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***VERBATIM REPORT***  
***(Hansard)***

Speaker: Honourable Patrick McNicholas

Friday

22 May 1987

The House met at 3:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):  
Order, please!

Before calling for Statements By Ministers I would like to welcome to the galleries fifty-two students and their teachers from Gonzaga High School in St. John's.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:  
I would also like to welcome thirty students and their teachers from Mount Pearl Junior High School.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS:  
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. SIMMONS:  
The wheelchair athlete, Mr. Rick Hansen, is about to put the finishing touches on a rather magnificent achievement and I wondered if perhaps the House might want to consider sending a telegram in time for the celebration tomorrow, scheduled for BC Place in Vancouver. I suggest it would be appropriate, Mr. Speaker, in terms of our saluting the achievement itself and also in assisting him, and those associated with him, in helping to focus attention on a vital issue which touches the lives of several millions of Canadians either directly or indirectly.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Mr. Speaker, we, indeed, would be delighted to join in such a message. We were very impressed with Rick Hansen when he started his journey across Canada from Cape Spear, and, of course, we were very impressed with him when we met him here in front of Confederation Building, when government was very pleased to make a donation to his cause. We would just like to go on record as saying, yes, we certainly concur.

#### Statements by Ministers

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I am pleased, on behalf of my colleague, the Minister of Career Development and Advanced Studies, to announce the approval of another 20 projects under the Private Sector Employment Programme.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

This combined, Mr. Speaker, with the thirteen projects announced on Friday, May 15, brings the total number of approved projects to date to thirty-three.

Mr. Speaker, Whalen's Ultramar of Dunville will receive \$2,160 for the creation of two jobs involving twenty-four work weeks. These two

jobs will go to students.

D. Rex Hunter of Manuels will receive \$3,120 for the creation of one job involving twenty-six work weeks.

Kenny's Food King of Fermeuse will receive \$6,240 for the creation of two jobs involving fifty-two work weeks.

L.S. Condon of St. John's will receive \$1,920 for the creation of one job involving sixteen work weeks.

Kevin Fowler for Bayway Stores in Kelligrews will receive \$4,160 for the creation of two jobs involving fifty-two work weeks.

Trepassey Motel in Trepassey will receive \$4,940 for the creation of two jobs involving fifty-two work weeks.

Mr. Speaker, G.W.S. Recreation Rentals Limited of Lewins Cove will receive \$2,200 for the creation of two jobs involving twenty-two work weeks. These two positions will go to students.

Information Services Inc. of St. John's will receive \$9,360 for the creation of three jobs involving seventy-eight work weeks.

McEntegarts Fur Farm in Blaketown will receive \$1,920 for the creation of one job involving sixteen work weeks.

Don Maloney of Bay Bulls will receive \$10,800 for the creation of three jobs involving ninety work weeks.

Atlantic Liquid Motors (Nfld) Ltd. of Mount Pearl will receive \$3,120 for the creation of one job involving twenty-six work weeks.

Wiseman's Sales and Services Limited of Shoal Harbour in rural Newfoundland will receive \$2,860 for the creation of one job involving twenty-six work weeks.

Atlantic Enterprises Consultants Ltd. of Corner Brook will receive \$5,460 for the creation of one job involving fifty-two work weeks.

David Rideout of Cormack will receive \$3,120 for the creation of one job involving twenty-six work weeks.

French's Limited of Manuels will receive \$4,160 for the creation of three jobs involving fifty-two work weeks. Mr. Speaker, one of these positions will go to a student.

Blackwood Design in St. John's will receive \$1,920 for the creation of one job involving sixteen work weeks.

Seawatch Division of Beothuck Data in St. John's will receive \$1,920 for the creation of one job for sixteen weeks.

John J. Coady of Cape Broyle will receive \$6,000 for the creation of two jobs involving fifty work weeks.

Lakeview Services (1986) Ltd. of Harbour Main will receive \$5,000 for the creation of two jobs involving fifty work weeks.

Mr. Speaker, the projects I have outlined today total \$82,300 and will provide employment for thirty-two, persons, including five students of the Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:

Of the \$5 million allocated for the Private Sector Employment Programme, the funding approved to date totals \$116,180.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out the expediency with which we have announced project approvals under the Private Sector Employment Programme. As previously indicated to honourable members, the private sector has reacted most enthusiastically to this job creation initiative. In line with the commitment given when the program was introduced, government will continue to get these projects approved as quickly as possible so that the Private Sector Employment Programme will be of maximum benefit to all concerned and for all regions of Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my colleagues, some of whom are here, the rest who are out celebrating in the streets over these latest announcements, I want to welcome this latest in a series of megaproject announcements by the government.

Does this mean now, Mr. Speaker, that the entire Newfoundland population at Fort McMurray will be on the plane this weekend rushing back? Will it mean we will have to import outside labour to do all these jobs, Mr. Speaker? Is there not the danger the economy will now be overheated

with all those additional jobs? Mr. Speaker, even the inflicting of prosperity on people ought to be done at a rate that is not too painful.

MR. BAIRD:

You must have been a grudge baby, were you?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS:

No, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, you, Sir, have exercised real discretion in allowing that man to give, one, his maiden speech and, two, by far the most intelligent thing from that side of the House in weeks.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS:

Now, Mr. Speaker, Dunville, Manuels, Fermeuse, St. John's, Kelligrews, Trepassey, Lewins Cove are all targeted areas for the Liberals in the next election.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, it is no accident that in that entire list there is only one community, Blaketown, which is in a Liberal district. And I tell you why, Mr. Speaker, and I told you two weeks ago, because the giving out of the applications was manipulated politically and they were given to people in Tory districts several days before people in Liberal districts got them. It is no accident, Mr. Speaker. Whatever you think, Mr. Speaker, in this House about the representatives of Liberal districts, I say to you that there are people in Liberal

districts who have initiative, who have businesses. Despite the onslaught of this government trying to destroy those businesses and destroy their incentive, there are people out there in those fifteen districts who could provide jobs had they been given the time and the opportunity.

But the system was manipulated against them and that statement, Mr. Speaker, is clear evidence of that. And let us come back to this: Will these thirty-two jobs be in an ad next week? If so, put a caveat in saying maybe, saying temporary, because your ad about St. Lawrence mines a hundred jobs, apart from it being a big lie about the provincial government doing it, apart from that there is another lie there now because that hundred jobs today, Mr. Speaker, is considerably less, thanks to the lack of monitoring of this particular government.

The minister was on TV last night wondering out loud that he might have a talk with the company to see what is going on. Yes, I guess he should have a talk with them. I guess he should. This speech, if I may call it such, Mr. Speaker - and the gentleman for Ferryland (Mr. Power) was smart to be out of the House when this was given. He is smart not to have his name associated with this, I will tell you - is another bit of an attempt at political pork barrelling using public money. It will not work. It is another sign of a government that has run its course, just another sign.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. LONG:  
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the member for St. John's East.

MR. LONG:  
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am sure that the thirty-three individuals who have been listed in the minister's statement will welcome the initiative by the government, and certainly the employers will no doubt share the excitement of these individuals in being able to generate some economic activity in their areas.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. LONG:  
But, Mr. Speaker, we must object -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Oh, oh!

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

MR. LONG:  
- to the tedious fashion in which ministers are coming in week in and week out listing small numbers of jobs, pretending that this government has some kind of comprehensive programme to put this Province back to work. This is a poor substitute for any kind of integrated programme to deal with the ills in this Province. It is all smoke and mirrors. There is not a lot of money being spent here. This Ministerial Statement has not met the standards that was set out with this programme in which 40 per cent of the jobs were supposed to go to people under twenty-five. You have five jobs for students out of thirty-three. That is not going to address the serious unemployment problem that students are having this Summer. There are

no jobs in this statement for public and non-profit community organizations. The Minister of Social Services (Mr. Brett) stood here yesterday defending cuts in jobs in his own department in which people who are under incredible pressure, in the Social Services Department, do not have enough time to answer phone calls that are coming in to their offices, people who are dealing with people who are suffering from unemployment and who are on social assistance.

MR. SPEAKER:  
Order, please!

MR. LONG:  
Those cutbacks will hurt people who are hurting in this Province. The statement by the minister is not good enough.

MR. SPEAKER:  
Are there any further Statements by Ministers?

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is amazing how an announcement of jobs and job creation by the Province really hits a nerve with the Opposition. It is amazing!

Mr. Speaker, I wish to inform this hon. House that from May 22 to May 31, over 100,000 Newfoundlanders will join millions of other Canadians in celebrating National Fitweek. No other project involves as many people in such a variety of activities as this unique mass participation

celebration.

The basic objective of Fitweek is to get people involved in physical activity and increase their awareness of the benefits of a healthy, active lifestyle.

Thousands of fitness activities are being held all across the country, and here in our Province we have a very extensive schedule of events. Throughout Newfoundland and Labrador, Provincial health and fitness associations, municipal recreation departments, community groups and town councils are organizing hundreds of special events for the week of May 22 to May 31. These range from fun runs, family fitnics and bicycle rallies, to square dancing, community challenges and many other unique fitness activities.

This is the fifth year for Fitweek and community involvement in our Province increases every year. From nine towns hosting their out fitness week in the first year, we have twenty-seven this year. In addition, fourteen provincial health fitness and sport associations are actively promoting special projects during the week. Finally, over 100 communities will be involved to some extent, with hundreds of individual events.

My department is playing an active role in coordinating National Fitweek. We have worked closely with these groups and have provided organizational and financial assistance along with a host of promotional materials.

In the spirit of Fitweek, moreover on Friday, May 22, my department and other government departments will be having employees wearing

their sneakers to work to 'kick-off' Fitweek with Sneaker Day. Over fifty business in Newfoundland and Labrador have registered for this project.

As minister responsible for fitness in this Province, I urge all Newfoundlanders to participate in as many events as possible during this annual celebration of regular physical activity.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Stephenville.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to thank the minister for giving me a copy of his statement. It is a pleasure to rise and speak about National Fitweek. I would like to congratulate all the organizers around the Province who are volunteering to organize events for people of all ages, because fitness is for people of all ages. I encourage all people around the Province to get out and participate in the different activities. I would like to encourage government to take further steps to help people and provide programmes and so on through the minister's department so that people can take advantage of them.

One of the things I notice in this announcement is that we have the words "kick-off" for Fitweek, and a couple of weeks ago we had "kick-start" for the economy. I think the word 'kick' -

kick-start, kick-off - is becoming a buzz word of the provincial government. I would also tell the minister to put his sneakers on and keep them on, because we will be pursuing him for the next couple of years.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. LONG:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. LONG:

This party welcomes the announcement of the start of Fitweek but would point to the irony in the statement that the minister has brought forward, in that the municipal governments and volunteer associations he has referred to, who will be organizing most of these activities, are the very people who are suffering from a lack of support from this government. In particular, I would mention that the Newfoundland and Labrador High School Athletic Federation, which is the backbone of volunteer involvement in high school sports in this Province, has been able to get absolutely no support from this government in its present financial difficulties.

If the minister is going to come in and talk about Fitweek one day, we would like to see a commitment to the rest of the year for this government to support all the people in our Province who are playing leadership roles in their communities in making sure that fitness is an ongoing day-to-day, month-to-month, year-to-year activity. Unfortunately, the minister does not demonstrate a commitment beyond the statement

that he makes at this opportunity, beyond the opening of Fitweek. We would like to see the commitment continued by way of you putting some money where your mouth is.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS:  
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. SIMMONS:  
I wonder, without doing anything unkind to the gentleman who operates the mike system here so well, would he do the gentleman from St. John's East (Mr. Long) the favour of turning on his mike so he does not feel he has to scream and bawl every time he gets up.

MR. SPEAKER:  
There is no point of order.

#### Oral Questions

MR. SIMMONS:  
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. SIMMONS:  
Mr. Speaker, I remember when I was Up-along the CBC in Ottawa used to have once a week -

AN HON. MEMBER:  
Too bad you could not stay up there.

MR. SIMMONS:

Dream on. Dream on.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Oh, oh!

MR. TULK:  
Amazing, is it not?

MR. SIMMONS:  
Some words that come to mind you should keep to one's self.

MR. TULK:  
But it is amazing that you can do it.

MR. SIMMONS:  
Mr. Speaker, when I was Up-along the CBC in Ottawa used to every Friday morning give the squished tomato award and I would like to give it to the Premier this morning. I want to ask him about his cuc farm, about the \$13 million pickle that he has gotten himself into. He puts on a brave front but I will help him get rid of that brave front this morning by referring him -

MR. MATTHEWS:  
We will send you a case of cucumbers and you can do what you like with them.

MR. SPEAKER:  
Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS:  
He talks so much and says so little.

MR. TULK:  
Sell us one of those lottery tickets on yourself.

MR. SIMMONS:  
Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion, the hon. Michel Cote, a great Tory, a member of Mr. Brian Mulroney's administration, has stated in writing that the reason the



federal government would not get involved financially in a Sprung proposal for development of greenhouses and the growth of cucumbers and tomatoes, etc., is, Mr. Speaker, in his words, "because of concerns over the long-term reliability of the technology involved and concerns relating to the commercial viability."

Mr. Speaker, I say to the Premier that if -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

Will the hon. the Leader of the Opposition pose a question?

MR. SIMMONS:

Not a bad idea.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Premier: In view of the indictment by the federal government of this whole thing, both from the standpoint of the calling into question the technology in the long term, calling into question, therefore, the commercial viability, does the Premier not have some second thoughts about this issue? Or more to the point, does he not feel the need to lay before the public all the information to, at the very least, demonstrate to the public the wisdom of the choice that the government is now a part of in the Sprung endeavour?

