearts the \$700,000 necessary to reinstate these positions to help the most needy in our society.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Torngat Mountains.

MR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition to the House of Assembly by 130 residents of the community of Rigolet in the district of Torngat Mountains.

"WHEREAS the unemployment rate in Rigolet is extremely high; and

"WHEREAS the fishery is the major employer in this community; and

"WHEREAS the fishing season is short; and

"WHEREAS we have the facilities and manpower for this operation;

"THEREFORE we, the undersigned, demand that the provincial Department of Fisheries provide us with the necessary funding to charter a longliner to collect codfish from fishermen in the Smokey area to bring to Rigolet for further processing, and that the provincial Department of Fisheries cover the cost of this operation."

AN HON. MEMBER:

Could you repeat that?

MR. WARREN:

"That the Department of Fisheries provide us with the necessary funding to charter a longliner to collect codfish from fishermen in the Smokey area to bring to Rigolet for further processing, and that the provincial Department of Fisheries cover the cost of this operation."

Mr. Speaker, 130 names on that petition includes, I would think, 98 per cent of the voting population in the community of Rigolet. For the past number of days, Mr. Speaker, I knew that this petition was en route to me. It was hand delivered by a gentleman who left Rigolet last week. I received it today on my desk. Since that time, I have been in contact with the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Rideout) and his officials. The people in Rigolet do have a legitimate concern.

They are concerned that there are codfish thirty and forty miles outside of their community and they would like to have a piece of the pie. They would like to have a piece of the pie to have some of this fish brought into Rigolet and processed in the community.

I might add, Mr. Speaker, at the present time the salmon has struck into Rigolet very favourably and the need for codfish is only after the salmon fishery has slowed down or coming to a halt, which would be probably later on in the Summer. Subsequently, I have taken my concerns to the Minister of Fisheries and to his officials and I do not think that we have to look at a charter as a number of dollars per day per charter. I think, as it is done in some other places in my district with fish being collected and brought into the fish plants, we could provide a so much per pound subsidy on the fish that are brought into the community of Rigolet.

We have the facilities there. We have the manpower there. Hopefully, the minister will seriously look at it and see if we can come up with some suitable solution to alleviate an unemployment problem in the community of Rigolet.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Twillingate.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, I do not have a copy of the petition but I gather from what the hon. member said there are a large number of fishermen and others in the Rigolet area that are petitioning the

government to provide the funds to charter a longliner to bring fish from the outlying areas to the processing plant in Rigolet to provide badly needed jobs. Mr. Speaker, I do not think anybody, certainly not on this side, can take issue with that request and certainly it gives me a great deal of pleasure to support that petition.

Life is not easy, Mr. Speaker, on the Coast of Labrador and it is certainly not easy for people who have to depend on the fishery for their livelihood. I recall having a meeting one time in the Northern part of Labrador where people were invited in from the various communities to give some guidance to the then Minister of Fisheries with respect to fisheries development policy in that part of our Province. We had a two day conference. We had people coming in from Square Island and from Rigolet and from all of the outlying areas. I marvelled at the courage of those people and the stamina and their enthusiasm when you realize the difficulties and disadvantages under which they had to operate and how they were willing and anxious to continue to try and sustain a livelihood for themselves and their families under very hostile conditions.

Mr. Speaker, on this side we have no hesitation at all in supporting this petition. The cost should not be that great. It does not cost that much, certainly when you talk about the overall good that will derive from it. I understand they do have a small fish plant in the Rigolet area. Is that correct?

AN HON. MEMBER:
Yes.

MR. W. CARTER:

Yes. Of course, employment this time of year is essential, not only will it provide dollars now but unfortunately in Newfoundland there is another consideration that must not be overlooked. That is the fact that some badly needed unemployment insurance contributions no doubt will flow from employment that is now provided people in that area.

So not only will this benefit the fishermen now, but I submit to you, given the fact, of course, that unemployment insurance benefits are only, well, it is entirely the responsibility of the federal government where social assistance is 50 per cent of the fiscal responsibility of the Province, then it might well be that if sufficient employment can be provided to enable these people to make a decent wage now and qualify for unemployment insurance benefits at a later date, then, Mr. Speaker, the net cost to the Province, I submit, will not that great. In fact, there might very well be a very substantial gain.

So, Mr. Speaker, we support this petition and we compliment the people in the Rigolet area for their initiative. I join the hon. member for Torngat Mountains (Mr. Warren) again in asking the minister to give this petition some very serious consideration.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. RIDEOUT:

Thank you, very much, Mr. Speaker.

I am pleased to join with my colleague, the member for Torngat Mountains (Mr. Warren), and our friend for Twillingate (Mr. W. Carter) in supporting, certainly in principle, the prayer of this petition. I have had discussions with the member for Torngat Mountains and I think we will be able to hopefully accede to the prayer of this petition and be able to do something for the people of Rigolet to create some further employment opportunities in that community in the processing of fish.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I have to go on to say as well that we have to be very careful. We are going to try to work out some kind of an arrangement through Torngat Co-op where there will be some employment opportunities provided in Rigolet. We have to be very, very careful because as hon. members may or may not know, all of the fish that is caught in the Smokey area at the moment, where those people wish to collect from and to bring into Rigolet, is presently transported by collector vessel to Cartwright. Cartwright, of course, is in the constituency of the hon. gentleman for Eagle River (Mr. Hiscock). So in supporting holus-bolus, 100 per cent the prayer of this petition which is take the collected fish from the Smokey area and bring it into Rigolet which will create employment opportunities in the community of Rigolet, badly needed employment opportunities, for every job you will create in Rigolet, you might be eliminating a job in Cartwright because all of that fish now, as I said, is being collected in the Smokey area and brought to the community of

Cartwright and provides onshore processing jobs in that community in the constituency of Eagle River.

So it is not easy, Mr. Speaker, and the department is looking with a favourable eye to try to help out the situation in Rigolet but, at the same time, we cannot cut off our nose to spite our face and do irrefutable damage to the people who live and want jobs in the community of Cartwright.

Orders of the Day

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Order 15, Bill 25.

Motion, second reading of a bill,
" An Act To Amend The
Government-Kruger Agreements
Act." (Bill No. 25)

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Windsor -
Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I have only a little time left in the debate and actually I only need a little time because all I intend to do, on behalf of the Opposition, is to express our concern about the very broad brush that the minister wants to paint with here, Mr. Speaker.

The minister specifically in introducing the Bill indicated that the need for this particular piece of legislation arose out of the fact that Kruger, in continuing their modernization programme, intended to go further than they had indicated in the first place and they were about to spend another \$72 million, as I

understand it. There is \$42 million already available from Kruger that they are prepared to put in, however the banks required agreements to be changed in order to - there is no problem the minister has said. The banks are standing ready to advance that extra \$30 million to Kruger, however he banks are insisting that changes to one of the agreements that was ratified by the original Kruger legislation be changed.

We have no problem with that, Mr. Minister, but what we are suggesting to the minister that we will facilitate anything that Kruger wants to do within reason. We will be prepared to consider changing any agreement if it means facilitating Kruger's plans and encouraging Kruger to continue on and make the contribution to the economy, particularly of the West Coast, that they are making.

What we are saying to the minister is that he should have brought in a specific piece of legislation and required a specific change to the agreements. Because we can very easily visualize, Mr. Speaker, all the agreements under which Kruger operates in this Province, that are contained in these particular agreements, this amendment gives the government the right to change any, and all, agreements ratified by the original Kruger legislation. That is not necessary. That is too wide a brush. No changes should be necessary to the Kruger agreements without reference to the House of Assembly.