MR. TULK:

Good question!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I have a copy of the letter that the hon. the Leader of the Opposition refers to. I know of no study that the Department of

Regional Industrial Expansion has done to substantiate the statements that the minister makes. I do know that the Government of Canada has been under severe political pressure from the traditional greenhouse growers of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island, and even into Quebec and Ontario, and so was the original facility in Calgary under that kind of pressure. I do not know if Mr. Cote has referenced the National Research Council's view of this or the view of other scientists who are in this field. I have no idea. And I know of no study that DRIE has done to substantiate the statements that are made in that letter. I do not know of any.

All I do know is that when ourselves and Sprung applied and asked whether this project was eligible for the Atlantic Enterprise Programme or IRDP, we were told it did not fit the criteria. We are satisfied, in our own minds, that this new technology is very sound and it is very scientifically sound. It has been proven so and it has been said so by the people in the National Research Council, who helped the Sprung Group through the last ten years, with \$35 million of Sprung's own money, to develop the technology. They are very confident of it. We are as well. I think that whilst this may be said in this letter, I know that from a political point of view there are a lot of people in Eastern and Central Canada who oppose this technology, and not that it cannot work. This is the thing that I do not understand. If everyone is saying it is not viable, why are they so afraid of it? That is the question. Why does Alberta want it back? Why do

the Liberals and NDP of Alberta want the Sprung Group to stay with the facility in Alberta, and why is everybody else so afraid of it?

It is natural; Mr. Speaker, I suppose, anytime a new technology occurs. Through the history of man, when there have been changes and improvements, people have feared change. This administration is looking to the future and we embrace change.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SIMMONS:

The change in the unemployment rate from 8 per cent to 24 per cent since the Premier took over is proof that he embraces change, Mr. Speaker, but not necessarily change for the better, I submit.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have a few 'whys' for him too. He asked why, why, why? There is a why he will not respond to, and I put it to him again. Why is it, if this is the best thing since sliced bread, will he not table the information? Why will he not put the information out to the light of day for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador to be assured that their \$13.5 million in direct and indirect funding is being well placed?

Mr. Speaker, he undermines the letter. He dismisses the letter. Other days he stands here and he talks about the federal government in more glowing terms. Today he walks a different line. I ask him in view of this letter - and we are not talking here about a tomato farm or a greenhouse farm;

we are talking about the minister in a federal department, a funding department, who has indicted the technology and indicted the possible viability - so in light of that and the Premier has acknowledged in the House that he has had that letter, has the Premier taken any initiative to ask the federal government or that particular minister's officials for any basis, any information on which they have made those determinations? They are not iffy, they are very definitive, and I would be concerned if I were he about the definitive nature of those statements. Has he gone to the federal government, I ask him, Mr. Speaker, for any information that would substantiate or undermine the assertions made by Mr. Cote in that letter? And further to the point, does he not have some concerns, despite his feeling that he is firmly based on this one -

MR. DAWE:

Question!

MR. TOBIN:

Question!

MR. SIMMONS:

How would you hear? How would you know?

MR. TOBIN:

How would I hear?

MR. TULK:

How would you know?

MR. SIMMONS:

How would you know?

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, I do have a hearing impairment, but I do not like that kind of trashy comment.

MR. TULK:

He is not talking about your hearing impairment.

MR. SIMMONS:

If you would listen, you might hear.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. TOBIN:

If you want to open the floodgates on personalties, buddy, you would be slaughtered.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, I do not know why he is so upset. Perhaps it is because Dawe upstaged him on the bridge, and he has good reason to be upset, I understand. He did not do his job on the bridge.

MR. TOBIN:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! A point of order, the hon. member for Burin-Placentia West.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, I do take exception. I do have a hearing impairment, and it is something I have been treated for and it is something that has been ongoing. Mr. Speaker, there are colleagues in this House the same as I am. I do suffer from a hearing impairment, and I do not like the hon. member slapping up such trash.

MR. TULK:

I did not know that. I am sorry about it.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, briefly to the point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, the hon.

the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SIMMONS:

I say to the gentleman that I just heard a bit of information then for the first time. That is number one. Number two, I am sure he will be aware, as all observers of the scene will be aware, that my inference was how could he hear when he was talking? How could he even know what I was asking when he is talking all of the time?

MR. TULK:

That is a very logical question as far as he is concerned.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, I must rule that there is no point of order. But I would like to point out to all hon. members that they should try and keep both their questions and answers as short as possible.

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, I was asking the Premier whether or not he has had some concerns about the assertions in this statement from the minister, Mr. Cote, and what he has done to allay any concerns he may have? Or to find out whether the information here is poppy-cock?

MR. DAWE:

It is a supplementary question!

MR. SIMMONS:

How many speakers are over there, Mr. Speaker?

Whether this information is poppy-cock?

AN HON. MEMBER:

How long is the question going to take?

MR. SPEAKER:  
Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS:  
It takes as long as it needs, Mr. Speaker, to get the question out without interruption, I submit.

Mr. Speaker, has the Premier some concerns about this? What has he done to allay those particular concerns? And why does he not table the information to show that his assurance about the technology is firmly based?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

PREMIER PECKFORD:  
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:  
Mr. Speaker, first of all I have answered the original question and I think the answer was shorter than the question. I suspect that what I am going to say now is going to be shorter than the supplementary. I just ask for the protection of the Chair so that the rules of the House are enforced equitably and fairly in this question and answer period. Number one, let me say, in the hon. Leader of the Opposition's preamble he indicates that some days I am supporting the federal government and other days I am not on given issues, and that is correct, Mr. Speaker. When there is evidence to show that something that the federal government does is injurious to Newfoundland, I will oppose it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

PREMIER PECKFORD:

When, on other occasions, Mr. Speaker, there is evidence where this is good for Newfoundland, then I will support it. That is the way this administration works.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

PREMIER PECKFORD:  
We do not blindly follow, we take positions based on the evidence. Now, Mr. Speaker, there is no evidence whatsoever in this letter, only a statement by a minister. Now, all I would say to the Leader of the Opposition and the minister, Mr. Cote, if they want to know about the proof of the technology, is ask the people who understand and who have researched the technology, the scientists. Go to the National Research Council and ask the National Research Council what their opinion is on this technology, ask the people who have been in this field where \$35 million has been spent on it in ten years. Ask people at the university here who have been familiar with this technology. Ask the Dean of Science at Memorial University what he thinks of the technology, because he has been in that field. These are the people who know, these are the experts. All of the answers are affirmative, are positive, that this is a proven, good technology, Mr. Speaker. That is the story. When we went to the federal government the federal government had no evidence on this technology. All the federal government told us and all the information they had was that it did not fit the criteria. I know of no studies done by the federal government which demonstrates that this technology does not work.

MR. SIMMONS:

You got it in writing.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Premier and it relates to what he has just said in this House. He said,

'Go to the people who have done the study.' Now, Mr. Speaker, I say to the Premier that that is poppy-cock. He has studies, supposedly, done on all of this, which he has refused to table in the House. So my question to the Premier this morning is this: Why, if he is so sure that the federal minister is wrong; why, if he is so sure that the rest of the people objecting to this project are wrong; why is the Premier closing his government? Why is he keeping the information secret in the same way as he has done about numerous other projects in this Province? Why is he afraid to open up his government as he promised the people of this Province in 1979? Why has it become a closed government? The people are saying, 'Why, Brian, why?' Answer the question.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I find it ironic, of course, that when it is convenient for the members of the Opposition they condemn everything that comes out of Ottawa, everything that Mr. Cote or Mr. Crosbie or the Prime Minister says. In the last two or two and a half years, since they have been in, nothing that the federal government has done is right; they do not deserve to

govern, they do not know how to govern, and the information that they give out is all false. Now, all of a sudden, they take lock, stock and barrel, hook, line and sinker, an opinion in a letter from a federal minister. Now, Mr. Speaker, I find that rather contradictory on behalf of the Opposition, to 99.9 per cent of the time condemn everything a federal minister says and all of the sudden now the federal minister is lily white, is 100 per cent right, when 99 per cent of the time the federal government, in anything that they have done in the last two and half years, have been wrong, according to the members opposite.

MR. CALLAN:

The fact of the matter is you will not table the information.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I cannot help it if the Opposition do not like what we are doing. I cannot help that. That is, I suppose, part of their job, to oppose. So they can go ahead and oppose. All I can tell the members opposite is that we are getting involved in a technology which has been proven, Mr. Speaker. The research has been done. The scientific community agrees with that. We are going to proceed with this project and we are going to make it work, the same way as we are making Come By Chance work, the same way as we have made Corner Brook work, and the same way as we have made the offshore fishery work. We shall make it work. And, unfortunately, they will not have egg on their face, they will have all kinds of tomatoes and cucumbers on their face.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. TULK:  
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. TULK:  
Mr. Speaker, let me say to the Premier that we are not taking it hook, line and sinker from the federal minister, we are not painting him lily white, and neither are we taking it hook, line and sinker from the Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. TULK:  
There is absolutely no reason why we should have to.

So I would ask him once again, rather than standing in his place and doing as he did last week, saying, 'No, I will not table the studies that my department, my government, has done on this,' to come clean now and allay any doubts that are in the scientific community, just come clean and show us the information.

MR. SIMMS:  
Bring in Leo.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:  
Order, please!

MR. TULK:  
Lay the information on the table.

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:  
Come on over, Leo, boy, come on

over. You made a mistake, you can always come back.

Mr. Speaker, we are still negotiating with the Sprung Group to sign a legal agreement. We have now an agreement in principle. The same way as we negotiated with the Come By Chance oil refinery, we move from an agreement in principle to a full-fledged legal agreement. The lawyers for the company, the lawyers for the government, are now negotiating and working towards that legal agreement. When that legal agreement and all that is signed, then, of course, we will release the full agreement to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. But we are not going to do it before we have that legal agreement in place, Mr. Speaker.

If the Opposition are so skeptical about the technology in the interim between the signing of the heads of agreement to the legal agreement, at which time we will release the agreement to the public, they have ready access to go to them. All they have to do is pick up the phone and call the National Research Council and ask them about the work that was done on this technology.

MR. TULK:  
The federal minister did.

MR. PECKFORD:  
I do not know if the federal minister did.

MR. TULK:  
No. You do not know.

MR. SPEAKER:  
Order, please!

MR. PECKFORD:  
Talk about taking something for nothing!

But there is no question, Mr. Speaker, not only in Newfoundland, although I would say less in Newfoundland, but across Canada, especially in Eastern and Central Canada, and I would say parts of British Columbia, because of their type of agriculture there is a lot of opposition to this technology, and that opposition is because there is a large agricultural community based on a technology which is not as far advanced as this one is, and therefore they are scared of their own enterprises and their own business. That is very natural, Mr. Speaker, no question, and I understand that. That is not to say, Mr. Speaker, that we should suddenly steer away from this. Obviously a lot of people are scared, a lot of people are afraid because they are afraid that their own business enterprises might have to compete with this new technology, and so it will, Mr. Speaker.

We are pleased when we think of Alberta trying to get the Sprung group to build another facility now in Alberta, when we think of the shrillness of the Opposition from all of Eastern Canada, the shrillness of it, the tone of it, Mr. Speaker, gives one an idea that whilst they say it is completely non-viable in writing, the undercurrent of what they are saying shows an awful lot of fear, and they are not very comfortable in their allegations of non-viability, because if they were they would not be near as fearful in the way they are approaching this particular project.

Mr. Speaker, we shall prevail and we shall go on and we shall build this project and, come November when we are producing the

cucumbers and the tomatoes and we are exporting it to the other provinces of Canada where there are already markets ready to accept it, Mr. Speaker, then we will see where all this skepticism goes. Then we will hear people say, "Well, I never really was against it, you know, I was not really against it, I just had certain questions. I was really fundamentally in favour of it." Then we will see all the reversals by the members opposite who will then try to take credit for something that right now they are condemning.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Port de Grave.

MR. EFFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, after listening to this statement this morning from the Department of Career Development, I realize that it is wrong to accuse the administration over there of pork-barrelling, and I know they did not pork-barrel when it comes to Mr. Andy Wells and his appointment to the Public Utilities Board. But I would like to ask the Minister of Justice (Ms Verge) for the information we asked her for yesterday, the salary Mr. Wells is receiving, and that she said yesterday, of course, was public information.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Justice.

MS VERGE:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I have that information. I was intending to give it in the time allotted for Answers to questions for which notice has been given. As a

member of the Board of Commissioners of Public Utilities Mr. Andy Wells receives an annual salary of \$56,180. The Public Utilities Board is a quasi-judicial body, it operates at arms length from the Cabinet and the other arms of the government: Consistent with the nature of the board, the act governing it provides for commissioners to serve during good behaviour until age seventy.

The Public Utilities Board is self-financing, Mr. Speaker. The board generates revenues through assessments on public utilities and life and insurance underwriters, licencing of motor carriers, fines imposed on motor carriers, and fees charged for hearings before the board. And this revenue covers the salary of all the commissioners as well as all the other expenses associated with the board's operations.

MR. EFFORD:  
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
A supplementary, the hon. the member for Port de Grave.

MR. EFFORD:  
That amount of salary, I assume the minister is saying, was approved by Cabinet, \$56,000 a year, for a man, Mr. Wells, already receiving a salary from the Municipal Council in St. John's and has private business. How much time is put in by this gentleman, or by any member on the Public Utilities Board, to earn that amount of money, \$56,000 a year?