There are the forestry agreements, our intentions or non-intentions to build forest access roads and there is the possibility of Kruger coming to government in the

future. Maybe Kruger will in the next year or so or in the next six months have a requirement or a desire to expand or continue on with the modernization, and another \$30 million, \$40 million, or \$50 million will be required. It would not be our position, Mr. Speaker, to deny Kruger that ability or to pass legislation that would enable Kruger to do what they wanted.

But certainly, when Kruger requests and wants changes to an agreement, there is no way that those changes should take place without the scrutiny of this Legislature and without the ability of the people of Newfoundland to debate the wisdom or lack of it.

So, Mr. Speaker, having said that, I think that anything else I would say would be repetitious. I would say to the minister that unless he is prepared, when he stands in his place to close the debate or any other minister speaking on behalf of government in this Legislature, unless the minister can convince the Opposition that this kind of precedent-setting legislation is necessary, we are not prepared to pass a piece of legislation that gives the government carte blanc, that gives them a blank cheque. From this day hence they will be able to deal with Kruger on whatever the subject matter might be. We are not prepared to have the Government of Newfoundland or this particular administration, or for that matter any administration, pass a piece of legislation that would enable government from that point on to deal privately and secretly with Kruger or any other corporation, Mr. Speaker, particularly a corporation that is so fundamentally involved in the

economy of this Province, a corporation where the Government of Newfoundland and the people of Newfoundland have so much at stake. It is not necessary.

There is no explanation. There is no reason why, Mr. Speaker, we should give the government that kind of blank cheque nor do we intend do. We will wait until the minister stands, or the Minister of Forestry (Mr. Simms) who I understand is going to get into the debate and attempt to justify the government's requirement for this legislation. No, Mr. Speaker, it is not in the better interest of the people of Newfoundland or this Legislature to pass a piece of legislation that would, in fact, from this day on allow the government to deal secretly and privately with Kruger. The people of Newfoundland have too much at stake in that particular company to allow any government to have that kind of leeway.

Mr. Speaker, unless both ministers are capable of convincing us otherwise, we will have no choice but to vote against this legislation.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMS:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. SIMMS:
Mr. Speaker, I just want to try to address some of the forestry issues, I guess, that the hon. member raised and to try, as he says, to convince him of the rationale for proceeding in this

particular manner and taking this particular approach.

He says, 'Why not bring in a specific amendment covering this specific situation?' That, of course, was an option, I suppose. It was considered. But basically what we decided to do - if you read the bill, maybe the bill is not explanatory enough - because you may face a situation where a commercial transaction of this nature requires some kind of an amendment to the existing agreements, the loan agreements and so on, and if the Legislature was closed for a long period of time, five or six or seven months, then obviously we would be handcuffed if this particular request came to us unless we were able to make an amendment to it.

I also want to give him an assurance. Whilst, he says, it gives us the power to do anything and everything like that, that is not quite the case. Because one of the clauses here, of course, exempts or limits our power in that regard, specifically to three main items. One is with respect to the level of security that we provided in the put agreement which was part of the overall agreement, that no amendment can be made to that particular issue that would increase, for example, the level of government's security. We would not be permitted to do that. It is specifically limited in the bill.

Secondly, we would not be able to amend the agreement to change the price for power to be paid Hydro which is already covered in the original agreements. So we are limited in that respect which, of course, would be very major issues.

Thirdly, we would not be able to provide an amendment that would increase government's obligation for loan funding. I think those are three major areas that obviously would require debate and consideration and all the rest of it.

It is for those reasons that we actually put in the bill a clause which limits our power in that regard with respect to amendments. However, for normal commercial transactions that might require, or would require, an amendment perhaps, we are bringing in this piece of legislation so that we could make those necessary amendments to allow the projects to proceed, the work to proceed and so on. Obviously we would not want to hold it up and I know the hon. member opposite would not want to hold it up. It might never occur again, but if it does and if the Legislature was closed, for example, we would need to have some kind of way to accommodate those kinds of issues.

The other point I would make of course is that all amendments that government would make to the agreements would be tabled in the House within fifteen sitting days. That too is spelled out in the actual bill.

MR. FLIGHT:

What the minister is really doing is any amendment made, say, a week after the House closes, like last year, the House closed in June -

MR. SIMMS:

Yes.

MR. TULK:

- reopened in March, that was nine months. So if the change took place mid-July, it could conceivably be eight months before

the Legislature would be aware of that particular change and would have any input.

MR. SIMMS:

Yes, that is accurate. With respect to normal commercial transaction items that we are talking about, but if it was with respect to fairly significant and important matters, such as the price of power, or such as an increase in the government's security, if we were talking about increasing the government's security or increasing government's obligation under the loan funding that we have provided for in the agreement, we would not be able to do that. We would not be able to make amendments to the agreement on those particular three specific and major and serious and important issues.

I might add by the way, just in passing, you made reference to access roads and so on and so forth. Those are covered under separate agreements with the Department of Forest Resources and Lands and not really covered in this agreement that we are talking about, The Government-Kruger Agreements Act, 1984.

So I just wanted to take the opportunity really, rather than to enter into a debate, to kind of offer that clarification for the hon. member and I hope that, having heard it, perhaps it will convince him to support it because we all know that the company is progressing fairly fast and they are well ahead of schedule. They are going to require money over the next couple of years to complete the project and in order for them to proceed the banks require it, but because their request is tied into the loan agreement, it requires an

amendment in any event. I understand the member has no problem with this amendment in any event.

So I trust that would explain the matter, Mr. Speaker.

MR. FENWICK:
Mr. Speaker.

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

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

Quite frankly, I am not impressed by the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands (Mr. Simms) explanation of the reason for this power. I am actually quite pleased to hear the party to our physical left agreeing in large part with the kinds of criticisms that we would bring up here.

As a matter of fact, my colleague and I have been willing to bestow on them the sobriquet of semi-socialists on this particular bill and maybe a couple of other actions they have taken with regard to the social services cutbacks and so on. We have looked on with approval at the attack that the Liberals have made, so maybe in the future we will refer to them as the semi-socialist party and look forward to more progressive moves by our colleagues in the party here.

Maybe actually that would be a good name. I understand from the election yesterday that the Liberal Party in Britain is now only protected by the game laws in that there is I think something like only a handful of them left. Most members probably do know that across the country we have a

considerable problem.

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

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

MR. BAIRD:
The debate is on the Kruger Bill 25 and since the member got to his feet I have not heard one word in relationship to the bill that we are now discussing. I would suggest the Speaker bring him back to relevancy.

MR. SPEAKER:
To that point of order, I would ask the member for Menihek to be more relevant to the debate.

MR. FENWICK:
Relevancy is coming, Mr. Speaker, it is a matter of laying the ground work to the surprising situation we find ourselves in where we actually agree with the semi-socialists over here in terms of the unwarranted power being given to the Cabinet by this particular piece of legislation which rightfully belongs here in the House of Assembly.

I think that is the important point to make. The Kruger business, the restructuring and the transfer of ownership involved a considerable expenditure of funds on the part of various levels of government, specifically our particular government. We put a lot of money into it. We did a lot to support it as taxpayers and, of course, the protection of the purse and the spending power rests here in this House.

For the government to arbitrarily say that because they need another \$30 million they want to borrow,

we therefore are going to unshackle any guarantees we have other than in one or two areas on this particular company I think it is totally unwarranted. I do not buy the minister's arguments. I think the only argument that he put forward was that while the House was not open, there may be a need to change some of the agreements, and that this way the agreements could be changed by a Cabinet decision rather than by the House.

I would suggest to the minister that if it is important enough and it is timely enough that it needs to be done, then the government always has the power to bring the House back into session in order to change the agreement in that manner. So I do not see any reason why we should surrender our power, that is, of the House itself.

MR. SIMMS:
What if it is a minor or routine matter?

MR. FENWICK:
Well, if it is minor or routine thing, then I would suggest it is not of sufficient urgency to have to be done immediately and it could be left for the next Legislative session.

MR. SIMMS:
What about this particular item?

MR. FENWICK:
This particular problem is no problem. I can see that we can go with that. But I think you should of brought in the piece of legislation specifically addressing that particular matter rather than -

MR. SIMMS:
What happened if this came up

after the House was closed and they had to wait for seven months?

MR. FENWICK:
If it is important enough, bring the House back into session.

MR. SIMMS:
But is it? Is it?

DR. COLLINS:
A typical NDP, logical argument.

MR. SIMMS:
That is my point.

MR. FENWICK:
I am just saying to you that you have to balance the need of Kruger to borrow \$30 million against the need of this House to have control over the public purse. I suggest that the need of this House to have control is much greater than that of Kruger to borrow a few bucks.

MR. SIMMS:
That is why we exempted the major items.

DR. COLLINS:
Have you read Clause 3 of the bill?

MR. FENWICK:
Anyway, those are the few comments we wish to make on it, and we wish to congratulate the semi-socialists over here for the excellent work they have done on a number of issues lately. We feel that if they do that, they will not head in the same direction as the Liberal Party in Britain, which is primarily down the tubes. As is, of course, been the situation of the Liberal Parties virtually throughout the known world. If they continue in that direction, we think it may be a reflection of the inspired leadership of their new leader. On that basis, we look forward to

more support from the semi-socialists over here.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Greening):

If the hon. the Minister of Finance speaks now he closes the debate.

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Just on that last remark there, I suppose we might have been a little bit remiss in the House here that we did not send a note of congratulations to Mrs. Margaret Thatcher on her glorious victory at the polls yesterday.

I think it is worth noting that it has taken almost twenty-five years of hard work on the part of the Conservative Party in Britain to undo the damage that was done by the socialists, i.e., the Labour Party in that country, where they practically ruined the economy and the work ethics.

MR. FENWICK:

Irrelevant, irrelevant.

DR. COLLINS:

I am responding to remarks you brought up on socialism. I lived in the UK in those days, in 1945 to 1956, so I span the period when there was a certain amount of enthusiasm for the socialists when they came in, and then the horrendous understanding of the population by the early 1950s of what they had done to themselves. The horrendous feeling of, you know, sickness in the stomach over what was happening to the great British economy and the influence that Britain had through the world.

Finally they chucked them out. They had a sort of aberration, they said, 'Gosh, did we do the right thing? Let us give them another chance.' So they had Harold Wilson come in back in and then they threw up their hands in horror again after a few years and threw them out.

It has taken twenty-five years to get rid of all the ideological nonsense that the socialist did to British industry. It has taken twenty-five years for them to get rid of all these foolish practices that the socialists put into the work force and so on. So I am glad that the hon. socialist from Labrador West (Mr. Fenwick) and the hon. socialist from St. John's East (Mr. Long), who are there for a temporary -

MR. SIMMS:

The member for Menihek does not like to be called a socialist.

DR. COLLINS:

Oh, I see.

MR. SIMMS:

The member for St. John's East loves to be called a socialist.

DR. COLLINS:

Okay, the ultra socialist then and the ordinary kooky socialist, I am glad they brought that up. Again, it gave me an opportunity to send our congratulations to Margaret Thatcher to continue the work of undoing this tremendous damage they have done to the British people. It just gives me the opportunity of enjoining the Newfoundland people, for gosh sakes, do not touch this with a barge pole. Do not touch the socialist philosophy with a barge pole.

MR. SIMMS:

It is similar to what they did in Saskatchewan and B.C., they chucked them out over there.

Saskatchewan, B.C., Eastern Europe and Manitoba are at the early stage of wondering what hit them. It is now in the last budget, and so on. The full impact of what the Socialists have done to Manitoba is coming home.

Having dealt with that - I do not want to have the hon. Socialists slink out of the House in disgrace all together, I want them to stay in their seats for a few moments longer - I would just like to say that this particular bill does not really raise the spectre that the hon. member for Windsor - Buchans quite rightly and quite logically had to bring out to make sure it was underlined, that the bill does not have this horrendous effect.

This amendment will allow us to amend the agreements, but there are very clear restrictions on the degree to which those agreements can be amended. The ones that we had to be particularly concerned about were that it should not change the price of power the company could buy from the grid, that it could not change the level of security that government has in regard to its put agreement, and that it could not change the obligation in terms of loan funding.

MR. SIMMS:
I said all that.

DR. COLLINS:
Now, the hon. the Minister of Forestry keeps saying that he said all that, but I just wanted to reiterate it.

The other point is that any of the lesser changes we make to the

agreements, and those are the big concerns for government, and those are excluded from our ability to bring those in without coming to the House, but any of the lesser ones that we will have if the House now accepts this amendment have to be tabled in this House within fifteen days if the House is sitting, if not, within fifteen days after the House commences. These will be only the lesser ones. The big concerns, which the hon. member may have, cannot be done in the absence of coming specifically to this House.

With those words, I move second reading.

MR. SPEAKER:
Is it the pleasure of the House that the said bill be now read a second time?

Carried.

MR. SIMMONS:
Nay!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Nay.

MR. SIMMS:
What?

Call in the members. Mr. Speaker, call in the members. Division!

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

MR. J. CARTER:
Call in the members.

MR. SIMMS:
No, no. Division.

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

MR. SIMMS:

This is a division. We called a division.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, it is now appropriate that the Chair determine the result of the voice vote.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMS:

To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. SIMMS:

It is normal practice that the Chair obviously rules on a voice vote in favour of the majority. That is natural.

MR. SIMMONS:

The majority is over here right now.

MR. SIMMS:

No, no. The majority of the House.

MR. SIMMONS:

No, no. Come on!

MR. SIMMS:

In any event, Mr. Speaker, three members rose on this side. That is an automatic call for a division. The hon. Speaker automatically rings the bell and calls in the members. Then we shall see who has the majority.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, further to that point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

Further to that point of order, the hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SIMMONS:

The gentleman from Grand Falls is entirely right, that a number of members can rise and require a division. That was not my point of order at all. My point of order is that according to the rules of this House and according to the traditions, the practices of this Chamber, without equivocation, without exception, the clear procedure has been, Mr. Speaker, to announce the result of the vote on a voice vote.

MR. BAIRD:

The 'ayes' have it. You are falling asleep over there.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, I understand that there are more Conservative members than were in the Chamber. That is not my point. My point is that there were four in the Chamber at the time which is illustrative of their interest in the Kruger matter, but that is another issue. The point is that Mr. Speaker put the question, there were only four people on that side to say 'Aye', and there were a total of twelve people on this side.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Fourteen.

MR. SIMMONS:

There were a total of twelve people in the official Opposition and, I believe, the gentlemen of the NDP - and they are nodding their agreement - also voted against it. The 'Nays' carried that motion, Mr. Speaker, fourteen to four. Fourteen against it, Mr. Speaker, and four for the principle of the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS:

Now, Mr. Speaker, I will predict to you that when you do a division, as the gentleman from Grand Falls has given notice will be done, that the vote will be in the other direction. That is not the point. The point is, and my point of order is, Mr. Speaker, that the Speaker, in accordance with the time-honoured tradition in this House, having called the question, put the question on the voice vote, having had the response from each side should then have said, without allowing any intervening event to take place, "the 'nays' have it." That is the time-honoured tradition and there is no question about that whatsoever, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS:

Once Mr. Speaker had made his determination on the voice vote, it then would have been opportune, but not before then, for a number of members to rise in this chamber, if they so desired, and require a division. But the point of order is that the 'nays' carried that vote and Mr. Speaker ought to follow the time-honoured tradition and so declare that before any other process takes place.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

DR. COLLINS:

To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

To the point of order, the hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker, I think it is important that we understand what is going on here, because I think there may be a certain amount of confusion. If I understand the hon. Leader opposite and the hon. Socialists tucked away down in the corner there, they are against this Bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