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

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, all the members of the Public Utilities Board are full-time members and as members of the Board they govern their own conduct and attend to the business of the board. As I mentioned, they operate at arms length from the Cabinet and other parts of the government. All the members are full-time members. When Mr. Wells was appointed first he was appointed as a part-time member and he was paid on a pro rata basis. If he served half time, which I understand was the case in the beginning, he was paid half the annual salary, but in recent months he has been serving on a full-time basis and has been paid the full salary accordingly.

MR. EFFORD:  
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. EFFORD:  
So what the minister is saying is that the gentleman, until age 70, is going to receive \$56,000 a year, which will amount to approximately \$1.5 million. I would like to ask the minister, seeing it is not a political appointment, that they are not paying off their buddies again but they got to make the taxpayers suffer in this Province, is it a fact that if the Cabinet sees fit to terminate that job for any reason that they would have to buy out that particular job from Mr. Wells in the same way as with the Workers' Compensation Board, and he would probably then cost as high as \$300,000 or \$400,000? Could the minister tell us approximately how much it would cost?

MR. SPEAKER:



The hon. the Minister of Justice.

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, I have already pointed out that the legislation governing the Public Utilities Board provides for commissioners to serve during good behaviour.

MR. EFFORD:

Good behaviour!

MS VERGE:

That is necessary. It is necessary for commissioners to have security of tenure if they are to be truly independent of political influences. This administration takes pride in the fact that we have a Public Utilities Board which is truly independent, it is a quasi-judicial body, its members' security of tenure is no different from the nature of other quasi-judicial bodies in this Province and in other Canadian jurisdictions.

MR. CALLAN:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Bellevue.

MR. CALLAN:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Dawe). I want to ask the minister how is the hiring done in the Air Services Division of his department? Who does the hiring for the water bomber fleet, as an example, who hires the pilots? Is the much touted local preference policy of this government followed in the hiring of pilots who fly government aircraft? If so, would the minister explain why in recent weeks pilots have been hired from outside this Province, Ontario and Quebec, at a time, Mr. Speaker, when there are better qualified

pilots in this Province who have applied for these positions and have not got them? Would the minister explain that?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Transportation.

MR. DAWE:

Mr. Speaker, first of all, the hiring procedures - this is a very technical job - go through the Public Service Commission initially for screening. Then there is a process of attesting to the technical and other qualifications of the pilots. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, I might point out that our training programmes over the years have been so good, there is an ongoing fear, and it has been a realized fear, that a number of the pilots who have been trained through our water bomber fleet over the years are now flying in other parts of the country with water bomber fleets in other provinces. There is a great demand for the quality and the level of pilots being trained to serve in our water bomber fleet.

It is very dangerous from a flying perspective. It is a very technical procedure. There is an ongoing training programme with the pilots annually. They have to undergo very stringent testing requirements through our chief pilot. We are going to make sure, Mr. Speaker, that we have the best pilots available and make sure that the planes are used in a manner that is most effective for the fighting of fires and used by the safest possible pilots available.

Of course, Mr. Speaker, many of the pilots are Newfoundlanders and many of them are not. Many

Newfoundland pilots who have been trained through that system are flying in other parts of Canada. I would like to go on record again, Mr. Speaker, as indicating that our water bomber fleet, our pilots, and our Air Services Division are the best available anywhere in Canada.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. CALLAN:  
A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. CALLAN:  
Mr. Speaker, the minister did not answer my question. Let me ask the minister, then, to answer directly: How many pilots does this Province have employed in the operation of government aircraft? How many pilots are employed in this Province, and, of that number, how many are Newfoundlanders and how many are non-Newfoundlanders? Would the minister answer that?

Perhaps the minister, in view of the fact that Amelia Earhart and Mary Kelly have been in the news in recent days, would also indicate how many of them are females as well. Would the minister answer that? What is the total number of pilots, how many are Newfoundlanders, and how many are females?

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

MR. DAWE:  
Mr. Speaker, I think I will take that question as notice and supply the answer to the hon. gentleman

in due course, as soon as I am able to get the information, possibly before the morning is over.

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

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

MR. CALLAN:  
Mr. Speaker, the minister, I am sure, is aware that there are grievances lodged with the Air Services Division of his department. There are grievances lodged by pilots who have applied consistently, better qualified, who have not even been given a chance to apply for the job in the sense that they have not been given any test or anything else. How many grievances are filed with the Air Services Division of his department, and when is the minister going to get a handle on his department and clean up the mess that exists down there?

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

MR. DAWE:  
Mr. Speaker, just a couple of points. First of all, it is perhaps a question better addressed to the Order Paper or I would have to take it under notice. But the allegations that somehow there are pilots who apply for positions who are not qualified, and that there is somehow a mess down in the Air Services Division, Mr. Speaker, is completely irresponsible. That particular section of government, the water bomber fleet, the pilots that operate with Air Services and the air ambulance work in this Province, are second to none in

this country. I think the hon. member should be required to withdraw those comments. It is a slur to a very dedicated, professional group of people operating in this Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, I have question for the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins). The minister will recall that a couple of days ago I pointed out how the Department of Social Services was depriving disabled pensioners from receiving the full benefits of the Canada Pension Plan. Now we have another example of how the provincial government is depriving people from receiving the full benefits of the Canada Pension Plan, and I refer to Bill 40, which is "An Act To Amend The Public Service (Pensions) Act."

My question to the minister: Is it the deliberate policy of this government to keep the poor, disabled pensioners, public service pensioners, and those on fixed incomes from ever rising above their economic plight? Is it the policy of this government to rob and steal money from the disabled and the public service pensioners in an attempt to reduce the deficit of this Province, to rob them of money from the Canada Pension Plan which they are fully entitled to receive?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker, obviously the short answer to that ridiculous question is no. But I should point out that previously the members opposite used to get their question from a technical person in the background. Now, we are breaking new ground here this morning. I understand the hon. member is getting his question from a comment made by a member of that splinter party that the hon. Leader of the Opposition referred to yesterday. I understand that the member for Menihek (Mr. Fenwick) made some comment this morning which I did not hear personally but I had indirect information about, and totally erroneous information given. I understand that that was the same matter that the hon. member for Bonavista North has now brought up.

The point about this bill is that this is going to improve matters for our pensioners, not detract. If we did not bring in this bill there would be certain things happen to some pensioners, who now take early retirement, that would be to their detriment. This bill is going to improve on that so it will not be to their detriment.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The time for Oral Questions has elapsed.

#### Petitions

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Stephenville.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is a pleasure today to rise and present this petition. It is another petition, which I received yesterday, from Stephenville on the West Coast concerning the social services cutback. It is from over 160 people in the area of the Bay St. George, Port au Port Peninsula, and from all over the area. They have expressed concerns about the cutbacks as they feel they will drastically affect the service and will put increased pressure on the social workers who are now working so hard.

The prayer of the petition reads as follows: "We, the undersigned, would like to present a petition to the House of Assembly of Newfoundland and Labrador.

"The Department of Social Services has recently cutback thirty-five positions around the Province within its department.

"The Bay St. George Foster Parent's Associations is concerned about these layoffs as it will critically affect the services that are needed for the children and all those whose lives are enriched by the services of social workers.

"As a Province, we must have increases of services by approximately 150 new workers. As citizens we feel that we cannot permit this reduction of services.

"We ask that this petition be presented to the House of Assembly of Newfoundland and Labrador and that the minister act upon our concerns."

Mr. Speaker, I rose yesterday with the same petition, and there are more of them coming in. It is unfortunate that we have to have petitions being presented to this House to express concern about cutting back social service workers in this Province. It is a situation that takes away from the problems that are out there. I am well aware when the minister tells us that the workers are working very hard. I am very well aware of that because I deal with them all the time and I give them great credit for the job they do, but they have to be provided with the right resources for which to do their job.

When the minister's department is going to announce all these projects that they announce about employing people and so on, I wonder, and many people out there wonder, what is being done and where the emphasis is on trying to get people back into the system, into society, through rehabilitation, and the way of dealing with child welfare cases and abuse cases that are ongoing.

So, while we are very aware of the financial situation of the Province and of this government, one which they created, the argument that the minister uses that, 'We only have this much or we only have that much and we have decided that we did not want to cutback the programmes,' that does not bounce or balance. This is a priority. It should be a priority and it should be addressed. I would anticipate that there are more petitions following from around the Province. I know from my area people are still sending them to me and they are very concerned that the government would take such action to cutback such an important service to

people who desperately need it.

We are not taking any shots at the workers or nothing like that because they work so hard now as it is. The situation is they need help in doing their work, they need resources and this government has the responsibility to provide that resource, to provide the staff and to provide the resources with which they do their job.

The cry has been in the last year or two for more people, not less, and this government has taken a negative action which is going to see negative results in the future. I am very concerned, especially in my area, and in the Port au Port Peninsula.

MR. EFFORD:

It is Province wide.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

That is right, all over the Province there are major problems that have to be dealt with. Concerns are being expressed and I again ask the minister to respond.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to support the prayer of the petition so ably presented by my friend and colleague for Stephenville (Mr. K. Aylward). The issue of the cutback of the thirty-five positions is one that is not going to go away, I say to the minister, for a couple of reasons.

He may not have realized before

now that social workers were so popular out there. I am not talking about the few out there who, by nature or by inclination or design, are extremely rude, and I have told him about those before. For the record and to send a signal, I suppose, like in any profession, you will have a few rotten apples and in that profession you have a few out there who treat people, who treat clients, the taxpayers of this Province very, very crudely, indeed they take pride somehow in their crudeness. But they are the exception, and they know who they are.

I am talking though about the others now, Mr. Speaker. I want to first of all pay tribute to that overwhelming majority of people who are in the minister's employ and who do a first rate job with limited resources, and the resources ought to be limited. It is public money and there ought not to be unlimited funds. Nobody will argue that point, I am sure. But I do first of all want to pay tribute to them.

Secondly, I want to flag an issue that is raised in this particular petition. If you go halfway down the second paragraph, you will find this sentence, Mr. Speaker. "Children who usually come to live in our homes are children who have been abused either mentally, physically or sexually."

Some of us in this Chamber, including the gentleman from Mount Scio-Bell Island (Mr. Barry), the gentleman from Windsor-Buchans (Mr. Flight), the gentleman from Port de Grave (Mr. Efford) and I, had the opportunity yesterday to attend a seminar elsewhere in this building, featuring Linda Halliday, a child sexual abuse

consultant from British Columbia, who, among other things, told her own personal story, but in that and otherwise gave to us a whole new dimension on the problem of sexual abuse. One of the issues that came powerfully home to me, and to others there, I feel certain, was the need to have somebody sometimes outside the family circle that that child could reach out to and could talk to. It is in this context, Mr. Speaker, that I rise today to support this petition.

Young people, children, need the kind of person that is being wiped out, the kind of position that is being wiped out by the latest cutbacks. I have not heard from the minister. I have watched him on television with his usual callous arrogance and I do not know where he gets off on that, Mr. Speaker. He is a public servant. His salary is being paid by the Public Treasury, and yet he gets the feeling every time he gets before a camera, it is another opportunity to insult and to tell people that they are all wrong and he is all right.

Mr. Speaker, why does he not return to the basic humanity we know he has, the basic people skills that we know he has, why is it? Is it an inferiority complex or what is it that he has to be belligerent and callous and crude every time he talks about people? Why instead will he not address these issues, Mr. Speaker? I am sick and tired of him talking about occupants of the Boys' Home as though they are sub-humans. I am sick and tired of his talking about people generally as though somehow they are several steps on the ladder below him.

I would ask him to start treating

people as human beings. I would ask him in this particular context

MR. J. CARTER:

I would say that is a personal insult. I would like to know where you get off on that.

MR. SIMMONS:

I agree with the gentleman from St. John's North (Mr. J. Carter), what the minister does is personal insult, I agree with him, absolutely, I agree with him.

MR. J. CARTER:

This is foolishness. You have a vendetta against a different person every day in this House.

MR. TULK:

Go back to sleep.

MR. SIMMONS:

This is all in order, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, the minister would do well -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. J. CARTER:

Get on with your speech.

MR. SIMMONS:

Why do you not stop muttering some times?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS:

I never did. Now get off that kick. Get off that kick. Okay? You come by your inferiority complex honestly. I understand that.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the gentleman -

MR. J. CARTER:

(Inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS:

Now, Mr. Speaker, if the paid terrorist will allow me for a moment, the gentleman who is the Minister of Social Services owes an explanation to those children, owes an explanation, not particularly to the thirty-five people - he owes an explanation to them, I suppose, their welfare, their livelihood is directly on the line and I understand they would have some immediate concerns and some vested interests - but these people are put in position because they can address a larger concern of society.

The larger concern here is whether or not in their absence, in the absence of those thirty-five, the functions they will were performing would be adequately carried out. If he is telling us, Mr. Speaker, with a straight face that he can suddenly remove thirty-five from the system without any negative impact on the programme, then he has got some answering to do as to where he has been all those months in allowing the fat to continue, if that is what he is implying. If he is saying there is no reduction of service, by implication he must have been saying that there was fat in the system that he as minister had not properly

monitored or gotten rid of sooner. Now it is one way or the other.

Will the minister tell us, Mr. Speaker, at the very least, in the spirit of this petition he will review that decision to get rid of those thirty-five people or alternately, will he explain to us why it is that the removal of those thirty-five positions will have no negative impact whatsoever? Will he, Mr. Speaker, give us the assurance that the appalling litany of abuses that we heard about yesterday insofar as child sexual abuse cases is concerned will not escalate as a result of this removal of thirty-five positions?