DR. COLLINS:

I just getting clarification of what we are up to. They are against having the funding for extended modernization at Corner Brook being extended. More than that, Mr. Speaker, on an interim basis the banks have, as a result of a letter from me saying that we will introduce this legislation, already extended part of the money to the mill out there. Now, if the hon. Leader of the Opposition and the Opposition persist, what will happen is that Kruger will immediately have to stop its modernization programme and will have to throw a large number of people out of work who are working out there this day. Now, I just want it to be clear. Is this what the Leader of the Opposition and the Socialists down in the corner are at? They want us to agree that we will allow them to defeat this Bill. Do I have it right? Is my understanding correct? Do they want us to agree to allow them to have their way and defeat this Bill to stop the modernization and to throw people out of work this day in Corner Brook? Would the hon. the Leader of the Opposition clarify if that is what he wants us to do on this side? Because I would have to consult with my colleagues whether we should agree with the Leader of the Opposition on that matter or

whether we should bring in an alternative that is available to us, which we might have to exercise if we are convinced by the Leader of the Opposition that is what we should do, we should stop the modernization, we should throw people out of work. The hon. Minister of Forest Resources and Lands (Mr. Simms) is now trying to a mechanism in Beausheve where we can have an alternative way of continuing with this Bill.

MR. SIMMONS:

To the point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, the hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SIMMONS:

First of all, the minister knows that in the last four or five minutes he has abused the rules of the House in the most brazen fashion. Mr. Speaker, if he wants to know our view, he would have listened to the gentleman for Bonavista North. There is the problem: He does not listen to anybody. He should have listened to the gentlemen for Bonavista North and Windsor - Buchans who put the case well, that what we are opposing is giving this government unlimited authority to do whatever it wants without reference to this House. That is what we are against, Mr. Speaker. Now, Mr. Speaker, if he wants to note that he can, but that is not the issue here. The issue here, twist and turn as they wish, this government has been defeated on a voice vote on an important issue. They have been defeated on a voice vote.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS:

They have lost an important vote, Mr. Speaker. I recognize that on division they will drag their bedraggled troops in here and they will reluctantly be forced to vote for this bit of legislation, but that is not the issue. The issue is that fourteen members on this side voted against the principle of the Bill, and four on that side, which was all that was in the chamber at the time, voted for it. Mr. Speaker now has the obligation to announce that particular vote before any other subsequent process takes place.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMS:

To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, what is happening here now is obvious to anybody who is watching. The Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues are simply trying to play a bit of politics. They think they can score a few political points at the expense of a bill that is extremely important. Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is not the one who judges whether we have lost a vote or not, that decision is made by the Speaker. I remind him of that. It is a long standing tradition in any parliament in the Western world that when a voice vote is taken that the Speaker would - I might point out, by the way, that in this case the Speaker has not ruled, he did not give a decision as to the vote because the Division was called

immediately.

AN HON. MEMBER:

That does not (inaudible).

MR. SIMMS:

Yes, it is. That is quite acceptable. That happens all the time, Mr. Speaker, in any parliament you can think of in the Commonwealth.

MR. SIMMONS:

It does not. It is the only time I have ever seen it.

MR. SIMMS:

It does, Mr. Speaker, and they can argue that it does not. In any event, the point here is it is obvious that the government has the majority in the House and that is usually the ruling and always the ruling on any voice vote, and members opposite, if they do not like the outcome, can call for Division, or if they want to get their names recorded in favour of the bill, as we do in this particular case because we are strongly supportive of this piece of legislation. Members opposite had a lot of questions, so I am not really sure where they stand. We are delighted to have the opportunity to call the Division, and it is one of the main reasons why we called the Division. In any event, Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter here is the Chair is not supposed to know - I mean technically speaking - to look, and count, and because the Leader of the Opposition yelled out 'Nay', as he was doing, that does not necessarily mean that they have more. That is all irrelevant. The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, following the voice vote three or four members on this side stood and requested a Division and, Mr. Speaker, that is what we are

calling for right now, a Division.

MR. SPEAKER:

I have heard enough on the point of order. Actually, in the voice vote the 'nays' have it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Division.

MR. SPEAKER:

Division. Call in the members.

Division

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

Is it agreed to put the question?

AN HON. MEMBER:

No.

MR. WINDSOR:

We just want to double check, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

All those in favour of the motion please stand:

The hon. the Minister of Justice (Ms Verge), the hon. the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Rideout), the hon. the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins), the hon. the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands (Mr. Simms), the hon. the President of Treasury Board (Mr. Windsor), the hon. the Minister of Public Works and Services (Mr. Young), the hon. the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth (Mr. Matthews), the hon. the Minister of Education (Mr. Hearn), the hon. the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Doyle), the hon. the hon. the Minister of Labour (Mr.

Blanchard), the hon. the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development (Mr. R. Aylward), the hon. the Minister of Social Services (Mr. Brett), the hon. the Minister of Development and Tourism (Mr. Barrett), Mr. Baird, Mr. Patterson, Mr. Reid, Mr. J. Carter, Mr. Tobin, Mr. Peach, Mr. Parsons, Mr. Hodder, Mr. Warren, Mr. Woodford.

MR. SPEAKER:

All those against the motion please stand:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Simmons), Mr. Hiscock, Mr. Flight, Mr. Tulk, Mr. Barry, Mr. Callan, Mr. Lush, Mr. W. Carter, Mr. Gilbert, Mr. Efford, Mr. Baker, Mr. Furey, Mr. Decker, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Long.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

I declare the motion carried.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

On motion, a bill, "An Act To Amend The Government-Kruger Agreements Act," read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House on tomorrow. (Bill No. 25).

DR. COLLINS:

Order 17, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. TULK:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

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

MR. TULK:

I am trying to hear.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. TULK:

We do not want to miss what is being called by the Chair and, to be quite frank with you, it is impossible to hear on this side of the House what is happening because of the noise here.

MR. SPEAKER:

Could we have order please?

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker, to that point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS:

To that point of order, Mr. Speaker, I agree with the hon. member. There was a great deal of noise here. The Opposition has fallen into an obvious trap and unfortunately our members could not forebear sort of laughing at the trap they fell into and they could not hear what the order was. I called order 17, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, I would ask members on both sides of the House to please be quiet.

Motion, second reading of a bill, "An Act To Establish A Community College System In The Province". (Bill No. 13).

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Culture Recreation and Youth.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I take pleasure this morning in speaking to this bill on behalf of my colleague, the Minister of Career Development and Advanced Studies. There are a number of major points I would like to make on this particular bill, Mr. Speaker. Back in June, 1985, the government put forward a White Paper on the Reorganization of the Vocational School System in Newfoundland and Labrador and because of that White Paper there was significant public response; some 60 submissions were received from various areas of the Province and, as a result of public input and public response, the plan was revised based on that public input.

As well, in August, 1986, the plan for the restructuring of the vocational school systems into a community college system was announced. On March 20, 1987 the advisory committees for the five community colleges were announced in the House of Assembly, and in May, just a month or so ago, capital funding was announced for new programmes and expenditures within the reorganized post-secondary education system, amounting to some \$10,420,000.

Mr. Speaker, this is just some background as to what has brought us to the point of this act to establish a community college system in the Province.

There are a number of major points in the bill itself that I would just like to highlight: There will be five community colleges established and two acts being repealed. One, the Bay St. George Community College Act, 1977, and two, the Technical and Vocational Training Act, 1970.

Each community college, Mr. Speaker, will have a board of directors and a president, or a chief executive officer, and, of course, the mandates for the community colleges will be to identify the educational needs of the particular region which they will service, design and implement programmes to meet these needs, bring a wide variety of educational programmes to the region through the brokerage system from the other institutes in the Province and emphasize courses and programmes for adults in the region.

So, Mr. Speaker, I guess the whole emphasis on the community college system will be to make what is happening in the system and in the colleges more pertinent to the people in the respective regions so that what is offered will be more localized and of more significance and importance to each respective community college system. Of course, the Boards of Governors, as well, are made up of people from the various communities that fall within each respective community college system.

This is just some of the background, Mr. Speaker, on what has happened.

In conclusion, the establishment, Mr. Speaker, of these community colleges will allow the Department of Career Development and Advanced Studies to enhance its ability to provide quality educational opportunities for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. I would like, in particular, to emphasize that through such decentralization of the system, which is very, very important to the rural areas of our Province and to the residents of the rural communities, we will

be in a much better position to respond to local needs and the needs of special interest groups in various areas of the Province.

MR. FENWICK:
Mr. Speaker.

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

AN HON. MEMBER:
Before the official Opposition?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the member for Menihek was standing first. I am sorry.

MR. FENWICK:
Before I start, Mr. Speaker, I think we had a -

DR. COLLINS:
A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
A point of order, the hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS:
Mr. Speaker, I just want to be clear on what is happening just now. Actually, the minister brought in a government bill and has finished speaking. My understanding was that the official Opposition wished to discuss the bill. The Leader of the Opposition was getting his notes together and was perhaps a little tardy in getting to his feet. But, on the other hand, I think it is the tradition in the House when there is a government bill brought in by a minister and the Leader of the Opposition has indicated in a fairly substantive way that he wishes to discuss the bill, he is given that courtesy to do so. I am not questioning Your Honour's ruling, I just wanted to be sure. Is that the point we are dealing with here? I just want

clarification on that point.

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

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

MR. SIMMONS:
First of all, there was no tardiness. I think we were on our feet essentially at the same time, but that is beside the point. It is the tradition in this House that when a government order is placed before the House for debate the official opposition has a right of response and, therefore, I did not feel the compulsion to play the jack-in-the-box game with the gentleman for Menihek to see if I can jump a milli-second faster than he. I fully understood that representing the official Opposition it was my right and my obligation to respond to a government order. That was what I was doing, and I believe is my right to do, on behalf of the official opposition.

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

MR. SPEAKER:
Further to that point of order, the hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:
This might help, Your Honour, in deciding whether indeed the gentleman for St. John's South is right. You will note in our Standing Orders, I believe, and I do not have mine in front of me, that the person introducing a government bill has an hour to introduce it and the person speaking for the Opposition, and that means the official Opposition

in this Legislature, has an hour as well to speak, which would indicate that it should be the official Opposition spokesman who replies to the minister introducing the bill.

MR. SIMMS:

To that point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. SIMMS:

If I recollect, we had a situation occur like this not to long ago and we argued at that time very strongly that the tradition and practice should be followed.

In that particular case, I think, we gave the hon. member the right to speak but we said that would not be precedent-setting as a rule. I think we made a very strong case on that, Mr. Speaker. If Your Honour is inclined anyway at all to be unsure or uncertain, I would beg him to take a few minutes to confer with the Speaker, if that becomes necessary. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition when he stood up and said that he fully understood, expected, and anticipated that he would be called on to respond. And I find that very similar to the kind of situation that would occur in the case of a voice vote on a motion in the House of Assembly. I mean, everybody fully understands that the majority carries, the government in the House carries.

MR. FENWICK:

To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Further to that point of order, the

hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

Since the others are going on their imperfect recollections, I will go on the Standing Orders which is what we go by. Page 17, Rule 49, Section (2), says: "The Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, a Minister moving a government order and a member replying thereto immediately after such minister..." Mr. Speaker, it is 'member' with a small 'm'. It does not indicate that the member has to be a member of the official Opposition. It says 'a member' and I would argue that I am as much a member of this House as every other person in this chamber is at this time. On the previous ruling, Mr. Speaker, I believe you were in the Chair the last time the argument was raised by the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands. He made the argument at the time I had already spoken in response, in agreement with the ruling made by the Chair. It was my understanding at that time that the Chair was to bring back a ruling on the point of order raised by the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands. To this point, I have not heard the response to it, but it would be an appropriate time now, I would suggest, to bring in the ruling.

MR. SPEAKER:

To the point of order that is on the floor at this particular time I think the Chair did make a mistake. It is the practice to recognize the official Opposition, so right now I will call on the hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. FENWICK:

Actually it is not, it is going to be a point of privilege. I believe, at this point, that what you are now saying is that there are two classes of members in this House and that the rules can clearly be interpreted in a way other than that in which they are written. What you are saying is that we do not have the right of response as the official Opposition does. I would suggest to you that there have been a number of rulings that way and that from that point you are now saying that our rights as members of this House are second-class to those of the official Opposition. I believe that impairs my rights as a member of this House. It means that you have now created two classes of opposition members, and I suggest to you that that is not consistent with the way in which members should be treated.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Further to that point of privilege, the hon. the President of the Council.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Mr. Speaker, all hon. members have equal rights as members of the House of Assembly. There are certain members who have a particular position or responsibility in the House of Assembly. It is not their identity or status as members of the House of Assembly, it is their position within the House in addition to being a member of the House of Assembly. That is as clear as the nose on even the hon.

Socialist's face. The Speaker has a certain position as a member of the House - he is a member of the House, or she. The First Minister and Premiers have a certain position and a certain responsibility. They make Ministerial Statements. They answer questions. There are certain things operative for certain members because of their position. The Leader of the Opposition is in a similar situation. The Leader of the Opposition or his designate has, by right, the right to reply immediately in a Ministerial Statement.

MR. FLIGHT:

And his representatives.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Or his representatives. The Leader of an additional party, it has been ruled and agreed, would have the right to reply for a shorter period of time after the Leader of the official Opposition or the Leader of the official Opposition's representative. So it is to cloud the issue, and, indeed, it is to handle the issue in an intellectually improper manner to bring up, 'Oh, there are two classes of members.' As members, in our functions as members, our responsibility as members, certainly we are all equal. But there are positions within the House and the Standing Orders recognize that. Standing Order 49 (a) and (b) talks about the Premier, it talks about the Leader of the Opposition, or it talks about a minister. All of these positions are identified with particular responsibilities. And quite apart from that, it is the practice of this House that in reply to a government motion, a government bill, a government order, the Leader of the

Opposition, or that person's designate, has the immediate reply if that person wishes to exercise it. That does not mean getting up ten minutes later, but I think it does mean that there does not have to be a race. And I never thought it was like a horse race. It is not a photo finish. I mean, it is not whoever by the split second is up first, because then you would have to do as you would do in horse races, and that is have a camera to see who gets across the line first. I think the rule says, a person recognized by the Speaker. I do not think it is a question like photo finish in a horse race, it is a question of the usage and practice of a parliamentary procedure in general, the meaning of the rules, and how that parliamentary practice and procedure has traditionally been applied in this House.

MR. SIMMONS:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. SIMMONS:
I thank the gentleman for Waterford - Kenmount, and I just want to reinforce a point he made towards the end. It is on page 49 of the Fifth Edition of Beauchesne, Paragraph 157 (1), two brief quotas: First of all, at the beginning of that paragraph "The importance of the Opposition", with a capital 'O', and I think by implication you will see in the next sentence, particularly, that it means Official Opposition. "The importance of the Opposition in the system of parliamentary government has long received practical recognition in the

procedure of Parliament. Statutory recognition has been accorded through the grant of a salary to the Leader of the Opposition." Now, I do many things in this Chamber. One thing I do not want to be accused of doing is leading the two to my far right physically, and God - knows where philosophically.