I support the prayer of the petition, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BRETT:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

MR. BRETT:

Mr. Speaker, now that the temporary Leader of the Opposition is finished abusing me, I would like to make a couple of comments on the petition.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, as I said yesterday - and the Opposition has spent a couple of days on this, I guess they think they are on to something good - this government has been the most caring government that this Province has ever seen with respect to the people who have to depend on the Department of Social Services for various services.

We have done more in the last ten years than any province in Canada

in the field of social services. I say that without equivocation and I can back it up. The Department of Social Services is the only department, to the best of knowledge, in this government that has not received cuts or have been frozen, staff been frozen, in some area of other. The only department of government.

Every single day this year, Mr. Speaker, for 365 days a year, this government will spend almost \$500,000 every single day, including Saturdays and Sundays. We will spend almost \$500,000 a day in the field of social services. Does that sound like a government that does not care?

In the last seven or eight years we have increased the staff of the Department of Social Services by 52 per cent. Does that sound like a government that does not care?

We recently opened a child abuse treatment center in this city and put five or six staff in there. Does that sound like a government that does not care?

I have said over and over, Mr. Speaker, that the thirty-five staff that will be laid off across the Province from St. John's to Port aux Basques were staff that were over and above the complement. Yes, Mr. Speaker, the ones that are left will have to work a little bit more. They will have to do a little bit more. They will not be all that overburdened. The services will not suffer. We acknowledge our obligation and I repeat, Mr. Speaker, we have done more than any government in Canada since 1979 in the field of social services.

I am very proud of the department,

proud of the staff and the government that has given us the money to do all these things.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. J. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member for St. John's North.

MR. J. CARTER:

This is a continuation, Mr. Speaker, of the petition I had yesterday only more of it. The prayer is the same as yesterday, but I will read it very briefly.

"We, the undersigned, residents and business owners of the Kenmount Road are desirous to have the water and sewer extended further West on the Kenmount Road.

"We urge you to take into consideration the important economic aspect of this commercial area and the wealth of opportunity that it can bring to the City of St. John's for years to come."

I covered most of the points yesterday, and I am also glad that the member for Mount Scio - Bell Island (Mr. Barry) is in the Chamber today because there is one more point that is quasi legal I think should be addressed and addressed fairly carefully. That is that properties without services are harder and more expensive to get mortgages for. In other words, it is harder to get a mortgage. If you do succeed in getting a mortgage, you have to put down a larger downpayment and frequently the interest rate is somewhat higher. That is if you can get a mortgage at all. It is



very difficult to get a mortgage. It is so difficult, in fact, that I know of some builders who will not touch unserviced property. They just will not build on it for speculation. The only way they will build on it is if they have a customer who asks them to build a particular house on a particular piece of land.

It is not necessarily that city services or municipal services are any better than private services. One can be as good as the other, an artesian well and the private disposal system can be as good, perhaps even better, depending upon the lay of the land, and perhaps cheaper to operate than a public service.

However, the tremendous pressure for public services, city services, municipal services, water and sewer in this Province is because of the difficulty of arranging financing for building without attachment of such services. It is harder to build, harder to get a mortgage, and much harder to sell. It is just a very, very rough situation.

I think there are two avenues. I think, on the one hand, services should be extended. As I said yesterday, heavy taxes should not be levied on unserviced areas. But another possibility is that the government could look into the laws that restrict mortgages on so-called unserviced land. I am not a lawyer. I do not have a legal background, but it seems to me that some effort could be made by the administration to change the laws of this Province so that mortgages would be more easily obtained for unserviced areas. This would be what I call a stroke of the pen solution that might offer some relief until public

services can be extended.

I would appreciate any comments.

MR. BARRY:  
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the member for Mount Scio - Bell Island.

MR. BARRY:  
Mr. Speaker, I did not hear all of the member's comments at the beginning. I assume it is a similar petition to the one presented yesterday which would relate to my own district of Mount Scio - Bell Island, because I have constituents on Thorburn Road which are presently unserviced. Could I see a copy of the petition?

I think the member may have missed the point to a certain extent. It is not so much a problem of getting mortgage on unserviced property. You can get a mortgage on unserviced property, I do not think there is any law preventing that or any need for a legal change. The problem is that the value of the property is much lower than the value that would be obtainable if water and sewer and other municipal services were provided to the property and, for example, because of municipal regulations which prevent what they call backlot development. You may have two or three or four acres of land and you might be able to build only one dwelling house or, at the most, two when, if you had water and sewer facilities there, you can have many more homes built on the same size piece of ground because you do not have the problem of having to have your septic tanks and your septic fields and needing much more land in order to deal with that drainage problem.

So, what is happening is that land owners who have property in the Thorburn Road area and the Groves Road area, Nagles Hill, and Airport Heights, if they go out to get a mortgage, they have to tie up a much bigger piece of land in order to obtain an equivalent amount of money than if they had services provided to the land. A 50x100 lot within the serviced area of the city is worth as much as maybe two acres in an unserviced area.

So this is the real problem. You have taxpayers, you have residents of the City of St. John's - and this is the problem in other municipal areas, we have to remember, as well. We are talking about our own two districts now, but a similar problem arises in other municipalities where, for one reason or another, municipal services are not provided to land within the municipality. You get people being forced to pay property taxes when they get very little in terms of the services that the rest of us, who live in serviced areas, are obtaining.

That is not fair, that is not right, that is not equitable, and it does not make economic sense either. Because if you have services provided, then you have more opportunity for young families just starting off to build. A lot of the land out there on Thorburn Road, for example, is family owned where you have younger members of the family unable to get their own homes because they cannot afford to go out and buy a building lot, whereas if services were in that area, their parents would be providing them with a piece of land that they could go out and build a home on and start their family.

So I support this petition that is raised again by the member for St. John's North (Mr. J. Carter). But I would ask the member, as I said yesterday, to start accepting some responsibility. He sits on the government side of the House. Cabinet, the Premier, the Minister of Municipal Affairs can do something about this problem, can see that money is provided to the City of St. John's to provide the services, can see that the City of St. John's is prevented from applying excessive rights of taxation if they do not grant services to these residents of the city.

So the member has to do more than just get up and say these pious words. He has to start taking responsibility as a member of that caucus and a member of the administration opposite.

MR. DOYLE:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

MR. DOYLE:

Mr. Speaker, this is essentially, as members have said, the same petition that was presented by the member for St. John's North on that occasion yesterday. At that time I supported the petition that he presented and made a few comments. Essentially, the comments that I make today are not too different in that we certainly do sympathize with the residents in on Kenmount Road, and especially the business people. When I say especially the business people, I say it for a reason in that they are the people who provide the jobs and, of course, water and sewer is a basic necessity and residents of that

area should also have access to it.

Again, it is not the government or the Department of Municipal Affairs that sets the priorities for any council in Newfoundland. The priorities are set by the council themselves. They submit a list of the work that they intend to do for approval to the department, and it is generally approved out of hand.

Then the department, of course, makes the money available to the council insofar as it can.

The hon. member for Mount Scio - Bell Island (Mr. Barry) mentioned that we have a responsibility to provide the money to the city. This year the City of St. John's received the largest allocation of money for any council in the Province of Newfoundland. Now, granted, we all realize that it is not enough money and the city could use a whole lot more. But we have to realize as well that municipalities in Newfoundland could use \$215 million this year to cover all of the requests that they had in, but the city was provided with \$1.9 million which is the largest allocation of money by my department to any council in the Province of Newfoundland.

Again, Mr. Speaker, it is the city that sets the priority and hopefully they will be able to provide the type of services to the people of Kenmount Road that they should have in the not too distant future. As I mentioned yesterday, it is a major, major financial undertaking, to put services in on Kenmount Road because, members may not be aware, but the trunk sewer stops at the Health Sciences Complex right now. You have to take it from there and extend it up Kenmount

hill and into that area, and it will cost many, many, many, many, many millions of dollars for the city to undertake that. It is a major undertaking, because the sewer system right now is at limited capacity and it would involve essentially a twining of the line all the way in that way, and it is a major financial undertaking.

But this government does have a commitment, Mr. Speaker, to municipalities and, as I have said so many times here in the House, ever since 1979 when the Peckford administration took office, 176 per cent is the increase that this government has made available in municipal grants to municipalities, a 176 per cent increase. We all realize again that it is not enough money, but we are attempting to deal with these situations as best we can.

MR. SPEAKER:

Are there any further petitions?

MR. SIMMONS:

Yes, Mr. Speaker. I do have a petition.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SIMMONS:

I am delighted to present it. It is from a district that is very dear to my heart. Not one that I represent at the moment, but circumstances change in this life. It is from another district that I have fond memories of. It is the district of LaPoile.

MR. TULK:

Somebody needs to represent it.

MR. SIMMONS:

Basically the district of LaPoile,

so my cousin can rest easy. I say to him that Grand Falls is another district that I have a certain fondness for, but that is another issue. That is open to negotiation, I say to him.

The district of LaPoile principally, and some persons from the South West corner of the district of St. George's. In all, Mr. Speaker, nearly 4,000 signatures from the district of LaPoile, principally and some in the South West corner of the district of St. George's down around South Branch and the Codroy Valley.

Mr. Speaker, it is a petition that is properly addressed, you will be delighted to hear. It says: "To the Honourable Speaker and members of the Honourable House of Assembly of Newfoundland.

"The petition of the undersigned citizens of the district from Rose Blanche to South Branch hereby showeth" - then you will be pleased to know that the end it says things like, your petitioners, therefore, pray, etc., and it says towards the end, "And, as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray." So, Mr. Speaker, I believe we have established that the form of the petition is absolutely in order.

Now, let us come to the substance. I am sure it is a substance that the gentleman from LaPoile will have an interest in, and I am sure would want to support. The substance, Mr. Speaker, is contained in the prayer.

"That we are totally supporting the Tapp family in having their son, David, treated at the IWK hospital in Halifax and that

accommodations and transportation should be provided by the Department of Social Services. We are familiar with some of the background pertaining to the illness in question, and we show our support.

"Your petitioners therefore pray that the Honourable House of Assembly may be pleased to have this matter taken into consideration so that David Tapp can be treated at the IWK Hospital in Halifax and that accommodations and transportation be provided by the Department of Social Services."

That is the essence of the prayer of the petition, Mr. Speaker. This case has been ongoing for some time and you will realize that when nearly 4,000 people in more than a dozen communities, Cape Anguille, Codroy, Port aux Basques, Grand Bay and Rose Blanche are just some of the ones that I notice as I flick through the petition.

MR. SIMMS:

How many names are there?

MR. SIMMONS:

Just under 4,000 altogether.

You realize, Mr. Speaker, that when people in so many different communities can get this worked up as we say in our vernacular, can get this concerned about an issue that effects one individual and one family, it is a story, Mr. Speaker, that I am sure the gentleman for LaPoile (Mr. Mitchell) is familiar with and it is one that I have been familiar with for a number of years. It is a heartbreaking story and one that should not have to come to the House of Assembly. I am not saying that it is improper for it

to come here. I am saying that our system ought to be sufficiently more compassionate so that it should not take the effort and the concern of 4,000 people, mobilized in the form of a petition, to get redress on a matter this simple, and simple does not mean unimportant, this simple, this basic and this clear-cut.

Mr. Speaker, I have know the Tapp family for a number of years and a couple of months ago they did me the honour of visiting me here in my Confederation Building office and bringing with them a fairly extensive file on this matter. Then in communicating the petition to me in the last day or so, yesterday afternoon, they send me some additional letters. They have spared nothing, Mr. Speaker, within reason and within law, to have this matter addressed.

I have to say to you, Sir, that they are metting an impregnable brick wall sofar as the provincial government is concerned. The gentleman for Mount Scio - Bell Island (Mr. Barry), in his capacity as leader, would have had a fair amount of involvement with this through correspondence. Others on both sides of the House have had involvement with this. The sad commendatory, Mr. Speaker, is that despite all the words and all the letters that have gone back and forth, there is still the approach of the Department of Social Services that the problem can be handled here in Newfoundland. That is the basic argument, Mr. Speaker, I should say. There are those in the provincial government who say the problem can be attended to here in Newfoundland and there are those who say, including some experts at the hospital in Halifax, that the

problem ought to be attended to outside the Province. So it comes down to a question of who pays the bills. As you can appreciate where you have a son with a chronic disease, a kidney disorder and so on, you can recognize that the bills can get pretty high over a time.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support the prayer of this petition. I would ask that it be referred to the appropriate department. But I believe, more to the point, I would ask that in the treatment of this petition we look beyond the politics, we look beyond the mechanics involved and we find some way to accord to this case the compassion which it commands and the compassion which it deserves.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MITCHELL:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for LaPoile.

MR. MITCHELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The petition that has been presented by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Simmons) today is one that I sure that everybody would sympathize with. I do not have a copy of that petition although the Leader of the Opposition does have a copy of the petition. I did not know that he was going to presenting it in the House but I did happen to take a few notes.

I am quite familiar with the case that the petition talks about involving Mr. Tapp, who is a constituent of mine in the

community of Cape Ray in the LaPoile district. He has two sons and right from birth, I think, they have had some serious problems, kidney problems, and the government of this Province have continuously supported those kids through getting the top medical treatment available in Canada. The department has sent those kids to Halifax for years for treatment.