Further down in that paragraph, Mr. Speaker, "The Leader of the Opposition is, by custom, accorded certain particular rights, etc." I think the point we are arguing here is most elementary. That we have to stand, in 1987, in a Chamber and justify the role of the Official Opposition is, more than anything else, a comment on the degree of education in parliamentary matters of the person who raised the issue in the first place, the gentleman for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:
Mr. Speaker, to that point of order.

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

MR. FENWICK:
As the Speaker is quite aware, this is an important point from our perspective. It affects the way in which the will Chamber operate, I would suggest, up until the next election, at which time some other party can have the difficulty of trying to get recognized in this House.

What I am asking you to do, Mr. Speaker, it is clear in both excerpts, both from our Standing Orders -

MR. WARREN:
(Inaudible).

MR. FENWICK:

Will you shut up! - and also from Beauchesne, in the sections that have -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. FENWICK:

- been quoted by the Leader of the Opposition, that they are arguing not on the basis of the rules here but on tradition and practice.

MR. BARRETT:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of order, the hon. the Minister of Development and Tourism.

MR. FENWICK:

We are on a point of order already, are we not?

MR. BARRETT:

The point of order is that (Inaudible) should be withdrawn, Mr. Speaker.

MR. FENWICK:

If I offended the member for Torngat Mountains in any way I am deeply apologetic, Mr. Speaker. But I wish he would keep his own counsel while I am making a point which is very important to us at this time. I assume there is no point of order.

I want to ask you several things: The House Leader for the Government side indicated in there a rule which I had never heard of before, assumedly based in tradition, that a government bill would be introduced by a minister, that the leader of the official Opposition would then reply to it, and then the leader of other recognized parties in the House would be given the next turn to

debate it. Now, that is the way I understood it. But I have never heard of that rule before, I have never seen the precedents on it.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Ministerial Statements.

MR. FENWICK:

If that was on Ministerial Statements, then I suggest it was totally irrelevant to the discussion we are making here, which is on legislation.

I will be willing to yield the floor to the Leader of the official Opposition so that he may have his shot at it this time, but I would strenuously ask the Speaker if he would undertake a consultation with the rest of the people involved with the Speakership so that we would have all due consideration to this point. Because it is important to us, we would hope that rather than being made in the heat of debate, some reflection would be applied towards it. We feel that the interpretation of the Standing Rules are clear, that any member has the right to respond to a bill introduced by a minister. We have not seen the precedents that these individuals are quoting. They may be there, but we do not have the opportunity to research them. I would ask the Speaker to take his time in researching them himself so that we will be in a position to have a rule consistent with the practice in this House in the past.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of privilege, there is no point of privilege. I ruled before that it is the practice in this House that when a bill is presented by a government member the Leader of the Opposition or somebody designated by the official Opposition would debate

that bill first. We will now have the hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, this morning on the voice vote they had a second chance. When the election comes, there will be no second chances. When the voice of the people is heard it will be loud and clear, and all the post-mortems will be academic exercises. What we have voted against this morning, Mr. Speaker, is the arrogance of a government who figures it should operate by fiat.

Mr. Speaker, before speaking directly to the principle of the bill, just let me voice a concern about the speaking practices in this House. I want to do so particularly in the presence of the gentleman who is the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth, because he illustrates -

MR. TOBIN:

(Inaudible).

MR. SIMMONS:

I have all the time in the world. Take your time. Say what you want to say, then we will carry on.

MR. TOBIN:

I just said your leader is back. (inaudible) in the House.

MR. SIMMONS:

The member for Burin - Placentia West (Mr. Tobin) does such a poor job of assisting the Premier I would not want his help on assisting our leader, I will tell you that.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if they can settle down after the shock of their caucus last evening we will proceed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

AN HON. MEMBER:

You were some relieved this morning, when you came in.

MR. SIMMONS:

Before speaking directly to the principle of the bill I wanted to make a point to express the concern about the debating practices in this Chamber. Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth illustrated this morning very well the point that I want to make. It is becoming, Mr. Speaker, almost the accepted practice in this Chamber to state something -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

Could we have order on my left, please?

MR. SIMMONS:

It is becoming all but the accepted practice here to get up on one's feet and state something that is blatantly untrue, as the minister did this morning. The only defence that other hon. member's have is to rise on a spurious point of order, and all of us have been guilty of that in the past, but that, itself, Mr. Speaker, of course, becomes an abuse of the rules.

I resisted doing so this morning, but I wanted to draw attention to the problem because I believe the real solution is not these spurious points of orders, but it is for the member, such as the minister, speaking in debate to stick a little more closely to the truth.

MR. MATTHEWS:

That is what you are doing now, is it?

MR. SIMMONS:

Unless we can assume the basic good will of all members, then the Chamber, I submit, cannot really function.

Now, the quotation that I want to make reference to is the one that the minister uttered during Question Period when he said, in reference to my involvement as an MP in the Port aux Basques area at the time, "If they did not hire who he wanted, they would not get another cent while he was in Ottawa." Mr. Speaker, just for the record let me say two things: I did not say that at all. Secondly, what I did say - the gentleman who is now the member for LaPoile (Mr. Mitchell) was the President of the Development Association at the time - and say in writing, and I would not mind producing the letter, is that if he kept administering the programmes in such a slaphappy, inadequate fashion, I could not recommend any more funding to be administered by that association. It was a concern for the inadequacy of the administration, not for the kinds of people who were being hired.

Mr. Speaker, let us come then to the bill, Bill No. 13. Bill No. 13 would provide the legislative wherewithal to allow for the creation of five community college regions in the Province. We are on the record, Mr. Speaker, as being fully in support of the principle of restructuring the vocational school system and taking the other related colleges around the Province and marrying them up into an integrated community college system. We

believe that is a step forward. When the Minister of Career Development and Advanced Studies a year or so ago brought in his White Paper on the issue, we then saluted the principle as being a good one. We see the need to make some important structural and curriculum changes if we are going to, as a Province, look ahead to a very different kind of society in cultural and social terms, and to a very different set of skill requirements in terms of the offshore requirements and demands, just for example. So we support without reservation the principle of this particular bill. Already, in debate on the White Paper and elsewhere, we have said in some detail, as various members of this Chamber, why we support that principle so I will not dwell on it at length this morning.

Mr. Speaker, as we just saw in the Kruger legislation, as soon as the government finds it cannot get away with an arrogant approach to a problem, it cannot get away with looking for a carte blanche which will allow it by fiat, by dictate to make quite far-sweeping decisions in the absence of the consent of the Legislature, we have seen how, under the guise of getting permission to lift a dollar ceiling in a particular agreement, the government comes before this Chamber and looks for a much more generalized authorization, an authorization, as I say, which would allow it to dodge the need to come to the Chamber on future occasions. Just as we have seen that happen, I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that this particular bill is not necessarily what it is said to be.

The Premier, in Question Period a couple of days ago, said that the bill was all about being a panacea

for youth unemployment and once we had this restructuring of community colleges, instead of 40 per cent unemployment we would see the end to that cycle and we would see a whole new day for those youths.

I would agree with him only to this extent: If the community college system is given a chance, it is put at arm's length from government, good, competent administrative people are put in place, courses are revised, are adapted to the particular requirement of the industry out there as we know it today, I would agree with him that those youths will have a better opportunity of dovetailing into job requirements, will have a better opportunity of matching up with job descriptions in industry around the Province.

But, Mr. Speaker, and this is a very big but, you can have all of the credentials in the world academically in terms of job training, you can have all of the credentials in world, if the jobs are not there no amount of credentials will provide the jobs for you. That is why I say, Mr. Speaker, that this bill has a lot more to do with form than substance, necessary form, yes. We need a legislative framework around which to build the community college system. Nobody argues that point. But what jobs will it create? What will it do for youth employment in this Province? Almost nothing at all, except very, very indirectly.