I have been working on this case and it is an ongoing problem there, Mr. Speaker. I understand that one of the major problems here with the family is that the specialists in Halifax have told the family they have done all that they can in relation to the treatment and the treatment that those boys are on now is available here in Newfoundland. We have specialists that are providing the same type of treatment here in Newfoundland and the Government of this Province has said that we will do everything possible, we pay all expenses for the children and the family to come to St. John's and to receive the ongoing treatment that they are receiving in Halifax.

Mr. Speaker, even though I sympathize with the petition, I am not so sure that all of the 4,000 names that are on that petition is aware of the responsibility and the concern that we, as a government, have had for this family over the years. The fact is this treatment now, Mr. Speaker, is probably better than what they have been getting in Halifax because we do have better facilities here now in the Province, better equipment and top specialists who can continue the treatment.

So I do support the petition to a

degree but it is an ongoing situation and I have been involved in it quite a bit since the family brought this to my attention.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. K. AYLWARD:  
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. K. AYLWARD:  
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is a pleasure to rise in support of the petition so ably presented by the Leader of the Opposition. Mr. Speaker, 4,000 names is an impressive list when it comes to a petition when you bring it to the House of Assembly. I think that the people have a very serious concern for the family and for a member of the family who needs the medical attention. I would whole-heartedly support their efforts.

While I am sure the government has been helping the family over the years, I would ask that the government and the minister responsible take the petition and look at it very seriously and look at the problem probably a little bit more to see if something can be worked out for the person. It is quite a petition to get them all over the Southwest Coast of the Province to support the Tapp family.

I would encourage the government to have a further look at the situation. I am sure they have been looking at it very hard but I would just say that the impressive list of names is reason enough to make sure that the person is given

the best possible medical attention that is available and that the family's concerns are dealt with and taken care of.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker: I support the petition presented by my colleague.

MR. SPEAKER:

Before calling the next item I would like to welcome to the galleries eleven students and their teachers from Williams Harbour.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

I have also a card here for the hon. the member for Fogo (Mr. Tulk) and I would like to read it. It says, "On your birthday you should rule the roost with arrogance, but the government has a monopoly on this. So act like a true taxpayer and have a happy but humble birthday." I would like to extend my personal best wishes, too, as I am sure all hon. members would.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. TULK:

Thanks, Mr. Speaker.

Orders of the Day

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

I am holding at thirty-nine.

MR. SIMMS:

Oh, well, in that case we will heartily endorse your comments.

Order 3. Concurrence motion. Social Services Committee.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order 3. The hon. the member for Port de Grave adjourned the debate without speaking his fifteen minutes.

The hon. the member for Port de Grave.

MR. EFFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member for Fogo should not be giving misinformation to the House concerning his age. He said he was thirty-nine but, if my memory serves me correctly, I believe he is fifty-two.

MR. TULK:

You will not have to worry about him in Question Period any more, Mr. Speaker.

MR. EFFORD:

Mr. Speaker, the Estimates Committees this year were somewhat of a disappointment, I think, to both sides of the House, Opposition as well as members of government, one of the reasons being the lack of attention being paid to them by members of the press. I think the change in procedure from last year to this year was made for their convenience. Because the press lodged several complaints last year about the Estimate Committee meetings taking place in different areas and in different time slots and they found it impossible to attend, this year, for their convenience, government changed the location and all meetings were held here in the House of Assembly, which made it very convenient for them to attend the

sessions. And I think the time slot was very logical and sensible for everybody. But we of the official Opposition were very disappointed to find out when we came to attend the Estimates committees that there was little - I stand to be corrected. I think  
The Telegram -

MR. TULK:

They deserve an award.

MR. EFFORD:

They do deserve an award, because I think they were about the only press that did attend all sessions at which I was present, and I must say we owe them a vote of thanks for that. But I am disappointed in other members of the press who did not see fit to attend those meetings. I do not know what their reason was. At some point in time I would like to hear the reasoning behind their not seeing fit to attend those sessions to hear the questions asked and the answers given by the administration in power.

But, Mr. Speaker, I find it very difficult to get information. With the seals and the locks around members of government and the ministers, it is almost an impossibility. They dance and twine around and give off whatever they feel like saying, and in most cases it is not even relevant to the question asked. That is the mode government is displaying. In 1979 the Premier, I have been hearing, gave the impression that his government was a very open government and that anything that mattered to the people was easily accessible to any person in the Province. As the official Opposition we believe it is our duty to ask for questions and, in a lot of cases, to be critical if we see the need to be critical,

and to seek information we figure the taxpayers of this Province have a right to know.

That, of course, is the reason for having the Estimates Committees meet after the budget is brought down, to give us an opportunity to garner information. Because time does not prevail in the House of Assembly, in the thirty minutes allotted for Question Period, to get all the information that we require. I find it very disturbing that even in the Estimates Committees we come in with questions for ministers of the various departments and they do not see fit to give all the information, or they just say, Well, I am not answering the question.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Which of the ministers did not give you answers?

MR. EFFORD:

They give us answers. I am not saying they sit there in silence, but the answers they give are answers that suit them and are not necessarily fact. They slide around the correct answer, the answer that is to the point. And, of course, that is the only way the Official Opposition can operate. We have to ask questions, and if we do not get the right answers that is all we can do. This year, especially, it did not matter whether we got the right answers or not as far as the press is concerned, because they were not around to listen to the answers.

There are a couple of areas in social services I want to make a couple of points on, and one of them is environment. Just recently the Minister of Social Services announced the



Beautification Project programme out in Harbour Grace district, the clean up programme. No doubt it is a good programme not only from the point of view that it is going to employ a large number of people who certainly need employment, even though they are only temporary jobs and they are just given enough time to get their unemployment insurance to help them over next Winter.

From the environment aspect it is certainly needed. In my driving back and forth over the Trans-Canada Highway from my district to St. John's one of the things that I notice - and it is very annoying and I do not understand why people continue to do it - is the litter that is thrown on the Trans-Canada. If you take particular notice of it, you will find that not every mile but every two feet there are bottles on both shoulders of the Trans-Canada. And it is only in the Summertime that it is cleaned up; it is only cleaned up once a year when the Department of Transportation or the Department of Social Services implement a programme to do so that some people can get their unemployment stamps.

As far as I am concerned, the Department of Environment is not doing its job, and I suppose you could also point the finger at the Department of Justice. I have not been all over Canada, but I have been to quite a few places and in the United States, and anywhere you go on the Trans-Canada or on any highway you will see signs against littering showing the minimum and maximum fines or whatever. And the RCMP or the OPP, depending on which province you are in, take it very seriously and they give out tickets. They

check anybody throwing litter on the Trans-Canada or on any highway. But in Newfoundland you can drive from St. John's to Port aux Basques and I do not know if there is one sign on the Trans-Canada indicating that littering is a punishable offence. The law is there, there is no question about it, but the public are not made aware of what the penalty is for littering the highway.

I do not know why this is happening when such emphasis is continuously being put on the environment not only provincially but nationally, all across North America and, I suppose, all over the world. In every democracy the environment is one of the major things coming on stream right now, but here in Newfoundland we are far behind. We seem to be always dragging our coattails in every area.

The Department of Environment is supposed to be very active and to be interested in cleaning up the environment and, just to give an example, when Newfoundland Energy took over Come By Chance, I think government gave them for \$1 the wharves and the property in there, when the Department of Environment said it would have to spend something like \$1 million to clean up the area, which certainly needs to be done. But I do not think it would take \$1 million, or anywhere near that amount of money, to put some signs on the Trans-Canada or for the Minister of Justice (Ms Verge) to ask her department to pass on a few words. Let us start paying some attention to our highways and let us start paying some attention to cleaning up the Trans-Canada, and not only the Trans-Canada, but the camping sites, the local communities,

and the local by-roads. If you go by any takeout out around the Port de Grave district and many other areas, you will see empty boxes from Kentucky Fried Chicken and Mary Brown's, paper cups, and everything else, all over the area. It is very disturbing, especially this time of year, when Newfoundland is going to get a great influx, we hope, of tourists into the area.

And increase in tourists would certainly be a boost to the economy that this Province can stand. It certainly will not hurt it. I do not think it will overheat it by any stretch of the imagination, not like the job creation will announced by the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth (Mr. Matthews) today on behalf of the Minister of Career Development and Advanced Studies (Mr. Power), under the Job Development Programme, or the subsidy programme, I should say.

There is one other area I want to speak about which comes under the Department of Social Services. There have been a number of petitions presented this week, and again this morning my colleagues, the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Stephenville, presented others this morning. This is the one area that is most affected by the restraints and the cutbacks of government, the Department of Social Services.

The minister said this morning in his response to the petitions that his department is paying more attention to the social services of this Province than any other Social Services Department in Canada. I think the reason for that is very obvious. Due to the high unemployment rate in this Province - statistics, I think,

show it is around 24 per cent. I think if the true figure was shown it would be closer to 35 or 40 per cent - there are probably more people per capita depending on Social Services than in any other province in Canada. So his department should be spending more money, and it probably will after the way this government is creating jobs. It is going to have to be increased, and that is no excuse for the hardships that are being placed on those people by the Department of Social Services and by this Progressive Conservative Government.

The recent cutback of thirty-five jobs in the Department of Social Services is evidence of exactly what is taking place, where an administration is paying more attention - it is very obvious - to the higher paid people and getting their friends political appointments, with wages of \$55,000, \$60,000 and \$70,000 a year, in some cases. There is no figure put on it and it is of no concern, but when the lower income people, the disadvantaged people of the Province happen to get an increase, all of a sudden the Department of Social Services and the government take a serious look: 'We cannot let those people have that. They are going to be living far above their standards.'

That was very evident just recently when the Canada Pension was increased by approximately \$152 a month, I think. And the reason for that is very logical and very sensible, because most of the people - I should say all of the people, I guess - who are on Canada Pension are subsidized by a small proportion by Social Services to bring them into the particular allotment they are allowed to live on. The federal

government saw fit to increase that so it would give them a small increase and give them a better chance of enjoying some of the good things that we as higher paid people enjoy, and immediately the Department of Social Services, for the second time this year, had to go and take it away from them. Then the minister stands in the House and comments on the fact that there is a certain structure or a certain income that those people are allotted to live on, but he never gave the true facts about it.

Able-bodied people - and this is the important thing to remember - who are on social services can go to work on community development jobs and earn \$200 a week for ten weeks, or for twenty weeks, or whatever, and then they go on unemployment insurance and, in some cases, they can go cut their own wood and get some of things that they need without actually spending money. But the people who are on Canada Pension are disabled people in 99 per cent of the cases and, of course, being in that predicament they are not able to supplement their income by cutting firewood, or by catching a few fish, or growing a few vegetables. So, in that particular instance, I do not think it is fair. I think the Minister of Social Services and the Cabinet should take another look at exactly what they have done in this area, because the few extra dollars those people received in Canada Pension was totally lost when Social Services took their supplement away.

Another area in which they have done the same thing this year is in the subsidized heating programme. Newfoundland and Labrador Housing came in this year

with forty-five dollars a month to supplement heating costs over the long, cold Winter. It was only forty-five dollars a month, which is not a great deal of money to supplement anybody's income. But what I find most ironic about it is that even with that small amount of money that those people were receiving, an extra forty-five dollars a month, the Department of Social Services saw fit to take twenty dollars a month away from those people, which was absolutely ridiculous.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. member's time has elapsed.

MR. EFFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands.

MR. SIMMS:

I just want to have a few words, Mr. Speaker, on the estimates for the social departments, I guess is the way to put it. First of all, I want to attempt to redeem myself from debate on the Resource Estimates Committee of a week or so ago when the member for Twillingate (Mr. W. Carter) and I got into a little bit of a kerfuffle. I want to apologize to him for my actions on that day. It was most unnecessary and certainly not my style, normally. I apologize to the member for Twillingate for that little outburst of last Friday. It was not my style, not my intention. It was not warranted and I apologize to him, for what that is worth.

With respect to the debate under consideration now, which is the estimates of the social departments in government, I tried to listen intently to what the member for Port de Grave was saying. As he got halfway through, unfortunately his colleague, the member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Decker) and then his colleague, the member for Fogo (Mr. Tulk), came over having a discussion with me about a couple of other items so I missed the last portion of it.

I did hear his opening comments, which were of a general nature, I guess, with respect to the workings of the Estimates Committees themselves, and in particular the one that he is involved with, the Social Services Estimates Committee. He alluded to the changes that were made this year in the timings of the meetings so that they did not conflict, so that there were not two on at the same time and so on, and that, indeed, was something. I recall that members of the Opposition not only in the last year or two but for the last four or five years, if they had one main criticism with the Estimates Committee, although they had others, it was always that the press were not able to attend the Estimates Committee hearings, or meetings, and properly report what exchanges were made.

So, it was as a result of that constant representation by the Opposition, quite frankly, that we decided to make those changes this year, and to have only one meeting at a time, one in the morning and usually one in the evening. For the majority of the three or four week period, the meetings were one in the morning and one in the evening.

So, like the hon. member for Port de Grave, I really am not certain why the media were not present aside from The Evening Telegram, as he so correctly pointed out, who were faithful in their attendance and, I believe, fair in their reporting; they gave basically both sides. I think they did anyway. Aside from The Evening Telegram, I do not know where The Sunday Express were, for example, which is another print media. There is no reason why they could not have been there. And I do not know why the electronic media were not able to attend or did not attend.

In the same way, Mr. Speaker, I recall that two or three years ago the President of the press gallery, I believe, made representation to the Speaker for consideration of changing some of these meetings so that they could attend.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
(Inaudible).