Of course, this, itself, is a comment on the kind of legislation this administration has brought in during this particular session. This is the same administration which a year or so ago held a press conference in the middle of

the Summer - the Premier and the then Government House Leader, Mr. Marshall, held the press conference - to make a great to-do about how they could not get all the work done in a Spring session so, henceforth, they were going to have a session of the House in the Spring to deal with money matters, budget etc., but in the Fall - you will recall they talked about it as though it was a new, bright idea - they would have a legislative session in which they would bring before the people's representatives legislation to be debated affecting important areas of involvement in this Province. That was their stance in August of 1985, a year and a half or two years ago.

MR. TULK:

Revolutionary legislation.

MR. SIMMONS:

Yes. My friend for Fogo reminds me, if you would go back and get that particular press statement from the Premier, he gave some notice about how far-reaching the legislation would be and its impact for good on the people of Newfoundland and so and so.

Last Fall, of course, we heard them make an argument why there was no need, why it was foolish to have a Fall session, it is a waste of time etc. etc. It brings me to the point I was making a moment ago about this legislation, and legislation generally in this session of the House. We have seen very little legislation this session that will do anything to improve the lot of the ordinary Newfoundlander and Labradorian, that will do anything to increase the number of jobs in this Province, that will do anything to allow the people from Fort McMurray to accept the Premier's

invitation to come on back home, that will do anything to improve the fortunes of people who are trying to survive on welfare and the ten week work syndrome. That is the indictment, Mr. Speaker, of this particular administration.

Mr. Speaker, let me come even more directly to the bill and make two or three points fairly quickly. First of all, we have voiced our concern about the politics that creeps into this process here as well. We have seen insofar as the report on recreational facilities is concerned. We have seen how the hopes of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador were raised on that particular issue, and we dragged people many, many miles; I remember, for example, people driving over those excuses for roads down in Pool's Cove, that the Minister of Transportation must take the blame for, driving mile after mile up over that road to the Harbour Breton Road down into Bay d'Espoir. What for? To make a presentation at Milltown before this Recreation Facilities Commission, and how many dozens and dozens - a total of over 70 submissions I believe altogether to that particular committee.

Dragging themselves in from all parts of the Province because they felt that here was process they ought to be part of and they were told how this administration, being very open, was going to let them have some input into the process. No one can criticize that. That is a good step in the process, but by itself, if it is cut off at the knees, if there is only one step, input only, everybody giving of themselves with their ideas and their concerns about where recreational facilities are needed, if that is

given in isolation, if the process is cut off at the knees and people do not know what happened to that input, or what the government is going to do as a result of that input, then, Mr. Speaker, you are playing with the concerns of the people out there who have some legitimate ideas about the need for recreational facilities, particularly in rural communities.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I object very strenuously, as does my friend from Stephenville (Mr. K. Aylward) and others, to the twist that the minister puts on the report this morning. Suddenly it is just a little in-House thing, a little report to him as minister and he made the point yesterday rather pompously I thought that there is only one minister. Well, given his particular performance, to that we should say thank God. Mr. Speaker, for him to now construe that this report is none of anybody's business but his, as minister, is to undermine the very commitment that he made the people who participated in that process.

I digress, Mr. Speaker, because I wanted to make the point that insofar as the report is concerned, insofar as the questions raised by my friend from Windsor-Buchans (Mr. Flight), the gentleman from Bonavista North (Mr. Lush) and others about the abominable partisan way in which government is dealing with the youth of this Province in the assignment of job opportunities in provincial parks, in the partisan manner that the government is dealing with the Entrepreneurship Programme and the selection of persons who are to receive monies from that programme, and in so many other instances, Mr. Speaker, and in terms of the government's handling

of the new college system and the setting up of programmes and courses, in all of these, we see very clear examples of partisan behaviour.

Take the decision, Mr. Speaker, to put first year university credit courses in Lewisporte and Grand Falls. Mr. Speaker, where are the people? Where was the gentleman from Port au Port (Mr. Hodder) I ask you? Did he not speak up for Stephenville? Did he not make the case that if the government had to choose Grand Falls, well that is fine, or choose Lewisporte, that is fine, but to choose Grand Falls and Lewisporte over Stephenville as the place for those courses, to choose it over Goose Bay, to choose it over Labrador City, where was the Minister of Social Services in terms of Clarenville? Why not Clarenville for those first year courses? Where is the member for Burin-Placentia West? Why not Marystown or Grand Bank? But no, Mr. Speaker, the two places you had to choose for those two first year courses are where? Lewisporte, and a few miles away in Grand Falls, and then, Mr. Speaker, with a straight face they say no politics, no it had to do with other things. What about those other places, Mr. Speaker?

What about a university report? A university report, Mr. Speaker, I say to the minister, which says that Gander, not Lewisporte, not Grand Falls, but Gander is the place. This is the recommendation to the government, the recommendation the government went against by the way, from the university. This is the recommendation that Gander is the place most ready to set up courses in first year university accreditation.

MR. SIMMS:

That is not true.

MR. SIMMONS:

It has the infrastructure.

MR. SIMMS:

Grand Falls is halfway -

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Grand Falls has to defend Grand Falls. I have nothing to take away from Grand Falls. The comparison I am coming to of course is Lewisporte where I was born and very proud of it. But the minister will know that it is going to cost \$1 million to upgrade the Lewisporte facility. It is causing staff layoffs, as the minister will know. And here, right under their nose, was an opportunity, based on the university recommendation, to set up courses in Gander.

Mr. Speaker, we have also recorded our views on the Board of Governors and, just for the record, because we will have occasion to point back to it, we make a plea that if the government wants those five community colleges to be fully functional, it resist the temptation, of which we have already seen some evidence, to appoint people on those boards on the basis of their political affiliation, and to do so instead on the basis of their concern for community college matters and their knowledge in that particular area.

Mr. Speaker, I am not sure, I say to the Acting Government House Leader, the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins), I assume, what we are doing debating this bill right now. The minister responsible is not here and the minister who stood and introduced the bill is

not in the Chamber either. So it is difficult to know who you are talking to, because apart from -

MR. BAIRD:

You did not think there were enough here to carry the vote on Kruger, either.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. FLIGHT:

You lost the voice vote.

MR. SIMMONS:

- the one or two matters that I am making which the minister may classify as political rhetoric, there are also -

MR. BAIRD:

If it was not for Kruger, where would we be?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, I am not standing in this Chamber and yelling against the guy from Humber West. I am just not going to do it. He may be able to yell louder than I am, and that is to his credit.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. BAIRD:

I voted for the Kruger bill too.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, I was making the point that in addition to some of the matters I have dealt with, which people on the other side may classify as political rhetoric, there are also a couple of substantive concerns we have about

the bill. I would like to know who I am talking to. The Minister of Career Development is not here. So perhaps the Government House Leader might want to adjourn the debate on the bill for the time being or allow me to do so, because if we have caught the government flatfooted with its minister somewhere else, well that is understandable. That is not the first time that has happened. I do not know why we are going to proceed on this if there is not somebody here at least who can respond intelligently to the concerns that have been raised.

DR. COLLINS:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of order, the hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker, I think that the hon. member may be suggesting that we are proceeding improperly here. I think I have to rise on a point of order on that. We are proceeding quite properly.

Every single minister in the administration knows this bill inside out, because it was passed through Cabinet and discussed in detail. So the hon. member can make any points he wishes. They are fully understood over here, and any facts that he needs for clarification can be given by any minister in this administration. I just bring that up because he was questioning whether we were proceeding properly or not.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, I think it was more a matter of clarification than a point of order.

The hon. the Leader of the

Opposition.

MR. SIMMONS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I did not for the moment suggest it was improper. I was just drawing attention to the government's usual arrogance on the matter. They come into Question Period with half a troop at a time when they are supposed to be accountable to the House. They only bring in now nine or ten ministers. They hide the Minister of Social Services all week, with good reason. Now, they come in today and they do not even bother to have the appropriate minister in the House to steer the bill through.