MR. SIMMS:

No, not to Your Honour, of course, to Your Honour's superior. There is nobody superior to Your Honour. I am sorry. I take that back. To the Speaker. Your Honour is Deputy Speaker. In any event, in the same way as they wrote and made some kind of representation, I cannot cite specifically what it was, perhaps it might be appropriate for the House to ask the Speaker if he would not communicate with the President of the press gallery, perhaps in writing. Maybe we could ask the Speaker to do that, because it is a concern on all sides, and just find out what the explanation is. Because if there is another problem, then maybe we will have to look at that for

future Estimates Committees. But if the problems are with the press themselves, not enough people and so on, then I do not know what we can do about it. That would really be out of our hands, I suppose, because of the system we have.

I listened intently to the member's opening comments with respect to the beautification projects in the Eastern part of the Province that were announced by the Minister of Social Services, and then I got waylaid by the member for the Strait of Belle Isle and the member for Fogo.

The normal process in debate back and forth would be to comment on the comments of the previous speaker and so on, but I only got so far. Having done that, and still having maybe four or five minutes left, perhaps I can just move into a couple of other areas I now have an opportunity to comment on. The estimates that we are considering, of course, are the estimates of the Departments of Social Services, Health, Justice, Environment, Culture, Recreation and Youth, and Career Development and Advanced Studies.

Now, under Environment, I guess I could allude to the spray programme and some of the issues that have arisen in that, but I think I will save that for another occasion, because I do not want to get into it for three or four minutes and then have to sit down and maybe wait for another opportunity to speak. I am going to try to get an opportunity to say a few words on environment.

MR. EFFORD:

Would the hon. minister permit a question?

MR. SIMMS:

Yes, sure.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Port de Grave.

MR. EFFORD:

A point of information for the minister, and I would like to hear his comments on this. One of the points I brought out when I was speaking had to do with the problem of litter on the highways in Newfoundland and the fact that neither the Department of Environment, the Department of Justice, nor the Department of transportation is doing anything about the lack of signs and the lack of enforcement of the law pertaining to littering.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands.

MR. SIMMS:

Okay. Well, again I presume there are other members who might want to speak, so I would rather wait until the next time I get up to get into the spray programme and beautification. I also want to give notice that I hope to get an opportunity to get up under the Department of Culture, Recreation and Youth, which is being studied, and have a comment on the green paper on outfitting which has created a bit of stir for different reasons, and I would like a chance to explain all that. But I will not have time to do all that now, at this point in time on my feet.

The only thing I want to say now, Mr. Speaker, is that under the Department of Health's estimates, the estimates of my colleague, the member for Exploits and the Minister of Health, there is a

significant allocation of funding for the expansion of the Central Newfoundland Hospital.

The total amount over the course of the expansion will be in the area of \$20.4 million. I believe that is the overall expansion project cost. I just forget the amount this year. I do not know if the minister recalls it off the top of his head, but this year alone?

DR. TWOMEY:

Around \$16 million.

MR. SIMMS:

\$16 million?

DR. TWOMEY:

Something like that.

MR. SIMMS:

Something like that, \$16 million. The hon. the member for Port de Grave, who has been only in the House a couple of years, perhaps might not be familiar or remember it from way back, but this project is one that began back in the early 1970s and I guess it is an indication of just how long the people in various communities are prepared to work and lobby to see a dream of their's come true. But this started back in the early 1970s, when I was only a little toddler - certainly, politically speaking I was, and maybe I still am in the eyes of some. But in 1975 I got involved in politics as an executive assistant to John Lundrigan, who was the then member for Grand Falls, and it was during the course of Mr. Lundrigan's term, of course, that the issue of the hospital really blew up. Subsequently, he resigned from Cabinet over the issue, and all the rest of it. So it has been a major, major issue out in my area. And not only in Grand

Falls, but in Exploits, and Windsor - Buchans, and even Burgeo - bay d'Espoir, because a lot of people from those areas use that facility.

So I am delighted, and I wanted to take the opportunity to say that finally this government was able to allocate the funding for a \$20 million expansion to that Central Newfoundland Hospital facility.

The other thing I want to comment on in a positive way from my own perspective, at least, in my district, again a facility that serves the region, is the first year university courses which have also drawn a bit of comment and criticism in the public eye occasionally. Again there have been allegations of politics being involved here because of the putting of the first year programmes in Grand Falls and Lewisporte as opposed to Grand Falls and Gander.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MR. SIMMS:

Well, I mean, there have been allegation of politics. I mean, it always intrigues me anyway, to begin with, that when a politician practices politics there is something wrong, that somehow it is reprehensible. A doctor practices medicine, a nurse practices medicine, an engineer engineers and everything is fine, but when a politician practices politics, there is something wrong with that. That always seems strange to me. I can say, in the case of the first year university courses, that there were no politics involved. I can assure members of this House that there were no politics involved because, as the minister has said, it was done

because of the cost factor. It was felt that we could only provide enough funding to do one community college this year to see how it works, and because Lewisporte was so close, within a thirty mile radius, it was felt that you could hire the eight instructors and they could commute the thirty mile distance fairly easily and not have to give up their homes in Grand Falls, for example, if they were living there, and move anywhere else.

So that is why it was done. It was simply a cost factor. It was not politics at all. In fact, I predict here and now in this House that places like Gander, Clarendville, and all these other places that are looking for first year university programmes, will get them. I mean, it is going to happen because that is our plan. That is what our legislation says. That is what our announcements all pertain to.

MR. SPEAKER (Greening):  
Order, please!

The hon. minister's time is up.

MR. SIMMS:  
Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will come back to it later on.

MR. W. CARTER:  
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. W. CARTER:  
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I did not get the total comments made by the minister when he stood up first, but I believe he did make reference to a slight difference of opinion that existed

last Friday between himself and myself, and granted some very unkind words were said and some harsh words were uttered, but I, too, Mr. Speaker, -

AN HON. MEMBER:  
(Inaudible) said worse things.

MR. SPEAKER:  
Order, please!

MR. W. CARTER:  
Yes, I can talk about that, too.

MR. SIMMS:  
I apologized.

MR. W. CARTER:  
I accept the hon. gentleman's apology. And maybe I should do likewise, because it is not my style, either, to refer to people as clowns and foolish and all that sort of thing. But I think what happened last Friday, Mr. Speaker, pretty well epitomizes the frustration that we are experiencing in committee and in the House. Certainly, I as one member am maybe naive enough to think that fifty-two reasonably well paid Newfoundlanders, all with the best interests of the Province and the people of Newfoundland at heart, I think we can be spending our time in a much more productive and useful way than some of the things that we do and say in this House. I think that is what sort of brought on the little kerfuffle that took place last Friday. Again, I accept the minister's apology and I too offer mine if any of the words I uttered were unparliamentary. Well, I know they were unbecoming.

Mr. Speaker, today we are discussing the social service estimates and as you will see in the budget and in the pamphlet

that was subsequently circulated by the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins), the social sector of the provincial government is a pretty expensive animal. In fact, as you will see in this pamphlet, 62.1 per cent of the gross government expenditure on both accounts, capital and current, is eaten up by the social service sector. Of course, we know that included in that amount there is a very substantial amount, in fact, \$191 million, almost \$200 million being expended by the government in social services.

Mr. Chairman, it is quite obvious, I believe, that something is drastically wrong in this Province when we have so much unemployment and we have so many people that are, through no fault of their own, forced to accept government welfare then, I think, we have to start looking around and trying to identify areas where maybe we can make some improvement. I have one thought in mind. In fact, it has become almost an obsession with me, I suppose. I am not against regulations, laws, or people who enforce regulations and who administer laws. I recognize their very importance and the need for them. Were it not for laws and regulations, I suppose, we would be eating each other. We would be almost going back to the days of the jungle where only the fittest survived.

But, Mr. Speaker, I think that we have gone too far. I think that it is now about time that the government, and I am not only talking about this government but I am talking about governments, period, municipal, provincial and federal, I think it is time now that we get off the backs of the Newfoundland people.

I strongly suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that this government is aiding and abetting what is happening in the Province. We have come to the point now where the bureaucracy that has been mushrooming and pyramiding over the years has evolved to the point where it has become a major operation almost. It has become a major operation to get a simple government document such as a birth certificate or a building permit. People are, in my view anyway in this Province, literally being driven to the brink of rebellion.

I find it in my district. Last week I visited my district and in a three or four day period I was approached by no less than five different people and groups of people who complained to me that because of government bureaucracy and unnecessary and totally impractical government regulations and red tape, they were being stopped in their tracks in terms of pursuing some ideas they had to get a business venture off the ground. I talked to these people and I found out that such was the case. I have subsequently written the Minister of Health (Dr. Twomey).

In one case a person wanted to develop a small family business, one that would enable the owners, the man and his wife and probably another daughter or son to earn a decent living in that business. I will not mention the name of the business or the area in which it was intended to be located because negotiations are still ongoing. I would not want to jeopardize their chances of getting approval. Mr. Speaker, the point I am trying to make is this: Government regulations and overbearing public servants apparently do not know



how to interpret regulations. I will explain that in a few minutes, what I mean by that. They refuse to use discretion if it helps the entrepreneur or the person looking for help, but who insists on exercising discretion if it is used to put a further barrier in their way. Let me give you an example of what I am talking about.

Today in this Province we have regulations that compel a small business starting up who applies for a vendor's number from the department concerned, it compels that small businessman, whether it is the beer parlour, garage operator or grocery store, it compels him or her to provide a security bond to the department concerned at his own expense to protect the governments against himself should he decide to misappropriate or mismanage funds that he is being forced to collect, sales tax, and for which he does not receive any form of direct compensation.

In the act I think it states - and I have not got it here in front of me but I have read it some time ago - I think it states that the minister may order or direct that a security bond be provided in cases where a person is applying for a vendor's number, which of course enables him to collect sales tax. The minister may insist, may order that, but what is happening, of course. We have bureaucrats within the system that are power hungry, that get a great feeling of elation when they can ride - I call them the bureaucratic cowboys - who get a joy out of riding herd on the masses and pushing little people around. These bureaucratic cowboys interpret that legislation and they do not give the

long-suffering citizen, the small businessman a break. They enforce that law to the letter. They do not exercise the discretion that the act enables them to use. Now, in most cases I understand, people who are starting up the small business are compelled, again at their own expense, to provide a security bond, which is costly in some cases, to protect the government against their potential dishonesty. It just does not make sense. It is rubbing it in.

It is bad enough, Mr. Speaker, to force people to do work for the government and to collect taxes for them, to comply with their asinine and silly regulations, in some cases, filling in forms, remitting these taxes at the own expense, the government will not now even provide a prestamped envelope in which these taxes and forms can be sent back, all at their own expense, and then you have the heavy hand of the bureaucrats in that department.

If some poor, unsuspecting store owner or business operator, through no fault of his own, through oversight or otherwise, should fail to remit the taxes collected by a certain date, immediately that person is subjected to, I believe, it is a \$50 fine right away.

MR. SPEAKER:  
Order, please!

The hon. the member's time has elapsed.

MR. W. CARTER:  
May I have leave to continue for a few minutes, Mr. Chairman?

AN HON. MEMBER:  
Leave.

MR. SPEAKER:

Leave is granted.

MR. W. CARTER:

That person is immediately subject to a \$50 fine and then he must pay interest on any outstanding balance. I might remind you that is money being collected by him against his own will and wishes in most cases for the government.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think it has become quite obvious that we have now evolved to the point in this Province, and maybe in Canada, probably moreso in this Province than any other province, and maybe moreso in Canada than any other country in the industrialized world, we have now evolved to the point where the elected politicians and the highly paid bureaucrats have become the masters and not the servants of the people.

I am afraid that the time is coming when people are going to have to revolt, they are going to have to rebel because indeed I think their very survival now, as a people and as businesspeople, almost demands that they take a stand against some of this nonsense.

MR. J. CARTER:

Are you revolting?

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Chairman, the hon. member for St. John's North (Mr. J. Carter) asked me if I am revolting. I can tell him now that having had some little experience in business, having been involved in a small downtown business, I did revolt, in fact, to the point where I could not take any more of it. The other person involved in it and myself decided to give it up.

I think the government, Mr. Speaker, must take stock of itself. Let me suggest this to the Premier. He is not here. Maybe he is listening and if not, maybe he will read it in Hansard.

On May 12 the minister issued a statement in which he outlined the establishment of setting up of an Expenditure Review Committee. Now this Committee is made up of high ranking top civil servants, I think, all deputy ministers and there mandate is to examine the efficiency and effectiveness of government's operations and programmes.

Now I am not sure that that particular committee is necessary, in fact, if they are going to spend money on that kind of a committee, I would strongly suggest that there are better ways in which it can be spent. Taking four or five highly paid deputy ministers and the support staff that will go with it to look into and to examine the efficiency and effectiveness of government operations, it seems to me we already have an army of people who are being paid to do just that. So why should we have to go through the expense of having another brand new committee duplicating what should be the responsibility of an existing staff.

Mr. Speaker, if the Premier and the government insist on going through and keeping that committee in place, I would suggest that they should give some thought to maybe appointing a second, similar committee. Certainly I would not recommend that it be manned by bureaucrats because sometimes in order to protect themselves in their own little bailiwicks they are inclined to wear blinkers.

I would strongly urge the government to set up a special committee, it could be a committee of the House, or it could be, for example, a committee of outsiders made up of people in the various sectors of the economy that are affected by government regulations. And that this committee be given the mandate to carefully review government regulations, especially those that apply in the regulatory sectors of government, licencing sectors, and that they identify regulations that have become in some cases redundant, and in most cases can now be declared unnecessary and totally impractical, and that are having the effect, Mr. Speaker, of strangeling business, would-be businesses, and totaling frustrating the ordinary citizen of this Province.