I understand that in generality these guys and girl ought to know about legislation, but I would hope that the Minister of Career Development would have the Minister of Career Development and Advanced Studies (Mr. Power) who would have his head around it to a more specific degree than others would.

I want to draw somebody's attention to Clause 5 (1) of the Bill. We will make this point again on clause by clause but it deals with the overall principle of the Bill, I submit, in that we are dealing in Clause 5 (1) with the method of the appointment of a president, and thereby, by extension, we are dealing with the issue of academic freedom.

Insofar as the appointment of the President of Memorial University is concerned, the procedure that is followed is that the Board of Regents make the effective decision but the government has, in effect, the final say. I have no particular difficulty with that

because, for the most part, it becomes a rubber stamp type of approval. I have never had any difficulty with the fact that the political authority in the Province has the final say. They are the people who answer to the taxpayers and they are the people who answer to the electorate.

What I have difficulty with is where you have, as you have in this Bill, in Clause 5 (1), a provision which could be open to some abuse because this provision in Clause 5 (1) allows the government to make the appointment. In other words, the government to do the candidate search for the person who will be president of each of those five colleges. That is unlike the university's enabling legislation in that the Board of Regents actually make the selection, subject to final approval by the government. I would hope, in concluding debate, the minister would respond to that particular concern. There is no need to beat my gums about it and talk at length about it. Can he tell us why it is that the procedure in the appointment of the President of the University is not the one that is embodied in Clause 5 (1) of the Bill for the appointment of the presidents of the five community colleges?

Mr. Speaker, we support the principle of the Bill and we have one or two concerns we want to raise on clause by clause analysis.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. HISCOCK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Eagle River.

MR. HISCOCK:

Mr. Speaker, I want to comment on Bill 13 very briefly, "An Act To Establish A Community College System In The Province." We found out when they had Grade XII brought into this Province, one of the reasons why they brought it in was for an extra year of maturity. One of the things that happened was they brought the system in in a rushed fashion and they did not provide the proper equipment to Grade XII students. Another thing that also happened was that many of the schools around the Province did not have the instructors to start teaching courses like physics, chemistry, biology, and higher levels of math. We found out also that the university did not recognize Grade XII and we found Grade XII becoming a system of simply watering down Grade XI and Grade X courses and dividing them up. So now we have the community colleges spread out around the Province.

As the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Simmons) said, why have Grand Falls and Lewisporte, so close together, get university courses when you have other areas around the Province which would be better? Corner Brook, with the Grenfell College there, eventually within the next three, four or five years will become a university status college. Grand Falls, if I am correct, where they have first year university could become a university one of these days but it is rather limited now with the fact that they spread it over to Lewisporte.

MR. SIMMS:

(Inaudible), so says the President of the university.

MR. HISCOCK:

The point I am making is that when

we make decisions on education, it should be done on the basis of the recommendations of people like the President of the university and other educators. By doing that, Mr. Speaker, we would probably be providing the basis and nurturing the basis for another potential university ten, fifteen, or twenty years down the line, or at least first, second, and maybe third year programme institutions but not necessarily degree granting places. As a result, you would have a nucleus in Central Newfoundland and you could have more courses than just first year university.

What we are seeing in these community colleges, Mr. Speaker, which I am concerned about as a former educator, is that we are bringing only first year university courses into these former vocational schools which we are now calling community colleges. We are bringing only first year university in there. So the amount of courses that are going to be offered is not staggering. They will probably be first year math and English and maybe history. I doubt that they will get into languages. I doubt that they will get into physics. I doubt that they will get into chemistry. So it is going to be rather limited.

If they took one center like Grand Falls or Gander and gradually expanded it, then, of course, you would find that they would be able to offer evening courses to teachers who want to upgrade themselves, adults who want to upgrade themselves, as well as working students who could go on and do second year courses in these schools. Instead, they have taken the low road and they are using education as a form of

political patronage, as they are doing with everything else.

The other thing is I believe, from the structure of the bill, they are getting top-heavy by putting administrators and principals there. St. Anthony gets \$420,000 which is not very much to bring in first year university when you consider a lot of that money is going to go into salaries for administrators, secretaries, principals and instructors.

Another part that I am concerned about in this bill also is that they set up the advisory boards. When they set up the advisory boards, you would think they would go and get the top educators and business people into this college. Again, what did they do? They went and appointed political people to these positions.

MR. MORGAN:

That is not true!

MR. WARREN:

Not true! Name them!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. HISCOCK:

For example, in a community in the Labrador Straits there is a principal of a school who had been teaching over twenty-five years, retired and had everything to offer, who was overlooked and a political patronage appointment was made to the Happy Valley - Goose Bay college. I can go on down to the other end. Of course, there is no question, Mr. Speaker, that there are some people who are qualified. They could not make mockery out of it altogether. But the point I am making is they have taken the low road and they are

trying to turn our educational systems into political institutions.

The other part I am concerned with is, if we are going to have these community colleges, hopefully we will get into apprentice programmes and hopefully another thing they will get those community colleges into is the co-operative measure, where students who are going in and doing these courses will have arrangements with businesses so they can have work terms which will again give them more training, and help along the apprenticeship programmes.

The other thing I feel, Mr. Speaker, is that in these colleges, the majority of the equipment is outdated. They are upgrading it with some money from the offshore, but, again, Mr. Speaker, if you look at what they are doing and where they are putting the money, they are again being political and putting it into their own districts. They are not taking the high road and saying where is the largest population to draw from? Where is housing for students? Where are transportation facilities and X number of other factors which should be involved?

Mr. Speaker, with regard to this bill, I feel that like Grade XII, it is being brought in too quickly. I am concerned about qualified instructors, I am concerned about the number of courses that are going to be offered, I am concerned about the advisory programme, and I am also concerned that we are not putting enough money into the community colleges that need it. In concluding, Mr. Speaker, I would ask that this government study

this bill a little bit more closely, and take more time with regard to first year university.

Thank you.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Mr. Speaker, I advise hon. members that if I speak now it will be on behalf of the minister and I will be closing the debate.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Right on. Right on.

MR. SPEAKER:

If the hon. the Government House Leader speaks now he will close the debate.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I have listened with care and interest to the speech made by the hon. minister introducing the bill and also to the comments of hon. members of the Opposition. One particular thing, and I think probably the most important one to which I would reply, was the Leader of the Opposition with respect to the method of appointment envisaged in the legislation, or provided for in the legislation. I would point out that there have been, through the Public Service Commission, Province-wide advertisements for this position. I understand there have been a large number of applicants, and I would certainly assume a significant number of very qualified applicants. I think the assessment is still going on, but the process of appointment has, in fact, been province-wide advertisements through the Public Service Commission, and then the appropriate assessments and interviews.

The assessment, presumably, is not completed yet, but the appointment of the president will be through that process. So, all interested and qualified people had an opportunity, obviously, to apply and I have no doubt that the Public Service Commission will make an appropriate recommendation. If there are other technical matters within the clauses, then I am sure the minister would be more appropriate to reply to them in Committee of the Whole.

I move second reading.

On motion, a bill, "An Act To Establish A Community College System in the Province" - (Bill No. 13).

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Nay! Nay! Nay!

MR. SPEAKER:

This bill has now been read a second time. When shall the said bill be referred to a Committee of the Whole House?

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

On tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER:

Tomorrow.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

In moving our adjournment, I know hon. members would be interested in learning that we have had a very recent poll done on the West Coast and points for the government have gone up 11 per cent and still rising.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

However, not to end on a partisan vote, I wish all hon. members a pleasant weekend and move that the House adjourn until Monday at 3:00 p.m.

On motion, the House at its rising adjourned until Monday, June 15, 1987 at 3:00 p.m.

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