I remember one time the Moores Administration, having been prompted to do so by certain members in Cabinet, including myself did, in fact, have a very cursory look taken at the regulations governing the development sector of the government and having to do with the issuing of regulations, the enforcement of laws respecting certain regulations, etc.

I recall very well that the results of that very limited investigation proved to be rather interesting in that there were hundreds of regulations that were being enforced at that time, some of which, of course, could not be enforced. But a lot of them were on the books that had no business being there, and, in fact, should have been rescinded. I do not know what happened to that study afterwards because I left Cabinet, but I am not aware of it having been pursued any further.

I think the time has come now for the government to take a long hard look at itself and to review these regulations to identify ones that are, in fact, having a strangeling effect, a stifling effect on business, and there are many, and that where it is possible, for example, where the act states that discretion can be shown, when the minister is given discretion, I think that the minister should instruct their officials, their deputies and their directors that the benefit of the doubt be given to the people whom they are suppose to be serving.

Mr. Speaker, these are just a few brief remarks. I hope to take part in this debate before it adjourns. I hope that, in cluing up the debate, the ministers concerned will be able to shed some light on what is happening within their respective departments, and maybe comment on the few things I have had to say today, and maybe indicate to the House if, in fact, they are prepared to do anything about it.

I believe that if Newfoundland is to progress, if small business is going to be given a chance to flourish, then I think that we are going to have to get off the backs of people, gets off the backs of our small businessmen and stop frustrating the average citizen.

I heard a case the other day on one of the talk shows when this very subject was being discussed, government bureaucracy, government red tape. I heard a person say she went down to the Registry in the basement of this building to get a lowly birth certificate, a very simple document. It took her forty-five minutes to get that document. She gave a play by play description of what she had to do

to get it. She had to go to this cage and give her name and date of birth. Then she had to go to another cage and wait there to pay for it. Then she had to get a slip from that person and then line up at another cage to get the actual document. I mean, what nonsense, that people should be expected to do that sort of thing. It is totally and absolutely unnecessary, as are most of the regulations.

Let me tell you something, Mr. Speaker - I am sure this is not coming as any great revelation to you or any world shattering news - today in Newfoundland, fishermen especially, anybody involved in the resource sector of this Province, anybody involved in trying to develop the resources of this Province, are literally being driven up the wall with overbearing inspectors from federal and provincial governments, from licensing regulations, from quotas, from restricted entries in certain fisheries, and from tax collectors. It amazes me how anybody has got the courage to hang in there, or call it what you want.

I know a businessman who admitted to me that they were ready to throw in the sponge. They just could not take any more of it. Last week in Twillingate district, where employment opportunities are pretty well zero, I saw a certain businessman who was not looking for financial assistance. All he wanted was the right to do a certain thing, and the bureaucrats had made it so hard for that man to adhere to their requirements, pages and pages of foolish regulations. They were imposing on that gentleman regulations that would apply to a high-rise in

downtown Montreal. He wanted to build a very simple wooden frame building in which to operate this very unsophisticated simple business and they were enforcing on him the National Building Code.

That man, when he got the letter and the instructions of what he had to do, and the forms to fill out, he could not fill them out and he came to me for help. I could not fill them out either. He said, 'Look, I am going to throw in the towel. I could have provided four jobs, but to heck with it. I do not have to get that business going. I have other businesses. So why should I be bullied around by overbearing bureaucrats?'

So I talked to him and eventually he came around to seeing it my way, that these regulations maybe could be adhered, that he should get somebody who understood the building industry to fill in the application forms. I am happy to say now that he is on the hand of getting started.

Let me tell you something. He came to me after and said, 'Look, I have got the building started. We have got the foundation in. We are framing it up. We have got the roof on. But guess what? I have got to cut sixteen inches off the eve of the gable end of my building.' I said, 'Why?'. He said, 'Because the Newfoundland Light and Power Company requires that a wooden building be at least ten feet away from one of their poles. My building is eight feet, eight inches,' or whatever it was, eight feet, six inches. He has got to actually get up on the roof in this nice building that is going to cost, I suppose, \$100,000, and he can do one of two

things. He can pay them \$2,000 to move the pole, which is about ten times what it should cost, or he can get a chain saw and cut a part of his eye off. He choose the latter, it being probably less costly than the other way.

I know of another case where a young man in my district, who has got a saw mill, wants to extend it modestly. There is a hydro pole, a utility pole in the way. He phoned the Light and Power Company in Gander and said, 'I want that pole moved.' They said, 'Fine, we will move it but it will cost you \$1,700 to move it.' This young man did not have the \$1,700.

He went to a private contractor who is involved in that kind of work and said, 'Look, what will it cost to move that pole from here and put it over here?' The contractor said, 'It will cost \$190 to move.' The Light and Power were charging him \$1,700. Then, of course, there was the question of moving the transformer or whatever it was on the pole and shifting the wires from A to B, a job that by their own admission would take about three or four hours for two people. They said, 'Well you can go ahead, young man, and get a contractor to move the pole, that is fine, but we have are going to have to switch the wires over.' 'How much will that cost?' 'That will cost \$900.' Nine hundred dollars for a half a days work for two people to move a transformer and a utility wire from one pole to another.

Mr. Speaker, is it any wonder that Newfoundland is poor and that we have got unemployment like we do with high taxes. The attitude of people in authority, the powers that be, so called, who get a delight, as they said, these

bureaucratic cowboys who get a charge out of pushing some poor, little, unsuspecting, innocent person around, and making demands they know he cannot meet. It is going on all over the place.

In my district I can cite, I suppose fifty cases that I know of where people are literally being driven up the wall by bureaucrats who are trying to impose on them regulations that are unnecessary, totally impractical and regulations with which they are not able to comply.

So, Mr. Chairman, these are the few comments I have and I will be hopefully pursuing this matter at a later date.

MR. RUSSELL:  
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. RUSSELL:  
Mr. Speaker, I just want to say a few words in this debate. I would just like to comment briefly first of all on some of the points raised by the hon. member for Twillingate (Mr. W. Carter) in terms of the frustrations of the John Q. Public out there, if you will, with regards to regulations and that kind of thing.

I find it interesting, Mr. Speaker, that most often, I think, I will not say on all occasions, that when one finds himself - and I am not referring to the hon. member personally now - but anybody finds himself or herself in opposition they readily - and maybe sometimes with some justification and maybe not - criticize the bureaucracy and the public servants. On the other

hand, when one finds himself on the side of government there is perhaps a tendency to defend the public servants and the bureaucracy. Somewhere in the middle, I suppose, there might be a happy medium.

I do not particularly agree with the hon. member for Twillingate's views that public servants necessarily deliberately set out to frustrate the public by all sorts of rules and regulations. I am equally convinced however that unconsciously, perhaps in drafting regulations and rules, that becomes the end result. I have some sympathy for some of the comments made by the hon. member for those of us perhaps more particularly, and this again may not be necessarily so, who represent rural districts. The small businessman and fishermen and others in their efforts to obtain birth certificates for example and to fill out application forms of various things, there is a degree of frustration there, there is no question about that.

The hon. the member for Twillingate made some reference to the Premier's announcement of setting up this committee to review government spending in trying to reduce the deficit, and said that it was headed by senior public servants and maybe that was not the thing to do.

Then, Mr. Speaker, he went on to suggest another committee and, I submit, Mr. Speaker, another bureaucracy, small maybe, but a bureaucracy to review the rules and the regulations of government and the various agencies of government and various departments. So that is what the hon. member suggested, that there

be another committee, other than the one the Premier announced, and I think I understood the hon. member correctly.

I am not so sure we should set up another committee which would cost more money, and maybe set up another mini bureaucracy to review existing rules and regulations and to throw out those that may no longer be applicable or practical. What I would perhaps suggest, Mr. Speaker, is that those of us who are in government, and ministers, possibly should do a complete review of their own departments and any agencies, or whatever, they are responsible for.

AN HON. MEMBER:

A long (inaudible).

MR. RUSSELL:

Maybe. I do not recall that. It could be. I just do not remember it, that is all. But maybe it is an exercise we can go through rather than set up another committee and spend more dollars to do that. I am sure there are some rules and regulations we could throw out or maybe streamline a little to ease some of the frustration, because I think that everybody in this hon. House, on both sides, will agree that there are frustrations out there for people trying to do things.

I am not convinced, as I said, that the public servants deliberately set out to do that, but sometimes it is done unconsciously in, hopefully, trying to do the best job they can. But the end result is the same.

Mr. Speaker, realizing that I only have ten minutes, I would like to move on and perhaps repeat some of

the comments made by my colleague, the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands, as they pertain to the Department of Career Development and Advanced Studies and, more particularly, Mr. Speaker, the establishment of Memorial University courses and the expansion of the post-secondary education system and the community college system in the Province, particularly as it applies to Central Newfoundland.

I do not think that there was any pork barrelling or politics deliberately involved in establishing these university courses at Lewisporte and Grand Falls.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Do not go misleading the House now.

MR. RUSSELL:

I am not misleading the House, Mr. Speaker, and I certainly do not intend to.

MR. SIMMS:

Of course not.

MR. RUSSELL:

If hon. members will look at the announcement made by my colleague, the Minister of Career Development and Advanced Studies, I think they will find that announcements were made that put various new programmes, if you will, or the infrastructure to eventually implement these programmes into practically every place in the Province where there was a vocational school. Now, there has been some criticism from Gander of the fact that the university courses have gone into Lewisporte and Grand Falls. I could perhaps understand that, Mr. Speaker, if nothing had been announced for Gander.

Mr. Speaker, there is approximately, if I remember, \$680,000, in round figures, allocated for the Gander School for the Helicopter course.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. RUSSELL:

And it is a very obvious and very practical place to put a course that is related to aviation.

Now, there are other places in the Province, Mr. Speaker, where it could have been done: It could have been done at Torbay, it could have been done at Argentia, at Stephenville, or in Goose Bay, but it was done at Gander. And I do not need to repeat for anyone in this Chamber, I am sure, the significance of Gander in the aviation industry.

It is a fact, Mr. Speaker, that from Grand Falls to Gander it is approximately seventy or seventy-five miles by highway. It is also a fact that from Grand Falls to Lewisporte it is approximately half of that, and basic economics will show that it is cheaper for persons to commute from Grand Falls to Lewisporte than from Grand Falls to Gander.

I want to point out as well, Mr. Speaker, that some weeks ago I had the pleasure of presenting a petition in this Legislature in support of implementing first year university courses at Lewisporte and that that petition was wholeheartedly supported by my friend and colleague, the member for Grand Falls, the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands, and the member for Gander, who stood in his place and supported that petition.

Mr. Speaker, there is not enough money to implement first year university courses, since I am referring to these, all over this Province in one year. I would like to think that this is phase one of the university courses, not forgetting the other courses that were announced in the announcement not only for Grand Falls and Lewisporte but for other parts of the Province.

I have no objection to university courses going into Gander or any other part of this Province. I find it interesting, however, Mr. Speaker, that there has been some, in my opinion at least, unjustified criticism by certain individuals in Gander - and I am not referring to the member for Gander. He has been very positive about this - of something going into my district.

Mr. Speaker, for a number of years there have been things go into Gander, and rightfully so, and I, perhaps, felt that they could just as easily have gone into Lewisporte or Bellevue - since I am talking about Lewisporte and Gander districts, I will stick to them. Now, Mr. Speaker, for perhaps the first time, when a new idea costing approximately \$1 million as opposed to \$680,000 for Gander's project goes into my district, there is a great hullabaloo from certain individuals and segments in Gander. I have been tempted to say, Mr. Speaker, and think, that it is pure unadulterated greed and jealousy on the part of Gander, or certain segments and individuals in Gander, but having had some second thoughts about that, Mr. Speaker, I suppose in reality they are speaking out and trying to get things for Gander and for the district the same as any citizen

of any community would do, or any member would do for his own district.

Although I must say, Mr. Speaker, I think the criticism, in some respects, is unfounded. Because there are things going into Gander; there is \$680,000 for the helicopter course. If nothing had been announced for Gander, I, perhaps, Mr. Speaker, could understand a little better why they have been speaking out and why they are speaking out against the concept of university courses at Lewisporte and Grand Falls.

Mr. Speaker, for a number of years students from Lewisporte and Twillingate districts, the district of my friend across the way there, have been going to the Gander Vocational School to take various courses offered there that were not offered in Lewisporte, and that is fair enough. That is not a problem with me. But suddenly, Mr. Speaker, when I suggested a little while back, what is wrong with students from Gander going to Lewisporte to do a course? I was just shot right down by certain people.

MR. EFFORD:

Shame!

MR. RUSSELL:

I know the member for Port de Grave does not really think it is a shame.

MR. EFFORD:

I do, Mr. Speaker. I do.

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, I think if this community college concept is to succeed it has to be looked at not in light of what goes into the Gander Vocational School or the Lewisporte Vocational School or



the Grand Falls Vocational School or the Carbonear Vocational School or wherever it is over there, if it is to succeed, we, all of us together working together, have to somehow or other try to change the attitude of people who want to see things only in their own little community, only in their own school and nowhere else. We have to change our way of thinking. That may not be easy, but we have to change our way of thinking and think in a larger perspective of the success of the Central Newfoundland community college, the Eastern Newfoundland community college, not so much in my case, I guess, the Lewisporte school or the Gander school, but let us try to co-operate, to pull it all together and make it work. If we do not do that, Mr. Speaker, I fear that what in theory right now, and hopefully in practice, is an excellent programme in terms of the expansion and the change to the community college system, may not be the success that I am sure we would all hope it to be.

There will be growing pains as there have been and will continue to be, I suppose, in all new programmes and new ideas. We hope that there will be as few problems and as few frustrations as there can be.

MR. SPEAKER:  
Order, please!

The hon. minister's time has elapsed.

MR. RUSSELL:  
Could I just have one minute to finish up?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
By leave!

MR. SPEAKER:

By leave.

MR. RUSSELL:  
We all hope, Mr. Speaker, as I said, that everything will succeed and it will be pulled together by all of us working together. Because, Mr. Speaker, if we do not, as I said, I fear that this good idea and good policy on the part of this government will not be the success that we would all hope it to be.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. SIMMONS:  
Mr. Speaker, I really cannot let the occasion pass. The subject we are on at the moment, not the overall subject but the immediate subject of the college courses, is an issue that we cannot let pass. Now, I understand that from much practice my good friend from Lewisporte (Mr. Russell) can do almost anything with a straight face, but that does not make it right and proper.

When the gentleman, who is the Minister of Career Development and Advanced Studies (Mr. Power), announced the White Paper on the reorganization of the vocational school system, I applauded that in this House, because in principle it is a step in the right direction. Mr. Speaker, it is time to stand off and take note of the general approach of this government. In the administration there are a number of men and a woman who are, in their own right, quite informed and quite intelligent people. Now, of course, the same thing could be said of Dr. Goebbels; intelligence itself does not

necessarily translate into worthy actions.

To the first point, because they are intelligent they have taken a number of right decisions, including the decision to reorganize vocational education. Because they are intelligent they correctly diagnosed the problem and they have taken a decision which, if left untampered, would have gone a long way to corrected the problem. But then something else enters in. That something else is called desperation politics. We are seeing such an orgy of desperation politics in this Province as we never saw before.

When Joe Smallwood, after his long period in office, was on his final slide, he, even in his last year or so of the fingernail performance, never got as crudely desperate as this hon. bunch is. So we see good decisions, the decision to reorganize the vocational education, for example, and the decision in particular, within that larger decision, to have a community college system around this Province, a good decision, but we see a good decision like that being prostituted, being botched, being peddled, being cheapened, because of an overriding consideration, a consideration to practice desperation politics.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Consumer Affairs (Mr. Russell) is going to have to do a lot more explaining than he has done today before he will convince the people of Gander, and that whole Gander Bay area, and the Bonavista North area, that there was anything but partisan politics involved in the decision relating to Lewisporte and Grand Falls.

Somebody has said that not only must justice be done, it must appear to be done. Mr. Speaker, here even the appearance stinks. If you look at the basic geography of Gander, Grand Falls and Lewisporte, and if you are going to have three centers with post-secondary courses these are the obvious three, Gander, Grand Falls, and Lewisporte, but if for reasons of fiscal restraint or reasons of the limited availability of expertise, staff, etc., faculty, if, for whatever delimiting reasons you have to make the number fewer than three, as in two, then you cannot make a case for Grand Falls and Lewisporte over Grand Falls and Gander. You just cannot do it. Because if one of your objectives is to serve the maximum number of people, you do not need to be a logistics or a geography whiz to notice on the map that Gander is further to the North East than is Lewisporte. It is further removed from Grand Falls than is Lewisporte. To recognize that Gander has a greater educational hinterland, if that is the term, that does not overlap with Grand Falls any more than does Lewisporte. That is simple geography, a very simple conclusion you can draw from knowing the juxtaposition of those three communities. So you have to back off and ask other questions. If it is not blatant politics, then what is it? Is it that the instructors have some inflexible reason why they will live in Lewisporte and they will not live in Gander? Is that the issue? I can understand that, Mr. Speaker, because I was born in Lewisporte.

MR. J. CARTER:

The press has gone home.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS:

Notwithstanding, Mr. Speaker, I would think the reason for the choice -

MR. J. CARTER:

It is time to insult someone now.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, it is too late today to accept the invitation down into the gutter from my friend for St. John's North (Mr. J. Carter). Let him wallow, as he needs all the free rein he can have down there. I am in too good a mood, to tell the truth.

I had some good success yesterday after talking to the people down in Little Bay, who are not getting very much action on their bridge down there. We now have some action on that issue, and that is important, Mr. Speaker. Because while I no longer represent them federally, I know how they have been put off in terms of provincial government funding all these years. But, Mr. Speaker, they, like people in other parts of this Province, have gotten the message that the politics that are being practiced in relation to Lewisporte and Grand Falls, or Lewisporte versus Gander, is the Bailey bridge politics of Little Bay, is the Jersey side politics.

And talking about hanging people out to dry, did you not feel for that gentleman from Placentia (Mr. Patterson) last night on television? I mean, partisan considerations aside, how a man could be so completely hung out to dry by his 'colleagues' boggles me. I am talking about the

gentleman who is the member for Placentia, temporarily the Tory member for Placentia, but I suggest that is something he is debating right now.

MR. PEACH:

He will be around a long while.

MR. SIMMONS:

I am not talking about his longevity, that he has. Politically he has longevity, and it is a longevity we admire and wish him more of. What we are talking is something else altogether, and that is the insult that was inflicted on him, made public yesterday but inflicted over the past few months, by his colleagues. I am talking about my good friend for Placentia, who has now come into the Chamber. I was telling his other friends here, in his absence, how I empathized last night with his situation, commend him on how well he handled it in the circumstances, confirm what we know about him, to be a diplomat even in the most difficult circumstances, and I appreciate they were very difficult circumstances.

The politics of Lewisporte versus Gander on community college courses, the politics of the Bailey bridge in Little Bay, the politics of the Jersey side town council, the politics of the Terrenceville council in not having a cent of municipal funding in twelve years - the last municipal funding they got was in 1974 - is the same politics, Mr. Speaker. It is the politics of desperation. It is the politics of hanging on by your fingernails because you have nothing else left to hang on by. You have no record of service to hang on by. Mr. Speaker, I am sure they do not particularly want to hear this.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

We have a good record.

MR. CALLAN:

Play it.

Say it again.

MR. SIMMONS:

Say it again. The politics of desperation have taken over in this Province and the word is getting out all over all parts of this Province, even to some members on the government side, getting to the member for Placentia, getting to the member for Terra Nova (Mr. Greening). If they need another minister, a minister for tossed salads, I recommend the gentleman for Terra Nova. The member for Terra Nova, by George, I think he has got it. The member for Terra Nova who sits, both physically and politically much to the left of the gentleman for Humber West (Mr. Baird), who does Attila the Hun credit by coming here in terms of political philosophy.

Mr. Speaker, I rose just for a moment, I hope my friend for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Decker) is about to rise.

MR. EFFORD:

No, he is gone.

MR. SIMMONS:

He is gone, he could not take it any longer.

Well, I just wanted to have a moment in response to the gentleman for Lewisporte, because if I were he I would find a better line or I would quit talking about the decision to put courses in Lewisporte. I would like to see courses in Lewisporte and in Gander and in so many other places, but, if you have to make

choices you cannot justify the choices that have been made. The people of Gander deserve some answers on this. The people who live in Gander and down around Glovertown, for whom Gander would have been much more accessible than is Lewisporte, in shorter time space, these people deserve some answers on the question of the decision to put post-secondary courses in Lewisporte as opposed to Gander.

I believe my time is up, but we will have another crack at it over the next two, three or four weeks, as the case may be.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Stephenville.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak in the debate today. It is a nice Friday.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of different departments in this social sector where most of our money is spent. One of the things that I would like to concentrate on in my short comments, Mr. Speaker, is the Career Development and Manpower Department, which are responsible for employment in the Province, the creation of jobs around the Province, the creation of long-term employment. It is also responsible for the new community colleges which are being brought in. I still do not have an answer about the recent advertising, Mr. Speaker, that

this government undertook to advertise about all the jobs that they have created. We have searched and asked questions about where the money came from to pay for such an ad, but we still do not have an answer. I am disappointed, Mr. Speaker, because they seem to know where every other dollar goes, but when it comes to that issue it is hands off, and they do not want to have the responsibility for it. The ad is a disappointment to many people. They could have flared it up a bit better, put a nice blue colour on it, and that probably would have gone over a lot better with a lot of people out there.

But it is unfortunate, because for the people who are out there looking for work and are out there searching for employment to have to pick up their newspaper, sit down after they have been out beating the streets and look at a full page ad of how good a job this government is doing, to be told by their tax dollar that things are hunky-dory does not go over very well with a lot of people out there, especially the 40,000 who are walking around searching for employment.

So when the Minister of Career Development and Advanced Studies and his government decide to advertise, I wish they would be more careful and more tactful in their approach because it flies in the face of what the reality is, out on the streets and in rural Newfoundland, about the employment situation. And it only rubs into those people who are searching for employment that the situation is considered more of a joke by the government, and that is what it appears to be when you see such an ad.

I have had many comments on it from a variety of people whom I deal with every day, and it is unfortunate that the government has undertaken that strategy. It is unfortunate that they have not come out and advertised the creation of jobs around the Province, a lot of jobs around the Province, a lot of numbers around the Province. Then they might get more support for their advertisement, Mr. Speaker, but when you have 25 per cent or so unemployment officially - the real figure is of course way higher than that - I would like to give some advice to the Minister of Career Development, that before they release their next ad on the great job they are doing they look a little bit more carefully at the psych of people out there, because they are not taking it too well and they are not too pleased by seeing such a waste of the taxpayers' money.

A number of the different departments come under the social sector, Mr. Speaker, including the Department of Career Development, and the community college scheme which is now being undertaken by the government I think has the support of many people around the Province. I feel that the community college in Stephenville has been the leader of the system and should be allowed to expand its mandate, as the other community colleges should be, to meet the needs of people in the area and the West Coast of the Province, and I am looking forward to debating that legislation when the minister decides to bring it in. Because it is very important legislation which will have a long-term effect on the education of our young people in the Province.

Speaking of the education of young people, since we only have a few short moments left I would like to put forward a concern that I have about the employment counselling of young people who are trying to seek employment. We have suggested on this side, and we have it as a policy, that employment counselling centres be set up around the Province. We suggested this to the Minister of Career Development and to the government on a number of occasions but they decided that they really do not think it is a requirement or needed. But I would urge the government to consider such a proposal to establish employment counselling services for young people around the Province, in certain areas of the Province which have critically high unemployment, which is most of the Province, actually, because it would be a way to help with the attitude of young people in the Province who feel they have been left or hung out to dry by the government when it comes to employment creation, when it comes to concern about the future.

So it is a very concrete suggestion that we have made to the Government of the Province on a number of occasions. It is a policy that we have decided upon and I would only hope that the Minister of Career Development and Advanced Studies (Mr. Power), when he looks at his budget next year, will look at possibly taking under consideration this suggestion, because I think it is one part of the way, or one part of the process of tackling that problem. And so it would be, I think, a constructive measure to take. But, again, we have suggested some of those and they have gone by the wayside, unfortunately. So I think we are going to have to do

the other thing, probably get in there and try to tackle the problem because it is a gigantic problem in this Province. You cannot stress it enough, forty-odd per cent of youth unemployment of a generation of people who have not seen work, some of them, since they attempted to look for it in the last number of years. There are concrete measures that can be taken and it is about time that this government decided to take upon itself that problem and to tackle it, instead of advertising 100 jobs here or 200 jobs there. I would hope that they would look at the philosophy of what they are at and try to tackle the problem. I do not mind politics being played, but at the end of the day you have got to sit down and show what you are doing and you also have to show results. A government is elected to produce.

My measure of results of being in politics, as long as I am going to be here, be that short or long, will be if the unemployment rate comes down. That will be a measure of whether or not a government is effective. Ladies and gentlemen on the other side, your record is not very good, and that is putting it very mildly. I hope that you will take some suggestions and look for others from the Royal Commission on Employment and Unemployment and decide to tackle the problem. Hopefully, we will see an improved situation when it comes to employment in the Province, because it is a drastic thing to have to deal with every day.

One of the things, Mr. Speaker, that I have specifically been working on has been a cadet base for the West Coast. It comes under the employment minister in many ways. I have in front of me

the budget of this government, and in the highlights of the budget they have a Department of National Defence expenditures table. The ranking has Nova Scotia number one, it has Prince Edward Island number two, and New Brunswick number three. Newfoundland is number ten. We have it in this budget of the government that they are wanting to get defence spending for the Province. We are the tenth out of ten in the country requiring such dollars. Yet when you ask the Premier about what he is doing, about meetings that they might have had, he gets on the defensive and says, 'Well, we are working on it and we will do our own governing.' Well, I can only suggest to him that up until this point we are still tenth out of ten after fifteen years of that administration over there. So I would only suggest that the results that you have gotten so far are not the best in the world and that maybe you would look at a different strategy of trying to acquire, for example, in this particular area, dollars that we need around this Province which would help build an economic base which would help the economy of the Province and help the long-term employment situation. Again, I hope this does not fall on deaf ears, but it probably will.

Anyway, it is getting close to one o'clock, Mr. Speaker. I am sure they all want to listen to me, I know, but I will wait until the next day. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform hon. members, as I did the Opposition House Leader, that we will next week continue with the Concurrence Debates, which means that they will probably conclude Tuesday or, if not, early Thursday, depending on how many petitions we have, etc. Then we will go on to legislation.

I move the House adjourn until Monday at 3:00 p.m.

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

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